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Instructors' perceptions of their own effectiveness

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INSTRUCTORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR OWN EFFECTIVENESS: THE ROLE

OF CREDIBILITY AND NONVERBAL IMMEDIACY

An Abstract of a Thesis

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

Abdullah S. Al-Asmari

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May 2014

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of college instructors regarding the role of credibility and nonverbal immediacy in teacher's effective behavior in the classroom. It seeks to understand instructors' perceptions of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility. A qualitative method was used to examine the perceptions of instructors. A sample table and two graphs provide numeric indicators to illustrate the study's results. Participants were selected based on a convenience sampling of twelve instructors from a communication department at a mid-sized Midwestern university. Although the sample is one of convenience, efforts were made to ensure that the twelve instructors chosen represented a variety of variables including sex, years teaching, and classes taught. This qualitative study explores how sex, experience, content area, and culture play significant roles in forming instructors' perceptions of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility. As this study found, the role of sex comes first among other roles and explains the big differences between male and female instructors in perceiving teaching effectiveness through the role of credibility and nonverbal immediacy.

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Entitled: Instructors' Perceptions of their Own Effectiveness: The Role of Credibility and Nonverbal Immediacy

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the

Degree of Master of Arts.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is whole-heartedly dedicated to my mom and dad for the ongoing streams of support and prayers my whole life. It is lovingly dedicated to my wife of nearly 15 years to whom I am so thankful for love and patience. It is also dedicated proudly to my daughters, Randah and Leena and my sons, Ameer and Haitham who have been asking me when I would be done with my work. It is done, and I am ready to enjoy my time with you sweethearts.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of educators is to share knowledge. This objective can be

achieved by engaging in effective communication with students. Effective

communication is an important aspect of fostering an enriching and inspiring educational

environment (Richmond, 2002). Brophy (1979) stated that teachers' behaviors can

encourage students to achieve important goals associated with the academic environment

(as cited in Hendrix, 1998, p. 738). Teachers employ several types of verbal and

nonverbal behaviors; these behaviors contribute to their credibility.

In higher education systems, a professor's credibility is one of the most

significant perceptions that students form (Glascock & Ruggiero, 2006). Students'

perceptions of their instructors' credibility are very important for the rating of the teacher

and his or her course, and the willingness to take another course with the same instructor

(Glascock & Ruggiero, 2006). Although credibility is important, it is difficult to measure.

Communication scholars have long attempted to understand the facets of credibility:

O'Keefe states that "the communication discipline has devoted much attention to

identifying speaker characteristics associated with credibility" (as cited in Hendrix, 1998,

p. 738).

One possibility for assessing instructor credibility is to explore the relationship

between nonverbal behaviors and credibility. The impact of nonverbal communication

often has been overlooked, but several studies have illustrated its significance. One study

argued that, "While verbal messages are generally thought to have their major impact on

the cognitive aspects of communication, nonverbal messages are believed to be the stimuli which are primarily responsible for affective communication" (McCroskey, Fayer, Richmond, Sallinen, & Barraclough, 1996, p. 200). Another study hinted at the connection between nonverbal communication and credibility: Aguinis, Simonsen, and Pierce (1998) found that "a relaxed facial expression, compared with a nervous facial expression, increased the ratings for referent, reward, legitimate, expert, and credibility power bases" (p. 455).

Nonverbal immediacy behaviors play a significant role in communication efficiency. Mehrabian (1967) defined nonverbal immediacy as "the degree of perceived physical and/or psychological closeness between people" (as cited in Christophel, 1990, p. 325). Effective classroom communication includes the use of immediacy behaviors, which help teachers build credibility in the classroom. McCroskey, Richmond, and McCroskey (2002) reported that "teachers who are more nonverbally immediate are seen by their students as more caring, clearer, and overall better teachers than less immediate teachers" (p.69). Caring is a part of the ethos or credibility, along with trustworthiness and competence. Ambady and Rosenthal (1993) described the nonverbal actions of teachers with higher immediacy ratings:

> Teachers with higher rating [of using nonverbal immediacy] tended to be more nonverbally active and expressive. They were more likely to walk around, touch their upper torsos, and smile. Fewer effective teachers were more likely to sit, touch their heads, and shake rather than nod their heads. These results suggest that teachers with higher ratings showed more nonverbal expressiveness and involvement than fewer effective teachers. (As cited in Richmond, 2002, p. 69)

Several studies have bolstered the assertion that nonverbal immediacy provides a way to measure and evaluate an instructor's credibility and effectiveness. In a study about

the relationship between instructor nonverbal immediacy and effective classroom

teaching, Anderson, Anderson and Jensen (1979) indicated a significant relationship

between an instructor's use of nonverbal immediacy and his or her effectiveness. Another

study reported that greater teacher immediacy resulted in greater affiliation and positive

affect on the part of the students, and that students liked immediate teachers far more than

non-immediate teachers (Richmond, 2002).

There is an Arabic proverb, which states that "of nothing comes nothing." The

proverb means if one does not own something, one cannot give it or control it.

Furthermore, if one does not care about something, one will not use, value, or benefit

from it. The positive perception of the importance of nonverbal immediacy is essential

for using, valuing, and benefitting from it. For instructors, the benefits of nonverbal

immediacy reside in the potential for greater credibility.

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, I explored instructors' perceptions of

the importance of nonverbal immediacy behaviors using the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale

Observe-Report (NIS-O; Richmond, McCroskey, & Johnson, 2003b). Second, I assessed

the impact of nonverbal immediacy on their credibility using the Teacher Credibility

Scale (McCroskey & Teven, 1999) as a foundation for formulating interview questions.

Exploring more about instructors' perceptions of the importance of nonverbal

immediacy and its impact on their credibility could be an additional effort for the

construction of the field of teacher nonverbal immediacy and credibility. The results of

this study could influence the educational environment by showing teachers any positive

or negative indicators regarding their perceptions of the importance of nonverbal

immediacy and its impact on their credibility. As a part of the cognitive goal of teachers, this study could contribute to the increase of students' learning achievement.

<div align="center">My Story</div>

Mufarreh was one of those great teachers who contribute positively to their students' lives. I was in 10th grade when he came to my school. Although he did not stay for long, he was the favorite teacher for all the students he taught. At that time, I was frustrated because of some circumstances in my life. I received a lot of help from this teacher, especially during that time. Now, I realize that he was a teacher who used numerous nonverbal immediacy behaviors. I also rank him as the most credible teacher I have known.

Although teaching students was my dream, I could not achieve this dream because I was majoring in media, and I had to study pedagogy for an additional year before I could teach. After graduation, I worked in Saudi Radio and TV for ten years as an announcer. At that time, I remembered another one of my high school teachers who taught at the same time as Muffareh, but that teacher was just passive. In his reading class, students took turns reading aloud. I remember that I was reading nicely waiting for some encouragement and praise. None of that happened. In front of the microphone in the radio station, I wondered why he had not done anything positive to encourage me. Even though I was not teaching, I found myself thinking about teaching effectiveness and teachers' behaviors. Thus, when I started teaching, I knew that I needed to learn more about the characteristics that effective teachers exhibit.

When I achieved my dream of teaching students, I realized that I had not needed as much immediacy working in media as in the academic field. When I began teaching, I realized that although I had a lot of immediacy, most of it was verbal. I knew that I had a general problem in delivering my nonverbal cues directly and clearly. I was also aware that skillful nonverbal communication was of the utmost importance. This awareness has driven me to research and explore the field of nonverbal immediacy, especially in the classroom. Years after I met him, my teacher Mufarreh has continued to influence me to concentrate on teacher effectiveness and explore it thoroughly.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses nonverbal communication, nonverbal immediacy, teacher nonverbal immediacy, the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale, instructor credibility, and the Instructor Credibility Scale. This chapter includes a definition of nonverbal communication, a review of the development of the immediacy effect concept, an overview of research relating to teacher immediacy, and an explanation of the nonverbal immediacy measurement instrument, the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale. It also includes an argument for the importance of teacher credibility and its impact on the college classroom context, and it includes an explanation of the credibility measurement instrument, the Teacher Credibility Scale.

A successful classroom can be conceptualized by first understanding the role of the teacher. Richmond (2002) stated that "the role of the teacher in educational systems is to create learning environments in which the probability of the desired achievements is enhanced" (p. 1). Hendrix (1997) reported "teachers play a critical role in the cognitive, behavioral, and affective development of students" (p. 253). Teachers are vitally important to the success of their classroom and students.

Effective teacher communication is the cornerstone of a successful classroom. Knowing how to communicate in class is the key to successful interactions between teachers and their students. Many researchers have asserted that communication and teaching are completely inseparable. Communication in the classroom, according to Cooper and Simonds (2003), is "the very essence of teaching and learning" (as cited in

Fiedler, 2007, p. 3). Furthermore, Hurt, Scott, and McCroskey (1978) stated that there is

a "difference between knowing and teaching, and that difference is communication in the

classroom" (as cited in Fiedler, 2007, p. 1).

Nonverbal immediacy is associated positively with important dimensions of the

educational context. Teel (2011) stated that numerous studies have established the

relationship between teacher immediacy and student learning. Much research has

indicated that the increased use of immediacy behaviors by teachers is associated with

higher levels of effective and cognitive learning by students (Teel, 2011). The large body

of research on teacher immediacy has generated significant results (Richmond, 2002).

Richmond (2002) has communicated with more than 50,000 teachers, business persons,

and government personnel about what usually works and does not work in the learning

situation. She listed a number of important generalizations for teacher immediacy

research:

> Teacher immediacy behaviors can be used effectively to get students to do what
> we want them to do, so long as we are truly engaging in immediacy behaviors and
> we continue to use nonverbal and verbal immediacy behaviors throughout the
> course. Students are drawn to teachers they trust and perceive as competent and
> caring. Students avoid teachers that they do not trust or perceive as competent,
> caring, and responsive. Teachers immediacy behavior gives the teacher positive
> forms of behavioral control, rather than using coercive or antisocial teacher
> strategies. Immediacy in large part determines the amount power and affect
> (liking) that a teacher has with students. Students usually will comply with, rather
> than resist, reasonable teacher requests, if the teacher is liked, respected, and
> admired by her or his students. (Richmond, 2002, pp. 65-66)

Nonverbal Communication

Much of communication studies research has concentrated on the significant

importance of nonverbal communication. Scholars and researchers have defined

nonverbal communication and described its multiple characteristics. Burgoon and Saine (1978) defined nonverbal communication as "those attributes or actions of humans, other than the use of words themselves, which have socially shared meaning, are intentionally sent or interpreted as intentional, are consciously sent or consciously received, and have the potential for feedback from the receiver" (p.9). Moore, Hickson, and Stacks (2010) asserted that "nonverbal communication is the portion of the communication process that involves the sending and receiving of messages that are not words or part of our language system. Mottet and Richmond (2002) stated that nonverbal messages "remain outside of our conscious awareness" (p. 49). Teel (2010) stated that nonverbal messages are generally uncontrollable and unintentional. Researchers confirm that nonverbal messages do not exist alone, but are also associated with verbal messages and with the messages' receivers. Mehrabian (1972) stated that nonverbal behavior "refers to actions as distinct from speech. It thus includes facial expressions, hand and arm gestures, postures, positions, and various movements of the body or the legs and feet" (as cited Teel, 2011, p. 14). Therefore, we can see nonverbal communication helps make the communication process a very complicated process.

Previous studies have assessed the significant role of nonverbal communication. Hall (1959) stated that "the importance of understanding the use of nonverbal message systems has long been recognized; their functions are referred to as a silent language" (as cited in McLean, 2007, p.18). Researchers have offered various reasons for the significance of nonverbal communication. Some of those reasons include giving a first impression, providing a universal language system, being the first form of

communication between human beings, and being more truthful and less risky than

verbal communication in some situations (Teel, 2011). Burgoon, Buller, and Woodall

(1996) stated "some researchers believe that successful communication relies on the

ability of individuals to use and interpret nonverbal messages" (as cited in Teel, 2011, p.

14). Burgoon and Hoobler (2002) reported the following findings about the importance of

nonverbal encoding and decoding skills in interpersonal relationships:

> Nonverbal encoding and decoding skills are strong predictors of popularity,
> attraction, and psychosocial well-being. Nonverbally skilled senders are more
> successful in deceiving and influencing others. Encoding and decoding skills are
> related to sex and gender. Race, education, and intelligence do not appear to be
> related to encoding and decoding skills, but age, occupation, and training [are
> related]. Encoding and decoding abilities are correlated. Those who are better
> senders tend to be better receivers and vice versa, but the relationship is a modest
> one. (p. 241)

Mottet, Beebe, Raffeld, and Paulsel (2004) asserted that verbal messages function

to convey the content of the message whereas nonverbal messages function to establish

the relationship (p. 29). Guerrero, DeVito, and Hecht (1999) described several functions

of nonverbal messages: "to create impressions, manage interaction, express emotions,

send relational messages, deceive and detect deception, and send messages of power and

persuasion" (as cited in Teel, 2011, p. 15).

Facial Expression

 Facial expression is one of the important concepts in the body of nonverbal

communication studies. Leathers and Eaves (2008) declared that the search for meaning

in interpersonal relationships begins and ends with facial expression. Ekman and Friesen

(1975) outlined three types of facial signals: static, slow, and rapid. Static signals include

the permanent features of the face including skin color; face shape; bone structure; and

size, shape, and location of facial features. Slow signals refer to the changes in facial

appearance in relation to time and including wrinkles, changes in skin texture, and

changes in muscle tone. Rapid signals are based on movements of the facial muscles

which only cause temporary changes in facial appearance. Hansen (2011) stated that "the

human face is capable of producing 250,000 expressions" (p. 9).

<u>Eye Contact</u>

Eye contact has occupied a large portion of the nonverbal communication studies

because eyesight is one of the most important communicative senses. Hansen (2011)

reported that "whether eyes are windows to the soul is debatable, but experts agree that

people use their eyes as the primary medium for nonverbal communication" (p. 9).

Leathers and Eaves (2008) declared that "eye behaviors clearly stand out as one of the

primary nonverbal features in our human interaction" (p. 53). According to Hansen

(2011), "instead of trying to interpret the entire facial expression, many people focus on

the speaker's eyes" (p. 9). Richmond and McCroskey (2004) stated that eyes scan to

collect information, establish relationships, express emotions, and control and regulate

interactions. Hansen (2011) stated that increased eye contact is associated with several

significant values, and its interpretation differs among cultures:

> Increased eye contact communicates to others that the person is dynamic,
> approachable, extroverted, sociable, and believable. Saudi Arabians maintain
> strong eye contact with half-closed lids. Japanese, Koreans, Thais, Puerto Ricans,
> West Indians, African-Americans, and Native Americans avoid extended eye
> contact because they believe it's rude. (p. 9)

Body Movement and Gestures

Body movement and gestures play a significant role in supporting the meanings of messages through the communication process. Ekman and Friesen (1975) classified body movements and gestures into five categories based on type of usage, origin, and form of coding: emblems, illustrators, affect displays, regulators, and adaptors. Hansen (2011) stated that "the number of emblematic gestures used in different countries varies, ranging from less than 100 gestures in middle-class America to over 250 in [Palestine]. Although many gestures are universal, each country has unique gestures" (p. 9).

Personal Appearance

Much nonverbal communication research has also focused on personal appearance. According to Teel (2011), "Personal appearance is a significant element in the formation of a first impression" (p. 18). Leathers and Eaves (2008) stated that nonverbal communication is influenced by our body cathexis or the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with our body and personal appearance. Moore et al. (2010) stated that physical appearance includes body type, body image, level of physical attractiveness, type of clothing, use of cosmetics, hair style, and other accessories.

Vocalics

The study of voice also has occupied a significant portion of the nonverbal communication studies. Moore et al. (2010) stated that vocalics or the study of vocal sound that are not language includes accents, emphasis, pitch, rate of speech, pauses or other vocalizations that add meaning to verbal communication. Anderson (1999) asserted that vocalics is important to the accurate interpretation of verbal communication. He also

stated that vocalics also includes nonverbal characteristics such as laughing, sighing, yawning, crying, and vocal segregates such as "ah," "uh-huh," and "um."

<u>Haptic Communication</u>

Tactile contact or haptic communication is a very powerful type of nonverbal communication. Haptic communication is the study of touch in communication. DeFleur, Kearney, and Plax (1998) explain that touch is an important source of showing comfort and reassurance. Although haptic communication is a powerful behavior, it is sensitive and dangerous at the same time. Teel (2011) stated that "touch communicates positive emotions showing attraction; but, touch can be used negatively to communicate hostility or aggression" (p. 18). Hansen (2011) suggested that "touching is the most intense and misunderstood form of nonverbal communication. Touching is an intrinsic part of developing the bonds that are necessary for normal social development" (p. 10).

<u>Proxemics</u>

Proxemics is a term associated with the study of distance and its role as an important aspect of the nonverbal communication. These behaviors play a role in face-to-face communication. Teel (2011) stated that researchers define proxemics as "the way individuals communicate through the use of space and distance" (p. 17). Richmond and McCroskey (2004) described proxemics as the use, control, and sharing of space and the corresponding effect of those behaviors on the sending and receiving of nonverbal messages.

Chronemics

Time affects the communication process directly. The study of this area is referred to as chronemics. Richmond and McCroskey (2004) defined chronemics as "how we perceive, use, study, structure, interpret, and react to messages of time" (p. 177). DeFleur et al. (1998) stated that chronemics is a nonverbal behavior which includes guidelines, ethical beliefs, and personality differences relating to time as well as the study of how people schedule and use time.

Nonverbal Immediacy

Immediacy is one of the most important topics in communication research. Richmond, McCroskey, and Johnson (2003a) stated that during the past 25 years, immediacy, primarily nonverbal immediacy behaviors, has been a leading topic of research among communication professionals. The importance of nonverbal communication behaviors in general has inspired several researchers to study nonverbal immediacy specifically.

Mehrabian (1969) explained immediacy behaviors as behaviors that "enhance closeness and nonverbal interaction with another" (p. 302). Mehrabian (1971) based the immediacy principle on the belief that "people are drawn toward persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer" (p. 1). Richmond and McCroskey (2000) offered a revised version of this principle:

> The more communicators employ immediate behaviors, the more others will like, evaluate highly, and prefer such communicators; and the less communicator's employ immediate behaviors, the mores will dislike, evaluate, negatively, and reject such communicators. We prefer to call this idea the "principle of immediate communication. (p. 191)

Nonverbal immediacy is the level of affection, liking, or esteem shown by people through nonverbal cues.

Several nonverbal cues are associated with the immediacy principle. Mehrabian (1971) listed some immediacy behaviors such as standing close to a person, leaning toward another, touching, and eye contact. Anderson et al. (1979) described additional immediacy behaviors such as reduction in proxemic distance, increases in touch, increases in eye contact, positive facial expressions, increases in gestures, bodily relaxation, purposeful body movements, positioning of head and body toward others, head nodding, and vocal expressiveness. Kelley and Gorham (1988) stated that the presence of close physical distance, leaning forward, head nodding, and increased eye contact are classified as high immediacy conditions and the absence of these behaviors is low immediacy conditions. Andersen (1999) asserted that spending time with another person signals immediacy because of the closeness and availability that is communicated.

Immediacy behaviors correlate with positive interactions in human communication. Mehrabian (1971) reported that immediacy behaviors in communication "involve an increase in the sensory stimulation between two persons" (p. 3). According to Rocca (2007), immediacy is positively correlated with some dimensions like "perceived instructor competence, caring and trustworthiness." Cole (2000) stated that individual attitude toward the use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors is related to temperament. He

also indicated that personality may be a significant factor in determining the level of nonverbal immediacy displayed by each individual.

Some studies have reported the gender differences between men and women when it comes to immediacy in general. Menzel (1999) stated that while students perceived better learning from an instructor of the same gender, the effect was strongly mediated by instructor verbal immediacy behavior. In a study about the nonverbal behavior and the vertical dimension of social relations, Hall, Coats, and LeBeau (2005) stated that comparison of gender differences in nonverbal behavior are limited. Henley (1977) theorized that men's nonverbal behavior is characterized by a sense of authority and women's behavior by compliance or acquiescence (as cited in Kalbfleisch & Cody, 1995, p. 64). Kalbfleisch and Cody (1995) cited several studies that support this theory. Some of the studies suggest the following:

> Men display more visual dominance than women, whereas women maintain a high degree of attentive gaze toward others; women display more appeasement or submission gestures such as smiling and the head tilt; women claim less space, are touched more, and tolerate more spatial intrusions than men; women use more rising intonation and questioning vocal patterns rather than authoritative ones; women are silent (or silenced), talk less, and interpreted more than men, giving them access to the conversational floor. (P. 64)

Although Kalbfleisch and Cody (1995) cited these previous research results in their book "*Gender, Power, and Communication in Human Relationships*," they suggest that there was relative lack of differences in the meanings attributed to male and female immediacy behaviors. Kalbfleisch and Cody (1995) also indicated that touch especially is among the most nonverbal immediacy cues that could make the difference between men and women.

Instructor Nonverbal Immediacy

Teaching without talking is a high level of pedagogical skill. Hansen (2011) asserted that a "teacher must learn how to teach without talking" (p. 7). Hansen (2011) stated that "teachers will be better able to teach what they preach once they learn to teach without talk" (p. 11). Nonverbal immediacy behaviors can aid in the achievement of the principle of teaching without talking.

Teachers who apply immediacy in their classrooms act in a positive way to break the ice and reduce the distance between themselves and their students. Anderson et al. (1979) and Gorham (1988) stated that teacher immediacy refers to teachers' verbal and nonverbal communication attempting to reduce the physical and psychological distance between teachers and students. Burroughs (2007) defined an "immediate teacher" as one "who seems relaxed, animated, and vocally expressive during class lectures and discussion, moreover, this teacher smiles frequently, engages in a lot of eye contact and is generally perceived as friendly and approachable" (p. 456). Burroughs (2007) defined a "nonimmediate teacher" as one who "seems tense, reserved, and vocally unexpressive during class lectures and discussions. Moreover, the teacher seldom smiles, avoids looking directly at students and is generally perceived as remote, aloof and unapproachable" (p. 456).

Not all nonverbal behaviors or contexts are associated with immediacy. Several types of nonverbal communication do not apply to nonverbal immediacy as it is defined by communication scholars. Researchers have indicated some noteworthy nonverbal behaviors in the classroom such as "lesson organization, clarity of explanations, teacher

enthusiasm, and a pleasant classroom climate have all been correlated with positive student outcomes" (Fiedler, 2007, p. 1, 2) and yet some of these behaviors and contexts do not apply to nonverbal immediacy.

Some of the teacher's immediacy behaviors include using diverse illustrations with verbal messages, using a dynamic delivery style to engage student's attention for a long time, and using an open body position (Teel, 2011). Richmond and McCroskey (2004) suggested that gestures and movements displayed by teachers display extremely useful in adding interest and enthusiasm to their lectures. Richmond, Gorham and McCroskey (1987) stated that vocal expressiveness, smiling, and a relaxed posture provide the most positive effect on student learning.

The relationship between nonverbal immediacy and the prime educational dimensions has been clearly illustrated by previous studies. Teel (2011) reported that numerous studies have confirmed the relationship between nonverbal immediacy and motivation, affective learning, and cognitive learning. McCroskey et al. (2002) argued that students who are taught by immediate teachers demonstrate a higher level of cognitive learning than students who are taught by non-immediate teachers. Hansen (2011) asserted that "when teachers' verbal messages are incongruent with their nonverbal behaviors, students will believe what they see instead of what they hear" (p. 7). McCroskey et al. (2002) determined that "students who have more immediate teachers are more motivated and develop more positive affect for both the content taught and the teacher than do students with less immediate teachers" (pp. 387-388). Richmond (2002) stated that if a teacher uses appropriate nonverbal and verbal behaviors with his or her

students to increase the level of immediacy, then students generally feel closer to the
teacher.

Instructor Facial Expressions and Eye Contact

Facial expressions and eye contact are important components of nonverbal
communication research, and they are important in the classroom as well. According to
Teel (2011), "teachers' facial expressions also affect how students feel about the
classroom environment" (p. 21, 22). Hansen (2011) stated that "lack of eye contact, or
civil inattention, sends the message that the teacher acknowledges the person's presence
but doesn't want to communicate" (p. 9). Teel (2011) asserted that "teachers who
establish eye contact with their students are viewed as interested and immediate" (p. 22).
Hansen (2011) described some ways teachers can "keep an eye" on their students:

> Establish frequent eye contact with every student to ensure they're paying
> attention and understanding the lesson. Maintain steady eye contact and focus
> entirely on what the student is trying to communicate. Recognize that some
> students' cultural heritage might prohibit them from making eye contact with an
> authority figure, especially when they're being reprimanded. (p. 9)

Instructor Body Movement and Gestures

Body movement and gestures play a significant role in supporting meanings of
messages through the communication process. An animated teacher uses many gestures
while teaching. Richmond (2002) argued that "the teacher's delivery style should be
animated and dynamic, and gesturing is one method of achieving this" (p. 71). She stated
that "instructors who have an open body position communicate to their students that they
are receptive and immediate, whereas teachers who fold in or keep a closed body position

are perceived as nonimmediate and unreceptive" (Richmond, 2002, p. 71). Hansen (2011)

offered some guidelines for using gestures in the classroom:

> Keep up-to-date with the meanings and usage of "pop" gestures, such as rappers'
> hand signs. Use gestures carefully. Some students might misperceive innocuous
> gestures; adolescents can find sexual innuendos in almost everything. Use
> American Sign Language gestures to facilitate classroom management (that is,
> line up, bathroom, sit down). (p. 10)

Instructor Haptic Communication

Haptic communication, or communication through touch, is a powerful form of

nonverbal communication. At the same time, it is one of the most misunderstood and

dangerous communication behaviors. Hansen (2011) stated that "teachers can use

appropriate touching to communicate affection toward their students and to establish a

caring classroom community. Positive, appropriate touching demonstrates that teachers

care about students' well-being" (p. 11). Hansen (2011) also discussed the sensitivity of

touch from a teacher to students in the classroom:

> Touch-deprived children may grow into young bullies and destructive, violent
> adults. Although teachers want to reach out to these students, they're warned to
> "teach but don't touch" their students because of the mistaken belief that all forms
> of touching have sexual implications. This myth is reinforced through television,
> movies, and music. The truth is that touching has multiple nonsexual applications
> as well. Barbers and beauticians groom people; physicians use touch to examine
> patients; politicians shake hands and hold babies; cashiers touch customers' hands
> when returning change; and athletes bump bodies and give high fives to celebrate
> scores. People also use touch for greetings, congratulations, conversational cues,
> rituals and rites of passage, and play. (p. 11)

Hansen (2011) offered some suggestions for teaching through touching:

> Ask students' permission before touching them. Give them a choice of a hug,
> handshake, or knuckle bump. Respect their decision. Limit touching to the
> students' heads, shoulders, hands, and upper backs. Don't make accidental contact
> with the "danger zones." Leave the classroom door open and avoid being alone
> with children. (p. 10)

Instructor Proxemics

 Proxemics plays a role in all face-to-face communication, including

communication that occurs in the classroom. Hansen (2011) argued that "teachers

demonstrate how they feel about students and colleagues by adjusting their interpersonal

distance" (p. 8). Hansen (2011) stated that:

> Teachers' proximal boundaries are determined by their cultures, personalities, and
> relationships. When contact-oriented teachers interact with close friends or
> comfort students, they invite others into their intimate space so they can touch and
> converse privately. They increase rapport by directly facing students, maintaining
> eye contact, sitting at the same plane level, and leaning toward students to
> decrease physical and emotional distance. (p. 8)

Teel (2011) confirmed that "a teacher who always communicates with students from

behind a podium or desk is not viewed as friendly, receptive, and immediate" (p. 22).

Hansen (2011) suggested some ways for teachers to use proximity to enhance their

classroom communication:

> Leave the desk behind. Stand among the students. Sit side-by-side with parents
> when conferencing to indicate that they're partners in their children's education.
> Maintain eye contact and greet students, staff, and other educators in the hallway
> to demonstrate respect and build relationships. Stand near every student every day
> to increase accessibility, build relationships, and monitor students' academic and
> behavioral progress. (p. 8)

<div align="center">Nonverbal Immediacy Scale</div>

 The Nonverbal Immediacy Scale was developed by Virginia Richmond, James

McCroskey and Aaron Johnson in 2003. Richmond et al. (2003a) described the

"Nonverbal Immediacy Scale" as a 26-item instrument used to determine the level of

nonverbal immediacy. It is a self-report or other-report instrument for measuring the level

of nonverbal immediacy. According to Teel (2011), "the Self-Report version is designed

for the participant to evaluate how immediate his or her communication behavior is. The

Other-Report version is used for an observer to evaluate designated subjects level of

immediacy in communication behavior" (p. 38). Richmond et al. (2003a) suggested that

the instrument can be used in a variety of settings with high reliability and validity.

Regarding the Self-Report version, Richmond, McCroskey, and Johnson (2003c)

explained:

> This is the most up-to-date measure of nonverbal immediacy as a self-report. Alpha reliability estimates around .90 should be expected. This measure has more face validity than previous instruments because it has more and more diverse items. Its predictive validity also is excellent. When using this instrument it is important to recognize that the difference in these self-reports between females and males is statistically significant and socially significant (that is, substantial variance in the scores on this instrument can be attributed to biological sex). Whether these differences are "real" (that is, females may actually be more nonverbally immediate than males) or a function of social desirability (that is, females think they should be more immediate than males think they should be) or a function of actual behavior has not yet been determined (September, 2003. para.1, 2).

Regarding the Other-Report version, Richmond, McCroskey, and Johnson

(2003b) explained:

> This is the most up-to-date measure of nonverbal immediacy as an other- or observer-report. Earlier measures have had problematic alpha reliability estimates. This instrument may be used for any target person (most earlier measures were designed only for observations of teachers). Alpha reliability estimates around .90 should be expected. This measure also has more face validity than previous instruments because it has more and more diverse items. Its predictive validity is also excellent. When using this instrument it is important to recognize that the difference in these observer-reports between females and males is not statistically different. Hence, it is unnecessary to employ biological sex of the person completing the instrument in data analyses involving this instrument. It is recommended that the COMBINED norms be employed in interpreting the results employing this instrument. However, sex differences of the target persons on whom the instrument is completed may be meaningful. This possibility has not been explored in the research to date (September, 2003. para.1, 2).

Instructor Credibility

Teacher credibility affects students' perceptions of their teachers. Thus, credibility affects many educational dimensions. Bassett and Smythe (1979) asserted that teacher credibility is formed in "the mind of students," and teacher self-esteem is personal and internal (p. 179). Powell (1965) stated that "in the case of compliance with the position of a high credibility source, that source's credibility provides justification for having compliance; dissonance is not heightened, and attitude change is less than when compliance is induced by a low credibility source" (as cited in Parise & Haley, 2010, p. 29).

The definition of credibility consists of several dimensions. Thweatt and McCroskey (1998) stated that "Aristotle refers to credibility as ethos and suggested it consists of three dimensions: intelligence, character and goodwill" (as cited in Parise & Haley, 2010, p. 29). McCroskey and Young (1981) defined "credibility as the attitude toward a sender or source of communication held at a given time by a receiver" (as cited in Parise & Haley, 2010, p. 29). McCroskey and Teven (1999) noted "competence, trustworthiness and goodwill as the three antecedents of credibility" (as cited in Parise & Haley, 2010, p. 29). McCroskey, Holdridge, and Toomb (1974) defined teacher credibility as "a composite of character, sociability, composure, extroversion, and competence" (as cited in McLean, 2007, p. 17). McCroskey (1992) suggested that "the teacher's credibility was determined by three primary dimensions: caring, competence, and trustworthiness" (as cited in McLean, 2007, p. 17, 18).

Nitcavic and Koerner (1990) suggested "the continued study of teacher credibility as one potential avenue for exploring teachers' abilities to achieve desired affective, behavioral, and cognitive educational goals for their students" (as cited in Hendrix, 1997, p. 252). Nitcavic and Koerner (1990) also asserted that "expanding the traditional view of credibility from audience perceptions of a particular speaker to include the self-concerns and self-evaluations of teachers regarding their classroom communication would contribute to an understanding of teachers as communicators" (as cited in Hendrix, 1997, p. 252). Hendrix (1997) stated that "it may be worthwhile to study credibility using a qualitative method and student-generated rather than researcher-generated definitions of the construct" (p. 252).

Previous studies found a correlation between credibility and nonverbal communication in general. As Richmond (2002) explained, it is good for teachers to wear formal attire at the beginning of the course until they build enough credibility in their students' minds. Studying the nonverbal immediacy in this research will produce a conception of the effect of instructors' perceptions of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility in the college classroom.

Instructor Credibility Scale

The Credibility Scale was created by James McCroskey and Jason Teven in 1999 (see Appendix A, p. 97). This scale is an 18-item measure of ethos/credibility. This instrument measures three dimensions of credibility: competence, trustworthiness, and caring. Six items measure competence, (e.g., "Untrained/Trained"), six items measure trustworthiness (e.g., "Honest/Dishonest"), and six items measure caring (e.g., "Cares

about me/Doesn't care about me"). McCroskey and Teven (1999) explained that competence refers to perceived knowledge and expertise, trustworthiness or character refers to honesty, and caring refers to the instructor's concerns for his or her students' best interests. Schrodt et al. (2009) reported that "the validity and reliability of the ethos/credibility measure is well-documented" (p. 358).

The Credibility Scale has provided valuable results regarding several variables associated with instructor's credibility. McLean (2007) stated that previous research suggests that positive teacher credibility can be measured by variables such as verbal and nonverbal immediacy. Witt and Kerssen-Griep (2011) stated that previous studies confirmed "a consistent, moderate association between perceived instructor credibility and a variety of other teacher behaviors/characteristics and students outcomes" (p.78). They also reported that "credibility has been found to mediate the effects of instructors' prosocial communication behaviors-including teacher nonverbal immediacy cues-on students' learning outcomes" (Witt & Kerssen-Griep, 2011, p.78).

<u>Pilot Study</u>

In my pilot study, students completed surveys and I observed and interviewed classroom instructors. The purpose of the pilot study was to explore the relationship between nonverbal immediacy and credibility. During the pilot study, I attempted to answer five research questions: (1) How much do instructors use nonverbal immediacy in the college classroom? (2) How do instructors perceive the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility? (3) What are students' perspectives toward their instructors' nonverbal immediacy in the college classroom? (4) What are students'

perspectives toward their instructors' credibility in the college classroom? (5) What is the relationship between instructors' use of nonverbal immediacy and their credibility in the college classroom?

Multiple methods were required to answer these questions, thus I employed three research techniques: observation, interviews, and questionnaires. I intended to qualitatively explore instructors' use of nonverbal immediacy, first by observing their classes, second by interviewing them to explore their perceptions of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility, and third, by asking their students to complete a questionnaire about the instructor's credibility.

Six instructors, three males and three females were chosen as a convenience sample. Some efforts were made to choose instructors regarding specific criteria including sex, experience, and classes taught. Each instructor was observed for one class period, and then interviewed and later taped in his or her office for approximately 40 minutes to answer questions regarding the research values.

The Teacher Credibility Scales (McCroskey & Teven, 1999) was distributed to students of two of the instructors who were interviewed. About 16 students from each of the two instructors' classes participated in rating their instructors' credibility. The Teacher Credibility Scale does not include nonverbal immediacy behaviors. Although this questionnaire lacked specific measures of nonverbal immediacy, observations during the pilot study generated several useful insights that reconfigured the direction of this research. Those insights included the following findings:

- female instructors use nonverbal immediacy behaviors more than male instructors do.

- non-U.S. American instructors use nonverbal immediacy behaviors more than U.S. American instructors do.

- male and female students perceive male instructors as more credible than female instructors even when a female instructor uses extensive nonverbal immediacy behaviors.

These findings provoked many new questions. Does a female instructor practice her nonverbal immediacy with a consciousness about its importance or for other reasons? Does a U.S. American instructor perceive the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact of his or her credibility? What about a U.S. American male instructor? Does he think that male dominant principle gives him some support and makes him save his energy from doing more efforts? Does a non-U.S. American instructor see the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on his or her credibility more than their United-States American peers?

These findings and inquiries, in addition to discussion with my thesis committee, clarified the direction of this research. I narrowed the focus of my study to explore how instructors perceive the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility.

Research Question

In the pilot study, I explored five research questions: (1) how much do instructors use nonverbal immediacy in the college classroom? (2) How do instructors perceive the

importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility? (3) What are students' perspectives toward their instructors' nonverbal immediacy in the college classroom? (4) What are students' perspectives toward their instructors' credibility in the college classroom? (5) What is the relationship between instructors' use of nonverbal immediacy and their credibility in the college classroom? As the project evolved, I reduced the research questions to two that focused on classroom effectiveness: (1) How do instructors perceive the importance of nonverbal immediacy in the college classroom? (2) How do instructors perceive the impact of nonverbal immediacy on their credibility in the college classroom?

Ultimately, I decided that I wanted to focus on instructors' perceptions of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and their perception of the impact of nonverbal immediacy on their credibility as they affect teacher effectiveness. Thus, this study was guided by the following research question: What characteristics do instructors apply to their own teaching effectiveness?

To answer this question, I asked instructors to identify their own teaching behaviors and the characteristics they associate with teacher credibility and nonverbal immediacy, two well-documented measures of teacher effectiveness. My research differs from previous research because I asked instructors to identify their own specific behaviors and their perceptions of the behaviors associated with teacher credibility and nonverbal immediacy.

Summary

Instructor credibility is important in higher education because instructor credibility affects student success. Credibility plays an important role in the academic field, and one of the most significant methods to achieve credibility is communicating effectively with students through nonverbal immediacy.

The review of literature presented a preview of nonverbal communication, nonverbal immediacy, instructor nonverbal immediacy, Nonverbal Immediacy Scale, instructor credibility, Instructors Credibility Scale, and the research question. In addition, this review explained the development of the immediacy principle, provided an overview of nonverbal immediacy behaviors, summarized the research relating to teacher immediacy, and presented a description of the nonverbal immediacy measurement instrument, the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale. The chapter also included an overview of the principle of instructor credibility and presented a description of the instructor credibility measurement instrument, the Instructor Credibility Scale.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter emphasizes the importance of the qualitative approach and explains

why and how this study uses qualitative methods for collecting data. This chapter also

provides an overview of the participants and the study procedures, including data

collection and data analysis.

Qualitative Study

Other research has confirmed that teacher credibility is associated with behavior.

Hendrix (1997) found that students "assessed credibility on the basis of a professor's

communicative behavior in the classroom (rhetorical ethos) or the reputation that

preceded him rather than automatically assuming credibility on the basis of his "professor"

status" (p. 286). Although teacher behaviors play a significant role in promoting teacher

credibility, "few studies have been conducted that focused on the process of establishing,

maintaining, or losing credibility as a classroom teacher" (Hendrix, 1997, p. 266).

Hendrix (1997) noted that "professor credibility is rarely studied in instructional

communication" (p. 251). I chose to focus on the impact of nonverbal immediacy

behaviors because the exploration of instructors' perceptions of the relationship between

nonverbal immediacy and credibility addresses gaps in the existing research.

Other studies have used quantitative methods to evaluate the relationship between

teacher immediacy and credibility. James McCroskey studied teacher nonverbal

immediacy and credibility, and he developed quantitative scales for measuring both

values. He has suggested that qualitative research can provide necessary support for

quantitative data: according to McCroskey (1994), "some more open-ended qualitative assessments often are useful supplements to the quantitative data" (p. 62).

In contrast to quantitative techniques, qualitative methods are particularly suitable for probing emotional responses. McCroskey (1994) acknowledged that quantitative methods have limited value for measuring affective assessment. McCroskey (1994) wrote that "the best way to find out how someone feels about something is to ask them" (p. 58). Qualitative interviews can help researchers to more deeply investigate the behaviors, feelings, and attitudes of research participants. Intensive interviews are an especially effective tool for studying emotions and attitudes (Rubin, Rubin, Piele, & Haridakis, 2010).

McCroskey and Combs (1969); McCroskey, Holdridge, and Toomb (1974); and McCroskey and Young (1981) studied credibility, and "after extensive work in the area of credibility, McCroskey concluded that credibility could be disregarded as a relevant construct for further factor analytic study (as cited in Hendrix, 1997, p. 252). However, Hendrix (1997) argued that "it may be worthwhile to study credibility using a qualitative method and student-generated rather than researcher-generated definitions of the construct" (p. 252). According to Hendrix (1997), "the relationship between teacher behavior (e.g., power and immediacy) and students affect, motivation, and learning has been studied extensively using quantitative methods" (p. 251). Hendrix (1997) also reported the scarcity of qualitative studies in the area of teacher credibility. She also confirmed the complexity of the classroom as evidenced by the education research.

Much of the research on teacher credibility is old, and very little of that research has used qualitative methods. There is support for studying credibility inductively by interviewing teachers about the characteristics of teacher effectiveness and focusing on teachers' self-assessments of their credibility. This study attempted to rectify the lack of qualitative research and add information to the body of knowledge on teacher effectiveness. It qualitatively explored the instructors' perceptions of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility. As a foundation for this study, I relied on existing instruments for measuring nonverbal immediacy—Richmond et al. (2003a) Nonverbal Immediacy Scale—and for measuring teacher credibility— McCroskey and Teven (1999) Teacher Credibility Scale.

<p style="text-align:center"><u>Study Procedures</u></p>

I began working on a pilot study after receiving IRB approval (see Appendix B, p. 98). During the pilot study, I observed six instructors' classes using the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale Observer-Report (NIS-O) as a foundation for measuring their nonverbal immediacy behaviors in the classroom (see Appendix C, p. 99). These observations were used as a springboard for generating questions for interviews with the instructors. Interview questions focused on instructors' use and perception of the importance of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom and the impact of immediacy on their credibility (see Appendix D, p. 101).

Initial interviews were conducted during the fall semester of 2012. I recruited the participants through email (see Appendix E, p. 104). Interviews were conducted in instructors' offices during their office hours or during their free time. Interviews were

taped, and they ranged from 30 to 50 minutes in length. For the first two interviewees, there were some missing questions related to nonverbal immediacy behaviors so I later re-interviewed the two instructors including the missing questions.

Interviews in the pilot study included questions about instructor credibility and nonverbal immediacy. The interviews began with demographic questions about the instructor's position, years he or she had taught, and their teaching experience. Interviews included general questions about credibility and the instructors' nonverbal behaviors. Interviews included questions about the instructors' teaching styles and personality characteristics that contributed to or detracted from their credibility. Some questions required the instructors to explain how they showed or avoided showing care for their students and their students' wellbeing. Interviews also included questions about instructor behaviors that influence teaching effectiveness. Interviewees were asked to rank their credibility as perceived by their students and by themselves in comparison to their peers in the department and to all instructors at the university. The instructors were also asked to rank their use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom.

As I considered the results of the pilot study, I decided that a qualitative study would yield more answers than a mixed method study. I discovered that I was more concerned about teacher effectiveness and instructors' perceptions of their own effectiveness and behaviors. Thus, I reduced the number of research questions from five to one, to focus on data that I thought would add more knowledge to the literature on teacher effectiveness. My refined research question was: What characteristics do instructors apply to their own teaching effectiveness?

At the urging of my thesis committee, the interview questions also evolved (see Appendix F, p. 105). Later interviews included more open-ended questions about words or images that came to mind when instructors thought of effective classroom teaching and the strategies they used to ensure effective classroom teaching. They include questions about characteristics they associate with having credibility as teachers. Interviews also included questions about teachers they had who they found to be particularly engaging and credible and the characteristics of those teachers. I also included some questions about their behaviors in class and how they and their students perceived their credibility and nonverbal immediacy.

Additional interviews were conducted during the spring semester of 2013, after I emailed instructors the recruiting letter and got their approval. Four additional instructors elected to participate. Interviews were conducted and taped in instructors' offices during their office hours or their free time. Interviews ranged between 20 and 30 minutes. Upon analyzing instructors' responses to the new interview questions, many similarities to the first six interviews were found. Two of the four additional interviewees, a male and a female, were interviewed twice with both the old and the new questions to confirm the similarities between both interview questions. After comparing these responses, I set up interviews with two additional participants. All instructors signed the consent form (see Appendix G, p. 108). Despite the changes in the interview questions, the data collected from all twelve participants were valuable in answering my research question; thus, I used the interviews with all twelve participants as I analyzed the data.

Participants

      All participants were instructors from a communication studies department at a mid-sized Midwestern university. Twelve instructors, including six males and six females, all of whom taught communication courses, formed the teacher sample population. Although the sample was one of convenience, efforts were made to ensure that the six instructors chosen represented a variety of perspectives; as I assembled the participants, I considered sex, experience, and classes taught to ensure that variety of viewpoints. Instructors were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identities. A brief preview of each instructor follows the summary table (see Table 1).

Table 1

Instructors' Characteristics

Instructor Name	Gender	Position	Years Teaching	Subject Taught
Jack	Male	Professor	36	Group Communication, Persuasion, and Communication Theories
Brian	Male	Associate Professor	30	Mass Communication and Electronic Media
Mike	Male	Professor	24	Mass Communication and Society and Electronic Media
Allen	Male	Professor	23	Journalism
Zach	Male	Adjunct Instructor	7	Electronic Media and Public Speaking
Nick	Male	Adjunct Instructor	5	Oral Communication and Research Methods
Cathy	Female	Associate Professor	32	Public Relations
Julia	Female	Instructors	32	Oral Communication and Interpersonal Communication
Megan	Female	adjunct instructor	25	Oral Communication
Molly	Female	Associate professor	19	Organizational Communication and Interpersonal Communication
Heather	Female	Instructor	9	Public Speaking and Interpersonal Communication
Ashley	Female	Instructor	9	Oral Communication, Performance Studies

Instructors' Preview

Following are brief descriptions of the twelve instructors who formed the research

sample. Instructors are listed by sex and level of experience, beginning with the male

instructors and ending with the female instructors.

Jack

Jack is a full professor. He has taught classes in group communication, persuasion,

and communication theories. He has been teaching communication classes for almost 36

years (see Appendix H, p. 110).

Jack's teaching emphasizes the lecture. He values preparedness and organization.

His teaching style is formal. According to Jack, an effective class is one that features

engaged students. Jack linked nonverbal immediacy to competence. On a scale of 1-7,

Jack ranked himself in the middle regarding his use of nonverbal immediacy in the

classroom. He also ranked himself in the middle regarding his students' perceptions of

his credibility and his own perception of his credibility as compared to the credibility of

other professors within his department and throughout the university.

Brian

Brian is an associate professor. He teaches classes in mass communication and

electronic media. He has been teaching communication classes for almost 30 years.

Brian believes in adapting teaching strategies to the subject and the students. He

described the use of videos, handouts, exercises, and lectures in his classroom. He stated

that he tries to make connections between his classes and other classes. Brian asserted

that he shows students that he wants to work with them. He said "always I try to promote

an environment where a student can communicate their position, communicate their input and safe doing so." In general, Brian implied that he does not work with students in dominating way.

Brian linked nonverbal immediacy with credibility in the following order: caring, competence, then trustworthiness. Most of Brian's responses were concentrated on the dimensions of caring at first and competence at second. On a scale of 1-7, Brian ranked himself above the middle regarding his use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. He ranked himself highly regarding his students' perceptions of his credibility and his own perception of his credibility as compared to the credibility of other professors within his department and throughout the university.

Mike

Mike is a professor. He teaches classes in mass communication and electronic media courses. He has been teaching communication classes for 24 years.

Mike described how he makes materials available on his classes' eLearning sites. To support the needs of students who prefer visual representations, he uses PowerPoint to create presentations and shares those documents online. Mike also noted that he alters his teaching strategies to meet the needs of small and large classes. Specifically, in large classes, he shares videos and news stories, but in small classes, he asks students to bring their own examples.

Mike linked nonverbal immediacy with credibility in the following order: competence, caring, then trustworthiness. Most of Mike's responses were concentrated on the dimensions of competence first and caring second. On a scale of 1-7, Mike ranked

himself above the middle regarding his use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. He gave himself the best rating regarding his students' perceptions of his credibility and his own perception of his credibility as compared to the credibility of other professors within his department and throughout the university.

Allen

Allen is a professor. He teaches classes in journalism. He has been teaching communication classes for almost 23 years. Allen likes and enjoys his teaching experience in his current university because of the nature of people. He said that people in his current university are friendlier than people in other places. Allen is originally from Africa. He said:

> I've had friends who have taught in other universities, friends from Africa, friends from the Middle East, friends from, uh Latino friends, who teach elsewhere and they tell me how the students really are indifferent to towards them because of their cultures and sometimes they talk of their accents and things like that.

Because some students are dismissive of professors from other countries, Allen asserted that he must be more effective to support his credibility. He described how he uses his publications to support his competence. He also noted that he uses many nonverbal immediacy behaviors and applies some of his culture's values in the classroom.

Most of Allen's responses regarding nonverbal immediacy were concentrated on the dimensions of competence and caring. On a scale of 1-7, Allen ranked himself highly regarding his use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. He also ranked himself highly regarding his students' perceptions of his credibility and his own perception of his credibility as compared to the credibility of other professors within his department and throughout the university.

Zach

Zach is an adjunct instructor. He teaches classes in electronic media and public speaking. He has been teaching communication classes for 7 years (see Appendix I, p. 117). Zach indicated that he thinks it is important to involve students and lead the class by examples and activities. He suggested that teachers should listen to their students, smile while taking to them, and give them confidence. Zach concentrated on his competence in the class. He asserted that he has to have energy toward the topic using his knowledge of the subject matter and his professionalism experience in TV broadcasting and production. Zach referred to the importance of teacher dressing up in the class.

Most of Zach's responses regarding nonverbal immediacy were concentrated on the dimensions of competence first and caring second. He had a degree of balance regarding his perception of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and competence and caring. On a scale of 1-7, Zach ranked himself highly regarding his use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. He also ranked himself highly regarding his students' perceptions of his credibility and his perception of his credibility as compared to the credibility of other professors in his department. He ranked himself above the middle regarding his perception of his credibility as compared to the credibility of all professors at his university.

Nick

Nick is an adjunct instructor. He teaches classes in oral communication and research methods. He has been teaching communication classes for 5 years. Nick indicated that the choice to be a formal or an informal teacher depends on the class.

Regarding teacher characteristics, Nick said that a teacher should be reliable, open, honest, adaptable, and creative. He stated that a teacher should listen to his or her students and treat them like adults. Regarding nonverbal behaviors, Nick indicated that he thinks such behaviors are important and teachers should be aware of the appropriate use of such behaviors. He described his teaching strategies as including a lot of interaction, having students teach, and making material practical and relevant.

Most of Nick's responses regarding nonverbal immediacy were concentrated on the dimensions of caring and trustworthiness first and then competence. On a scale of 1-7, Nick ranked himself highly regarding his use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. He also ranks himself highly regarding his students' perceptions of his credibility. He ranked himself above the middle regarding his perception of his credibility as compared to the credibility of other professors in his department and all professors at his university.

Cathy

Cathy is an associate professor. She teaches classes in public relations and interpersonal communication. She has been teaching for 32 years.

Cathy seemed to have a balance between her students' different needs. When she was asked during the interview about words or images come to mind when thinking of effective teaching, she responded, "fairness. Um, rigorousness with a great deal of flexibility. Kindness, humor, um, how do I say this? Um, strength with a soft glove, those are words." Regarding the caring dimension, in her responses, she used words such as entertainment, humor, compassion, and flexibility. She also described herself as animated and said that she uses facial expressions in class. Regarding the competence dimension,

she said that an instructor's credibility is supported by how believable they are in presenting their material.

Cathy linked nonverbal immediacy with all credibility dimensions moderately. On a scale of 1-7, Cathy ranked herself highly regarding her use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. She also ranked herself highly regarding her students' perceptions of her credibility and her own perception of her credibility as compared to that of the other professors in her department. She ranked herself above the middle regarding her perception of her credibility in comparison to all professors at her university.

Julia

Julia is an instructor. She teaches classes in oral communication and interpersonal communication. She has been teaching for 32 years including some years in K-12 schools (see Appendix J, p. 123).

Julia was also moderate in her teacher style. She described herself as informal rather than formal in her teaching style. Some of the words she repeated during the interview were "engaging," "nonverbal," and "listening." She also referred to some terms such as "humanness," "honesty," and "approachable." She said that an instructor is the facilitator of the class, not the owner of it. She said, "you are [the instructor] there just like they are." She also mentioned the importance of preparation, knowing the subject matter, and longevity.

Julia linked nonverbal immediacy with credibility in the following order: caring, competence, then trustworthiness. Most of Julia's responses were concentrated on the caring dimension. On a scale of 1-7, Julia ranked herself highly regarding her use of

nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. She also ranked herself highly in terms of her students' perceptions of her credibility and her own perceptions of her credibility as compared to the credibility of other professors in her department and at her university as a whole.

Megan

Megan is an adjunct instructor. She teaches classes in oral communication. She has been teaching for 25 years (see Appendix K, p. 129).

Megan said that her teaching style varies depending on the class size. She uses formal lecture in larger classes, while in smaller classes she uses video clips and humor in addition to the lecture and discussion. Regarding her teaching style, Megan described a balanced approach to meeting her students' needs. She indicated that she values entertainment in class. Some of the words that she repeated during the interview were "included," "funny" and "involvement." She also affirmed the importance of experience. Megan said that one of her classroom strategies involves relating the class's materials to the subject matter. She also focused on sticking to the schedule. She said that not returning students' assignments could detract from an instructor's credibility. Megan also said that a good general strategy is to employ a variety of activities, especially small group activities.

Megan linked nonverbal immediacy with credibility in the following order: caring, competence, then trustworthiness. Most of Megan's responses were concentrated on the caring dimension. On a scale of 1-7, Megan ranked herself highly regarding her use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. She also ranked herself highly regarding her

students' perceptions of her credibility and her own perceptions of her credibility as compared to the credibility of other professors in her department and all other professors at her university.

Molly

Molly is an associate professor. She teaches classes in organizational communication and interpersonal communication. She has been teaching for 19 years including her assistantship in graduate school.

Molly came from an educated family. She stated that she thinks that she has the right type of personality to be the teacher she wants to be. She said "I think there's many different types of teachers and these different types of teachers can all be effective, but for the type of teacher I liked, and I think that's true, I think we become the type of teacher based on teachers that we liked." Molly indicated that teachers should respect their students so that their students respect them. She suggested that not all teachers do that. Molly said, "They [students] will respect you when you respect them and you show that by listening to their opinions, uh validating their opinions, expanding upon their opinions, letting them know that their opinions are valued and welcomed." She also thinks that teachers should be close to their students. She says "I think there is a certain point where you do have to be somewhat entertaining to keep their attention. So that's a strategy I use, I try to use humor, I try to use a lot of stories. Um, I try to relate to them and their age group."

Molly linked nonverbal immediacy with credibility in the following order: caring, competence, and trustworthiness. Most of Molly's responses were concentrated on the

caring dimension. On a scale of 1-7, Molly ranked herself highly regarding her use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. She also ranked herself highly regarding her students' perceptions of her credibility and her own perception of her credibility as compared to the credibility of other professors in her department. She ranked herself above the middle regarding her perception of her credibility as compared to that of all professors at her university.

Heather

Heather is an adjunct instructor. She teaches classes in public speaking and interpersonal communication. She has been teaching for 9 years. Although her BA was in K-12 education, she decided to change to undergraduate education.

Heather described her teaching strategy as emphasizing friendliness and humor. She stated that she often uses narrative in the classroom. Heather affirmed that she likes to apply the listening role in class by letting students talk themselves into listening. Heather is a dynamic speaker. She demonstrated a degree of balance regarding her perception of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and all credibility dimensions.

Heather ranked herself highly regarding her use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. She ranked herself above the middle regarding her students' perceptions of her credibility. She ranked herself in the middle regarding her own perception of her credibility as compared to that of other professors in her department and all other professors at her university.

Ashley

     Ashley is an instructor. She teaches classes in oral communication and performance studies. She has been teaching for 9 years.

     Ashley came from an educated family. She indicated that her specialty as a performance studies instructor affected her teaching style in class. She described practicing many nonverbal immediacy behaviors. As she described herself, she was animated. It was also evident that she feels comfortable making eye contact with her students. She did not seem to like barriers between her and her students in class. Ashley described herself as friendly but tough. She explained that she tries to gain her students' trust through being an immediate teacher. She also applies many strategies to support her competence. She discussed preparation and answering students' questions. Ashley also tries to engage her students by making herself vulnerable and doing the same thing that she expects her students to do.

     Ashley linked nonverbal immediacy with credibility in the following order: trustworthiness, competence, and caring. Most of Ashley's responses were concentrated on the competence dimension. On a scale of 1-7, Ashley ranked herself highly regarding her use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom. She also ranked herself highly regarding her students' perceptions of her credibility. She ranked herself highly in terms of her own perceptions of her credibility as compared to that of the other professors in her department and all other professors at her university.

<u>Data Collection</u>

In order to answer the posed research question, a qualitative research measure, a structured interview, was conducted. Rubin et al. (2010) explained that a structured interview "uses a prepared schedule of questions, which are presented in planned and predetermined order" (p. 221).

Finn et al. (2009) stated that "it is imperative that researchers continue to explore more thorough models of measuring teacher credibility" (As cited in Freeman, 2011, p. 23). Therefore, this study used two improved quantitative scales as foundations of measuring instructors' perceptions of the importance of the nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility. The first scale is the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale Observer-Report (NIS-O; Richmond et al., 2003b) used for measuring teacher nonverbal immediacy (see Appendix C, p. 99). The other scale is the Teacher Credibility Scale (McCroskey & Teven, 1999) used for measuring teacher's credibility from the perspective of their students (see Appendix A, p. 97). Interviews with instructors were conducted to identify the instructors' perceptions of their use of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility. Interviews contained open and closed-ended questions (see Appendix F, p. 105). The transcriptions of the first four interviews of the final study are attached in the appendices section (see Appendices H, I, J, and K pp. 110-135).

Generally, there are many reasons for choosing interviews as a research instrument. Lindlof and Taylor (2011) stated the following:

> Qualitative researchers interview people for several reasons: to understand their perspectives on a scene, to retrieve their experiences from the past, to gain expert insight or information, to obtain descriptions of events that are normally

unavailable for observation, to foster trust, to understand sensitive relationships, and to create a record of communication that can subsequently be analyzed. (p. 3)

Lindlof and Taylor (2011) also stated that "the ability of the qualitative interview to go deeply and broadly into subjective realities has earned it a place as one of the preeminent methods in communication studies" (p. 172). Lindlof and Taylor (2011) said, "qualitative interviews can be vehicles for exploring people's explanation" (p. 174). Lindlof and Taylor (2011) stated that "interviews are particularly well suited to *understanding the social actor's experience, knowledge, and worldviews*" (p. 173). According to Paget (1983), "what distinguishes in-depth interviewing is that the answers given continually inform the evolving conversation" (as cited in Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 172).

According to Rubin et al. (2010), "interviews allow one-on-one contact between the researcher and the research participant for longer periods of time than survey questionnaires" (p. 221). Interviews usually occur in a friendly atmosphere more than other research methods, and this is one advantage of interviews. Lindlof and Taylor (2011) said, "an interview does provides some of the same enjoyment-and the same sense of *connection*-as an intimate conversation" (p. 172). Lindlof and Taylor (2010) also stated that "although qualitative researchers often go into interviews with an agenda, they usually do not impose much structure" (p. 3).

Lazarsfeld (1944) outlined the goals of respondent interviews as the following:

(1) to clarify the meanings of common concepts and opinions, (2) to distinguish the decisive elements of an expressed opinion, (3) to determine what influenced a person to form an opinion or to act in a certain way, (4) to classify complex attitude patterns and (5) to understand the interpretations that people attribute to their motivations. (As cited in Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 179)

Lindlof and Taylor also (2011) stated that "respondent interviews are conducted to find out how people express their views, how they construe their actions, how they conceptualize their life world" (p. 179). Lindlof and Taylor (2011) stated that "in the traditional model, the respondent interview is like a lens focused on the psychological self. Interview talk is treated as a stable and valid representation of the individual's perspective" (p. 179).

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

After choosing the interview as the research instrument for data collection, I decided to adopt a grounded theory approach for the data analysis. Grounded theory is one of the most important methods for analyzing qualitative data. Lindlof and Taylor (2011) said that grounded theory is "one of the most influence models for analyzing qualitative data" (p. 250). They identified three features of this theory that are important for analyzing qualitative data. They stated:

> Emergent theory is "grounded in" the relationships between data and the categories into which they are coded. Categories develop through an ongoing process of comparing units of data with each other (a process known as the *constant-comparative method*). Codes, categories, and category definitions continue to change dynamically while the research is still in the field, with new data altering the scope and terms of the analytic framework. (p. 250)

Because English is not my first language, two fellow graduate students, Megan Wharff and Zachary Campbell, helped me in the analysis stage. Megan transcribed the interviews. Fourteen interviews were transcribed including interviews of the two instructors I interviewed twice. I analyzed the data of first six interviews and got help from Zach in pulling out the themes from the data. He listened to the audio files and read

the transcripts, and we came up with the same themes. As I double checked with him, I also double checked with my advisor many times to ensure the similarities between the first and the new data, and we all agreed.

In the pilot study, I used standard categories to organize and analyze my data. Although this type of coding relies on low-inference categories as in Lindlof and Taylor (2011), it gave me some indicators that drove the study to its current destination. The old and the new data were coded and categorized using the grounded theory method. I split the answers to each question and put all answers of each question on a separate sheet. I used a manual method to pull out the data themes and kept making the appropriate changes while I was coding and categorizing. Then I organized and labeled the data themes to make sense of it. The research data analysis went through four stages using the grounded theory method. First, I categorized and analyzed the data I got from the first six interviews. Second, one of my fellows checked my themes again, and we found the same results. Third, we categorized and analyzed the data of the new four interviews. We found a lot of similarities. Finally, we added two interviews, and the positive results of analyzing them allowed me to clearly identify my final codes and themes. Regarding the similarities between the initial and subsequent interviews and the important data about instructors' behaviors in the data of the pilot study, I listed all participants together and supported the research themes by drawing support from the entire collection of data.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter, I discuss the findings that emerged from the analyzed data. The research results are grouped according to the three dimensions of teacher credibility: competence, caring, and trustworthiness. I also include a discussion of instructors' nonverbal immediacy behaviors and categorize the results according to significant demographic roles that match the research sampling criteria: sex, experience, and classes taught.

Teacher Credibility: Competence

Competence is one of the dimensions of credibility. McCroskey and Teven (1999) explained that competence refers to perceived knowledge and expertise. Three main categories under the competence theme were discovered: (a) knowing the subject matter, (b) serving as a role model, and (c) organization. Participants' responses regarding these three categories are summarized below.

Knowing the Subject Matter

Two sub-themes related to subject matter knowledge. Instructors' responses addressed knowledge of material, and reflection and updating information.

Regarding the knowledge of material, both male and female instructors valued the importance of being knowledgeable in their discipline. Mike said he needed to demonstrate his knowledge:

I think even more important for credibility is just to know my stuff, so that I have to be an expert on the topics on which I'm talking. And I spend a lot of time making sure that I am. . . I think, for my credibility or any professor's, I think it really comes down to loving your subject area and really wanting to constantly know more about it.

Julia confirmed the importance of being knowledgeable. She said, "You have to have all the background where you know your subject well and you have your lesson well planned, you know what you're doing, you can't go in there cold. I wouldn't expect you to give a speech to me cold, I can't go into a classroom cold."

Reflection and updating information was the second aspect of knowing the subject matter. Most of the participants noted, in some way, that they felt the need to keep current in the discipline. Several commented specifically about their reading and research to keep up on current information and students' need to know that information. Not keeping updated with new information in the field could affect instructors' credibility, especially when teaching a class for the first time. Brian identified the type of research he does to keep up-to-date:

One of the things I do with all of my classes, whether it's management, audience analysis, law and policy, senior seminar, whatever…I'm, I'm constantly doing research to identify uh, trends, issues, things that have just happened and then I try to make connections from a class to other concepts we've covered in class, um, try to make connections from a class to other classes they've had. Um, and then, I think another way I establish credibility through that process is trying to make students aware of issues or things that may be coming in the future that they can't see now, that are not major news items yet, but could be or most likely will be.

Mike stated that he lets students know that he's aware of new developments in the field:

There was a recent case that I had brought up that was just in the news um, just yesterday and kind of talked with students just to let them know, I mean I think it's interesting but it also kind of communicates that that I'm keeping up and on this, I don't have like old notes from 20 years ago, like I try to keep up with the topic.

Most instructors indicated that they practice reflection constantly while some instructors practice it rarely. All instructors, the reflection and updating process said they practiced reflection as a solitary activity when they indicated they take notes and write out what worked, what did not, and how they would change it in the future. While they reflected on the day's teaching-learning process, most also said they felt being current in the discipline and using up-to-date information in their classes was important. Several said they looked for more up-to-date material by reading about issues, problems, or questions raised by the students. Heather, for example, addressed both reflection and currency when she said:

> After every time that I teach, I always teach with a lesson plan. And whenever I'm done, I come back to my office and I make notes on my lesson plan about what worked, what didn't work, what I maybe should do next time, what I should leave out, what I, maybe you know, a question that a student had. You know I'll think about oh maybe I should put that in the next time, you know do some research some thinking, some reading about that thing that they asked.

Mike also said he reflected on every class and wrote notes about what he would do differently the next time he teaches the class. In addition, he highlighted that he sometimes talks with others about teaching and listens to their suggestions about how to improve his own teaching:

> I like to think about, after every class, about how that class went. Is there something I could have done better, and oftentimes before I forget I'll jot down uh some notes about how I might want to do that different the next time I teach that. . . I try to anticipate, or I listen to what their suggestions are and where I can I try to make things better . . . I also, uh, you know, from time to time read books and talk with, about teaching, and talk with other professors about best practices for teaching, so I try to, I try to become better, I never think I'm like the perfect teacher you know in every situation, so there's always room for some kind of improvement.

Jack commented that he, too, looked for ways to improve:

> I'll stick with the willingness to change and the willingness to make adjustments and the sense that I don't have the right answer for how to do this well so that I keep searching for different answers. I keep searching for better answers, I keep improving things, but I've done enough of that to realize that change is the common, is the constant, uh, not improvement.

Nick thought that he could always be better and thinks about continual improvement as he meets students' needs in the classroom:

> I feel like I'm good, I know what I'm doing, I think you need that confidence, but I also feel like I can always be better and I hold that no matter what I do, there's always something I can do better so even if a class goes really well, how do I make that even better next time, how do I make it great, how do I keep that consistency, how do I keep adapting to students' needs so, always willing to improve I think.

Molly declared that her reflection was more informal, but that she adjusts her teaching based on student responses:

> I don't really engage in those kinds of formal reflections, but I think I'm constantly aware maybe because I teach nonverbal, of people's feedback, how they're responding to me, I can tell how well it's going by the looks on their faces and I can adjust accordingly I think.

Molly suggested that she does not engage in formal reflection, noting "It's that type of informal reflection that happens almost on a daily basis I think, especially if the class period was particularly good, or if a class period is particularly bad." Ashley described how she engages in constant reflection about her teaching. She said, "When I, from the time that I design a course to how I pick out what assignments I'm going to do, to every day practices in the classroom, I think they're informed by pedagogical theory. So, I think that for me, theory and practice, the merging of the two force me to reflect."

Brian offered a specific example of immediate reflection. He said:

> We covered a concept in programming that looked at research techniques on video programming, television pilots, … focus groups, … and so what I did is I had them watch a new program, because I knew no one had seen it- it'd just come on, first time it'd ever been on was like 2 to 3 days before. And basically what the program was, I knew that weren't going to watch it- it was 30 minute sitcom on ABC, Friday night, called "Malibu Country" starring Reba McEntire. I had them watch it, and then I conducted the focus group so they could see exactly what a focus group looked like, and the kind/type of questions. Then, later on, I was covering the research looking at repeat viewing- why do people watch the same content multiple times? And I used that same program (laughs) I wish, as soon as I did it, I thought "no" because the focus group had told me that they really didn't like it and so making them watch it a second time didn't help me (laughs) I mean there were other programs I could have used that I know that they watch- then I could've done it much more effectively. So I immediately, I mean I came back in the classroom and said "no" next time I cover that, I will do it differently.

Ashley commented that her job responsibilities mandated that she keeps current in her own practice and in her work with Graduate Teaching Assistants and that she needed to always practice self-reflection:

> I work with the GTA's, I meet with them weekly to talk about teaching and I think that that forces to me self-reflect on my own practice, to think about oh well what have I done, how did I, like this has been crazy, but like, I didn't realize how much goes into how to assign an assignment. Like how, like that there was an art of assigning an assignment so that you get a particular response, right. And all of the sudden I had to think about, well why is it that when I assign this assignment I'm getting really great things, but my GTA's assign the same assignment and they got duds. Right? And then I had to think about, well how do I assign an assignment so that I could teach my GTA's so that they can teach their students and get the results. And, so a lot of self-reflection happens because of my position, right?

The participants in this study all identified reflection on the teaching-learning process as critical to success in the classroom and being perceived as knowledgeable and credible. Another aspect they discussed was staying current in their knowledge of the discipline as important in being perceived as competent.

<u>Role Model</u>

Analysis revealed three sub-themes related to serving as a role model. Instructors' responses concentrated on experience and professionalism, life examples, and the professional model.

Regarding instructors' experience and professionalism, male instructors surpassed female instructors in using their own published works in their specialty. For example, Brian, in one of his classes, used a book of which he is the co-author. Another instructor, Allen, showed his students published journalism. Zach shared his experience in the media field with his students. He said:

> I have experience in the professional field so I have been on television, I have produced videos and so when I teach a class on video production I can say, I'm on TV, I have done this, and that gives me great credibility because they can watch me on TV, they can see the work that I've done and then they know that I have an idea of what I'm talking about.

Some female instructors also had published books and articles, and others had worked as teachers in K-12 schools. Female participants did not specifically mention using any of their own publications, although a few did suggest that they referenced their own research in the classroom. Julia mentioned her experience in K-12 education several years before teaching at the college level and others referred to their outside teaching experiences.

Instructors indicated that they use several strategies to ensure the practicality of their subject matter, simplify explanations of course concepts, connect the subject to the real world, and lead by example. They used different techniques such as media projections and corresponding activities. Self-disclosure was one of the strategies that instructors used to relate their subjects to life by sharing their personal life experience.

Female instructors surpassed male instructors in showing their passions and using self-disclosure to relate to the subject matter in class.

Instructor practices add significant weight to the instructor's ability to serve as a role model for his or her students. Molly affirmed:

> I think there's many different types of teachers and these different types of teachers can all be effective, but for the type of teacher I liked, and I think that's true, I think we become the type of teacher based on teachers that we liked. You know, I had a teacher in college where, when I took a class from him I thought, this is what I want to teach and that's how I want to teach it. And it was just about that simple so, and I've tried to emulate that ever since. . . I take pretty close care with my handouts- make sure there's not typos, that they look nice, they have a nice format and I do that because I want to be a role model for how I want their professional communication to be once they get a job- I want to model what they would look like, so I don't want something that's full of errors and looks terrible, uh because I feel like I want to be that model, um, but yeah, I think that's credibility too when, information that's clearly presented, it's in a structure that makes sense, I think that adds to credibility, sure.

Megan applies the concept of being a teacher model. She declared:

> I think that one of the things that I do that makes me credible in the classroom is as you can see I make my students do some goofy stuff that's kind of risky. You know, it can be risky because they could look silly doing the things that I ask them to do, it might be embarrassing right to have to get up and do some of the things that I ask them to do in front of other people. And so one of the ways that I think I establish credibility is that I'm willing to engage in those activities myself with the students. So often, I'll play, I'll do the activities with them, I'll play with them, I'll demonstrate first, so I make myself vulnerable.

Zach also volunteered as a model to show his students how to behave professionally. He said:

> We have a news anchor desk, so I showed them what I wanted them to do and we have the bright lights and the camera and I, we put on the microphone and we read off the teleprompter, so I put on the microphone, I said this is what I want it to be- and I showed them and they all started clapping because they, they knew that what I had done is what they had seen on TV.

Modeling effective communication behaviors and using examples from outside the

classroom and current research helped these instructors serve as role models for their

students.

Organization

Female instructors especially commented on organizational skills and behaviors.

Participants described both positive and negative organizational behaviors. Positive

organizational behaviors included putting class materials online for students, creating

handouts and PowerPoints, and following the course textbooks and readings. Instructors

suggested that sticking to the course schedule, especially with grading, is especially

important. Jack stated:

> Preparation and organization is a thing that can enhance your credibility and I
> think probably if I have credibility, it comes in part from that . . . if they [student]
> judge me credible my guess is part of that has to do with the fact that they can see
> all the materials that have been pulled together on their behalf.

Ashley suggested specific behaviors to create and maintain credibility:

> You also just gain credibility by turning assignments back on time, by keeping
> your schedule, keeping on schedule, by showing that you prepared your class so
> that you show up and I have a clear lesson plan and agenda, and they can tell that.
> You know, they know that I have, that I didn't just wing it when I got there I think
> all of those things you know, create credibility in the classroom.

> Ashley even planned ahead for potential grade disputes; she provided a grade

challenge sheet for students to use for any complaints. She indicated:

> I have some different things sort of set up, right away in Blackboard, I put a grade
> challenge, um, worksheet, there. So students know that if they ever have a grade
> challenge that there's a specific process that I ask them to go through. So, what it
> sort of outlines on that worksheet is that you are to wait 24 hours after you get
> your grade back and to think about it, if you want to challenge your grade, you're
> supposed to email me and setup an appointment with me and then provide me
> with a one page description arguing, or you know like, it doesn't necessarily need

to be one page but um, that will say I'm challenging this for these reasons with a justification and I need to have that before we meet and then we can sit down and discuss it. And so if they make good arguments, um I'll take it into consideration.

The primary negative organizational behavior mentioned by participants was poor time management. Instructors who do not return assignments or who are not available during scheduled office hours negatively are perceived as less credible by their students. When asking about classroom behaviors that may not communicate caring about students and wellbeing, Allen said, "Yeah, unapproachable is there, being unorganized, I try to be as organized as I can. And the other one is- just not listening to students, yeah, but I try to work on all those, I enjoy listening to my students."

Megan suggested:

I think students think you're not credible if you don't turn things back, if you don't show up, if you don't follow through on things, um, if you never read their assignments, um, they know that, they know if you're reading things or just throwing a grade on them. So I think a lot of it's more the classroom management stuff and the like keeping to a schedule type of stuff.

The three main categories discovered in the competence theme were: knowing the subject matter, serving as a role model, and organization. Each instructor had some common views of how these qualities are viewed, but also had some unique perspectives on how to be perceived as more credible.

<u>Teacher Credibility: Caring</u>

Caring is another dimension of credibility McCroskey and Teven (1999) explained that caring refers to the instructor's concerns for his or her students' best interests. Two main categories under the caring theme were found: (a) interpersonal connection and (b) engagement. Engaging students requires a lot of effort from

instructors to show that they care about their students. Engaging students demonstrates

that teachers care both about the students and their learning. Participants' responses

regarding these categories are summarized below.

Interpersonal Connection

Male and female instructors both valued the importance of interpersonal

connections to students. Mike declared:

> Establish credibility, really for that, I mean, two things, I mean one is just kind of
> having an interpersonal connection with students so that they understand that I'm
> kind of there for them and you know want them to learn.

Cathy mentioned some keys that lead to interpersonal connections between

instructors and their students. She suggested:

> You don't get to know a teacher very well in a classroom. You get to know a
> teacher much better in their office outside the classroom. What you're going to
> pick up on inside a classroom are hints, hints of compassion, hints of similarity,
> hints of empathy, hints of flexibility, hints of interest, and that will lead you to
> that person outside the classroom. And so those are the kind of things that you
> will look for inside that classroom.

Research participants highlighted the importance of being likeable, approachable,

and friendly. These characteristics could be enhanced by some practices inside and

outside the class. Mike stated that students often need more than classroom material:

> I think sometimes when professors aren't approachable I think students feel like
> they're, they've got something to hide, or maybe they don't want to answer
> questions because they might know the answer but I try to be approachable and
> answer their questions. You know, not only about class but just other things,
> sometimes they want to talk about registration, or want career advice, so I'm
> happy to talk about that with them.

In class, one-on-one assistance could offer additional opportunities to develop

interpersonal connections. Outside class, talking to students before and after class could

improve those connections. In both settings, inside and outside class, calling students by

their first names could also enhance the instructor's approachability and build

connections between instructors and students.   Heather indicated she often helps

students with issues outside the class itself: "I'm friendly, I think that that helps, um I

have lots of students that come to ask me for help in lots of different ways." Nick stated

he always keeps students' needs in mind:

> I'm very willing to communicate with my students depending upon what their
> needs are and, for example, I had um a student a couple semesters ago at Hawkeye
> who said that he just could not take multiple choice tests, and I feel like it was my
> duty, I'm like alright you brought this to me, maybe you do really have an issue
> with multiple choice tests, so I created just an essay test for him, and I'm like
> alright I gave the option to everyone else in the class too if you want to take an
> essay test instead; no one else picked it only he did.

The instructors expressed several ways they make connections with their students,

and each emphasized the importance of making those interpersonal connections.

Engagement

Student engagement requires effort from instructors to show that they care about

their students and how and what they learn.   Participants suggested that students believe

their instructors care when they demonstrate behaviors that show they see the student as

more than a number or a name on a class list. They referred to this as "being engaged"

with the student as a person. Further, question 4 in the pilot study about strategies

instructors use to create effective classroom teaching and question 4 in the final study

about words or images that come to mind when thinking of effective classroom teaching

elicited several common responses. Some of the concepts participants associated with

effective classroom teaching included "humor, listening, engagement, and interaction."

Some participants mentioned the importance of the class layout, enthusiasm, and using

public speaking techniques as strategies to engage students. Instructors who participated

in this study confirmed that listening and entertainment are critical for student

engagement. Thus, in my analysis, I focused on listening, humor and entertaining

students, and charisma as the primary engagement strategies.

      <u>Listening.</u> Having students' interests in mind and being willing to work with them

were mentioned by the research participants. Although some of the participants

recognized their lack of listening, they valued listening as a significant part of students'

engagement in the classroom. Julia confirmed the positive role of listening. She said,

"They know that you're human, you know that they're human and you'll listen to them

and they'll listen to you."

      Listening in the classroom influences the cognitive part of teaching. Brian

suggested:

> I always try to promote an environment where a student can communicate their
> position, communicate their input and feel safe doing so. I also try to
> communicate an environment, where, on numerous cases I actually asked them to
> connect their experiences…they try to make a concept real, but someone says I
> understand that, that just happened or I just saw this- that people will make fun of
> themselves and then you have to be willing to do that also. And I've found that
> very very successful. I think the other thing is, I think students know that I'm
> willing to listen to them.

Heather acknowledged that it is important to take students' questions seriously and

improve the chance for students to challenge the instructor:

I think when students question you in class, I think that's awesome. And it's a really great opportunity for you to ask them to expand on their thoughts and feelings about a concept. And, when you do that, and you're able to say, you know things like, I've never thought about it from that perspective, yeah you're probably right, you know and being able to say to students, you can challenge me and it's ok, because that's the way that we create new thought is through challenging of current thought.

Having the students teach was a strategy for student engagement that Nick used: "I feel like allowing the class to teach the class because by teaching—and I, I kind of thought of this when I was getting classes up for myself because I'm like, oh man, I was in grad school and if I had to teach this class I have to learn it before I could teach someone else this."

Instructors described some behaviors that detract from their students' listening and engagement. Molly described one of those behaviors as "beating a dead horse" [this means talking a point or a topic to death]. Participants also suggested that speaking too fast when the topic is interesting is another behavior that could detract from effective listening in the classroom.

Humor and Entertaining Students. Several instructors affirmed the importance of entertaining their students to keep the students engaged. Cathy stated that students want to be entertained. Participants also suggested that humor and the use of funny videos are effective tools for entertaining students.

Molly described how she used humor and other techniques to grab the attention of her students:

> I feel like you have to keep them engaged and it gets harder and harder when they've got their cell phones and Twitter and Facebook and all of these things vying for their attention um, as well as television and video games and…so I think there is a certain point where you do have to be somewhat entertaining to keep their attention. So that's a strategy I use, I try to use humor, I try to use a lot of stories.

Megan confirmed the importance of using and showing humorous videos to engage students:

> I mostly use humor because I have found that students like that. And I like to do it, I don't just do it for them, it's fun to do, so I would say mostly humor, including humorous video, it doesn't have to just be my humor, and having fun with them too, jokes and that sort of thing. I think it's very important to at least every so often involve them so they're getting, um, either some discussion or hands on um, application doing an activity.

Megan also said, "I entertain them and that shouldn't have to be part of learning, but I think it is, and I think that's, for me, it doesn't work for everybody's style, but that's what makes me stronger, is that I'm able to keep their interest." Entertainment also could involve sarcasm, which is a very sensitive issue. Regarding sarcasm, Heather confirmed:

> I can be a bit sarcastic in the classroom, and I struggle with that because, you know sarcasm and humor, there's a fine line between the two of them, and so, you know usually I'll have a couple of students that I know, you know will find it funny, and that's part of their personality, but I can also see how others students, if they don't know that that relationship has been formed that that may seem um, seem mean, a sarcastic comment.

Participants identified humor, engagement, and listening as qualities of effective classroom teachers.

Charisma. Showing enthusiasm in class was another important aspect of engagement and caring. Some instructors (especially female and young male instructors) valued the importance of showing enthusiasm in class. Many of their responses concentrated on the role of energy and enthusiasm in establishing credibility. Molly said,

"If I'm not interested in the subject matter, how are they going to be interested in the

subject matter, so I think it's really important for me to use my nonverbals to show how

excited I am about the topic." Kathy stated:

> Besides credibility I think you have to add the aspect of believability, how believable are you in presenting the material? Because you can have somebody who's very credible but very um, mundane and boring. And so you have to have a certain charisma for lack of a better word in presenting the material, or a certain style and so style is very important as well.

Similarly, Zach suggested:

> If I were to come in bored with the topic, if I were to come in tired, uninterested in what I'm presenting, they are going to be uninterested, but if I come in and I have energy and excitement about learning about today's topic and get the students involved in it then they are more likely to be engaged in the presentation and more likely to grasp what we are talking about.

Charisma was explained as showing enthusiasm about the topic as an essential

characteristic of effective classroom teachers.

<div align="center">Teacher Credibility: Trustworthiness</div>

Trustworthiness is another credibility dimension. McCroskey and Teven (1999)

explained that trustworthiness or character refers to honesty. Being real, by showing

humanness and being friendly could be added under the trustworthiness dimension.

Analysis revealed two sub-themes related to the trustworthiness dimension of teacher

credibility: (a) honesty and (b) being real.

Honesty

Participants' responses about instructor honesty focused on fairness and admitting

limitation. Achieving fairness is not always as simple as it seems. Ashley said, "When

you try to be fair, and you make sure that every student gets the same sort of fair

treatment, some people might see that unfair because they might go, oh I have special

needs, like I'm an athlete so you should change your schedule for me. And I won't do

that all the time." Some instructors, males and females, said that an instructor should be

rigorous, straightforward, and tough, but at the same time, he or she should be fair and

honest.

Regarding admitting limitations, Nick stated, "I feel like what makes an instructor

not be credible to students is by, I think one of the big things, is by thinking you know

more than you do." Mike said:

> I really like to make sure that I know, you know answer the questions and you
> know, and be an expert in that area. You know, there are times that students ask
> questions that I just don't know the answer to them, so I'll, you know if it's
> something like that I'll say, I'll admit I don't know the answer to that one but I'll
> find out for you by next class.

Brian acknowledged, "I can think of one occasion this semester where I, I simply

miscounted and I had the student missing three more points than they actually did, and so

they brought it up, we looked at it, counted it, and I said that's fine, thanks for pointing it

out, I'll make the change in the grade book." Being honest and admitting when you've

made a mistake were identified as essential components of a teacher who is trustworthy.

Being Real

Two categories encompassed participants' responses regarding being real: (a)

showing humanness and (b) being friendly. These two categories are closely related, yet

separate. Ashley illustrated this when she suggested:

> I'm willing to make myself vulnerable. I think it is an important thing, but another
> thing is that I do self-disclose to my students, so I think that they see me as a
> human being, like I'm not just a teacher that this is my only thing in my life, like
> they know that I have a husband, they know that I have a little dog.

Several instructors also talked about being a real person or being a human in addition to

being a professor. Julia stated:

> I will have students who I've known for a long time, I've been their advisor for a long time, and many times they're talking about some things that are very very private, and many times especially female students will cry, and if they're sitting there crying, I will hand them a kleenex and I might touch their hand. Sometimes, they'll ask me for a hug, and then I will give them a hug…You are there just like they are to learn and to share, you let them know that you learn as much from them, each and every class that you teach, as they learn from you. And I think that helps them understand that learning is a lifelong cycle and if never ends… I think probably the one of the things that we just talked about was also showing a side of being human, um, this past week my uncle passed away and so I needed to be gone, rather than hiding that from my students and saying, I can't get this done because just don't have time, I said to them, look I'm facing a family situation, my uncle was very close me, he passed away, I'm going to the funeral, I don't have your papers graded. They in turn said to me, don't grade them. You go and be with your family. I think that probably adds to the credibility factor.

Heather indicated another way to be perceived as real:

> I do use a lot of personal examples to help students understand, you know, the things that I have been through and experienced in my life and how that has affected me as a person, as a teacher, as a wife as a mother, as a daughter, um you know to help them understand that, especially when you're talking about either interpersonal and theory or how theory helps us to understand life.

On the other hand, Molly disclosed:

> I'm dynamic but I'm not necessarily very empathetic to student problems and concerns and I don't even really know why but, again, that's part of my personality that I just feel like students should do the work with very little you know, I mean I realize that there's life circumstances and I don't know, I don't have, my character, I don't know… (laugh) I don't know if it's a character flaw I suppose it is of, um, being able to demonstrate and show a lot of empathy for people's outside circumstances because I feel like we all have outside circumstances but you commit to doing certain things and getting them done and I think that's the way I was raised but it's also my character. So I think that can be, that can detract from being perceived as an empathetic teacher.

Molly also pointed out that while she wanted students to see her as a person, she emphasized the importance of not crossing the line between teacher and friend, in the process of being friendly and real:

> I try to be friendly but not to the point where they see me as their friend, I still want to be their teacher. I think it's important to still kind of keep that distance between friend and teacher. I can be friendly without being their friend per se, so that's maybe one place where I draw the line.

Heather described how being a friend to one's students helps communicate both friendliness and being human: "I'm friendly. I think that that helps. I have lots of students that come to ask me for help in lots of different ways." Heather also said, "I wear my emotions on my sleeve. It is not difficult to tell how I'm feeling about something. So, my students are very very good at picking up on my facial expressions, because I'm not good at hiding how I feel at all."

The participants all suggested that "being real" means being a regular person and being friendly were both important aspects of trustworthiness, but some suggested that one must find a distinct balance between being a teacher and being a friend. One can be "real" without overstepping the boundaries for students and teachers.

Instructors' Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviors

Female instructors responded more positively regarding teacher nonverbal immediacy behaviors. This section summarizes my findings about instructors' nonverbal behaviors including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, gestures, voice, touch, and smiling.

<u>Facial Expression</u>

Female instructors offered more responses about facial expressions than did male instructors. Cathy, one of the most experienced female instructors among the research participants, said that she uses facial expression with her students in the classroom. When she answered the interview question about how students would have described her nonverbal behaviors, she said "animated, passionate, and excitement." Cathy further added, "I'm always trying to use inflections and hand gestures and I do use facial expressions all the time because that's just the way I am."

Other females described themselves as looking relaxed in class while teaching students. Heather stated, "I'm constantly in motion, so although I'm relaxed, I'm not rigid." Julia suggested:

> I think body language is fairly inviting, I don't close myself off a lot, um, I might be carrying things, because you know when you go to class you have the classwork you're doing and your keys and, but I think it's pretty open.

Cathy indicated that she uses facial expressions all the time because that's just the way she is. Heather said:

> I wear my emotions on my sleeve. It is not difficult to tell how I'm feeling about something. So, my students are very very good at picking up on my facial expressions. Um, because I'm not good at hiding how I feel at all.

Mike is the one among all male instructors who talked about being perceived as relaxed and open. Mike stated that using nonverbal immediacy makes:

> a professor look like you're relaxed and enjoying it, I mean if you're very stiff and not communicative I think students think there's something wrong, why, you don't want your professor to be nervous, you want your professor to be kind of, you know relaxed but also in charge of the class.

We can see that facial expressions identify ways teachers exhibit immediacy. Female instructors in this study especially were conscious of the impact of facial expression on perceived immediacy.

Eye Contact

All instructors affirmed that they make eye contact except Allen, the African teacher. Allen explained that he avoids looking at women's eyes while talking to them because of cultural reasons related to the respect of women. In contrast, Ashley said that eye contact is comfortable:

> I think that I make eye contact with my students a lot, I think for me that's more comfortable. (laughs) I think that for me it makes it more like a one-on-one conversation would be and so, I feel like I have normal amounts of eye contact, I mean I don't think I'm a creep about it (laughs), you know I think that I feel comfortable making eye contact with my students.

Brian linked eye contact with caring. Brian said:

> One of the ways that students can perceive that you have a commitment to them, that you're serious about what you're doing and you're serious about them learning and they're well-being, and you're serious about what they say and that you're taking that into consideration rather than blowing them off is you have to maintain eye contact.

Eye contact with the students was identified as one of the ways instructors connect with their students in the classroom. When eye contact was not established, the instructor said there was a cultural reason for avoiding direct eye contact.

Body Movement

Most of the female instructors described themselves as animated. Male instructors in general did not describe themselves as animated except Allen. Molly said that she is dynamic and energetic. Heather also indicated that she is a dynamic speaker. She stated

that although she is relaxed, she is also hyper. Both male and female instructors moved

around the room more in large classes than in small classes. They also moved around

among students in lab settings. Mike declared:

> I'll still you know, be at the front but usually move around, because I want to make sure that I'm not talking to the people always just sitting in front of me. I want to make sure that I'm kind of in closer proximity to other students, so, so if I'm talking I'll do that, if it's uh, like a computer lab, I'll move around and actually I'll go around to each student and kind of be right beside them, even if they're sitting at a computer.

Molly said that she stands in class so she can walk around and stand by students

to promote engagement. Ashley and Brian both mentioned that group activities allow

them to sit with students; others indicated that group activities gave them an opportunity

to be in closer proximity to their students during class, observing what happened. Brian

stated that teaching seniors and juniors helps him to be more animated. Jack does not use

a lot of nonverbal behaviors in class as he said, and he does not think that his personality

affects his credibility:

> I don't know that my personality helps my credibility in any way, except that when I get in front of a classroom I'm able to speak without much hesitation, with a strong voice, about the subject matter and I think that tends to enhance credibility.

Animated body movement was identified as a way teachers can establish

connections with the students. Each instructor looked at movement differently, but, they

all identified movement as something that enhanced their credibility as a teacher.

Gestures

The new study's interview questions did not discover many instructors' classroom

behaviors, because there were no direct questions about behaviors. All of the first six

instructors indicated that they use many gestures except Mike, who said that he uses

"moderate gestures," and Brian, who "[uses] gestures when students get quiet." Mike

said:

> I don't have as many gestures as some people, but I use my hands when I'm
> talking about stuff and um, and more, and I usually walk around the classroom or
> the auditorium, for the auditorium, in the past year or two, I, this is another thing
> that a student suggested actually I got um, a remote mouse that I use to actually
> change the slides so I can move around and I'm not stuck behind the teaching
> station.

Zach said that he nods his head, "kind of give them [students] signs 'oh you're doing a

good job, keep up the good work' and really trying to give them the confidence that they

have while they are delivering their presentation." Jack said that he "tends to get into it a

little bit," while Brian said that he "definitely uses nonverbal gestures." Cathy said that

she has "flamboyant hand signs." Allen confirmed, "I'm a little bit dramatic in class, to

make the points I make. If I'm talking about a reporter going to knock on the door of an

interviewee, I probably would dramatize that by knocking on the table or knocking on my

door."

Gestures were seen as important in helping the instructors regulate students'

classroom behaviors as well as suggest the instructors' enthusiasm for the topic.

Voice

Female instructors' voices were more energetic than male instructors' voices. All

female instructors' voices were loud, and all female instructors said that they have variety

in their voices, and they avoid being monotone. Cathy said that she has vocal inflections.

Molly indicated that she has a strong and projected voice. Regarding male instructors'

voices, two instructors stated they had moderate voices while another instructor said that

he has a loud voice. Ashley corroborated the descriptions offered by the other female participants. She said "sometimes I'm too loud (laughs) um, I feel like I mean, yeah I feel like I'm conversational I'm energetic, both in my body and in my voice. Meaning that I probably have vocal, a lot of vocal variety and apparently I'm loud." Jack stated:

> I think probably the focal point for me is on movement and engaged, engagement with my material, so voice volume and articulation and gesticulation and so forth is all part of the presentation because I'm trying to keep attention and I'm trying to keep understanding flowing and that's tough as people are tired, or as people are working through difficult content, or content they find difficult to make a connection with, and so all of that wells up in the performance aspects of what it is that I'm doing. But there's all the other nonverbal things like, body size and age and white beards and male and all that that I know are there, I just ignore those while I'm trying to focus you know on what I can do to uh, through my words and the presentation of my words, make some sense to people who may or may not be all that interested in what I'm trying to talk about.

> Voice, vocal inflection and vocal change help instructors keep students' attention.

Touch

Touch is a sensitive issue and is perceived differently among different cultures. When used appropriately, it may be perceived as positive and comfortable, but it may also be misused, misunderstood, and dangerous. All participants confirmed the sensitivity of touch. Although they recognized the sensitivity of touch, female instructors acknowledged that they sometimes touch both male and female students. For example, Ashley stated:

> Last semester I had a student that has Lyme's disease and I could tell when he was, he would have periods that he'd be really sick, I might kinda before class you know ask him how he's doing and if I'm standing next to him I might put my hand on his shoulder, you know how you doing today, you know? Other ways that I might touch them, I might high five them because that's a form of, so if they give a good answer or if they give a good speech I might high five them after they're done.

Molly had a negative experience with touching students:

> I might nudge their arm to be playful, but even then I would do that sparingly. One time I remember I don't remember what it was, but I was kinda walking around the room and I touched a student's arm to get his attention- he was like looking over here or something and I touched his arm and he kinda- went back like this and then I went back like this and I thought oh gosh maybe I shouldn't have done that so.at the college level, I mean I think it's kind of important to maybe not touch.

Participants had differing views on touch. Women seemed more likely to touch their students than men, but all felt that touch had to be used carefully as it can be easily misconstrued.

Smiling

Most teachers admitted they smiled a lot except Brian, who said he smiles "only a little bit," and Allen, who stated that he "does not smile with all students." He said that he smiles especially "for positive students who participate and answer questions." Allen also said:

> You might use um, smiling, chuckling to convey that you are happy with nodding, nodding of the head or chuckling or smiling or giving a student thumbs up when they answer a question, you use it, that makes them feel good, it's a way of communicating to them that they did well without even saying it.

Zach stated that he smiles "while speaking." He also stated:

> It's very important when the students are giving their speeches for me not to be sleeping or looking out the window or distracted because it is an uncomfortable, stressful situation for them to be at the podium, that's why I always try and look up at them and smile while they are speaking.

Mike said, "I smile and sometimes have funny things that I say or jokes that they may or may not think are funny but at least I'm smiling (laughs)." Julia stated, "I smile a lot, sometimes my cheeks get tired of smiling." Molly, who enjoyed teaching classes in

interpersonal communication and nonverbal communication, said that "smiling affects students positively." On the other hand, Jack is struggling in practicing smiling. He stated:

> I think my general tendency is to not smile and so for the last 3 weeks I've been trying to do more of that, I saw some pictures of myself recently where, my natural state, now I have trouble getting it off because I've been exercising the muscles, is a very flat affect and that can so easily be misread as disgust or disinterest or something of that sort that I've been trying to do this and I think it's an issue, I think it's a problem.

Smiles were generally seen as positive indicators of teacher immediacy and effectiveness. These immediate nonverbal behaviors have a positive impact on the teaching-learning process.

Role of Demographics

Although this research was driven by qualitative methods, four simple questions sought to identify instructors' perceptions of their use of nonverbal immediacy, how their credibility is perceived by their students, and how they perceive their credibility in comparison to their peers in the department and all instructors at their university (see Table 2). The table and figures visually illustrate where each instructor placed herself or himself on a numeric scale for each dimension. These visuals summarize the instructors' self-perceptions.

The average of the instructors' credibility perceptions comparing to their perceptions of their use of nonverbal immediacy are included in two graphs (see Figures 1 & 2). The purpose of this is to display the results visually and to compare the instructors' perceptions. The results illustrated in these figures confirm the emergent themes in this research and allow the reader to visualize how each instructor views her or

his own characteristics. The roles of sex, experience, content area, and, in some aspects,

culture seem to play a role in the instructors' responses in this study.

Table 2:

*Instructors' Perceptions of their Credibility and Nonverbal Immediac*y

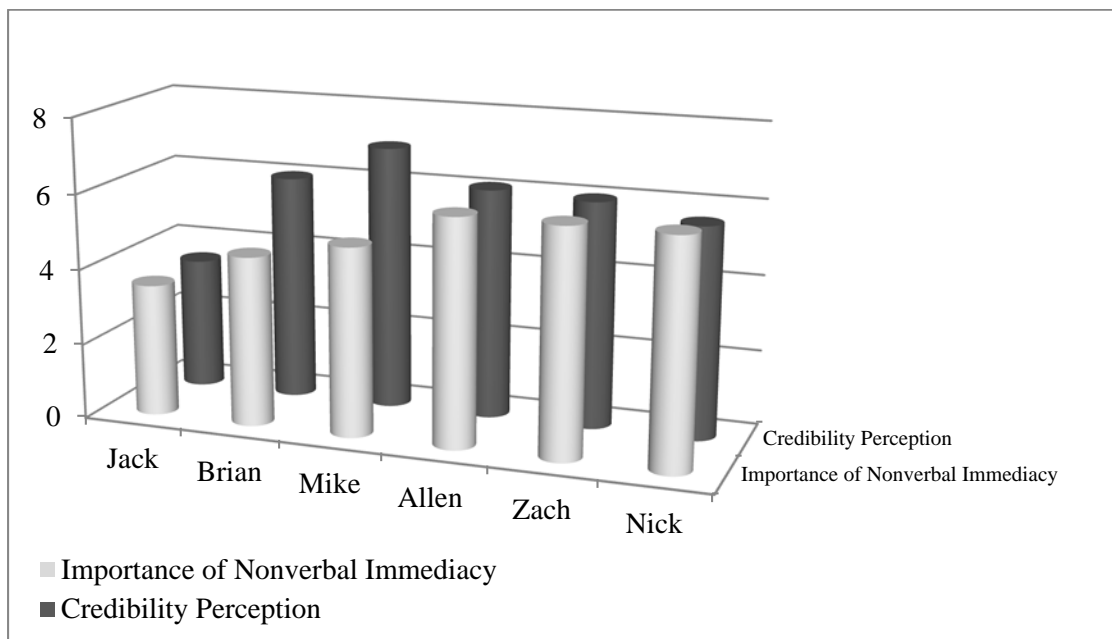| Instructor's Name	Years Taught	Sex	Credibility Rating				Use of Nonverbal Immediacy
			Expectations of Students' Perception	Self-Perception Comparing with Department	Self-Perception Comparing with University	Credibility Average	
Jack	36	M	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Brian	30	M	6	6	6	6	4.5
Mike	24	M	7	7	7	7	5
Allen	23	M	6.5	6	6	6.1	6
Zach	7	M	7	6	5	6	6
Nick	5	M	6	5.5	5.5	5.6	6
Cathy	32	F	6.5	6.5	6	6.3	7
Julia	32	F	6	6	5	5.6	6
Megan	25	F	5.5	5.5	5	5.3	5
Molly	19	F	6	6	5	5.6	7
Heather	9	F	5	3.5	3.5	4	6
Ashley	9	F	6.5	6	6	6.1	6

Figure 1. Male Instructors' Perceptions of their Credibility and Nonverbal Immediacy
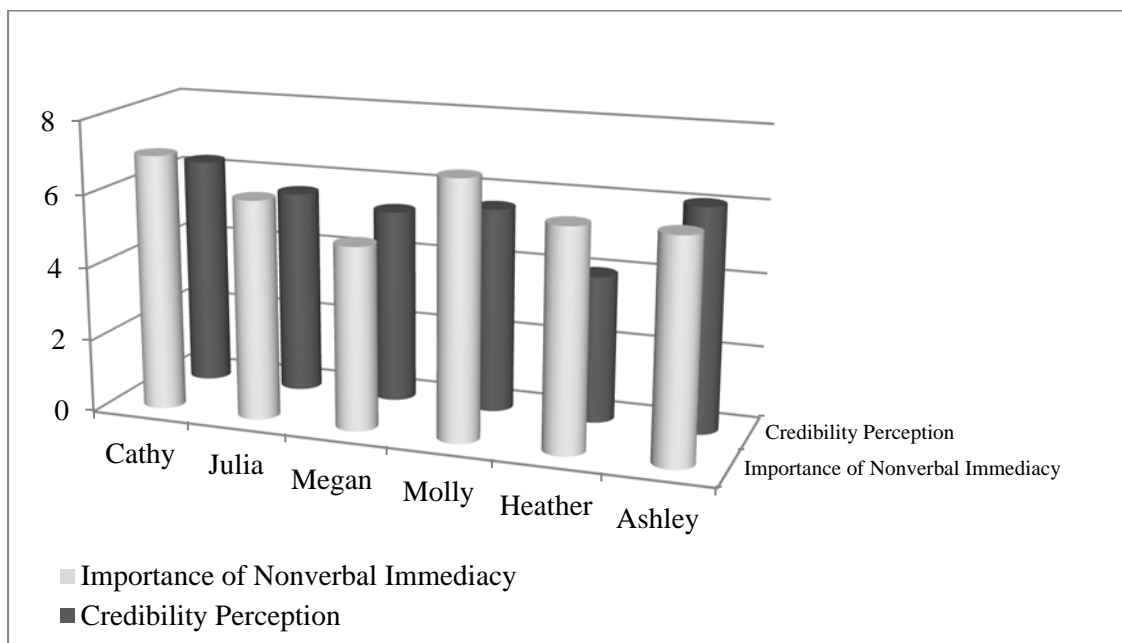

Figure 2. Female Instructors' Perceptions of their Credibility and Nonverbal Immediacy

Sex Roles

In this study, sex, more than any other criteria, seemed to play a role in how the instructors viewed themselves and how they assessed their own immediacy and credibility. While this is a qualitative study and I was not looking for statistical differences, the participants' responses illustrate how they perceive themselves in terms of credibility and nonverbal immediacy. Mainly, the two figures above illustrate the slightly higher rating of credibility perceptions by the male instructors (5.7) as compared to the slightly lower self-ratings by the female instructors (5.48). In a qualitative study this is only important insofar as the numbers suggest that instructors generally perceive themselves as credible, and men slightly more so than women. The figures also suggest that female instructors rated the importance of nonverbal immediacy somewhat more highly (6.17) than male instructors (5.17).

Sex differences played an interesting role in the results of this research. Choosing to teach one course rather than another could be related to gender differences. Instructors like to choose the course that helps them to apply their teaching style whether it is formal, informal, or somewhere in-between. In this study, female instructors mostly taught courses that fit their energy and willingness to self-disclose, while male instructors preferred courses complemented by a more formal teaching style.

Although some male instructors recognized the importance of nonverbal immediacy, they paired it with competence more than any other dimension of credibility. Female instructors paired nonverbal immediacy with caring more than other dimensions of credibility. Female instructors also paired nonverbal immediacy with trustworthiness

more than male instructors do. Male instructors valued their credibility more than female instructors did. Female instructors valued their nonverbal immediacy more than their credibility. Some of the male instructors said that admitting shortcomings fosters their students' trust. Both male and female instructors valued the importance of interpersonal connections with students. Female and young male instructors also affirmed the importance of energy and enthusiasm in class.

Female instructors valued the importance of nonverbal immediacy more than male instructors. Female instructors used self-disclosure to explain the class concepts to their students. They also used humor and considered it one of the most useful strategies for engaging students. More than male instructors, female instructors stated they valued the importance of being organized, and they surpassed male instructors in making reflections and updating their information. During the interviews, female instructors talked more about nonverbal communication. Female instructors also described themselves as animated. Although all instructors acknowledged that touch is a sensitive issue, female instructors indicated that they touch students more than male instructors do. Female instructors provided examples regarding the positive effects of their nonverbal behaviors on their students more than male instructors. Even women who admitted their lack of nonverbal immediacy suggested solutions to support practicing nonverbal behaviors in class.

All results underline the significant role that sex plays in valuing and practicing nonverbal immediacy behaviors in class. The results suggest that female instructors practice nonverbal immediacy as a part of their personalities.

Experience Role

The results that emerged regarding instructor's experience are not as clear as the other results in this study. More than one instructor, male and female, referred to the importance of an instructor's years taught and the role of such experience in student perceptions of instructor credibility. The research suggested that young male instructors use nonverbal immediacy more than older male instructors. Although male instructors with years of experience did not use as much nonverbal behaviors in class as female instructors, they indicated a willingness to improve their performance and be more effective.

While participants referred to experience, there was a wide variation in how they applied that criteria to themselves as effective teachers.

Content Role

Male and female instructors who taught courses in public speaking, performance studies, interpersonal communication, and nonverbal communication used and valued the importance of nonverbal immediacy more than other instructors. Instructors who taught these classes seemed to be more dynamic because such classes offer opportunities to use a variety of teaching strategies and class activities. Classes such as oral communication and public speaking include many activities that spark the energy and engagement of students. Thus, course content determined how much nonverbal communication is used by the participants in this study.

Cultural Role

Culture seemed to play a significant role in the participants' perceptions of appropriate classroom behaviors. The results indicated a positive perception of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on credibility from instructors who came from an educated family or who had taught in a K-12 school and from the African instructor as well. Instructors who had previously taught in K-12 schools touched students more than other instructors do. Allen stated that he does not look female students in the eye directly because of his culture's values. Allen comes in first among all male instructors in his perceived level of animation, and this may reflect cultural influences as well. Instructors who valued the importance of nonverbal behaviors refer to the role that students play in ensuring effective classroom interactions. Culture seems to play an important role in the educational setting, even though there were no specific interview questions directed at culture. A perusal of the participants' comments suggests that some of the instructors in the study were aware of cultural norms and taboos for touching; males tended not to touch, while females carefully used touch to show concern or caring. The role of eye contact in a cultural sense was identified as one reason to not have a great deal of eye contact by one participant.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Instructors' perceptions of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and credibility are important starting points for improving instructor effectiveness in the classroom. Although other researchers have investigated these phenomena quantitatively, I believed that these concepts called for an inductive approach. This study attempted to rectify the lack of qualitative research and thus add information to the body of knowledge on teacher effectiveness. As this study progressed, the research focused on answering one question: What are the perceptions of the importance of immediacy and credibility as they relate to teacher effectiveness in the classroom? The results of this study suggest number of answers to the research question. The following is a summary of the findings of the study.

Summary of Findings

The research results are best understood by revisiting three dimensions of teacher credibility: competence, caring, and trustworthiness. It is also important to acknowledge the influences of the instructors' various roles and characteristics including sex, experience, classes taught, and culture. Although the research sampling criteria did not include culture, the role of culture emerged during analysis as an important component of this study.

Three main categories under the competence theme were found: (a) knowing the subject matter, (b) serving as a role model, and (c) organization. In regard to knowledge of the subject matter, instructors' responses focused on knowledge of material and reflection and updated information, and both male and female instructors indicated that

subject matter expertise is important. Regarding role models, instructors' responses focused on the instructor's experience and professionalism, life examples, and the professional model. Female instructors surpassed male instructors in showing their passions and using self-disclosure to relate to the subject matter in class. Male instructors in this study surpassed female instructors in working or publishing works about their specialty. In regard to organization, female instructors especially commented more than male instructors on organizational skills and behaviors. Positive organizational behaviors included putting class materials online for students, creating effective handouts and PowerPoints, and following the course textbooks and readings. Instructors suggested that sticking to the course schedule, especially with grading, is especially important. Participants responded to the importance of the competence, as one of the credibility dimensions, more than caring and trustworthiness themes, and this is clear through the previous important categories under the competence theme.

Two main categories under the caring theme were found: (a) interpersonal connection and (b) engagement. Both male and female instructors indicated that they value interpersonal connections with students. Instructors who participated in this study confirmed the importance of engaging students through listening, humor and entertaining students, and charisma.

Research participants highlighted the importance of being likeable, approachable, and friendly. These characteristics could be enhanced by some practices inside and outside the class. The instructors expressed several ways they make connections with their students, and each emphasized the importance of making those interpersonal

connections. Participants suggested that students believe their instructors care when they demonstrate behaviors that show they see the student as more than a number or a name on a class list. They referred to this as "being engaged" with the student as a person.

Some of the concepts participants associated with effective classroom teaching included "humor, listening, engagement, and interaction." Some participants mentioned the importance of the class layout, enthusiasm, and using public speaking techniques as strategies to engage students. Although some of the participants recognized their lack of listening, they valued listening as a significant part of students' engagement in the classroom. Several instructors affirmed the importance of entertaining their students to keep the students engaged. Participants identified humor, engagement, and listening as qualities of effective classroom teachers. Many of participants' responses concentrated on the role of energy and enthusiasm in establishing credibility. Charisma was explained as showing enthusiasm about the topic as an essential characteristic of effective classroom teachers.

Two themes also emerged on the trustworthiness dimension of teacher credibility: (a) honesty and (b) being real. Participants' responses to questions about honesty also suggested two sub-sets: fairness and admitting limitation. Being honest and admitting when you've made a mistake were identified as essential components of a teacher who is trustworthy. Two categories emerged from participants' responses regarding being real: showing humanness and being friendly. Several instructors, both male and female, said that an instructor should be rigorous, straight-forward, and tough, but at the same time, he or she should be fair and honest The participants all suggested that "being real" means

being a regular person and being friendly were important aspects of trustworthiness, but some suggested that one must find a distinct balance between being a teacher and being a friend. One can be "real" without overstepping the boundaries for students and teachers.

Female instructors were the participants who most often responded positively regarding teacher nonverbal immediacy. Female instructors also responded more than male instructors regarding the importance of facial expressions. All instructors except Allen confirmed that they make eye contact. Most female instructors described themselves as animated. In general, male instructors did not say they are animated except Allen. Female instructors indicated that their classroom voices are more energetic while male instructors did not suggest they have energy in their vocal delivery.

All participants confirmed the sensitivity of touch, but women reported that they touch both male and female students more than male instructors do. However, all of the instructors expressed the need for caution in touching and suggested that one must be sensitive to the student's perspective and consider what is "appropriate" for the situation. All teachers smile frequently except Brian, who said he only smiles a little bit. Allen, who said he does not smile with all students.

<div align="center">Implications of Research</div>

My analysis yielded some important results regarding the roles of sex, experience, content, and culture. Sex differences played an important role in many of the results that emerged in this research. The results regarding instructor's experience were not as important and clear as some other results in this study. Male and female instructors who taught courses in public speaking, performance studies, interpersonal communication,

and nonverbal communication use and value the importance of nonverbal immediacy more than other instructors. There was a positive perception of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on credibility from instructors who came from educated families or who had taught in K-12 schools and from the African instructor as well.

This study is a good qualitative start on studying the instructors' perception of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility and their nonverbal immediacy performance in the classroom as well. The results of this study confirmed that qualitative methods can offer new information about instructors' credibility and nonverbal immediacy. According to Richmond (2002), the large body of research on teacher immediacy has found significant results. Immediacy is one of the most important topics in the body of classroom communication research. Richmond et al. (2003a) stated that during the past 25 years, immediacy, primarily nonverbal immediacy behaviors, has been a leading topic of research among communication professionals. McCroskey (1992) suggested that the teacher's credibility was determined by three primary dimensions: caring, competence, and trustworthiness. This study confirmed the three dimensions of credibility: competence, caring, and trustworthiness.

This study explored the influence of the roles of sex, experience, content area, and culture on instructors' perceptions of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility. One particularly important issue involved the connection between instructor energy and perceptions of the importance of nonverbal immediacy. Younger instructors seemed to use more energy in classes than older instructors. Female

instructors, even older female instructors, used more energy in class than male instructors. Did the difference between male and female instructors' energy play an important role in perceiving the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact in their credibility? Female instructors perceived nonverbal immediacy to play a more important role on their credibility than did male instructors. Female instructors could be characterized as more affective (concerned about emotions or feelings, and expressing those feelings in their interactions with students) as previous studies have reported. Ambady and Rosenthal (1993) said that "teachers with higher ratings [of using nonverbal immediacy] tended to be more nonverbally active and expressive" (as cited in Richmond, 2002, p. 69). McCroskey et al. (2002) reported that "teachers who are more nonverbally immediate are seen by their students as more caring, clearer, and overall better teachers than less immediate teachers" (p.69).

Anderson et al. (1979) described some immediacy behaviors such as reduction in proxemic distance, increases in touch, increases in eye contact, positive facial expressions, increases in gestures, bodily relaxation, purposeful body movements, positioning of head and body toward others, head nodding, and vocal expressiveness. Kelley and Gorham (1988) stated that the presence of close physical distance, leaning forward, head nodding, and increased eye contact are classified as high immediacy conditions and the absence of these behaviors as low immediacy conditions. Richmond (2002) stated that "the teacher's delivery style should be animated and dynamic, and gesturing is one method of achieving this" (p. 71). She stated that "instructors who have an open body position communicate to their students that they are receptive and immediate, whereas teachers who fold in or

keep a closed body position are perceived as nonimmediate and unreceptive" (Richmond, 2002, p. 71).

The results of this study are instructive for other teachers and scholars. The instructors interviewed for this study all had clear views of themselves as instructors and what they perceived as important behaviors and attitudes for effective classroom teachers. Men and women had different views of what was the most important, and age, culture, and previous experience all played a role in determining an instructor's own perceptions of themselves as effective classroom instructors. Each instructor interviewed indicated that nonverbal immediacy was of important for effective teaching. Each also at least alluded to characteristics of credibility as essential if instructors wish to inspire their students to learn.

<p align="center">Ideas for Future Research</p>

Nonverbal communication in the classroom is one of the complicated issues in the communication field. Although many research participants had high levels of experience, some of them were still not sure whether using particular behaviors affected their credibility or not. In-depth studies should be conducted to confirm this relationship. Instructors should also improve their awareness by reading about the important role of nonverbal immediacy to enhance their credibility. Even if an instructor uses immediacy behaviors, he or she may not be conscious of the impact of their nonverbal immediacy on their credibility.

The results of this research suggested that there is a distinction between female instructors and male instructors; previous studies have shown similar differences. Some

studies have reported the gender differences between men and women when it comes to

immediacy in general. Menzel (1999) stated that while students perceived better learning

from an instructor of the same gender, the effect was strongly mediated by instructor

verbal immediacy behavior. In a study about the nonverbal behavior and the vertical

dimension of social relations, Hall et al. (2005) stated that comparison of gender

differences in nonverbal behavior are limited. Henley (1977) theorized that men's

nonverbal behavior is characterized by a sense of authority and women's behavior by

compliance or acquiescence (as cited in Kalbfleisch & Cody, 1995, p. 64). Kalbfleisch

and Cody (1995) cited several studies that support this theory. Some of the studies

suggest the following:

> Men display more visual dominance than women, whereas women maintain a
> high degree of attentive gaze toward others; women display more appeasement or
> submission gestures such as smiling and the head tilt; women claim less space, are
> touched more, and tolerate more spatial intrusions than men; women use more
> rising intonation and questioning vocal patterns rather than authoritative ones;
> women are silent (or silenced), talk less, and interpreted more than men, giving
> them access to the conversational floor. (P. 64)

Although Kalbfleisch and Cody (1995) cited these previous research results in their book

"*Gender, Power, and Communication in Human Relationships*," they stated that there

was relative lack of differences in the meanings attributed to male and female immediacy

behaviors. Kalbfleisch and Cody (1995) stated that touch especially is among the most

nonverbal immediacy cues that could make the difference between men and women.

The results of the pilot study also confirmed that students perceived their male

instructors as more credible than female instructors. Further studies should be done to

confirm and discover the reasons for this finding. Female and non-American male

instructors' higher ratings of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on credibility could be an indicator of the strong relationship between credibility and nonverbal immediacy, and future research should explore this relationship in more detail.

More than one instructor referred to being fair and rigorous, thus future researchers may wish to study nonverbal immediacy as a mediator between fairness and firmness. Haptic communication can be an effective but risky form of nonverbal communication. Hansen (2011) stated that "teachers can use appropriate touching to communicate affection toward their students and to establish a caring classroom community. Positive, appropriate touching demonstrates that teachers care about students' well-being" (p.11). Although touch is effective, most instructors in this study indicated that they do not use it. Further studies should be done to address the appropriate touching by instructors to communicate affection toward their students.

The results of this research could apply to communication instructors in small Midwestern universities but are not generalizable. The results could help other instructors—especially instructors from other departments—to utilize effective teaching behaviors. Some participants in this research may have misunderstood the exact definition of nonverbal immediacy so that also may have affected the results.

Participants in this research referred to the number of students in class and the classroom layout and described how these factors affected their effectiveness. Attention to these factors can also contribute to improving instructor effectiveness in the classroom. One technique in particular—the use of small group activities—facilitates connections

between instructors and their students and gives instructors more opportunities to apply nonverbal immediacy strategies.

Conclusion

As I stated in the introduction, of nothing comes nothing. Instructors who value the importance of nonverbal immediacy practice its behaviors while instructors who do not value it do not practice it. This study confirmed the three main dimensions of credibility: competence, caring, and trustworthiness. It was clear that the sex, experience, content area, and culture play significant roles in forming instructors' perceptions of the importance of nonverbal immediacy and its impact on their credibility. The overlaps among these roles made instructors feel effective sometimes and ineffective other times. Previous studies confirmed that credibility is not a constant. The connection between the roles of sex, experience, content area, and culture and their impact on credibility and nonverbal immediacy is clear. However, instructors need to become aware of nonverbal immediacy strategies, and researchers must further explore this topic in order to better understand how to ensure effective instruction.

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APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTOR CREDIBILITY SCALE

1) Intelligent	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Unintelligent
2) Untrained	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Trained
3) Cares about me	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Doesn't care about me
4) Honest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Dishonest
5) Has my interests at heart	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Doesn't have my interests at heart
6) Untrustworthy	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Trustworthy
7) Inexpert	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Expert
8) Self-centered	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Not self-centered
9) Concerned with me	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Not concerned with me
10) Honorable	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Dishonorable
11) Informed	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Uninformed
12) Moral	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Immoral
13) Incompetent	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Competent
14) Unethical	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Ethical
15) Insensitive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Sensitive
16) Bright	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Stupid
17) Phony	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Genuine
18) Not understanding	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Understanding

Source: McCroskey, J. C., & Teven, J. J. (1999). Goodwill: A reexamination of the construct and its measurement. *Communication Abstracts, 22*(5), 90-103.

APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL

Office of Sponsored Programs

University of NorthernIowa

Human Participants Review Committee
UNI Institutional Review Board (IRB)
213 East Bartlett Hall

Abdullah Al-Asmari
901 Maplewood Drive, #7
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Re: IRB 12-0070

Dear Mr. Al-Asmari:

Your study, **Instructors' Perceptions of their Own Effectiveness: The Role of Credibility and Nonverbal Immediacy,** has been approved by the UNI IRB effective **11/21/12**, following an Expedited review of your application performed by **IRB member Helen Harton, Ph.D.** You may begin enrolling participants in your study.

<u>**Modifications:**</u> If you need to make changes to your study procedures, samples, or sites, you must request approval of the change before continuing with the research. Changes requiring approval are those that may increase the social, emotional, physical, legal, or privacy risks to participants. Your request may be sent to me by mail or email.

<u>**Problems and Adverse Events:**</u> If during the study you observe any problems or events pertaining to participation in your study that are *serious* and *unexpected* (e.g., you did not include them in your IRB materials as a potential risk), you must report this to the IRB within 10 days. Examples include unexpected injury or emotional stress, missteps in the consent documentation, or breaches of confidentiality. You may send this information to me by mail or email.

<u>**Expiration Date**</u>: Your study **approval will expire on 11/21/13**. Beyond that, you may not recruit participants or collect data without continuing approval. We will email you an Annual Renewal/Update form about 4-6 weeks before your expiration date, or you can download it from our website. You are responsible for seeking continuing approval before your expiration date *whether you receive a reminder or not.* If your approval lapses, you will need to submit a new application for review.

<u>**Closure:**</u> If you complete your project before the expiration date, or it ends for other reasons, please download and submit the IRB Project Renewal/Closure form and submit in order to close our your protocol file. It is especially important to do this if you are a student and planning to leave campus at the end of the academic year. Advisors are encouraged to monitor that this occurs.

<u>**Forms:**</u> Information and all IRB forms are available online at http://www.uni.edu/osp/protection-human-research-participants.

If you have any questions about Human Participants Review policies or procedures, please contact me at 319.273.6148 or anita.gordon@uni.edu. Best wishes for your project success.

Sincerely,

Anita M. Gordon, MSW
IRB Administrator

cc: Melissa Beall, Faculty Advisor

APPENDIX C

NONVERBAL IMMEDIACY SCALE OBSERVER-REPORT (NIS-O)

DIRECTIONS: The following statements describe the ways some people behave while talking with or to others. Please indicate in the space at the left of each item the degree to which you believe the statement applies to (**fill in the target person's name or description**). Please use the following 5-point scale:

1 = Never; 2 = Rarely; 3 = Occasionally; 4 = Often; 5 = Very Often

_____ 1.   He/she uses her or his hands and arms to gesture while talking to people.
_____ 2.   He/she touches others on the shoulder or arm while talking to them.
_____ 3.   He/she uses a monotone or dull voice while talking to people.
_____ 4.   He/she looks over or away from others while talking to them.
_____ 5.   He/she moves away from others when they touch her/him while they are talking.
_____ 6.   He/she has a relaxed body position when he/she talks to people.
_____ 7.   He/she frowns while talking to people.
_____ 8.   He/she avoids eye contact while talking to people.
_____ 9.   He/she has a tense body position while talking to people.
_____10.   He/she sits close or stands close to people while talking with them.
_____11.   Her or his voice is monotonous or dull when he/she talks to people.
_____12.   He/she uses a variety of vocal expressions when he/she talks to people.
_____13.   He/she gestures when he/she talks to people.
_____14.   He/she is animated when he/she talk to people.
_____15.   He/she has a bland facial expression when he/she talks to people.
_____16.   He/she moves closer to people when he/she talks to them.
_____17.   He/she looks directly at people while talking to them.
_____18.   He/she is stiff when he/she talks to people.
_____19.   He/she has a lot of vocal variety when he/she talks to people.
_____20.   He/she avoids gesturing while he/she is talking to people.
_____21.   He/she leans toward people when he/she talks to them.
_____22.   He/she maintains eye contact with people when he/she talks to them.
_____23.   He/she tries not to sit or stand close to people when he/she talks with them.
_____24.   He/she leans away from people when he/she talks to them.
_____25.   He/she smiles when he/she talks to people.
_____26.   He/she avoids touching people when he/she talks to them.

Scoring:
        Step 1. Add the scores from the following items: 1, 2, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, and 25.
        Step 2. Add the scores from the following items: 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, 18, 20, 23, 24, and 26.

Total Score = 78 plus Step 1 minus Step 2.

Norms:

Females	Mean = 96.7	S.D. = 16.1	High = >112	Low = <81
Males	Mean = 91.6	S.D. = 15.0	High = >106	Low = <77
Combined	Mean = 94.2	S.D. = 15.6	High = >109	Low = <79

Source:

Richmond, V., McCroskey, J., & Johnson, A. (2003). Development of the nonverbal immediacy scale (NIS): Measures of self- and other-perceived nonverbal immediacy. *Communication Quarterly, 51*(4), 504-517.

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS—PILOT STUDY

Credibility

1. What is your official position?

2. How many years have you been teaching?

3. Tell me about your teaching.

4. What strategies do you use to create effective classroom teaching? Why?

5. Please describe elements of your classroom presence / teaching style that make you a credible source.

6. Please describe the ways in which you show that you are competent in the subject matter.

7. What aspects of your character or personality contribute to your teacher credibility?

8. Can you think of any character traits you have that may detract from your teacher credibility? If so, please explain.

9. Please describe any classroom behaviors you have that may enhance your credibility and show that you care about your students and their wellbeing.

10. Can you think of any classroom behaviors you have that may not communicate caring about students and their wellbeing, thus affecting credibility? If so, please explain.

11. Do you employ any self-monitoring / reflection techniques regarding teaching practices and behaviors that influence the effectiveness of your teaching? If so, what do you do?

12. To what extent do you think you use self-disclosure? Can you give me an example?

13. Can you think of any behaviors you may have that may detract from your subject matter? If so, please explain.

14. Overall, how credible do you think your students perceive you to be? (One being not credible, seven being highly credible) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. In comparison to all the professors in the Communication Department, how would you rank your credibility? (One being not credible, seven being highly credible) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. In comparison to all the professors at the university, how would you rank your credibility? (One being not credible, seven being highly credible) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. What else can you add about your credibility in the classroom?

Nonverbal immediacy

1. How would you describe your nonverbal behavior as a teacher in the classroom? Give me some examples.

2. How much do you smile when you talk to students?

3. How do you use your hands and arms to gesture while talking to students?

4. How and when do you touch students?

5. How do you describe your body position when you talk to students?

6. Describe your eye contact while talking to students.

7. Do you lean toward students when you talk to them?

8. Where do you position yourself in the room while talking to students?

9. How do you describe your voice in the classroom?

10. Describe your amount of animation when you talk to students.

11. What can you share about how your nonverbal communication has positively affected students?

12. How would you rank your use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom? (One is low, seven is high) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. How does using nonverbal immediacy improve your credibility in the classroom?

14. What else can you add about your classroom behaviors?

APPENDIX E

RECRUITING LETTER FOR TEACHERS—PILOT AND FINAL STUDY

Hello Professor_____,

     I am glad to invite you to be a partner in the success of my thesis by participating in this research project conducted through the University of Northern Iowa. My thesis is titled "The Impact of Instructors' Nonverbal Immediacy on their Credibility in the College Classroom." You are one of the selected participants.

     I want to visit one of your classes so I can observe the class for one period and then schedule an appointment with you for about half an hour to interview you later about the research topic. I will also ask that you help me recruit students in your class by allowing me to give them a letter of invitation to participate in my study, and then allow me some time in your class to specifically ask for participation and ask those potential participants to sign an informed consent form.

     I hope you will approve, and we can meet soon to start a successful scholarly journey where you will be an important part of my research.

                                    Sincerely,

                                    Abdullah S. Al-Asmari

                                    (Investigator's cell phone number)

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS—FINAL STUDY

1. What is your official position?

2. How many years have you been teaching? What classes do you typically teach?

3. Tell me about your typical teaching style. What does a typical class look like when you teach? What kind of environment do you most prefer creating when you teach – formal, informal, or somewhere in between?

4. What words or images come to mind when you think of effective classroom teaching?

5. What strategies do you use to create effective classroom teaching? Why?

6. Tell me about a time when you felt particularly effective (or ineffective) as a teacher. What happened?

7. What characteristics do you associate with having credibility as a teacher? What makes an instructor not be credible to students?

8. Think about a teacher you have had who you found to be particularly credible as a teacher.

9. What characteristics did that person have? What were they like as a teacher?

10. Overall, how credible do you think your students perceive you to be? (One being not credible, seven being highly credible) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Why do you rate yourself this way?

11. In comparison to all the professors in the Communication Department, how would you rank your credibility? (One being not credible, seven being highly credible) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. In comparison to all the professors at the university, how would you rank your credibility? (One being not credible, seven being highly credible) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. Please describe elements of your classroom presence / teaching style that you believe make you a credible teacher.

14. Tell me about a time when you felt particularly credible (or not credible) as a teacher. What happened?

15. What else can you add about your credibility in the classroom?

16. Think about a teacher you have had who you found to be particularly engaging as a teacher or that you felt close to or really liked. What characteristics did that person have? What were they like as a teacher that made you feel close to them? Describe the atmosphere of their classroom.

17. Tell me about a time when you felt particularly close to a class. Describe what happened that created that closeness.

18. Describe the layout of the classroom of this class. [could have them draw a picture of the classroom] Where were you typically in that classroom when you taught?

19. What images or words would you use to describe your nonverbal behavior as a teacher in that classroom?

20. How do you think your students in that class would have described your

   nonverbal communication as a teacher in that class?

21. How would you rank your use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom? (One is

   low, seven is high) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. What else can you add about your classroom behaviors in that class?

23. In general, what are your greatest strengths as a teacher?

24. In general, what things would you like to improve on as a teacher?

25. Anything else you'd like to add about teaching effectiveness?

APPENDIX G

INFORMED CONSENT— INSTRUCTORS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
HUMAN PARTICIPANTS REVIEW
INFORMED CONSENT-TEACHERS

Project Title: Instructors' Perceptions of their Own Effectiveness: The Role of Credibility and Nonverbal Immediacy
Name of Investigator: Abdullah S. Al-Asmari
Invitation to Participate: You are invited to participate in this research project conducted through the University of Northern Iowa, under the supervision of Dr. Melissa Beall, Department of Communication Studies. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project. The following information is provided to help you made an informed decision about whether or not to participate.
Nature and Purpose: This study is designed to identify how instructors use nonverbal immediacy in the college classroom as well as the types most used. In addition, it seeks to identify the effect of nonverbal immediacy on instructors' credibility. This study will investigate teacher credibility levels by examining both students' and teacher's perceptions of credibility regarding the instructors' nonverbal immediacy.
Explanation of Procedures: Qualitative and quantitative methods will both be used as the research methods. Observation will be the first step followed by interviewing faculty members from the department of communication studies at UNI for approximately 30 minutes. The interview will contain inquiries on how much the interviewee uses nonverbal immediacy and his or her assessment of how nonverbal immediacy impacts his or her credibility. Interviews will be taped (with the interviewee's permission) for future reference only and notes will be taken throughout the interviews. After all interviews are conducted the tapes will be transcribed and analyzed in accordance with the research questions. A research assistant will help the principal researcher in transcribing data. The quantitative method includes measuring teachers' credibility by using the Teacher Credibility Scale as foundation for the students' questionnaire.
Discomfort and Risks: Risks of participation are minimal. Only pertinent contact information, such as interviews name, phone, and email, will be obtained and kept during the research process. The recording of this information is necessary in order to set up interviews. I will be the only one with the information, and I will assign a code name which will be used in my notes and on tape. I will also provide a written confidentiality clause signed by me and my advisor. The clause will also be read by me and agreed/disagreed to by participant, who will be code-named, on tape. At the completion of the thesis the information will be destroyed.
Benefits and Compensation: There are no anticipated direct benefits of this study on the teachers or students who participate in it. This study could help teachers increase their credibility through better understanding of the importance of nonverbal immediacy in the college classroom.

Confidentiality: All information obtained during this study will be kept confidential. The thesis resulting from this study may include quotations from the interview. The summarized findings with no identifying information may be published in an academic journal or presented at a scholarly conference.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw: Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time or to choose not to participate at all, and by doing so, you will not be penalized or lose benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Questions: If you have questions about the study or desire information in the future regarding your participation or the study generally, you can contact (Abdullah Al-Asmari) at 515-779-8795. You can also contact the office of the IRB Administrator, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-6148, for answers to questions about rights of research participants and the participant review process.

Agreement:

I, voluntarily, agree to participate in the study " The Impact of Instructors' Nonverbal Immediacy on their Credibility in the College Classroom," conducted through the University of Northern Iowa by graduate student Abdullah Al-Asmari, Communication Studies. I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the minimal risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement. I am 18 years of age or older.

_____   _____
(Signature of participant)   (Date)

_____
(Printed name of participant)

_____   _____
(Signature of investigator)   (Date)

_____   _____
(Signature of instructor/advisor)   (Date)

Note: Participant will be offered a copy of the consent form.

APPENDIX H

JACK'S INTERVIEW

Note: **R** refers to the researcher while **P** refers to the participant.

R: What is your official position?

P: Uh, I'm a professor in the department of communication studies at_____.

R: How many years have you been teaching?

P: Since 1977, I started teaching as a graduate student then.

R: What classes do you typically teach?

P: Persuasion, Communication Theories, Small Groups, and Leadership.

R: Tell me about your typical teaching style. What does a typical class look like when you teach? What kind of environment do you most prefer creating when you teach, formal, informal, or somewhere in between.

P: It's formal in the extent, to the extent that most of my classes feature lecture. Uh, it's informal in the sense that students are encouraged to ask questions, we'll break out into small groups several times perhaps during the course of a single class or at least once each class, uh and students are encouraged to engage in that. They're given materials prior to each class so that they've had a chance to read the lecture content and the goal for it, they're encouraged to bring questions with them but I'd say it tends more toward the formal on the scale of the modern classroom.

R: What words or images come to mind when you think of effective classroom teaching?

P: Can we use my answer to that question from the last time, that's the same question that we used for isn't it?

R: No.

P: That's a new one, oh my.

R: What words or images come to mind when you think of effective classroom teaching?

P: I think engaged is probably the key uh, I would hope the students are engaged but certainly I would at minimum need to be engaged in the material and then trying to engage them in the content, so that'd be the centerpiece.

R: What strategies do you use to create effective classroom teaching and why?

P: Well, there's so many answers to that cuz there's a variety of different strategies and tactics that are interwoven throughout what I do, from the materials that I've prepared to what I do during the class, but I'd say the primary answer would be trying to give students an opportunity to engage the material and succeed with the material at the level they want to. There'll be some students who seem to be determined just to get through on whatever minimal effort they can, there'll be others who seemed to me to my assessment to be really trying to learn the content regardless of what the performance on exams are like and I try to have materials that challenge the eagerest student and that give an opportunity to the less eager student or the ones who's intention is split 5 different directions, I wanna make sure that the material and my presentation of it is accessible enough to give them a chance to succeed even though they're approaching the material in a different way than the highly engaged individual.

R: Tell me about a time when you felt particularly effective or ineffective as a teacher. What happened?

P: Well, effective, there is some sort of a sense of flow to the lecture interaction, discussion, that the students are having, they forget to be self-conscious, worried that their questions would make them stand out and feel foolish and they just ask the questions, they just make the comments or they are by their nonverbal presentation engaged in the material at a level higher than the norm, higher than the average, and when that's happening, then I would say there's a good flow to the class and when I get a class that works that way, predominantly in a single session in a given week, it's a good week. If 2 or more sessions happen like that it's a great week, if a couple happen in the same day it's a wonderful day.

R: Ok good. What characteristics do you associate with having credibility as a teacher, what makes an instructor not be credible to students.

P: That's new? That's the same question we did before isn't it?

R: yeah, if you want add something here...

P: Add something, or try to remember what I said last time. This is tricky, I'm not gonna say the same things I said last time. Um, I think that credibility is in the perception of the students, I said that last time no doubt. And so that's a judgment made in each class as a consequence I wouldn't wanna say here's what you need to be in order to be a credible instructor because the students and the individuals who are attempting to instruct will be different in each sort of a case. But in the end the answer to your question that would always be correct is the students that made the judgment of credibility, they have for one reason or another found the instructor approachable or concerned sufficiently about what

they're doing, or well enough prepared that there was some admiration from that, whatever the reason students have decided this is a place where they can learn from this individual.

R: Think about a teacher you have had who you found to be particularly credible as a teacher, what characteristics did that person have, what were they like as a teacher?

P: Well, see that's, alright, so that as an example of what I was just saying, that varied through my lifetime as a student, prior to college there would be teachers that I was engaged with more who might not have engaged me later in my life as an undergraduate, I was one kind of a student, as a master's and doctoral student I was a different kind of a student and the instructors that I admired as doctoral student for instance, I don't know that I would've had the same assessment as an undergraduate in their classroom and many of the master's and doctoral classes had undergraduates and master's students and doctoral students in it and I think people were getting different experiences from that, so for me there's been quite a wide range, but probably I tend toward in each case someone who is more on the formal side of the scale in terms of information provider as a opposed to someone who's trying hard to get the students to create the knowledge amongst themselves, just as a range between formal and informal, lecture oriented versus discussion oriented folks.

R: Overall, how credible do you think your students perceive you to be on the scale from 1 to 7, 1 being not credible, 7 being highly credible.

P: 3.5. that's an aggregate deal, some would say 7 some would say 1, 3.5.

R: In comparison to all of the professors at the Communication Department, how would you rank your credibility, the same scale.

P: You understand that I'm talking, that I view credibility as a perceptual judgement made by, in this case the students, and I'd again put me in the middle of the bunch.

A: In comparison to all of the professors at the University.

P: You know what the answer is to that.

R: Yeah, uh, please describe elements of your classroom presence, teaching style that you believe make you a credible teacher.

P: Well, one of the classes I teach spends a lot of time talking about what credibility is and the various dimensions of that, and I don't want to get too deep into those weeds, so I'll just provide a brief answer to that. Preparation and organization is a thing that can enhance your credibility and I think probably if a have credibility, it comes in part from that, it comes in part from having the position at the University of Northern Iowa, but

primarily in the classroom, with the classroom experience with me what credibility I have, which is always perceptual in the minds of the students, it's not that I can carry that with me, but if they judge me credible my guess is part of that has to do with the fact that they can see all the materials that have been pulled together on their behalf.

R: Tell me about a time when you felt particularly credible or not credible as a teacher. What happened?

P: Well, you've added that question earlier that got me talking about flow and I would answer this one going back to that. Uh, there were a couple of classes that went very well on Wednesday this week for instance, and if I had to describe what made them go that way I wouldn't be able to tell you because to me, I try to prepare similarly each day and I try to give each class period an opportunity but sometimes things click sometimes things don't but when they do there's that flow that I was talkin about where it feels like we're really, there's an ease of presentation, there's an ease of reception, there's engagement on the part of the students at least as measured by their affect displays, they look interested not bored, they look engaged not distracted, and their hands are moving, they're sometimes writing things down, the downside to providing lecture in advance is, it can so easily make people passive because they feel as though they've got the material and if that's the case and I talk with the students about that, then the material won't ever come to life for them unless they paraphrase or come up with their own examples of each of the things that we're talking about. so whatever presentational approach I take, has it's potential downside to it and trying to figure out what that is and trying to talk openly with students about that gives a chance to have one of those good sessions or to have part of our session that is a very engaged part, but I come back to that flow as the sign that that's going on without the ability, I have no magic wand to say and now we're going to have flow, it has to be something that we co-construct in that instance.

R: What else can you add about your credibility in the classroom?

P: This is very indirect, but I find it useful to try and recapture my experience as a student, because I don't believe that I was nearly as strong a student as some of the students I have had in my own classes, and I try to learn from my better students about how to be a better student, even though I'm now teaching, but I try to remind myself what it was like when I was an undergraduate student an was not, I did well with my grades, but I don't think that I was one of the better students the way I've come to judge better students and for me, that links into, of the 3 Aristotelian conceptions of credibility, goodwill, good sense, good moral character, that gives the similarity, the homophyly part of the equation that if I can just remind myself what it was like to be an undergraduate student in the middle of their undergraduate degree, trying to figure out whether this is the major for them, trying to figure out what to do with their life, and then add in all the complications of the modern college student, most of whom are working and so forth, then I get a better sense of how I oughtta approach the material. The second way I try to get at that is I now have children that are college age, and I try to imagine what I want the professors who are working with

them to have in their heads when they're working with my child so that I can have that same mindset when I'm working with the children of other people. Try to find access to ways that make the experience a better one for my students, realizing that it gets more and more difficult as I get further and further away from their experience myself.

R: Think about a teacher you have had who you found to be particularly engaging as a teacher or that you felt close to or really liked, what characteristics did that person have, what were they like as a teacher that made you feel close to them, describe the atmosphere in the classroom?

P: Ok, and yet although I see the distinction now I have no distinction in my answers it would still be that that would have varied through my time so that I can't, so anything that I answer would be accurate for a moment but would be wrong for me for other times in my career (laughs) and so, I see that it's two different questions but I can't answer it any differently than I did the first one.

R: Ok, tell me about a time when you felt particularly close to a class, describe what happened that created the closeness?

P: Oh, I don't know, but I try to figure it out, I try to make it happen again, it's that flow business, it's the engagement business, and it just baffles me that sometimes it'll be there and sometimes it's not cuz I know that I'm changing as I go along and I know that the students change as I go along but it seems so random to me that sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't work and so I try each of the things that I think might be causal, each of the things that might trigger, that might work, and sometimes they do and sometimes they don't, uh, and it's random enough that I don't feel like if I gave you an answer, it sounds as though, I think we'd all like to have a recipe to be able to say 2 parts of this and 3 parts of that's gonna make a wonderful sort of a session and I'm convinced that I don't even know what the ingredients are.

R: Describe the layout of the classroom of, if we were talking about a specific class, describe the layout of this class, could you draw a picture of the classroom?

P: Well, I can't because it's been good in a variety of sorts of settings and I'm to the point where I don't try to move those things around, we've got faculty who like to have the students in circles around them and so forth and where I've ever, the previous people have left us is what we'll work with because I haven't found the ideal setting for a classroom and I've operated at times this has happened in large auditoriums and other times it's been very small sort of circumstances, uh, and, again, there's not an answer to that that would would be worth making that wouldn't mislead more than it would help.

R: Describe or um, what images or words would you use to describe your nonverbal behavior as a teacher in this class, in that classroom?

P: My guess is that until we're into that flow that I'm more tentative and rushed, and then when we enter the flow then I'm less, I'm more outside of myself uh, and the pace might not slow, and yet, I'm not as aware of myself as separate from the class as I am when it's difficult to keep the information flowing because the response I'm getting from students doesn't indicate the level of engagement that's very encouraging.

R: How do you think your students in that class would have described your nonverbal, described your nonverbal communication as a teacher in the class?

R: How would you rank your use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom, on the same scale, 1 to 7, 1 is low, 7 is high.

P: 3.5

P: I don't know. I don't have any idea.

R: Ok. What else can you add about your classroom behaviors in that class?

P: I think I've got it, in the best answer I've had for that question is where I was talking about flow and I was remembering what it was like and I got more animated because it was reminding me of that circumstance, that's the best answer I've got for that.

R: What are you greatest strengths as a teacher?

P: Well anything that I would list has gotten me in trouble enough times that I would be afraid to do the list, so I'll stick with the willingness to change and the willingness to make adjustments and the sense that I don't have the right answer for how to do this well so that I keep searching for different answers. I keep searching for better answers, I keep improving things, but I've done enough of that to realize that change is the common, is the constant, uh, not improvement. My best improvements end up getting moved away from because they don't work out as well as I would hope, and so, really I think it's just I keep trying and keep changing the approach, the approaches that I have and that keeps me actively engaged in trying to do the class and every once in a while some of that magic happens, and it happens enough that I'm able to hang on right now, so.

R: Ok, in general what things would you like to improve on as a teacher?

P: Oh, I--I have that desire to know what the answer is for how to do this well all the time, but I no longer believe that I'll ever get to that point, so, I don't have an--.

R: Anything else you would like to add about teaching effectiveness in general?

P: Uh, other than--just to reiterate that it would be different for each person who is attempting to teach and for each of the classes in which they are operating. I always

worry that success in one case stimulates the human tendency to want to capture whatever made that a success and to transplant it and to try it again, and while I have that same feeling, I don't--I'm not convinced that it works and as long as people are willing to try stuff new, that's good, but as soon as we start to say here's what we need to do, here's how you need to do it, then I start to really shrink away from the best ideas purposed other people in the form of prescriptions worry me.

R: Thank you so much.

APPENDIX I

ZACH'S INTERVIEW

Note: **R** refers to the researcher while **P** refers to the participant.

R: What's your official position?

P: So I am an adjunct instructor for the Communications Department and currently I'm leading a new program called Electronic Media Leadership, so I've taught in the past 7 years courses in Oral Communication which is um a required general education course for mainly freshmen students of all different majors. Now I'm teaching more of the Electronic Media Broadcasting students so they upper level students.

R: How many years have you been teaching and what classes do you typically teach?

P: I've been teaching for 7 years here and the courses that I've taught are Oral Communications, I've taught Media Trends and Issues. I've taught Advanced Video Production. I've taught Strategic Media Planning and an Applied Media Credit as well.

R: Tell me about your typical teaching style. What does a typical class look like when you teach? What kind of environment do you most prefer creating when you teach, formal informal, or somewhere in between?

P: I really try and uh get the students involved. I do, I would say about 40% of the courses that I teach are lecture based, where they're sitting there taking notes and I'm lecturing to them. But because we are in the field of Communication, Public Speaking, Broadcasting, I want them to get experience speaking in front of people as well. So I do different activities that complement the reading, that complement the lectures, where they are then in front of the class um lecturing and teaching us as well on their own individual research.

R: What words or images come to mind when you think of effective classroom teaching?

P: I really think it is important to get the students involved, um, unfortunately it seems that students' attention span has dwindled over the years. They used to be able to sit during an hour and 15 minute lecture and be able to take all the information you're throwing at them, but because of the fact of smartphones and multitasking, sitting there for an hour and 15 minutes and just listening to someone talk and talk and talk and talk, that's kind of hard to do. So I try and break it up and getting the students involved, um, getting them to interact in small groups, getting them to lead the course, short video clips or things that can grab their attention and kind of break up the lecture is really important I think to help keep their attention.

R: What strategies do you use to create effective classroom teaching and why?

P: Um, I really try and dive into the readings and follow the course textbook a lot because then they can follow along with the readings, my hope is that they read the chapter before they come to class and then they can, they don't have to write down every single thing that I say, but they have read the course textbook so they can follow along, they can write some different notes with that, and then the activities that we can do can dive a little bit deeper into the content that is the textbook, so it's kinda taking that information on the pages and bringing them to life with different activities.

R: Tell me about a time when you felt particularly effective or ineffective as a teacher, what happened?

P: Um, ineffective, it's frustrating when it feels like they are falling asleep (laughs) and I try and be energetic and bring as much enthusiasm to each class that I teach. But I generally teach 8am, 9am, 10 am courses. That's really early in the morning for college students so you can tell they just woke up, they're still wearing they're pajamas and they're in the classroom. So I really try and bring the energy level up so they're not falling asleep, but there are times that you can tell that they're just not as interested in the content. Um, so that's frustrating from an instructor's standpoint, but there are other times when you can tell they're really grasping it and that is very rewarding because they are really understanding what we are working on and through their presentations and activities, different projects they produce, it makes me proud because, oh they understand, they were listening, they do get it.

R: What characteristics do you associate with having credibility as a teacher, what makes an instructor not be credible to students?

P: You have to know what you're talking about. If you were to come in unprepared, if you can't answer questions from your students, then you're going to lose credibility. Uh, fortunately I have experience in the professional field so I have been on television, I have produced videos and so when I teach a class on video production I can say, I'm on TV, I have done this, and that gives me great credibility because they can watch me on TV, they can see the work that I've done and then they know that I have an idea of what I'm talking about. But if I were to walk into a class and not have fully grasped the theories or the concepts and can't answer simple questions that they ask, then you lose all credibility and you lose control of the class I would assume.

R: Think about a teacher you have had who you found to be particularly credible as a teacher. What characteristics did that person have, what were they like as a teacher?

P: Um, when I was in high school I had a speech or drama teacher that just really, really knew the information and really brought an enthusiasm and excitement to the classroom so we would talk about these different um, you know, plays, or readings and she really

really knew the material well and did a good job of leading discussion and bringing up valid questions that we would talk about and had an open mind to different viewpoints and I really appreciated that.

R: Overall, how credible do you think your students perceive you to be, 1 being not credible, 7 being highly credible.

P: I'm in a unique position, I feel like they would all say I'm highly credible, just because, so I'm not a full time PhD professor, I have worked for many years in the broadcast field, so like I said in my earlier answer, I can show them samples of what I did last week, I can show them samples, awards that I've won in this industry. So, they can, and I have contact with businesses and TV stations all across the country that they know that I have been successful in the professional world so when I am teaching them about these specific things, I have examples to back up what we're talking about in the readings.

R: So from 1 to 7.

P: 7 is the highest

R: Ok, 7. How would you rate yourself, your credibility in comparison to all instructors in the department, from 1 to 7, the same scale.

P: I'd, it depends on the course, because if it is that UNI TV advanced production course, I think I'm the highest you can get 7, but for another course I'd put it at a 5, just because I do not have my PhD, so I do not have the extra 4 or 5 years of schooling that my peers have. but I make up for that with the professional experience, so um, it's not a 7 because I do not have the PhD, but for what, for not having that degree I make up with the professional experience as well.

R: Ok, in comparison to all instructors at the university, from 1 to 7.

P: Let's do a 5 (laughs)

R: Please describe elements of your classroom presence or teaching style that make you a credible teacher.

P: I really try and um, get the students involved by listening to their viewpoints. Because we are talking about, in a lot of my classes, a developing industry, so we're talking about media trends and issues, and social media is changing so much and a lot of these students know a great deal about Twitter and Facebook and other items. So by listening to them and having them provide examples of 'oh I skyped with my Grandma last night' and then we can talk and build off of that experience and then look at the direction that the media is changing.

R: Tell me about a time when you felt particularly credible or not credible as a teacher. What happened?

P: Not credible? (A: credible or not credible) I love the [university] TV course that I teach um, because it's at the studio down here in Lang Hall and we have a news anchor desk, so I showed them what I wanted them to do and we have the bright lights and the camera and I, we put on the microphone and we read off the teleprompter, so I put on the microphone, I said this is what I want it to be- and I showed them and they all started clapping because they, they knew that what I had done is what they had seen on TV. So then, when they each did it individually they tried to do similar to what I had done. So, that was a unique experience um, being able to lead by example and show them an example of what I wanted to see from them individually.

R: Ok. Uh, what else can you add about your credibility in the classroom, if you want to add something here.

P: Um, I think it's important to be dressed up, I mean if I were to come in in jeans and a t-shirt, I think you lose credibility there. You don't have to wear a suit and tie everyday, but I feel with how you dress, how you carry yourself, um, that's an important element with having credibility.

R: Think about a teacher you have had who you found to be particularly engaging as a teacher, or that you felt close to or really liked, what characteristics did that person have, what were they like as teacher that made you feel close to them, describe the atmosphere of their classroom.

P: Dr. _____ was my advisor for 6 years for my undergraduate and master's, and he, I learned so much from him, he was so knowledgeable about the material, he wrote the textbook that we studied out of. That's huge credibility because he wrote, he did the research, he interviewed the people, he put everything together, so he knew the material better than anyone else and so by having that credibility and then his willingness to assist people, students at all different levels. Some students grasp it right away, others it takes a little bit longer, but he was able to work individually to, to assist in the learning process.

R: Tell me about a time when you felt particularly close to a class, describe what happened that created that closeness.

P: Um, I had an Oral Communications class where they were all freshmen students and freshmen at the very beginning of the semester are pretty nervous because this is their first college class, they're unsure. And I asked them to do some things that get them out of their comfort zone, speaking in front of their peers. But we had a lot of fun growing as a class, there were some speakers that weren't as good with the public speaking, but they weren't laughing or, 'oh he stumbled'. They supported each other and would applaud at the end of each individual speech and they actually did group work outside of class and

many of them became friends outside of class and even moved in and lived together and I was proud that when they came in as 25 separate individuals they left as a good group of friends.

R: Describe the layout of the classroom of this class. Could you draw a picture of the classroom, where were you typically in the classroom when you talked?

P: Yep, it's just a normal class here at [the university], and so what I would do is every class period, try and have at least 10 minutes worth of activities but they never had the same partners, so we would move desks around so they wouldn't sit in the exact same spots every time. So, one time you might come in and sit in the front next to this person, next time you're in the back or in the middle. So I'm always at the front talking but they have chairs and desks that they can move around over the course of the semester.

R: What images or words would you use to describe your nonverbal behavior in that classroom?

P: It's very important when the students are giving their speeches for me not to be sleeping or looking out the window or distracted because it is an uncomfortable, stressful situation for them to be at the podium, that's why I always try and look up at them and smile while they are speaking, um, nod my head, kind of give them signs 'oh you're doing a good job, keep up the good work' and really trying to give them the confidence that they have while they are delivering their presentation.

R: How do you think your students in that class would have described your nonverbal communication as a teacher in that class?
P: They, my student evaluations that I receive have been very very positive, so I think that they are thankful for the way that I taught the course and appreciative of my nonverbal communication and verbal communication. Uh, having a Master's degree in Communication and having worked in the professional field, I feel like it's the most important part of teaching is communication and as you well know, it's not always what you say, it's your actions as well nonverbally that are important.

R: What else can you add about your classroom behaviors in that class?

P: Um, classroom behaviors....I, some students are very um, shy and some students wanna answer every question, so I really tried to get the students that were shy, that liked to sit in the back corner, get them involved. And sometimes that's more just one on one interaction or that's just you know working with them individually so, uh, just trying to pull the most out of each individual student is important.

R: Ok. In general, what are your greatest strengths as a teacher?

P: Energy. I really try and bring energy and enthusiasm toward the topic. If I were to come in and give, and I usually teach Tuesday/Thursdays which is an hour and 15 minute class. If I were to come in bored with the topic, if I were to come in tired, uninterested in what I'm presenting, they are going to be uninterested, but if I come in and I have energy and excitement about learning about today's topic and get the students involved in it then they are more likely to uh, be engaged in the presentation and more likely to grasp what we are talking about.

R: In general, what things would you like to improve on as a teacher?

P: Yeah. There's a lot and I've been doing this 7 years, but at the same time I'd really like to grow in several different areas, um, really just finding how best to connect to the students and I teach similar courses but I try and alter them, so at the end of the semester I always have them write a short reflection paper about what they liked about the course and things that they would've changed or liked to see changed. So you know, is it going be less lecture next time? Is it going to be more hands on activities the next time I teach the course. Is it going to be more one on one time with the students, is it going to be more group activity, it depends on the topics you're talking about, but at the same time, I think we are seeing a movement towards digital interaction as well, so I'm trying to keep up with that cuz it's important.

R: How would you rate your use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom from 1 to 7?

P: That's higher, I'd say that's probably a 6 just because I really am aware of the nonverbal, I've done research in nonverbal communication, I see the importance of it, so that, I'd score higher.

R: Ok, thank you so much.

P: Thank you so much.

APPENDIX J

JULIA'S INTERVIEW

Note: **R** refers to the researcher while **P** refers to the participant.

R: What's your official position?

P: I am an instructor.

R: How many years have you been teaching and what classes do you typically teach?

P: Teaching at the university or teaching overall?

R: Yeah,

P: This is my 24th year here and I taught for 8 years in the high school and I taught for another 2 years in a preschool.

R: Ok good. What classes do you typically teach?

P: Typically I teach business and professional oral communication and introduction to communication and usually interpersonal in the summer.

R: Ok, tell me about your typical teaching style, what does a typical class look like when you teach, what kind of environment do you most prefer creating when you teach, formal, informal, or somewhere in between.

P: It's kind of an in between. I like to have the class be interactive and so I like to have some activities that gets them up and moving and engaging in the lesson but yet still there are times when they need to take notes, so it's sort of a combination.

R: ok, what words or images come to mind when you think of effective classroom teaching?

P: Ok. Let me see, I think probably one of the best images I see is a class that is participatory, it's where they are engaged, they are talking back to the instructor, there's understanding going on, you understand that people are listening and that there is nonverbal engagement going on. So, you know that they're being read appropriately, so I think the best words to describe it would be, participatory, interactive, engaged.

R: Ok. What strategies to you use to create effective classroom teaching and why?

P: Strategies..one of the things I think that is very important is from the very beginning that the students know what'd expected of them, and so we definitely go over the syllabus, we go over the assignments, we know what's expected at all times. Another strategy I think is really important is to create that atmosphere that you are the facilitator, you aren't the lecturer or the owner of the class. That you are there to provide them with the knowledge that you have and to give them to critically think and move beyond just listening. So they're engaged.

R: Ok. Tell me about a time when you felt particularly effective or ineffective as a teacher, what happened?

P: Ok. I think probably the ineffective example might come from when I was student teaching, which was a bazillion years ago, but my supervising teacher walked out of the room and never came back. And so at that time I had only been there for 4 days and so I sort of knew where she was going with things, but it wasn't my class at that time so it was gosh, um, now where do we go, so I got up and I started leading the class and asking the questions, but I didn't feel that they knew me well enough and I knew them well enough and so they were junior high students and so they weren't really engaged in what I was trying to explain to them and I just felt I was swimming and not moving forward. Ok. Effective. Effective I think happens particularly, you want a really effective one. Ok. I also have a background in performance studies, that's what I did my emphasis in for my post secondary degree, and I can think back to a time when I was teaching an Oral Interpretation class and we were talking about personal narratives and the students were to share their stories and we'd gone through the whole unit of building up what's a personal narrative and I think there's nothing more exciting than seeing your students put all of those concepts together and then present their performance and the whole class is so engaged in what they're doing that you could hear a pin drop and when they reach the fulcrum or the high point of the story, the class goes (gasps) that's satisfaction.

R: ok good. What characteristics do you associate with having credibility as a teacher? What makes an instructor not be credible to students?

P: I think credibility comes from your ability as a person to one, not put yourself on a pedestal, you have to let the students know from the very beginning that yes you're the facilitator, yes there are rules, but yes you are there just like they are to learn and to share, you let them know that you learn as much from them, each and every class that you teach, as they learn from you. And I think that helps them understand that learning is a life long cycle and if never ends. I think also that you need to use a lot of eye contact and smile, a think that's part of it and maybe that's something that you're going to tell me later is a female thing. But I think that when they know that you're friendly and approachable, that only adds to your credibility and of course you have to have all the background where you know your subject well and you have your lesson well planned, you know what you're doing, you can't go in there cold. I wouldn't expect you to give a speech to me cold, I can't go into a classroom cold.

R: Think about a teacher you have had who you found to be particularly credible as a teacher, what characteristics did that person, what were they like as a teacher?

P: They were kind, prepared, listened well, and were good at giving compliments but also extremely good at giving constructive criticism, and I think that's really important as a teacher, you must be able to design the approaches where a student can grow from and share that with them in such a way that they don't feel that you are being overly critical, but they see it as being an assistance to their improving.

R: Overall, how credible do you think your students perceive you to be? from 1 to 7, 1 being not credible, 7 being highly credible.

P: 5.5 (laughs) Um, 5 to 6 I think, yeah. (A: Can you choose one of them?) Ok, 6. I think they feel that I'm credible, I would never give myself a perfect rating on anything because I think we always have room to grow.

R: Ok, in comparison to all the professors in the Communication Department here, how would you rank your credibility, the same scale 1 to 7, 1 being not credible, 7 being highly credible.

R: 6.

R: ok, what about in comparison to all the professors at the University of Northern Iowa, how would you rank your credibility, same scale.

P: That's hard because I don't know all the professors at the University of Northern Iowa, I think there's so much to deal with subject matter, as credibility in my subject matter, I far outweigh many of them, but I don't want you to send me over to the math department and ask me to teach math classes because I wouldn't be very credible, I don't like math very well, so, um, I'm just gonna say 5.

R: please describe elements of your classroom presence or teaching style that you believe make you a credible teacher.

P: Preparation, I think that's one of the things, uh, approachable.

R: Ok. Tell me about a time when you felt particularly credible or not credible as a teacher, what happened?

P: A time when I felt particularly not credible. Probably when I started teaching a class in group communication. The instructor we had here resigned a week before classes began, 3 days before the head walks in and says hi would you take this class, it's not that I didn't want to take the class, it's I wasn't prepared enough, here it's dumped in my lap, class begins in 3 days, I'm using the text that they already had because all the students had bought it already, I haven't read the text, so I go home over the weekend, digging in

there reading all I can, looking at the syllabus that's already been created, thinking oh my gosh, here I am it's been dumped in my lap, how are we going to weed through this together? So, I didn't feel personally credible walking in, I talked to the students about, I said, hey look this is the situation, this class was just given to me, it's my first prep for it, we're using their text that they wrote and I just read it, so you're going to have to bear with me because we're going to struggle and weed through this together because in all honesty it wasn't a text that I would've used. So, I felt very (aaahhh) Um, but I owned up to it, and I thought that was important, so maybe that's where the credibility comes to, because even though I felt not very credible, because I was honest with them and said look, this is how it is, it was also credibility.

R: What else can you add about your credibility in the classroom?

P: I think probably the one of the things that we just talked about was also showing a side of being human, um, this past week my uncle passed away and so I needed to be gone, rather than hiding that from my students and saying, I can't get this done becauseI just don't have time, I said to them, look I'm facing a family situation, my uncle was very close me, he passed away, I'm going to the funeral, I don't have your papers graded. They in turn said to me, don't grade them. you go and be with your family. I think that probably adds to the credibility factor because you're being honest with them. and it helps them understand that you are a human being as well. I think maybe another thing that adds to the credibility is longevity, I've been here a long time. Anytime you've been some place for a long time, that gives you some background knowledge that you have that others don't.

R: Think about a teacher you have had you found to be particularly engaging as a teacher or that you felt close to or really liked, what characteristics did that person have, what were they like as a teacher that made you feel close to them, describe that atmosphere or their classroom.

P: Creative. I think that's one of the most appropriate words for it. the classroom was engaged, it was creative, we did a lot of brainstorming, we got to work together in groups, we got to bounce ideas off one another, and as we were bouncing them, we were, it was a performance class, so we would be practicing those and this instructor would say, go follow the passion, run with it, and so it was never, oh I don't see it that way, you have to do it the way I see it, it was what's your vision, go with your vision, play with it. So encouraging, leading some, but never demeaning, never saying my way is the only way and if you don't do it my way forget it, certainly there are times when as a teacher we can go and say, you know, this is the right way, this is the wrong way, but sometimes we find all the new ways to go because the student had the creativity, so I think it's the creativeness.

R: Tell me about a time when you felt particularly close to a class, describe what happened that created the closeness.

P: I felt that way with all of my classes (laughs) I think it's the comfort level, they know that you're human, you know that they're human and you'll listen to them and they'll listen to you, but yet the know that when you're serious, you're serious and so they have to get to it. Um, I just, I feel that way with every class I have, I can't say that there's one I felt more closer to than the others, I miss them when they're gone.

R: If you want to talk about a particular classroom, describe the layout of the classroom of this class, I mean, could you draw a picture of the classroom, where were you typically in the classroom when you talked, if you want to answer this question?

P: (laughs) that's an interesting questions, classrooms vary from size to size and oftentimes we don't get to be the person choosing the classroom we're in. My ideal classroom though, would be a wide open space with chairs that we could move around, I'm thinking more of a theatrical type black box space where we could sit in circles, we could get into groups, we could maneuver ourselves around, I wouldn't be at a lecture podium at all, I'd be out there with them because the podium creates a barrier and so anytime we can circle and sit on the same level and look at each other eye to eye so we can see all of the nonverbal cues, that's the best time.

R: What images or words would you use to describe your nonverbal behaviors as a teacher in that classroom?

P: In that classroom, ok. Immediate. When you can be that close to the students and you can move around and you can talk to them face to face, it's an immediate behavior, they get immediate feedback and I think that's really important.

R: How do you think the students in that class would have described your nonverbal communication as a teacher in that class?

P: Good. they would've said, hey she's there, she listens to us, we know how she thinks, we know how she reacts to things, she's there all the time.

R: How would you rank your use of nonverbal immediacy in the classroom, the scale of 7, 1 is low and 7 is high.

P: I'm gonna say 6. When you walked in, I know this is an online classroom, but their assignment was due yesterday and those that are there I want to respond to immediately so I'm reading through what they turned in giving them responses back right away because I think online the worst thing that can happen is if you have to wait forever to know if it was right or wrong, now does it take a lot of time, yeah, that's one thing I'm learning about online classes, it's not easy, it's not like I have 22 of you sitting here and I can say once and you will all get it. It's everything I say I have to do kind of on an individual one on one basis. So I think that's really important as far as like my class on

Thursday took a test, I came right in and graded it, they'll get it back on Tuesday. I think it's really important to get that feedback immediately. Um, I don't like if it I have to wait a long time, so if I don't like it, you shouldn't have to wait either.

R: What else can you add about your classroom behaviors in that class if you want to answer something here?

P: I'm not sure there's more to say, creative and engaging, that's how that class would be.

R: In general, what are you greatest strengths as a teacher.

P: Listening. Nonverbals. Caring. Yeah I think those are my greatest strengths.

R: In general, what things would you like to improve on as a teacher?

P: Time management, I always have too much stuff. I always think I can get through all of this stuff and then I get there and I say oh I had all this over here yet, and maybe that's good.

R: Ok, anything else you would like to add about teaching effectiveness in general?

P: No

R: Thank you.

APPENDIX K

MEGAN'S INTERVIEW

Note: **R** refers to the researcher while **P** refers to the participant.

R: What's your official position?

P: Um, right now I'm an instructor of Communication, technically this semester I'm an adjunct instructor, but I've been a term instructor for, this is my 25th year of teaching here.

R: How many years have you been teaching in general?

P: I've been here the whole time, 25, so 25th right now.

R: What classes do you typically teach?

P: Mostly I teach Oral Communication, which is our basic hybrid speech course, and I also this semester, and this year am teaching a university cornerstone course which is for freshmen, and it is um, kind of a combination of speaking and writing course.

R: Tell me about your typical teaching style, what does a typical class look like when you teach, what kind of environment do you most prefer creating when you teach- formal, informal, or somewhere in between.

P: I'm pretty informal, um, I do like to have some activities and class discussion. I'm comfortable though, doing a lecture and I have done some large lecture classes and I'm ok with that, there were 4 semesters, or 5 that we taught this Oral Comm course in a great big, like 200 student lecture and then we had break out sessions and I did the lecture and I do like lecturing to a large group. Even then though I would say I'm kind of informal in terms of like the examples that I use and things like that. In the smaller classes, the traditional sized classes, um, I'm very informal, I like to use some lecture but then a combination of, I really like the students to give input too and to discuss and talk back, so some combination of lecture. I always try to work in at least one activity, always try to work in at least one activity, um, I use a lot of video, a lot of video clips like humorous video clips, I like to do that too.

R: What words or images come to mind when you think of effective classroom teaching?

P: Hm..interesting question, words or images...um, I think with our currents students, it needs to be fun, I really think they need to be entertained. And, I think um, captivating, interesting, entertaining somewhat, um, and I think those are the kind of things...I also think there has to be some control, cuz I think our students are so easily distracted with

other media and things, so I really think it has to be catchy and entertaining, um, and totally engrossing to them.

R: Ok. What strategies do you use to create effective classroom teaching and why?

P: I mostly use humor because I have found that students like that. Um, and I like to do it, I don't just do it for them, it's fun to do, so I would say mostly humor, um, including humorous video, it doesn't have to just be my humor, and having fun with them too, jokes and that sort of thing. Um, I think it's very important to at least every so often involve them so they're getting, um, either some discussion or hands on um, application doing an activity. I don't do a lot of small group, dyad stuff, I know a lot of people do like pair and share and like, you guys go sit over here and talk about it and then report back to the group, I should do more of that, but I like to keep control and I like the attention on me, I'll be honest about that. So, that's, but I do think it's important to keep them involved.

R: Ok. Tell me about a time when you felt particularly effective or ineffective as a teacher. what happened?

P: I really felt effective the whole time that I did the large lecture section, um, when we did that for 4 or 5 semester of the Oral Comm course. I think my lecture were good, they were appropriate for that audience size and they were, we didn't have any freshmen in there, it had to be sophomores or above, so I was able to really talk more casually to them and not treat them like freshmen because they weren't freshmen. But I think it was fun, I think people really enjoyed the lecture, um, kept it really entertaining, the attendance was always really good and I was very surprised after the first semester of it, how positive the student, um reactions the student, um evaluations were for another lecture cuz that you know generally students say they don't like lecture and they really liked that one. So I think I was, I think that was my niche, I think I was very good in there. I wish we were still doing it cuz it was a good way, it turned out to be a good way to deliver the class, I think it was very successful.

R: What characteristics do you associate with having credibility as a teacher? What makes an instructor not be credible to students?

P: I think it's, in some ways more than just the knowledge, I mean yes of course it's the knowledge of the material and the background and the experience with the material. But I think students think you're not credible if you don't turn things back, if you don't show up, if you don't follow through on things, um, if you never read their assignments, um, they know that, they know if you're reading things or just throwing a grade on them. So I think a lot of it's more the classroom management stuff and the like keeping to a schedule type of stuff. Um, I think that's in some ways almost equally important as the content of what you're teaching. And, because that's what we hear the students complain about is the teachers who don't come to class or don't read my paper, or keep extending due dates

and things like that. So I think of course I have to say it's knowledge of your subject and ability to deliver it, a lot of it's the day to day housekeeping stuff, I really think so.

R: Think about a teacher you have had who you found to be particularly credible as a teacher. What characteristics did that person have, what were they like as a teacher?

P: Oh that's easy, I would think of Mary Bosic, who I had in my methods classes when I was in grad school. She just was constantly doing things related to the class. The Sunday paper, she would bring in photo, articles out of every single Sunday paper and we would talk about how that related to class. So obviously the whole time she read the paper. She was thinking about our class and the issues. Um, constantly demonstrating how to listen to people, constantly showing um, good use of activities and very rigorous though, a very hard teacher with deadlines and very large, like physically large files of things that you had to turn in, it was a work intensive class, you had to turn in like a file box at the end of it, but she, I have no question that she read through every piece and page of that file. So, I would say definitely, um, definitely her, she was not a really super loud outgoing, captivating um type of entertaining speaker, so she didn't have those other things that I was talking about that I feel are important, but yet she really content wise was always just, you just had the feeling she was always thinking about your class, and ways to bring new things in all the time.

R: Overall, how credible do you think your students perceive you to be, 1 being not credible, 7 being highly credible, why do you rate yourself this way?

P: I would say probably a 5 or a 6, and mostly because I do um, teach mostly freshmen and I try to, I think I'm, I'm a good blend of likeable to them but I'm not their friend and I don't you know have to bake them something every week like some of our people do around here, I'm not their facebook friend and I'm not you know celebrating their birthdays in class with them, but yet I try to be approachable, um, and I think I get the job done and I teach them something and I think when it comes down to it, you know, how do you define credibility, there's people that define it as likeability and I don't think we should confuse those two things necessarily. I would say my view of it has definitely changed over time, but based on what they say, and they're honest in the good and the bad comments that I read on the student evaluations, I would say probably a 5 or a 6, but I'm not teaching rocket science, you know, I'm teaching 'em how to make a speech and that doesn't change very much over time, you know intro, body, conclusion, here's how to do it, here's some good examples. I do have a lot of, I bring in a lot of outside, like real life experience, like when I do speeches somewhere and I tell them those stories and I go to a lot of speakers, so I really try hard to make it real world applicable, not like classroom speech, so I think that adds to my credibility too.

R: How would you rank your credibility in comparison to all professors in the department from 1 to 7?

P: 5 and half to 6.

R: In comparison to all professors in the university?

P: 5.

R: Please describe elements of your classroom presence, teaching style that you believe make you a credible teacher.

P: Probably the same things I said before, I maintain control of the classroom, they kinda know who's boss, who's in charge, and I'm really prompt about staying on schedule, getting things back to them, being thorough with my comments- that sort of thing. So I think those would be the things for sure.

R: Tell me about a time when you felt particularly credible or not credible as a teacher. What happened?

P: Mm.. well for the credible one I already told you um, probably teaching the big lecture section. For not credible, um, I don't know...I don't know of a particular time that comes to mind, um, maybe the last time I had to teach like interviewing, I used to teach a class called interviewing and I never felt particularly credible with that subject matter and there was some particular terms and phrases and key concepts that I would have to read all the time before then, um, and another time when I taught public speaking and I tried it in the summer to try and teach it a different way, I tried to teach it like um, using historical speeches and I felt like I was constantly reading to stay a step ahead of them, I felt like I was, you know I would talk about FDR's speeches and famous, you know presidents and things and I would have to read the whole speech cuz I wasn't as familiar with it, cuz I'm, I was not a great history student, it's not one of my interests, but I did feel it was important for them. So I don't know if I felt not credible doing that, as much as um, just that I was really having to work to keep my credibility up.

R: What else can you add about your credibility in the classroom?

P: I think it changes over age, I've been teaching for so long and I think, you know, it change by semester to semester, it definitely hopefully increases over time just with age cuz students see you as wiser if you're older, which isn't necessarily true but it, it does have some truth to it, and um, it changes by class. there's some classes that you know you get a certain student or a couple students who are really bright in a class, um like in my honors classes, or who are really critical, critical thinkers, then if they're able to influence others, your, my credibility in that particular section might be a little bit different cuz each class has their own culture.

R: Yes, think about a teacher you have had who you found to be particularly engaging as a teacher or that you felt close to or really liked, what characteristics did that person have,

what were they like as a teacher that made you feel close to them. Describe the atmosphere of their classroom.

P: As an undergrad I had a teacher who I really liked. He was very energetic outgoing, sarcastic, and sometimes the environment of his classroom wasn't always pleasant. I thought he was funny cuz he liked me, but now that I look back on him as an example I can see where he didn't really have a real welcoming, he definitely had favorites, and he didn't have a real welcoming, um, presence in the classroom, he was sort of the real sarcastic, snide, funny, but I got that and that was my kind of humor at that time in my life, and so I really like him, I don't know how I would feel if someone like that was teaching now, cuz I was a lot younger, but at that time I thought he was very engaging and he was very funny. Originally I think kind of modeled my teaching after him, I definitely have mellowed out.

R: Tell me about a time when you felt particularly close to a class, describe what happened that created the closeness.

P: Oh that comes to mind really easily. Um, I had a class once at 3:30, years ago on Tuesday Thursday and they were just a neat class, they were always doing stuff as a group to surprise me, to, oh it started with just like, one day they were all, their desks were all moved, they all sat in different seats, and I made a comment about it and then the next day, there must have been a few ringleaders here, the next day they maybe moved the actual furniture in the classroom around and then the next week they all wore the same color, everybody had navy blue on when they came in and they wanted to see how long it would take me to notice it, and then the next day it was something else, so they were just a neat class that um, really, somebody must have been the ringleader there, but I still remember some of them and they just, they, I think because they did all these team building things on their own, they started to really look forward to the class and it was at a hard time of day, a tiring time of day, it was fun. I still remember them, a lot, it was many years ago, like we were still over in the CAC, so it was more than 12 years ago and I still remember that class.

R: Describe the layout of the classroom of this class.

P: Oh, of that class that I was just talking about. Ok it was tables, but not individual tables like we have here in our table classrooms, they were longer tables and it was 2 to a table, it was long and narrow, aisle down the middle and, boy I don't even know if it's a classroom anymore, 2 people to a large, a very long table, they had plenty of room, like maybe as long as this desk that you and I are at. And then I think there was just a 6 of those down 1 side and an aisle and 6 down the other, so they were in rows of, so they were 4 across but there was an aisle down the middle. Yeah, and it was a very long narrow classroom. It wasn't as square, you know how these are kind of square in Lang, it was longer and narrower. No windows, it had no windows, it was an interior classroom

which was maybe part of it too that we were sort of like insulated, cuz I remember it had no windows at all and 1 teacher's desk in the front.

R: Where were you typically in the classroom when you taught?

P: Usually at the front, because if you got down the middle aisle, then you would be, your back would be to so many people so you kind of had to stay in the front for that one because if you walked very far down the aisle, then people were having to turn to see you. It was an unusual classroom, it wasn't a very good layout of a classroom for, considering how good the class turned out.

R: Ok, how do you think your students in the class would have described your nonverbal communication as a teacher in that class?

P: Um, I don't know. I have no idea, they just, um, probably just fun and outgoing, I don't think they would've...I didn't feel like I was very standoffish or far from them even though I kind of was in some cases they were pretty far back from me, but um, I don't think it would've been negative, I don't know what words they would have used though, to describe it.

R: What else can you add about your classroom behaviors in that class?

P: Um, I don't, it was so long ago, I don't know, I'm sure I was fun, I'm sure I was outgoing and fun with them because I remember them being so into it, but I don't remember very much about my behaviors being any different than they are now.

R: In general, what are you greatest strengths as a teacher?

P: Probably my biggest strength is just, for this subject matter I really know my subject, I do a good job of bringing it down to earth and making it practical, like when you leave here and in real life, when you have to do a speech, so I make it very practical and I use a lot of practical, real life examples. And I entertain them and that shouldn't have to be part of learning, but I think it is, and I think that's, for me, it doesn't work for everybody's style, but that's what makes me stronger, is that I'm able to keep their interest.

R: In general, what things would you like to improve on as a teacher?

P: Um, I'd like to start to do more variety cuz it gets kind of old to do the same examples, the same activities all the time, I would, it's not my style, but I know that I should and I would like to do more of the sort of like, people do that paired sharing, now you two go talk, I should find more ways to make them talk more. Cuz like, if they're willing to raise their hand and say an example, great, but if they're not, I'll just keep talking, I don't force them to say, get into groups and talk about this and I should because I know that students learn more when they have come up with the idea or they've said it. So that's probably the

biggest thing,, I should have more interaction between them and smaller group things every single day to make them think about it cuz just listening to something they don't take it all in but if they've sat and discussed it with 3 or 4 other people they'd do better.

R: Uh, anything else you like to add about teaching effectiveness?

P: Just that I think that everybody has their own style, I mean there's probably people that I would consider to be really super effective teachers who don't say some of these things at all, who in fact would say, it's not our job to entertain them and in fact they try hard to not be funny, um, that we, we have to do what works for each one of us, our style. I don't think my style would work at all for certain people and I go to other people's classes who are very, what I would call more um, I don't mean this in a bad way, in a perjorative way, but they're more touchy feely, you know they're more, like let's get into groups and discuss that and when I watch that I think oh I should do that more, you know, that's a good strategy, but I don't, um, because it's not my comfort level, I know there's different strategies that work really well for different people but, you have to balance the value of those strategies I think with your own comfort level and I, I'm not comfortable when I lose control, when I'm just walking around listening to groups talk, I wanna be the center of attention, I know that's how I do the best, so that's what I would say there.

R: I have 3 questions here, how much do you rank yourself from 1 to 7, scale, um, the nonverbal immediacy. How much you think you use nonverbal immediacy in the classroom, 1, being low and 7 high, yeah.

P: Ok, 5.

R: Ok, thank you so much.

P: You're very welcome, good luck with the rest of it.