UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

LECTURER IMMEDIACY FOR EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL

COMMUNICATION IN UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
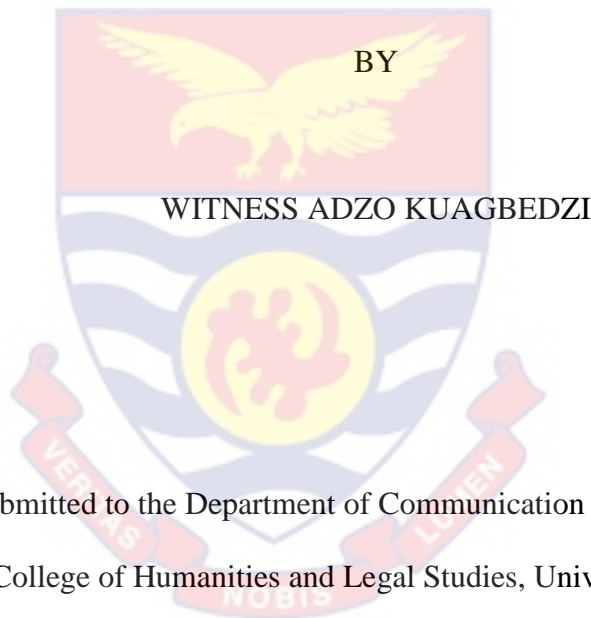
WITNESS ADZO KUAGBEDZI

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

LECTURER IMMEDIACY FOR EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL

COMMUNICATION IN UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

BY

WITNESS ADZO KUAGBEDZI

Thesis submitted to the Department of Communication Studies of the Faculty

of Arts, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast,

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Award of Master of

Philosophy degree in Teaching Communicative Skills

APRIL 2024

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is a result of my original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:……………………….. Date:……………….….……..

Name: ……………………………………………………………………

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the university of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's signature:………………………… Date ………………………

Name:……………………………………………………………………………...

ABSTRACT

The relationship between instructors and learners is considered as one of the major factors that influence learning outcomes. The present study explored the strategies utilized by lecturers of Communicative Skills course in the University of Cape Coast, Ghana to establish immediacy with their students during classroom instruction. The researcher purposely sampled six lecturers and forty-two students to participate in the study. Data were collected from the selected lecturers and students through observations, face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. Guided by rhetorical and relational goal theory and impression management theory, the researcher analysed the data and found that lecturers employ nonverbal cues (facial expression, eye contact, touch, and distance) and verbal cues (positive comments, vocatives, and jokes) to establish immediacy with students. In addition, the study revealed that lecturers utilized immediacy strategies to increase students' classroom participation, reduce tension among students and sustain attention of students during classroom instruction. Furthermore, the study showed that immediacy strategies are effective in maintaining good relationship between instructors and students, achieving motivation of students, and maintaining inclusive environment for learners. The researcher recommends that lecturers should consider making deliberate efforts to incorporate immediacy strategies in their teaching of courses at the tertiary level.

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KEYWORDS

Immediacy

Instructional Communication

Communicative Skills

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DEDICATION

To the loving memory of my late father, Mr. R. E. K. Kuagbedzi

TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction, background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation, limitations, and organization of the study.

Background to the Study

Knowledge creation and dissemination is the main goal of all universities, (Sellman, 2015) and it is worthwhile when achievement of this aim aids in the accomplishment of other objectives such as helping students to attain their academic success. Academic success is defined as the fulfilment of a student's cognitive, affective, and behavioural learning needs, as well as their motivation and communication satisfaction (Myers, 2010). This success is largely dependent on the teacher's appropriate use of communicative behaviours in the teaching and learning process (Wolfe, 2012). The field of study that is interested in communication's role in the teaching and learning process is termed as Instructional Communication (Conley & Ah Yun, 2017: Myers, 2010; Sellnow, Limperos, Frisby, Sellnow, Spence& Downs, 2015).

Instructional communication research focuses on three major key elements: the instructors, the students, and the communication. In the instructor aspect, instructional communication researchers hone in on the skills and strategies instructors use in the teaching and learning situation (Myers, 2010, Myers, 2017; Preiss & Wheeless, 2014). Therefore, studies are done purposely to discover effective communicative skills and strategies that could result in positive teaching and learning outcomes. In the student aspect,

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instructional communication focuses on understanding how learners learn effectively through the satisfaction of their affective, cognitive, and behavioural needs. It is also interested in behaviours that motivate learners to learn (Wolfe, 2012). Given this, attempts are made to understand communication factors that could contribute to the learners' cognition, affection, behaviours, and motivation. The last aspect of instructional communication deals with the practical communication exchange between teachers and students (Myers, 2010). This communication exchanges component of instructional communication marries the instructor's strategies and skills to the learner's needs or variables: cognitive, affective and behavioural to achieve positive classroom experience and outcomes.

One of the critical areas in instructional communication is instructor immediacy: teachers' communicative behaviours that are relevant in reducing the distance between the teacher and his or her students both in the classroom context and outside the classroom to ensure effective teaching and learning (Andersen, 1979; Frymier, Goldman, & Claus, 2019; LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; Sellnow et al., 2015; Wolfe, 2012). The immediacy construct was first conceptualized by Albert Mehrabian, a social psychologist, as the perception of physical and psychological proximity between communicators (Alharbi & Dimitriadi, 2018; Darakhshan, 2021; Wolfe, 2012). He argued that "people approach what they like and avoid what they don't like" (Mehrabian, 1971 p22). This assertion of the relationship between immediacy and likability is called the principle of immediacy. The principle of immediacy focuses on the fact that people are attracted to what they like but are repelled by what they do not like. In the educational setting, teachers' communicative behaviours that

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generate perceptions of psychological closeness with students are referred to as teacher immediacy (Andersen, 1979; Frymier et al., 2019; Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; Wolfe, 2012).

Immediacy has been categorized into nonverbal immediacy and verbal immediacy (Rocca, 2007). Nonverbal immediacy incorporates behaviours like smiling, gesturing, eye contact, and having relaxed body language, and verbal immediacy includes calling students by name, utilising humour, and promoting student involvement in discussions (Frymier et al., 2019; Furlich, 2016; Liu, 2021; Stamatis & Kostoula, 2021; York, 2015). Though the list may differ in different contexts (Alemu, 2014), there are generally agreed nonverbal and verbal cues identified as capable of bridging the perceived distance between students and their instructors. According to Rocca (2007), nonverbal behaviours such as gestures, use of vocal variety (non-monotone), eye contact, smiles, relaxed body posture, movement around class, less focus on the board, professional but casual dressing and many others could contribute to students' perception of the lecturer as being immediate. On the other hand, verbal immediacy behaviours such as calling students by first name, use of personal pronouns, allowing conversations, asking about students' feelings, and allowing students to call teacher's first name, among others, lead to high immediacy between students and lecturers (Rocca, 2007).

Research into teacher immediacy has revealed a lot of benefits associated with the immediacy construct in the instructional communication process. Examples of these benefits are its contribution to affective learning, cognitive learning, motivation, participation, class attendance and many others (Allen, Witt & Wheeless, 2006; Hess & Smythe, 2001; LeFebvre & Allen,

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2014; Mottet, Garza, Beebe, Houser, Jurrells & Furler, 2008; Stilwell, 2018;Wolfe, 2012). Immediacy is found in some studies to be a significant influencer of students' affective learning. In such studies, it is found that when immediacy is higher, students are more affectionate towards the course than when immediacy is low (Allen et al., 2006; Pogue & AhYun, 2006). Some of these studies found that even when the workload is high, the students will still be more focused and affectionate in high-immediacy classrooms than in low-immediacy classrooms (Mottet, Parker-Raley, Cunningham, Beebe, & Raffeld, 2006).

Immediacy has also functioned as one of the critical determiners of students' cognitive learning. It is found that students who have enjoyed high immediacy in the classroom are more cognitively assimilating to course content than otherwise. This is seen in studies that found a positive correlation between immediacy and students' cognition (Asiri, 2013; LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; Scales, 2016; Stillwell, 2018; Titsworth, 2001).

Aside the affective learning and cognitive learning of students being greatly influenced by immediacy, there is growing evidence that immediacy also influences students' evaluation of instructors' competence, care and trustworthiness (Asiri, 2013; Howard, 2022; Moore, Masterson, Christophel, & Shea, 1996; Zheng, 2021). Other studies have found immediacy to be a key determiner in students' attendance and participation, as well as their motivation to learn and out-of-class communication between professors and students (Furlich, 2016; Guerrero, 2017; Liu, 2021; Rocca, 2004; Stilwell, 2018: Velez & Cano, 2008).

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Pogue and AhYun (2006) identified immediacy as one of two constructs -- the other being credibility -- that have been found to impact student achievement. According to these authors, immediacy and credibility determine students' motivation and affective level, thereby increasing or decreasing their learning outcomes. Pogue and AhYun considered these two essential factors in their study on how credibility and immediacy work together to produce the desired outcome. They argued that when students are taught by less credible but more immediate teachers, the students' motivation and affection are higher than those taught by professors perceived as more credible but less immediate. As a result, they concluded that immediacy has a more substantial impact on learning outcomes than believability.

In spite of the growing interest in immediacy research that has brought to light its positive contributions to the instructional communication process, the area has been inadequately explored in the Ghanaian context particularly, and African context in general hence the need for this study.

Statement of the Problem

Studies abound on how immediacy is achieved in the classroom (Al Ghamdi, 2017; Allen et al, 2006; Gao, 2006; Zheng, 2021). These studies have examined verbal cues (Furlich, 2016; Liu, 2021) and nonverbal cues (Frymier, Goldman & Claus, 2019; Stamatis & Kostoula, 2021) as the immediacy strategies employed by teachers in their instructions. Some of these studies have revealed student motivation as a major benefit derived from teacher immediacy (Furlich, 2016; Guerrero, 2017; Liu, 2021; Stilwell, 2018: Velez & Cano, 2008). Other positive effects of immediacy practices of teachers unveiled by the studies are students' affective learning and cognitive learning,

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(Allen, Witt & Wheeles, 2006; Asiri, 2013; LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; Mottet, Garza, et al., 2008; Scale, 2016; Stilwell, 2018) increased perceptions of teacher credibility, (Zheng, 2021) and improvement of students' class attendance and participation, (Roberts & Friedman, 2013; Rocca, 2004; Sidelinger, 2010).

Though these findings have been arrived at from different perspectives, majority of them are results of surveys based on students' perceptions (Allen, Long, O'Mara & Judd, 2008; Darakhshan, Eslami, Curle & Zahleh, 2022; Conley & Ah Yun, 2017; Frymier, Goldman & Claus, 2019; LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; & Mottet el al, 2008) meanwhile Smythe & Hess (2005) questioned the validity of findings of teacher immediacy research that are based solely on students' perceptions. Their critique suggests that findings regarding teacher immediacy and its effect on student motivation might be better arrived at `if the studies were conducted from teachers' perspective (Conley & Ah Yun, 2017; Hess, Smythe & Communication 451, 2005; Smythe & Hess, 2005).

Furthermore, most of the studies on immediacy have been undertaken outside the African continent (Al Ghamdi, 2017; Furlich, 2016; Gao, 2006; Wendt & Courduff, 2018) which is indicative of the possibility of the inapplicability of the strategies in African settings. Also, a good number of these studies were conducted in the area of English as a foreign language (EFL). Even though in Ghanaian universities, Communicative Skills serves the same purpose as EFL, and is an important university-wide program (Afful, 2007; Asemanyi, 2015; Gborsong, Afful, Coker, Akoto, Twumasi, & Baiden, 2015) that hosts thousands of students every year, it has received minimal

attention. This study, therefore, explored the use of lecturer immediacy in the teaching of Communicative Skills in the University of Cape Coast. Specifically, the study seeks to examine the nonverbal and verbal immediacy strategies used by lecturers, lecturers' motivation for displaying immediacy behaviours and the positive effects of their immediacy behaviours on Communicative Skills instructions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the immediacy strategies used by Communicative Skills lecturers in their teaching in the University of Cape Coast. Specifically, it aimed at vividly describing the verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviours that are employed by the lecturers during their instructions purposely to reduce the physical and psychological distance between themselves and their students, and how these behaviours benefit both the lecturers and their students during the instructional communication process.

Research Objectives

To achieve this purpose, the following research objectives were posed.

1. To explore the immediacy strategies employed by Communicative Skills lecturers in their teaching.

2. To examine the reasons Communicative Skills lecturers display immediacy behaviours during instruction.

3. To investigate the contribution of immediacy strategies used by Communicative Skills lecturers to the effectiveness of their instructions.

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Research Questions

   The study seeks to answer the following questions;

1. What immediacy strategies are employed by Communicative Skills lecturers in their teaching?

2. Why do Communicative Skills lecturers display immediacy behaviours during instruction?

3. How do the immediacy strategies used by Communicative Skills lecturers contribute to the effectiveness of their instructions?

Significance of the Study

   The study is significant in adding to the existing literature, contributing to theory, improving practice and informing policy making.

   First, this research would add to the existing studies on immediacy across the globe. Many studies have investigated the relevance of immediacy, both verbal and nonverbal, in engendering students' positive attitudes towards learning, increased interest and motivation, affection, cognition, attendance and involvement in class (Al Ghamdi, 2017; Allen et al, 2006; Furlich, 2016; Guerrero, 2017; Liu, 2021; Stilwell, 2018: Velez & Cano, 2008 & Rocca, 2004). Immediacy has also been found to increase students' perceptions of teacher credibility (Allen, Witt & Wheeles, 2006; LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; Mottet, et al., 2008; Stilwell, 2018; Zheng, 2021). This study would contribute by providing more insight into the classroom benefits of the phenomenon.

   Second, the study would provide insight into how impression management and rhetorical and relational goal theories work in the classroom by exploring how teachers use them to improve their instructional practices and outcomes. These theories would aid in understanding how immediacy is

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relevant in creating positive and conducive environment for both learners and teachers in classroom for effective instructional communication.

Third, the study would improve practice and professionalism by providing practical recommendations on ways through which lecturers could reduce the physical and psychological distance that impedes in-classroom communication between instructors and students. This would be achieved through revelations of behaviours that students actually perceive as immediate and how they benefit from lessons when their lecturers make use of such behaviours during their instructions. By so doing, the dread around Communicative Skills as a course will be reduced.

This study would also inform curriculum planning as well as policy making for effective instructional communication as suggested teaching strategies and lecturer orientation programs will be informed by the recommendations of this study. This study would suggest appropriate teacher behaviours to be incorporated in suggested teaching strategies that are imbedded in designed curriculums. Also, the study would propose desired behaviour patterns to be included in orientation programmes for newly employed lecturers to make them efficient.

Delimitation of the Study

To elucidate the phenomenon of interest, this study was limited to immediacy strategies, Communicative Skills, and University of Cape Coast.

For its scope, this study focused on lecturer's immediacy behaviours in the teaching process and how beneficial they are in the achievement of the classroom goals of both the lecturers and the students in the University of Cape Coast. It tried to give a vivid description of the verbal and non verbal

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cues employed by lecturers for the purpose of physical and psychological proximity between themselves and their students for the achievement of their classroom goals. The study therefore did not attempt to discuss the course content: whether or not it was easy or difficult for students to grasp. Also, the study's focus was limited to the teacher-student relationship for academic purposes only. Therefore, attention was not paid to shared experiences that resulted in any other form of support.

The focus was specifically on Communicative Skills and its lecturers and students even though many lecturers are teaching other courses that can be studied. The delimitation to lecturers of the Communicative Skills course is informed by the researcher's belief that these lecturers are capable of helping her to understand the communicative behaviour under study. Also, the study of Communicative Skills by lecturers is relevant because the researcher's current program of study is teaching Communicative Skills. This will therefore provide her robust practical and theoretical understanding that will aid her in her chosen field of study. Future studies can consider other course areas.

Organization of the Study

The entire study is organized in five chapters. The first chapter provided an introduction to the work. It covered the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose and research questions, the significance of the study, and the study's scope.. The chapter two presented the review of existing literature in order to position the current study among the existing literature. The theories that underpin the study were also discussed in this chapter. The third chapter focused on the methods that were used to

conduct the entire study. Chapter four presented the results as well as the discussions of the results. Chapter five provided the summary, findings, recommendations and conclusion of the study.

Chapter Summary

Generally, this chapter laid a foundation for the study. It provided among other things the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation and organisation of the study.

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CHAPTERR TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study explores Communicative Skills lecturers' use of immediacy during their lesson delivery in the University of Cape Coast. This chapter presents the review of literature related to the study in order to identify gaps, and situate the current study in existing literature. First, the theories that underpin the research, rhetorical and relational goal theory and impression management theory, are elaborated. Second, relevant concepts such as communication, instructional communication, and immediacy are discussed, and last, empirical studies are reviewed.

Theoretical Framework

Two theories; the rhetorical and relational goal theory and impression management theory underpin this research. These theories are relevant to the present study because they lay a good foundation (Horan, Houser, Goodboy, & Frymier, 2011) for the understanding of the lecturer-student relationship and communication during instructions, and are useful for the analysis of immediacy behaviours in the classroom context.

Rhetorical/ relational goal theory was propounded by Mottet, Frymier and Beebe (2006) to aid researchers and other stakeholders understand the instructional communication process. According to the rhetorical and relational goal theory (RRGT), teachers and their learners have needs and goals they intend to achieve in the instructional setting (Frisby, Limperos, Record, Downs & Kercsmar, 2013; Mottet et al., 2006). Both parties have relational needs, their wish to be liked and affirmed and rhetorical needs,

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which have to do with their desires to accomplish tasks (Frisby et al., 2013; Zheng, 2021). For example, whereas learners want to acquire good grades, the rhetorical goal that is most important to them, teachers also want to complete their course outlines, as well as help their learners to achieve good grades. This theory tasks teachers to select and display communication behaviours that are capable of helping them to meet their own relational and rhetorical goals as well as those of their students as the responsibility of achieving these goals lies on the teacher (Myers, Baker, Barone, Kromka, & Pitts, 2018).

According to Myers (2008), when instructors adopt relational communication behaviours, they can build professional working connections with their students. Both nonverbal and verbal immediacy cues and confirmation are examples of the relational communication behaviours (Myers et al., 2018). These cues allow teachers to collaborate with their students to establish an effective instructional setting where there is reciprocal care because both the teachers and their students become empathetic (Beebe & Mottet, 2009). Teachers employ verbal and nonverbal immediacy to draw their students closer to themselves (Mottet et al., 2006; Myers et al, 2018; Witt, Wheeles & Allen, 2004; Valez & Cano, 2008). When teachers demonstrate their support for students and show them that they value their participation in classroom activities, students feel their self-worth and are ready to engage in more activities in class (Ellis, 2000).

According to research, when teachers adopt these actions, they can achieve their own relational and rhetorical aims while simultaneously successfully assisting their students in also meeting their needs, resulting in optimal learning (Frymier, 2007; Mottet et al., 2006; Myers et al., 2018).

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When students' cognitive, affective, and behavioural needs are addressed, their learning is said to be successful (Myers, 2010). This shows that relational communicative activities impact students' overall learning (Alderman, & Green, 2011; Valez & Cano, 2008). According to Myers (2008), teachers who use relational teaching techniques such as nonverbal immediacy assist students in forming mutually built relations and rapport with them. This is because "when instructors engage in these behaviours, their students form meaningful impressions of them" (Myers, 2019 p, 137). The use of rhetorical and relational behaviours therefore results in impression management, which enables the teacher to establish and maintain good relations with their students (Becker-Lindenthal, 2015; Chory & Offstein, 2016; Myers, 2018; Rui & Stefanone, 2013).

Application of the Theory in the Present Study

The rhetorical and relational goal theory provides basis for understanding the underlying that prompt lecturers to use immediacy behaviours. The theory has already has established both lecturers and students are goal-oriented communicators in classroom communication; the extent to which these goals are achieved dependent largely on the relationship building is enhanced through immediacy strategies. The present study finds theory as useful in relating lecturers' reasons for using immediacy strategies to achieving the goals of teaching and learning.

Also, the theory also will guide the researcher to understand the students understanding of immediacy strategies and how the strategies impact their participation in the classroom. Through immediacy strategies, lecturers

are capable of creating affinity with their students as well as creating a conducive environment for teaching and learning of Communicative Skills.

Impression Management Theory

The second theory that underpins the present study is Impression Management Theory (IMT), also known as image management or perception management (Horan, Houser, Goodboy, & Frymier, 2011). The IMT traces its origin to Eving Goffman's (1955) presentation of self. According to the IMT, human interactions can be compared to a stage play in which the actors assume particular roles that they like their audiences to associate with them (Goffman, 1959). As these acts get registered in their spectators' minds, they give their actors their desired identities. As Tracy (2013) suggests, peoples' identities are co-constructed by themselves and their "significant others"; the important people in their lives (p 52). The theory posits that whatever impression is produced in the minds of others with whom an individual interacts is predetermined by that individual (Becker-Lindenthal, 2015; Gaspar, 2016; Wang Zhou, Yu & Li, 2020). This implies that people make conscious efforts (Ting-Toomey, 2015) to display communicative behaviours that give them the identities (Schlenker, 2012) they wish to possess. This is because impressions people form about those they come into contact with influence how they perceive and judge those persons (Al-Shatti & Ohana, 2021; Feaster, 2010; Wang, et al., 2020) and they set the tone for future interactions (Horan, et al., 2011).

During this theatrical performance, it is alleged that the actors control what is seen by their audience by partitioning their environments into "front-stage and back-stage" (Richey, Ravishankar, & Coupland, 2016). This control

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mechanism allows communicators to only display those aspects of their behaviours which support the identities they wish to create in the minds of their observers when they are present but in their absence, that is on the backstage, they become their original selves and end the performance they were putting up for society (Picone, 2015; Tashmin, 2016).

In view of this, teachers who wish to be perceived by their students as immediate people would carefully select and display behaviours that present them as such. Homer et al. (2011) provide evidence that teachers also participate in these stage acts, asserting that teachers frequently establish a positive first impression, believing that it will lay a solid foundation for their work throughout the semester. This suggests the likelihood of teachers' deliberate use of some immediacy strategies which are not naturally a part of them.

Impression management strategies used by communicators have been grouped into five categories by Jones and Pittman 1982 as cited in Merki-Davies, 2016. These categories include ingratiation (strategies used purposely to make oneself likable to fellow communicators, for example, complements, offering of help, and showing compassion), self-promotion (strategies used purposely to present oneself as competent for example sharing of one's abilities and achievements), exemplification (strategies used purposely to present the self as virtuous for example showing commitment and presenting oneself as a role model), supplication (strategies employed purposely to look weak for example humility, modesty, and dependence), and intimidation (strategies used purposely to look fearful). These categories of impression management techniques, except intimidation, could be useful in analyzing the

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immediacy strategies employed by lecturers because in order to make themselves approachable to their students, lecturers could use ingratiation, self promotion, exemplification and supplication. Examples of these tactics are embedded in the verbal and nonverbal cues employed by instructors to draw their students closer to themselves (Mottet et al., 2006; Witt et al., 2004; Valez & Cano, 2008)

According to Nguyen, Seers, and Hartman (2008), impression management not only improves positive self-image for good interpersonal connections, as many researchers suggest, but also helps support organisational goals by facilitating teamwork by reducing embarrassing moments at work. Similarly, Wang et al. (2020) suggest that impression management can be beneficial but also risky. They supported their claim with research from Ashworth, Darke, and Shaller (2005) and Jain (2012), which found that people who manage their self-image have a positive social image, and Bolino et al., (2008), who found that if the 'actors' do not take care, impression management backfires and they end up creating negative self-perceptions. These assertions suggest some advantages and disadvantages of impression management to the instructional communication process. If the lecturers are not tactful in their attempts to be immediate, they would end up creating the wrong impressions which could rather impede the achievement of their rhetorical and relational goals, those of their students, and the goals of the institution as a whole.

Researchers have identified some elements that contribute to impression management strategies used by communicators (Wang et al., 2020). Demographic characteristics such as the 'actors' age and gender,

(Berinsky, 2004) and self-monitoring (Alexander & Knight, 1971 cited in Wang et al., 2020) affect people's choice of impression management tactics. This implies that an individual's age, gender, and self-monitoring may influence their choice of immediacy strategies. Bolino et al., (2008) posit that those who highly monitor themselves engage in impression management more than those who do not monitor themselves frequently. In the classroom therefore, teachers who wish to be perceived as immediate will carefully select and consciously and consistently display behaviours that present them to their students as those who are ready to draw them (the students) closer and their choice of such behaviours could be influenced by the socio-demographic factors suggested by Berinsky (2004) and Alexander & Knight (1971), cited in Wang et al., (2020).

Consequently, students will react positively toward these teachers and the things they teach, resulting in affinity for both the teacher and the course (Frymier & Houser, 2000). Homer et al. (2011) assert that the initial impressions students form about their teachers affect their responses to the teachers later in the semester. How students feel about their teachers and learning surroundings influences how much they participate in class activities and obey classroom rules (Frymier and Houser, 2000; Kerssen-Griep et al., 2008). In order to effectively help learning, Frymier and Houser (2000) recommend that teachers learn to balance information with connection factors.

Research has also shown that due to the power relations that exist between teachers and students (Foucault, 1995; Hall, Coats & LeBeau, 2005), impression management enables teachers to present themselves to their students as approachable and welcoming fellows (Frymier & Houser, 2000;

Kerssen-Griep et al., 2008; Wolfe, 2012). This is achieved using non-verbal cues such as facial expressions and proximity (Hall et al., 2015).

Face-work and politeness are metatheories of Impression Management (Wolfe, 2012). Goffman (1959) introduced the concept of face, and posited that everyone has a desired self-image that they wish to exhibit and preserve while dealing with others. According to Goffman (1959), one's face represents the positive public image one wishes to project in social circumstances. Brown and Levinson's (1978) definition of face upon which they developed their politeness theory is an example. They define face as "the want to be unimpeded and the want to be approved of in certain respects (p. 63)". Goffman's (1967) definition from his sociological point of view serves as the bedrock of the other definitions (Redmond, 2015). He defines face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself through the line others suppose he has taken during a specific engagement" (p. 213).

From Goffman's definition, it can be realised that human behaviours are understood by observers based on the social context in which one finds himself. The meaning that is read from a particular behaviour differs from place to place and is influenced by the sequence of interactions during which the behaviour is displayed (Geertz, 1973). This is what Kersten-Griep et al. refer to as "the notion of contingency". This suggests the possibility of variations in immediacy strategies because behaviour that is interpreted as an immediacy behaviour in one context might be inappropriate in another context hence the need to investigate what constitutes immediacy strategies in the context of this study.

Another notion that is worth looking at in Goffman's definition of the face is that of "line", which is used to refer to the "pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts" (Redmond, 2015). For example, an instructor who wishes to be approachable to his students will not only use verbal cues to achieve that. He will also use appropriate nonverbal cues that accompany the verbal cues to communicate his desire to be approachable (Mottet et al., 2006; Valez & Cano, 2008).

Politeness theory, developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) complements Goffman's face-work theory because it is "necessary to support the face" of the recipient in the communication process (Miller-Ott & Kelly, 2017, p. 193). Both Goffman's (1955) face-work theory and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory posit that everybody has two faces; positive and negative An individual's positive face refers to his or her desire that his or her wishes or desires are desirable to or accepted by others. These desires include one's interests and values that are presented during interactions with others. For example, a teacher's wish to be seen as approachable is his positive face, and he hopes that his students and others will see him as such.

Negative face, on the other hand, refers to the individual's desire that his or her wishes or desires are unimpeded by others. In other words, one's negative face is his wish to be allowed to do whatever he wants to do as and when he wishes. In the classroom situation, for example, a teacher who wishes to finish marking his students' exercises within a specific time frame wishes that no one disturbs him when he is marking. If any student tries to unnecessarily engage that teacher at that particular time, his wish will be hindered, hence his negative face.

According to Goldsmith and Lamb Normand (2015), politeness theory further asserts that "our face is on the line every time we interact" (p. 268). This is also in agreement with the notion of threats to the face as opined in Goffman's face-work theory (Kerssen-Griep et al., 2008; Redmond, 2015). Sometimes, people face challenges when trying to portray the particular face they desire. They are unintentionally, spitefully or incidentally undermined by others, resulting in shame, embarrassment, agitation, and others. Situations of this kind are what Goffman (1955) and Brown and Levinson (1987) referred to as threats to the face. Depending on people's perceptions of the kind of threats, various strategies are used to restore one's face.

According to Kerssen_Griep et al. (2008), face threats are prevalent in the classroom because when teachers give feedback to students, it is challenging to avoid posing threats to their faces. It is, therefore, necessary for teachers to be careful in order that they do not end up exposing their faces to threats. According to Goffman (1955), those who can maintain their faces when threatened have poise: the ability to remain unembarrassed during face threats.

Face-work, therefore, refers to the steps an individual takes to ensure that whatever he or she does conforms to his or her face (Goffman. 1955). According to Kerssen-Griep and Witt (2012), it includes "interactional strategies that restore, protect, threaten or maintain those relational and self-identities for others and oneself. These strategies help in building, maintaining, and protecting one's dignity, honour and respect (Domenici & Littlejohn, 2006). Competent teachers make conscious efforts to keep their actions in line with their faces to maintain their faces and those of their

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students for mutual achievement of goals (Kerssen-Griep et al., 2008; Neary et al., 2008). If the face they are projecting is immediacy, the right steps, nonverbal and verbal immediacy strategies must be employed to achieve and maintain this face. When students perceive their teachers as highly immediate, especially in their use of nonverbal immediacy, they perceive greater cognitive learning, a more positive attitude towards both the course and the lecturer (Borrough, 2007).

Similarly, politeness strategies are used by communicators to "avoid" or "redress" face threatening acts (Miller-Ott & Kelly, 2017, p. 193). People either confirm their own faces or those of their fellow communicators: positive politeness, or try not to interfere with the other person's negative face needs: negative politeness. Sometimes, a mixture of the politeness strategies is used. This is what Brown and Levinson (1987) referred to as the "hybrid strategy" (p. 230).

Impression management theories, including face-work and politeness theories are relevant to the study because they will aid in achieving the necessary proximity between lecturers and their students, allowing the students to attach the necessary attitudes to their courses for the most outstanding results. Impression management theories are essential for identifying and analysing the verbal and nonverbal strategies lecturers employ to create an impression of immediacy, fostering a sense of closeness and connection with their students

Conceptual Review

The concepts of communication, instructional communication, and immediacy are espoused to situate the work conceptually.

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Communication

Communication is a complex phenomenon that reflects the total make-up of those participating in it. How people communicate, their exact pattern of communication: what they deem fit to be the best way and the best thing to say, and what they abhor are all a result of the shared practices in the group to which they belong (Geertz, 1973). Wood (2004) posits that meaning resides in people, not words; meaning is constructed and shared among communicators as proposed by the constructivist model rather than chosen and transferred among communicators as suggested in the linear model. Keyton (2011) defined communication as the process of conveying information and common understanding from one person to another.

Depending on the context in which it occurs, communication can be intrapersonal, interpersonal or intercultural. Intrapersonal communication occurs within the individual, interpersonal communication occurs between two or more people, and intercultural communication is influenced by the cultural variables of those involved (Chen, 2014; Wood, 2004). In other words, every communication encounter can be situated in any of these forms. Intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intercultural communication occurs during teaching and learning. Both teachers and their students communicate within and among themselves. The experiences inform these forms of communication that both parties have gathered from the various cultures to which they belong. Therefore, teachers must be tactful in their choice of verbal and nonverbal cues to maintain a cordial relationship between themselves and their students.

Communication is a continuous process involving both verbal and nonverbal cues. While the verbal cues are largely managed, chosen and sent,

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the nonverbal cues can be unplanned and unconscious. Verbal communication is the type of communication in which messages are transmitted through the use of words, either in writing or speaking. When the message is given in the form of writing, it is called written communication, but when it is given through speaking, it is called oral communication (Gamble and Gamble, 2002; Navarro & Thornton, 2011).

According to Proctor and Rodman (2003), nonverbal communication exists, and one's communication competence is mainly dependent on the successful management of nonverbal communication. Nonverbal communication is the communication without the use of words (Gamble & Gamble, 2002) which involves using oral (tone, pitch and the rest.) and non-oral (eyes, distance and the rest) means other than the linguistic means to communicate.

In nonverbal communication, communicators construct meaning from the taken-for-granted aspect of the communication (LaPlante & Ambadi, 2003). Peter Drucker, cited in Hendrix and Wilson (2014), says that the most important thing in communication is to hear what is not said. In the Ghanaian setting, for instance, a sharp look from a parent or teacher on a child or student communicates the former's dislike towards what the latter is doing. Assuming that the parent or teacher could only say stop to communicate that message, it simply means that the child would not interpret the gaze to mean stop.

Again, nonverbal communication uses multiple channels simultaneously, enabling individuals to send spontaneous messages aside from words. According to Proctor and Rodman (2003), several nonverbal communication cues can be sent in the same minute. Since this is possible, the

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interpersonal communicator cannot choose not to communicate. For instance, a communicator's smile, posture, and eye contact can communicate his or her interest in the communication. Moreover, nonverbal communication is primarily relational. According to research, communicators can manage their relationships with others through nonverbal communication (Anderson et al., 2013; Proctor and Rodman, 2003). For instance, impression management can be created through the appearance one puts on and the facial appearance, among others. In the classroom, there is an excellent play of communication at the verbal and nonverbal level that creates relational dialectics between teachers and students. Understanding this area of classroom communication is based on instructional communication.

Instructional Communication

Instructional communication refers to the study of the communication process in teaching and learning situations irrespective of the subject matter, the grade level, or the learning environment (Myers, Tindage, & Ankinson, 2016). Hayes (2010) argued that instructional communication explores the relational communication between teachers and students in a classroom. Myers (2017) considered instructional communication from three areas: the teachers, the students and the communication. With the teachers, instructional communication bothers on understanding the skills and strategies teachers use to successfully communicate with students in the classroom without jeopardising the relationships. On the student side, instructional communication seeks to understand how communication is used to achieve students' cognitive, affective, and behavioural experiences. It focuses on understanding students' understanding of content and models through the

teacher's effective use of relevant communication strategies and skills. Communication is the last construct, focusing on how teachers and students exchange information through communication. In this last aspect, Goodboy (2018) further explains that the focus is on meaning and message. Instructional communication creates knowledge about these variables for application in all formal learning contexts (Goodboy, 2018).

Another area worth mentioning is the relationship between instructional communication and communication pedagogy which is the teaching of communication in schools. A good example is the training of students to teach Communicative Skills at the University of Cape Coast (Coker, 2014). According to Coker (2014), students are equipped with the requisite skills for analysing, synthesising, and applying concepts in very basic and helpful ways to solve practical problems that arise in the teaching of communication. These skills also make students potential researchers who can add to existing knowledge in instructional communication.

As expounded by Goodboy (2018), instructional communication is relevant to communication pedagogy as the discipline of pedagogy is one of its three key areas of interest to the instructional communication researcher. Studies of these constructs will benefit the potential communication educators and their instructors. Immediacy is an example of the communicative behaviour used in instructional communication to achieve an effective relational connection between students and teachers (Corlee, 2021; Hayes, 2010; Myers, 2010). This involves understanding the immediacy behaviours.

Immediacy

Immediacy is a multidisciplinary construct rooted in communication, culture, and psychology (Wolfe, 2012). Immediacy was coined in the 1970s by Albert Mehrabian. It refers to verbal and nonverbal interpersonal communication behaviours that heighten the perception of proximity and decreases social distance between communicators (Al Ghamdi, 2017; Allen et al., 2006; Zheng, 2021). Mehrabian (1971) defined immediacy as actions that convey congeniality and readiness to be close with others, as well as acts that increase the perception of proximity between communicators. He asserts that people readily associate with or get closer to persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer, however, they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer. Immediacy can be verbal or nonverbal.

Nonverbal immediacy employs nonverbal or implicit cues for eliminating or reducing the physical, social and psychological distance between communicators (Anderson, 1979; Frymier et al., 2019; Menegoni, 2018). Examples of nonverbal behaviours include smiles, eye contact, leaning toward people, face-to-face body position, reducing physical obstructions, gesturing, and overall relaxed body movements and positions (Mottet, Richmond, & McCroskey, 2006; Valez & Cano, 2008). In teaching, immediacy has been related to several positive academic results, including increased student learning (Allen et al., 2008; Lefebvre & Allen, 2014; Mottet et al., 2008), enthusiasm for the subject (Pogue & Ah Yun, 2006) sustenance of students' interest, trust and confidence (Furlich, 2016; Lei, Cohen & Russler, 2010; Lui, 2021; Menegoni, 2018). Students have been found to

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benefit from nonverbal immediacy; particularly, nonverbal immediacy has been linked to gains in affective learning, perceived cognitive learning, information retention, and motivation (Frenzel, Goetz, Ludtke, Pekrun, & Sutton, 2009; Mottet & Richmond, 1998). Vocal expressiveness, smiling, maintaining a comfortable body stance, and increasing movements and gestures are examples of nonverbal actions linked to greater affective and cognitive learning (Gorham, 1998). Students' judgments of emotion toward instruction are more positive when teachers use nonverbal immediacy cues during their teaching, according to Plax, Kearney, McCroskey, and Richmond (1986).

On the other hand, the degree of directness and intensity of contact between communicator and referent in a communicator's linguistic message is defined by Mehrabian as verbal immediacy (1966). Credibility, competence, clarity, topic relevance, humour, storytelling and self-disclosure are all examples of verbal immediacy cues (Dalonges & Fried, 2016; Pogue & AhYun, 2006). According to Pogue and Ah Yun (2006), credibility combines intelligence, character, and kindness. Teachers considered credible have a more significant impact on the production of comprehension, or cognition, in the educational environment. According to Myers and Bryant (2004), material expertise, student emotion, and verbal fluency are all indicators of instructor competence. In other studies, competency is defined as how informed an educator is in his or her subject area (McCroskey, 1992).

Other examples of verbal immediacy behaviours include the use of compliments, jokes, and personal pronouns, addressing terms, exhibiting a desire to speak with students before, after, or outside of class, interrogating

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students to obtain their viewpoints or opinions, and reacting to student-initiated topics (Furlich, 2016; Jensen, 2002; Lui, 2021). Verbal immediacy is also associated with improved student motivation, retention, and affect; students' readiness to engage in classroom activities (Lei et al., 2010; Menzel & Carrell, 1999), class attendance (Rocca, 2004), and students' out-of-class communication with instructors. Verbal immediacy lowers communication apprehension among students (Jensen, 2002), as more active students perceive their professors differently than those who are less active. As a result of their frequent engagement with their instructors, the more active students have a more favourable image of their instructors overall and can generate discussions with them (Crombie, Pyke, Silverthorn, Jones, & Piccinin, 2003).

Studies have revealed that instructor immediacy behaviours are essential contributors to effective learning in the educational setting (Allen et al., 2008; Conaway, Easton, & Schmidt, 2005; LeFebvre & Allen, 2014). As a result, the impact of immediacy in motivating students has been confirmed (Guerrero, 2017; Velez & Cano, 2008; Stilwell, 2018). Furthermore, an association between immediacy behaviours and affection and cognition has been discovered (Asiri, 2013; Mullane, 2014; Scales, 2016). In educational settings, immediate conduct is critical for effective communication and positive interpersonal perceptions (Andersen, 1979; Myers et al., 2018). Immediacy increases cognitive learning, affective learning, motivation, and behavioural changes, according to research conducted by Goodboy et al. (2009).

Empirical Review

This section of the literature review discusses previous studies related to the present study. The review focuses on instructional communication in general and immediacy in particular. Under immediacy, particular attention is given to the use of verbal and nonverbal immediacy in the classroom and the effectiveness of immediacy cues in the instructional communication process. The goal is to identify the niche, and situate the present study in the literature.

Instructional Communication

Instructional communication researchers have over the years studied the role of communication in the teaching and learning process. For instance, Mottet et al. (2008) conducted a study to ascertain the importance of instructional communication behaviours of teachers and their impact on 9th-grade students' affective learning of Math and Science. They sampled 497 students and utilised a questionnaire to obtain the students' impressions of their math and science teachers' teaching behaviours. A key finding of their study was that professors' use of clarity and subject relevance behaviours, rather than nonverbal immediacy and disconfirmation actions, predicted students' intention to continue studying math and science and contemplate professions in those fields. Also, Mottet et al. observed that students did not perceive significant variations in their emotional learning between math/science and non-math/science courses when it came to the effectiveness of using instructional behaviours to boost their liking for the courses.

Finally, Mottet et al. (2008) found that students observed minimal variations in the employment of instructional communication behaviours by their math/science and non-math/science teachers. This study confirms that

instructional communication behaviours, in general, contribute to affective learning among students. Even though nonverbal immediacy was found to be less effective in this study, it could be because the study considered other instructional communication constructs such as clarity and credibility. That might have reduced the respondents' focus on immediacy hence the tendency not to ascertain its relations. The present study thus focuses solely on immediacy in the instructional communication process.

In another study, Allen et al. (2008) examined the relationship between students' communication avoidance and socio-communicative orientations and their perceptions of instructor immediacy, communicative style, satisfaction with instructors and learning. The researchers surveyed 265 volunteer students using questionnaires. Their findings revealed that students with high communication apprehension perceived their teachers as less immediate. These students were also not satisfied with their teachers and their (students') learning. However, students with low communication apprehension perceived their teachers positively and were satisfied with the teachers and the learning. If students attribute their demotivation to learn to their instructors, as asserted by Allen et al, qualitative studies would have presented a better opportunity for the students to share their experiences and feelings about the phenomena under study hence the present study's use of qualitative methods.

Also, Zheng (2021), in his functional review on the impact of immediacy, clarity and credibility on the development of instructional communication theories such as relational or rhetorical theory, attachment theory, social cognitive learning theory, broaden-and-build theory among others, discovered this methodological weakness in the available studies on

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immediacy in that the studies have primarily depended on quantitative instruments such as questionnaires to understand immediacy rather than using case studies, interviews and other relevant qualitative methods. The present study considers the weakness identified by Zheng in terms of the methodology of existing studies as a guide to reconsidering choosing a qualitative approach over the weaknesses of previous studies.

Frymier and Houser (2000) studied the relationship between communication skills and students' learning outcomes. Their survey found that referential skill, ego support, and conflict management were the essential factors in effective teaching based on the replies of 93 students to a questionnaire. On the other hand, referential skill, ego support, and immediacy were found to have a high association with student learning and motivation by the writers. The work of Frymier and Houser is significant in establishing the relationship between immediacy and students' motivation and learning outcomes. This implies that immediacy studies effectively find ways to improve a teacher's classroom success and students' improved performance in a lecture. This study seeks to add more to the works of Frymier and Houser and others who majored in immediacy by allowing the participants to recount their experiences rather than merely selecting options on a questionnaire. .

Rudick and Golsan (2014) studied instructional communication from a relational dialectic theory perspective. Based on reviews of existing literature on affinity-seeking strategies, immediacy and relational communication, the study revealed that understanding relational behaviours such as immediacy, affinity and other relational behaviours are cogent in achieving success in the classroom. It was therefore recommended that rigorous research on

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instructional communication behaviours could improve the way teaching is done in classrooms. Finally, Rudick and Golsan discovered that a holistic view of students' and teachers' relational communication is essential for promoting dialogic communication in educational settings. The findings of Rudick and Golsan inform their recommendation for epistemological expansion of the research in relational communication to improve the instructional communication application in today's world. This call is heeded in this study.

Teacher Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy

Verbal and nonverbal immediacy strategies of teachers were tested by researchers for their effectiveness in bridging the perceived physical and psychological gap that exit between teachers and their students. For instance, Stamatis and Kostoula (2021) investigated nonverbal immediacy strategies and their impact on secondary school teaching. They used immediacy indicators or scales in a quantitative survey and sought teachers' views on their use of nonverbal immediacy. Their findings revealed that the teachers used smiles, eye contacts, leaning toward students, face-to-face body position, reducing physical obstructions, gesturing, and overall relaxed body movements and positions as nonverbal immediacy strategies, but they avoided touching of students to avoid misunderstandings.

The findings of Stamatis and Kostoula (2021) suggest that certain strategies may be problematic in some settings hence the researchers decision to explore the use immediacy strategies in the classroom of a Ghanaian university. Also, a better picture of the phenomenon could be painted from a combination of both teachers' and students' views in a qualitative study as intended in the present study.

In another study, Wolfe (2012) studied immediacy practices between professors and graduate teaching assistants in the college classroom. Using three hundred and eleven students to rate the teaching staff in the study and MANOVA to track the differences between the categories of teachers, Wolfe discovered that the professors used more verbal immediacy behaviours while the graduate assistants used more nonverbal behaviours in the classroom. Moreover, the study found no statistical difference in the use of immediacy behaviours between female and male teachers. The researcher concluded that graduate assistants should learn more about verbal immediacy behaviours to improve their classroom experience.

Wolfe's (2012) work concluded that teachers' experience in their work as college tutors could influence their level of knowledge and use of immediacy behaviours. For instance, the insufficient working experience and knowledge of the graduate assistants were seen to affect their level of use of the immediacy behaviours, especially verbal behaviours. This finding is vital because, in Ghanaian universities, the use of Teaching Assistants and Demonstrators for teaching university students is not new. However, studies on teaching assistants and lecturers are scarce in Ghana. As a result, the current study intends to include in its sample lecturers of different experience levels for a rich description of the phenomenon.

In another study by Sözer (2019), the researcher sought to understand which immediacy behaviours are effective based on students' evaluation using the twelve-scale teacher immediacy behaviours developed by Crump (1996). Sözer found from the responses of 382 students that teachers' use of friendly smiles ranked highest and others such as eye contact and personal examples

effectively generated immediacy between teachers and students. On the other hand, Sözer"s study found that physical appearance did not achieve so much immediacy in terms of students' ratings. This work has equally shown the importance of immediacy behaviours among students to close the physical and psychological distance between teachers and students.

In a phenomenological study, Menegoni (2018) explored how humour, immediacy and teacher efficacy interplay in a classroom. Purposefully sampling ten full-time instructors from Western University in Ontario, Menegoni discovered through engaging interviews that the teachers used pedagogical humour to bridge the gap between themselves and their students. Also, the study revealed that pedagogical humour is an effective teaching strategy that could improve teachers' performance as college instructors. This researcher observed that there was scarcity of research on humour and immediacy in the classroom; therefore, researchers needed to investigate these areas to improve teaching and learning. It is partly the call of Menegoni that this study seeks to answer by providing empirical evidence on immediacy in the classroom in a Ghanaian-based university.

Stamatis and Kostoula (2021), in a case study in secondary education in Lyceum, Greece, conducted purposely to study and interpret teachers' use of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on the teaching process, used a standardised questionnaire. Using the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale-Self Report by Richmond, McCroskey and Johnson (2003), Stamatis and Kostoula (2021) allowed their respondents, made up of teachers of an Upper Secondary General Education School to report their use of nonverbal immediacy cues such as gestures, level of proximity to students, eye contacts with students,

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body position and use of voice. The study found that in exception of touch which was avoided by the respondents to prevent misunderstandings, the teachers often used most of the nonverbal cues on the self-assessment scale, and occasionally used the remaining few. They also found that even though both male and female teachers made use of nonverbal immediacy cues, their female respondents took a slight lead over their male counterparts.

Even though the study concluded that teachers' use of nonverbal immediacy cues promoted dialogue between them and their students, it was concluded that the impact of nonverbal immediacy on the instructional communication process would have been greater if the students had not barricaded themselves against their teachers whom they perceive as assessors. The foregoing discussion justifies the inclusion of students in the present study for verification of this assertion.

In a similar work, York (2015) studied the correlation between instructors' nonverbal communication and students' learning in a Midwestern University. Using data collected through tests, surveys and focus groups from a total of 80 students, the study revealed an association between instructor-student relationships built as a result of nonverbal immediacy cues and student learning. Both the quantitative and qualitative data established a positive correlation between the two variables as there was appreciable increase in students' post-test scores after scripted lessons were taught to them by teachers who made use of nonverbal immediacy cues. Students' reports in focus groups also indicated that nonverbal cues were effective in capturing their attention during lessons. In contrast to the studies previously discussed, this one gave participants the opportunity to elaborate the choices made in the

survey. This will serve as a guide in the conduct of focus group discussions in the present study.

In another study, Furlich (2016) investigated the relationship between both verbal and nonverbal immediacy cues used by instructors and students' motivation to learn in a small liberal arts university in the Midwestern region of the United States. Using, Christophel's (1990) instrument for measuring students' motivation to learn, Gorham's (1988) instrument for measuring verbal immediacy, and Richmond, Gorham, and McCroskey's (1986) instrument for measuring nonverbal immediacy, 77 undergraduate Communication Studies students evaluated their instructors verbal and nonverbal immediacy cues and their own motivation to learn. Furlich's statistical analysis found a positive correlation between instructors' verbal immediacy and students' motivation to learn as the former accounted for 5% variance in the later. On the contrary, the study found no correlation between nonverbal immediacy and students' motivation to learn. This study disconfirms findings made by researchers such as York (2014) however; the researcher recommended the conduct of a similar research in a different context for a confirmation of the findings hence the conduct of the present study.

Butt (2011) explored the perceptions of teachers on the importance facial expressions during the teaching and learning process. Two teachers, male and female from 20 public schools from rural and urban areas of Pesharwa provided the data for this study through closed ended questionnaires. The study found that facial expressions make the teaching learning process more effective and interesting. It was also discovered facial

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expressions enhance the understanding of the students in the classroom and help to improve the teachers' role in promoting learning outcomes. In addition, facial expressions of teachers, like anger and a smile, could help the students to understand the messages, which would be helpful to change their behaviour according to the learning requirement in the classroom during the teaching-learning process. Finally, Butt found that teachers' facial expression made clarification of difficult concepts and contents easier, and helped in capturing students' interest in the teaching-learning process. Though the findings on facial expressions, most of which are nonverbal immediacy cues sound interesting, qualitative methods involving both teachers' and students' accounts could generate richer and more interesting findings.

Butt, Sharif, Muhammad, Fanoos and Ayesha (2011) explored efficient use of eye contacts during instructions. They gathered the thoughts of 40 instructors, each randomly chosen from one of 20 public senior secondary schools in Peshawar, Pakistan. According to this quantitative study that used closed-ended questionnaires, eye contacts improve the learning environment in the classroom. Further, the research revealed that eye contact was very successful and efficient in the classroom because it helped teachers express their admiration and appreciation to students, which in turn made the students more alert and attentive, better able to absorb topics, active, and motivated to learn. This study is relevant to the present study because eye contact is one of the nonverbal immediacy cues. Since these conclusions were reached using quantitative techniques, the present inquiry uses qualitative methods to support or refute them. Additionally, the present study will examine the perspectives of both teachers and their students.

Similarly, eye contact between teachers and students has been studied in relation to interpersonal classroom interaction by Haataja, Salonen, Laine, Toivanen, and Hannula (2021). The results of their study, which combined gaze tracking data and classroom videos from three ninth-grade mathematics classes from three different schools, showed that: teacher communion and agency affect the frequency and durations of teachers and students' gazes at each other; students tend to gaze their teachers more during high teacher communion and low agency; eye contacts create moments of more intimate dyadic interaction within the overall classroom interaction which enabled students to communicate their feelings to teachers through direct gazes.

Jakonen and Envitskaya (2020) examined the functions of teacher smiles in instructional initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) using conversation analysis. Their detailed analysis focused on a sample of over 50 interactional episodes involving a variety of instructional activities and was based on a corpus of 37 bilingual lessons that were gathered from primary through secondary schools in Finland and Spain. They paid particular attention to the teacher's relationship with the students prior to the interaction, the ongoing conversations, and the students' subsequent facial expressions.

According to Jakonen and Envitskaya (2020), teacher smiles control how affiliative and instructionally responsive instructors' activities are because they encourage students to smile more, which helps to ease their emotional stress. The study also discovered that instructor smiles help students to feel more confident because the smiles convey to students their apparent efforts when they provide correct answers, or mitigate unfavourable evaluations of incorrect responses. This shows that teacher smiles help in softening teachers'

face threatening activities in the classroom. Consequently, instead of receiving negative reactions from students during these exchanges, they rather smile back. These findings will serve as a guideline in exploring the instructional communication process for the description of the nonverbal cues and their effectiveness.

Nguyen (2007) examined how rapport building is accomplished during instructions in the language classroom. This study used discourse analysis, which was influenced by the conversation analytic technique, to examine data from an advanced ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) class comprised of 16 foreign students and their teacher. It was discovered from the analysis of the 40-minute video that the teacher used a variety of verbal and nonverbal contextualization cues, such as smiles, lexical items, special grammatical structures, formulaic expressions, speech tempo, speech volume, emphasis, intonation, facial expressions, body language, and vocal effects, to simultaneously orient to the immediate instructional tasks and the social and interpersonal dimension of the interaction with the students.

Furthermore, Nguyen (2007) demonstrated how face-threatening behaviours including attention-calling, correcting, and summarizing were reduced by nonverbal signs like smiling. This study found that all of these led to a collaboratively created friendly, productive classroom environment in which the teacher and students successfully completed their assignments while cultivating a favourable connection. Since immediacy strategies are used by communicators for rapport-building purposes, Nguyen's findings could direct the present study.

Researchers Krane, Ness, Holter-Sorensen, Karlsson, and Binder (2017) investigated how teachers' kindness might foster positive teacher-student connections in upper secondary school by interviewing students and holding focus group discussions. 17 participants who were either at risk of dropping out of school or knew someone who had been at risk were utilized in the research as a carefully chosen sample. One of these participants acted as a co-researcher. After rigorous study utilizing the NVIVO software and the thematic analysis described in Braun and Clarke (2006), the following conclusions were reached: that teachers had an impact on students by their behaviour and interactions with them in addition to what and how they taught: that positive teacher-student relationships are influenced by instructors' facial expressions such as smiling, in interactions, such as conversations, and actual behaviours, such as being helpful: and that a person's interior states and emotions can be inferred from their facial expressions: the study concluded that students value teachers who address their emotional needs as well as their academic needs, and they perceive their teachers to be kind as a result of their assistance, concern, and support.

The concerns and best practices of three General Education Teachers (GETs) who taught English Language Learners (ELLs) were studied in a study by Craighead and Ramanathan (2007). Using a qualitative approach, the researchers engaged in a number of observations in the classes of three selected GETs who had at least three ELLs in their classes. Interviews, both pre and post observation, were used for an understanding of the participants' teaching philosophies, their expectations for the students, and a description of their teaching styles to provide the participant an opportunity to explain

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particular interactions and strategies used in the classroom respectively. The study discovered that the GETs were reflective practitioners with good teaching skills, despite their findings showing that they lacked awareness of ELLs' language learning processes. Additionally, it was shown that they used verbal and nonverbal corrective behaviours, as well as nonverbal cues like smiles winks, and thumbs-ups, to effectively manage their classes.

Yan, Evans, and Harvey (2011) investigated the emotional interactions between instructors and pupils in elementary classrooms to learn the helpful techniques used by teachers to deal with emotional occurrences. This qualitative study observed six teachers' lessons in classrooms that were described as having a very pleasant, supportive environment. Following Harvey and Evans' (2003) model of the emotional environment, five 2-hour observations were conducted in each teacher's class with an emphasis on incidents involving emotions between teachers and students.

The study discovered that teachers created healthy relationships with students by making an effort to get to know them after analyzing the data using Hubbard and Power's (1993) perspective of the reduction technique and assigning themes. This was accomplished through asking students about their personal life and activities outside of school, exchanging personal information with them, utilizing humour to relieve stress in the classroom, and using endearing phrases like "honey" for female students and "man" for male students. Other findings included complying with rules, controlling emotions through coaching, promoting good judgment by rewarding good behaviour, and treating others with respect and fairness.

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Park (2016) investigated how teachers integrate rapport-building into language instructions in Korean foreign language classrooms in an American university without losing control over the class. The study focused on teachers' management of frames and footings for the understanding of the development and maintenance of rapport in the classroom. Using a corpus of video-taped teacher-students interactions recorded in four different classes, a conversational analysis of the transcribed data revealed that teachers built rapport with their students by engaging the students in informal conversations during which the teachers listened to students' experiences and also shared their own experiences with the students. The teachers also integrated humour into their classroom interactions, sometimes using self deprecating humorous stories that relate to the topic of discussion. Corrections were also with compliments and empathy was demonstrated towards students.

The study further showed that teachers were able to move in and out of the instructional frame by initiating shifts in footing as they changed their alignment toward the talk and the students from moment to moment with the help of these strategies. Benefits of rapport-building strategies identified by this study include making the classroom a comfortable space for students, preparing students for different interactional roles, drawing students' attention to the class, and getting students to develop interest in the teacher and the content.

Aside the above studies which were all conducted on face to face learning environments, Alharbi (2018) investigated the level of immediacy among instructors and female students in a virtual learning setting. Using mixed methods, the findings of this case study showed that some immediate

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practices can assist female students in overcoming their shyness when interacting in a VLE by enhancing interaction, involvement, and pleasure. The evidence also suggested that both instructors and female students were aware of the value of immediacy in online teaching and learning and the utilisation of VLE practices. They were also aware of unique considerations influencing using VLE tools to apply immediacy practices. Furthermore, they identified distinct immediacy practices frequently exploited in the virtual environment of female students. As a result, the findings of this study contribute to a better understanding of e-immediacy in Saudi online education in general and the virtual learning context of female students in particular as a means of improving student learning.

In a similar study, Al Ghamdi (2017) investigated the influence of text-based immediacy on learners' learning experiences and outcomes in a distance programme in Saudi Arabia. The author focused on two experiences which are communication satisfaction and online classroom participation, as well as two learning outcomes which are cognitive learning and affective learning. Using questionnaire and interview as data collection instruments, Al Ghamdi (2017) sampled 413 undergraduate students to fill the questionnaire and 169 undergraduate students to respond to an interview guide in focused group discussions.

From Al Ghamdi's (2017) results, students could feel closer to lecturers through the lecturers' use of immediacy behaviours in online classes. Also, the results indicated a significant correlation between immediacy behaviours and students' participation, communication satisfaction, cognitive learning and affective learning. These results were confirmed in the thematic

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interview analysis as the result of immediacy behaviours. Also, Al Ghamdi (2017) did not find any significant difference between males and females in the effectiveness of immediacy behaviours in improving learners' experience and outcomes in online classes. The work of Al Ghamdi (2017) is indicative of the effectiveness of immediacy in improving online learning outcomes and experience. The fact that the immediacy behaviours fared well for both males and females indicates that the immediacy behaviours are not gendered biased. The findings could, however, not be generalisable because of the different contexts and differences in students' characteristics, hence the need for our context-based study like this present study.

Hayes (2010) studied the influence of text messaging as an immediacy behaviour impact on students' affective learning. The researcher purposefully sampled 37 students and found that using text messaging between teachers and students bridged the level of distance perceived between them. Also, the study found that text messaging increased affection for the course of study. Lastly, Hayes (2010) found that text messaging as immediacy behaviour leads to increased classroom engagement. The study, therefore, concluded that in a mobile learning environment, text messaging is an effective tool for achieving immediacy and increasing the engagement and affection of students.

Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed existing literature relevant to the study. It first discussed the rhetorical and relational goal theory and impression management theories which underpin the study. This was followed by the review of major concepts used in the study; communication, instructional communication, and immediacy. Also, relevant empirical studies were reviewed, thereby revealing

numerous classroom benefits of teacher immediacy. Notable among these benefits were learner motivation and participation. The empirical review however brought to light the over reliance of the existing studies on quantitative methods and students' perceptions, and a geographical gap as majority of available studies were conducted in non-African countries. The current study therefore fills these gaps by utilising qualitative methods to gather data from both lecturers and students in the University of Cape Coast, Ghana, Africa.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This chapter presents, step by step, the methodological procedures adopted by the researcher to find answers to the research questions posed. According to Kothari (2004), methodology is the systematic approach to solving the research problem. Key areas discussed in the chapter are the paradigm within which the study is set, methodological approach, the research design, the study setting, the population and the sampling techniques, data collection and analysis instruments and procedures and ethical considerations.

Methodological Paradigm and Approach

Every research approach is guided by a philosophical assumption (Creswell, 2014) in other words termed as the research paradigm. "A paradigm is a way of looking at the world. It is composed of certain philosophical assumptions that guide and direct thinking and action." (Mertens, 2010, p. 8). A paradigm is the researcher's underlying worldview, a worldview which drives the researcher's ideas of the nature of reality and knowledge; and informs their choice of methods (Andersen, 2016).

Historically, the social research community has been divided over and wrangled about the primacy of either positivist/postpositivist, objective, quantitative researchers and approaches on one hand, or interpretivist, subjective, qualitative researchers and approaches on the other. With affinity for apparently different ontological, epistemological and axiological viewpoints, proponents of each side of the debate have tended to have

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predilections toward different data collection and analysis approaches (du Toit, 2015; Mertens, 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

In the late 20th Century, the mixing of quantitative and qualitative methods in single studies gained currency as a practical middle course between the historically conflicted social researchers. The pragmatic paradigm, characterised by a mixing of qualitative and quantitative methods in various ways, has come to stay as the third primary research paradigm (Creswell & Plano Clarck, 2017; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017; Johnson et al., 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

This study is set in the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm. Interpretivist research is founded on the doctrines of idealism and humanism. It is metaphysically idealist in the sense that it posits that reality is in the mind, and that the mind's interpretation of phenomena is as valid as the phenomena themselves (Walliman, 2018).

Ontologically, it is the contention of constructivists that…

… the social phenomena making up our social world are only real in the sense that they are constructed ideas which are continually being reviewed and reworked by those involved in them (the social actors) through social interaction and reflection. There is no social reality apart from the meaning of the social phenomenon for the participants. However, the meanings attributed to and the understandings of a social phenomenon (like an organisation, the family, a community, social care, the law), which are constructed by the social actors, are available for study. Most importantly, the social researcher, as part of the social world herself, brings her

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own meanings and understandings to her study (Matthews & Ross, 2010, p.25).

Constructivist research operates on the assumption that reality is not something out there, which a researcher can clearly explain, describe, or translate into a research report; both reality and knowledge are constructed and reproduced through communication, interaction, and practice (Matthews & Ross, 2010; Tracy, 2020).

In the epistemological sense, interpretivism places more store on the "subjective interpretations and understandings" that people – both the researcher and the researched – hold about the phenomenon of interest, and of the behaviour of said people (Matthews & Ross, 2010, p. 28). Interpretivism emphasises that humans are different from physical phenomena because they create meanings, and that the goal of research in this paradigm is to construct new, richer insights and meanings of the social world and contexts (Matthews & Ross, 2010; Tracy, 2020). Consequently, this paradigm is inherently and unabashedly subjectivist.

Therefore, axiologically, interpretivist researchers acknowledge that their subjective interpretations of empirical materials, as influenced by their personal value and belief systems, are not separable from the research activity: the research process and findings are not independent of the researcher and their reflexivity (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Tracy, 2020). Also importantly, interpretivist research does not preclude, and most often even prescribes, that the researcher adopts an empathetic stance, that is, try to understand the phenomenon and context from the perspective of those studied (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Matthews & Ross, 2010; Tracy, 2020).

Founded on the foregoing paradigmatic considerations, the current work is necessarily qualitative research. This is because qualitative research is better suited to the goals of this study, which are to observe and make subjective meaning of lecturers' immediacy behaviours, to negotiate meaning with lecturers over their use of immediacy behaviours, and to construct meanings from students' experiences of lecturer instructional behaviour. Qualitative research as an approach is about exploring and gaining insight into the meanings individuals or groups assign to social phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), which in the current study is lecturer immediacy behaviour, and also providing rich descriptions of same. Research using this approach generally involves empirical data collection in natural settings, emergent research questions and methods, inductive analysis, and imposition of researcher-constructed meanings on data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018)**.**

Research Design

This research adopted the case study design. The case study design involves the exploration and investigation of a contemporary real life situation, case or an issue in order to get a thorough understanding of that particular case or phenomenon (Cresswell, 2013: Zaidah, 2007). A case study may fall under the quantitative or qualitative research categories, depending on the goals of the study and the design chosen by the researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Like other qualitative studies, for a case study to be considered as a qualitative study, the researcher must focus on the meanings assigned to events by respondents rather than in generalizing results to other groups of people (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Matthews & Ross, 2010; Tracy, 2020).

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As a result, this study focused on understanding the meanings of verbal and nonverbal immediacy cues from the perspectives of the research participants themselves as it examined the immediacy strategies employed by lecturers during their instructions.

The case study can be categorised as exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. When a case study's main objective is to look into situations where the intervention being evaluated doesn't have a clear, consistent set of results, it is said to be exploratory; it is explanatory when the focus is on establishing the purported causal linkages in real-world interventions that are too complicated for survey or experimental procedures, and descriptive when the focus is on describing the natural phenomena that occur within the relevant data (Yin, 2003). The case for the current study, therefore, was considered exploratory and descriptive in nature. The selection of the case study design thus enabled the researcher to get immersed in the scene to make sense of it (Crowe, Cresswell, Robertson, Huby, Avery & Sheikh, 2011). This research design was deemed appropriate as the researcher intended to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of immediacy in the classroom communication. This design therefore allowed her to explore and examine lecturers' communication with their students for the description of the phenomenon. Finally, the case study was appropriate for the study because it is one of the varieties of the designs of qualitative research that engages data from participants' points of view to produce meaning from their meanings and interpretations of their interpretations (Astalin, 2013; Creswell, 2013; Hulst et al., 2015; Tracy, 2013).

A major challenge of the case study design, as explained by Cresswell (2013), is the researcher's ability to select the case and define clearly its boundaries. He cautioned that if this is not done properly, the overall analysis of the study gets diluted which consequently affects the depth of the case.

Study Site

The research was carried out in the University of Cape Coast, one of the largest public universities in Ghana. This University was established in 1962 (Afful, 2007), first as a University College affiliated to University of Ghana, with the sole aim of training teachers and educationists for the pre-tertiary institutions and teacher training colleges. With empowerment from a parliamentary act, the University of Cape Coast Act 1971 (Act 390), the University of Cape Coast later became an autonomous institution on the 1st of October, 1971 with the authority to confer her own degrees, diplomas and certificates (Afful, 2007). University of Cape Coast currently offers many other programmes in its one hundred and six (106) departments available in the eighteen (18) faculties and schools of the six (six) colleges of the university (University of Cape Coast , 2022).

The College of Humanities and Legal Studies is one of the six colleges in the UCC. This college is made up of three faculties: Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Law and Faculty of Arts; three schools: School of Development Studies, School of Business, and School of Economics; and two centres: Centre for African and International Studies and Gender, Research, Advocacy and Documentation.

The Department of Communication Studies is one of the eleven departments in the Faculty of Arts. Among other courses, the department

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offers the Communicative Skills course, a compulsory course, to all students in their first two semesters (Afful, 2007). According to Afful, "the underlying premise of CS as a foundation course is that language skills can be decontextualised from content and that academic language is unvarying across disciplines". This implies that the Communication Skills course lays a strong foundation for academic work in all disciplines. The focus of this study is therefore on the lecturers and students of Communication Skills in the Department of Communication Studies.

Population

A research population is all the individuals or units of interest to a researcher (Halon & Larget, 2011). The study population, therefore, includes all the people who are members of the group who's lived experiences the researcher intends to study for the understanding of the phenomenon under study (Casteel & Bridier, 2021; Shukla, 2020). The population of this research included all the lecturers and regular undergraduate students of the University of Cape Coast. Currently, the school has a total population of 876 lecturers and regular undergraduate students (University of Cape Coast, 2022).

Target Population

A target population is the specific, conceptually bounded group of potential participants to whom the researcher may have access that represents the nature of the population of interest (Casteel & Bridier, 2021). The target population for this research consisted of all the lecturers, both members and non-members, of the Department of Communication Studies who taught Communicative Skills, a compulsory course for all level 100 students of the university. **Consequently, all the level 100 students are also included in the**

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target population. In the 2022 academic year, 33 lecturers, 25 males and eight females taught the course to 6,019 students during the first semester (Department of Communication Studies, UCC). Among these lecturers were: 8 permanent teaching staff in the department, 18 demonstrators, five part-time lectures, one post-retirement lecturer and one teaching assistant (Department of Communication, UCC). This targeted population was further sampled into a workable number of participants who were observed and interviewed for the description of the phenomenon.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample is a portion of a population representing the various elements found in the population (Halon and Larget, 2011; Shukla, 2020). The approach to selecting this sample is termed the sampling technique (Casteel & Bridier, 2021). Shukla (2020) cautions researchers to ensure that their samples are selected in a manner that makes them ideal for the study purpose. Generally, an ideal sample is that which is proportionate to the population size, representative of all the characteristics of the units of analysis, capable of helping to answer all the research questions, is within reach of the researcher, and saves the researcher energy, time and money (Shukla, 2020). All these considerations, except for the idea of proportion, have guided sampling considerations for this study. In qualitative studies, researchers usually purposively select the participants needed to respond to their interest in a topic or issue (Creswell, 2013; Tavakoli, 2012). Qualitative researchers are interested in thick description (Tracy, 2013) for a better understanding and interpretation of the phenomenon under study. For this reason, purposeful (purposive) and small samples, rather than large and random ones, are

considered adequate for qualitative studies (Bhattacherjee, 2012; Buckley, 2010; Yin, 2003).

Sampling Procedure

The study adopted the purposive and convenience sampling techniques for the selection of the research participants. Purposive sampling, also called judgmental sampling, is the intentional selection of persons because of certain characteristics that interest the researcher (Casteel & Bridier, 2021; Creswell, 2013). Qualitative researchers use purposeful sampling to select information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood, 2015). For this reason, researchers are advised to involve individuals with knowledge and experiences that inform the understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell & Clark, 2011) and to consider the individuals' availability and readiness to share those experiences (Bernard, 2002). Therefore, this research selected Communicative Skills instructors because they are best equipped with the requisite knowledge needed by the researcher to describe the communicative behaviours exhibited by lecturers during instructions.

Maximum-variation purposive sampling was then employed to select the final sample of the required number Communicative Skills instructors for the study. Maximum variation is a purposive sampling that allows researchers to select the units of analysis in a way that makes it possible for varying characteristics in the population to be included in the sample (Benoot, Hannes & Bilsen, 2016; Palinkas et al., 2015). When this is done, the data that emerges from the sample is rich (Palinkas et al., 2015) in that it brings out the similarities and differences in the lived experiences of these varying

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participants for a vivid description of the phenomenon under study (Benoot et al., 2016). Applying this, the researcher selected one associate professor, two senior lecturers, one lecturer and two part-time lecturers. This final sample included the young and old, both male and female, with varying teaching experiences.

In the case of student participants, their sampling was done using a two-pronged sampling method. After purposively selecting the classes of the lecturer participants, the convenience sampling technique was used to select the desired number of students for the formation of focus groups. Convenience sampling refers to the selection of research participants per the researcher's own convenience (Showkart & Parveen, 2017). Thus participants are selected because they are readily available to the researcher. Also, whoever comes into contact with the researcher first is selected as the participant provided that he or she is willing to participate.

Applying this, on the days of observation, the researcher arrived at the lecture halls at about thirty minutes before the commencement of lectures. She then approached any student that arrived at the venue, introduced herself and the purpose of her visit, and sought the consent of the student. The researcher initially sought the consent of more students for each group so that, should any of the participants opt out after reconsiderations, the required number will still be worked with. Phone numbers of the students were also taken for further negotiations.

The sample size comprised of six instructors and between three to seven students in each focus group.

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Data Collection Instruments

In qualitative studies, the researcher is positioned as the primary research instrument. Rather than rely on tests and questionnaires to gather data, as would be the case in positivist or postpositivist research, qualitative research – being rooted in the interpretive tradition – involves the researcher as the research instrument that gathers data via one or a combination of observations, interviews, artefact assessment, among others. The researcher is analytical and constantly absorbs, sifts through, and interprets the data relating to the social phenomenon of concern (Braun & Clark, 2013; Creswell, 2013; Tracy, 2020).

Every researcher has a way of seeing the world (Walliman, 2018); while quantitative researchers endeavour to isolate the researcher's worldview from findings, qualitative researchers embrace this subjectivity (Braun & Clark, 2013; Tracy, 2020). Therefore, in this research, while an attempt was made to accurately describe teacher immediacy behaviour and student's experience of this, the researcher made no representation that her background, values and beliefs – the tools of her analytical subjectivity – should not influence meanings arrived at in the final report. To achieve validity of the reports, a combination observation, interviews, and focus group discussions was used for the purpose of triangulation (Tracy, 2013). Some physical tools and equipment aided the researcher to enable her to collect empirical material for analysis. These were the observation guide, interview guide, focus group discussion guide, field notebooks, and audio-recording equipment.

The generation of both the observation and interview guides was informed by the Richmond, Gorham and McCroskey's (1986) non verbal

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immediacy scale and Gorham's 1986 verbal immediacy scale. A few of the 16 items on Richmond, Gorham and McCroskey's (1986) original scale reads: My teacher:

1. Sits behind desk while teaching.

2. Looks at class when talking

3. Smiles at class as a whole, not individual students

4. Has a very tense body position while talking to class

5. Gestures while talking to the class

6. Uses monotone/dull voice when talking to the class

Likewise, some of the items specified on Gorham's (1988) scale are as follows: My teacher:

1. Asks questions or encourages students to talk.

2. Uses personal examples or talks about experiences she/he has had outside of class.

3. Uses humour in class.

4. Addresses students by name.

5. Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn't to be part of his or her lecture plans.

These items and others on the two immediacy scales guided the preparation of the observation and interview guides used in this research.

Data Collection Procedures

A variety of data collection techniques were applied in this study. Each primary technique helped to find answers to one of the research questions that drove this study. After negotiating access and gaining clearance from the Institutional Review Board and the Department of Communication Studies,

UCC, the researcher met with individual lecturer participants, and negotiated the time for the observation of their lectures and the venue and time for the interviews. Each focus group was also assigned a leader who helped the researcher to negotiate with group members the time and venue for the discussion.

First, participant observation was used. This is the process of data engagement in which the researcher gets himself or herself involved in the lived experiences of his or her participants to understand the phenomenon under study (Gill & Temple, 2014; Tracy, 2013). There are different standpoints from which the participant observation can be carried out depending on the researcher's goal. In this study, the researcher assumed the role of a play participant (Tracy, 2013), also known as an active participant (Spradley, 1980, cited in Tracy, 2013).

The play participant is the observer who becomes an improvised member of the group under study and takes an active part in a range of activities carried out in the group but is not bound by the rules that govern the group (Tracy, 2013). For example, a play participant in a classroom can behave like a student for his or her observation but is not bound by the class norms like doing and submitting assignments. To answer research question one, the researcher actively participated in a lecture of each selected lecturer purposely to observe and take notes from the scene. These raw notes (Tracy, 2013) were later rewritten as field notes and coded into themes which were used to describe the verbal and nonverbal immediacy strategies employed by the lecturers. Some tools and materials used in the fieldwork are jotters, pen, and pencils.

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Second, the researcher interviewed the lecturers to better understand and validate the immediacy behaviours that were observed during the lectures. Interviews can be structured or unstructured (Tracy, 2013). Structured interviews are planned so that the prepared sets of questions are strictly followed, leaving no room for further probing (Bryman, 2012; Tracy, 2013). On the other hand, unstructured interviews are spontaneous and conversational and are often guided by a schedule of prompts known as an interview guide (Tracy, 2013). Using a schedule of prompts instead of a fixed set of close-ended questions affords the interviewer the flexibility of using follow-up questions to probe further into interviewee responses. This research made use of the semi-structured interview (Bryman, 2012) which Tracy (2013) considers as an unstructured interview. With permission from the lecturers, conversations were recorded and later transcribed and coded into themes which were used for the description of their reasons or motivation for the use of immediacy cues.

Third, students were engaged in focus group discussions. Focus group discussions are ways of engaging qualitative data, which involves engaging a small number of people in an informal group discussion (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009). The choice of this strategy was to enable the researcher to engage multiple students for data at the same time. It enabled the students to share freely, their feelings, ideas and perceptions about the topic as they felt less threatened in the group (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2019). The researcher moderated the discussion to reduce the tendency of deviating from the topic and the possibility of individual students dominating the discussions. Each discussion session lasted for about an hour. This allowed for free expression of thoughts

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among discussion participants, thoughts which provided a rich mine of data to describe students' experiences with teacher immediacy cues.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data processing involved the organisation of all empirical materials. A particular organisation heuristic for an initial organisation was to group empirical materials according to source, with lecturers as the loci of organisation. For example, all audio and textual materials (including field notes and analytical memos) from a batch of observation, interview, and focus group discussions were linked to a particular lecturer. This way, the researcher was able to link observed immediacy behaviour to expressed motivations for such use, students' reactions to a particular lecturer, and the researcher's reflections. This organising heuristic also enabled the researcher to compare insights across different lecturers, their use of immediacy behaviours, and their instructional effect on students.

To facilitate the organisation of empirical materials, each material was tagged with a unique alphanumeric identifier composed of a respective lecturer's pseudonym, an element identifying the type of material, and a date. This meta-data was entered into an organised in Microsoft Excel along with contact information for respective lecturers and Focus Group Discussion participants. This database was then password-protected and stored in an encrypted cloud folder on Google Drive.

Thematic Analysis was done according to the framework developed and principally propounded by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013, 2022), a worked example of which process appears in Byng (2022). Concerning the lecture hall observations (ideally, audio

recordings and raw notes), the researcher conducted an etic analysis of immediacy behaviours based on immediacy identified and validated in published works (some works available to the researcher included Puertas-Molero et al., 2022; Richmond et al., 2003; Robinson & Richmond, 1995; Wilson & Locker, 2007; Zhang & Oetzel, 2006).

Analysis of interview and Focus Group transcripts followed the iterative approach put forward by Tracy (Tracy, 2020); it involved a back-and-forth analytical process between emic insights (emerging from the data) and etic insights (sourced from the theories presented in the Literature Review section of this thesis). First, the researcher transcribed verbatim audio recordings from both interview and focus group discussions. These data sets were then read through severally to enable the researcher get immersed in the data, begin coding immediately, and document her reflections.

Second, the researcher colour-coded line by line both interview and focus group discussion transcripts following Tracy's (2013) "computer aided approaches to everyday software" (p187). This first-cycle complete coding process (Braun & Clark, 2013: Tracy, 2013) was in three folds each attempting to find answers to one of the three research questions. Initial codes were generated in vivo: using participants own words to generate the codes. The in vivo codes were necessitated by research question two which sought to investigate lecturers' reasons for using immediacy strategies. These initial codes were first typed in the margins using the comment feature, and later copied and pasted onto a new word page where they were categorised according to hues representing analytic themes. Likewise, the coded data

relating to each code were also collated for easy reference and utilisation as extracts.

Third, the researcher analysed the codes for similarities, patterns and relationships and developed preliminary theme and sub-themes. Using the iterative approach suggested by Tracy (2013), the researcher, completely immersed in the data, and at the same time re-examining the theories and literature reviewed, refined and defined the initial themes for description and interpretation of immediacy strategies used by the lecturers of Communicative Skills, their reasons for using these immediacy cues, and the contributions of these strategies to their lessons.

Chapter Summary

This chapter set out to discuss the procedures followed in finding answers the research questions. It did this by first, discussing the methodological paradigm and approach within which the study is set. It then, discussed the research design, the study's setting, the population and the sampling techniques, data collection, analysis instruments and procedures, and finally, the ethical considerations.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate immediacy strategies employed by lecturers in the teaching and learning of Communicative Skills Course at the University of Cape Coast. This chapter presents the results of the study and the discussion of the results in relations to extant empirical researches and theoretical framework. The chapter is divided in to three sections based on the research objectives that guided the study. These research objectives are:

1. To explore the immediacy strategies employed by Communicative Skills lecturers in their teaching.

2. To examine the reasons Communicative Skills lecturers display immediacy behaviours during instruction.

3. To investigate the contribution of immediacy strategies used by Communicative Skills lecturers to the effectiveness of their instructions.

Results of the Study

Immediacy Strategies Employed by Lecturers

The first research objective focused on understanding the immediacy strategies employed by lecturers of Communicative Skills during instruction. Based on the data gathered and analysed, the researcher observed that there are two main categories of immediacy strategies employed by lecturers in the instruction of Communicative Skills. These are nonverbal immediacy strategies and verbal immediacy strategies.

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Nonverbal Immediacy Strategies

These are behaviours, other than words, that are used by the lecturers during their instructions. Nonverbal behaviours displayed by lecturers were deemed capable of communicating lecturers' readiness to bridge the perceived gap between themselves and their students. On the nonverbal immediacy strategies, the researcher found that facial expression, eye contact, smile, gestures, proximity and many others were employed by the lecturers to achieve immediacy during instruction.

Facial Expression Strategy

Facial expressions are messages sent in an unspoken manner using parts of the face. As posited by Butt, (2011) the teacher's face is the most obvious part of his body during the teaching and learning process. During communication, the face relays different feelings to those involved in the process through the use of the eyes, eyebrows, mouth and the facial muscles. In the classroom context, both teachers and students display a range of facial expressions. The teacher's facial expressions especially are capable of contributing to the effectiveness of instructions or otherwise (Butt, 2011). Eye contact is the first facial expression identified during the observation. It is one of the eye behaviours which play very significant roles in face-to-face interactions (Anderson, 2015). Eye contact occurs when two people look at each other face to face. According to Jiang, Borowiak, Tudge, Otto, and Kriegstein, (2017), eye contact "occurs frequently and voluntarily during face-to-face verbal communication", and "is a powerful visual cue for building social links between communicating partners" **(p219)**. This means that eye

contacts do not occur automatically during interactions. Communicators make use of eye contacts deliberately.

The setup of the lecture halls had the lecturers facing their students up front, making it possible for the use of eye contacts. All the six lecturer participants maintained eye contact with their students. Even though they moved round at certain points during their teaching, the lecturers made conscious efforts to maintain eye contact with their students during the lecture, whether they were in front of the class, standing between rows, or moving from one place to another. Periodically, they fixed their gaze on individual students, especially when those students were asking or answering a question, or contributing to the discussion. Largely, apart from moments when the lecturers were writing on the board or reading from a paper or slides (in one instance), they appeared to be looking at students eye to eye.

Communicating through facial expression such as eye contact, smiles and winks contribute to bridging the perceived distance between lecturers and their students in the classroom instruction. From the researcher's observation of the classroom instruction, it was found that lecturers of Communicative Skills employ different facial expressions such as eye contact, smiles and winks to communicate their readiness to be closer to the students. This nonverbal cue when properly employed reduces the perceive distance between lecturers and their students. In a focus group discussion, the researcher sought to ascertain if students understand the implication of facial expression in communicating immediacy between lecturers and students during instruction. This extract from the focus group discussion with students revealed that

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students interpret eye contact from different perspectives with respect to immediacy.

> *One time, he came to the class, and then he prepared himself in front of the class. Then, he looked at me and we met eye to eye. Then he smiled and waved. When that happened, I almost thought he was my relative.* (Extract 1, FGFS 5, 2023)

From this extract 1, it is succinct that the student in the focus group discussion found the lecturers facial expression, smile and wave as communicating immediacy. For instance, the student recounted that the eye contact coupled with smile and wave contributed to his perception of the lecturer as a relative. In essence, the student understood that the lecturer's nonverbal cues diminished the perceive distance of lecturer and student to what the student termed as *my relative.* This means that to the student, lecturer's facial expression could communicate family kind of relationship that is quite close and immediate than the lecturer-student relationship.

This confirms rhetorical/relational goal theory's position that that teachers use of immediacy strategies aids in increasing relationship. According to the rhetorical and relational goal theory (RRGT), teachers and their learners have needs and goals they intend to achieve in the instructional setting (Frisby, Limperos, Record, Downs & Kercsmar, 2013; Mottet et al., 2006). Both parties have relational needs, their wish to be liked and affirmed and rhetorical needs, which have to do with their desires to accomplish tasks (Frisby et al., 2013; Zheng, 2021). The student felt the smile and wave communicated the lecturer's liking, and in essence, removing every sense of relational barrier between them.

In another extract, a student recounted how a female lecturer deploys eye contact during instruction.

She uses eye contacts but it's not like she is stationary and sets her eyes on one person, no. Her eyes go round the classroom and once in a while, your eyes will just meet with hers so that is it. (Extract 2, FGCS 3, 2023).

In the student's view, the lecturer uses the eye contact in a random manner to communicate with students. Through eye contact, lecturers are able to monitor what is going in the classroom and correct students when necessary. For instance, a student noted "*because he is able to communicate with his* **eyes** *whilst teaching, he is able to know what is going on at any point in time and he corrects it.*" (Extract 3, FGES 2, 2023).

Therefore, it is evident that eye contacts and other nonverbal cues reduce the existing physical, social and psychological distance between lecturers and students. This is because, according to *extract 1*, the supposed formal lecturer student relationship was nearly taken to a different level: that of an informal family relationship by the student as a result of the eye contact and its accompanying smile and wave the student had received from his/her lecturer. This finding is in line with Sözer's (2019) finding that eye contact and some other verbal cues generated immediacy between teachers and students. It also confirms Haataja et al.'s (2021) assertion that eye contacts create moments of more intimate dyadic interaction within the overall classroom interaction, which enabled students to communicate their feelings to teachers through direct gazes. It has also affirmed Jiang et al., (2017)'s claim that eye contacts build social links between communicating partners.

Nonetheless, students also noted that eye contact could sometimes cause discomfort and lack of confidence in responding to questions. According to one student, the discomfort arises because of the fear that they might give wrong answers to questions and end up being made fun of by the class including their lecturer. This is evident in extract four below.

> *... he stood in front of me, staring at me and I was somehow tensed because when you get it wrong, he will definitely turn it into a joke and tease you ...* (Extract 4, FGBS 1, 2023)

This could be an explanation to the prayer that was made using cross when one lecturer leaned towards a student to read what she was writing. It is clear from this student's submission that he is not worried about the question asked per se, but what usually follows a wrong answer in that particular class. Even though this confession sounds worrying, it was made amidst laughter, which suggests that the situation becomes a funny moment for everybody in the class, not excluding the person who gave the wrong response. This corroborates discovery made by studies such as Nguyen (2007) and Jakonen and Envitskaya (2020). These studies found that nonverbal cues such as eye contacts, smiles and verbal cues like jokes mitigate face-threatening activities like questioning and corrections during instructions.

In some cases, it was found that not all students experience discomfort with facial expression as a strategy for establishing immediacy. For instance, a student recounted that "As soon as your eyes meet, she will ask you to say whatever you have, so you will be at ease to tell her whatever you know. She doesn't really make anyone uncomfortable with her eye contact. (Extract 5, FGDS 3, 2023). This means that the extent to which eye contact or facial

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expression could cause discomfort or tension depends on the student as well as the perception of actions by lecturers. Lecturers who create conducive learning environment might convince students that eye contact is not a face-threatening cue; rather, it is a strategy for bridging the gap between the lecturer and students. Therefore, lecturers could consider adding explicit or implicit encouragement or comments to the eye contacts in order to reduce misinterpretation.

Another facial expression used by the lecturers was smiles. Smiles convey people's willingness to communicate with others. They also convey emotions such as happiness, acceptance and appreciation. From the researcher's observation of classroom instruction, she found that all the lecturers smiled to their students during the instructional communication process. Moreover, lecturers used smiles intermittently within lectures to communicate immediacy with students. With the exception of lecturer, pseudo named, LPD, all the lecturers greeted their classes with a smile. Their students responded joyfully as was expressed in their tone and pitch of voice. LPD, on the other hand, entered the class with a stern face, and greeted her class with that demeanour. It was later realised that she deliberately wore a frown to call her students who had wanted a postponement of the group presentations scheduled for the day to order. Surprisingly, the students who even approached her with excuses quickly produced their write-ups the moment they were told that without the write-ups, they would score zero. It was only after the submission of the printed documents that she gave her students a broad smile to which they all responded with "Eeeeiiiii Madam!" amid smiles and laughter.

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To present the lecture hall observation (LHO) results, the researcher developed nonverbal cues abbreviation to indicate how different actors in the classroom used them in the instruction. The extract contains the key: L=Lecturer, SM=smile, Ss=Students, LGH=laughter, WEB=widened eye brow, OA=open arms). From extract 6 below, it is succinct there is obvious use of smile to communicate immediacy during the classroom instruction.

L: I only asked him to write the address. Or? (SM+OA)

Ss: YES (LGH)

L: Now, tell us what is wrong with the address. (SM)

S: The date is not part.

L: This "st!" Is it supposed to be top or down? (SM + WEB)

Ss: It should be down: on the line with the 1 (LGH)   (Extract 6, LPB's LHO, 2023)

These questions and answers followed a response given by a student on the white board. This student was asked to write an address on the board but he wrote the date in addition. When asked about their opinion, some people said that the writer was wrong and the lecturer agreed. A section of the students asked why hence the extract above. This is the key to this extract 7. *(Key: L=Lecturer, S=Student, PaS=points at student, MC=moves closer, S1= Student One, S2=Student Two).*

L: Yes, another one, it is on the paper.

S. The woman cannot bear children at all.

L: What is wrong with it? There's nothing wrong with it, right? (SM) Yes! (PaS) The way you are smiling, tell us, (SM) there is nothing wrong with it, right? (SM+MC)

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S1: Yes

L: So you left it like that. (SM) What is your name? (SM) Okay, if you support Kofi (not the student's real name) raise up your hand. You know, he is going to be the SRC president, so if you will vote for him, raise up your hand. (SM).

S2: One is ...

L: So what is the problem with it? Since you are saying one is, two is, meaning it has more than one meaning. (SM) Meaning it is (SM)

Ss: Ambiguous! (Extract 7, LPB's LHO, 2023)

This is an extract from LPB's class where they were having a discussion of a quiz paper that the lecturer had finished marking. The paper contained sentences with some errors ranging from ambiguity to dangling or misplaced modifiers. Students were to identify and correct the errors, or maintain the sentences in cases where they thought that the sentences were correct. The lecturers' smiles in these two instances appeared to be sending different signals. For example, whereas the smiles used in the first two questions posed in extract six coupled with the lecturer's widened eye brows and opened arms were used to draw the students' attention to the mistakes made on the board. Those used by LPB appeared to be encouraging the students to come out boldly and share their thoughts on the sentences they were analysing.

In order to ascertain students' understanding of smile's potential in creating immediacy, the students observed the following during classroom instruction. In extract 8 from the focus group discussion, a student noted that:

> *"When the class becomes quiet and no one decides to talk, that's when he brings you the microphone to talk because sometimes; he sees it on your face that you are murmuring the answer, and as you are doing that, he sees that you have something to say but you are not confident enough to bring it out."* (Extract 8, FGBS 2, 2023).

This was a response to a question on eye contact during the focus group discussion, but it could be applied here because it validates the assertion made above concerning the lecturer's use of smiles to encourage students to participate in discussions. Even though the student did not make mention of smiles in this particular submission, when they were asked whether their lecturer uses smiles, one of them, FGBS3 answered: "*Has he ever frowned*?" (Extract 9, FGBS3, 2023) and they all laughed. This establishes the fact that their lecturer uses smiles together with eye contact and proximity to encourage them to contribute to discussions. Also, a careful look at extract seven above authenticates this student's claim in extract eight. In line three to four of extract seven, the lecturer said: "The way you are smiling, tell us, (SM) there is nothing wrong with it, right?" Just as this student revealed, the lecturer approached Kofi because he saw that he was smiling as though he had wanted to say something.

The findings stated above confirm Jakonen and Envitskaya's (2020) finding that instructor smiles help students to feel more confident because the smiles convey to students their apparent efforts when they provide correct answers, or mitigate unfavourable evaluations of incorrect responses. They are also in line with Nguyen's (2007) conclusion that smiles and other nonverbal cues promote social and interpersonal dimensions of classroom interactions,

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and soften face-threatening behaviours including attention calling, correcting, and summarizing.

Haataja et al.'s (2021) argument that eye contacts create moments of more intimate dyadic interaction within the overall classroom interaction, thereby enabling students to communicate their feelings to teachers through direct gazes has also been confirmed by the interaction in extract seven above. The student's smile, which was rightly decoded by his lecturer in this instance, was in reaction to his lecturer's eye contact and smile. Just as Haataja et al found, one of the student respondents shared his experience of teacher smiles as follows:

> "*Me personally, when he smiles, I see him **as a relative** and it gives me more confidence to even ask him whatever I do not understand. I do not have the fear that this man may snub my question, anything, or me. Because of that, I build more confidence despite whatever the class might say, I bring it out because of the way he smiles.*" (Extract 10, FGFS 5, 2023).

Teacher smiles, therefore, could be said to have a positive impact in the instructional communication process since it mitigates students' fear to contribute to lessons.

Winks and widening of the eyebrows are two similar actions that are made in the same area of the face. While winking is blinking with an eye: closing and opening the eye quickly, opened eyebrows, as the name suggests, are done by widening the muscles around the eye. Communicators of the same status and those who share intimate relations usually display these communicative behaviours. According to Lindsey and Vigil (1999), winking

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is usually accompanied with smiles, and is used jokingly for the purposes of reinforcement and involvement.

Distance/Proximity (Getting close to students)

Another nonverbal cue that was employed to create immediacy between lecturers and students was proximity. From the observation, the researcher observed that even though the set-up of the lecture halls positioned lecturers on the special tables and chairs provided for them where they should sit facing their students, the lecturers did not utilise the tables and chairs as expected. Two of the lecturers, LPA and LPB, never sat down throughout the one-hour observation period. They, however, leaned on their tables intermittently. Three of them, LPD, LPE and LPF, sat down for about half of the duration. This was because one of them, LPD, was having group presentations in her class, so she sat down during the presentations and stood up after each group had presented. LPE started his period with a quiz, so he sat down occasionally. LPF also made use of slides so when displaying sample essays, he sat down and gave explanations, maybe, to allow students to see from the slides. The last lecturer, LPC, a female, sat down at the beginning. She informed her students about her ill health, but in less than ten minutes, she stood up and started moving in the hall.

All the lecturers, apart from the moments they sat down or leaned on their tables, were either standing close to the students sitting in front, or walking in between the rows, close to students who were sitting at the sides. Occasionally, they stood very close to individual students who were being questioned, answering questions, or making submissions during discussions. It was observed that some of the students were not very comfortable when the

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lecturers approached them. To be sure that this was always the case, and to find out why some of the students appeared to be uncomfortable when their lecturers got closer to them, some questions were posed during the interview and focus group discussion sections. The following are some revelations made by the students about their lecturers' proximity during lecturers. .

> *"She starts by sitting. When it gets to a point, she goes round through the rows, go round, and come back to her seat. At times, she gets closer." (Extract 11, FGCS 4, 2023)*

> *"I once had an experience where he came very close to me. He came talking to me and the feeling was naked because I normally listen to people better by looking at them, but when he is so close, I have this kind of feeling. I can't look at him because of that privacy space he has taken. I can't just look at him because the eye is too close. I have become kind of shy, and his gestures are not very loud at that moment. When he is too close, I don't see the gestures and I feel very awkward." (Extract 12, FGFS 5, 2023).*

In extract 11 above, it is indicative that students are conscious of the distance between lecturers and themselves in the classroom setting. While some of the students might not necessarily establish any link between the distance of the lecturers and themselves, in extract 12, it is evident that some students might find lecturer's close proximity to them as an invasion of privacy. The student succinctly puts it that *I can't look at him because of that privacy space he has taken" (Extract 12, FGFS 5, 2023).* This implies that proxemics might have negative connotation in terms of students' perception of immediacy because the students consider it as an intrusion in their personal

space (Hall, 1994). This finding is in line with Goffman's (1955) and Brown and Levinson's notion of face threats in their face work and politeness theories respectively. As posited by this component of their theories, this student's negative face was her wish that her lecturer does not invade her "privacy space" she explained that she is able to listen better by looking at people, something she was unable to do when her lecturer was "so close". Lecturers should therefore consider students' individual differences and personal feelings when employing certain nonverbal cues to avoid the tendency of posing threats to their students' faces.

In other cases, it was observed that some other students might also consider proxemics as useful in giving lecturers' opportunity to observe their answers to questions posed by the lecturer in the course of teaching. This made proxemics performing the role of effective teaching.

> *"When he is giving examples in class, he asks us to write, or when he asks a question so he will come around and read the answers." Extract 13, FGES 1, 2023).*

> *"He moves around as he teaches, and because he reads our examples, he gets closer to us and even leans towards us."(Extract 14, FGBS 2, 2023).*

From these shared experiences, the lecturers apparently get closer to their students during instructions. All the students agreed that their lecturers approached them during the teaching and learning process to look at the notes they were making or read their answers to trial questions in class.

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Leaning towards Students

Before the one-hour observation period elapsed in each lecturer's class, all the six lecturer participants leaned towards a student or two. LPs A, B and F in some instances asked their students to write certain things in their books, so they approached some of the students, leaned towards them, and read what they had written in their books. As they were reading, I noticed that some of the students were tensed to the extent that some even started mimicking a catholic prayer action (the cross). LPC leaned toward one of her students, but it was not clear what she said to her. The student smiled back to her lecturer who was also smiling at the time. LPD leaned towards two of her students, a male and a female. These students approached their lecturer in front and talked to her after she had asked them to submit their write up for the presentation.

Even though we could not hear what the students said to her, from her response, we realised that these students were leaders of groups whose works were not ready. It appeared that the lecturer leaned towards them because she was finding it difficult to hear what they were saying. She did not compromise so the students quickly went back and produced scripts they were keeping in their bags. This action was met with smiles from the lecturer. LPE leaned towards more students than the rest of the LPs. During the first twenty minutes during which he administered his quiz, he occasionally walked round, stood by some of the students, leaned towards them and spoke with them. The students mostly responded with smiles. To validate this observed cue, questions were asked about it during the interviews and focus group discussions. The following revelations were made.

"...and because he reads our examples he gets closer to us and even leans towards us." (Extract 15, FGBS 2, 2023)

"He does lean towards us especially when trying to read our examples... Sometimes, he will even sit on your table. ... When he leans that close to you, he is probably going to explain what you should do or what you should not do." (Extract 16, FGES 4, 2023).

This nonverbal cue provided opportunity for the lecturer to read the students' examples thereby fostering some level of personal relationship with each student. This study confirms Stamatis and Kostoula (2021) that the teachers employed nonverbal immediacy techniques such as smiles, eye contact, leaning toward students, face-to-face body position, removing physical barriers, gesturing, and generally relaxed body movements and positions; however, they refrained from touching students in order to prevent misunderstandings. In the present study, it was found that teachers touch students reasonably to communicate immediacy as contrary to Stamatis and Kostoula (2021). This shows the cultural and geographical differences that mediate the use of immediacy strategies among instructors from different setting. This notwithstanding, lecturer participants who made use of **touch** displayed awareness of sexual harassment issues as inferred from the following submission by LPA:

"*At times, some do not pay attention. I can just come and hold your hand. If I hold your hand, you will know that I want you to pay attention. At times, I will hold your shoulder. So, it is not the sensitive parts of the body that I touch and it is not like I am taking advantage of you."* (Extract 17, LPA, 2023)

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Winks and Thumbs

One non-verbal cue that was outstanding in LPB"s class especially was winks. In response to students' contributions, submissions and answers to questions, LPB made use of winks together with smiles. On two occasions, these cues were accompanied by a thumb-up. When this happened, the students in question looked much fulfilled, and these students were always among those who raised-up their hands to answer questions during the observation period.

> *"When you are doing something or you give a right answer, he will give you an eye or a nod and that motivates you to carry on."* (Extract 18, FGCS 3, 2023)

> *"He uses winks to encourage us to continue with the right things we do in class."* (Extract 19, FGCS 2, 2023)

From these results, it is succinct that nonverbal cues such as facial expression, smiles, distance and posture contributed to establishing immediacy between lecturers and students. While nonverbal cues such as facial expression and smiles were quickly noticed by students as having that ripple effect in reducing lecturer and student distance, other nonverbal cues such as distance and posture were sometimes seen to be having negative interpretation among some students.

The nonverbal cues support the impression management theory that nonverbal behaviours such as smiling, increasing movements and gestures, keeping a comfortable body stance, and vocal expressiveness have been associated with higher affective and cognitive learning (Gorham, 1998). According to Plax, Kearney, McCroskey, and Richmond (1986), when

teachers employ nonverbal immediacy cues throughout their instruction, students' perceptions of emotion toward instruction are more positive.

Verbal Cues

The data from observations conducted revealed that lecturers do not only make use of nonverbal cues; they also employ some linguistic resources during their teaching for the purpose of reducing tension in their classrooms and enhancing students' participation. The researcher discovered that there are verbal cues such as first person plural pronouns, use of students' first name, praise and positive comments among others to establish immediacy with students.

First Person Plural Pronouns

Lecturers used the first person plural pronouns severally during instruction. The first person plurals were usually employed by lecturers to create inclusive communication with their students. The inclusive 'we', 'us' and 'our' often drew the students closer to the lecturer thereby removing the perceived distance of lecturer and student relationship. The use of these first person plurals in the lecturer and students communication involved the students and relinquished the power of the lecturer over the students. For instance, the extract 20 and 21 below shows how the first person plurals were used for establishing immediacy between lecturers and students.

> *"**We**'ve exhausted all the topics ... so, **we** will be delving into the difficult areas ... as **we** discussed when **we** are able to identify the problem, it is easy for **us** to correct the sentence ..." (Extract 20, LPB, 2023)*

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*"**We** are done with…, so **we** will look at the formal letter … those **we** write to … I want **us** to look at the features … so **we** will stop here and continue …", (Extract 21 LPC, 2023)*

In extract 20 and 21 above, the lecturers used the first person inclusive we and us to indicate that the classroom activities are jointed and shared between the lecturer and the students. In the lecturers' words, the lecturers and students together *exhausted, delving into difficult areas, correcting errors, looking at formal letters and looking at other features*. These inclusive pronouns bridge the gap between the lecturer and the students and create some level of inclusivity in the course of the lessons.

Moreover, lecturers used the "we" inclusive to frame classroom discourse. The use of we shows the collaboration between the lecturer and students in learning the different topics of the course. For instance, extract 22, and 23 following, the lecturers use the *we and us* to indicate the joint work between students and the lecturers in learning.

*"**We** are doing **our** presentations this morning…. **We** cannot wait for you to go and print your work …. Let's start …. Let's look at what they have done", (Extract 22 LPD, 2023)*

*"**We** have ten minutes more and some of **us** are now starting …. **We** have covered the course outline…. Which of them should **we** discuss … so **we** are going to discuss how to write **our** formal letters…. Should **we** meet next week or do **our** individual revision … Are **we** meeting on Wednesday or Thursday? **We** are still reserving seats for others… **We** want to continue with what **we**'ve been doing…. What did we do last time? … **We** are going to be static or move backwards…. **We** want to*

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*look at the essay…. Last week, **we** looked at the introduction…. Those of **us** who are not clever, **we** start numbering", (Extract 23, LPE, 2023)*

The first person plural we indicated that lecturers are observing what the students are doing and are bringing it to their attention in a mild way without direct manner. The use of we showed that the lecturer is identifying herself or himself with the students thereby creating some level of closeness with the students. The assertion that the first person plural "we" does create immediacy with their students was confirmed by the lecturer participants during the interviews. For instance, a lecturer recounted, *"I usually use we to let the students know we are one, they feel better and respected when I address all of us as we." (Extract 24, LPE 2, 2023).* This is a shared notion among the lecturers on the potency of inclusive we in establishing immediacy with students.

Likewise, the student participants validated the potency of the inclusive we in fostering a closer relationship between themselves and their lecturers. The following revelations from the focus group discussions support this claim.

When maybe he is coming to introduce a topic, he is like: next week, we will be doing this or next week, we will be looking at the topic, we will be studying this particular topic, so read on it before you come. When he says these things, it gives us the assurance that we are doing it together. (Extract 25, FGAS3, 2023)

At times he will put some questions on the board and say "let's look at these questions". He made us know from the beginning that we were

coming to teach each other. That we will learn from one another. So, when he says let's analyse this, we know that everybody is involved ...With let's all look at the problem; you know that you are not all alone, that no matter what, you will get a solution to it. (Extract 26, FGBS3, 2023)

From extracts 25 and 26 above, it has been established that students easily notice their lecturers' attempt to draw them closer to themselves with the we inclusive, and this verbal strategy apparently works because from the students' revelations, it gives them assurance that they "will get a solution" for whatever difficulty they encounter during the teaching and learning process.

Beyond the first person plural, other verbal cues equally created immediacy in the classroom. The observation session the lecturer had coupled with the interviews conducted showed that jokes, praise and comments equally aided in establishing immediacy with students.

Jokes

Humorous statements dominated the instructions observed except one LPE where there was group presentation. The use of jokes made the class fun and engaging, and this made the students to feel the friendliness and fancy aspect of their lecturers. For instance, in extract 27 below, the lecturer used joke about "fufu" and flies to illustrate the function of an effective introduction in whetting the appetite of readers about the entire essay.

"If the fufu is served at a place where a lot of houseflies are welcoming you, you won't feel like eating.... A bad introduction is also like that, it does not interest the reader ...therefore, according to

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Aggrey, I am an individual but I am teaching you, some women are there, they are not teaching you", (Extract 27, LPF, 2023).

This illustration relates the classroom discourse to everyday realities that students are conversant with in life. The use of such joke taps the shared knowledge between lecturer and students to enhance understanding of the lesson. Moreover, the students are easily able to connect with the lecturer based on the examples because the lecturer is also knowledgeable in their everyday experience.

Also, other lecturers uniquely carved jovial phrases to enhance communication in a mutual manner in the course of instruction. For instance, extract 28 shows that lecturer has a jovial expression that the students have knowledge of how to respond at the end. The lecturer stating that expression quickly invites the students to provide the relevant answer to enhance communication.

"as usual, the intelligent students are writing what I am saying, the other type of student will be looking at me like (the students chorused)…'shit' …so you want to write to the vice chancellor that you have gone to play adult games and got belly… if you know, show me your armpit" (Extract 28, LPE, 2023)

The lecturer's expression, "*as usual, the intelligent students are writing what I am saying, the other type of student will be looking at me like*" categorically classifies two types of students: note taking and none note-taking students. However, with the use of such jovial expression, students are able to connect the dot and ensure that those points stated by the lecturer are noted so that they do not end up as the students' response *'shit'* in class. In essence, the

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use of jokes bridges the gap by creating a common understanding between students and lecturers while at the same time encouraging good classroom practices such a note taking among students.

In extract 29, the lecturer used jokes to hilariously encourage students to get the answers correct.

"Did anyone try to make his life complicated ... Is there anyone who promised to get it wrong? ... I heard it's an: then you swallowed the rest .... My friend, you're in tie, tell us something…the way some of you can eat ... if she's hungry, she can chew you". (Extract 29 LPB, 2023)

These examples may not sound humorous for the reader, but in the context in which they were made, they were very hilarious utterances that got all the students laughing. The use of humour is found to be effective in establishing immediacy. For instance, Menegoni (2018) found that the teachers utilized educational humour as a means of bridging the gap between themselves and their students. The study also showed that using pedagogical humour in the classroom is one successful teaching method that can help instructors perform better when educating college students. It was noted by this researcher that in order to enhance teaching and learning, further research was required in the areas of humour and immediacy in the classroom. This finding corroborates the findings of Menegoni (2018) on the usefulness of humour in achieving immediacy in classroom interaction.

Other Verbal Cues

Other verbal cues indicated to some extent immediacy between lecturers and students. First, **praise and complements** indicated immediacy between lecturers and students. During all the lectures observed, students were

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positively reinforced using praises and complements. In reaction to the students' answers, contributions and submissions, their lecturers made use of expressions such as "That's a good attempt", "That is correct", "good", "that's nice", "great", "we are good" and many others. This enforced positive feeling and motivated students to do better in class discussion.

Second, lecturers employed **seeking students' viewpoints**. Apart from LPD who insisted that she was not going to postpone the group presentations because according to her, she had informed her students in advance that they would be presenting, the rest of the lecturers sought the views of their students in taking some decisions in class. LPF for example, wanted to conduct a short quiz that morning but aborted the idea when his class told him that they were not ready for the quiz. LPE also allowed his students to decide whether or not they would meet him for tutorials. LPA's class were also allowed to decide which essay type their lecturer should discuss with them. The lecturers did not only seek the views of their students. They also discussed concerns raised by their students. One student in LPB's class, after the whole class had agreed that the sentence: "This woman cannot bear children at all" was ambiguous, raised his hand and expressed his disagreement to their explanations. The lecturer, in a calm demeanour, explained the possible meanings with gestures to the understanding of the student. In the other classes too, some students raised concerns in the form of questions, which were all attended to by the lectures.

Third, lecturers used **encouragement** to establish immediacy. Not all students made attempts to answer questions or make contributions during the lectures. Anytime questions were posed, the same students kept raising up

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their hands. That notwithstanding, the lecturers encouraged the other students through various means to participate. LPB who was using a microphone would approach a student, give him or her the microphone, and ask them to say what is in their minds. He would say, "What you have in mind is correct, you tell us". Surprisingly those students made "fantastic" contributions according to their lecturer.

The lecturers also used **self-disclosure** and **name calling** to create immediacy. Not all six lecturers made use of self-disclosure. During the observation sections, only LPs C and E made use of self disclosure. The later shared his personal experiences about writing essays such as letters, tributes, and biographies for people, even graduates, for a fee. While teaching the same topic, the former also shared some experiences she had in her hall of residence. They therefore urged their students to take their studies on the essay types seriously. Extract 30 below shows how the lecturer validated this behaviour in the interview.

> *At times, they come and ask your success story because sometimes, as I teach, I try to make them know some realities of life by sharing my past experiences with them, how I was able to cope with my academics and other things at my undergrad level. (Extract 30, LPE, 2023)*

This extract showed that the lecturer discloses his personal experiences to the students to arouse their interest, and enhance their understanding of the realities.

The lecturers also used *students' first names*. Each of the six LPs addressed a student or two by name. LPB however addressed six of his students using their first names. It appeared that they could not use more

names because of the huge class sizes. At the time of the observation, each class was made up of not less than 150 students. Instead, some of the lecturers addressed the students using phrases like my friend, yes you (while pointing at the person), the one in red, blue, or any colour (also pointing at the student). Interestingly, the students being called quickly gave the appropriate response, depending on the situation in which they were called. In some instances however, few students pretended as if they did not know that they were the ones being called. Surprisingly, it appeared as the lecturers understood that to mean that they (students) were not ready for what they were being called to do, so they quickly called other students. The use of these verbal strategies complimented the nonverbal cues to establish immediacy in the classroom discourse.

The present study supports Wolfe's (2021) findings on verbal versus nonverbal immediacy strategies. Wolfe examined the immediacy techniques that graduate teaching assistants and instructors used in college classrooms. Wolfe found that in the classroom, graduate assistants exhibited more nonverbal behaviours while professors displayed more verbal urgency behaviours. Furthermore, there was no statistically significant difference in the urgency behaviours used by male and female teachers, according to the study. Moreover, the specific discovery of Butt et al., (2011) on eye contact as immediacy strategies was also evident in the present study. Butt et al., (2011) found that making eye contact enhances the classroom learning environment. Additionally, the study found that maintaining eye contact with students was a highly effective and efficient way for teachers to show their love and admiration for them. This, in turn, increased the students' attentiveness,

alertness, and motivation to learn. Therefore, these immediacy strategies were not employed for nothing, rather they were goal oriented.

Reasons Communicative Skills Lecturers' Display Immediacy Behaviours/Strategies

Communicative Skills lecturers appeared to have deployed immediacy strategies or behaviours in a purposeful manner during classroom instruction. The researcher sought to understand the perspective of lecturers in terms of the reasons underlining their use of immediacy strategies in teaching and learning, hence the research question: *why do Communicative Skills lecturers display immediacy behaviours during instruction?* To answer this question, semi-structured interviews were conducted on the lecturer participants. During these interviews, the lecturers were asked to express their reasons for using the immediacy cues identified during the observations. Despite their display of surprise when they heard the nonverbal cues identified during their instructions, the lecturers gave reason why they might have used those strategies. They also elucidated the intention behind their use of the verbal cues.

Encouraging Classroom Participation and Engagement

Participation and engagement of students during a lesson is necessary for enhancing understanding of lessons. Lecturers deployed immediacy strategies to increase classroom participation and engagement. The use of immediacy strategies established greater participation and engagement between students and lecturers. The lecturers revealed that their use of nonverbal behaviours like smiling, and verbal strategies like the we inclusive

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and jokes enable their students to contribute to lessons and ask questions. This is evident in extract 31 and 32 as follow.

"It puts them at ease. You eliminate tension in the classroom when you laugh with them, when you smile at them, when you joke with them. It puts them at ease. Tension is banished from the lecture theatre. That's why I do that. It makes them feel comfortable, easy asking you questions. They know that if they ask you questions, you will smile, you will not get angry. They know that this man is tolerant. But if you are always angry at them, they fear to ask you questions, and the more they ask questions, the better their understanding " (Extract 31, LPE, 2023)

"It makes the class feel involved when I use "we". You are involving them in the discussion or the message. It makes them comfortable. They feel free talking or contributing to the discussion because they feel they are part of the "we". (Extract 32, LPE, 2023)

Extract 32 also illustrated how lecturers purposefully employ the inclusive first person plural "we" as a rhetorical device to foster a sense of belonging among thereby promoting active participation in lessons. According to LPE, immediacy strategies like movement in class and proximity are also deliberately employed to enable lecturers "keep students alert, and to also get some feedback on the go". He further explained that *"...as I teach, one of the ways of getting feedback is to see what students are writing and see how students see things from where they are seated. You know, maybe what you have written on the board, some of them, I want to know how it appears from*

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their angle" (Extract 33, LPB, 2023). These revelations suggest that lecturers display immediacy behaviours to encourage student participation in lessons.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of immediacy strategies in enhancing student engagement, a review of students' feedback revealed that touching, for example, pointed them to participate in the classroom discourse. One student recounted that *"she has ever done that to me. She was passing and tapped my shoulder, and said, yes, you answer the question." (Extract 34, FGAS1, 2023).* This immediacy strategy of touching made a student who might not have participated to do so because the lecturer has pointed him or her out of the crowd. The awareness among students that the lecturer could easily point any of them through the immediacy strategy to answer question or contribute was sufficient to encourage students to learn and prepare for class discussion.

> *"That's when he is using examples which include us. Like, he's using you to make an example: this one will stand for this, this one will stand for this.... so when explaining, instead of standing somewhere and pointing, he gets closer and maybe, touch you.'* (Extract 35, FGAS1, 2023)

In extracts 35 above, the lecturer uses the touch immediacy strategy to engage students and encourage their participation in the Communicative Skills instruction. Therefore, one of the reasons behind the use of immediacy strategies among lecturers is to encourage participation and engagement in the classroom instruction.

Reduction of Tension among Students

Another major purpose for using the immediacy cues, according to the lecturer participants, is to reduce the tension in their classrooms. According to them, their students always come into the class with a high level of fear, which they believe has been passed on to them by their seniors. For example, when asked about the attitude of students at the beginning of the CS course, LPF said,

> *"When students come, what I realize from their attitude is that they come with a kind of fear. They come with a scare and we've been trying to find out why and it's as if when they come in, they meet some of their seniors or people who have been here before them telling them that the course is a course that fails a lot of students and so, they have the preconception that they are coming in maybe, to fail or to pass".* (Extract 36, LPF, 2023)

LPB also asserted that "... it is general, and it's been consistent that these students come to class with a lot of preconceived ideas about how CS can set them back: that if they are not careful, they will go home. I am not quite sure where they get these rumours. Probably, it will be because of the continuing students who they come to meet every time, but it gives the general impression that students are anxious when they enter the class at first" (Extract 37, LPB, 2023). It was further revealed by LPE that the students "... are scared when they come. They are scared because the continuing students keep on pumping funny ideas into their heads that CS will deflate your GPA, CS will send you home, CS this, CS that (Extract 38, LPE,2023)". For this reason, all the lecturers adopt certain strategies to help them ease the tension in their

classrooms. In the words of LPB, "as any good teacher will do, one of the ways of reducing the tension in the class is to make the atmosphere in the classroom more friendly and more cordial. So, I make use of a number of strategies, not one, depending on the calibre of class and the response to offset their fear". (Extract 39, LPB, 2023)

Lecturers usually deploy the immediacy strategies to reduce the tension and deflate the fear that students have concerning the Communicative Skills.

Promotion of Students' Attention

It is important to reiterate that attention of students is keenly linked to their understanding of the lessons. Increase attention may consequently lead to increased understanding. Based on the results from the interview, the researcher noted that Communicative Skills lecturers employed immediacy strategies to encourage students to pay attention to the lecturer. For instance, in this extract, the lecturer explained how he uses immediacy strategies to encourage the students to pay attention.

> *At times too, I will just get closer to you because as soon as I move or come closer to you, and I am there for some time, you will know that whatever you were doing, I have seen you. So, it's like the person will be more attentive. So, that's how I do it because when you pause and address these things, it distracts the lesson. I try to do that just to manage the class so that I can get their attention.* (Extract 40, LPA, 2023)

In extract 40, the lecturer uses proximity as an immediacy strategy to encourage students to pay attention when the students are busy engaged in

other irrelevant activities. Through the distance immediacy strategy, the lecturer is able to communicate with the student to stop the activity and pay attention to the lecture.

Aside the use of distance, other lecturers employed touch as an important immediacy strategy for encouraging students to pay attention to the lecture. For instance, in the extract below, the lecturer used touch to encourage a student to pay attention.

> *At times, some do not pay attention. I can just come and hold your hand. If I hold your hand, you will know that I want you to pay attention. At times, I will hold your shoulder. So, it is not the sensitive parts of the body that I touch and it is not like I am taking advantage of you.* (Extract 41, LPA, 2023)

As the lecturer explained, touching the student's body, though in a conscious manner of harassment issues, is able to indicate to the student to pay attention without necessarily using words. This is important because if lecturers allow students who might be using phones, talking to colleagues and many other distractions, there is more likelihood of loss of concentration and consequently low understanding. The importance of using immediacy strategies to increase attention and concentration is communicated in this extract below. This finding diverges from previous research conducted by Stamatis and Kostoula (2021) which suggested that teachers tend to avoid the use of touch to prevent misinterpretations. Lecturers should however exercise caution when using physical touch as a means of immediacy, ensuring that any physical contact is appropriate, respectful, culturally sensitive, consensual and in accordance with school policies and guidelines. They should refrain from

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the use of touch in situations or areas where it is prohibited, discouraged, or culturally sensitive.

> *It gets them to be alert and attentive and responsive to what is happening or what is going on. It's like you carry them along with you with just the facial expressions. So, the benefit is that it helps them to stay focused all the time, to the content and what you are doing in class.* **It is the eye contact, the smile, it is the frown and other facial expressions that do these if you employ them well, all of them.** *You see,* **the trick is not to abuse any single one of these.** (Extract 42, LPB, 2023)

From extract 42, it is obvious that immediacy strategies get students to be alert and responsive during instruction. Therefore, lecturers employ immediacy strategies to achieve increased attention and concentration among students.

Contribution of Immediacy Strategies to Effectiveness of Instruction

The research question three focused on the contribution of immediacy strategies to effectiveness of classroom instruction. The research question bothered on *how do the immediacy strategies used by Communicative Skills lecturers contribute to the effectiveness of their instructions?* On this question, the researcher found four main contributions of immediacy strategies to effective Communicative Skills instruction. These are relationship building, inclusion, motivation and promotion of best practices.

Relationship Building

Immediacy strategies contribute to effective instruction among lecturers and students by enhancing relationship building between them.

Positive relationship between lecturers and students is found to be useful in effective teaching and learning (Zheng, 2021). Through immediacy strategies, lecturers were able to bridge the gap between themselves and students thereby enhancing effective teaching and learning. In the extract following, the lecturer in an interview expressed how immediacy strategies such as smiling contribute to relationship building among lecturers and students.

> *As for smiling, you see, when you are teaching, at least, your students should know that you have that kind of good relationship with them. When you smile at someone, it means you love the person. You want the person to know or to welcome all that you do. That also shows that you care about the person. You acknowledge the presence of the person in class. The smiles come in the course of some of the words that I use. So, if you have any problem, by the time you leave the class, that problem should go. That also develops the cordial relationship because they feel that you are approachable and they have that kind of trust in you.* (Extract 43, LPE, 2023)

From extract 43, it is revealed that smiling as immediacy strategy establishes good relationship with students, consequently establishing some level of lecturer and student affinity. The lecturer indicated that the smile shows the students that you love them, and that opens the door for students to welcome everything that the lecturer is sharing with them. Immediacy strategies such as smiling provide ground for establishing *cordial relationship* between lecturers and students which in turn promotes lecturer and student affinity. According to Sözer's (2019) analysis of 382 students' responses, the most commonly used tactic by teachers to establish immediate rapport with

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their pupils was a warm smile. Other strategies that worked well included making eye contact and using personal examples. It was therefore, not surprising to find smiling as effective in relationship building.

Moreover, the relationship building through immediacy strategies enhanced trust between lecturers and students. Through the lecturer immediacy strategies that promote relationship building, lecturers are able to win the trust of students and establish long lasting relationship with the students even after students' completion. For instance, a lecturer recounted how she establishing relationship with students using immediacy strategies.

> *I want them to know that I am someone they can rely on because I've been telling them that in life, you don't know where you will meet the person, so at least, making good relationship with the person really helps. Sometime, I can just meet some of them when I am buying something and just buy it for them.* (Extract 44, LPA, 2023)

The extract revealed that the lecturer goes beyond classroom gestures and verbal exchanges paying for products students are buying. This in turn creates relationship between the lecturer and the students; hence, promotion lecturer and student trust.

Furthermore, immediacy strategies such as jokes was used by the lecturers to enhance relationship building that promoted positive reinforcement and joy in the classroom. The lecturer engaged the students in fun activity, thus writing 4 and 8 using both hands at the same time. The students found it difficult, and therefore, ended up laughing at the impossibility of the task. The extract shows the revelation of the lecturer during the interview.

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So, that is the science behind it. Okay, you try to write four with your left hand. Now, write eight with your right hand. Okay, try to write both numbers at the same time. You see, no one asked you to laugh, but it just came out that naturally you were laughing. This is the impression I get anytime I ask students to do that. It's a physical exercise but because of our numbers, I am not asking us to go for a run, but I mean, you can be in your class and do it. It is just interesting to see students trying to get it right and they laugh and that laugh comes out naturally, It makes it more cordial and what follows is what establishes or reinforce that kind of relationship. So, it is not a onetime thing that we do. We do this ice breaker and I automatically now turn a stern face, but once we start like that, I make all effort to continue in that way so that they feel more part, and they feel more welcome, and they feel respected and in the class, they feel less distant. (Extract 45, LPB, 2023)

Extract 45 shows that when lecturers employ immediacy strategies such as joke, it contributes to creating positive ambience and emotions that enhance effective teaching and learning of communicative skills. The good relationship that this joke creates is channelled towards releasing tension and creating a conducive environment emotionally and physically for learning of Communicative Skills.

Finally, immediacy strategies such as self-disclosure enhanced relationship building that is based shared experiences. The lecturers who employed self-disclosure found out that the students could learn from the stories how to cope with the present challenges and be inspired for the future.

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Through the immediacy strategy of self-disclosure, students are inspired to work hard and achieve their dreams. The extracts below show the use of self-disclosure to build relationship based on shared experiences.

> *At times, they come and ask your success story because sometimes, as I teach, I try to make them know some realities of life by sharing my past experiences with them, how I was able to cope with my academics and other things at my undergrad level.* (Extract 46, LPA, 2023)
>
> *I do that when it becomes absolutely necessary. There are times when students need to know that you didn't emerge as a super man or super woman. That you have been in their shoe, some of the examples that you are giving, you know what you are talking about ...* (Extract 47, LPB, 2023)

Extracts 46 and 47 showed that lecturers' personal experiences inspired students to pursue their dreams. Through those stories, students are encouraged to understand their lecturers are not *supermen or superwomen,* rather, the lecturers worked hard to get to the apex. This contributes to effective instruction of Communicative Skills by encouraging students to face the challenges and win. Students definitely learn not to give up due to this relationship building strategies. This is consistent with studies on verbal immediacy cues that found positive relationship between verbal immediacy strategies and other teacher qualities such as competency, credibility, clarity, issue relevance, humour, narrative, and self-disclosure (Dalonges & Fried, 2016; Pogue & AhYun, 2006). Pogue and Ah Yun (2006) asserted that compassion, intelligence, and character are the components of believability. Credible teachers have a greater influence on students' ability to produce

comprehension, or cognition, in the classroom. Material expertise, student emotion, and verbal fluency are all signs of an instructor's competency (Myers & Bryant, 2004).

Furthermore, the data indicates that the relational benefits derived from immediacy persist beyond the conclusion of the Communicative Skills course, exhibiting a lasting impact. This enduring effect is exemplified in the following extract.

> *My main goal is to ensure that we produce students who can communicate well: orally and in written forms and these students must pass their examination and get their degrees. So, once they are doing that, I feel satisfied. That's the benefit. I remember I taught the medical students communication skills. At the end of the year, they all left, and I was happy. Then, when they got to their fifth year, they said they were doing courses and at a point, they were now being tested using oral examination. So, they found that the CS I was teaching, those hedges and oral skills were necessary. So, they had to come and call me and say they wanted me to come and help them with some of these things. These are people I taught in the first year. They run to the fifth year, they realize the need more this time. It's not an examination in CS, but they realize the politeness, and so, so, and so we were teaching them is going to value because they are now going to a certain calibre who will be questioning you. How will you respond? A student I taught 15 years ago was going for an interview two days ago and sent me series of questions about politeness. Even how to greet the panel when she appears before them ...* (Extract 48, LPF, 2023)

Extract 48 illustrates that students persist in seeking knowledge from their lecturers due to the rapport established through immediacy. Notably, this relationship endures over time, as evidenced by the students' continued connection with their lecturer fifteen years subsequent to completing the Communicative skills course,

Inclusion

Another contribution of immediacy strategies to effective teaching of Communicative Skills among lectures is inclusion. Immediacy strategies aid lecturers to ensure inclusive classroom where the diverse students are represented in the classroom discussion. The extract below presents a lecturer's perspective on the advantages of utilising the first person pronoun to foster inclusivity in the teaching and learning of Communicative Skills.

> *So whatever they have should also be brought so that we all share our ideas. That is why I use we to show that we are all part. So, we are all in the learning process because we are all learning. I let them know that I don't have all the knowledge. I am also learning so if we are learning, then I have to use "we" so that they feel they are part of the discussion. So, we are all doing the teaching and learning.* (Extract 49, LPE, 2023)

The lecturer indicated from the extract that the use of "*we"* is to encourage the students to be co-creators and owners of the lesson content. The inclusion makes the students to feel represented and equally knowledgeable in what is being taught by the lecturer. Inclusion is considered as an important cultural value in effective teaching and learning of language (Ah Yun, 2006).

Another lecturer indicated that the use of immediacy strategies helps lecturers to relate Communicative Skills to the students' daily lives and cultural experiences. This extract shows that lecturers use immediacy strategies to promote inclusion in the teaching of Communicative Skills.

> *I employ them a lot, I mean, very often because it helps the students to relate to what they are doing. It makes the lesson present. It makes the content relatable, they don't feel that they are learning about certain people somewhere or the thing becomes too distant. I do that quite a lot and in doing that, we cite a lot of examples outside the classroom from their experiences. So, it enables them own the content that we are discussing. They own it and it becomes more relatable ... so, that is the reason why I use that.* (Extract 50, LPB, 2023)

The lecturer found the use of immediacy strategies to create inclusion as effective in helping them make the Communicative Skills course content relatable to the students. This contributes to effective instruction because it is important to always start from the known to the unknown. The lecturer considers the use of plethora of immediacy strategies for engaging students.

> *Oh, there are a number of strategies that depending on the atmosphere, I employ at the spur of the moment but I can say sometimes, we do some physical activities and we also do some kind of ice breakers or icebreaking exercises, and there are also concentration exercises which really, no matter how tensed, no matter how bad the mood you are in, if you get yourself into doing these exercises, it will digress you and make you more active in the class, and you know, it*

will break the supposed distance or barrier that is between the lecturer

and the students. (Extract 51, LPB, 2023)

Motivation

Another contribution of immediacy strategies to the effective instruction of Communicative Skills is motivation of students. Through immediacy strategies, lecturers were able to motivate their students to participate in classroom discourse. For instance, the use of complement and praise by lecturers established immediacy, and in turn provided some form of motivation for students.

If someone does something, I use them to let the person know that what

he has done is good. Sometimes too, I award mark: okay, the answer

that you have given, I give you two marks. Then, I record. Or, I say

"very good". That is to encourage them. (Extract 52, LPB, 2023)

In this extract above, the lecturer uses the extrinsic motivation, complement or award of mark to motivate the students to participate in class discussion. This contributes to effective teaching and learning of Communicative Skills because it provides source of motivation for students to perform in class.

Aside the complement, a lecturer also noted that using the immediacy strategy of self-disclosure motivates students not to give up because the students are able to know that the lecturer has equally gone through such experiences in the past. The extract below shows the exchange on how self-disclosure immediacy strategy could contribute to motivation of Communicative Skills students for performance in Communicative Skills.

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Some of them, they have some problems. Some are fed up with life. Some don't have people they can share their problems with, and they think that what they are going through, no one has gone through before. So, in sharing that, they get that kind of motivation that at least, they can also do something. Maybe my experience in level 100, 200, 300, I will be sharing, so I look at the problems students encounter. **Then I share my personal experience in those things, and some of them get motivated.** *They will see that after all, life must still go on and they can also do something.* (Extract 53, LPA, 2023)

The lecturer noted that his or her personal experiences as a student when disclosed to the students provide motivation for the student never to give up in life. Through giving students hint that they are not the only one going through such difficulties, the students are able gather strength and face their challenges. Motivation is key for students' performance in any course, hence, when students are motivated, they have the vigour and concentration to study and excel in a course. The impact of immediacy in motivating students has been confirmed (Guerrero, 2017; Velez & Cano, 2008; Stilwell, 2018). Immediacy increases cognitive learning, affective learning, motivation, and behavioural changes, according to research conducted by Goodboy et al. (2009).

Promotion of Best Practices

Among the reasons that motivated lecturers' use of immediacy strategies was promotion of best practices in language instruction. Teaching, like other professions, has some best practices that lecturers are expected to

follow. For instance, a lecturer explained why he uses immediacy strategies in line with best practices.

> *I **said it takes off the stress of** you having to talk for a very long time in class. That is one of the benefits. It makes you **align to international best practices**, as to what you should be doing. So, that is beneficial to me that I'm being able to check the box that I'm doing the right thing. It helps me to have cordial relationship with my students and **they are more willing and receptive**, **to share things even beyond the class***: things that I also learn personally from* ... (Extract 54, LPB, 2023)

In this extract, the lecturer observes that the use of immediacy strategies helps him or her to follow international best practices. These best practices the lecturer was referring to include student-centred teaching methods, inclusive teaching, effective questioning styles among others. Through immediacy strategies, lecturers are able to achieve best practices of Communicative Skills instruction. This is seen in the further explanation of the lecturer on how immediacy strategies aid in aligning with international best practices.

> *So, I think I employ what is best within my capacity and my training and my background to package the content in a way that is, I will say in line with international best practices, right, and that is more student cantered and that really gets the student to be at the centre of the instruction rather than the old routine which is more of the dialectical approach, the lecturer being the source of the knowledge. I try to make it more dialogical instead of dialectical* (Extract 55, LPB, 2023)

This lecturer adheres to the advocacy of Paulo Freire (1992) for change in educational system from banking system of education to participatory or dialogical system of education. In the lecturer's view, the use of immediacy strategies is to *be more dialogical instead of dialectical* in the Communicative Skills instruction. This is consistent with the work of Rudick and Golsan (2014). They employed the relational dialectic theory to examine instructional communication. The study's findings, which were based on studies of the body of research on affinity-seeking tactics, immediacy, and relational communication, showed how important it is to comprehend relational behaviours like affinity, immediacy, and others in order to succeed in the classroom.

Rudick and Golsan (2014) found that encouraging dialogic communication in educational contexts requires a comprehensive understanding of the relational communication between students and teachers. Rudick and Golsan's (2014) recommendations for the epistemological development of relational communication research to enhance the application of instructional communication in the modern world are informed by their findings. The present study corresponds to their finding that employing immediacy strategies will contribute immensely to dialogical instruction rather than dialectical.

Aside the international best practices; there are specific skills and expectation that students should imbibe in the course of studying Communicative Skills. One of such skills is note taking. It is noted that lecturers employ immediacy strategies to emphasize the importance of note taking and insist on students to take note during classroom communication.

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The extract below shows how the lecturer employs immediacy strategy for this purpose.

I have been encouraging them that whatever I am saying, they should be writing and so, if the person is not writing and I go closer to the person, then he or she will begin to write something because they know that I have been warning them to take notes. (Extract 56, LPA, 2023)

The lecturer uses proximity to encourage students to take note during classroom instruction. Notes usually serve as reference materials for what is learned in class. In the university setting, notes are useful for revising for examination, appreciating knowledge acquired and forming basis for subsequent reading and note making (Gborsong, 2009).

The data additionally reveals that effective implementation of immediacy strategies fosters an environment where students willingly share their notes with lecturers for feedback and correction. The following extract demonstrates this point.

...So you go to them sometimes, engage them in a conversation and that kind of thing. And they get enthused with that and the next time you go, they are no more scared, they are no more anxious. So, now you can stand anywhere. You can read people's papers but initially, it wasn't a joke. They will not like. They see you coming, they close their book and it doesn't help them. So I will prefer to go to them. Oh, let me see your work. Then you look at it. So you see, whether good or bad, you don't embarrass the person. If there is anything good in it, you point it, if there is anything that is not good, you point it out to him alone, not the whole class. You see, that way, they feel

comfortable and some will even start calling you to come. If you are comfortable with that, when you give some work, they will be calling you to come and see what they have done. And then you know that at that stage, things are moving on well. It's better than when you isolate yourself. (Extract 57, LPF, 2023)

Moreover, students were encouraged to ask questions in Communicative Skills instruction through lecturers' use of immediacy strategies. For instance, it could be noticed in this extract that the lecturer uses immediacy strategies to build trust and eliminate all forms of fear among students.

They are not afraid to ask questions. That fear in the student-lecturer relationship is no more. So you see that in the class they see me as one of their colleagues who is in front because they will just call me by an ordinary name. They don't use any title. They call me ... I have a question. (Extract 58, LPA, 2023)

The students are confident to ask questions and participate in class discussion because the immediacy strategies have eliminated the barriers that come with the lecturer and students relationship. Again, lecturers' use of immediacy strategies promoted effective writing and listening skills among students. One lecturer described that:

And once they become aware of the possible shortcomings that they have with writing and listening through the diagnostic activities that they do, they become more responsive because, all of a sudden, they show the willingness to learn for the sake of the knowledge, and then, passing the course becomes automatic or a bonus, and then, they see

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the bigger picture. So, sometimes, we even do dictation using simple simple words , day to day words but every time that I have done that dictation in my thirteen years, I tell you, no one has scored 10/10. And I am not talking about using very complicated words. (Extract 59, LPB, 2023)

This practice of testing students' knowledge through dictation is crucial in instilling in students listening skill. The students equally learn to listen as well as turn to be more serious because the lecturer brings the course to their level by opening their eyes to see their specific challenges. The use of immediacy behaviours confirm the observation that immediacy has proven to be a crucial factor in determining how well students learn cognitively. Students who have experienced high immediacy in the classroom have been shown to assimilate course material more cognitively than those who have not. Research has shown that immediacy and students' cognitive abilities are positively correlated (Asiri, 2013; LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; Scales, 2016; Stillwell, 2018; Titsworth, 2001). This is seen in the sense that students who relate with lecturers' immediacy behaviours are likely to participate and be involved in classroom interaction.

Based on the findings, it can be inferred that the combined use of verbal and nonverbal immediacy strategies facilitates the attainment of both lecturer and student objectives, as illustrated in the extract below.

Oh, to me, they work a lot. I use these strategies to get them to participate and they do. They do well in their exam as well. So, I teach them, exam comes, whether I set the exam or not, I am not afraid. They go to do it and I am happy to see what they do. So, I know we are

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succeeding. The objective is to help them also to get their goals, to help them speak in a way and so, by the end of the year, they are able to speak in a certain way. I listen to how they comment to one another and I'm happy about it. That's the best I can do for them when I leave them. (Extract 60, LPF, 2023)

Consistent with Mottet et al.'s (2006) Rhetorical and Relational Goal Theory, effective impression management by lecturers, as conceptualised by Goffman (1955), enables them to attain their own relational and rhetorical objectives while simultaneously fulfilling those of their students.

Immediacy strategies contributed immensely to classroom instruction in four different major ways. These are enhancing relationship building, inclusion, motivation and promotion of best practices.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study as well as the major findings, the conclusions drawn, and the recommendations based on the conclusions. The chapter provides a recap of the major issues raised in the study, and the ways major issues contribute to answer the research questions that underpinned the study.

Summary of Study

The purpose of the present research was to explore the immediacy strategies among Communicative Skills lecturers in the University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast. The researcher observed that immediacy strategies are cogent in advancing effective teaching and learning, especially in English for Specific Purposes courses. Even though there are several studies on immediacy strategies elsewhere (Asiri, 2013; LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; Scales, 2016; Stillwell, 2018; Titsworth, 2001), there appears to be little or no studies on immediacy strategies in the Ghanaian setting. The present study employed play-participant observation of classroom instruction, focus group discussion with students and face-to-face interview with lecturers to gather sufficient data for the study. Guided by rhetorical/relational goal theory and impression management theories, the researcher analyzed the data and discovered the following major findings.

Major Findings

There are four major findings in the present study even though the research questions were three. First, the researcher discovered that both verbal

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and nonverbal immediacy strategies and behaviours are employed by lecturers to achieve immediacy in the Communicative Skills instruction. Regarding the nonverbal cues, the researcher found that facial expressions; eye contact, smiling, winks and blinks, and touch, among others were effective in establishing immediacy with students during Communicative Skills instructions. On the verbal aspect, the researcher found the use of praise and encouraging comments, jokes, self-disclosure, first name calling and first person plural pronouns as effective verbal immediacy strategies for achieving immediacy with students during classroom instruction. Even though the present study was not rating the immediacy strategies, the observation revealed that teachers employ the nonverbal immediacy strategies more than the verbal immediacy strategies in establishing immediacy with students.

Secondly, the study revealed that teachers employ immediacy strategies or behaviours to achieve classroom participation and engagement, reduction of tension, and promotion of students' attention. The researcher found that the use of immediacy behaviours were goal oriented towards increase effective communicative skills instruction by reducing tension, increasing attention and participation from students.

Third, the study has shown that immediacy strategies contribute to relationship building, inclusion and motivation among lecturers and students. The relationship building removed distance and contributed to positive feeling among students. Students almost felt family relationship with their lecturers who employed immediacy strategies such as smiles, contact and positive comments, and this contributed to creating conducive learning environment that fostered effective teaching and learning of Communicative Skills. The use

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of jokes, self-disclosure and we inclusive personal pronouns provided inclusivity among students and caused students to feel motivated to perform in the Communicative Skills course.

Finally, the researcher discovered that nonverbal strategies or behaviours may have a ripple negative effect if not appropriately managed by lecturers in the classroom instruction. It is important to acknowledge that nonverbal immediacy strategies could convey negative connotations such as sexual harassment as well as flirting. Depending on the socio-cultural background of students, nonverbal immediacy strategies such as touch, facial expression and gestures could generate misunderstandings if the lecturer does not take concrete steps to buttress or clarify them with verbal immediacy strategies.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that immediacy strategies are part of effective Communicative Skills course instruction. The use of verbal or nonverbal immediacy strategies is based on the knowledge and personal discretion of the instructor. In as much as using both verbal and nonverbal immediacy strategies is beneficial in achieving effective Communicative Skills course instruction, there is the need for lecturers to consider coupling their nonverbal immediacy strategies with verbal comments to reduce or mitigate misinterpretation from students, or utilizing only culturally appropriate nonverbal strategies. Moreover, immediacy strategies are useful in promoting participation, reducing tension and promoting best practices in Communicative Skills teaching. In addition, immediacy strategies contribute immensely to effective Communicative Skills teaching by promoting

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relationship building, participation, inclusion, and motivation of students. In essence, Communicative Skills instructors should consider adopting and utilizing immediacy strategies in order to promote effective Communicative Skills course instruction at the tertiary level.

Recommendations

There is the need for further research on intervening variables such gender, education, programme of study etc that mediate the effectiveness of immediacy strategies in effective Communicative Skills teaching and learning.

Moreover, lecturers should consider incorporating both verbal and nonverbal immediacy strategies in the teaching Communicative Skills Course.

Again, Communicative Skills Coordination Unit and Department could consider organizing seminars where experienced lecturers and professional communicators could take the instructors through how to utilize immediacy strategies for effective Communicative Skills teaching.

Finally, educators and policy makers should consider devising policies that provide opportunities for incorporation of immediacy strategies into the education students' curriculum. This will ensure that professional teachers are trained to utilize immediacy strategies in teaching.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Observation Guide

1. What is the general classroom environment?

    i.   What sitting arrangement is made in the classroom?

    ii. Observe the sitting position of the lecturer and his or her students and describe the relationship that exists between them. As time goes on, verify this relationship through the lecturer's interactions with the students.

    iii. Does the sitting arrangement allow for lecturers' free movement in class or it separates him or her from students?

    iv. Does the lecturer make conscious efforts to move around in class? (consider certain factors that could account for the movement or otherwise)

2. What nonverbal immediacy strategies are used by the lecturer during instructions?

    i.   Check the following: (take note of number of times each one is used and how long it lasts)

         a) Eye contacts [ ]

         b) Smiles [ ]

         c) leaning toward students [ ]

         d) face-to-face body position [ ]

         e) reducing physical obstructions [ ]

         f) gesturing [ ]

         g) overall relaxed body movements [ ]

         h) touching [ ]

         i) look for other non verbal cues

3. Does the lecturer seem to be avoiding certain non verbal immediacy strategies mentioned in the literature? Eg. Touches, pats, etc.

4. What verbal immediacy strategies are used by lecturer during instructions?

    ii. Check the following: : (take note of number of times each one is used)

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     a) Use of first person pronouns (plural especially) **[]**

     b) Calling students by name **[ ]**

     c) Compliments **[ ]**

     d) Jokes **[ ]**

     e) Praise **[ ]**

     f) Responses to students' questions **[ ]**

     g) Seeking of students' viewpoints **[ ]**

     h) Self disclosure **[ ]**

     i) Clarity **[ ]**

     j) Look for other verbal cues **[ ]**

iii. Is the lecturer willing to interact with students after the lecture?

iv. Does he or she leave just after the lecture or he or she makes time for conversations with students?

v. How does the lecturer display the immediacy cues observed? Describe

vi. How do students respond differently to questions posed and the instruction in general when their lecturer uses the immediacy strategies?

vii. Does lecturer encourage students to participate in discussions?

viii. Are students' responses encouraging?

ix. Do their responses show that they understand lessons?

Appendix B

Interview Guide for Lecturers

A. Bio-Data / Demographic Information

1. Position/Status……………………………………………
2. Age (range): 25-35 ( ); 36-46 ( ); 47-60 ( ); 61 and above ( )
3. Gender: Male ( ) / Female ( )
4. For how long have you been teaching the Communicative Skills Course?
5. What are your motivations for teaching the Communicative Skills Course?

B. Instructional Communication in General

1. What classroom goals do you set for yourself at the beginning of each semester?
2. What measures do you put in place to achieve those goals?
3. Kindly share some communicative behaviours you employ in order to achieve your goals.
4. Do you consider the goals of your students when trying to achieve your own goals?
5. How do you manage to achieve your own goals and those of your students?

C. Lecturer Immediacy

Immediacy strategies employed by Communicative Skills lecturers in their teaching

1. What strategies do you employ to reduce the distance (physical and psychological) between your learners and yourself during instructions?
   - I.   Verbal cues
   - II. Nonverbal cues
2. How do you display each of the strategies mentioned above?

Communicative Skills lecturers' motivation for displaying immediacy behaviours during instructions?

3. Why do you use these strategies?

4. Do you deliberately display these behaviours or they are naturally a part of you? If some are not natural, why do you intentionally use them?

5. How are you able to use those that are not part of you, but are deliberately used to achieve this purpose?

Effectiveness of immediacy strategies

6. Does each of the strategies mentioned above actually help to achieve its intended purpose between you and your students? If yes, how? If no, why?

7. What benefits do you derive from your use of the immediacy strategies in the classroom?

8. How do your students benefit from the immediacy strategies you use?

9. How do the immediacy strategies you employ contribute to the effectiveness of your instructions?

10. Are your students able to ask questions during lectures?

11. How do you react and respond to their questions?

12. Are your students able to approach you after lectures for more clarifications or any form of assistance?

13. How do you interact with them after your lecture? Why?

Thanks for your participation

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Appendix C

Focus Group Discussion Guide for Students

1. **Bio-Data / Demographic Information**
   a) Programme of study …………………………………………

2. **Instructional Communication in General**

   b) What goals do you want to achieve by the end of your Communicative Skills course?

   c) How is your lecturer helping you to achieve those goals?

   d) Are you aware that your lecturer also has his own goals?

   e) How well is your lecturer doing his attempt to achieve his goals, and at the same time ensure that you achieve your goals?

3. **Immediacy Strategies**

   Immediacy strategies employed by Communicative Skills lecturers in their teaching

   a) Does your Communicative Skills lecturer use the following verbal and nonverbal communicative behaviours during lectures? (follow up with questions b-e after every yes answer)

      i. Eye contacts
      ii. Smiles
      iii. leaning toward students
      iv. face-to-face body position
      v. reducing physical obstructions
      vi. gesturing
      vii. overall relaxed body movements
      viii. touching
      ix. Use of first person pronouns (plural especially)
      x. Calling students by name
      xi. Compliments

      xii.   Jokes

     xiii.   Praise

     xiv.   Responses to students' questions

      xv.   Seeking of students' viewpoints

     xvi.   Self disclosure

    xvii.   Clarity

b) Describe how he displays this strategy.

c) How do you feel when he uses this behaviour?

d) Do you feel comfortable when your lecturer uses this strategy?

e) How often does your lecturer use this strategy?

f) Mention other verbal and nonverbal behaviours employed by your lecturer for the purpose of reducing the psychological and physical distance between you and him during his instructions. (follow up with questions b-e after each new strategy is mentioned)

Effectiveness of immediacy strategies

g) Do these strategies benefit you during instructions?

h) Do the strategies make you develop a liking for the course for which you want to study it after the class?

i) Do you think your lecturer's immediacy strategies are contributing to your success in the course?

j) How do you think you would feel if your lecturer was not using these strategies?

k) Do you benefit from some or all of his immediacy strategies?

l) If no, mention those that you do not benefit from and give reasons.

m) Would you like to suggest some immediacy strategies to be used by your lecturer for effective instructions?

n) How helpful do you think these new strategies will be?

Thanks for your participation.

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