The Effects of Teacher Clarity and Immediacy on Student Learning, Apprehension, and Affect

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Abstract

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This study examined the effects clear and immediate teaching have on student learning, state receiver apprehension, and affect. Although teacher clarity and constructs conceptually similar to immediacy have been identified as effective teaching behaviors, few experimental studies have investigated the combined use of these behaviors. This is important because research related to clear teaching suggests that immediacy may be a necessary precursor to clear teaching and that the absence of immediacy may significantly threaten the effectiveness of clear messages. A review of this research is followed by the identification of attributes which characterize clear teachers. The results indicate that clarity, as defined in this study, is an important factor in student learning. Students who were taught by a clear teacher learned more than those who were taught by an unclear teacher. Immediacy did not have a significant effect on learning but did increase students' affect for the instructor and the course material.

Acknowledgments

And now, the end is near, and so I face the final curtain . . . F. Sinatra

This is the best part of any paper: free from any editing and no need to cite any sources The exceptions of course are the sources of support I have had over the years. I plan to be thorough here, because there are so many people who have helped me finish this program and this dissertation. Some have provided guidance, others love, some friendship, and others just plain comic relief.

A zebra is a horse designed by a committee. . . R. Barraclough

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Communication Apprehension is whatever I say it is! . . .J. McCroskey

Though this comment could be taken a number of ways, to me it represents the "shot-in-the-arm" of confidence that one gets from working in the WVU Department of Communication Studies. At once it represents pride, dedication, and a strong sense of humor. I want to thank Jim and also Virginia Richmond for accepting me into this program, taking a chance on someone with a rhetorical background and having the sense to see that my low GRE's said NOTHING about who I was or what I could achieve. Finally, I appreciate that every time I went to Jim with an "is this possible?" type of

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See, you and me, Have a better time than most can dream. Have it better than the best. And so can pull on through, Whatever tears at us, Whatever holds us down, And if nothing can be done We'll make the best of what's around . . . D. Matthews

This section is for those who have been such good friends to me over the years. Randall, Denise, Kevin, Tracy, Jere, & Shelly - I bet when we were in high school you would have had me committed if I said I thought I would end up teaching in college. I barely can say it with a straight face! I am as happy that you all are doing so well as I am for my own good fortune. There are no memories quite like those when you are growing up, & I thank you for being a part of mine. Shelly, I am glad we have kept in touch & I am very happy for you & your happy marriage.

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Teach your children well . . .Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young

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You were the love for certain of my life. You were simply my beloved wife . . . N. Merchant

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I think of all the education that I missed, but then that homework was never quite like this . . . Van Halen

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Everything I learned about life, I learned from music . . . J. Chesebro

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-That's all I have to say about that . . . F. Gump

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Chapter 1: Defining Teacher Clarity

The ability to teach clearly so that students can understand course material is fundamental to teaching. In fact, it is the point of teaching. As such, it consistently has been identified as an important aspect of teaching effectiveness (Brophy & Good, 1986; Civikly, 1992; Cruickshank & Kennedy, 1986; Rosenshine & Furst, 1971; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986). However, research on clear teaching lacks coherence. Some researchers have examined vocal clarity, while others have examined the clarity of messages based on their structure. While some have provided syntheses of clarity research (Civikly, 1992; McCaleb & White, 1980; Smith & Land, 1981), research has yet to provide a coherent definition of the construct.

The absence of a definition of clear teaching presents a void that is worth being filled for a variety of significant reasons. The most compelling concerns effective teaching. The practice of effective teaching behaviors evolves in accordance with the ways in which those behaviors are defined. For example, if a teacher is told that clear teaching involves effective articulation, the majority of that teacher's efforts to teach clearly will be devoted to effective articulation. In contrast, a definition of clear teaching which is informed by the variety of existing research on clear teaching would provide teachers with a more comprehensive guide to frame their efforts to teach with greater clarity. A clear definition also permits the evaluation of teachers based on the extent to which they exhibit clear teaching behaviors. At a time when teacher education is undergoing considerable scrutiny, the instruction of one of the teaching behaviors most important to effective teaching should be guided by a clear and comprehensive frame of understanding.

A definition of teacher clarity would be beneficial also because it could help guide research on clarity. Although different research programs have examined aspects of teaching which conceptually are related to clarity, the absence of a clear definition or framework for clarity has prevented the various research programs from complementing each other's work. For example, although work on the verbal aspects of clarity have yielded useful and important results (Smith & Land, 1981), this work has not been integrated into other programs which research clarity (such as

Cruickshank & Kennedy, 1986). A definition of clarity would help synthesize existing research and provide a direction in which future research could focus. Instead of working in a variety of directions, future research could proceed within a more distinct and theoretically sound framework.

The future research that could be guided by a strong definition of clarity is warranted for a number of important reasons. As noted, an understanding of teacher clarity enables the practice and identification of clear teaching. Most importantly, this benefits students. However, it also benefits teacher educators and evaluators. Beyond enabling teachers to identify aspects of clear teaching, research on clarity can help teachers learn more about their students and how they learn. As aspects of teaching are found to be more or less conducive to clarity, researchers can gain a greater understanding about the ways students attend to, process, and remember information. Because good teaching starts with a consideration of our students, this benefit of clarity research should not be underestimated.

Given the state of our understanding of teacher clarity, a need exists to provide a concise definition of teacher clarity, to benefit both teachers and researchers. The present study examined the nature of teacher clarity from a number of perspectives, offered a definition of teacher clarity that is well grounded in educational research, and tested an important aspect of that definition. Specifically, the extent to which nonverbal behaviors (such as teacher immediacy behaviors) are a necessary dimension of clear teaching were tested. A review of research related to teacher clarity includes a review of immediacy research and a discussion of the role of immediacy in clear teaching.

Teacher Clarity

Processes related to clear teaching consistently have been related to positive instructional outcomes. These processes have been studied as various constructs with a variety of labels. This review examines the various constructs related to clear teaching and discusses the ways in which they comprise the construct of teacher clarity. Teacher clarity herein is defined as a variable which represents the process by which teachers are able to effectively stimulate the desired meaning of course

content in the minds of students through the use of appropriately structured verbal and nonverbal messages. To be a clear teacher, one must take information and present it in a way which students are able to comprehend it. The body of literature related to clear teaching supports this definition as it includes the study of verbal messages, nonverbal messages, and the structure of messages. This review argues that each of these dimensions of behavior makes a significant contribution to the process by which teachers are able to teach clearly.

Most research related to teacher clarity has not been conducted to study a specific variable labeled "teacher clarity." Instead, a number of researchers have examined variables related to clear teaching, including instructor expressiveness (Perry, Abrami, & Leventhal, 1979), instructor enthusiasm (Solomon, 1966), instructor immediacy (Mehrabian, 1981), lesson vagueness (Land, 1979), discontinuity (Smith & Cotten, 1980), mazes (Land, 1979), explicit teaching (Rosenshine, 1987; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986), advance organizers (Ausbel, 1963; Mayer, 1979), notetaking facilitation (Kiewra, 1985), and message organization (Feldman, 1989; Kallison, 1986; Murray, 1991). Though diverse, the various approaches in this body of research can be organized into a small number of instructional processes which comprise the proposed definition of teacher clarity. First, nonverbal messages are relevant to the process of clear teaching (e.g., enthusiasm, expressiveness, and immediacy). Second, some research can be grouped based on a focus on verbal messages (e.g., vagueness and mazes, use of examples). A third important element of clear teaching is structure (e.g., organization, advance organizers, explicit teaching, direct instruction, discontinuity, and notetaking facilitation). The following review of literature related to each of these three categories of teacher clarity supports the definition of teacher clarity as including the components of (a) verbal message characteristics, and (b) the structure of messages. Given the role of immediacy in the teaching process, it may be likely that immediacy is a necessary precursor to clear teaching.

Immediacy as a Precursor to Clarity

Nonverbal messages related to teacher clarity include instructor enthusiasm, expressiveness, and immediacy. Each of these terms is related to effective nonverbal

classroom behaviors such as movement, gesturing, eye contact, vocal variety, energy, and smiling. Although these variables are related to positive instructional outcomes (Murray, 1991; McCroskey & Richmond, 1992; Schonwetter, 1993), they have not been discussed as a precursor to teacher clarity. However, their role in instruction is to enable the impact of clear teaching by gaining students' attention during lectures. Unless teachers are able to gain students' attention, the extent to which they teach clearly is relatively unimportant. The nonverbal behaviors listed above help facilitate selective attention to the teacher's message (Schonwetter) which enables other teacher messages to be processed by students. For clear messages to have utility, students must attend to them.

There is a solid body of evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of instructor enthusiasm, expressiveness, and immediacy. Furthermore, there is considerable conceptual overlap between enthusiasm, expressiveness, and immediacy. In a review of research related to teacher enthusiasm, Krawchuk and Walls (1997) identified a number of behaviors used by enthusiastic teachers: vocal variety, eye contact, gesturing, body movement, facial expression, and overall energy. Because of the conceptual overlap among these three terms, for the remainder of this review they will be discussed using the term immediacy, which includes those behaviors which increase perceptions of physical and psychological closeness. A number of studies have manipulated immediacy behaviors experimentally. With a few exceptions, these studies indicate that immediacy has a greater impact on student ratings of instructors than on student achievement. A meta-analysis by Abrami, Leventhal, and Perry (1982) indicated that immediacy has a strong impact on student ratings (average variance accounted for = 28.5%) but that its impact on student retention of content is small (average variance accounted for = 4.6%). Recent findings regarding the impact of immediacy on achievement include experimental studies which indicate that immediacy behaviors play a significant role in the retention of content (Kelley & Gorham, 1988; Perry & Penner, 1990).

The observed impact on student ratings has been supported by a large body of correlational research on immediacy and instructional outcomes such as (a)

motivation, (b) affect towards the instructor, subject, and course, and (c) estimations of the amount learned in a given class. Students who report being in classes in which their teacher is immediate are much more likely to report that they are motivated to learn, that they have more positive affect towards the instructor and course, that they learn more (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1999a; Christophel, 1990; Frymier, 1994; Richmond, 1990), and that they are less likely to experience anxiety when trying to learn the material being presented (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1999b). Clearly, immediacy behaviors are an important aspect of instruction that should not be overlooked. They enable instructors to gain students' attention, and they significantly contribute to a positive learning experience in terms of student motivation and affect. However, experimental findings suggest that immediacy alone is not enough to improve student achievement. Immediacy behaviors should be considered to be the set of behaviors which provides the foundation upon which other teaching behaviors such as clarity can be more effective in increasing student achievement. In addition to being immediate, teachers need to exhibit behaviors which enable them to take advantage of the attention gained by the immediate behaviors. The meta-analysis by Abrami et al. (1982) revealed that unlike immediacy, information coverage was strongly related to student achievement (mean variance accounted for = 15.8%) and not as strongly related to student ratings (mean variance accounted for = 4.6%). This finding demonstrates the way in which clear teaching behaviors can add to the impact of immediacy and together how the two can improve both achievement and student ratings.

Verbal Messages and Clarity

Much research related to teacher clarity has focused on the clarity of verbal messages (vagueness, fluency, mazes). One area of research on the clarity of oral messages involves experiments in which the vagueness, fluency, and/or number of mazes in presentations were manipulated as indicators of a lack of clarity. Vagueness terms are "words or phrases indicating approximation, unclarity, or lack of assurance" (Land, 1979, p.795). An example of a statement with the vagueness terms highlighted is "This mathematics lesson *might* enable you to understand a *little*

more about some things we *usually* call number patterns" (Land & Smith, 1979, p.56). Disfluencies such as "uh," "ah," and "um" also have been investigated as indicators of a lack of clarity (Hiller, Fisher, & Kaess, 1969). Mazes are false starts or abrupt halts in speech, redundantly stated words, and tangles of words (Smith, 1977). An example of a maze with the relevant parts highlighted is "This mathematics lesson *will enab . . .* will get you to understand *number, uh,* number patterns" (Land & Smith, 1979, p. 56). In a review of ten studies in which vagueness terms were manipulated, Smith and Land (1981) indicated that the presence of vagueness terms reduced student achievement in every study. Mazes reduced achievement in three of four studies. In the one study which manipulated specific fluency behaviors such as "uh," the relationship between fluency and achievement was negative but non-significant (Smith, 1977).

A program of research originating from Ohio State University further depicts the verbal message component of teacher clarity (for a detailed review, refer to Cruickshank and Kennedy, 1986). Recognizing that early studies in support of teacher clarity really were studying related variables and no specific construct called "clarity," Cruickshank and colleagues conducted a series of studies in an attempt to identify specific clear teaching behaviors. In various studies, students were asked (a) to recall their most clear teacher and list five things the teacher did when teaching clearly (Cruickshank, Myers, & Moenjak, 1975, cited in Cruickshank & Kennedy, 1986); (b) to identify their best teacher (half of the participants) or worst teacher (other half) and indicate clarity behaviors (generated from the Cruickshank et al. study) on a 5-point scale (Bush, Kennedy, & Cruickshank, 1977); and (c) to report on their most clear and unclear teacher (Kennedy, Cruickshank, Bush, & Myers, 1978). This series of studies enabled the identification of clear teaching behaviors and the discrimination between clear and unclear teaching behaviors. Discriminating behaviors related to verbal messages were: "explains things simply," "gives explanations we understand," "tries to find out if we don't understand and repeats things," "asks if we know what to do and how to do it," "repeats things when we don't understand," and "explains something and then works an example" (Cruickshank & Kennedy, 1986, p.58). The

list of behaviors also revealed important nonverbal message components: “teaches at a pace appropriate to the topic and students” and “stays with the topic until we understand.” These results indicate that verbal messages related to clear teaching include the ability to explain concepts, effectiveness at monitoring students’ understanding, appropriate repetition, and the effective use of relevant examples. Adding to the nonverbal dimension of clarity is the appropriate use of time to explain concepts.

A number of studies have studied the relationship between teacher clarity and student achievement and ratings of instruction. Hines, Cruickshank, and Kennedy (1985) studied the relationship between the generated clarity behaviors and student achievement and satisfaction. As part of a peer-teaching program, 32 pre-service teachers taught the same lesson to a small group of peers. The lessons were videotaped and coded for the extent to which previously identified clear teaching behaviors were exhibited. Analyses revealed that clarity behaviors accounted for 36 percent of the variance in instructional ratings and 52 percent of the variance in student achievement, suggesting the importance of the clear teaching behaviors. However, this finding runs counter to the tendency of clarity to relate more strongly with ratings of instruction than with achievement in experimental studies (Murray, 1991). Interestingly, student achievement correlates more highly with perceptions of teacher clarity than with actual clarity, which led Murray to suggest that student perceptions of teacher clarity mediate the relationship between actual clarity and student achievement. This may be the way in which nonverbal immediacy has its impact on clarity. It is possible that in experiments, students who had unclear teachers also had immediate teachers. This might lead to perceptions of clarity even though the teachers were in the unclear conditions. Thus, students would rate instruction high in clarity but not necessarily learn more. Future research could explore this possibility in greater detail by examining the combined impact of immediacy and clarity on affective and cognitive outcomes.

The research reviewed related to the clarity of verbal messages indicates that there is a verbal component to teacher clarity. Speaking without being vague, using

examples, attempting to assess students' understanding, and explaining content effectively all directly involve the use of verbal messages and are related in some manner to student achievement and ratings and instruction. In addition to these verbal messages and the nonverbal component of clarity, related research suggests that an additional component of clarity is related to the way in which presentations of course content are structured.

Structural Qualities and Clarity

Research related to structure and clarity has included investigations of advance organizers, organization, notetaking facilitation, discontinuity, internal connectors or transitions, and explicit teaching. Advance organizers (Ausubel, 1963) are concepts introduced before material is covered which are on a more general or abstract level than the material which is to be covered. The theory supporting the use of advance organizers is that they help create a general context into which more specific information can be integrated more effectively. Although research on the use of advance organizers primarily is related to their use with written material, they have been applied to the oral presentation of content (Alexander, Frankiewicz, & Williams, 1979). Subjects received either advance or post organizers, a combination of both, or no organizer. Before presenting information about a specific culture, experimenters provided a general overview of culture and asked some very general questions about culture. This use of advance organizers was presented according to Ausubel's criteria. Although there were no significant differences between the groups with organizers, every group with at least one organizer had a significant advantage over the group with no organizer in terms of the amount of material learned. This evidence extends the research on advance organizers to include their use in oral messages and supports the notion that they are valuable to teachers and learners.

Related to advance organizers, skeletal outlines given to students prior to lectures also appear to be an effective component of structure which can contribute to the clarity of the messages presented. Hartley (1976) indicated several advantages associated with the use of skeletal notes: students take fewer notes than those not provided outlines yet those given outlines recall significantly more; those given

outlines with less information and more space will take more notes than those given more information and less space; when information on skeletal notes is equal but the amount of space is varied, the students with more space take more notes; and students with skeletal notes recall more than those who take personal notes and those given a complete set of the instructor's notes prior to the lecture (cited in Kiewra, 1985). In addition to other structural strengths, it is likely that skeletal notes help students learn information more effectively.

Another component related to structure and clarity is organization. Organization can be said to include providing a preliminary overview of the lecture, putting an outline of the lecture on the board, using headings and subheadings, and signaling transitions to new topics. The preliminary overview is conceptually similar to the use of advance organizers but may not be at a higher level of abstraction (merely a summary). Transitions are comments that indicate the end of discussion on a topic and the beginning of discussion of a new topic. Teaching behaviors related to the effective use of transitions were cited as important in a number of the Ohio State studies (Cruickshank & Kennedy, 1986). These include "teaching things in a related step-by-step manner" and "orienting and preparing students for what follows" (p. 56). Research related to internal transitions focuses on two types of discontinuity (Smith & Cotten, 1980). One type of discontinuity is when the flow of the lesson is interrupted with a comment irrelevant to the lesson ("Look at the figure involving the secant and tangent to the circle. It looks like a bird with a long beak. Let's apply the theorem to solve for the length of the tangent" p. 671). The other type of discontinuity involves an interruption with relevant information but at an inappropriate time ("In solving for the length of the tangent, we apply the second theorem. When we get to the third theorem, we won't have to deal with tangents to circles. Now, lets solve for the length of the tangent" p. 671). Smith and Cotten reported discontinuity to be negatively related to achievement but not to ratings of instruction. This body of research on transitions and discontinuity suggests that the use of internal connectors during presentations can be another means by which teachers can be more clear.

The most comprehensive program related to structure and clear teaching is explicit teaching (Rosenshine, 1987; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986). Based on extensive observation of effective teachers (measured by student gain scores in reading) and experimental studies, a number of recommended teaching functions were identified. It should be noted that these behaviors are recommended for those teaching areas that are well structured and contain specific steps of progression. These behaviors may be less relevant for the teaching of more implicit concepts such as philosophy or problem solving. For those teaching these types of subjects, it is recommended by Rosenshine that their students learn a the body of content knowledge which informs more implicit processes and that those student are afforded the opportunity to have extensive and varied practice with the content. For those teaching more structured and explicit content, the recommended teaching behaviors are listed below (Rosenshine, 1987, p.76).

Begin a lesson with a short statement of goals.

Begin a lesson with a short review of previous, prerequisite learning.

Present new material in small steps, with student practice after each step.

Give clear and detailed instructions and explanations.

Provide a high level of active practice for all students.

Ask many questions, check for student understanding, and obtain responses from all students.

Guide students during initial practice.

Provide systematic feedback and corrections.

Provide explicit instruction and practice for seatwork exercises and, when necessary, monitor students during seatwork.

Continue practice until students are independent and confident.

Several of these recommended behaviors are related to structure and clarity specifically. Beginning a lesson with a short statement of goals is conceptually similar

to providing an advance organizer, and reviewing previous learning is similar to a post organizer. Teaching in small steps structures the information into small chunks which ideally will be connected with appropriate transitions. When done effectively, it also assures that students understand the current topic before moving on to the next. If structured appropriately, this approach also will help instructors avoid discontinuity.

Although the benefits of providing structure are clear, their relationship with teacher clarity is less apparent. The importance of structure to clarity becomes important when its absence is considered. Without structure, a teacher may be immediate and verbally clear so that individual points are comprehended, but a context in which to assimilate those points is likely to be missing. Without structure, a teacher can stimulate much meaning in the minds of students, but that meaning quite likely may be fragmented, incomplete, or disorganized. Because this meaning is not completely likely to be the meaning the instructor desired to stimulate in students' minds, the instructor's teaching cannot be said to be clear.

The Clear Teacher

Clarity as defined in this review is a variable which represents the process by which teachers are able to effectively stimulate the desired meaning of course content in the minds of students through the use of appropriately-structured verbal and nonverbal messages. The review of the literature related to teacher clarity leads to the conclusion that a clear teacher, after gaining students' attention by being nonverbally immediate, (a) presents structured learning experiences complete with reviews, previews, and internal summaries, (b) stays on task at an appropriate pace, (c) speaks fluently, (d) provides examples, and (e) assesses students' understanding while presenting information. Though this might seem like a "laundry list" of behaviors and too much to include under the realm of one single construct, it presents a synthesis of effective behaviors related to enhanced teaching clarity that previously were fragmented and discussed independently of each other. When presented in this manner, the profile of a clear teacher becomes more complete and gains precision. For example, those interested in becoming more clear in their teaching could look at this profile, assess their strengths and weaknesses, and proceed to improve certain

aspects of their teaching with respect to clarity. For example, teachers could examine which clear teaching behaviors they practice and which their teaching lacks. Such information would enable teachers to strengthen their teaching by incorporating effective teaching behaviors that they may be lacking. The profile of the clear teacher is located in Table 1.

The behaviors said to contribute to teacher clarity are based on a strong theoretical foundation. Nonverbal immediacy functions to gain students' attention, thereby acting as a precursor to clarity by "opening the door" for clear teaching behaviors to function effectively. Once students are attending to messages, the use of reviews and previews helps to activate students' schemata (Minsky, 1975) which facilitates the integration of new information in long-term memory structures and stimulates the recall of information that already has been learned. Providing transitions enables students to attach one concept to another within their continually developing schema for the topic. These efforts also are aided by teacher behaviors of staying on task and pacing the presentation appropriately. By using relevant examples, teachers can further enable course material to be integrated into students' schemata. If examples are relevant to student experiences, they also may be linked to autobiographical memories, which are considered to be the most lasting types of memory (Baddeley, 1990). Taken together, this collection of behaviors is said to be clear teaching behaviors because they all help instructors stimulate the desired meaning in the minds of students.

Table 1
The Clear Teacher

Clarity	
Structured	**Verbally Clear**
Previews the main ideas of the presentation before beginning.	Does not overuse terms such as “uh,” “um,” or “like.”
Reviews the main ideas that have been discussed each day.	Explains material in a straightforward manner.
Explicitly states the way the next topic to be discussed is related, linked, or relevant to the topic currently being discussed.	Does not frequently drift on tangents not related to the course material.
Frequently stops to summarize ideas after a number of them have been discussed.	Encourages and effectively answers student questions to achieve clarity.
Explains the objectives of each unit.	Paces instruction such that students have time to comprehend each point or topic.
Visually displays and adheres to an outline of course content on the board or through some type of instructional media.	Employs examples with which students can identify and to which students can relate.
Provides skeletal outlines of course content with ample space to take notes and adheres to those outlines throughout the lecture.	

The profile of the clear teacher resulting from this review of literature is not necessarily exhaustive. Other variables also may relate to clear teaching directly. However, the variables which have been demonstrated by research to be significantly related to clarity are included and integrated into the profile. Worth noting is the fact that the relationships between many of the different clear teacher qualities have yet to be studied together. For example, until very recently (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1999a; 1999b) immediacy and clarity had not been studied together. Though they both contribute to student reports of affect and cognitive learning, they have not been systematically manipulated to test the assumption that immediacy is a necessary precursor for other clarity behaviors to be effective. Given the fact that immediacy may be a precursor to clarity as defined in this review, research into its relationship with clarity is warranted. Specifically the relationship between clarity and immediacy and a number of important instructional outcomes is worthy of further study.

Benefits of Clear Teaching

Student learning. As indicated throughout the review, clear teaching is linked to increased student achievement, and unclear teaching is linked to decreased student achievement (Alexander, Frankiewicz & Williams, 1979; Hines, Cruickshank, and Kennedy, 1985; Smith & Cotten, 1980; Smith & Land, 1981). Correlational evidence also indicates that students think they learn more when they are taught by clear teachers (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1999a). Research on immediacy or similar teacher behaviors has yielded similar results related to student achievement (Kelley & Gorham, 1988; Perry & Penner, 1990). Individually, clarity and immediacy both lead to desirable instructional outcomes. Furthermore, the benefit of both clear and

immediate teaching outweighs that of either behavior alone (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1999b). The hypothesis that immediacy itself is a dimension of teacher clarity, however, is yet to be tested. One way to examine this aspect of the definition of teacher clarity is to examine the differences in students' recall of information as a function different levels of immediacy among clear teachers. Based on the literature related to clarity and immediacy and the resulting profile of the clear teacher, the following hypotheses are warranted:

H1 : A combination of clear and immediate teaching will lead to significantly more recall of information than a combination of clear and nonimmediate teaching.

H2 : The combination of unclear and nonimmediate teaching will lead to the lowest amount of recalled information.

Reduced receiver apprehension. The study of receiver apprehension grew out of the study of oral communication apprehension. Recognizing that communication apprehension was being studied from a source perspective even though "we spend more of our time as receivers than sources," Wheeless (1975) began to focus on apprehension associated with the reception of messages (p. 261). He reasoned that the nature of fear or anxiety related to sending information was different from that of receiving information. Specifically, he conceptualized trait receiver apprehension as "the fear of misinterpreting, inadequately processing, and/or not being able to adjust psychologically to messages sent by others" (p. 263). Receiver apprehension involves an amount of anxiety associated with the decoding process. This anxiety may be in terms of listening competently, or a concern with having to listen to messages which psychologically are difficult for one to hear.

Ayres, Wilcox, and Ayres (1995) examined the effects of receiver, message, and situational variables on receiver apprehension. They found that individuals were more apprehensive receivers when information processing demand was greatest, when they were more motivated to listen to messages, and when they were going to be evaluated later. These findings are important within the context of the proposed study because they indicate that situational factors, such as teacher behaviors or message characteristics, can influence the extent to which students are apprehensive receivers. Evidence for the relationship between clear and immediate teaching and reduced student state receiver apprehension already exists. Chesebro and McCroskey (1999a; 1999b) reported that students of clear and immediate teachers reported experiencing less state receiver apprehension in actual and anticipated listening classroom situations. Based on this evidence, the following hypothesis is plausible:

H3 : Clear and immediate teaching will lower student state receiver apprehension.

Given the negative relationship between receiver apprehension and students' reports of their own learning, the following hypothesis is offered:

H4 : Student state receiver apprehension will be inversely related to student learning.

Student affect. Student affect is important to instruction as an intrinsic motivator (Rodriguez, Plax, & Kearney, 1996). It functions to guide students' involvement with a topic and sustain their interest in that topic. When students have positive affect for course material, they are likely to attend to it with greater energy

and will be more likely to study it and pursue it outside of the classroom. Positive relationships between student affect and a number of instructional variables have been reported, including student motivation (Rodriquez et al., 1996) and students' reports of their own learning (Christophel, 1990; Frymier, 1994; Richmond, 1990; Rodriguez et al., 1996). Positive relationships between student affect and teacher clarity (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1999a) and immediacy (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1999a; Christophel, 1990; Frymier,

1994; Richmond, 1990; Rodriguez et al., 1996) also have been reported. Given these findings, clear and immediate teaching should produce positive student affect.

H5 : Students of clear and immediate teachers will report significantly higher levels of positive affect for their instructor and the course material.

Chapter 2: Method

Participants

The participants were 192 students from West Virginia University. They were selected from large-lecture classes to participate in this study and randomly placed into one of four experimental conditions. In exchange for their participation, they were offered extra credit for their course. Participation was completely voluntary and students who chose to not participate had other options for securing extra credit in their classes.

Design

This study examined two independent variables, clarity and immediacy. These independent variables were manipulated in a 2 (high clarity versus low clarity) X 2 (high immediacy versus low immediacy) design. Each participant attended only one session and therefore was exposed to only one condition. The 6 dependent variables for this study are students' (a) factual, (b) conceptual, and (c) total recall of lecture information, (d) reports of receiver apprehension, and affect for the (e) instructor and (f) course material (refer to Table 2).

The manipulations of immediacy involved variations in eye contact, vocal variety, gesturing, and facial expressiveness. The more immediate instructor made sustained eye contact, spoke with vocal variety, enthusiasm, and emphasis in the appropriate places during the lecture, gestured moderately but not excessively, and used positive facial expressions (such as smiles) moderately and when appropriate.

Table 2

Independent and Dependent Variables

Independent Variables

	High Clarity	Low Clarity
High Immediacy	n = 46	n = 57
Low Immediacy	n = 50	n = 40

Dependent Variables

1. Factual recall
2. Conceptual recall
3. Total recall
4. State receiver apprehension
5. Affect toward instructor
6. Affect toward material

The combination of these behaviors resulted in a warm, relaxed, and friendly delivery that ischaracteristic of immediate teaching. The less immediate instructor made little contact and instead read heavily from lecture notes. The instructor's voice remained fairly monotonous. Additionally, very few gestures were used to emphasize points, and facial expressiveness was minimal. The sum of these behaviors resulted in a very stiff and non-immediate delivery and provided an effective contrast with the behaviors of the immediate instructor. These manipulations are consistent with the behaviors thought to comprise immediate teaching (McCroskey & Richmond, 1992) and are the same behaviors identified in the literature review as aspects of clear teaching (refer to Table 1).

The manipulations of teacher clarity involved variations in the ordering of topics, the transitions between main points, the use of previews and reviews, the extent to which information was presented visually (via PowerPoint), and the extent to which concepts were explained with verbal fluency and in a concrete manner. The clear teacher included a skeletal outline on PowerPoint slides throughout the presentation. The objectives and main points of the presentation were previewed before the teaching of the main points began. Movement from topic to topic was made explicit with transitions which connected the topics. After a topical area was covered, internal reviews were used to recap the information that was presented. The teacher also refrained from using vocal "fillers" such as "um." The result of these manipulations was a structured presentation with clear points and examples delivered by a teacher who spoke fluently. The unclear teacher did not use PowerPoint slides and did not preview the main points or objectives of the presentation. The topics were

not ordered in a logical way in that the points were somewhat "scattered" and did not follow smoothly from one to another. Internal summaries and transitions between topics were not used. Additionally, the instructor used several vocal fillers such as "um." The instructor used few examples to illustrate concepts and the examples that were used were theoretical and not practical and concrete. To control for the length of the unclear presentation, which may have been shorter due to the lack of previews, transitions, and reviews, additional concepts which are related to the topic but are not directly relevant to the presentation's objectives were added. The addition of this extra material helped even the lengths of the presentations (all presentations were within a minute's length of each other). The result of this manipulation was a presentation that lacked a visible structure, concrete examples, and internal transitions. This provided a sufficient contrast to the clear presentation. Furthermore, the manipulations of clarity are consistent with the characteristics of clear teachers outlined in the review (refer to Table 1). The specific differences between the clear and unclear presentations are outlined in Appendix 1.

Instruments

Learning. Student learning was measured by a quiz with both fill-in-the-blank recall and multiple choice questions. The quiz tested material in accordance with the presentation's objectives. Specifically, the quiz contained items on two general levels of cognitive complexity. Seven items were concerned mainly with factual recall while seven items tested more complex conceptual dimensions of the presentation. The use of different types of questions enabled an examination of two different ends of Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of the levels of complexity in cognitive processing. Rather

than testing each of the six levels, this study focused in general on the less complex recall of facts and the more complex use of concepts. While the differences between any two levels of the taxonomy may be difficult to identify, an identification of two general processing levels is feasible. The factual questions on the quiz tested for knowledge and comprehension while the conceptual questions tested more cognitively complex processes such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. After all of the quizzes were administered, they were randomly placed into one pile and graded without any knowledge of the experimental group in which they belonged. The objectives and quiz are provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Objectives & Quiz

Objectives

1. The students will be able to identify the four main parts of an argument. When given the definitions for the following terms, the students will be able to state them: data, warrant, reservation.

2. The students will be able to list the 4 types of claims.

3. Given an example of one of the types of claims, the students will be able to state which type of claim has been exemplified.

Quiz Questions

Factual Recall

1. A weakness in our argument is a _____ (reservation).

2. Beliefs held by our receivers that we use to support our arguments are _____ (data)

3. If someone says that you should go on spring break with them, they are making a(n) _____ claim? (advocative)

4-6 List 3 of the 4 types of claims (designative, definitive, evaluative, advocative).

7. If someone tells you that Titanic was a good film, they are making which type of claim? (evaluative)

Conceptual Recall

1. If one lawyer calls a person's self-defense and another lawyer calls those same actions murder, the lawyers are making what type of claim? (definitive)

2. In which type of claim do we not refer to past events specifically? (advocative)

Use the following argument to answer the next 2 questions: "People should buy Dell computers because computers help people do their work more quickly."

3. This argument would fail because of a weakness with the (a) claim; (b) warrant;

   (c) data. (b)

4. Which of the following would make the argument a better argument? saying: (a) "people should buy IBM computers"; (b) "computers have many uses"; (c) "Dell computers are very reputable and last a long time." (c)

Use the following argument for the next three questions: "Bill Clinton is honest because he has told the truth several times."

5. Which could be a reservation to the argument? (a) "Since Bill Clinton has told the truth before he is honest;" (b) Bill Clinton has lied a number of times also; (c) "also, several people can testify to examples of Bill Clinton's honesty;" (b)

6. Which could be a warrant in the argument? (a) "Since Bill Clinton has told the truth before he is honest;" (b) "Bill Clinton has lied a number of times also;" (c) "also, several people can testify to examples of Bill Clinton's honesty;" (a)

7. Which of the following is functioning as data in the argument? (a) "Bill Clinton has told the truth several times;" (b) "Bill Clinton is honest;" (c) "Bill Clinton has lied a number of times also" (a)

State receiver apprehension. State receiver apprehension during the learning process was measured using the A-State anxiety measure (Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene, 1968; cited in Beatty, Behnke , & Henderson, 1980). This 5 item Likert type instrument, which is sensitive to anxiety produced by a specific stimulus, was used to assess the extent to which students tend to feel anxiety when learning from a specific teacher. Subjects were instructed to indicate "how you felt when trying to learn information from the instructor on the video." This instrument was the first one completed and was filled out immediately after the lecture ended.

Student affect. Students' affect for 1) their teacher and 2) for the course subject matter were measured with a series of bipolar scales regularly used to assess student affect (Gorham, 1988; Richmond, 1990). The full scale employs 8 items to assess affect for the instructor and 8 items to assess affect for the course content. In reporting their affect for the instructor and course, participants complete 4 items which rate their current instructor/course and 4 items which rate their likelihood of taking the same instructor or a course with the same content again. In the present study, only half of the complete measure was used. Given the small amount of time the participants spent with the experimental instructor and course content, they were asked to answer items related to their present feelings for the instructor and content. However, they were not asked whether they would take the same instructor in another class or if they would take a course with similar content. As a result, participants completed 4 bipolar items related to their affect for their instructor (good/bad; valuable/worthless; unfair/fair; negative/positive) and 4 bipolar items related to their

affect for the course content (good/bad; valuable/worthless; unfair/fair; negative/positive).

Manipulation checks. To assess the effectiveness of the manipulations employed in the study, students completed two 7-point bipolar items related to the manipulation of clarity and immediacy. These items were completed after students completed the other measures. Short definitions of clarity and immediacy preceded the items. Immediacy was defined as "The degree of perceived physical or psychological closeness between people. We are closer to some people, or more immediate with them, than we are with others." The manipulation checks for immediacy are "immediate/non-immediate" and "unapproachable/approachable." Clarity of instruction was defined as "Clear teachers are able to get their information across so students can easily comprehend it." The items for clarity are "unclear/clear" and "understandable/not understandable."

Control for prior knowledge. Students also were asked about their prior knowledge of the lecture topic before they viewed it. Students responded on a 5-point, Likert-type scale about their prior knowledge of the material. They indicated how familiar with the material they were (1 = not familiar at all/ 5 = very familiar).

Materials

This study required the use of a variety of materials. First, two lectures were created (clear/unclear). Students were taught material on the nature of argumentation and the structure of arguments (McCroskey, 1997). This material was chosen for a number of reasons. First, it was unlikely that students would have encountered this material in any other classes at WVU or earlier in their high school careers. Second,

this material was relevant to the material taught in the course from which students were sampled (the material actually is taught at the end of the semester, but none of it was covered in the first 2/3 of the semester). This relevance is important in terms of validity because an experiment using this material helped approximate the actual conditions of one of the students' classes, rather than covering something they otherwise would not encounter in their college careers. Finally, this material was chosen because it is challenging and, in particular, necessitates clear teaching.

This study also required the use of equipment to record and display the presentation. A television was required to display each lecture to the participants. A camcorder was used to videotape each condition. A room with adequate lighting and the ability to project PowerPoint slideswas used to tape the manipulations. This experiment required the reservation of a room in which students could view the tapes. The use of videotaped presentations has a number of advantages over the use of a live instructor. First, it permits greater control of the manipulations. The videos can be prepared until the manipulations are effective, and the manipulations will remain consistent on repeated viewings. Furthermore, videos have been used for presentations of teacher behavior in previous research involving manipulations of immediacy-like behaviors (Perry & Penner, 1991). Finally, a master's-level teaching assistant in the Department of Communication Studies presented the information in the four conditions. This assistant was selected for his ability to teach with an immediate presence yet control nonverbal behavior to the extent that he also could be appropriately non-immediate.

Procedure

Students in a multi-section, large lecture class at WVU were offered an opportunity to earn extra course credit which involved their participation in a project related to their course. Specifically, students were told that the department is "pilot testing" the presentation of an instructional unit which is in the course presently but is being changed for future semesters. The students were asked to help evaluate the instructional unit by meeting outside of class one time for up to an hour. A number of times to participate were offered to the students so that all have an opportunity to participate. Students were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions listed in Table 2. To avoid the problem of intact groups, five sub-groups of participants in each condition were tested at different times, and the ordering of the groups was counterbalanced (refer to Table 4).

Table 4

Counterbalancing of Groups

	Wednesday	Thursday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
12 - 1	Group A	Group C	Group D	Group B	
1 - 2	Group B		Group C		Group D
2 - 3	Group C		Group A		Group B
3 - 4	Group D		Group B		Group A
4 - 5	Group B		Group A		Group C
5 - 6	Group D	Group A	Group C	Group D	

Once students were in the room, they were be issued the following set of instructions in a moderate to low-immediacy manner:

> We have asked for your assistance in helping us examine a particular unit of COMM 14. This will take about 40 minutes. We are working on some changes for this unit and would like to pilot test them with actual COMM 14 students. The unit you see here will be used in future semesters, so for this semester, you will be taught this information the way it has been taught in previous semesters. You will view a short video of an excerpt from this unit and then will be asked to take a short quiz on the material. Please note that the quiz is for our purposes only and will not affect your grade in this course in any way. You will receive full credit regardless of your score. After the quiz, you will fill out some questionnaires about the presentation of the material. Because we are testing this unit as a future COMM 14 unit, we ask that you treat this like any other COMM 14 unit. So if you usually take notes on material for quizzes, you may want to take notes for this quiz. Once again, thank you for helping us with this unit.

After this introduction, the students viewed one of the four videos (high clarity/high immediacy; high clarity/low immediacy, low clarity/high immediacy; low clarity/low immediacy). Nothing about the videos was mentioned other than that they are a presentation of a unit of COMM 14. After the video, students immediately completed the receiver apprehension and affect instruments and then were given 4 minutes to study the material. The participants then took the quiz with 14 questions. Following the quiz, students completed the manipulation checks and the other instruments. The students then were thanked for their participation and excused.

Chapter 3: Results

Preliminary Analyses

A number analyses were conducted before the hypotheses were tested. First, analyses of variance were conducted to test for outcome differences as a result of the order in which a given condition was administered. The analyses revealed that there were no differences in the recall of low level lecture material (F [4,189] = 1.63, p > .05), higher-level lecture material (F [4,189] = 1.12, p > .05), or in the total recall of all items (F [4,189] = 1.51, p > .05). There also were no differences in levels of receiver apprehension (F [4,184] = .49, p > .05) or for the amount of affect students had for the lecture material (F [4,187] = 1.31, p > .05) or the instructor (F [4,187] = .65,p > .05). These results indicate that the manipulation of clarity and immediacy was consistent regardless of the order in which a given condition was administered.

Analyses of variance also were conducted to test for differences resulting from the day on which conditions were administered. The analyses revealed that there were no differences in the recall of low level lecture material (F [4,189] = 2.18, p > .05), higher-level lecture material (F [4,189] = .98, p > .05), or in the total recall of all items (F [4,189] = 1.79, p > .05). There also were no differences in levels of receiver apprehension (F [4,184] = .43, p > .05) or for the amount of affect students had for the lecture material (F [4,187] = .92, p > .05) or for the instructor (F [4,187] = .62, p > .05). These results indicate that the day on which the conditions were administered did not affect the results.

Analyses of variance also were conducted to examine the extent to which the manipulations of clarity and immediacy were effective. The participants' reports of the manipulations of immediacy and clarity were reliable (immediacy = .81; clarity = .90), allowing for an examination of the mean differences in scores obtained from the measures. The ANOVA model for the manipulation of clarity was significant (F [1,189] = 90.48, $p < .0001$, r-squared = .32). The ANOVA model for the manipulation of immediacy also was significant (F [1,189] = 28.21, $p < .0001$, r-squared = .13). There were no interactions between clarity and immediacy for either of the manipulations. These results indicate that the manipulations of clarity and immediacy were effective. They also reveal that the manipulation of clarity was stronger and successful to an even greater degree than the manipulation of immediacy (32% variance accounted for by clarity versus 13% variance accounted for by immediacy). This finding may be explained, in part, by the fact that the 2-item self-report measure of the instructor's clarity was more reliable than the same type of report of the instructor's immediacy. In addition, an examination of the means for the immediacy manipulation reveals that although immediacy was manipulated successfully, the high and low levels of immediacy are not truly very high or very low. They actually are moderately high and moderately low. Nonetheless, the findings of significant effects for the manipulations indicate that analyses which test for the effects of clarity and immediacy are appropriate. The ANOVA results for the manipulation checks are located in Table 5 and the means and standard deviations for the manipulation checks are located in Table 6.

Table 5: ANOVA Results for the Manipulation Checks

Immediacy Manipulation	**IV**	**DF**	**F Value**	**Variance**
*	Immediacy	3,189	28.21	13%
	Clarity	3,189	3.32	
	Immediacy x Clarity	3,189	.37	
Clarity Manipulation				
***	Immediacy	3,189	6.25	2%
*	Clarity	3,189	90.48	32%
	Immediacy x Clarity	3,189	.03	

* = significant at the p < .001 level
** = significant at the p < .01level
*** = significant at the p < .05 level

Table 6: Means & Standard Deviations for the Manipulation Checks

Immediacy	**Clarity**	**n**	**Immediacy Manipulation**	
			Mean	**SD**
High		102	9.21	3.31
Low		88	6.87	2.94
	High	95	8.41	3.25
	Low	95	7.80	3.43
High	High	46	9.52	3.1
High	Low	56	8.96	3.48
Low	High	49	7.37	3.10
Low	Low	39	6.25	2.66
Immediacy	**Clarity**	**n**	**Clarity Manipulation**	
			Mean	**SD**
High		102	8.86	3.99
Low		88	8.17	3.54
	High	95	10.65	2.89
	Low	95	6.42	3.41
High	High	46	11.28	2.78
High	Low	56	6.86	3.74
Low	High	49	10.10	2.89
Low	Low	39	5.79	2.79

The Fmax test (Bruning & Kintz, 1977) was used to test for homogeneity of variance. The Fmax test is appropriate to use when examining the variability of experimental groups (Bruning & Kintz, 1977). The analyses, conducted at the $p < .05$ level, revealed that the variances were homogeneous for the recall of low level lecture material (Fmax [47] = 1.92), higher-level lecture material (Fmax [47] = 1.36), and for the total recall of all items (Fmax [46] = 2.33). There also were no differences in the variances of receiver apprehension (Fmax [46] = 2.09), the amount of affect students had for the lecture material (Fmax [46] = 2.43), or affect for the instructor (Fmax [46] = 2.05). Following from these results, the assumption of homogeneity of variance has been met, allowing ANOVA tests of significant main effects and interactions.

The final series of preliminary analyses examined the alpha reliabilities of the measures used in the study. These analyses indicate that most of the measures employed are sufficiently reliable to permit data analyses. These include the measures of state receiver apprehension (.92), affect for the instructor (.85), affect for the course material (.83), low-level recall (.85), and total recall (.80). The measure of high-level learning was not sufficiently reliable (.29). Given this result, the reliability of the measure of total recall must be called into question. Its reliability largely is a function of the reliability of the low-level learning items. Also, the fact that some items on the high-level learning quiz are free recall and some are multiple choice may have played a role in the instrument's poor performance. Although analyses involving the high-level learning instrument are examined later in the results section, the confidence with which the results are interpreted necessarily will be cautious. Aside from the high-level learning instrument however, the other instruments may be used with confidence.

Tests of Hypotheses

To test the hypotheses, a series of ANOVAs were conducted to examine the effects of clarity and immediacy on student learning, state receiver apprehension, and affect for the instructor and course material. The F statistics, significance levels, and variances accounted for are located in Table 7, and the means and standard deviations are reported in Table 8. Prior to examining the hypotheses, the participants' reports of their prior involvement with and knowledge of the subject material were entered into the models. The results of these analyses failed to reveal significant effects of prior knowledge on any of the outcomes being examined in this study. This enabled a confident examination of the effects of clarity and immediacy.

The first hypothesis predicted that a combination of clear and immediate teaching would lead to significantly more recall of information than a combination of clear and nonimmediate teaching. The analyses of the effect on the recall of low-level information revealed a significant model (F [3,189] = 70.19, p <.001, r-squared = .53) and a significant main effect for clarity (F [3,189] = 207.34, p <.0001, r-squared = .52). There was no significant effect for immediacy (F [3,189] = 0.00, p > .05) or for the interaction of clarity and immediacy (F [3,189] = .86, p > .05). The analysis of the effect on high-level learning revealed a significant model (F [3,189] = 7.87, p <.001) and a main effect for clarity (F [3,189] = 22.79, p <.0001, r-squared = .11). There was no significant effect for immediacy (F [3,189] = .12, p > .05) or for the interaction of clarity and immediacy (F [3,189] = .01, p > .05). Given the questionable reliability of the measure of total recall, analyses of the effects on total recall were not conducted. Had they been, the results would have been attributable to the low-level items, which are the only sufficiently reliable items on the measure. The results of the effects of

clarity and immediacy on low- and high-level learning do not support the first hypothesis. Instead, they indicate that clear teaching leads to greater recall than unclear teaching, regardless of the level of immediacy.

The second hypothesis predicted that the combination of unclear and nonimmediate teaching would lead to the lowest amount of recalled information. Given the observed main effect for clarity and the absence of a significant interaction between clarity and immediacy, this hypothesis is not supported. The extent to which the instructor was immediate was less important than the extent to which the instructor was clear. This is evident when examining the mean differences in Table 6.

The third hypothesis predicted that clear and immediate teaching would lower student state receiver apprehension. The analyses revealed a significant model (F [3,184] = 3.88, p <.05) and a significant main effect for clarity (F [3,184] = 11.18, p <.01, r-squared = .05). No significant effect was revealed for immediacy (F [3,184] = .10, p > .05) or for the interaction between clarity and immediacy (F [3,184] = .03, p > .05). Although these results do not support the hypothesis that the combination of clear and immediate teaching significantly lowers receiver apprehension, they do demonstrate the mild effect that clear teaching can have on the reduction of receiver apprehension.

The fourth hypothesis predicted that student state receiver apprehension will be inversely related to student learning. The relationships were assessed by examining the Pearson's correlation between state receiver apprehension and low- and high- level learning. The analyses revealed a significant negative relationship between receiver apprehension and low-level learning (r = -.22, p < .01, n = 185) and between receiver apprehension and high-level learning (r = -.15, p < .05, n = 185).

These results support the fourth hypothesis and indicate that receiver apprehension can interfere with successful learning.

The fifth hypothesis predicted that students of clear and immediate teachers would report significantly higher levels of positive affect for their instructor and the course material. The analyses of the effects on participants' reports of affect for the instructor revealed a significant model (F [3,187] = 18.7, p <.001, r-squared = .23), a significant main effect for clarity (F [3,187] = 32.88, p <.001, r-squared = .14), and a significant main effect for immediacy (F [3,187] = 28.11, p <.001, r-squared = .12). The interaction of clarity and immediacy did not have a significant effect on participants' affect for the instructor (F [3,187] = .30, p > .05). The analyses of the effects on participants' reports of affect for the course material revealed a significant model (F [3,187] = 10.72, p <.001, r-squared = .15), as well as significant main effects for clarity (F [3,187] = 29.29, p <.001, r-squared = .14) and immediacy (F [3,187] = 4.84, p <.05, r-squared = .02), The interaction between clarity and immediacy did not have a significant effect on students' affect for course material (F [3,187] = 0.00, p > .05). These results indicate that clear teaching and immediate teaching each can increase students' affect and that these effects are stronger for students' affect for the instructor than they are for students' affect for the course material.

Table 7: ANOVA Results

Low-level Learning	IV	DF	F Value	Variance
	Immediacy	3,189	0.00	
*	Clarity	3,189	207.34	52%
	Immediacy x Clarity	3,189	.86	-
High-level Learning				
	Immediacy	3,189	.12	-
*	Clarity	3,189	22.79	11%
	Immediacy x Clarity	3,189	.01	-
Receiver Apprehension				
	Immediacy	3,184	.10	-
**	Clarity	3,184	11.18	5%
	Immediacy x Clarity	3,184	.03	-
Affect-Instructor				
*	Immediacy	3,187	28.11	12%
*	Clarity	3,187	32.88	14%
	Immediacy x Clarity	3,187	.3	-
Affect-Course				
***	Immediacy	3,187	4.87	2%
*	Clarity	3,187	29.29	14%
	Immediacy x Clarity	3,187	0.00	-

* = significant at the p < .001 level
** = significant at the p < .01level
*** = significant at the p < .05 level

Table 8: Means & Standard Deviations

Immediacy	Clarity	n	Low-level Learning	
			Mean	**SD**
High	High	46	4.58	1.75
High	Low	56	1.23	1.79
Low	High	49	4.81	1.81
Low	Low	39	1.00	1.27
Immediacy	**Clarity**	**n**	**High-level Learning**	
			Mean	**SD**
High	High	46	3.67	1.44
High	Low	56	2.76	1.22
Low	High	49	3.75	1.33
Low	Low	39	2.82	1.27
Immediacy	**Clarity**	**n**	**Receiver Apprehension**	
			Mean	**SD**
High	High	45	10.57	4.81
High	Low	55	12.85	5.48
Low	High	47	10.23	3.76
Low	Low	38	12.73	4.95
Immediacy	**Clarity**	**n**	**Affect-Instructor**	
			Mean	**SD**
High	High	45	22.24	3.85
High	Low	56	18.08	5.53
Low	High	48	18.37	4.27
Low	Low	39	14.94	3.71
Immediacy	**Clarity**	**n**	**Affect-Course**	
			Mean	**SD**
High	High	45	21.88	4.46
High	Low	56	18.37	5.29
Low	High	48	20.43	3.67
Low	Low	39	17.00	3.45

Chapter 4: Discussion

This study examined the nature of teacher clarity by investigating the extent to which teacher immediacy is a necessary precursor to clear teaching. Though some of the specific hypotheses were not supported, this study has yielded useful information for teachers and instructional researchers. The combination of clarity and immediacy did not have the impact on instructional outcomes that was expected. It did not reduce students' state receiver apprehension or improve recall or affect. Instead, the results indicate very few effects for immediacy and several strong effects for clarity.

This study hypothesized that the combination of immediacy and clarity would lead to the most positive instructional outcomes. Clear teaching has been linked to improved student learning (Alexander, Frankiewicz, & Williams, 1979; Cruickshank & Kennedy, 1986; Smith & Land, 1981). In addition, years of research on immediacy have demonstrated its relationship with increased student affect, motivation, and perceptions of learning (Frymier, 1994; Richmond, 1990). Furthermore, immediacy has been shown to increase student learning (Gorham & Kelley, 1988; Perry & Penner, 1990). Because immediacy's effect is thought to be due in part to its ability to gain students' attention, it was thought that the combination of immediacy and clarity together would gain students' attention and enable students to process messages effectively. Furthermore, both immediacy and clarity have been cited as two of the most important variables in effective teaching (Rosenshine & Furst, 1971). The demonstrated importance of these behaviors led to the hypothesis that the combination of both would lead to greater outcomes than the absence of either.

Immediacy itself did not play a significant role in students' learning. It did have a positive effect on participants' affect for the instructor (12% variance accounted for) and for the course material (2% variance accounted for). These results may be a reflection of the relatively moderate manipulation of immediacy. Though it was manipulated significantly, participants did not consider the instructor to be highly immediate or highly nonimmediate. Instead, the instructor was considered moderately high or moderately low in immediacy. The manipulation of immediacy may have been weakened by the format used for the lecture. Few would argue that a television is as authentic or immediate as an actual instructor. Another possible explanation is that students' attention already was engaged due the novel settings of the learning environment. Students knew that the presentation would be brief and that they would be quizzed on the material. Furthermore, they were in a room with no windows and relatively few distractions. Although the directions were administered to students with a moderate level of immediacy at best, they may have felt obligated to pay attention. Given these factors, it is plausible that immediacy's effect on students' attention might have been diminished.

Although the role of immediacy in clear teaching was not supported by this study, the other aspects of clear teaching received strong and significant support. Clear teaching helped increase low-level learning (52% of the variance), high-level learning (11% of the variance), and affect for the instructor (14% of the variance) and for the course material (14% of the variance). It also helped reduce receiver apprehension (5% of the variance). In addition, the moderate or average levels of

instructor immediacy in this study suggest that clear teaching benefits teachers who may not be highly immediate. The significance of these effects and the magnitude of the effect sizes make a compelling argument for clear teaching as profiled in this study.

Remaining very consistent with the profile of the clear teacher discussed earlier in this study, the clear teacher in the experiment used previews, reviews, frequent summaries, and a visual outline (PowerPoint). The experimental clear teacher also stayed "on task," explained the information with concise and relevant examples, and paced instruction appropriately. In contrast, the experimentally unclear teacher used no reviews, previews, or visual outlines. Furthermore, the unclear teacher frequently discussed tangential information and discussed information in an out-of-order manner. Also, examples often were confusing or irrelevant. The results outlined above indicate that the clear teaching behaviors advocated in this study indeed are effective teaching behaviors that should be encouraged of all teachers. They enabled students to focus on the appropriate information, follow the instructor easily, develop an appropriate schema for the lecture material, and relate the material to their own experiences. Just as striking was the effect that a lack of these clear teaching behaviors had on students' performance. Students who viewed the unclear teacher were left to guess what they should write in their notes and what they should study for the quiz. Those interested in instruction should consider these results carefully. The series of clear teaching behaviors outlined in this study had a very meaningful impact on students' learning.

Given the televised format of the instruction in this study, the results also have several important implications for distance instruction which is mediated via television. The first implication is that it may be very difficulty to be highly immediate when teaching by TV. The instructor in this study was coached to be very immediate in a variety of ways and yet was only moderately-high in immediacy. To the extent that this finding is representative of televised distance education courses, instructors in these courses may be quite limited. While immediacy is a powerful tool in live classrooms, televizied instructors may not have it at their disposal. This suggests the even greater importance of teacher clarity in distance education settings. Although immediacy may be difficult to convey, both clear teaching and the absence of clear teaching do transfer to this format and play a significant role in student learning.

In addition to supporting the existing behaviors in the clear teacher profile, the results of this study also suggest several avenues worthy of future investigation. Given the power effect of clarity on students' learning, more research should explore this variable and its nature. Future component-analysis experiments may manipulate the various aspects of clear teaching to investigate whether some are more effective than the others. One aspect that is timely, given recent technological advancements and the popularity of presentation software such as PowerPoint, is the extent to which the visual display of the lecture outline significantly enhanced students' learning. An experiment comparing clear teaching both with and without this type of visual organization would be of interest to teachers both who do and do not favor the use of PowerPoint. Future studies also could investigate the relative merit of the use of previews, reviews, and transitions in terms of student learning. Perhaps one of these

is more vital than the others. Also, research in this area might help illustrate which types of previews, reviews, or transitions are most effective. In the area of verbal clarity, as defined in this study, research could examine the influence that examples have on learning, in terms of their relevance to students, the number used, and their placement within the lecture relative to the material they are attempting to clarify (e.g., before or after the concept). Research also could examine the pacing of instruction to determine the extent to which

it influences clear teaching. Research even could examine whether some types of tangents are more harmful in terms of student learning.

Student expectancies also could be studied in future research. Given that some of the possible explanations for the lack of an immediacy effect suggested that students expected to take a quiz or that they would pay attention because they knew the presentation was short, the nature of student expectancies is worthy of study. Research could vary various student expectancies involving the amount of time the session takes, what happens after the session, whether there will be a follow-up quiz, and even how easy or difficulty the material is to grasp. It is plausible that students' learning would be influenced by expectations such as these.

The findings regarding immediacy also suggest that more study on immediacy is warranted. Future experiments could manipulate immediacy in a variety of ways to test for its effects. This may involve more exaggerated behavior or more physical manipulations such as increasing the volume of the television when the immediate condition is being played. The television also could be moved physically closer to the audience when the immediate teacher is teaching. The manipulation of immediacy

with a live instructor would diminish experimental control but might be a necessary way to truly manipulate immediacy in an externally valid manner. Given the way in which the findings of the present study are not consistent with the majority of findings on immediacy, future study of immediacy in experimental settings is warranted.

This study could have been improved in a number of ways. As discussed, the manipulation of immediacy could have been more externally valid. In fact, it is important to point out that external validity would have been stronger if a live teacher had taught students in-person. Also, the use of an actual classroom setting would have improved validity. The measures used to assess student learning also could have been improved in this study. Although the measure of low-level learning was reliable, the measure of high-level learning was not reliable, and therefore, the complete measure of learning was not reliable. In future research, the instrument should be pilot tested with students who already have learned the material being taught in the experiment. In addition, the types of questions used to assess learning should be consistent. In other words, if free-recall questions are used to assess low-level learning, free-recall questions should be used to assess higher-level learning. It also is worth noting that the distinction between low- and high-level learning is problematic and there is likely to be uncertainty regarding differences between the two.

This study has made important contributions to the study of educational psychology and communication in the instructional process. It has provided a definition of clarity and helped strengthen that definition. It has provided a framework for further exploration of the construct. Clear teaching in this study was defined as a

variable which represents the process by which teachers are able to effectively stimulate the desired meaning of course content in the minds of students through the use of appropriately structured verbal and nonverbal messages. The impact that structure and verbal effectiveness had on students' learning supports this definition. This study demonstrated that clear teaching involves structure and verbal clarity. Furthermore, this study demonstrated the significant impact clarity has on learning while simultaneously illustrating the negative outcomes of unclear teaching. As a result, this study has provided researchers with several useful directions for future research. Most importantly though, this research illustrates to teachers the value of clear teaching and some of the means by which they can teach more clearly.

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Appendix A

The Lectures (in rough-outline form)

The Clear Lecture

Introduction:

1. Today we will revisit all of the arguments we have had with people in our lives and in doing so, we will examine the nature of arguments with some detail.

2. Specifically, we will be looking at the parts of arguments, including the claim, data, warrant, and reservations. Additionally, we will be looking very closely at types of claims people make (preview).

3. The objective in looking at this stuff is to be able to identify the different parts of arguments and name the different types of claims people make (objectives, more preview, and transition into a discussion of claims).

Body

I. We will start by looking at an argument's claim

-people make claims all the time; a claim simply is a belief we wish our receiver to accept; if we claim to a friend that they should go out to dinner with us, we are hoping that they accept what we say

-because we do make so many claims, it is important that we look at the different types of claims we make (transition)

II. Types of claims: as we look at these, I will use the example of a crime case to illustrate the types of claims that people make

-Designative claim: This is a claim that something did or did not happen; It is concerned with the factual matter of whether something happened; In a court case, the first thing that needs to be decided is "did the act occur?" In other words, "was someone killed," or "was something stolen."

-throughout the discussion of the types of claims, 2 examples were used: one of an event that is considered in a court case, & the other an example of missing property (students' CDs) & claims about those events.

-Definitive claim: This claim is concerned with what we should call something that did happen. In other words, how do we define it? In court, they need to decide if an act of killing someone was murder, manslaughter, or self-defense. In other words, they have to define what happened.

-ok, up until this point we have looked at designative claims which claim that something did or did not happen and definitive claims which are our attempts to put a label on what did happen, now we go to (internal summary)

-Evaluative claims: When we make an evaluative claim, we are evaluating something and deciding how good or bad, or favorable or unfavorable it is. In the court case, they argue about an act being a "proper act of self-defense" or a "horrible act of violence." Whenever we call something good or bad, we are making an evaluative claim.

-Advocative claims: When we make an advocative claim, we are advocating a future course of action. In other words, we are saying that something should or should not be done. In court, lawyers make these claims all the time when they say that a defendant should be convicted or acquitted. Again, advocative claims deal with what should be done in the future.

-Again, we have looked at four types of claims we frequently make: we often designate that something did or did not happen with a designative claim; define what happened with a definitive claim; evaluate how good or bad something is with an evaluative claim; or advocate what should be done in the future with an advocative claim (internal summary).

-Now that we have covered the concept of claims well, we will focus on how those claims are supported by looking at the concepts of data & warrant (transition).

III. Data: We often hear the term "back up what you say with data." In other words, we are used to the idea of supporting claims with data. Any receiver belief that we use to support our claim is considered data. Think of when you have used some kind of evidence to back up a claim: if your receiver did not believe the evidence you were using, you probably did not successfully back up your claim. Remember, when we use something our receiver believes to support our claim, we are using data.

-However, we must use the right data to support our claim. Our receivers may believe several things, like the fact that it may rain tomorrow, but not just any receiver belief like this can be used to back up a claim that your receivers should donate money. In other words, the data must match the claim (transition)

IV. Warrant: Receivers know this too. They look at arguments to see if the data and claim match well. Their judgement of the link between the data & claim is called the warrant. You may have heard the term an unwarranted claim. We call claims unwarranted when they are not supported well by data. So, for a claim to be warranted, the data that the receiver believes must link well to the claim you are trying to get the receiver to believe.

-now this can be difficult, and often our arguments have weak spots as a result (transition)

V. Reservation: These weaknesses are called reservations. You may lack enough data, or the data you have might not link well with the claim. You might have heard of someone having reservations about something. They are reserved because there are weaknesses at some point in the argument.

Conclusion

-Now when you argue with someone in the future you will have a greater understanding of how arguments are put together; their parts; and the types of claims that people make (summary)

> -If we call something good or bad it is an evaluative claim. We are evaluating something. We are evaluative by our nature. Look all around you and you will see people calling something good or bad. That's normal, it's just something we do.

-First order data is something the receiver already believes. This is good data to use because if we can say something that the receiver already believes, are argument will be a bit stronger. So, if first order data can be used, this should be the first resort. When I find myself trying to convince others, I try to use first order data. Keep in mind that it is good to start w/stuff the receiver already believes.

- Arguments contain claims. A claim is a belief we want our receiver to accept. We make claims all of the time. When we do this, we are trying to get people to accept what we are claiming. It often can be frustrating when we can't get someone to accept our claims. We may get into arguments, yell at each other. As a result, our relationships may suffer. (a considerable tangent about verbal fighting & argumentativeness, aggressiveness, & assertiveness) Anyway,

> -Sometimes we make claims about what something should be called. We may want to label something. This is a definitive claim. We are defining what something is. We are calling it something.

-Third order data should not be our first choice, because we will want to use other types of data. Third order data is stuff we bring in from outside sources. If the source of that data is bad, it won't help our argument. If we use third order data, we have more work to do because we have to get our listener to believe that data. If they believe that data, then we may be ok. However, their judgement of that data also depends on their judgement of us. If they don't like us, they probably won't like our data. So, we should try to use other data besides third order data. Besides, it's tough to get good third order data. It's hard to trust the sources of third order data. (extra information: related to the topic but not to the objectives: another considerable tangent about judging the source of external evidence)

-Tangential discussion of the Aristotelian & Toulminian views on the nature of argument.

-A warrant is our receiver's judgement of how well the data supports the claim. If the stuff our receiver believes is good enough to back up our claim, then the receiver will believe that the claim is warranted by the data. You want your argument to be warranted. You usually want your receivers to believe that their beliefs about the data support the claim. If an argument is not warranted, our receiver will not accept it. This may be as a result of the reservations but probably not because of the type of

claim. (the use of usually & sometimes functions as an annoying qualifier or hesitation). Remember, an argument should be warranted with effective data functioning as receiver beliefs (talking in circles & repeating stuff in a very confusing manner)

-When we make claims about what did or did not happen we are making designative claims. We are designating that something did or did not happen. If I tell you about an argument I was in, I am making a designative claim that I was in an argument.

-An advocative claim is when we tell someone what should happen in the future. If we want something to happen in the future and we express this to others, we are making this type of claim. We see politicians making these types of claims all of the time . . .(don't elaborate at all, just leave at that)

-Second order data involve our credibility as sources of the argument. If we are liked as a source or trusted, then that may be used as second order data. This is better than third order data because we may be able to convince our audience without relying on third order evidence. However, we can hurt our credibility if we rely too much on second order data. (extra information: related to the topic but not to the objectives)

-Weak spots in our arguments are called reservations. If you know an area in an argument where someone can "poke holes" through it, that probably is a reservation. They usually weaken an argument. It is frustrating when our arguments have reservations. I envy some politicians who always seem to be able to cover the weak spots in their arguments. Of course it is frustrating to see how they do it, but that's politics for you. (tangent). Another tangent about people who are exceptions to the rule (e.g., the smoker who lives forever).

-We use data to get receivers to accept our claim. Data are receiver beliefs that we use to support our claim. If the receiver believes what we are saying to support our claim, we can use that belief as data. (way out of order)

Hopefully this info. helps, arguing can be fun but frustrating. It all seems to boil down to what the receiver believes. Mainly, remember the fairly important stuff about the warrant.

--Note: The unclear presentation will include plenty of "um's" and other disfluencies (even when spoken in an immediate manner)

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Education

Degree	University	Major	Year
EdD	West Virginia University	Communication Studies/Educational Psychology Specialization: Interpersonal Communication, Persuasion, Listening, Teacher Clarity.	1999
MA	Ball State University	Speech Communication Specialization: Classical and Contemporary Rhetoric, Rhetorical Criticism.	1995
BS	State University of New York at Brockport	Communication	1994

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Teaching Experience * Denotes Graduate Courses

Course	Description	Dates
COM 12	Human Communication in the Interpersonal Context: Introduction to interpersonal communication with emphasis upon application of one-to-one communication in a variety of social contexts.	Fall 1998 Fall 1997 Spring 1997

COM 14	Human Communication in the Public Communication Context: Introduction to principles of communication in the one-to-many context.	Summer 1999 Spring 1999 Fall 1998 Spring 1998
COM 15	Presentational Speaking: Introduction to and application of principles of speaking in public. Emphasis on practical applications of speaking and those skills which are important to public speakers in contemporary organizations.	Spring 1999
COM 106	Nonverbal Communication: An examination of the effects of human nonverbal behavior on human communication. Emphasis on specific nonverbal behaviors including touch, time, environmental contexts, physical appearance cues, and social communication cues.	Fall 1997
COM 363*	Communication in the Educational Organization: Problems of communication within educational organizations with emphasis on elements that impact educational change, conflict management, and interpersonal influence. Recommended for elementary, secondary, and college teachers in all fields.	Summer 1999 Summer 1997
COM 375*	Communication Apprehension and Avoidance: Theory and research related to individuals' predispositional and situational tendencies to approach or avoid communication. Emphasis on work in the areas of willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, reticence, and shyness.	Summer 1998 Summer 1997
SPCH 210 (Ball State)	Fundamentals of Public Speaking: Instruction in the principles of public speaking with demonstration of understanding through several in-class speech presentations.	Spring 1995 Fall 1995

Administrative Experience

Course	Administrative Duties	Dates
COM 11	Duties include: Coordinating the instruction of 3 sections (300 students/section) and the efforts of 1 instructor, 3 graduate teaching assistants, and 6 undergraduate teaching assistants; Maintaining the course web page; Administering the tests for each section; and handling all registration and records duties.	Spring 1999 Fall 1998 Spring 1998

COM 14	Duties include: Coordinating the instruction of 3 sections (200 students/section) and the efforts of 3 instructors, 3 graduate teaching assistants, and 12 undergraduate teaching assistants; Constructing and administering the tests for each section; Maintaining the course web page; and handling all registration and records duties.	Fall 1998 Spring 1998
COM 361*	Duties include: Grading written homework assignments and essay tests.	Fall 1998

Instructional Design Experience

COM 14	Duties: In accordance with the department chair's preferences and under the direction of Dr. Steve Booth-Butterfield: selecting the content, shaping the assignments, and creating a workbook and instructor's manual for this service course taken by 600 students each semester.

Publications

Chesebro, J. L., & McCroskey, J. C. (In press). The development of the teacher clarity short inventory (TCSI) to measure clear teaching in the classroom. Communication Research Reports.

Chesebro, J. L. & Booth-Butterfield, S. (1998). Informing and persuading in public contexts. Acton, MA: Tapestry Press.

Martin, M. M., Chesebro, J. L., & Mottet, T. P. (1997). Students' perceptions of instructors' socio-communicative style and the influence on instructor credibility and situational motivation. Communication Research Reports, 14(4), 431-440.

Work Submitted for Publication

Chesebro, J. L. The relationship between receiver apprehension and listening styles. Submitted to Communication Research Reports.

Chesebro, J. L. Sexual attraction and intensification behavior in opposite-sex platonic friendships. Submitted to Communication Reports.

Chesebro, J. L., & McCroskey, J.C. The relationship of teacher clarity and immediacy with student state receiver apprehension, affect, and cognitive learning. Submitted to Communication Education.

Chesebro, J. L., & McCroskey, J. C. The relationship of teacher clarity and teacher immediacy with students' experiences of state receiver apprehension. Submitted to Communication Quarterly.

Professional Presentations

Chesebro, J. L., & McCroskey, J.C. (1999). The relationship of teacher clarity and immediacy with student state receiver apprehension, affect, and cognitive learning. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Communication Association, Charleston, WV.

Chesebro, J. L. (1998). The relationship between receiver apprehension and listening styles. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, New York, NY.

Chesebro, J. L. (1998). The relationship between listening styles and conversational sensitivity. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, New York, NY.

Chesebro, J. L. (1998). Sexual attraction and intensification behavior in opposite-Sex platonic friendships. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Communication Association, Saratoga Springs, NY.

Martin, M. M., Chesebro, J. L., & Mottet, T. P. (1997). Students' perceptions of instructors' socio-communicative style and the influence on instructor credibility and situational motivation. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL.

Chesebro, J. L. (1995). The identification of Susan Powter's Stop the Insanity! Paper presented at the 2nd Annual Huckleberry Graduate Communication Conference, Ball State University.

Chesebro, J. L. (1994). How films persuade us, using `JFK' as an example. Paper presented at the Annual Scholar's Day at the State University of New York at Brockport.

Work Submitted for Conference Presentation

Chesebro, J. L., & McCroskey, J. C. The relationship between teacher clarity and immediacy and student state receiver apprehension, affect and cognitive learning. Submitted to the Eastern Communication Association.

Chesebro, J. L., & McCroskey, J. C. The development of the teacher clarity short inventory (TCSI) to measure clear teaching in the classroom. Submitted to the Eastern Communication Association.

Professional Membership

National Communication Association

Eastern Communication Association

International Communication Association

International Listening Association