

The Relationship Between Teachers' Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviors and Students' Willingness to Speak in English in Central Taiwanese College Classrooms

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This study was designed to examine the relationship between teachers' verbal nonverbal immediacy behaviors and Taiwanese college students' willingness to speak in English in English classes. A sample of 386 participants was drawn from a cluster of four different institutions in Taichung City, the third largest city in Taiwan. The participants were asked to respond to instruments designed to measure the frequency of teachers' verbal nonverbal immediacy behaviors influencing students' willingness to speak in English classes. Spearman rho correlations were computed to answer the research questions proposed in this study. The results of this study indicated teachers' verbal immediacy behaviors were positively correlated at a statistically significant level with students' willingness to speak in English in English classes. Similarly, teachers' nonverbal immediacy behaviors were statistically significantly correlated with students' willingness to speak in English in the English classes. However, teachers employing verbal immediacy behaviors accounted for more variance in students' willingness to speak than did nonverbal immediacy or combining both verbal and nonverbal immediacy. The findings of this study reinforce the literature on the uniqueness of cultural implications for teachers' verbal and nonverbal immediacy, such as seen in Taiwan where teachers' immediacy is low.

Keywords: teacher immediacy, verbal immediacy behaviors, nonverbal immediacy behaviors, willingness to communicate

Introduction

A successful and effective English education that increases students' oral communication proficiency has become a major goal in universities in Taiwan (Chang, 2002). Increasing student participation is vital as Taiwan strives to make its English language education more effective while aiming for increased visibility and competitiveness on the world stage. Raising college students' English oral communication proficiency has become a high priority in English classes (Chang, 2002; Yuche & Stewart, 2001) where students' conversational abilities are developed.

Students' willingness to participate in the classroom is believed to be one of the most critical component in second language (L2) or foreign language (FL) acquisition (Hashimoto, 2002). Students' oral proficiency in the target language is also positively associated with their willingness to talk (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). Thus, the more the students are willing to talk, the better their communicative competence. Teachers are identified as a key factor in making learning effective (Nasr, Booth & Gillett, 1996), even more so in the Taiwanese English classroom where traditional cultural values place much emphasis on the role of the teacher (Chen & Chung, 2000). While many other factors could contribute to students' participation, teachers' verbal and nonverbal

immediacy behaviors are found to have significant correlations with students' willingness to participate in the class (Frymier & Weser, 2001; Lin, 2003; Martin et al., 2001).

Background of the Study

Since a great number of English teachers in Taiwan have experienced academic success in learning environments that were typically teacher-centered and relied heavily on lectures (Li, 2003), it is understandable that teachers' preferred teaching styles would be to repeat the techniques they had experienced as students. Research supports this concept and states that those teachers who have a tendency to model their teachers' teaching styles (Li, 2003; Savignon & Wang, 2003; Stitt-Gohdes, 2001) usually favor less student involvement and prefer a formal teaching method themselves (Pithers, 2001). However, it has been found that these formal teaching methods do not adequately stimulate a student's willingness to communicate in the classroom (Menzel & Carrell, 1999).

Taiwan is identified as a society strongly influenced by Confucianism and collectivism (Hofstede, 2001; Skow & Stephan, 2000). These traditional and cultural influences impact the educational realm, resulting in larger power distances in teacher-student relationships (Andersen, 2000), teacher-centered classrooms with little two-way communication (Hofstede, 2001), a high level of respect for hierarchy (Fwu & Wang, 2002), and face-saving concerns in the classroom (Hofstede, 2001). All of these are potential obstacles for effective English education. While cultural impact on teacher-student relationships has been reported in some studies (Fwu & Wang, 2002; Li, 2003), it is important to note that few studies have examined the impact of teachers' immediacy behaviors in relation to teacher-student relationships.

The particular interest in this study is to examine the relationship between teachers' verbal immediacy behaviors and nonverbal immediacy behaviors with Taiwanese college students' willingness to speak in English in central Taiwanese college classrooms.

Review of Literature

Teacher immediacy is defined as "nonverbal and verbal behaviors, which reduce physical and/or psychological distance between teachers and students" (Christophel & Gorham, 1995, p. 292). Nonverbal behaviors include using vocal expressions, smiling in the class, having eye contact with class members, and gesturing and moving around the classroom during teaching (Gorham, 1988; McCroskey, Richmond, Sallinen, Fayer & Barraclough, 1995). Verbal behaviors include using humor, addressing students by name, referring to the class as "our class," initiating conversations with students before or after the class, and encouraging students to ask questions and talk during the class (Gorham, 1988; Neuliep, 1995, 1997). Moore, Masterson, Christophel, and Shea (1996) note that the existence of teacher immediacy behaviors in the educational environment "in turn contributes to students' willingness to learn and their desire for continued education" (p. 38). Early research conducted in the field of education labeled these behaviors as "teacher enthusiasm" or "teacher expressiveness" (Abrami, Leventhal & Perry, 1982; Coats & Smidchens, 1966), while communication researchers have chosen to label them as "immediacy behaviors" (Andersen, 1979). Conversely, non-immediacy behaviors convey lack of enthusiasm and expressiveness, such as "low eye contact, a distal position, backward body lean, and the absence of smiling and touch, communicated

greater detachment” (Sanders & Wiseman, 1990, p. 342). Immediacy behaviors, both nonverbal and verbal, are considered to be highly effective teaching behaviors.

Willingness to communicate (WTC) is an affective variable that has impact on L2 and/or FL acquisition (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément & Donovan, 2002; MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei & Noels, 1998; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide & Shimizu, 2004). The notion of WTC was first introduced into the literature by McCroskey and Baer (1985) with reference to native language use and later adapted to L2 acquisition by MacIntyre and Clément (1996) signifying a learner’s preparedness to communicate using an L2 or FL. For this study, willingness to communicate is conceptualized as an individual’s “readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a special person or persons, using an L2” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547). Willingness to communicate, willingness to talk, and willingness to speak refer to the same concept in this study that underlines a face-to-face communication, or more specifically, using English in the classroom to ask or answer the questions and participating in the classroom activities. MacIntyre et al. (1998) constructed a heuristic model, suggesting twelve variables affecting one’s WTC in the L2 communication which are presented in a pyramid-shaped structure, including a mixture of situational and enduring influences. Many of the variables claiming to be influential in enhancing WTC are found to overlap with the positive effects of teachers’ verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors (Lin, 2003; Moore et al., 1996).

Cultural Origins of Unwillingness to Communicate

Taiwanese students’ unwillingness to communicate in the classroom is deeply rooted in and affected by traditional cultural values. These values shape the students’ perception of the relationship between oneself and others and their ways of learning (Wen & Clément, 2003). Taiwan is strongly influenced by Confucianism in social and educational realms (Chen & Chung, 2000; Fwu & Wang, 2002; Shuter, 2000). Traditional cultural values have placed great emphasis on submission to authority, which influenced teachers to embrace a large power distance in teacher-student relationships and reinforced their preference for a teacher-centered classroom (Li, 2003). One expression of this in students’ behaviors can be observed in students’ over-concern with losing face (Liu, 2001) and their strong desire for group acceptance (Li, 2003). The tendency of power distance, teacher-centeredness, and face protection is discussed below.

Power Distance

Teachers in Taiwan are highly respected due to the Chinese cultural tradition and values that lie within Confucianism (Fwu & Wang, 2002; Yang & Cheng, 1987). The hierarchical relationship among people is stressed in the teaching of Confucius (Hofstede & Bond, 1988). This, in turn, is demonstrated in the educational setting with classrooms being authority-centered and by the existence of a large power distance between the teacher and the students (Andersen, 2000). In addition, the status of teachers is distinctly higher than that of students (Fwu & Wang, 2002). Because of teacher status, students will defer to the teachers and will not feel comfortable asking questions or otherwise challenging their authority. Teachers’ exhibiting a distant relationship with students is common in the Taiwanese classroom (Gao, 1997; Li, 2003).

Teacher-Centeredness

Influences of Confucianism are also apparent in the teachers’ ways of teaching (Savignon & Wang, 2003) and students’ views of learning in Taiwan (Yu, 2004). In a teacher-centered classroom, the teacher controls much of the communication (Skow &

Stephan, 2000). Under Confucian influence, teacher-centered education is stated as: "Above all, the fundamental concept among Asian people is that education is not anything to be acquired or to be learned by students, but something to be taught by teachers" (Kuroda, 1986, p.16). The teacher is considered to be the authority, a learned scholar with absolute knowledge (Fwu & Wang, 2002; Kuroda, 1986; Wen & Clément, 2003). A submissive way of learning is formed by these expectations that are placed on the teacher's role in the classroom. Confucianism shapes the students' cultural values, thus affecting their perceptions and ways of learning. Culture in Taiwan places a great emphasis on obedience and proper conduct of the student, therefore causing students to be quiet in class as a sign of respect for the teacher (Boyle, 2000; Li, 2003). An extended effect derived from this cultural emphasis on the roles of students is shown in a tendency toward students' reluctance to actively engage in the class (Li, 2003).

Face Protection

The concept of *face* in cultures where Confucianism has an influence has brought a negative effect in establishing an interactive atmosphere for English learning (Li, 2003; Wen & Clément, 2003). Due to the concern of losing face, Taiwanese students only engage in speech when they feel comfortable and run no risk of losing face in the presence of significant others. Some Taiwanese students who were interviewed in a study by WikEd (2005) said their reticence in responding and being involved during English class was not only to assure themselves of not losing face, but also for the sake of teachers' face-saving. The WikEd study implies that asking the teacher a question may be viewed as challenging authority and might potentially cause teachers to lose face if they do not know the answer. Therefore, students prefer to keep silent in class to ensure mistake-free conduct, thus saving face.

The following two research questions were posed.

RQ1: What is the relationship between teachers' verbal immediacy behaviors and Taiwanese students' willingness to speak in English in the classroom?

RQ2: What is the relationship between teachers' nonverbal immediacy behaviors and Taiwanese students' willingness to speak in English in the classroom?

Method

Sample and Procedures

The 386 participants from a four-year undergraduate program (190 sophomore, 153 junior, 43 senior) were drawn from a cluster of four different category types of institutions (national university accounted for 22.7% of respondents, 16.4% for private university, 26.3% for national technology, 34.6% for private technology) in Taichung City. In order to avoid data collection problems or potential bias, the researcher used the technique introduced by Plax, Kearney, McCroskey and Richmond (1986). This technique surveyed the students' input regarding the teacher of the most recent course they have completed. All subjects participated in this study during October 2005, one month after the fall semester started. Subjects were asked to answer the measurement questions based upon one of their English classes in the previous school term. Because freshmen did not fit in this category, they were excluded. The participants were assured of confidentiality; code numbers were employed to guarantee anonymity.

Measurement

Three self-report scales with satisfactory reliabilities were utilized; they are: Willingness to Talk in Class Scale (Menzel & Carrell, 1999), Verbal Immediacy Behavior Scale (Gorham, 1988), and Nonverbal Immediacy Behavior Scale (Richmond, Gorham & McCroskey, 1987). These three instruments were scored on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1(never) to 5 (very often). To avoid any misinterpretation due to the lack of English proficiency from the participants, all three instruments were translated into Chinese by utilizing the following three techniques to validate the translation of the instruments.

First, consultation with other experts who are bilingual during the process of translation involved discussion and decision about the best term to use in Chinese translation (Birbili, 2000). Second, back translation technique (Werner & Campbell, 1970) was used to look for equivalents through the translation of items from English to Chinese, and then an independent translation from Chinese back into English was utilized. The final stage of back translation was to compare the two versions eliminating ambiguities or discrepancies in meaning (Ercikan, 1998). Third, a pilot study (pre-test) of the research instrument was administered to a small group of volunteers who share similar characteristics with the target population (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Volunteer participants not only were asked to give their answers but also their interpretation of each item's meaning to advance the clarity of the Chinese translation.

Willingness to Talk in Class Scale, consisting of 19 questions, was first constructed by Christensen, Curley, Marquez and Menzel (1995), and later utilized by Menzel and Carrell (1999) with satisfactory reliability, .92 for the Cronbach's alpha. The questions directly related to students' willingness to participate in the classroom, e.g., individual variables, such as interest in class or topic, motivation, similarity to other classmates' viewpoints, similarity to the teacher; and classroom variables, such as seating arrangement. Reliability for this present study, as indicated by Cronbach's alpha, was .921

Verbal Immediacy Behavior Scale, developed by Gorham (1988), consisted of 17 items and has demonstrated consistently high reliability of .83 to .94. This scale was a low-inference measure with a reference base consistent for all students, regardless of the subject matter being studied or the culture of the student (McCroskey, Sallinen, Fayer, Richmond & Barraclough, 1996). It provided the respondent with items that described individual verbal immediacy behaviors (e.g., "asks questions or encourages students to talk") and asked the respondent to indicate which of five response options best described the teacher: never=1, rarely=2, occasionally=3, often=4, and very often=5. Item 11 "Calls on students to answer questions even if they have not indicated that they want to talk" was considered to be non-immediate, so coding was reversed before summing. Item 2, 3, 4, and 12 have been reworded, and minor changes have been made in the Chinese translation for a better understanding of the questions while employing back-translation. The reliability indicated in this current study was .855 for the Cronbach's alpha.

Nonverbal Immediacy Behavior Scale, developed by Richmond et al. (1987), consisting of 14 items, was adopted to measure teachers' nonverbal behaviors, with an estimated reliability ranging from .73 to .89. Some studies omitted 4 items (item 1, 7, 9, and 11) in this scale that related to sitting, standing, and touching while teaching with an explanation that these behaviors were poor items to predict teacher immediacy in the

western educational setting (McCroskey et al., 1996). However, previous research indicated that body position and distance between seating were extremely communicative and had significant impact on interpersonal relationship (Egan, 2002). For this reason, all 14 items of this scale were administered for this present study. The researcher accepted the suggestion from the panel of experts (comprised of two native Chinese speakers, one bilingual English teaching expert, and another professional ESL expert) to add one explanation to item 7, “such as patting on the shoulder, shaking hands, etc.,” following the question, “Touch students in the class.” Item 6 was reworded in the Chinese translation after employing back-translation. Items 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, and 11 were presumed to be non-immediate. They were reverse coded before summing. The Cronbach’s alpha value showed in this study was .777.

Data Analysis

The data was summarized and analyzed by utilizing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 14.0 for Windows. A five-point scale used in this study is considered as an ordinal scale (Muijs, 2004; Patten, 2001). The median for each variable is presented to describe its average. The interquartile range describes the range of value for the middle 50 percent of the scores in a distribution (Kiess, 2002). Spearman rho correlations were computed to determine the relationship (Kiess, 2002) among teachers’ verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors and students’ willingness to speak in English in the classroom. All statistical tests were conducted at a .01 level of significance (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

Results

Correlations Between Verbal Immediacy and WTC

Spearman rho correlations were obtained both on summed scores and separate examination of individual teachers’ verbal immediacy behaviors. The findings indicated that teachers’ verbal immediacy behaviors were significantly correlated with students’ willingness to talk in English in English classes ($r_s = .451$; $p < .01$). All 17 items of teachers’ verbal immediacy behaviors showed a statistically significant relationship with students’ willingness to talk. “Calls on students to answer questions even if they have not indicated that they want to talk,” was the only behavior negatively correlated with students’ willingness to talk ($r_s = -.238$; $p < .01$), while the remainder of verbal immediacy behaviors showed a significant positive relationship. Five verbal immediacy behaviors accounted for above 10% variance in WTC. The strongest correlation was indicated for teachers “providing feedback on students’ work ($r_s = .415$; $p < .01$),” followed by “Asks questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions ($r_s = .380$; $p < .01$), “Praise students’ work, actions or comments ($r_s = .368$; $p < .01$), “Uses humor in class ($r_s = .359$; $p < .01$)” and “Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn’t seem to be part of his/her lecture plan,” ($r_s = .329$; $p < .01$). In comparison to some immediacy verbal behaviors that tended to be more student-centered, a significant positive correlation was found and also accounted more variance than the teacher-centered approach. For example, “Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up,” and “Asks questions to lead students to solicit viewpoints,” are more student-centered approaches than “calling on the students to answer the questions,” ($r_s = .259$; $p < .01$) or “using teachers’ own experiences as examples,” ($r_s = .265$; $p < .01$).

Correlations Between Nonverbal Immediacy and WTC

Spearman rho correlations were obtained both on summed score and separate examination of individual teachers' nonverbal immediacy behaviors. The results indicated that the relationship between teachers' nonverbal immediacy behaviors and students' willingness to talk in class was significant and positively associated ($r_s = .308$; $p < .01$). Out of 14 items of teacher nonverbal immediacy behaviors, four particular behaviors were seen as non-immediate behaviors (Richmond et al., 1987) and found to not correlate with students' WTC, these behaviors are "sit behind the desk," "sit in a chair," "look at board or notes," and "stand behind the podium." "Move around the classroom while teaching" was shown to have a significant positive relationship with students' WTC ($r_s = .229$; $p < .01$), and it shared the variance with 5.2% in WTC. "Touch students in the class, such as patting on shoulder, shaking hands, etc.," showed a significant positive relationship, ($r_s = .228$; $p < .01$), explaining a 5.2 % variance in that relationship. Teachers' gestures, smiling, and eye contact while teaching shared approximately 6 to 7% of variance in WTC, whereas teachers' relaxed body position shared 10.6 % variance in students' WTC ($r_s = .326$; $p < .01$).

Correlations Between Teacher Immediacy and WTC

In order to find out if students' WTC correlation coefficient were higher with teachers employing an overall teacher immediacy (including verbal and nonverbal immediacy) than with the verbal or nonverbal immediacy alone, another correlation test was computed. The results indicate that total teacher immediacy (verbal and nonverbal) had a significant positive relationship ($r_s = .448$; $p < .01$), explaining 20% of the variance in WTC. However, teachers employing verbal immediacy behaviors accounted for slightly higher variance ($r_s = .451$; $p < .01$) than combining both verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors in students' WTC.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between teachers' verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors and students' willingness to speak in English in central Taiwanese college classrooms. The results indicated that Taiwanese college students' willingness to talk in English in the English classes was associated with teachers' immediacy behaviors. When teachers demonstrate these verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors, students' WTC was likely to increase. The correlation results revealed that teachers' verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors were both positively related to students' willingness to talk in English in Taiwanese classrooms. Verbal immediacy accounted for more variance in students' WTC than did nonverbal immediacy alone or combining both verbal and nonverbal immediacy.

Verbal Immediacy and WTC

Each teacher's verbal immediacy behavior was correlated at a statistically significant level with students' willingness to talk. The strongest correlation was shown when teachers gave feedback on students' work ($r_s = .415$; $p < .01$). This finding was consistent with students engaging in more talk if they were graded on participation. Taiwanese college students' learning relies on teachers' initiation and is driven by degree pursuit (Hofstede, 2001). In addition, teachers are respected as learned scholars with absolute knowledge (Fwu & Wang, 2002; Wen & Clément, 2003). Providing feedback to students' work through written comments or oral discussion is seen as a direct

approach that demonstrates teachers' knowledge and motivates students' learning (Brown, 2000). The lack of feedback indicates a weakness in the teachers' expertise. Since the reward or punishment aspects of grading motivate students, their expectation on teachers' feedback is relatively high. Therefore, when teachers fail to meet the students' expectation, the students' disappointment develops, and they respond with unwillingness to speak English in the classroom.

A strong tendency of teacher-centeredness was revealed in teachers' directing the classroom communication by calling students to answer questions, and not by facilitating students to ask questions. This particular verbal immediacy behavior was found to be used the most in Taiwanese college English classes (74%). The large power distance maintained in teacher-student relationship was also obvious. Students indicated that only 16% of their teachers would initiate conversation with them before or after class. During the class, Taiwanese teachers seemed to be more open to student input. Over 50% of students responded that their teachers would ask them how they felt about an assignment, due date or discussion topic during the class. However, less than 30% of students responded that their teachers would invite them to meet outside of the class for any discussion. An unequal relationship between Taiwanese teachers and students was also indicated by a high percentage of students responding that they "never" or "rarely" called their teachers by their first names (60.2%). However, a statistically positive relationship was revealed between students' WTC and by calling teachers by first name. Calling the teachers' by their first names is an indication of an equal position in relationship rather than a hierarchical relationship as emphasized in Confucianism (Fwu & Wang, 2002). The result seems to reasonably reflect the Confucianism influence in the educational realm in which the teacher is superior to the students creating a formal and distant relationship (Hofstede, 2001).

Nonverbal Immediacy and WTC

Four teachers' nonverbal immediacy behaviors which were seen as non-immediate behaviors—"sit behind desk," "sit on a desk or in a chair," "look at board or notes," and "sit behind podium,"—were found not statistically significant in relation to students' willingness to talk in this study. This explained why some studies removed these items when predicting the relationship between teachers' immediacy and students' learning (McCroskey et al., 1995; Lin, 2003). Nevertheless, three additional nonverbal immediacy behaviors—"use monotone or dull voice," "have a tense body position," and "touch students in the class,"—which were also seen as non-immediate behaviors in some studies (Gorham, 1988; McCroskey et al., 1995; Lin, 2003) showed a statistically significant correlation with students' willingness to talk in this study. Therefore, it would be questionable to conclude all non-immediate nonverbal behavior would not contribute to student's willingness to talk in a Taiwanese context.

Taiwanese college students did benefit from teachers' immediacy nonverbal behaviors that symbolized approachableness and availability. Taiwanese college students responded that they would be more willing to participate in talking in English classes if they felt closer in relationship to teachers. The data also revealed that teachers' movement in the classroom was significantly and positively correlated with students' willingness to talk ($r_s = .229$; $p < .01$). Taiwanese college students' willingness to talk in English in English classes was positively correlated at a statistically significant level with teachers' shaking hands with them and patting them on the shoulders. The

tradition of little physical contact in social settings is well preserved in the society where Confucianism is stressed (Hofstede, 2001). Lin's study (2003) purposely removed this particular teacher nonverbal immediacy behavior because of inappropriateness in the Taiwanese context. However, this study gives a new perspective, indicating that shaking hands with students and patting them on the shoulders to indicate warmth and friendliness are more than acceptable to Taiwanese college students and effective at enhancing their willingness to participate in the classroom. This result may derive from the western influence brought to Taiwan over these past few years. What might have seemed inappropriate before is appropriate today due to the changes of thought and influences from western customs.

Implications

The results of this study suggest Taiwanese English teachers should use more verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors to establish rapport with students and, in turn, increase students' WTC in classes. Taiwanese college students tend to participate more when they are closer in proximity to the teacher and when they feel less of a threat of losing face. Therefore, teachers should rotate students' seating regularly, initiate more classroom activities in small groups, give students adequate time to prepare for discussion, avoid controversial topics that might hamper their willingness to talk, direct positive group cohesiveness, and create an active atmosphere to enhance their willingness to talk in the classes.

The results of this study suggest Taiwanese English teachers should avoid one-way communication or dominating classroom communication by exhibiting a large power distance. Instead, they should show more concern about students' thoughts and demonstrate an interest in them, convey more warmth, friendliness, and care for students through touching, such as shaking hands with students and patting them on their shoulders, which will actually increase students' willingness to talk in English classes. Taiwanese English teachers should also provide immediate feedback to students' work through written comment or oral discussion that contributes meaningfully to students' motivation of learning and willingness to talk.

Future Research

Future research should consider identifying and contrasting the impact of gender and age on teachers' verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors in cultures where Confucianism and collectivism have an influence. Do male teachers maintain a larger power distance than female teachers, and will that further impede male teachers from employing verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors? Will teachers of different ages demonstrate different level of verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors?

In addition, future research should examine the other variables besides teachers' verbal and nonverbal immediacy that might contribute to students' willingness to talk. For example, will teachers' dress, formal or casual, make any difference to students' classroom participation? Will wearing a tie for male teachers or wearing make-up for female teachers influence students' willingness to talk? Lastly, future research should be replicated in other Asian countries that are also under the influence of Confucianism and collectivism, such as South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, and China, to see if similar results can be found in these countries.

Conclusion

Considering the results of this study and previous literature on the importance of the teachers' role in enhancing Taiwanese college students' willingness to talk in English classes (Li, 2003; Lin, 2003), it was found that employing teacher's verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors significantly enhances students' WTC in Taiwan. In a less immediate culture, such as Taiwan (Andersen, 2000), where expectations for teachers' immediacy is low but the impact of immediate teachers in contrast to non-immediate teachers is comparatively larger, teachers' rigid figures dissolved and a rapport was established between teacher and student. When teachers employ more verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors, distance is shortened between the teacher and students and closeness is enhanced. Moreover, it results in positive effects on students' willingness toward classroom participation. Therefore, English teachers should use more verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors while teaching.

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