

MEDIATED IMMEDIACY A Language of Affiliation in a Technological Age

PATRICK B. O'SULLIVAN

STEPHEN K. HUNT

LANCE R. LIPPERT

Illinois State University

Evidence shows that computer-mediated communication has the potential to be used in ways that are important for relationship initiation, development, and maintenance. We know less about the communication practices that individuals use within various mediated channels. This article describes a series of studies addressing mediated forms of immediacy. Specifically, the research examines the various ways that individuals can foster psychological closeness via computer-mediated communication and older communication channels, and the relationship of those activities to outcomes in educational settings. Implications of this research are discussed for mediated communication practices as well as theory development.

Keywords: *distance education; immediacy; computer-mediated communication; interpersonal affiliation*

As in other areas of social interaction, technology presents a dual-edged sword in educational settings. An increasing number of college teachers are incorporating new communication technologies into their instruction. Accompanying the diffusion of social technology in teaching, important problems in student reactions have occurred. More than 40% of college courses include Web resources as a course component as of 2000. Approximately 84% of 4-year colleges were expected to offer distance-learning courses in 2002, up from 62% in 1998 (Report of the Web-Based Education Commission, 2000). The World Wide Web is the fastest growing instructional medium in higher education today (LaRose & Whitten, 2000), and technology-intensive "hybrid" courses (incorporating both on-site and online elements) and distance educa-

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464

tion courses are becoming more common throughout higher education. Despite the promise of new communication technologies to improve teaching and learning, progress in developing well-informed, appropriate, and effective applications of technology has been slow and inconsistent (see Boshier et al., 1997). Low student involvement and motivation have been cited as one of the drawbacks of technology-intensive instruction (LaRose & Whitten, 2000). Many students report low involvement and a high sense of isolation in these courses, which may contribute to relatively high drop-out rates (Anderson, 1996; Pipes & Wilson, 1996). One of the most significant design issues facing technology-intensive courses around the social aspects of learning via communication technologies. Students and instructors who spend little time outside the lecture hall or communicate primarily via mediated communication channels may struggle to establish positive relationships that can be important for student motivation and their perceptions of instructors.

These issues in educational technologies parallel long-standing concerns about the perceived limitations of computer-mediated communication (CMC) for social interactions, which have attracted researchers' attention for several decades. Early views of CMC were that its impersonal nature made it effective only for information exchanges and ineffective and inappropriate for social and relational interactions. Later research has established that CMC could be used effectively for personal relationships. Scholars have recently turned their attention to understanding the communication practices that contribute to effective CMC use in social and personal relationships.

This project contributes to this line of scholarship by focusing on the role of mediated immediacy cues as a language of affiliation. Specifically, we present results of three studies of technology use in educational applications that identify mediated forms of immediacy and then examine their influence on student perceptions of course and instructor. First, we embed this scholarship in the larger context of social uses of communication technologies. After detailing each of the studies of mediated immediacy in educational settings, we then identify how the findings contribute to the literature on social uses of communication technologies.

CMC: FROM EFFICIENCY TO AFFILIATION

One of the more significant social developments in recent history has been the rapid diffusion and widespread use of CMC in industrialized countries around the globe. This expansion in communication technology use emerged first in the military and the workplace as managers invested in various CMC systems (primarily text-based messaging systems) in an effort to increase business efficiency.

Scholars noticed these trends and began to examine the role and consequences of these newer forms of mediated communication in the corporate world. These early observations of initial applications for text-based messaging systems with largely novice users in the distinctive context of the workplace generated findings and explanations that laid the foundation for CMC research to come.

That foundation included a number of generalizations about the nature of CMC in human communication.¹ One was that CMC, by its nature as an asynchronous, text-based system that displayed messages on a computer screen, was devoid of nonverbal signals (e.g., Sproull & Kiesler, 1986). When these social cues transmitted nonverbally are filtered out of messages, the emotional content is also stripped. When compared to face-to-face, CMC was considered inferior in conveying elements of interaction considered essential for developing and maintaining relationships, which depended heavily on nonverbal communication and co-presence (e.g., Lea & Spears, 1995). Thus, the conventional wisdom was that CMC was ineffective and inappropriate for anything other than clear, unequivocal information exchanges (e.g., Daft & Lengel, 1986). When other scholars encountered significant amounts of social interaction being exchanged via CMC in organizations and other contexts, that phenomenon was considered surprising and remarkable (Rice & Love, 1987).

The conditions that bounded those early conclusions about the impersonalness of CMC were dynamic, however. A small number of scholars noted these trends in the 1990s and expanded their inquiries beyond the workplace into social uses of CMC. In effect, they opened a new area of inquiry that had been largely overlooked in the interpersonal communication literature: mediated interpersonal communication. This area of study bridged traditional interpersonal communication scholarship, with its focus on verbal and nonverbal communication in face-to-face dyads (often in relationships), and scholarship on communication technologies (including early work in organizational CMC).

This scholarship slowly but steadily began to challenge the early generalizations of workplace CMC scholars. Researchers found that CMC could be used effectively to initiate, develop, and maintain relationships that were comparable in intimacy and richness to conventional face-to-face relationships (e.g., Parks & Floyd, 1996; Walther & Burgoon, 1992). The research thus indicated that the prevailing generalizations about CMC in organizations would require revisions when scholars examined social and relational uses of CMC outside the workplace. Lea and Spears (1995) argued that the findings were convincing enough to merit a comprehensive revision of what we think we know about conventional relationships conducted primarily via face-to-face communication. Documentation of widespread and successful relationships based on CMC suggested that elements long considered

essential for anything labeled a relationship (e.g., conventional nonverbals, co-presence, frequent interaction) may not be as indispensable as scholars had assumed, they said.

A subtheme of some of the scholarship on social uses for interpersonal CMC was a shift in focus away from the technology hardware and toward communication practices as the key to understanding CMC's role in society. Early organizational communication research looked to a technology's characteristics to explain outcomes associated with the technology. For example, the "cues filtered out" approach (Culnan & Markus, 1987) emerged from observations that text-based CMC filters out conventional social cues available in face-to-face interaction, such as voice intonation, gestures, and facial expressions. Similarly, the media richness approach is based on evaluating various communication technologies' characteristics (e.g., multiplicity of cue systems, the availability of immediate feedback, message personalization, and natural language or language variety) to assess a medium's richness (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Media that rate high on the relevant characteristics are considered rich, whereas those that rate low are considered lean. The combination of a medium's richness and the message qualities (e.g., equivocal or nonequivocal) determine whether the communication is efficient or inefficient. The framework is then used to identify which channel is appropriate for what type of interaction, based on the unstated assumption that efficiency is always a workplace manager's goal. CMC, according to this approach, is considered too lean to be effective in the emotional, equivocal interactions important in relationships. However, widespread and successful use in relationships of "lean" interpersonal CMC technologies that filter conventional social cues (see e.g., Markus, 1994), as noted above, indicated that focusing to such a degree on the technology was overlooking important factors that provide a more comprehensive understanding of mediated communication.

In contrast, some scholarship on mediated interpersonal communication has instead foregrounded the communication process and the interactants' relational context rather than focusing on the channel of interaction. Researchers have drawn effectively on existing interpersonal communication literature (Walther, 1992) and generated findings that identify such factors as impression management goals (O'Sullivan, 2000) and anticipated future interaction (Walther, 1994) as important determinants of CMC outcomes that dominate the influence of channel characteristics.

At the same time, technologies gained new capabilities and forms and technology users expanded their expressive repertoire. CMC systems, which began as basic text-based messaging limited to ASCII characters, evolved to include a variety of fonts, text colors, and other typographic characteristics as well as the capacity to attach or embed nontextual elements. The growing population of CMC users gained

experience and skills beyond novice level. As CMC technologies were being used by a wider numbers of users outside the workplace for socializing rather than information exchange, new elements and conventions emerged and replicated. Thus, the artifacts of the channels themselves are appropriated by users as expressive devices, and are applied to interpersonal purposes, in ways that become a language in and of themselves.

O'Sullivan (2000) developed an Information Management Model to frame relational uses of interpersonal mediated channels, which incorporated elements of these perspectives and findings. He argued that communication channels' characteristics are best understood as communicative resources that individuals could use (or could learn how to use) tactically and strategically in their interactions as guided by their social and relational goals. Communication channels—from newer interpersonal CMC to older technologies such as answering machines and face-to-face interactions—have their specific set of characteristics, which constitute a potential repertoire from which individuals can select and use in their interactions. For example, someone who seeks to hide or ambiguate his or her emotional state for a particular interaction might choose the telephone because the other person cannot see tearful eyes or a quivering chin.

A person's skill with a particular channel could shape selection and use. Novices with a particular channel may be less capable at using it effectively or even perceiving the range of possibilities it presents. With experience over time and exposure to others, novices could deepen their understanding of the possibilities that a channel offers as well as strengthen their ability to and effectively exploit those possibilities. In addition, considerations of normative expectations for channel use in specific contexts and situations could shape selection and use. For example, a telephone call might be perceived as appropriate for many interactions between relational partners such as making arrangements or sharing daily events but might be seen as inappropriate for other instances such as conveying bad news.

Scholars have made progress establishing that interpersonal CMC and other mediated interpersonal channels can be—and are—used for a wide range of social and personal interactions. And they have elaborated the ways that individuals select channels as a means of pursuing a range of relational goals. Less attention has been paid to the distinctive set of communication possibilities presented by each channel, and how individuals conduct their interactions as they take into account—or creatively employ—a channel's characteristics. Mediated immediacy is proposed here as a way to better understand the communicative practices that convey affiliation and foster relationships via communication technologies. The next sections will review the immediacy literature and summarize research related to mediated immediacy before elaborating the current research program and reviewing the

implications of findings for relational uses of mediated communication.

IMMEDIACY: FACE-TO-FACE AND MEDIATED FORMS

Face-to-Face Immediacy

Immediacy refers to communicative behaviors that reduce the physical or psychological distance between individuals and foster affiliation (Mehrabian, 1971). Mehrabian (1971) linked immediacy to the approach and avoidance construct—the proposition that people generally approach things they like and avoid things they dislike or that induce fear. Scholars have identified a range of nonverbal and verbal behaviors that communicate immediacy (P. Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Baringer & McCroskey, 2000; Gorham, 1988; Mehrabian, 1971). Immediacy includes nonlinguistic approach behaviors, signals of availability for communication, and communication of interpersonal closeness. Nonverbal immediacy behaviors include reducing physical distance, displaying relaxed postures and movements, using gestures, smiling, using vocal variety, and engaging in eye contact during interactions. Verbal immediacy behaviors include using personal examples, asking questions, using humor, addressing others by name, praising others, initiating discussion, and using inclusive pronouns (“we” vs. “I”).

In many social encounters, individuals wish to develop positive relationships with others. They do so in part by adopting interaction behaviors that signal that they are warm, friendly, and approachable (see for review, J. Andersen, 1985). This argument is consistent with intuitive expectations about why individuals might perceive another person positively. Most people would tend to be positive about someone who smiles, is expressive, appears relaxed, addresses them by name, asks them questions, and discloses through personal anecdotes.

Research on immediacy in instructional settings consistently has found a positive and robust relationship between frequency of immediacy behavior use and a range of desired educational outcomes (Christophel, 1990). For example, instructor's immediacy behaviors are associated with positive student affect toward instructors (Chesebro, 2003; Gorham, 1988; Richmond, 1990; Titsworth, 2001), increases in student affective learning (Gorham, 1988; Plax, Kearney, McCroskey, & Richmond, 1986; Thomas, 1994), greater student state motivation (Christophel, 1990; Richmond, 1990), more positive ratings of instruction (Abrami, Leventhal, & Perry, 1982), increased perceptions of cognitive learning (Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey, 1987), and enhanced retention of course material (Messman & Jones-Corley, 2001; Perry & Penner, 1990; Witt & Wheelless, 2001). In addition,

teacher immediacy behaviors promote learning by reducing students' apprehension (Chesebro & McCroskey, 2001).

Several different models attempt to explain the relationship between immediacy and learning. Kelley and Gorham's (1988) four-step model proposes that teacher immediacy is related to arousal, which is related to attention, which is related to memory, which is related to cognitive learning. Christophel (1990) developed a motivational theory proposing that teacher immediacy first directly affects students' state motivation, which then positively affects their learning. The affective learning model states that immediacy's influence on cognitive learning is mediated by affective learning (Rodriguez, Plax, & Kearney, 1996). Despite differences in the models, the literature indicates that immediacy plays an important role in student arousal, affect, motivation, and learning (LaRose & Whitten, 2000). It is also clear that given the key differences between mediated learning and traditional classroom instruction, instructors need guidance on effective communication in mediated environments if they seek similar results found in traditional instruction (Berge & Collins, 1995; Easton, 2003).

In sum, researchers have demonstrated that students learn most from teachers who are "warm, friendly, immediate, approachable, affiliative, and fostering of close, professionally appropriate personal relationships" (J.F. Andersen & Andersen, 1987, p. 57). Use of immediacy has been shown to be important to developing positive relationships between instructors and students as well as facilitating desired student learning outcomes.

Mediated Immediacy

To date, the immediacy literature almost exclusively examines immediacy in face-to-face interactions, including traditional classroom settings and "extra-classroom communication" such as student-instructor interaction after class or during office hours (Gorham, 1988; Owens, 2000). The implicit assumption that immediacy only occurs face-to-face ignores the important and increasingly pervasive role of technologically mediated communication (O'Sullivan, Hunt, Lippert, Owens, & Whyte, 2001). Only a handful of studies have considered immediacy behaviors in a channel other than face-to-face (e.g., Carrell & Menzel, 2001; Comeaux, 1995; Hackman & Walker, 1990; LaRose, Gregg, & Easton, 1998; LaRose & Whitten, 2000; McHenry & Bozik, 1995; Walther, Loh, & Granka, *in press*). The rapid and widespread expansion of CMC for distance education and on-site instruction—as well as a wide range of social and personal communication—suggests that scholars should explore mediated forms of immediacy more fully.

We define “mediated immediacy” as communicative cues in mediated channels that can shape perceptions of psychological closeness between interactants. Stated another way, immediacy cues can be seen as a language of affiliation. The existing literature has identified a vocabulary of verbal and nonverbal behaviors that signal an invitation and intention for greater closeness. Because it is clear from the literature on CMC in relationships that people have found or invented ways to develop intimacy using mediated channels, examining the language of affiliation in mediated channels would further illuminate the means by which intimacy can be accomplished via newer and older communication technologies.

MEDIATED IMMEDIACY RESEARCH PROGRAM

We describe three studies from our research program. The first sought to lay a foundation for subsequent studies by examining the forms of mediated immediacy. The second and third used the findings of the first to test the degree to which the use of mediated immediacy cues predicted positive perceptions of the sender and some desired educational outcomes.

STUDY 1

This project (O'Sullivan et al., 2001) was designed to address one sweeping research question: What forms can immediacy cues take in mediated communication channels? The goal was to identify a broad spectrum of mediated immediacy cues, while future research would address relative importance or prevalence. A total of 24 participants, all university students in their late teens and early 20s with experience with mediated communication in instructional settings, were assembled into three focus groups. One group was directed to focus primarily (although not exclusively) on text-based forms of communication (e.g., e-mail), another focused on Web-based and multimedia communication technologies, and the other dealt primarily with mass media (e.g., television, radio, and movies). Each was provided a widely used conventional definition of immediacy² and then asked to describe what communication practices (if any) convey immediacy via various mediated channels.

Participants described a wide range of communicative cues across an array of channels that shaped perceptions of closeness. Following Corbin and Strauss (1990), analyses of transcripts involved the researchers (as expert coders) identifying and organizing immediacy

cues described by focus group participants into emergent categories. The process involved several coding cycles. Initially, researchers independently identified statements in the entire set of transcripts that addressed immediacy and then proposed tentative categories to group those statements at a moderate level of abstraction. Then, researchers jointly compared their proposed categories for clarity, consistency, appropriate scope, and accuracy as they referred to the examples that each had identified as exemplars for each category, similar to Spradley's (1979) process of identifying semantic relationships. When differences were identified, revisions to the categories' names and criteria for inclusion were negotiated and approved by consensus. Revised categories were reapplied individually to the transcripts to resort immediacy behaviors as well as to further refine category criteria. Recoding stopped at the point of saturation or redundancy of the category definitions.

Results consist of multiple categories, which were sorted later into two emergent macro categories that at a higher level of abstraction encompassed all micro categories. Some mediated immediacy forms consisted of conventional immediacy cues conveyed via mediated channels. Others differed from, but closely paralleled, conventional immediacy behaviors. Some mediated immediacy cues consisted of novel ways of expressing immediacy that have no parallel with conventional immediacy behaviors. All of the cues, according to respondents, function the same as the traditional, face-to-face immediacy behaviors in that they can shape a receiver's sense of closeness with the source.

The two macro categories of mediated immediacy, *approachability* and *regard for other*, represent two related but distinct types of communicative cues related to immediacy. *Approachability* encompasses immediacy cues that signal to others that "You can approach me." Individuals invite others to perceive them positively by presenting themselves as friendly and open. *Approachability* encompasses nine micro categories of immediacy cues: self-disclosure, expressiveness, accessibility, informality, similarity, familiarity, humor, attractiveness, and expertise (see Table 1). *Regard* encompasses immediacy behaviors that generally signal to others that "I am approaching you." They convey a positive perception of others by being personal and respectful with them. The macro category of *Regard* encompasses four categories of immediacy behaviors (see Table 2). Together, then, the two macro categories capture a range of immediacy-related options that individuals can control in their efforts to shape others' perceptions of psychological closeness. In terms of physical space, individuals have two options to become physically closer: (a) invite the other to step closer or (b) take a step toward the other. The macro categories of mediated immediacy cues encompass those two options in mediated communication for shaping perceptions of psychological closeness.

Table 1
Dimensions of Mediated Immediacy: Approachability

Approachability ("You can approach me")		
Subcategory	Description	Examples
Self-disclosure	Intentionally revealing personal information that allows others to feel that they know source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • referring to experiences outside official role • photos portraying experiences outside official role
Expressiveness	Varying emphasis, intensity, vividness, tone of message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using vocal inflection • using punctuation • using colors
Accessibility	Being accessible for communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • indicating availability • providing contact information • setting time aside for contacts
Informality	Portraying informality and casualness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informal postures/settings in images • use of slang, colloquialisms
Similarity	Displaying personality qualities/ personal history shared by receiver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revealing interests, experiences, opinions, backgrounds, and so on, that match receivers'
Familiarity	Providing for repeated contacts over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent encounters and/or interactions
Humor	Using humor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing jokes • playful interactions
Attractiveness	Displaying characteristics perceived as appealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presenting attractive appearance • displaying appealing personality
Expertise	Displaying competence and skill related to source's role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrating knowledge

DISCUSSION

The two macro and multiple micro categories represent a preliminary conceptual map that is likely to undergo revisions through future research. They are not assumed to be independent of one another. For example, the many ways that we can convey regard for another may also convey approachability. It may work similarly among the micro categories. For example, self-disclosure may contribute to perceptions of similarity and personalness may also be seen as a form of politeness. In addition, the analyses did not seek to identify the most important or most prominent micro categories. The goal of this exploratory study was to compile an array of immediacy behaviors as complete as possible without regard for frequency of mention or other specific measures of importance. We did not want to preclude the possibility that a behavior identified once or infrequently in this study could be identified in future research with different participants and different topics as

Table 2
Dimensions of Mediated Immediacy: Regard

Regard ("I Am Approaching You")		
Category	Description	Examples
Personalness	Conveying that source views receivers as individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using synchronous, richer channels • remembering, using names • incorporating knowledge of person in interactions
Engagement	Indicating attentiveness and practicing responsiveness to receivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • returning phone messages/e-mails • listening to/reading carefully messages • inviting future interaction
Helpfulness	Assisting receivers' efforts to pursue needs and goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly designed Web site to aid navigation • providing needed info on outgoing messages
Politeness	Following etiquette, courtesies, and other communication procedural norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • word choices • practicing common courtesies in interactions

more prominent. Of the many questions that these results raise are whether mediated immediacy in the forms identified function as respondents had indicated. In short, does use of mediated forms of immediacy contribute to perceptions of closeness between individuals? The next study was designed to begin to address this question.

STUDY 2

This project applied findings from the first study to test whether there is a relationship between mediated immediacy and anxiety, uncertainty, and attitude toward the message source at initial mediated contact (Whyte, O'Sullivan, & Hunt, 2003). Forms of mediated immediacy identified in the first study were used in a manipulation of Web-based immediacy cues. Consistent with the predominant application of immediacy in instructional settings, the questions were addressed in terms of students' responses to immediacy cues presented in a Web site for a university-level, technology-intensive course. Anxiety-Uncertainty Management Theory (Gudykunst, 1988, 1995), an intercultural communication theory, was the theoretical framework for the study. The application of this theory to educational uses of CMC was based on the conjecture that students encountering a new course, new instructor, and the relatively new use of communication technology for instruction would experience anxiety and uncertainty similar to those encountering individuals in an unfamiliar culture.

Mediated immediacy cues, which were viewed as a means to convey an instructor's approachability and positive regard for students, were expected to mediate anxiety and uncertainty, as well as attitudes toward the instructor and the course. Hypotheses predicted that mediated immediacy would be negatively related to anxiety (H1) and uncertainty (H2) and positively related to attitudes toward the course (H3) and the instructor (H4). The results are of interest as a means of extending findings from conventional immediacy in face-to-face instructional settings to mediated interaction. More generally, they also test the proposition that mediated immediacy functions as a language of affiliation, with consequences for perceptions of the source.

A total of 95 undergraduate students were randomly assigned to view one of two Web sites.³ Both Web sites were for the same hypothetical course, included much of the same content, included the same links, and had the same instructor. Although these stimuli were constructed for this study, they were presented as depicting a real course and instructor. One Web site was developed as a high-immediacy Web site with multiple immediacy cues throughout. These included specific operationalizations of self-disclosure, expressiveness, accessibility, informality, personalness, engagement, and politeness as described by respondents in Study 1. For example, the Web site included color, graphics, and the instructor's photo. Language incorporated first- and second-person pronouns and informal, conversational, and friendly language. Each page included an e-mail link to the instructor and a link to his personal homepage, which included the instructor's photo, his scholarly interests, information about other courses that he taught and research that he had accomplished, and a summary of personal interests and family photos.

The low-immediacy condition was identical to the high-immediacy Web site except that most of the immediacy cues were eliminated. Colors were restricted to black, grey, and white and all graphics or photos were removed. No link to the instructor's personal Web site or e-mail was available. Language was formal and included only third-person pronouns and references. A manipulation check confirmed that the manipulation was successful. Respondents rated the high-immediacy Web site as more immediate ($M = 5.4$ on a 7-point scale, $SD = 1.09$) than the low-immediacy Web site ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 1.42$), $t(93) = 4.37$, $p < .001$. Participants individually toured their assigned Web site at a computer terminal and completed an instrument with scales measuring anxiety, uncertainty, motivation, and affective learning.⁴

Regression analyses indicated Hypotheses 1 was not supported, as immediacy's negative relationship with anxiety was not significant ($t = -1.37$, $p > .05$, $\beta = -.13$). Hypothesis 2 was supported, as immediacy had a significant negative relationship with uncertainty, ($t = -3.56$, $p < .01$, $\beta = -.31$). Hypothesis 3 was also supported, as immediacy had a significant positive relationship with motivation toward the course ($t = 5.51$,

$p < .001$, $\beta = .47$). Finally, Hypothesis 4 was also supported, as immediacy had a significant positive relationship with affective learning ($t = 6.09$, $p < .001$, $\beta = .51$), indicating students' positive attitudes toward the course, recommended behaviors, and the instructor.

DISCUSSION

Results generally supported the hypotheses. A Web site with multiple immediacy cues produced lower uncertainty and higher motivation for the course and more positive attitudes toward the course and instructor. Although higher immediacy cues did not produce significantly lower levels of anxiety, the relationship was in the predicted direction. Given the strong positive relationship between anxiety and uncertainty in the literature, future studies might find that immediacy cues can also reduce anxiety. These results are consistent with prior research on conventional immediacy cues in face-to-face settings in which immediacy use was positively related to positive attitudes about course content, the recommended behaviors, and the instructor (Christophel, 1990). As a first test of the Study 1 findings, the results also provide evidence that immediacy cues can be conveyed effectively via mediated channels and that mediated immediacy can shape perceptions of a communicator.

STUDY 3

The previous study provided an initial test of mediated immediacy and its capacity to shape receivers' perceptions of senders. Although it supports the proposition that immediacy can be conveyed in mediated channels, it does not address which cues might be more effective than others. A subsequent study was designed to unpack a subset of the mediated immediacy cues identified in the first study and incorporated in aggregate in the second study. The first study had identified a broad range of immediacy cues conveyed via an array of channels: text, audio, visual, and multimedia.

Of particular interest from Study 1 were respondents' descriptions of text-based immediacy cues. As a communication method that excludes many of the familiar expressions of affiliation in conventional ways face-to-face (e.g., smiling, proximity, vocal inflection, etc.), text might be expected to have limited effectiveness conveying affiliation cues. If text-based immediacy cues can effectively convey cues that facilitate closeness and affiliation, the findings would have implications for better understanding how the many text-based communication technologies (e.g., e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, texting, Web pages, etc.) can be used to affect relationships. They would also suggest the potential for multimedia forms of mediated immediacy, which can include conventional (e.g., facial expressions, vocal

inflections) as well as unconventional forms of mediated immediacy identified in Study 1, to shape affiliation between communicators.

To refine our understanding of mediated forms of immediacy cues, this project distinguished between two types of text-based immediacy cues. A review of the extensive list of text-based immediacy cues from Study 1 suggested that they could be organized into those dealing with language and those dealing with the nonlinguistic visual presentational setting for the language. This project examines the relative influence of linguistic and presentational forms of mediated immediacy cues on receivers' perceptions of message senders.

Similar to Study 2, stimulus materials incorporated Web sites for a hypothetical course and instructor. The design was a 2×2 between-subjects design, with one independent variable being linguistic immediacy with two levels (high and low) and the other presentational immediacy with two levels (high and low). Based on traditional immediacy literature and Study 1 results, linguistic immediacy was manipulated by varying such language elements as pronouns (high: first and second person; low: third person), use of casual or slang words (high: informal, casual, and slang words; low: formal language), use of greetings and signoffs (high: greetings and signoffs; low: none), and use of punctuation (high: exclamation marks, dashes, ellipses; low: none). Presentational immediacy was manipulated by varying the visual presentation (high: graphics, color, photos; low: none) and text formatting (high: use of bold-face, different-sized fonts, color, san-serif typeface; low: no text formatting, Times New Roman typeface). Four versions of a course Web sites were created: (a) high presentational immediacy/high language immediacy (see Figure 1), (b) high presentational immediacy/low language immediacy, (c) low presentational immediacy/high language immediacy, and (d) low presentational immediacy/low language immediacy (see Figure 2). A manipulation check indicated that the manipulation was successful. One ANOVA produced a significant main effect for presentational immediacy, $F(1, 135) = 117.80, p < .001, \eta^2 = .47$. Respondents in the high presentation immediacy conditions ($M = 2.83, SD = 1.29$) rated the Web sites as significantly more immediate compared to those in the low presentation immediacy conditions ($M = 5.28, SD = 1.34$). The second ANOVA produced a significant main effect for linguistic immediacy, $F(1, 135) = 21.63, p < .001, \eta^2 = .14$. Respondents in the high linguistic immediacy conditions ($M = 2.14, SD = .94$) rated the Web sites as significantly more immediate compared to those in the low linguistic-immediacy conditions ($M = 3.17, SD = 1.55$).

Dependent variables were motivation to take the course, attitude toward the course, perceptions of the instructor, and instructor credibility. Hypotheses predicted main effects for both presentational immediacy (H1) and linguistic immediacy (H2) in that we expected a positive relationship of both with all dependent variables. Regarding



Figure 1. **High Presentational Immediacy—High Linguistic Immediacy Condition.**

possible interactions, there is very little extant research examining the relative influence of verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors on perceptions of immediacy. However, it is important to understand the relative influence of linguistic and presentational immediacy cues. Is one more influential than the other? Is either one more influential than no immediacy? Are the two experienced concurrently more influential than one or the other alone? Therefore, we posed three research questions addressing the influence of individual and combined independent variables.

<p>COMMUNICATION 112 Communication and Society Dr. Peter Sullanger Spring 2004</p>	
<i>Home</i>	This is the homepage for Communication 112 at Illinois State University for Spring 2004. This is the starting place for the Comm 112 website.
<i>Overview</i>	The course includes both onsite (in the classroom) and online (this website) experiences. Students will find that this website complements and extends the in-class parts of the course. Bookmark this page if using a computer at home and write down (or memorize) the website address if using a campus lab computer. Students will be using this website several times a week to access readings, assignments, exercises, and grades.
<i>Syllabus</i>	
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<i>Webboard</i>	Click on links in the navigation bar on the left-hand side of the page to access the elements of the website.
<i>Grades</i>	
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Figure 2. Low Presentational Immediacy—Low Linguistic Immediacy Condition.

Research Question (RQ) 1: Is there a difference in influence comparing presentational immediacy alone to linguistic immediacy alone on student motivation, attitude toward the course, and perceptions of the instructor?

RQ2: Does high presentational immediacy alone and high linguistic immediacy alone influence student motivation, attitude toward the course, and perceptions of the instructor more positively than minimal immediacy?

RQ3: Does a combination of presentational immediacy and linguistic immediacy influence student motivation, attitude toward the course, and perceptions of the instructor more positively than presentational immediacy alone and linguistic immediacy alone?

A total of 170 respondents were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions.⁵ Respondents explored the purported course Web site on a lab computer for 15 to 20 minutes and then filled out an instrument. Scales included an immediacy scale constructed for this study ($\alpha = .83$)⁶ and a student state motivation scale ($\alpha = .95$) (Christophel, 1990). It also included a subscale of the affective learning scale that focused on

Table 3
Means and Standard Deviations for Dependent Variables by Condition

	Presentation Immediacy Cues				Linguistic Immediacy Cues			
	High		Low		High		Low	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Immediacy ^{a,b}	2.70	.92	3.40	1.17	2.77	.99	3.30	1.13
Motivation ^a	3.22	1.11	4.02	1.19	3.50	1.16	3.69	1.25
Instructor ^b	2.20	1.03	2.43	1.11	1.98	.90	2.60	1.14
Competence ^b	2.10	.92	2.25	.97	1.99	.74	2.33	1.08
Perceived caring ^b	2.76	1.13	3.01	1.16	2.53	1.01	3.20	1.18
Trustworthiness ^b	2.45	1.03	2.50	.99	2.29	.93	2.64	1.07
Overall credibility ^b	2.43	.91	2.60	.91	2.28	.78	2.72	.98

Note. For all of the scales, lower values represent more positive assessments.

a. Signifies a significant main effect for presentation immediacy cues.

b. Signifies a significant main effect for linguistic immediacy cues.

attitudes about the course instructor ($\alpha = .92$) (Christophel, 1990). A teacher credibility scale ($\alpha = .93$) (Teven & McCroskey, 1997) included three subscales: instructor competence ($\alpha = .87$), perceived caring ($\alpha = .84$), and trustworthiness ($\alpha = .86$). Standard demographic information was also collected.

H1 predicted that higher levels of presentational immediacy would produce higher evaluations of immediacy, motivation, and perceptions of the instructor. This hypothesis was supported for immediacy, $F(1, 163) = 18.56, p < .001, \eta^2 = .10$, and for motivation, $F(1, 165) = 19.98, p < .001, \eta^2 = .11$, but not for any of the measures assessing the instructor.

H2 predicted that higher levels of linguistic immediacy would produce higher evaluations of immediacy, motivation, and perceptions of the instructor. The hypothesis was supported for immediacy, $F(1, 163) = 11.01, p < .01, \eta^2 = .06$, and for all of the measures assessing the instructor, which included the overall evaluation, $F(1, 166) = 16.26, p < .001, \eta^2 = .09$, the overall assessment of teacher credibility, $F(1, 164) = 10.75, p < .01, \eta^2 = .06$, the teacher credibility subscale of competence, $F(1, 164) = 5.58, p < .05, \eta^2 = .03$, the teacher credibility subscale of perceived caring, $F(1, 166) = 19.15, p < .001, \eta^2 = .09$, and the teacher credibility subscale of trustworthiness, $F(1, 166) = 5.32, p < .05, \eta^2 = .03$ (see Table 3). Linguistic immediacy did not predict higher levels of motivation regarding the course.

RQ1 examined the relative strength of influence presentational immediacy cues alone to linguistic immediacy cues alone on the dependent variables. A planned contrast test of Condition 2 (high presentational/low linguistic cues) to Condition 3 (low presentational/high linguistic cues) found that motivation differed significantly, $t(165) = 2.47, p < .05$. The high presentational cues condition ($M = 3.35$,

$SD = 1.10$) generated more positive scores on motivation than did the high linguistic cues condition ($M = 3.98, SD = 1.05$). Planned comparisons were significant for two of the measures assessing the instructor. For perceptions of the instructor, the instructor was rated more positively in the high linguistic cues condition ($M = 1.95, SD = .84$) than in the high presentational cues condition ($M = 2.37, SD = 1.08$), $t(166) = 1.89, p < .05$. For perceived caring, the instructor was also rated more positively in the high linguistic cues condition ($M = 2.65, SD = 1.02$) than in the high presentational cues condition ($M = 3.09, SD = 1.16$), $t(166) = 1.81, p < .05$. There was no significant difference for immediacy.

RQ2, which examined whether high presentational immediacy cues alone or high linguistic immediacy cues alone influenced the dependent variables (DVs) significantly more than minimal immediacy cues, required two sets of planned contrasts. The first compared Condition 2 (high presentational/low linguistic cues) and Condition 4 (low presentational/low linguistic cues) on the DVs. The high presentational cues condition generated significantly more positive evaluations on three of the DVs. For immediacy, the high presentational cues condition ($M = 2.84, SD = .86$) was rated as more immediate than the low cues condition ($M = 3.77, SD = 1.19$), $t(163) = 4.24, p < .001$. For motivation, the high presentational cues condition ($M = 3.35, SD = 1.10$) was rated more positively than the low-cues condition ($M = 4.05, SD = 1.32$), $t(165) = 2.85, p < .01$. For perceptions of the instructor, the high presentational cues condition ($M = 2.37, SD = 1.08$) was rated more positively than the low-cues condition ($M = 2.86, SD = 1.15$), $t(166) = 2.25, p < .05$. There were no significant differences for perceptions of competence, caring, trustworthiness, and overall credibility.

Planned contrasts compared Condition 3 (low presentational/high linguistic cues) and Condition 4 (low presentational/low linguistic cues) on the outcome measures. The high linguistic cues condition generated significantly more positive evaluations on six of the DVs. For immediacy, the high linguistic cues condition ($M = 2.99, SD = 1.00$) was rated as more immediate than the low-cues condition ($M = 3.77, SD = 1.19$), $t(163) = 3.43, p < .01$, and all measures evaluating the instructor. For perceptions of instructor, the high linguistic cues condition ($M = 1.95, SD = .84$) was rated more positively than the low-cues condition ($M = 2.86, SD = 1.15$), $t(166) = 3.99, p < .001$. For competence, the high linguistic cues condition ($M = 2.01, SD = .71$) was rated more positively than the low-cues condition ($M = 2.46, SD = 1.13$), $t(164) = 2.16, p < .05$. For perceived caring, the high linguistic cues condition ($M = 2.65, SD = 1.02$) was rated more positively than the low-cues condition ($M = 3.77, SD = 1.19$), $t(166) = 2.72, p < .01$. For trustworthiness, the high linguistic cues condition ($M = 2.25, SD = .89$) was rated more positively than the low-cues condition ($M = 2.73, SD = 1.05$), $t(166) = 2.15, p < .05$; and overall credibility, the high linguistic cues condition ($M = 2.32, SD =$

.74) was rated more positively than the low-cues condition ($M = 2.84$, $SD = .99$), $t(164) = 2.60$, $p < .05$. There were no significant differences for motivation.

RQ3, which examined whether the combination of presentational cues and linguistic cues generates significantly more positive DV scores than presentational or linguistic cues alone, also required two sets of planned contrasts. The first compared Condition 1 (high presentational/high linguistic cues) to Condition 2 (high presentational/low linguistic cues) on the DVs. Two contrasts were significant. For perceived caring, the combined high-cues condition ($M = 2.42$, $SD = 1.00$) was evaluated more positively than the high presentational cues alone condition ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.16$), $t(166) = 2.90$, $p < .01$. For credibility, the combined high-cues condition ($M = 2.23$, $SD = .82$) was evaluated more positively than the high presentational cues alone condition ($M = 2.62$, $SD = .97$), $t(164) = 2.03$, $p < .05$. The test for perceptions of the instructor approached significance ($p = .05$), where again the combined high-cues condition was evaluated more positively than the high presentational cues alone condition. Tests for immediacy, motivation, competence, and trustworthiness were not significant.

The second set of planned contrasts compared Condition 1 (high presentational/high linguistic cues) to Condition 3 (low presentational/high linguistic cues) on the DVs. The contrast for motivation was significant, $t(165) = 3.46$, $p < .01$. The combined high-cues condition ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.11$) was rated more positively for motivation than the high linguistic cues alone condition ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.05$). The test for immediacy was also significant, $t(163) = 1.86$, $p < .05$. Again, the combined high-cues condition ($M = 2.57$, $SD = .96$) was evaluated more positively than the high linguistic cues alone condition ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 1.00$). All tests for measures evaluating the instructor were not significant.

DISCUSSION

This study sought to test whether text-based immediacy cues—specifically, two types: presentational and linguistic—influence assessments of immediacy, motivation, and the message source. Results partially supported the hypotheses. As predicted, a main effect was found for presentational immediacy cues on two DVs. Conditions with higher presentational cues produced perceptions of higher Web site immediacy and higher levels of motivation to take the course. However, they did not produce significant results for any of the measures assessing the instructor. Regarding linguistic immediacy cues, as predicted, main effects were found for immediacy as well as for all measures assessing the instructor. However, no effect was found for motivation. This interesting pattern of results suggests that presentational immediacy cues and linguistic immediacy cues have similar influence on perceptions of immediacy but contrasting influence on the

appeal of a course and perceptions of the message source. Presentational immediacy cues influenced respondents' motivation to take the course but not their perceptions of the instructor. In contrast, linguistic immediacy cues had little influence on motivation to take the course but a consistently positive influence on evaluations of the instructor.

The three research questions further examined the relationship between linguistic and presentational forms of text-based immediacy. The pattern of results is consistent with the findings for the main effects. RQ1 compared the influence of presentational immediacy cues alone to linguistic cues alone. Both types of cues appear to convey immediacy with equal effectiveness. However, the Web site with presentational cues alone was significantly more influential on motivation to take the course, and linguistic immediacy cues alone consistently (if marginally) tended to shape perceptions of the course instructor.

RQ2 compared Web sites with each type of immediacy cues alone to a Web site with minimal immediacy cues. The Web site with presentational cues only was rated as more immediate and prompted higher motivation but was no better than a Web site with minimal cues on four of five measures assessing the instructor. A Web site with linguistic cues only was rated as more immediate and generated more positive evaluations on all assessments of the instructor than a Web site with minimal cues but was no different on motivation to take the course. These findings indicate that higher levels of text-based immediacy cues of either type are better than few or none in shaping perceptions of immediacy. However, presentational cues will prompt higher motivation to take a course but have little effect on evaluations of the instructor. Linguistic cues will generate more positive evaluations of the instructor but have little effect on motivation.

RQ3 examined the question of whether presentational and linguistic immediacy cues together have a cumulative effect on perceptions of immediacy, motivation, and perceptions of the source. Findings reinforce the pattern of the other RQs and the tests of main effects. Adding linguistic cues to a high presentational cue-only Web site will generate improved evaluations of the message source on some measures. However, the addition makes no difference on perceptions of Web site immediacy and motivation to take the course. Adding presentational cues to a high linguistic cue-only Web site will generate improved motivation and weakly improve perceptions of Web site immediacy. However, the combined cues were no better than linguistic cues alone Web site regarding positive evaluations of the source.

Overall, the results contribute more evidence that immediacy can be conveyed in mediated forms—in this case, a text-based channel of a course Web site. Based on only the language and the visual presentation of the Web site, immediacy manipulations generated significant differences in Web site immediacy, student motivation, and assessments of the instructor. In addition, the results illuminate parallel

influence of presentational and linguistic immediacy cues on perceptions of Web site immediacy. However, they also indicate that the two types differ in their influence on the set of outcome measures included in this study. Presentational cues shape motivation for the course, whereas linguistic cues appear to be far more effective at generating positive evaluations of the message source.

CONCLUSION

This research program sought to engage the issue of how mediated channels, once chosen, can be used to convey affiliation and to develop perceptions of closeness. Although the literature has established that people are able to develop close and even intimate relationships using mediated channels exclusively or predominantly, researchers have not yet comprehensively addressed the communication practices that contribute to interpersonal connection. The three research projects presented here illuminate that issue by examining the immediacy construct as it occurs in CMC and other mediated channels.

Results demonstrate first of all that immediacy can be conveyed via CMC as well as a broad array of other mediated channels, newer and older. Although that observation may appear to be too obvious to mention, it does further undermine the assumption held by many scholars and nonscholars alike that the drastic reduction of social cues in CMC renders CMC impersonal and thus ineffective and inappropriate for interactions important to relationships. The many people who are successfully managing long-distance relationships (romantic, friend, and family) and the many individuals who have developed close relationships online are evidence that the early assumptions about CMC required revision. This research program, along with the handful of other studies that also addressed mediated immediacy (e.g., Carrell & Menzel, 2001; Hackman & Walker, 1990; LaRose & Whitten, 2000), further reinforces a more accurate understanding of people's capacity to connect and affiliate via CMC and other mediated communication.

This research also confirms that immediacy can be conveyed via different mediated channels—even text-based channels—that cannot convey many of the conventional nonverbal forms of immediacy. Thus, the results further support our proposition that existing conceptualization of immediacy, based on the single channel of face-to-face interaction, needs to be expanded to include mediated interactions. Also, the differences between linguistic and presentational forms of immediacy found here not only prompt more interesting research topics in the study of mediated immediacy but suggest possible distinctions between conventional verbal and nonverbal immediacy that are worth exploring.

The specific studies were set in educational settings, where the vast majority of extant research on immediacy has been conducted. Results provide preliminary guidance for educators about the importance of understanding and applying knowledge of mediated immediacy for shaping student motivation and perceptions of instructors. This is true for experienced instructors of DE and TI courses as well as for instructors just beginning to incorporate more technologies into their teaching practices. It is clear that some mediated immediacy is usually better than none and that a teacher does not have to be a skilled graphic artist but does need to attend to linguistic immediacy cues to build a course Web site that positively influences student perceptions.

These insights might be of value outside educational settings as well. Mediated communication in training and development may closely parallel the institutional educational settings of college classrooms. Whether these findings are replicated in the workplace is worth scholarly attention, with implications for the effectiveness of corporate training programs. The findings of these studies might also be of value in business communication. Mediated communication is an essential part of just about any organization's daily business processes, and the ability to use it in facilitating positive business relationships might play a crucial role in successful business activities. The findings here could be incorporated into internal and external communication practices in organizations, which would present distinctive issues for scholars to address. Mediated communication is becoming increasingly important in health care, such as those involving patient-physician interactions, Web-based health information, and online social support.

The findings also suggest a number of future research projects examining the use of immediacy in a wide range of older mediated interpersonal channels (e.g., telephone, answering machines, letters) as well as newer mediated interpersonal channels (e.g., e-mail, chat rooms, discussion boards, instant messaging). Immediacy via older and newer mass-mediated channels (e.g., television, radio, video games) would also be worth investigating. Perhaps these studies might help to identify how some mass-mediated personae (e.g., talk-show hosts such as Oprah Winfrey) have been able to connect with audience members to such a powerful degree. Findings might contribute to the literature on parasocial relationships by identifying how affiliation can develop even with those we know exclusively via mass media.

These research projects have begun to identify specific forms of mediated immediacy as well as illuminating their role in shaping receivers' attitudes and perceptions of the source. These forms might be viewed in terms of Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson's (1967) proposition that every message carries both content and relational elements. The content portion is the message itself (usually the verbal elements),

whereas the relational content provides context for the message by conveying the relationship status of the interactants' (usually the nonverbal) elements. Immediacy cues (mediated and face-to-face) could be viewed as the relational portion of a message, in that they address senders' orientation toward their relationship with receivers.

Linking this research with Watzlawick et al.'s (1967) ideas, however, introduces an interesting anomaly. These studies have identified verbal (linguistic) and nonverbal (presentational) forms of text-based immediacy, both of which appear to be important to receivers' perceptions of the source. Mediated immediacy, conceptualized here as a language of affiliation in CMC and other mediated channels, functions as a relational element of an interaction in both verbal and nonverbal forms. This suggests that the long-standing linkage of message content to verbal communication and relational message to nonverbal communication should be reexamined, which might prompt new insights into the intertwined roles of verbal and nonverbal communication.

Although it may be that face-to-face immediacy cues are well-established in society and generally understood similarly, that may not be the case for mediated immediacy cues. Although it sometimes seems to those experienced with CMC that it has been an integral form of communication deeply embedded in social interaction, in reality only a short amount of time has passed since CMC diffused into Western cultures. There continues to be a gap between the experienced and the inexperienced, and differences in experience may contribute to differences in interpretation of mediated immediacy cues. This, of course, can contribute to miscommunication and all the problems associated with it—including the possible consequences of mediated immediacy use opposite to intention (i.e., disliking). Consistent with Watzlawick et al.'s (1967) arguments, results of these studies suggest that individuals convey immediacy cues in mediated channels whether they intend to or not. Excluding immediacy cues (intentionally or not) could be associated with more negative evaluations of the source, particularly if the exclusion was a strong violation of a receiver's expectations. At a time when many CMC users have low or moderate levels of competency, there may be greater likelihood of miscommunication.

It is important that we learn more clearly and with greater specificity the forms and functions of mediated immediacy cues. That would provide CMC users the opportunity to make informed, mindful choices about how to use CMC more effectively when managing the relational aspects of mediated communication. This would also complement and extend the literature on strategic and tactical channel selection (O'Sullivan, 2000; Walther, 1992, 1996), which would have a practical benefit as well for CMC users seeking to become more effective in their mediated communications.

NOTES

1. The meaning of computer-mediated communication (CMC) has evolved from its early use. In the early research, CMC denoted text-based messaging systems of various hardware and software configurations and implementation policies. Of course, currently CMC encompasses a far wider range of communication capabilities as the technology has evolved to include synchronous and asynchronous text, image, audio, video, and multimedia forms.

2. The definition used, derived from Meherabian (1971), was "The verbal and nonverbal behaviors that reduce the physical and/or psychological distance between people."

3. Descriptive statistics for respondents: Sex—male, 27%, $n = 26$; female, 73%, $n = 69$. Age— $M = 19.6$ years, $SD = 2.72$. Education: freshmen, 63.2%, $n = 60$; sophomores, 15.8%, $n = 15$; juniors, 11.6%, $n = 11$; seniors, 9.5%, $n = 9$. Ethnicity—Caucasian, 87%, $n = 83$; Black, 3%, $n = 3$; Latino, 1%, $n = 1$; Asian, 4%, $n = 4$; Native American, 2%, $n = 2$; Other, 2%, $n = 2$.

4. The instrument included scales measuring immediacy, anxiety, uncertainty, motivation regarding the course, and affective learning. Immediacy was assessed using a scale generated for this study, which presented four 7-point semantic differential items using the following sets of anchors: Inviting/Uninviting, Expressive/Nonexpressive, Friendly/Unfriendly, Warm/Cold ($\alpha = .87$). Anxiety toward using the Web site as part of a college course was assessed using a scale modified from Stephan and Stephan (1985) ($\alpha = .79$). Uncertainty was assessed using a scale modified from Gudykunst (1995) ($\alpha = .81$). Motivation toward taking the class was assessed using a modified version of Christophel's (1990) student state motivation scale regarding a college course ($\alpha = .95$). Affective learning was measured using a modified version of the Affective Learning Scale (Christophel, 1990) ($\alpha = .96$). All scale modifications involved minor wording changes to apply the items to an instructional Web site. Details are available from the first author.

5. Descriptive statistics for respondents: Sex—male, 37%, $n = 63$; female, 63%, $n = 107$. Age— $M = 21.74$, $SD = 3.74$. Education—freshmen, 13%, $n = 22$; sophomores, 6.5%, $n = 11$; juniors, 33%, $n = 56$; seniors, 42%, $n = 71$, graduate students, 6%, $n = 10$. Ethnicity—Caucasian, 78%, $n = 133$; black, 9%, $n = 15$; Latino, 3.5%, $n = 6$; Asian, 6%, $n = 10$, Native American, 3%, $n = 5$; Other, 3%, $n = 5$.

6. The immediacy scale generated for this study consists of 10 seven-point semantic differential items with the following anchors: Inviting/Uninviting, Disclosing/Nondisclosing, Open/Closed, Kind/Unkind, Distant/Close, Engaging/Detached, Inaccessible/Accessible, Expressive/Nonexpressive, Friendly/Unfriendly, Warm/Cold ($\alpha = .82$).

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Patrick B. O'Sullivan (Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara) is an associate professor at Illinois State University. His research interests include social processes of mediated communication; strategic and tactical uses of communication technologies (newer and older) in relational, educational, and organizational settings; and "masspersonal" communication.

Stephen K. Hunt (Ph.D., Southern Illinois University) is an associate professor and co-director of the basic communication course at Illinois State University. His research interests include the communication needs of students at risk, students' learning/cognitive styles, and instructional communication.

Lance R. Lippert (Ph.D., Southern Illinois University) is an assistant professor at Illinois State University. His research interests include workplace relationships and communication in organizations, health care relationships, and instructional communication.