The Impact Of Teachers’ Immediacy Behavior On Students’ Motivation: Implications For Pedagogy And Future Research

Dr. Mahrukh Shakir¹ and Marina Khan²

¹Assistant Professor, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, Pakistan.
²Lecturer, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, Pakistan.

ABSTRACT Research regarding teachers’ immediacy behaviour and students’ motivation has clearly outlined the significance of the former on the latter in classrooms, which indirectly impacts students’ learning, the ultimate goal of any education. Also, research points out that students’ motivation has increasingly become a major concern for teachers, as student’s motivation is not only critical for effectiveness of English learning and teaching but also influences teacher’s difficulty and their jobs satisfaction. Thus, a thorough understanding of the impact of teachers’ immediacy behaviour on students’ motivation is required, because it plays an important role in student learning, which this paper attempts. Based on the review of important relevant literature which includes main theoretical orientations, concepts, and empirical studies, significant implications for pedagogy, practice and future research are drawn.

KEYWORDS Behaviour, Immediacy, Implications, Motivation, Pedagogy

INTRODUCTION
The importance of teacher’s behaviour is described well by Ginot’s (1972) “Teacher and child”. According to Ginot, the function of creating an emotional climate for learning in the class always remains with the teacher, and one of the attributes of an effective teacher is to have the ability to motivate a student (DeSantis, 2008). In studies by Gorham and Christophel (1992) and most recently by Trigueros et al. (2020) and Misbah et al. (2015), they concluded the presence of a strong relationship between a teachers’ behaviour and his/her students’ motivation. Their research findings showed teacher’s negative behaviour (which discourage/inhibit student’s participation, interest, and involvement) as more central to students’ de-motivation than teacher’s positive behaviour (that encourage student’s participation, interest, and involvement) as central to motivation (Noori et al. 2020; Bhat and Khandai, 2015; Gorham and Christophel 1992). Dörnyei’s description of teachers as the most ‘powerful motivational socializers’ (2001: 136), and his claim that “teachers should aim to become good enough motivators” (Dörnyei, 2001) indicates that teachers’ motivational behaviour in the classroom may impact students’ levels of motivation. Hence, along with
students themselves, teachers also share the responsibility of generating motivation in students in the classroom (Tygrest 2017), particularly, by their use of (both non-verbal and verbal) immediacy behaviours (Britto 2018; Lin, 2003; Allen et al. 2006). Hsu (2010) also argues that teachers can capture learner’s interest and maintain their motivation for learning English provided the teacher utilizes immediacy behaviors.

**Research Objectives**

Having the above scope, the broader aims of this study are:

1) To understand the role of teacher’s behaviour in general, and of the ‘immediacy’ behaviour in particular, in student’s motivation.

2) To understand the implications of teacher’s immediacy behaviour for pedagogy, policy, and practice

3) To suggest areas of potential research based on understanding of the role of teacher’s immediacy behaviour which might be of benefit to the relevant stakeholders.

**Background and Rationale**

Since social psychologist, Mehrabian (1969) introduced the concept of ‘immediacy’, teacher’s immediacy remains a popular focus for the last 20 years in the field of education in western world (Mahmud and Yaacob, 2007) and the focus of instructional communication research for many years (Saechou, 2005). Decades of research have demonstrated the significance of teacher’s immediacy by indicating that the teachers’ use of immediacy behaviours positively and directly impact student’s motivation to study (for example, Frymier, 1994; Kearney et al., 1985; Lin, 2003; Allen, Witt and Wheeless, 2006), which, in turn, positively affect learning outcomes (Christophel, 1990; McCroskey et al., 1985; Pogue and Ahyun, 2006). Even in motivation studies (for example, Gardner, 1983, 1985; Clement, 1980), a great deal of research is carried out on ---what students do to enhance learning motivation, and relatively less on ---- what teachers do. However, teacher’s behaviours; verbal and particularly nonverbal, are usually ignored in teaching practices despite carrying a great value in terms of affecting students’ motivation. It is these stimuli that sparked my interest in this study to acquire some understanding of the role of teacher’s behaviour in general, and of the ‘immediacy’ behaviour in particular, in student’s motivation.

**Methods**

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, a descriptive qualitative study has been carried out. This involved an extensive review of important relevant literature, which includes main theoretical orientations, concepts, and empirical studies.

**Literature Review**

Rosenthal and Harris (2005) argue that our impressions of bad and good teachers are greatly affected by their behaviours. We still can recall our favourite teacher from our school time whose kind voice and warm smile would make us feel special (Rosenthal and Harris, 2005). Thus, we can say that teacher’s positive expressive (nonverbal) behaviour is also one of the critical aspects and main contributor of teaching effectiveness (Sorensen and Christophel,
To a learner, a teacher’s smile in response to his/her suggested answer might be a validation of the learner’s sense of intellectual achievement which, in turn, could influence the learner’s self-esteem even more than the instructor might have ever suspected (McCafferty and Stam, 2008). Conversely, a hostile or cold glance, whether intended or not, might provoke, in students, a sense of despair or shame (McCafferty and Stam, 2008).

**Immediacy and Teacher’s Immediacy**

The concept of ‘immediacy’ emerged during late 1960s and gained immense popularity in the next two decades in the field of instructional communication. This concept was originally delineated by psychologist Albert Mehrabian. Mehrabian’s concept was further extended by Andersen (1978, 1979) who advanced the concept of nonverbal immediacy into instructional communication. Thus, the periods of 1970s until early 1980s saw origins of the study of instructor nonverbal immediacy (Rosenthal and Harris, 2005). Andersen’s work (1978, 1979) is of special significance in aiding our comprehension of the relationship existing between teacher’s non-verbal immediacy and students’ learning, specifically affective learning. This line of research developed further in the mid-1980s. For instance, the research on teacher’s non-verbal immediacy led to its companion research on teacher’s verbal immediacy (Gorham, 1988).

Although, Mehrabian also established a taxonomy of verbal elements (Wiener and Mehrabian, 1968), immediacy originally was conceptualized as a non-verbal variable (Mehrabian, 1981), which got refined later to also include teacher’s verbal behaviours by Gorham (1988). Thus, subsequent researchers (Christophel, 1990; Edwards and Edwards, 2001) divided immediacy into two categories of communication, that is, nonverbal and verbal. Many research studies have been conducted on immediacy as a whole while some focused on immediacy breaking it apart into nonverbal and verbal components. Mehrabian (1971) argue that nonverbal immediate behaviours are, in fact, abbreviated types of avoidance and approach. For instance, “the lifting of a hand to greet someone at a distance is an abbreviated reach to touch, while pushing back in a chair when one wants to end a conversation may be considered an abbreviated movement of departure” (Saechou, 2005: 15). Variations of such behaviours give rise to the closeness linked with immediacy and complement the sender’s verbal messages (Saechou, 2005).

Teachers are considered as a crucial component in rendering learning effective (Nasr, Booth and Gillett, 1996). Learning L2 effectively needs a supportive atmosphere (Hsu, 2010). A supportive classroom environment is produced (Witt and Wheeless, 2001; Frymier and Weser, 2001) when teachers exhibit immediacy through the use of non-verbal kinds of communication behaviours, such as body tenseness, eye contact, and smiling (Burgoon, Birk and Pfau, 1990).

**Theories on “Immediacy” Construct**

The concept of immediacy can be explained on the basis of Implicit Communication Theory, Approach-avoidance theory, and attraction theory.

**Implicit Communication Theory**
The ‘immediacy’ concept, grounded in the Implicit Communication Theory states that messages are passed on via two forms of communication, that is, explicit and implicit. Explicit message tends to carry the content, while implicit message passes on feelings and emotions (Butland and Beebe, 1992). Mehrabian (1981) described implicit communication as “…aspects of speech […] which are rather expressions of feelings and attitudes above and beyond the contents conveyed by speech” (p. 2). Thus, explicit message is verbal, inherently, whereas implicit message refers to non-verbal communication. According to Mehrabian (1981), “implicit communication deals primarily with the transmission of information about feelings and like/dislike or attitudes” (p.3).

**Approach-avoidance Theory**

Andersen (1979) and Gorham (1988) found that teacher’s immediacy positively influences student’s motivation via its approach-avoidance tendency. This theory posits that, “people approach what they like and avoid what they don’t like” (Mehrabian, 1981: 22). Mehrabian (1971, 1981) argues that individuals tend to be attracted (prefer, evaluate highly, and like) toward things and people they perceive positively; and tend to avoid (evaluate negatively, dislike, or do not prefer) people and things that they perceive negatively. Mehrabian (1981) further argues that immediate communicators, through their behaviours, usually convey a message as if they like the person they are interacting with and that there is a positive relationship between them. Thus, Richmond et al. (1987) described immediacy as behaviours which not only increase physical and/or psychological proximity, but also add to the perceptual stimulation during interpersonal interaction.

Approach-avoidance, an element of the behavioural reinforcement/drive theory, describes immediacy as something a student either seeks out or feels comfortable while interacting with an instructor, or avoids and is apprehensive of the teacher (Weiner, 1992; Richmond et al., 1987). Where students are familiar, comfortable, and secure in a classroom environment, their avoidance tendency will be diminished (Christophel, 1990). In a research conducted by Martin, Myers, and Mottet (1999), they found that learners tend to avoid interaction with those teachers who are perceived by them as uncaring or uninterested. Imada and Hakel (1997) argues that greater liking attributes to greater immediacy. Immediacy behaviours enhance liking in a teacher-learner relationship in a classroom (Saechou, 2005). Researchers observed that teachers who display immediate behaviour are liked and viewed as more competent and motivated by students (Clifton, and Pryor, 1994). According to Mehrabian (1981), an individual contributes to the feelings of like/dislike via a range of immediate behaviours, thereby making the interactional/conversational partner either feel bad or good, negative, or positive regarding self.

**Attraction Theory**

The effectiveness of non-verbal immediacy behaviour, grounded in a reinforcement paradigm which underlies attraction theory (Mehrabian, 1981) states that individuals approach those stimuli which are rewarding while avoid the ones which do not provide rewards (Allen, Witt and Wheeless, 2006). Immediacy behaviours as displayed by teachers in acts of interaction and/or communication with learners, thus might be viewed as rewarding (Allen, Witt and
Wheeless, 2006). It further follows that such rewarding behaviours might furnish as a reinforcement for interaction, feedback and attentive behaviour from learners which increases cognitive, affective, and behavioural learning (Allen, Witt and Wheeless, 2006). Immediate instructors who “use pro-social, reward-oriented compliance gaining strategies” (p. 240) tend to enhance learning among their students, which will be on account of those instructors stimulating student’s motivation to learn (Gorham and Christophel, 1992). More often attraction is reciprocal (Sorensen and christophel, 1992). Hence, teacher conveys immediacy in the classroom through proximity and reinforcement in order to contribute to interpersonal attraction (Richmond and McCroskey, 1995).

**Immediacy Implies Positive Attributes**

Early research carried out in the field of education have labelled teachers immediacy behaviour as ‘teacher expressiveness’ or ‘teacher enthusiasm’ (Abrami, Leventhal and Perry, 1982), whereas communication researchers opt to name these as ‘immediacy behaviour’ (Andersen, 1979). Hence, immediacy implies positive teacher’s characteristics, for example, their enthusiasm and involvement (Myers and Knox, 2001) and employing immediacy behaviour bridges the psychological gap between two persons (Valencic, McCroskey and Richmond, 2005). A supportive classroom in which instructors establish an environment of acceptance, warmth, genuineness, and safety with their students, they tend to become more self-confident, self-initiated, and self-directed (Hsu, 2010). Resultantly, students experience the enjoyment and comfort of learning, feel accepted and encouraged (Li, 2003) thus paving the way for more positive instructional outcomes to take place (Banfield, Richmond and McCroskey, 2006).

**Immediacy Communicates Closeness**

Closeness during interaction between instructor and student is a significant component of the instructional setting (Allen, Witt and Wheeless, 2006). Immediacy centres on teacher-student closeness during their interaction (Babad, 2007). When students and teachers communicate with each other, they associate meaning to their constructed and conveyed messages and also interpret the messages they receive from one another (Saechou, 2005). The use of some specific certain cues can reduce the perceived distance between teacher and learners thereby influencing some classroom outcomes, particularly student learning (Allen, Witt and Wheeless, 2006).

**Immediacy Influences Students’ Behaviour**

An assumption usually made regarding the teaching/learning relationship is that the behaviours of teachers influence the behaviour of learners (Christophel, 1990; Gorham and Christophel, 1992). Several studies (for example, Andersen, 1979; Plax, et al., 1986; Richmond, Gorham and McCroskey, 1987; Gorham, 1988) have investigated immediacy’s relationship with learning from school to college levels and with multicultural student populations. The results of these aforementioned research studies show that conveyance of immediacy has a positive effect upon learners (Frymier, 1993). Learners who perceive their instructors as close or immediate report more comfort and enjoyment with the courses, and intend further pursuance of the subjects (Saechou, 2005). Early investigations (Andersen and Withow, 1981; Andersen, 1979) examined instructor non-verbal immediacy behaviour as a predictor of instructional
efficacy and found that perceptions of immediacy correlated highly with favourable learners’ attitudes (Christophel, 1990). The findings of a study carried out by Moore and colleagues (1996) concluded that learners rate a teacher more positively, with the increase in the frequency of the teacher’s immediacy behaviour. Positive immediacy behaviour, like nodding head, smiles, and eye contact by teachers show an increase in students’ information-seeking strategies (Myers & Knox, 2001), student information recall (Moore et al., 1996), extra-class communication (Fusani, 1994), and affective, cognitive, and behavioural learning (Witt, Wheeless, and Allen, 2004), as well as a decrease in learner’s resistance (Kearney and Plax, 1991) and learner’s apprehension (Messman and Jones-Corley, 2001; Ellis, 1995).

**Immediacy Induces Compliance**

In her book, Richmond (1987) mentioned a number of advantages that immediacy brings to teachers. For example, she discussed that teacher immediacy can be utilized for getting students to do what teachers want. Students are drawn to instructors they like, and they trust them more as compared to teachers who they think are not responsive and caring (Richmond, 1987). If the teacher’s nonverbal behaviour is positive, student enjoys the lecture and is greatly motivated towards the teacher as well as the subject matter, whereas if the nonverbal behaviour is negative, learners experience discomfort and lack of motivation towards the teacher and the subject matter (Negi, 2009). Further investigation concerning effect of instructor’s non-verbal immediacy regarding student’s on-task compliance indicates the strong impact of instructor’s nonverbal immediacy in terms of student’s decisions to comply with or resist on-task requests (Kearney, et al., 1988). Higher levels of compliance can possibly be attained via immediacy and students tend to comply more with the instructors who are more immediate (non-verbally) than the less immediate instructors (Pribyl, Sakamoto and Keaten, 2004).

Immediate instructors are seen by learners as more positive and effective which enhance learner’s liking towards their teacher, for the course and subject matter, attract or/and persuade students to get engaged in on-task behaviours, with subsequent learning gains (Christophel, 1990; Gorham and Christophel, 1990; Rodriguez, Plax, and Kearney, 1996). In short, immediacy research points to expressiveness of immediacy as a potentially important component in the improvement of instructional effectiveness.

**Relationship between Teacher’s Immediacy Behaviours and Students’ Motivation**

Motivation has been conceptualized as a force having stimulating and directive properties (Brophy, 1983) which can; drive learners’ arousal and instigative behaviours, give purpose and direction to learners’ behaviours, allow their behaviours to persist, and leads to selection of preferred behaviours (Dweck, 1986). Keller (1983) and Brophy (1987) divided motivation into 2 categories: state motivation and trait motivation.

Trait motivation means that majority learners are born with the natural tendency to learn, that is, student’s general predisposition toward learning, to strive for skill mastery and/or content knowledge (Brophy, 1987). Whereas state motivation implies student’s motivation towards a specific course and changes with time, particularly relying on the learner’s attitudes and perceptions towards a teacher who teaches the subject and towards other situational factors (Mahmud and Yaacob, 2007).
Student’s trait which points towards student’s general motivation towards learning (not a specific content subject or course) is more enduring. However, the extent to which a student learns is dependent upon student’s state motivation which gets activated through a range of educational factors. State motivation is found to be impacted and determined by a variety of teacher communication variables, one of which is nonverbal immediacy behaviour (Brophy, 1987; Christophel, 1990; Frymier, 1994). Enhanced learning outcomes related to teacher’s use of immediacy behaviours may take place as those behaviours stimulate students’ state motivation to learn in that teacher's classroom (Gorham & Christophel, 1992).

**Teachers’ (Behaviour) Role in Motivation**

Teachers, even with little experience, usually tackle the classroom management, though continue to wrestle with motivational issues among learners especially in classes with students having higher discipline problems and lower academic achievements (Christensen and Menzel, 1998). Even with such kind of classes, student’s interest can be captured, and motivation maintained if the teachers build ‘suitable’ characteristics (Christensen and Menzel, 1998). Russell (1971 as quoted in Hsu, 2010) argues that instructors are the most powerful and influential determiners of a student’s learning motivation. The instructor’s behaviour in a class brings about changes in the language learners’ motivation (Madrid and Canado, 2001). Authoritative and controlling style weakens motivation while autonomy and supportive style sustains motivation, leading ultimately to achievement (Madrid and Canado, 2001). Examining the causes of learners’ motivation and de-motivation, Gorham and Millette (1997) found that learners attribute their de-motivation more to the behaviour of instructors than to any other factor. Young and Shaw (1999) define effective teacher as one who can motivate learners. For teachers to be effective, they need to recognize and understand their ability of either negatively or positively affecting students’ motivation (Velez and Cano, 2008). Farmer (2001 as quoted in Hsu, 2010) explains that the most important and necessary norm in learner’s motivation which needs to receive primary importance is the instructor’s behaviour. Teachers can strengthen students’ motivation with their “helpful, friendly and understanding behaviours” (Den Brok et al., 2006: 17). Clement, Dornyei and Noels (1994) concluded that learners’ evaluation of their instructor’s relation with their class is connected to learner’s self-confidence. Here self-confidence implies motivation. Such relationship has been encompassed very well by Noels’ (2001) model as shown below (see Fig 1)
Learners are more motivated to participate and communicate when instructors are perceived as caring and responsive (Myers et al., 2002). Where teacher is less engaged with students, not only the students miss the involvement, but they also perceive teacher as more coercive and less consistent (Allen, Witt and Wheeless, 2006). Romaizom’s (2002) research reveals that learners are motivated by those instructors who display positive teaching behaviours in comparison to the ones showing negative teaching behaviours. In other words, immediacy triggers liking, and as a result, gives rise to motivation (Saechou, 2005). Kelley and Gorham (1988) and Christophel (1990) discovered that highly immediate instructors are linked with an increase in students’ motivation to learning and study.

**Immediacy-Motivation Models**
Richmond (1990) and Christophel (1990) are among the first few to suggest that student’s state motivation for learning is influenced by instructor’s non-verbal immediacy, which is the causal mediator between immediacy and (student) learning in a classroom (see Fig. 2). Here, the argument is that instructors who are more immediate sparks greater motivation in their learners, which then leads learners to attend classes more faithfully, study harder and learn more ultimately (Frymier, 1994; Christophel and Gorham, 1995).

**Figure 1: Students’ perceptions of teacher and L2 motivation (Noel, 2001)**

![Diagram showing the relationship between teachers' communication style, students' perceptions, and motivation.](http://www.webology.org)
Frymier (1993a) also examined immediacy in relation to motivation, which, in turn, influences learning. Frymier (1993a), on the basis of her research developed a Learning Model (Fig. 3 below). In a research study on 178 undergraduate students, Frymier found a positive relationship between instructor’s immediacy and learner’s state motivation. According to the Model, trait motivation leads to state motivation; and state motivation, verbal immediacy, and nonverbal immediacy all then leads to learning. This model shows that learning begins with student’s own trait motivation, but their motivation for learning a specific subject (state motivation) relies on the behaviours demonstrated by the instructor who is teaching that subject regardless of their trait motivation.

Initially immediacy was presumed to be related directly to learning (Frymier, 1993a). However, it was later found that motivation acts as a mediator between learning and immediacy (Frymier, 1994). Particularly, Frymier (1994) indicated an indirect causal relationship between teacher’s immediacy and learner’s affective and cognitive learning having learner’s (state) motivation as a mediator between the two (see Fig. 4). Frymier concluded that teacher immediacy behaviours are indirectly related to student learning, that is, through motivation. It indicates that teacher immediacy directly influences learners’ state motivation, that is, driving student’s motivation to learn before influencing their learning (Christophel, 1990; Frymer, 1994). Christensen and Menzel (1998) also discovered a positive linear relationship between instructor’s immediacy and learner’s state motivation.
Christophel (1990) also concluded that state motivation levels can be modified within the classroom and that, “a portion of teacher immediacy behaviour must first modify student’s state motivation prior to immediacy becoming an effective predictor of learning” (p. 335). Christophel (1990) also showed that though both forms of immediacy, nonverbal and verbal, affect learning, the results of his research suggested that nonverbal immediacy behaviours appear as having a more significant impact on learning as compared to verbal immediacy behaviours.

Another research study by Frymier (1993b), where she investigated high, moderate, and low apprehension students, found that instructor’s immediacy behaviour is related to high levels state motivation for all levels of Communication Apprehension (CA) students. This research showed that high CA learners demonstrated low level in CA when they were taught by high immediate instructor.

Christophel and Gorham (1995) conducted a test-retest analysis to investigate students perceived sources of demotivation and motivation in college classes. This research further supports the theory that teachers’ immediacy behaviour affects students’ state motivational levels, although instructors’ use of de-motivating behaviour was proved to have a stronger effect on learners’ motivation (causing de-motivation to study) than motivating behaviour.

Thus, higher instructor’s immediacy, a behaviour perceived by learners, operates as a means of enhancing the learner’s motivation to learn, to work hard in class and generates increased enthusiasm and involvement of the students towards the material and the teacher (Allen, Witt and Wheeless, 2006). Greater immediacy levels add to a positive reinforcement which would create a learner’s motivation for interacting with the instructor and also develops a sense of reward (Allen, Witt and Wheeless, 2006).

Among researchers who attempted at explaining motivation in an educational context, Dörnyei (1990 and 1994) deserves special mention. In Dörnyei’s framework of L2 motivation (1994), which examined motivation from a classroom perspective, the situation-specific motivation has three components in which one of them, that is, the teacher-specific motivational component refers to the motivational effect of instructor’s personality, behaviour, and teaching style.

Crookes and Schmidt (1985) hold a point of view which is more classroom oriented. Describing classroom level, Crookes and Schmidt explained that the events which occurs in a classroom tend to enhance, maintain, or reduce the student’s motivation. These events also include the type of interaction taking place between teacher and students.

**Conclusion**

Given the importance of teacher’s nonverbal immediacy behaviours in effecting student’s motivation and interested by such relationship, this study explored the relationship further through an extensive review of the relevant literature, drawing on main theories, concepts, and
empirical studies in this regard. Based on such a review, important conclusions are reached at both for educational practices and future research.

**Implications for Educational Practise (Discussion)**

These findings from literature offer some interesting practical implications and research directions both for any teaching/learning situations beyond Pakistan, in general, and for Pakistani context, in particular. Popular images of ideal instructors are likely to show them as happy, confident, enthusiastic, passionate, satisfied, and self-assured (Winograd, 2005). Teaching is a relational communication process (Mottet and Beebe, 2006) and teachers’ both verbal and non-verbal teaching style is important and carries equal significance in terms of its impact on learners, thus the following implications can be drawn.

**In the Language Classrooms**

The findings of the relevant research (such as, Gorham and Christophel, 1992; Christophel and Gorham, 1995) suggest various motivating and de-motivating individual immediacy behaviours which highlight the use/no use of certain immediacy behaviours in classes. Thus, it is suggestion of the researcher to encourage teachers to dispel these and other de-motivating behaviours in their teaching. Instead, the motivational elements of these and other teachers’ behaviour should be implemented in their classes to bring tangible positive changes in the learners’ “overall motivational disposition” as well as “concrete classroom behaviour” (Guilloteaux, 2007: 154).

Since teachers’ limited expression of nonverbal behaviours (for example, smile, eye contact) may affect students negatively, teachers should try to make frequent but natural use of nonverbal expressions in the classroom in order to promote positive learning environment. Thus, the proper management of teacher’s behaviour in a classroom can be profitable to both teachers and learners.

Another significant implication gleaning from the present study is that instructors need to know the fact that their immediacy behaviours (particularly non-verbal) powerfully and effectively increase learners’ motivation to learn English. Therefore, instructors are required to be more attentive in their English classrooms and exercise great care in portraying positive and encouraging expressions and gestures especially those which highly influence students’ motivation such as eye contact, listening patiently to students, relaxed body position and others ranked as highly motivating by students.

It also suggests to teachers to give specific detailed thoughts to these behaviours. All those who are involved in the educational process need to be encouraged to evaluate and reflect on their non-verbal communication methods. If teachers want to facilitate an optimal classroom environment, they should pass caring and supportive communication messages to all learners in the class. Teachers should demonstrate these nonverbal behaviours so as to successfully facilitate learners’ motivation and hence learning.
Teachers’ Training and Development

Given the critical role of teachers’ communicative behaviours in influencing students’ motivation, established in the relevant literature as mentioned above, teachers’ behaviours (particularly non-verbal) should accordingly get prominent attention in the development and training of potential teachers. Motivating behaviours can be taught to new and pre-service instructors to improve the learner-teacher relationship and learner motivation. They can be helped in building motivating behaviours through course work, workshops, seminars, and practice. In classes motivating immediacy behaviours should be discussed as a topic. New and in-service teachers should specifically be trained in using motivational behaviours as a part of teacher education programs. The establishment of a theoretically sound and empirically tested module on teacher education focusing on teachers’ motivational practices might be a significant step forward in rendering language education more effective. Teacher educators are particularly required to be aware of, communicate, and model aspects of motivating immediacy behaviour to teacher-candidates. This may help them in building up the closeness inducing skills of immediacy. In this way, student-teachers will be guided to practice motivating immediacy behaviours under the guidance and supervision of experienced educators.

Recommendations for Future Research

Other research directions for future investigations can also be identified regarding the potential of incorporating motivational behaviours into instructional practices. The concept of teacher’s immediacy (specifically nonverbal) did not gain the same level of importance in Pakistani educational research as elsewhere. This is also an area worthy of research by educational experts in this country. Many research studies investigated the instructor behaviours in different contexts. However, so far, this literature remained attentive to teacher behaviour in contexts, for example, Japan, China, USA, Germany, Turkey (Özmen, 2011; Zhang, 2007). Even research on immediacy in EFL\(^1\)/ESL\(^2\) context of Asian countries, Pakistan has drawn much less attention than, for example, Japan, Taiwan, or China (Hsu, 2010; Hsu, et al., 2007; Pribyl, et al., 2004). So, there exists a gap in language teacher behaviour research in the particular Pakistani context. Possibly, the findings received from future studies in Pakistan, exploring this concept, might answer the question teachers usually ask; “how can we motivate our students?”

The research outcome in the present report justifies attention to instructor’s immediacy as an attribute of classroom behaviour which can improve the learning outcomes by enhancing students’ motivation. Conducting more in-depth research on teachers’ individual behaviours and on students'/teachers’ perceptions of teachers’ interpersonal behaviour is needed. Also, more indigenous aspects of teachers’ immediacy behaviour and motivation needs to be looked at.

In line with the considerations sketched out in the preceding section, future research is also required for assessing the “teachability” (Hsu, 2010: 198) of nonverbal immediacy behaviours in general, as well as to investigate the particular ways through which it may be achieved, in

\(^1\) EFL: English as a Foreign Language  
\(^2\) ESL: English as a Second Language
particular. One main question that arises here is whether immediacy behaviours are modifiable, that is, via focused intervention, or just a broader awareness-raising initiative is required which can facilitate teachers’ thinking regarding immediacy behaviours generally. It will also be relevant to explore the relationship between use of motivational nonverbal behaviours and good teaching to make the overall process effective; still, it is unclear which aspects of instructional shortcomings (such as, lack of explanations) carry the potential to cancel the positive effects of motivational behaviours and which aspects of motivational behaviour might make up for instructional shortcomings.

Also, what are those perceptions which higher levels of immediacy can evoke in learners and what finally are the implications of these perceptions for the students’ practices, are still unanswered questions. In view of the attention given to the motivational concerns appearing in the literature of applied linguistics and ELT\(^3\) and in discussions of educational outcomes, continuing exploring the relationship of instructors' verbal and specifically, non-verbal communicative behaviours to students’ motivation have both pedagogical as well as practical salience.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
During this study, there was no conflict of interest among co-authors, and with any other published work, we the co-authors attest that the current research study is genuine work.

REFERENCES


\(^3\) ELT: (English Language Teaching)
http://www.webology.org


Frymier, A. B. 1993b. The relationships among communication apprehension, immediacy and motivation to study. Communication Reports, 6, 817.


McCroskey, J. C., Richmond, V. P., Plax, T. G., & Kearney, P 1985. Power in the classroom:


Winograd, K 2005. Good day, bad day: Teaching as a high-wire act. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Education.


