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Servers in a small college town were asked to take part in an interview to assess perceptions of their use of nonverbal communication, how they believe nonverbal communication affects tipping behavior, and whether or not they received formal training in nonverbal communication tactics. The study also links nonverbal communication with rapport in the service interaction. Results concluded that servers believe they use nonverbal communication in numerous ways, that nonverbal communication can have an affect on the customer's tipping behavior, and lastly, that servers have received little to no formal nonverbal communication training.

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Nonverbal Communication and Restaurant Personnel

by

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I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Carleen Drago, Author

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Nonverbal Communication and Restaurant Personnel

Chapter 1: Introduction

What job do nearly half of Americans have in common? If you guessed the restaurant industry, you are correct. According to the National Restaurant Association (2007), nearly half of all adults have at one time or another worked in restaurants and in fact, the restaurant industry has employed 32% of all Americans with their first job. In an industry that grosses over 1.5 billion dollars in a typical day, employs 12.8 million Americans, and is estimated to employ over 2 million more people in the next decade, it is of no real surprise that many scholarly fields are paying close attention to the dynamic economical impact the restaurant industry has on the culture of the United States (National Restaurant Association, 2007).

Growing up in a household where my mother put my father through medical school, raised four children, and worked for thirty years as a waitress I know firsthand what it means to be part of this industry and its statistics. I got my first job bussing tables at a home-town restaurant, started waiting tables when I went to college, and currently wait tables and bartend at a local college pub to fund my own education. The money that supported my childhood and the money that has subsequently supported my lifestyle is a result of an industry where a server's primary income is a consequence of a customer's tipping behavior.

Unlike most jobs, servers can directly impact their incomes daily. According to Azar (2004), "tipping is a unique economical phenomenon, as it is

voluntary payments for service that has already been provided by the time the tip is given” (p. 746). Since tipping is considered a voluntary payment, a server can take a direct role in influencing customer behavior. Tipping behavior has been the topic of many discussions regarding consumer behaviors, but regardless of the outcomes of these various economic discussions, tipping is undoubtedly a social norm that accounts for over 20 billion dollars of take-home income for servers across the United States (Lynn, 2003). As economists, sociologists, and psychologists begin to unravel the tipping behavior of customers, they are also focusing on ways to improve the service interaction and subsequently the tips servers are receiving.

One area of focus for improving customer tipping behavior is nonverbal communication. Researchers have investigated how nonverbal cues can play a significant role in improving the service interaction. Because I’ve studied interpersonal communication for the last several years, I have been engrossed in the studies that have taken place in this industry to improve my customer service skills and thus, my income.

According to the National Restaurant Association (2007), over 55% of the employees of the restaurant industry are women. As a woman I have become intrigued with the positive outcomes of the various studies that have implemented specific nonverbal cues. In fact, one study discovered that women receive larger tips than men when implementing posture variations (Davis, Schrader, Richardson, Kring, & Kieffer, 1998). This has important implications for women because Cruz

(2007) acknowledged that even though women are earning more college degrees than men, for comparable work women are still paid 77 cents to every dollar that men are paid. Thus, although women remain under paid in many professions the restaurant industry is a different kind of workplace because it may provide an opportunity for women to level the playing field.

The restaurant industry does not discriminate against servers when it comes to pay because a server's primary source of income is determined by consumer behavior. Since tipping is voluntary, many servers can take control of the service interaction on many levels, many of which researchers have investigated. Most of these studies have incorporated nonverbal techniques to gain rapport, affect customer behavior, promote return customers, and ultimately, improve servers' personal incomes. Nonverbal communication cues have been scientifically tested to improve the service interaction, but three factors are often overlooked in this research: (a) servers' perceptions about their use of nonverbal communication, (b) servers' beliefs about how nonverbal cues affect customer tipping behavior, and lastly, (c) the extent to which servers are trained to use nonverbal communication. These are among the questions this research seeks to answer.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Second to the government, the restaurant industry is the largest employer in the United States (National Restaurant Association, [NRA] 2007). In 2007, the National Restaurant Association estimated direct sales of \$537 billion dollars. Furthermore, as a result of its increasing growth, the restaurant industry is significantly impacting the American economy, leading researchers to focus greater attention on discovering the tactics that help facilitate better service. Better service, in turn, produces satisfied customers. More specifically, researchers are paying greater attention to how nonverbal communication can enhance servers' interactions with customers.

Servers play a significant role in facilitating customer satisfaction, therefore many researchers and employees of this industry have a vested interest in what takes place in the service exchange. Nonverbal communication is a central component of this exchange. Touch, glances, smiles, writing "thank you" on the check, and eye contact, each of which are forms of nonverbal communication, can all facilitate a positive service interaction. Furthermore, nonverbal cues such as these have been identified in research on building rapport in social interactions. When rapport is developed in social interactions, interactants categorize those interactions as positive. As a result of these positive interactions within the service interaction, servers often are rewarded by an increased tip. However, what is still under-researched are servers' perceptions of their use of nonverbal communication. This study seeks to examine servers' perceptions of the

relationship between rapport building, nonverbal communication, and tipping behavior in the restaurant industry. After discussing the psychology of tipping behavior in general, I'll review the relevant literature on nonverbal communication and rapport in service interactions within restaurant contexts. Finally, I'll demonstrate how scholars have linked nonverbal communication with developing rapport and consumers' tipping behavior.

The Psychology of Tipping

Why do people tip? Could it be that they had the best food ever, or maybe they were served by the most delightful waiter or waitress? Was it the smooth jazz playing in the background, or could it have been the customer just had money to burn? Although Lynn and Latane (1984, p. 549) attributed the origin of tipping to sixteenth century England where containers with the inscription "To Insure Promptitude" were placed in coffee houses and pubs, many other variables may also explain why people tip. Azar (2003) asserted that tipping is a phenomenon that is purely voluntary and often is associated with service that will be received in the future, empathy for the worker, and compliance with social norms.

According to Azar, (2004) tipping has evolved into a social norm in the United States. For example, if asked what most people in the United States tip in restaurant settings, most respondents would reply 15% of the bill size. This standard percentage has become a regulatory mechanism for researchers and servers to evaluate both good and bad service. As such, tipping behavior among customers allows servers and restaurateurs to understand their customers better. It

has also become a way for to evaluate their employees. Lynn (2001, p. 15) revealed that “restaurateurs rely on tips to (a) motivate servers to deliver good service, (b) measure service performance, and (c) identify dissatisfied customers”. As a result of these and other factors, customers tipping behavior has inspired a great deal of research, some of which has been summarized briefly below (Azar, 2004, p.33). Although all of the studies in the table are not detailed in this literature review, the table provides a time-line of how tipping behavior research has evolved.

Table 1: Summary of Tipping Research

The Study	The Findings
Economic Development Committee for the Hotel and Catering Industry (1970)	The reasons given by people for tipping were mainly “It’s a good way of showing gratitude for good service or cooking” (53%), “It is a the accepted practice” (50%), “It can be embarrassing not to” (30%); and “Staff need the extra income from tips” (19%)
Ben Zion and Kami (1977)	A theoretical model suggests if we ignore social norms, we can explain tipping by repeating customers as resulting from future service considerations, but we cannot explain tipping by one-time customers.
Lynn and Grassman (1990)	Data obtained about tipping behavior of restaurant customers was consistent with customers tipping in order to buy social approval and equitable relationships with waiter, but was inconsistent with tipping because of future service considerations.

Bodvarsson and Gibson (1994)	The quantity of service affects tips significantly, beyond the effect of bill size on tips, suggesting that customers want to compensate waiters according to the effort they make, maybe because doing so satisfies the customer's desire for fairness.
Lynn and Graves (1996)	Tipping is related to consumers' evaluations of service and the dining experience, but these relationships are weak. This suggests that tipping is, in part, a reward for good service, but that it may not suffice as an incentive for good service.
Bodvarsson and Gibson (1997)	Tipping is both a social norm and a means of rewarding good service, but also depends on expected future service. Lone diners tip higher percentages than parties (this may suggest that social pressure by other diners is not a reason for tipping).
Lynn and McCall (2000b)	Meta-analysis of research on the service-tipping relationship suggests that tippers are concerned about equitable economic relationships with servers, but that equity effects may be too weak for tips to serve as a measure of performance or to induce good service.
Azar (2003c)	A theoretical model suggests that if future service is a reason (even partial) for tipping, tips of frequent customers should be more sensitive to service quality than those of one-time customers. Empirical evidence suggests that this is not the case.
Azar (2003d)	A theoretical model about the evolution of social norms suggests that since tip percentages increased over the years, people tip not only because it is the social norm, but also because they derive other positive feelings.

Since consumers have no direct obligation to servers besides adhering to social norms related to tipping, it has become a matter of interest to researchers who study consumer behavior, psychology, economic studies, sociology, communication and hospitality management. As Azar (2003) pointed out, tipping is often used to influence individuals to conform to social norms, to avoid embarrassment, and to receive better service next time. As a behavior, tipping extends across cultures, varies from country to country, across different service fields, and leads to intriguing theories about cross cultural exchange (Lynn, Zinkhan, Harris, 1993).

Lynn, Zinkhan, and Harris (1993) examined different cultures' tipping practices and discovered that whereas tipping is important in cultures that value status, it is less important in cultures that emphasize social relationships. The findings of this study suggested that individualistic societies value tipping behavior more than collectivist societies. This may be due, in part, to the fact that individualistic societies value individual achievement, whereas collectivist societies emphasize collectivity or the group (Beebe & Beebe, 2006). Thus, tipping behavior in North America reflects an individualistic society for both consumers and servers. If consumers tip more, they believe they can receive better service, and servers will give better service if they believe the customer will tip more. Lynn, Zinkhan, and Harris' (1993) study is significant because it reveals the cultural implications associated with tipping behavior.

According to Lynn (1984), a hospitality management researcher who surveyed customers exiting restaurants about various aspects of the service interaction, patrons acknowledged an “expected” level of service. Based on this expected level of service, customers assessed the tip they would leave. In short, if there was an “expected” level of service by customers, the tip decreased only if the level was not met. Lynn (1984) also revealed that customers tip on the basis of group size, method of payment (cash or credit), and bill size. Although the notion of a regulatory 15% of the bill tip suggests that customers will tip on normative behavior only, nonverbal communication studies suggest that servers can implement certain nonverbal cues to enhance rapport, subsequently increasing the size of tip.

Researchers have disputed the claim that people tip only to adhere to social norms. In fact, surveys have revealed that customers identify specific behaviors that facilitate pleasant dining experiences and then tip based on the occurrence of such behaviors. Because there are many variables that affect the service interaction, it is important to identify what customers are paying attention to. For example, in a study initiated to examine server behaviors, Harris (1995) reported that customers identified promptness, friendliness, excellent food, self introduction by the waiter, and the ability to obtain separate checks as factors that affected tipping behavior.

Although, in many instances, tipping is a normative behavior in the service interaction, it seems clear that the tip amount can be affected by several nonverbal

communication cues within the server's control. Furthermore, based on the literature, it is evident that researchers, customers, and servers hold different beliefs about why people tip. Specifically, nonverbal cues, such as touch, posture, and writing on the bill, are extremely valuable in the service interaction. If servers become aware of how to use such cues effectively, and in turn gain rapport with customers, servers can be empowered to enhance their personal incomes.

Server's perceptions about strategies for increasing their income play a big role in their interaction with customers. Shamir (1983) explained that "there is a greater tendency among tip recipients to adopt the customer's viewpoint" (p. 258). For example, if a server gives in to a person's request, but the customer's request is against the establishment's policy, a server sacrifices the business to profit on a personal basis, (e.g., receive a better tip amount). Server's perceptions about increasing income are not the only factors affecting tip size. There are also myths that servers hold about customers that can be detrimental to the business.

Server's perceptions of their customers affect the expectations of that customer's tipping behavior. Whether those perceptions are correct or incorrect, they can have an effect on customers' actual tipping behavior. For example, Lynn (2004) stated, "that many service workers believe that Blacks are 'poor' tippers" (p. 2261). Using a telephone survey Lynn examined the differences in tipping behavior between Blacks and Whites in numerous service industries. His results found that Blacks were more likely to "stiff their waiters/waitresses, leave a flat tip amount, and on average, that Blacks left a smaller percentage tip than Whites,

though they left larger flat tips than Whites” (Lynn, 2004, p. 2269). Leodoro and Lynn (2007) also investigated differences in Blacks and Whites when it came to server posture. They found that White customers tipped more when servers sat down or leaned over the table, whereas Black customers tipped less when servers initiated different postures at the table. Their results indicated that “Blacks gaze less and maintain greater interpersonal distance than do Whites” (p. 1). These results can have a significant effect on how servers treat customers that they perceive will tip less. In short, if a server holds the belief that certain customers will tip less, they may be more inclined to spend more time at tables they perceive might tip more.

Defining Rapport

The customer/server interaction in the restaurant industry is one that most people have encountered at one time or another. In fact, the National Restaurant Association (2007) stated that the average American household spends almost \$2,500 in “food away from home” expenditures per calendar year. Consequently, the interactions that take place in the service industry become an important route through which scholars can investigate interpersonal interactions between service personnel and customers.

One area of focus in service interactions is building and judging rapport. The concept of rapport has been used in a broad sense to categorize positive interactions among individuals (Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1987), and linked to the impressions humans form of one another in initial interactions (Grahe &

Bernieri, 1999). Phrases such as, “we really hit it off”, or “we had great chemistry” are often used by persons to describe when rapport is achieved. Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1990) discovered that most of the general public has a working definition of what rapport is perceived to be and that definition often reflects a description of a positive interaction. Rapport has been studied in many different contexts; as a result of this, researchers have defined rapport based on the context of the interaction (See Appendix D for list of rapport studies).

According to Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1987) two prerequisites are required to develop rapport: a focused interaction and a sustained interaction. Each is vital to developing rapport because focused and sustained interactions lay the groundwork for researchers to study how rapport develops. Rapport is often linked to words such as harmony, balance, and in sync (Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1987; Grahe & Bernieri, 1999). In fact, Webster’s Dictionary (2006, p. 1113) defines rapport as a “relation marked by harmony, conformity, accord, or affinity.” Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1990) noted that “Individuals experience rapport as the result of a combination of qualities that emerge from each individual during the interaction” (p. 286). These researchers acknowledged three essential components that are experienced during interactions exhibiting a high degree of rapport: mutual attentiveness, positivity, and coordination.

In rapport research, scholars identify these three qualities when individuals express that they clicked together, or when they expressed how they had chemistry. Gremler and Gwinner (2000) asserted that positivity can be linked to

an enjoyable interaction, whereas mutual attentiveness can be referred to as personal connection. In the restaurant industry this chemistry becomes apparent when servers receive their tips. Tip size may be an indicator that the customer enjoyed the interaction. Thus, mutual attentiveness, positivity, and coordination are components of rapport that allow us to better understand the feelings of participants, and to effectively categorize behaviors that exist in interactions that reflect a high degree of rapport (Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal, 1990).

Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1990) stated that the weight of these three components will change based on the context of a particular interaction. For example, mutual attentiveness develops in an interaction when participants have an intense mutual interest in what the other has to say, creating a focused and cohesive interaction. Gremler and Gwinner (2000) acknowledged that mutual attentiveness, or what they refer to as personal connection, occurs when the interactants have repeated encounters. Positivity and coordination also will vary within different contexts when developing a high degree of rapport.

Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1990) describe positivity as “friendliness, caring, or warmth”, whereas coordination is thought of in terms of “balance, harmony, or *in sync*” (p.286). Although the terms that Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1990) used to describe positivity and coordination seem similar, both function very differently in the development of a high degree of rapport. Each may stand out more in developing rapport, depending on the nature of the conversation. For example, Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1990) noted that

positivity may show more in an interaction where group members are welcoming new members, whereas “coordination would be more prevalent on a busy crosswalk where people have to coordinate their movements with one another” (p.286). What is important to note is that developing rapport is highly dependent on key nonverbal communication cues.

Nonverbal Communication and Rapport

Nonverbal communication has been defined as “silent messages or communication without words” (Peterson, 2005, p. 143). Knapp and Hall (1997) defined nonverbal communication as “communication effected by means other than words” (p. 5). Broad definitions like Peterson’s suggest that nonverbal communication includes everything except verbal communication. Subsequently, “critics point out that literal interpretations of nonverbal communication suggest a limitless area of study” (Daly, Knapp, & Wiemann, 1978, p. 271). Patterson (1983) discussed nonverbal behavior and acknowledged that nonverbal communication is anything that we do with our bodies. Although these broad definitions may seem to imply a limitless area of study, it is apparent that many that the general public does not categorize many cues as nonverbal communication. One reason for this is that people are often unaware of their own nonverbal cues as nonverbal cues usually are seen by the observers only (Depaulo, 1992).

Some scholars have categorized nonverbal communication into four areas: proxemics, chronemics, kinesics, and paralinguistics (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

According to Gorden (1980, p. 335), “proxemics is the use of personal space to communication attitudes, chronemics deals with the pacing of speech or the length of silence in the exchange, kinesics focuses on body movement and posture, and finally, paralinguistics communication includes voice variations”. Other scholars have included the physical communication environment and the communicators’ physical characteristics as nonverbal communication (Knapp & Hall, 1997). Nonverbal communication has been studied in many different scholarly fields and is rooted in human nature.

Depaulo (1992) suggested that nonverbal communication has a distinct place in the history of science. “Beginning with Charles Darwin (1872/1965), who wrote the ground breaking piece, the *Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, some of the most eminent scientific scholars, such as Wundt, Boring, Titchner, Gorden, Allport, and even Hull, have written about nonverbal expressive behavior” (Depaulo, 1992, p. 203). The vast literature regarding nonverbal communication often focused on particular individual behaviors such as smiling, posture, touch, or gaze (Depaulo, 1992). Writers and researchers have also included behavioral attributes like physical appearance, body odor, clothing, and jewelry in their findings of what encompasses nonverbal communication (Patterson, 1983). Many of these studies have focused a single nonverbal cue that can influence interactions, but researchers that focus on judging rapport have identified numerous nonverbal cues that encompass a positive interaction.

Studies on rapport examined how nonverbal cues play a significant role in developing high levels of rapport with individuals. Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1987) explained that nonverbal communication is a “correlate, determinant, and consequence of rapport” (p.118). In fact, psychologists assert that nonverbal communication plays a significant role in developing and judging levels of rapport (Bernieri, 1988; Gillis, Bernieri, & Wooten, 1995; Grahe & Bernieri, 1999; Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1987). Mehrabian and Ferris (1967) examined how positive, neutral, and negative attitudes form in interpersonal interactions. They compared the vocal component to the facial component in assessing attitudes in interactions. The results of their study revealed that facial expressions have a stronger effect than vocal components, suggesting that visible nonverbal communication has significant power in interpersonal interactions.

Grahe and Bernieri (1999) studied the importance of verbal versus nonverbal communication in the perception of rapport and discovered that during the interaction perceiver accuracy was associated with having access to the visual channel rather than just the audio channel. The importance of nonverbal cues in judging rapport suggests that rapport is “primarily a physically manifested construct” (Grahe & Bernieri, 1999, p. 265). In turn, because rapport is manifested through a physical construct, it is evident that nonverbal cues will be a crucial determinant of the level of rapport achieved.

Rapport has been studied in numerous contexts, including movement synchrony and behavior matching. According to Bernieri (1988), interpersonal

coordination is evident in everyday interaction and nearly all aspects of our social lives; often, it becomes a way to negotiate face to face interactions. Bernieri et al., (1988) videotaped mothers and their fourteen-month-old infants in two different contexts. One was a pseudo-interaction and the other, a genuine interaction. The pseudo-interaction appeared to observers to be a genuine interaction, but the researcher edited images of different points in the interaction to create the pseudo-interaction (Bernieri, 1988). They discovered that the pseudo-interaction yielded significantly less in judging rapport development because raters could detect the more synchronized interactions in the pseudo-interaction. In other words, interactants' nonverbal behavior seemed unnatural in the pseudo-interactions and was easily detected by observers.

Bernieri (1988) also reviewed rapport and movement synchrony in teacher-student interactions. Again, true interactions were compared with pseudo-interactions by means of videotaping teacher-student dyads. His results revealed that there was more movement synchrony in the true interactions. Consequently, both studies reported “that there is a degree of coordinated movement between interactants occurring beyond a level that is explainable by rating artifact and chance” (Bernieri, 1988, p. 129). In short, movement synchrony is vital in developing rapport and the more professionals know about how to coordinate movement with consumers, the better the results of the interactions will be.

The research Bernieri (1988) conducted relays the importance of movement synchrony and behavior matching in interactions of high rapport. His

research concluded that “individuals do not move randomly or independently from each other, but rather movement in interactions is coordinated” (p. 134). In the restaurant industry movement is vital to the service interaction. For example, where a server is located in relation to the customer will have an impact on the level of nonverbal cues that can be initiated by either party. Moreover, the movement of a server can suggest the involvement or motivation behind the interaction. For example, when servers position themselves at the side of a full table, they will only be able to interact with the customers that they see, blocking the other group members. If servers position themselves at the head of the table, it will allow for more interaction with the whole group, as well as present the server as willing to engage and be attentive to the group.

Like Bernieri and his colleague’s initial studies, Patterson (1983) investigated service relationships. In focused interactions, Patterson (1983) noted that nonverbal behaviors that involved movement such as touch have a significant effect on the outcome of the exchange. In fact, the initiation of touch in many service industries (e.g., physician/patient, barber/customer, or golf professional/student) is crucial to the interaction (Patterson, 1983).

Movement is just one of the nonverbal behaviors that have been identified by those who study rapport. Bernieri (1988) acknowledged that behavior matching, or behavior mirroring, also will have a significant effect on levels of rapport. More specifically, he reported that behavior matching research has documented posture mirroring as one specific cue that is linked to positive rapport.

Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1987) also noted the relevance of posture mirroring in developing rapport. They concluded that posture mirroring signaled to participants that members were with one another, or “acting as a unit” (p. 125). In the context of service interactions in the restaurant industry, posture mirroring can be helpful for a server to determine how involved customers want them to be.

Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1987) identified that direct body orientation, forward lean, mutual gaze, smiling, and gestures all convey feelings of positivity in interactions. If a server is not receiving cues such as those that promote a positive interaction, it could potentially have a profound effect on the degree to which the server interacts with the customer. For instance, in my experience and that of those I have worked with, if customers proceed to read the newspaper or talk on the phone while the server is telling them the specials of the day or attempting to make contact with the customers, the server is more inclined to keep the service level at a minimum. In turn, there is less likelihood that rapport with the customer will be achieved, because nonverbal cues are central to the development of rapport in service interactions (Grahe & Bernieri, 1999; Puccinelli, Tickle-Degnen, & Rosenthal, 2003).

Nonverbal cues also help provide insight into the context of a certain setting. More specifically, Puccinelli et al. (2003) proclaimed that people associate different behaviors with certain settings. In the restaurant industry, the behaviors that servers initiate are often determined by the type of restaurant. For example, servers who work in a moderately priced pub will act differently than

servers who work in an expensive fine-dining establishment. Furthermore, certain people will identify personality dimensions with different settings. Kenrick, McCreath, Govern, King and Bordin (1990) explained that people rely on “social inclinations” to determine what is expected in an interaction. Since people choose restaurants based on atmosphere or the type of establishment, they tended to have “social inclinations” as to expected service levels. Consequently, the restaurant industry is an excellent venue to study rapport and nonverbal communication.

Nonverbal Communication Studies in the Restaurant Industry

There are many different aspects of the restaurant service interaction that merit study. However, nonverbal communication is of particular interest to many researchers because for servers it can be an essential key to better understand what customers want or need, thereby increasing the likelihood of obtaining a good tip. For example, the slightest turn of a customer’s head might lead a server to believe that the customer is looking for them, or is in need of some assistance. Servers who are in tune to such subtleties have the ability to serve their customers better. Additionally, servers themselves also are likely to rely on nonverbal communication. With it, they can relay to customers their friendliness, concern, or interest. Thus, because it is so useful for both parties in the interaction, many scholars have suggested that nonverbal communication will better the service interaction and make customers more comfortable (Crusco & Wetzel, 1984; Lynn & Mynier, 1993; Puccinelli & Markos, 2004; Stephen & Zweigenhaft, 1985; Stillman & Hensley, 1980; VanVolkinburg, 1998). Next, I’ll discuss the specific

nonverbal communication cues that have been linked to rapport development: touch manipulation, posture, writing thank-you and pictures.

Touch Manipulation

Researchers have focused on specific nonverbal cues that enhance the service exchange such as touch manipulation (Crusco & Wetzel, 1984; Stephen & Zweigenhaft, 1985). A landmark study by Crusco and Wetzel (1984) examined how servers can implement touch to increase the reward or tip offered by customers. Their purpose was to “determine the effects of touch in a previously unexamined, nonreactive, natural setting where experimental control could be exercised” (p. 513). Results suggested that touching customers on the palm of the hand or shoulder yielded greater tip amounts. Crusco and Wetzel’s (1984) study became an essential building block for further research emphasizing nonverbal communication theory; this was evidenced by replications of their work, completed by Stephen and Zweigenhaft (1985) and Hornik (1992).

Both studies extended Crusco and Wetzel’s (1984) initial experiment by increasing the sample size and the number of servers who implemented the touch manipulation. Additionally, both operationalized nonverbal communication as an innocuous touch by the server on either the palm or shoulder of one patron at the table. Finally, both studies measured the effectiveness of the touch in terms of the size of the tip left at the end of the service interaction. Results of both studies were consistent with Crusco and Wetzel (1984). Customers tipped more in the touch manipulation groups than the control groups. Although this method of

measurement has become the primary way to measure the effectiveness of nonverbal communication in the restaurant industry (Crusco & Wetzel, 1984; Hornik, 1992; Leodoro & Lynn, 2005; Lynn, 1988; Lynn & Mynier, 1993; Rind & Bordia, 1995; Rind & Strohmetz, 1999; Stephen & Zweigenhaft, 1985); other researchers have instead examined posture.

Posture

Studies completed by Leodoro and Lynn (2005), Lynn and Mynier (1993), and VanVolkinburg (1998) have examined a server's posture at the beginning of the service interaction for clues as to how it affects the exchange between server and customer. Does the server choose to stand or squat at the table, and does squatting at the table increase tips? According to these three studies, squatting allows a server better eye contact with their customers. In turn, better eye contact establishes sincerity during the service interaction and this leads to increased tip size. These findings are congruent with rapport research, which also suggests that mutual eye contact ensures greater rapport in interactions (Grahe & Berneiri, 1999). Thus, effective use of posture in the service interaction allows servers to make a connection and build rapport with their customers. In turn, according to VanVolkinburg (1998), achieving rapport and personal credibility through nonverbal cues allows servers to increase their sales and tip size.

Still other studies have shown that nonverbal cues such as eye contact and body orientation can also better personal sales (Peterson, 2005; VanVolkinburg, 1998). This is critical because often a server is expected to take a direct role in

“add-on” sales for restaurant’s products (i.e., extra drinks, desserts). As a result, “add-on” sales increase the interaction time, increase the size of the bill, and ultimately allow servers to establish rapport (Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1987). Studies also have focused on how servers can show their gratitude or relay mutual attentiveness to customers.

Thank you and Pictures

Nonverbal techniques that facilitate pictures or writing to customers “give customers something novel that stimulates their interest and presumably enhances their mood” (Rind & Strohmetz, 2001, p.1382). In turn, better moods of the customers often lead to greater tip amounts. Specifically, studies have demonstrated that writing thank you, or leaving pictures on the back of checks will produce sincerity in the service interaction (Rind & Bordia, 1995; Rind & Strohmetz, 1999; Rind & Strohmetz, 2001). Writing to customers reaffirms the server’s gratitude during the service interaction. In these studies, by initiating more than just a verbal interaction, customers reciprocated the server’s efforts by tipping servers more. “A widely believed viewpoint among scholars is that communication is optimized when verbal and nonverbal elements operate in an integrated fashion, producing coordinated and synchronized effect” (Peterson, 2005, p.144). Consistent with Bernieri (1988), coordination and synchrony are essential for effective communication and, in turn, effective communication is essential for developing rapport. Servers have the ability to optimize their

communication skills by implementing these various nonverbal cues, but they also need to understand what the customer wants or needs.

Decoding Nonverbal

Imagine you are running into a restaurant to grab a quick bite to eat before you have to return to work. You try to get the waiter's attention, but no one seems to be paying attention. Your nonverbal cues are not helping, so you proceed to walk up to the counter and ask for some help. By this time, frustration has gotten the best of you, yet you proceed to order promising yourself you will never return to that particular establishment. Puccinelli and Markos (2004) explained a similar situation in their research and asserted the importance of nonverbal decoding in a service interaction. Their work suggested the importance of servers being able to decode or "identify what a customer is truly thinking or feeling" (Puccinelli & Markos, 2004, p. 8). Puccinelli and Markos (2004) surveyed customers on the effectiveness of employees picking up on nonverbal cues, and hypothesized that nonverbal decoding is just as important as a server's positive attitude. That hypothesis was supported as they found a strong correlation between server's ability to pick up these nonverbal cues and the customer's perception of the server. Although a small number of employees participated in this study, the researchers maximized ecological validity by utilizing a real service interaction. Thorne, Reimer-Kirkham, and O'Flynn-Magee (2004) noted that research like this is needed to value the contextual dynamics of different interactions and individual perspectives within the natural setting.

Nguyen and McColl-Kennedy (2003) also reported on the importance of decoding nonverbal communication. Specifically, they examined the ability of a service worker to diffuse anger in customers by being attentive to attributes of customer emotions, which are often discovered through their nonverbal cues. The study revealed that if servers can identify an angry customer early enough to begin de-escalation, they will be able to engage in the recovery process effectively. Specifically, Nguyen and McColl-Kennedy suggested that if servers engage in listening, blame displacement, and provide an apology, servers have a good chance at diffusing customer anger. Although every service interaction is different, the value of being able to figure out when and why the customer is angry can seriously affect tip size.

Evidenced by the foregoing, there are many nonverbal communication factors that can be used in the service setting to increase a server's personal income. The studies on nonverbal communication in the restaurant setting have asserted that effective use of nonverbal communication can lead to positive interactions and can even affect customers' tipping behavior. Different limitations were relevant in each study and each has implications for future research.

Limitations in Restaurant Studies

There are several important limitations in the literature on nonverbal communication in the restaurant industry: a) there is an almost exclusive focus on women servers only, b) when nonverbal communication is operationalized as touch, the ambiguity of the touch was not acknowledged or eliminated, c) and the

descriptions of the dining contexts were too vague. Taking these issues in order, since women were the majority of servers who initiated the various nonverbal cues, the research raises questions about gender issues revolving around the sex of the interactants. Specifically, findings may only apply to certain gender combinations in service scenarios (e.g., female to female, female to male, male to male, and male to female touch).

As for studies that examine touch in the restaurant setting, Hornik (1992) stated “the inherent ambiguity of the message of touch limits the precision with which it can be described, and to date, no comprehensive theory of tactile communication exists” (p. 449). In short, he argued that it is difficult to quantify nonverbal communication. There are just too many different interpretations to a single touch, and individual perceptions about the meaning of particular touch behavior could skew data analyses. When servers implement touch manipulation it has been received well by customers, which suggests that the touch could display a server’s interest, but since individual customers can respond to touch differently, it is important to understand what types of touch are needed and when such displays are appropriate.

Finally, because many of these studies provide an incomplete description of the restaurant context, there is no way to determine the impact of the establishment on customers’ tipping behavior (Crusco & Wetzel, 1984; Leodoro & Lynn, 2005; Rind & Bordia, 1995; Rind & Strohmetz, 1999; Rind & Strohmetz 2001; Stephen & Zweigenhaft). More specifically, the aesthetic appeal of a

particular establishment can and does impact customer behavior. Consequently, we have no way of knowing how the communication environment impacted the customer's behavior. Researchers have identified that people tip based upon a standard social norm, but there is little research surrounding how the type of restaurant affects tip size (Azar, 2003; Crespi, 1947; Lynn & Grassman, 1990). Furthermore, one area that has been overlooked in restaurant research is the level of service "expected" by customers based on the type of restaurant.

However, nonverbal communication scholars have done extensive research on the aesthetic appeal of the communication environment (Leathers, 1986). For example, the comfort of a seating arrangement, the lighting of a room, or the cleanliness of a restaurant all can have dramatic effects on how individuals perceive an establishment. The brief or non-existent descriptions of the different restaurant environments affect the external validity of the studies because appropriate nonverbal communication may change by virtue of the restaurant type.

Overview and Research Questions

The objective of this current investigation is to understand servers' perceptions of their use of nonverbal communication in service interactions. Nonverbal behavior research has shown that rapport is developed through nonverbal cues, service quality can be enhanced with nonverbal cues, and customers' tipping behavior will increase with the use of effective nonverbal cues. What is missing from restaurant industry research is qualitative assessments of servers' nonverbal communication. To date, most of the relevant restaurant

research in this area reflects an experimental bias. Such a bias is problematic because it does not account for the many different variables that effect the service interaction (e.g. cleanliness of restaurant, quality of food, day of the week).

Although research has suggested that implementing nonverbal cues will increase a server's personal income via tipping, these examinations have been clearly focused on one aspect of the interaction and subsequently, the *whole* service exchange is often unaccounted for in these quantitative depictions. For example, a server's perceptions of customers will greatly affect the service encounter, as does the level of a customer's involvement in the service interaction.

Finally, because so many variables can affect the service exchange, it is important to understand a server's point of view in their interactions. Since nonverbal communication research suggests if servers implement nonverbal cues effectively they will increase their tips, it is important to understand if servers are aware of this relationship. Moreover, if servers are aware of the impact nonverbal communication on customer tipping behavior, then formalized training techniques may further enhance servers' ability to affect tip size.

Additionally, if this qualitative study is consistent with the results of previous quantitative work, by means of methodological triangulation, it will increase our confidence in the conclusions. Moreover, unlike previous experimental research, which suffers from a lack of ecological validity (e.g., Crusco & Wetzal, 1984; Lynn & Mynier, 1993; Puccinelli & Markos, 2004; Stephen & Zweigenhaft, 1985; Volkinburg, 1998), this study will focus on real life

situations. As a result conclusions are much more likely to reflect real world applications, making my work both practical and accessible. To sum up, the current investigation seeks to identify whether servers are aware of nonverbal communication, the extent to which they realize its impact on customers' tipping behavior, and to extend previous research by emphasizing a real world application based on servers' lived experience. To that end, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ 1: What are server's perceptions of their use of nonverbal communication?

RQ 2: Do servers perceive a relationship between nonverbal communication and tip size?

RQ 3: What training, if any, have servers received?

Chapter 3: Methods

Current research in the restaurant industry has sought to quantify the effectiveness of the service interaction by examining the relationship between the tip received and different nonverbal communication variables. Typically, this research suggests a positive relationship between the two variables. The almost exclusive focus on nonverbal cues such as touch, posture, eye contact, and writing on the bill often excludes other related nonverbal communication variables such as the types of establishment, the quality of the food, and the servers' perceptions of their use of nonverbal communication variables. Because each could affect the service exchange, they cannot be overlooked. Although many current scholars seek to improve the service interaction by adding specific nonverbal cues that promote a sincere exchange, they often ignore servers' perceptions about the effect nonverbal communication behavior has on the tip size. One way to remedy this oversight is to use qualitative research to learn more about how servers think they use nonverbal communication to affect customer tipping behavior.

Qualitative research values a naturalistic paradigm, which suggests that reality is reflected by multiple truths (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000). To be philosophically aligned with the naturalistic paradigm, one must understand that "interpretive description acknowledges the constructed and contextual nature of human experience that at the same time allows for shared reality" (Thorne, Reimer-Kirkham, & O'Flynn-Magee, 2004, p. 2). Since most of the relevant restaurant research has been examined through a quantitative lens, the focus has

suggested a singular reality. Consequently, the results of this method do not fully appreciate the role of lived experience as an alternative lens through which to examine the service interaction. Three key axioms offered by Thorne et al. (2004) provide a philosophical grounding for the naturalistic paradigm:

(a) There are multiple constructed realities that can be studied holistically thus, reality is complex, contextual, constructed, and ultimately subjective, (b) the inquirer and the “object” of inquiry interact to influence one another, indeed the knower and known are inseparable, (c) No *a priori* theory could possibly encompass the multiple realities that are likely to be encountered; rather, theory must emerge or be grounded in the data (p. 2).

In short, qualitative research maximizes internal validity because it increases researchers’ confidence in the conclusions drawn.

One oversight of the research that exists in the restaurant industry is it has not developed enough variables (e.g., greeting, food quality, refills, cleanliness of restaurant) to adequately reflect what interactants encounter throughout the *whole* service interaction. Consequently, readers are often hindered from understanding the extent to which every part of the interaction matters.

Since current examinations of the service interaction are experimental and often have left out how servers believe they use nonverbal communication, the value of a qualitative approach will emphasize the natural setting and privilege servers’ voices. This allows researchers to move from specific evidence offered by respondents, to general and tentative conclusions about individual perceptions. As grounded theory, the research allows you to discover themes to understand what is happening in the service interaction, as well as how servers are managing

their roles within the restaurant context (Dick, 2005). Thus, the intention of this study is to better describe the service interaction by examining servers' perceptions about nonverbal communication and customers' tipping behavior.

Sampling Technique

Various restaurants were selected to gain a wide variety of experiences within the service industry. A non-random network sampling technique was employed to recruit participants. To obtain subjects, managers of local businesses in a small college town were given recruitment letters. Restaurants were selected to vary on the following criteria: (a) employed table service, (b) had a clearly identifiable atmosphere (i.e. fine-dining, family-style dining, or casual dining) and (c) whether the establishment were either chain or a locally owned business. Managers were asked to share the letter with interested employees who would be willing to evaluate, via interviews, their experiences as servers.

Sample

Participants ranged in age from 21 to 54 and had anywhere from 11 months to 28 years of experience serving customers at numerous dining establishments. Given that the interviews were in-depth and ranged anywhere from 40 minutes to 60 minutes, the researcher decided to settle on conducting 15 interviews to effectively use available time and resources. Of the 15 respondents in the sample, 8 were female and 7 were male. All participants identified themselves as Caucasians. The sample size produced 4 respondents from well-known chain restaurants in the Pacific Northwest, 8 respondents worked at locally owned casual

dining restaurants within the community, and the remaining 3 respondents worked at fine-dining restaurant establishments.

Procedure

Fifteen face-to-face interviews were conducted. Each was audio-taped and transcribed for subsequent coding. Participants were made aware of the audio-taping three different times in the research process: in the recruitment letter, in the informed consent document, and at the beginning of the interview. No participant was compensated in any way to take part in this study and each understood that participation was strictly voluntary. All subjects were made aware that they could choose not to answer a question or conclude the interview at any time.

Respondents were informed that no information would be used to identify them, or the business at which they worked. To ensure participants' confidentiality, pseudonyms were used during the interview process and in the reporting of the data. Initial interview questions addressed respondent's demographic information.

Instrument

The measurement instrument was composed of a series of open-ended questions that were formulated after analysis of previous nonverbal communication research and the researcher's extensive experience working in the restaurant industry. Participants were asked to (a) identify specific nonverbal communication cues that they used in their interactions with customers, (b) describe customers' tipping behavior, (c) explain their perceptions of the way

nonverbal communication tactics influenced customer tipping behavior, and finally (d) indicate if they had been trained to use nonverbal communication tactics (See Appendix A for a complete copy of the interview protocol). As a result, responses to the interview questions were expected to provide both a holistic perspective of the service interaction and an accurate description of the way servers engage in nonverbal communication.

A pre-test was administered to ensure that the questions were clear so that participants could both understand and respond appropriately to them. The pre-test also allowed the researcher to determine if responses were relevant to the three research questions. As a result of the pre-test, minor changes were made, including rewriting and rearranging some items to reduce repetition and redundancy in the questionnaire.

Coding Scheme

The interviews were coded based on Grahe and Bernieri's (1999) study of the role of nonverbal measures in building rapport (See Appendix C for complete list of nonverbal measures). The objectives of their study were to (a) examine the importance of "verbal versus nonverbal information in the perception of rapport employing thin slices of the behavioral stream" and (b) document that rapport is encoded through the visual nonverbal stream (p. 256). Relevant nonverbal cues were selected from their definitions of behavioral cues and then were modified to apply to current research endeavors (See Table 2). Examples of the modifications include: (a) word changes from interactants to servers, (b) the frequency of cue

was altered to how much servers identified specific cues, (c) behavioral cues were verbally identified by respondents, rather than visually sought out by participant in Grahe and Bernieri's study, and lastly (d) some behavioral cues were left out that did not pertain to this study.

Table 2: Definitions of Behavioral Cues

Term	Definition
<i>Synchrony</i>	Refers to the extent to which the behaviors and the behavioral stream of each respondent was similar to, and coordinated among interactants
<i>Gestures</i>	Refers to nonverbal acts that had direct verbal translations or were used to illustrate and punctuate speech
<i>Posture Shifts</i>	Refers to how the respondents addressed posture change in the service interaction
<i>Proximity</i>	Addresses if servers identified different distances in the service interaction
<i>Smiling</i>	Refers to when servers identified smiling within the service interaction
<i>Forward Lean</i>	Discusses postural configuration (i.e. sitting, squatting, stern posture)
<i>Eye Contact</i>	How servers discussed the implications of eye contact
<i>Orientation</i>	The degree to which servers identified directional orientation of their bodies toward the table
<i>Nervous behavior</i>	The degree to which servers identified certain nonverbal behaviors to be awkward or uncomfortable

This study examined the perceptions that servers hold when it comes to nonverbal communication in the service exchange, the relationship between tipping behavior and nonverbal communication, and the extent to which servers had received nonverbal communication training in various restaurants. Next, I discuss each in turn.

Behaviors Associated with Nonverbal Communication

All 15 participants believed they understood what typically is referred to as nonverbal communication. When asked about perceptions of their use of nonverbal behaviors, servers were able to identify several specific behaviors, all of which were correctly associated with nonverbal communication. Although none of the individual responses were exhaustive, it became evident that the nonverbal cues each respondent described were the ones that they individually used in their service interactions.

For example, when describing his own behaviors, Bobby indicated that he used eye contact, hand gestures, and body language were behaviors, each of which he categorized as nonverbal communication. Maggie identified similar gestures, but other servers classified their use of nonverbal behaviors using specific scenarios. For instance, Chelsea identified that nonverbal behaviors are “when people flag you down if they want something. When you come up to a table, maybe how they are all sitting or watching, how they [customers] are interacting.” Quinn described his nonverbal behavior with customers by saying “I would say even starting off with a smile, posture, hand placement, hand gestures, and facial

expressions in response to things they are telling me.” Anna acknowledged much of what other participants said, but added that “tone of voice” is an important nonverbal cue that she used to convey warmth and friendliness.

Another consistent response from servers was the importance of eye contact in the service interaction. They indicated its use not only to relay information to customers, but also for customers to relay information to servers. Teri reported, “the other day I was standing at the counter and completely across the restaurant, I can see this lady like eyeball me and I walked over there and her burger wasn’t, well she didn’t like it, so we got her a new one.” Garrett also acknowledged the value of eye contact, reporting, “keeping eye contact and being open and friendly, being available to each person, which means being on the floor a lot, even if you’re not right at the table, being in an eye shot so if they look at you, you know to come to them.” Garrett made it clear that being on the floor not only allows customers to make eye contact with the server, but also conveys to the customer that the server is being attentive to their needs.

Another server noted that you need to make eye contact with all of the customers at the table. Grace asserted, “I would honestly feel out the table first, because if it was a boy and a girl, or if they were on a date or something, I would be explaining the menu and every item I described, I would make eye contact with each one, going back and forth to make sure that it was, well, you do not want to pay [more] attention to one sex compared to the other.” In summary, the use of eye contact was reported in numerous interviews as a nonverbal cue that conveys

attentiveness of the server as well as the customer and therefore, was a predictor of building rapport. Next, I discuss the relationship interviewees suggested existed between nonverbal communication and rapport in more detail.

Positive Nonverbal Cues and Rapport

Congruent with rapport research, servers identified specific cues including eye contact, which was just discussed, that would facilitate a positive interaction, and thus build a high level of rapport. Notably, to enhance positivity in the interaction, servers suggested the importance of using several other nonverbal cues in addition to eye contact. For instance, the behaviors that servers identified as positive included smiling, different posture orientations, and paying attention to customers' needs.

Many respondents acknowledged the significance of a smile. Garrett reported "just a smile, or the way you present yourself, I think that a straighter back displays your professionalism." Garrett went on to describe how nonverbal cues like smiling, or a straighter back allows customers to observe that you are interested in what they need and that you want to be serving them. In terms of paying attention to customers needs, Patty stated, "If I see dirty dishes or whatever on the table, that tells me you [customers] are needing some attention at the table. You could just catch my eye and I would know that your table needs something. You know, just kind of fidget a little bit and I would know something's going on over there." Many participants suggested that watching tables, smiling, and being attentive was critical to facilitate a positive interaction and thus, good service.

Participants also identified cues that they used most often in the service interaction and ones that they felt more comfortable implementing. Often, these cues overlapped. The behaviors that were identified as cues that were used most often were also congruent with nonverbal cues that establish high levels of rapport with customers. These cues corresponded with rapport research, which suggests that positivity, mutual attentiveness, and coordination can be achieved through nonverbal tactics. According to Grahe and Bernieri (1999), these behaviors will lead to a sincere exchange. These behaviors were: smiling, trying to make a connection, posture, and gesturing. In rapport research, nonverbal behaviors like the ones just described can facilitate positivity, mutual attentiveness, and coordination (Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1990). Many of the participants suggested that smiling, open posture, and various gestures would help to facilitate these three goals in developing a strong service interaction.

Negative Nonverbal Communication Cues

Conversely, participants noted that some nonverbal behaviors could facilitate a negative interaction. Participants stated their demeanors such as a stern stance, crossing their arms, or standing at a distance could come across as a negative attitude toward the customers. Grace said, “I have looks that can make you feel like you’re stupid. People often look at me like I am really snobby because I have a demeanor like that. I have had to watch my nonverbals.” Chelsea also acknowledged that how a server approaches a table in the beginning of the interaction could be perceived negatively. Chelsea explained that this may

happen by, “not even looking at the customer, starting off looking at other things going on, or if your body is turned away from them.” Thus, although each of the fifteen respondents noted that nonverbal behavior could facilitate a negative interaction, they also reported that such behaviors on their part are often unintentional.

Teri talked about how servers are expected to have a positive demeanor, but sometimes this is hard to do because of all of the different things that are going on in the restaurant. Teri noted, “I definitely try to put on a face, like everything’s great and I am fine, but really you are like ready to crack because their [the customers’] kids are blowing on you, or it’s really loud. It is hard not to show that you are not irritated, or it’s not your fault that the food is late, you have to keep pretending that everything is okay.” Many participants acknowledged that there are many variables that will affect their moods, making them come across negatively to the customer.

Respondents also identified nonverbal cues that can be uncomfortable or awkward to implement, and suggested that those too can often facilitate negative responses from customers. Maggie identified an instance with customers and explained, that at times, trying to get customers attention can be very awkward:

Generally, when people are talking and ignoring you and you are just trying to get their attention and not trying to chime in on their conversation. So it is kind of like, if you get to a table that is engrossed in conversation and you are just standing there awkward, yeah, like “come on, stop talking”!

When customers do not acknowledge that the server is there, it often hinders the service interaction and makes servers feel uncomfortable when trying to do their jobs.

Another reoccurring situation in the interviews was when customers' used nonverbal cues to display their attentiveness or inattentiveness, respondents said that they would often mirror the customers' behavior. In fact, one respondent even mentioned that when there is a history with customers, previous interactions affect subsequent interactions. Anna stated:

There is this one customer who is continuously, he's just kind of rude, he doesn't make eye contact, he doesn't look at you when he orders, he's just really pretty rude. He doesn't tip well and then sometimes he'll come in and he'll be really nice and I find myself not using my happy, warm, friendly tone because he's been so rude to me in the past and so that's kind of an ongoing thing. I don't necessarily use a tone of friendly, welcoming tone because I know he's not going to respond or even look at me, so I just kind of go through the motions and the verbage.

When servers' nonverbal behaviors were not reciprocated or acknowledged by the customers, respondents suggested that the interaction was often uncomfortable and would lead not necessarily to a bad service interaction, but to an interaction that lacked rapport. Bill said:

I mean, you know, you're standing there talking to them and if you're trying to be personable, smiling and stuff, and some people, they just don't want to hear it, they would rather just have you take their order and leave, bring them their food, and then bring them their bill.

Customers that give off nonverbal cues that express inattentiveness will often have a profound effect on how servers will interact with them.

Participants explained that some customers are just inattentive, which will cause the service interaction to lack rapport. Interviewees acknowledged that they will use nonverbal communication differently depending on previous interactions, their own comfort level, their demeanor, or mood, and the nonverbal cues that customers would use. All respondents acknowledged that there are many different variables that can lead to a negative exchange.

Touch in the Service Exchange

A specific cue that was identified in some interviews as negative, or was even discouraged at some restaurants, was touch. When servers felt awkward implementing touch it was often because of the reactions that they received or thought they might receive from customers. When asked if Becky had ever felt awkward when implementing nonverbal tactics she said:

Probably touching, that's the one where I feel like sometimes, you know, I've heard before that like if you're more likely to touch someone then they'll kind of warm up to you and then they might, well, it's suppose to kind of increase your tips. I feel like, that one is kind of awkward for me sometimes, but then if I feel like the interaction is going well or whatever I might try it.

Even though Becky noted that she heard that touch could influence customers' tipping behavior, she acknowledged that she would only implement touch if she felt a connection with the customer.

Other participants noted that touch could be received negatively by customers and that touch could be uncomfortable, awkward, and even discouraged at particular kinds of restaurants. Specifically, Teri said:

A girl that I used to work with, one of our servers. She's a really good server and she'd been there for like three years, she goes hey, how are you guys doing tonight and touched the back of the guy's shoulder and he had a really jealous wife and she really did not like it. It was barely a touch and she had let her hand off, and the wife was like, excuse me, could you not do that.

To summarize, although touch has been proven to increase a servers' tip size, some interviewees suggested that touch can only be used when it is appropriate such as when the server feels a connection, or when the server feels comfortable with their customers.

Synchrony and First Impressions in the Restaurant Industry

Many scholars who investigate rapport identify movement synchrony as a predictor of a positive or negative interaction. LaFrance acknowledged "that movement similarity can provide a common backdrop to the ongoing interaction" (Bernieri, 1988, p. 121). The nonverbal cues that the respondents identified often were related to how the customers interacted with the server, which would often be the "backdrop" of the interaction. Many respondents suggested that their position at a table, as well as in setting down items at the table would either feel coordinated or uncomfortable based on the reactions they received from customers. Bobby noted the different personas he used with tables and the importance of movement synchrony when first approaching a customer's table:

Well, I guess when I approach a table, depending on who it is, you know, you kind of have a different, I guess persona that you take on for different customers. So, if it is an adult couple, you know, I'd say 30 or older, I present a much more professional, you know, cross my hands, or like, I'll hold my hands in front of me and try to be as professional as possible. Because they do appreciate that. But if it is

college students, it's like hey how's it going guys, what's up, what can I get for you. I kind of take it down a peg or two.

Many times throughout the interviews servers expressed that they would change their demeanor based on how they perceived the customer.

Also related to positive and negative interactions are servers' first impressions of customers. Grahe and Bernieri (1999) acknowledged that "our impressions of others undoubtedly are formed primarily during our initial encounters with them" and in the service interaction, participants suggested that impressions may form at first glance (p. 253). Among the criterion used to gauge first impressions of customers was age, personal appearance, customers' demeanors and customers' expectations of the server. Specifically in relation to age of customers, Bill said:

If they're (customers) young people I'll be ten times more relaxed on purpose, and just talk to them and act like I'm around my friends. Which makes them, I mean, that's what I would like if I was at a place. And at the same time, if they're old people I, I put on the big cheese grin that whole time, and you know, just try and be like slow and as patient as possible.

Servers also identified factors that would affect their use of nonverbal communication. One reoccurring factor was age. Age would not only influence how servers used nonverbal communication, but would also affect the way they chose to develop rapport. For instance, Becky explained:

A group of probably younger people came in, like they're younger and they just turned 21 or something, I feel like I would be more excited and wanting to make sure that they were having a good time, so I'd feel like I would probably just smile more and check on them more, maybe buy them a drink or something and make sure that they're having fun, because I feel like they're going to be feeding off

of me and they're going to want to have more of an exciting time, but if it was someone like, like kind of an older couple and they just want to eat and stuff, I will still smile, but just kind of more be all business.

Respondents also reported that they would judge the nonverbal behavior of the customers before they would interact with them. Quinn stated:

I try to use the same nonverbal communication with my customers in general. And some people do not respond to it very well. You know I will give a smile and the smile is not returned. I will make eye contact and they will feel uncomfortable by that and I sometimes feel like, you know, it is like if a bunch of tough guys come in and I am trying to be super friendly and happy go lucky, and what they are thinking about me? It is like I am some sort of fruitcake or something like that. And you know I am trying to be polite And at the same time I do not know if exactly the type of communication I am using or that I am use to using is directly applying correctly to this particular customer.

Some participants suggested that they always look at the table before they begin to interact with them and assess the customers' demeanors. When asked if Grace believed that first impressions affected her service interactions, she described specific instances:

If it is cops coming in for lunch in uniform, I will interact very professionally, making eye contact with everybody. I would treat them more professionally than two mothers with kids running around. Some people get nervous when police officers come in, but I just treat them as professional as possible.

Personal appearance was another factor of how servers would judge customers.

Finally, respondents also used first impressions to assess customers' expectations of the server. Adapting to the customers' preference seemed present in almost all of the interviews. Chelsea noted, "when I deal with older customers or kids, I will get down on their levels so they can hear me better." Patty

explained that if customers come to the restaurant for a specific reason like a business meeting, she will change her demeanor. Specifically, she said: “in/for business meetings, you need to respect that they are having a meeting and so the less intrusive you are, I try to just, first of all get their drinks, get their food delivered, make sure their good and then not bother them until they are ready for a pre-bus.” Knowing what the customers are there for helps to determine how involved servers will be with the tables. Thus customers’ motives are important in deciding what nonverbal cues to implement. Another way to understand customers’ motives is based on the types of restaurants they frequent.

Restaurant Type and Nonverbal Behavior

Respondents who have had experience in both fine-dining establishments and casual dining establishments suggested that they would use nonverbal communication differently based on the type of restaurant in which they worked. Respondents described the nonverbal behaviors in fine-dining as more professional and in a casual-dining atmosphere as more relaxed. For example, Garrett stated:

In fine dining I would say eye contact, smiles are not nearly as important as in a family restaurant would be. In a place like, as you go upper scale, more people are not interested in the server’s stories as much as they are in the service by the server. They’re not here to learn about you, if they are, they’ll ask. You can start feeling [out customers], that’s more of a verbal clue, but if they open their shoulders to you as you’re talking, instead of looking straight ahead or giving you, little, little opening, that’s another server method. Always keeping yourself open to the customer.

One respondent acknowledged that etiquette is central to working at a fine-dining establishment. However, as a woman pulling out chairs for male patrons, Allison noted that it was often odd to “pull out a man’s chair, and when you did,

sometimes you'd receive a weird face or a sarcastic comment from the male patrons." Also, commenting on the dynamics of nonverbal communication behavior in fine-dining versus casual dining settings, Ron commented that in a fine-dining restaurant:

Nobody wants you to say anything, they don't even want servers to have to ask to remove the plate, there's symbols [in fine-dining], like putting the fork and the knife plate. That means to remove the plate and that way they don't have to say anything to you and you know when the plate is to be lifted off.

Other participants noted that what is important for casual-dining may not be as important for fine-dining. Mike explained that at the casual-dining establishment in which he works, "I'll come in and just sit down at the table with them and mess with them a bit, but I would never dream of that in fine-dining." It became evident that servers with many years of experience held strong opinions about what nonverbal cues can be used at different restaurant atmospheres and how nonverbal behavior can influence tipping behavior.

Nonverbal Communication and Tipping

The second research question asked servers if they perceived a relationship between nonverbal behavior and tipping. Broadly speaking, their answer was an emphatic yes. Although all of the participants suggested that there was a relationship between nonverbal communication and customers' tipping behavior, they also acknowledged the existence of a social norm regarding tipping behavior, suggesting that some customers have a predetermined amount that they are going to tip. Lee declared:

I think there are some people, a lot of people actually that come with a predetermined tip amount, but I think there are people that come in and say I am going to tip them at least 15% and if I get better service I will tip them 20% to 25% .

Subsequently, participants identified that nonverbal cues could hinder or facilitate the tip amount based on the whole interaction. Maggie reported that customers may really like you and that can facilitate a larger tip size:

Most people have a set general tip, unless they really like that service. If the person bases their tip on service and how much they like you as a person nonverbal communication will effect tipping a lot. If you have a stern look on your face, or if you come across as “bitchy” your tip will decrease.

Thus, by implication, Maggie suggested that by using nonverbal communication effectively, customers may perceive you as personable and therefore “like” your demeanor.

When asked to provide an example of how customers tip differently, many participants listed factors that were identified in Harris’ (1995) study on tipping behavior, including attitude, friendliness, and prompt service. Becky said, “if you’re standoffish then I think that people aren’t going to warm up to you as much, so if you just kind of drop off your food and then walk away and aren’t friendly and smiling and just making them feel comfortable, then I believe that effects tipping behavior.” Many respondents acknowledged that tips will be affected by whether or not the server makes the customer feel comfortable. Bobby explained, “Getting to the table right away, asking how everything is, just kind of being friendly and welcoming will impact my tips.” Other respondents acknowledged that although they implement nonverbal tactics to create a positive

atmosphere that will impact customers tipping behavior, they also stated that some customers tip differently than others.

Many participants explained that people will tip more or less based on age.

For example, Quinn declared:

Yeah, I think people tip differently, I think people who have been in the waiting industry or any industry that involves receiving tips as income. I think that most generally tip more than the general public because they know what it is like. I think people who are middle-aged tend to tip the most. I think they have the most amount of money and they have also come from a generation where tipping has been important. I think an older generation tips less because they are not used to throwing down that kind of money. Even though in today's standards it is not that much money anymore, they just come from a different generation. And the younger crowd obviously just doesn't have that much money and so they are a little more frugal with how much they tip.

Participants suggested that nonverbal communication can facilitate a welcoming and friendly atmosphere, but also believed that customers may tip differently based on age or economic status.

Restaurant Training and Nonverbal Communication

The third research question asked if servers have had received training in nonverbal communication tactics. Based on the 15 interviews, little or no nonverbal communication training was received. Despite the fact that much of the entry level training participants described was oriented toward the general operations of the businesses, it became evident that nonverbal communication training was implied in most servers' initial training.

Observation shadowing was commonly used to train employees. Most of the respondents would turn to other servers and observe what they did. For example, Lee noted:

I do not think you train people like this is the kind of procedure, but every restaurant has a procedure and everything like that, but you know you go up and establish the first relationship by getting the drink order and then go back and get the food order, and I think there is just like, well, you establish your own repertoire.

Specifically, when asked where the training came from Lee indicated the following:

Managers, but I think it also comes from other co-workers and peers. I see someone do something and I am like wow that was creative or that is a good way to do things.

Garrett agreed with Lee, reporting that he received training in every job, though it was never of a formal nature. Garrett said “Mostly, other servers. It is a manager’s job to pawn his work off to other employees.” Garrett commented that most training is informal in the restaurant industry and is often given by co-workers who may be unqualified to do so.

Depending on the restaurant, some servers reported having been told to minimize nonverbal interactions with customers. For example, when asked if she had been trained to implement nonverbal communication Anna replied, “No, mainly just posture, just to have good posture. We’ve actually been told to not be physical with some of the customers.” Throughout the interviews, respondents indicated that typically restaurants do not have one designated person to train new employees.

Finally, it seemed that training programs differed by restaurant type. In chain restaurants, the training was more regimented as reported by Bill:

At the more corporate places I would work at their training would be like extremely regimented, you know like it's planned out. There was one place where there was seven steps of service that you had to perform, do these things in this order, it left nothing to the person. You just did this like this or you would get in trouble, at some of the smaller places I would get like this is where you put the drinks and this is where you put the tickets and stuff.

Even though a significant amount of training happens in different chain restaurants respondents said that little, or no training was oriented toward specific nonverbal cues that, according to the literature could facilitate larger tips.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The current study yielded significant results in five areas: (a) servers choose which nonverbal tactics to use based on their impressions of customers, (b) rapport is linked to servers' use of nonverbal cues, (c) servers believe that although customers are affected by social norms regarding tipping behavior, appropriate nonverbal communication (i.e. rapport) can alter that tip, (d) servers perceive that restaurant types dictates the appropriateness of certain nonverbal behaviors, and finally, (e) specific nonverbal communication training may be needed in certain kinds of restaurants. A discussion of these results follows.

Theoretical Implications

Rapport research acknowledged that rapport can be achieved through the visual channel of communication (Grahe & Bernieri 1999, Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1990). One major premise in defining rapport is that both parties in the interaction will have mutual attentiveness. Mutual attentiveness refers to making a personal connection in the interaction (Gremler & Gwinner, 2000). Many respondents said that making a personal connection with some customers does not happen because customers' nonverbal cues suggest inattentiveness, disinterest, or even hurriedness.

According to Shapiro, mirroring customers' behaviors often builds high levels of rapport. Many respondents conveyed that when customers were not responsive to their nonverbal cues, they would just mirror the customers' behavior. For instance, if a customer did not make strong eye contact with the server, the

server was more inclined to mirror that behavior. This finding is significant because knowing what type of service involvement the customer wants will lead to an interaction that achieves rapport. Since respondents make judgments about the level of service customers wanted based on the customers' interest, the servers' service involvement will differ based on their impressions of customers.

Many respondents acknowledged that the initial encounter is a predictor of what type of nonverbal cues servers will enact. In turn, servers' nonverbal cues impact the level of rapport they achieve with their customers. For instance, because some respondents identified age as a predictor of how they believe customers will tip, if the servers believe that customers will not tip much, they may be more inclined to focus attention on certain tables. Specifically, as Lynn (2000) acknowledged, servers "may deliver better service to those customers known to be generous tippers" (p. 207). Consequently, first impressions will weigh heavy on how servers will interact with customers and potentially how the customer may perceive the interaction. This finding could be vital to business owners because if servers stereotype customers based on how they *believe* they tip, the quality of service may be at stake, and, in turn, customers may be less inclined to return to the establishment.

The nonverbal behaviors that servers believed they used in the service interaction to create a positive exchange were cues identified in several nonverbal communication studies of rapport (e.g. Grahe & Bernieri, 1999; Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1987). For example, Grahe and Bernieri (1999) acknowledged that

nonverbal cues, such as mutual eye contact, forward lean, and gestures would help to achieve high levels of rapport. Respondents also acknowledged these cues and suggested that their use could dramatically impact the service interaction. For example, Mike said “I worked at a private country club and it was a bunch of really rich, upper class people and to get them to tip well, you’d do like the slight head bow when you’d come up to them.” Mike noted that the head bow displayed a sign of respect, which is an aspect of the service interaction that Mike believed the “upper class” customers appreciated. Respondents also noted that minor cues may have a dramatic impact on the service interaction. Quinn stated that “I open my hands as a welcoming gesture” while Anna acknowledged that an “inviting stance” would influence a positive interaction. Both said these behaviors led to increased tips.

Research has shown that tips will increase when servers implement touch (Cursco & Wetzel, 1984; Hornik, 1992; Stephen & Zweigenhaft, 1985). Yet, some participants discussed how they have received negative feedback from implementing touch. Some respondents suggested that sometimes they would use nonverbal cues like touch and receive harsh reactions from customers. Patty stated: “I am a very physical person and so I tend to touch people on the shoulder and I touched this woman one time and she rubbed my hand off. She jerked away and then she rubbed her shoulder and it shocked me for one thing.” This particular respondent went on to acknowledge that the woman is a regular customer and she will never attempt to touch her again, revealing that sometimes people just do not

like to be touched. This is significant because the previous studies did not acknowledge negative reactions. As illustrated here if a server receives negative feedback from one customer, they may choose to stop using that nonverbal tactic as Patty pointed out.

Another key aspect of this study was that participants believe their nonverbal behavior can influence tipping behavior despite social norms that suggest that tips of 15% are mandatory. This finding supports the relevant conclusions of several nonverbal communication restaurant studies (e.g., Crusco & Wetzel, 1984; Hornik, 1992; Leodoro & Lynn, 2005; Rind & Bordia, 1995; Rind & Strohmetz, 1999; Rind & Strohmetz, 2001; Stephen & Zweigenhaft, 1985), which all support a link between customers tipping behavior and appropriate use of nonverbal communication cues. The only nonverbal behavior that was not identified as effective by participants, and was, therefore inconsistent with the literature, was writing or drawing smiley faces on tickets. This could have resulted because respondents do not have sufficient understanding of what encompasses nonverbal communication (Knapp & Hall, 1997). In other words, subjects simply may have not considered such behaviors as nonverbal communication.

Participants that had experience in both fine-dining and casual-dining establishments reported that levels of service vary based on the establishment. Accordingly, they suggested that the nonverbal communication used in a fine-dining establishment would be very different than a casual-dining atmosphere. This contradicts several studies that imply that nonverbal communication cues can

be used across many restaurant establishments. This finding could have occurred because very few of the restaurants identified in previous research actually identified the restaurant type (Crusco & Wetzel, 1984; Hornik, 1992; Leodoro & Lynn, 2005; Stephen & Zweigenhaft, 1985). Specifically, in this study, one key finding is that respondents often identified the type of restaurant as an important predictor of the appropriateness of nonverbal communication cues; servers suggested that in fine-dining contexts they are more professional, whereas in casual-dining contexts servers tend to use more nonverbal cues because such contexts are less formal.

Finally, this study sought to learn the extent to which servers had or had not been exposed to formalized nonverbal communication training. Results suggest that such training was minimal. Although most respondents had been trained in the operations of the businesses and had received suggestions from managers or co-workers about displaying a more positive demeanor, none indicated that they were specifically trained in nonverbal communication tactics. Consistent throughout several of the interviews, servers suggested that training at some establishments is very minimal and often happens in a very informal way. For example, Quinn noted that basically when someone saw something that needed improvement, he would be told to change it. As a result, much of the restaurant training is more or less advice that is offered by managers and/or co-workers.

Notably, much of this training comes in the form of informal advice and varies widely. In fact, at least one participant acknowledged that at times she was asked not to be “physical” with customers, even though studies actually suggest that appropriate touch can increase tip size (Crusco & Wetzel, 1984; Hornik, 1992; Stephen & Zweigenhaft). This finding is significant because managers and owners may not be aware of the way their informal advice may be limiting employees’ ability to effectively enhance tip size. This observation is fully supported by Lynn (2001) who acknowledged that academic research is rarely read by owners and managers of restaurants.

Limitations

Although many of the findings of this study are consistent with existing research in the restaurant industry and also suggest some possible avenues important for nonverbal communication training, there are some limitations. All of the respondents were Caucasian. The sample size was extracted from a city that is predominantly white. Although race was not a variable that was examined in this study, it is important to note because the respondents experiences could be affected by the fact that the population was largely homogenous. Clearly, cross racial data could lead to different conclusions regarding the appropriateness or inappropriateness of certain nonverbal cues.

Secondly, most of the respondents have similar educational backgrounds. Only one respondent had a minimal educational background (GED). All other respondents held college degrees, or were in the process of receiving a college

degree. This may have implications for the applicability of the results because many participants may have been better informed than the average because of classes taken in college. Accordingly, although none of the responses identifying nonverbal behavior were exhaustive, it was obvious that respondents had a strong understanding of nonverbal communication in general and this understanding may have been greater than normal in the typical server population.

Lastly, some of the questions were directed at identifying “types” of customers that would tip differently, or affect servers’ perceptions of customers would have on the servers’ use of nonverbal communication. Although many respondents suggested that age was a factor, they did not divulge much other information on the “types” of customers. One reason this may have happened is because it is socially undesirable to identify the kind of characteristics (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation) that may cause some servers to view certain customers differently. As Lynn (2004) stated in his examination of Black and White differences in tipping, the restaurant industry, much like society in general, needs more “openness and honesty” when it comes to acknowledging the role of perceived differences (p. 2271). Treating ethically, culturally, and racially diverse customers differently in the service interaction may often be unintentional, but despite intentionality it does happen. Thus, trying to get at servers’ perceptions of customers, accuracy in regard to such questions may be difficult to obtain.

Future Implications

According to the National Restaurant Association (2007) the overall economic impact of the restaurant industry is expected to exceed 1.3 trillion dollars this year. Thus, the restaurant industry is continuing to expand, and this has important implications for the U.S. as our country shifts to a service economy. The growth of this industry suggests that how servers employ nonverbal communication cues can have significant bearing on their incomes. In short, servers need to maximize their incomes and in order to do that, they need to use nonverbal communication effectively.

In terms of future directions, this qualitative study should be extended to examine how servers actually use nonverbal communication in their service interactions. Since research has shown that nonverbal tactics will facilitate a positive interaction and increase servers' tip size, it is vital to understand what cues servers' feel comfortable implementing and when such cues are appropriate. Furthermore, since the findings indicated that server's often use nonverbal tactics based on their first impressions of customer's, we need to learn what essential considerations go into forming first impressions of customers. In other words, the restaurant industry could be a venue for the investigation of how first impressions are formed and how such impressions dictate servers' use of nonverbal cues.

Nonverbal communication has been studied in many different contexts and when it comes to restaurant industry the outcomes of various nonverbal communication studies have been positive. However, there are many variables to

consider when drawing these conclusions. One such variable examined by nonverbal scholars is interactants' power or status. For example, Patterson (1983) examined the work of different researchers and reported that touch is "often a privilege of higher status people" (p. 102). More specifically, people in higher status positions can initiate touch, but lower status interactants cannot. In the service interaction servers are often considered to be the lower status person in the exchange, suggesting that the findings of more recent research indicating that touch improves tips contradicts Patterson's much earlier findings. This data suggest that within the restaurant context notions of power and status may shift due to the nature of the interaction. Consequently, more research is needed on power and nonverbal communication in this industry because whom a server chooses to touch and how that person or persons choose to respond could have significant implications for the perceived effectiveness of the communication in the interaction as well as the tip size.

Briefly, two additional directions for future studies include the examination of age and the effect of restaurant type on nonverbal communication behavior. Because many respondents identified that age was a significant predictor of customer tipping behavior, it should be examined further in light of servers' use of nonverbal communication. This direction is further necessitated by the fact that generational differences regarding customer tipping behavior seems to be under-researched. Additionally, because participants made claims that nonverbal communication varies based on restaurant type, future research should clearly

indicate the relationship between nonverbal communication and restaurant type. Specifically, since respondents suggested that nonverbal behaviors are more appropriate in casual-dining rather than fine-dining settings, future experimental studies should examine the potential difference between those contexts. Similarly, the expectations that customers hold about different restaurant contexts would be useful.

Finally, scholars need to examine the impact of training on the use of effective nonverbal communication cues in relation to tip size. If such training is shown to improve tip size, then research can direct practitioners. This is critical because, as has been noted, much of the research in this area does not reach either servers or managers of restaurants.

Conclusions

Nonverbal communication studies have repeatedly shown that certain tactics will increase individual income, but there is a strong need to improve the general restaurant population's access to these studies. Many scholars have made attempts to do so by posting various tools on the internet for restaurant personnel to take advantage of, but managers and owners have yet to take an active role in facilitating nonverbal communication training. When I began to research nonverbal communication studies in the restaurant industry I was skeptical. I poked holes in the arguments that touch, posture, and writing on tickets really would really increase incomes. Yet, when I started experimenting personally with these tactics, I was stunned that these cues do indeed elicit better tips. This was so

much the case that co-workers began consulting with me about the steps they should take!

To summarize, the results of this study led to the conclusions that servers choose nonverbal tactics based on their impressions of customers, that servers believe nonverbal communication impacts customers' tipping behavior, and that servers have not been adequately trained in nonverbal communication tactics. As the restaurant industry is considered to be the nation's largest private sector employer, it is imperative that business owners equip their staff with the resources needed to not only maximize the service interaction, but also to keep people coming back to their establishment. Servers can make or break how customers perceive the restaurant. In short, nonverbal communication can help servers maximize their tips, maintain customer patronage and facilitate customer satisfaction. For those reasons the restaurant industry needs to consider the importance of training its employees to effectively use nonverbal cues.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Questions

How do restaurant personnel view the impact of nonverbal (NV) communication on their interpersonal interactions with customers and do these views suggest NV communication has an effect on customers tipping behavior and rapport building between server and customer?

3 goals:

- Identify how restaurant personnel perceive and use NV communication.
- Reveal if restaurant personnel have been trained in NV communication tactics.
- See to what extent servers believe NV communication effects tip amount.

Questions for Interviews:

Demographic Questions

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Race/Ethnicity:
4. Education:
5. How long have you been working in the restaurant industry?
6. How many restaurants have you worked for, or is this your first job in restaurant industry?
7. Do you work part time or full time?
8. Have you worked at chain restaurants, independently owned restaurants, or both?
9. What types of establishments have you worked for? (fine-dining, casual dining, semi formal)
10. Do you prefer one type of dining establishment vs. another to work for?
11. Does your primary income result from waiting tables?

12. Do you pool tips at your current place of work or do you tip out other employees? If so, on average how much do you tip out?
13. Do you perform the primary functions of wait-staff, or do other employees interact with the tables?

Background Questions about Nonverbal Communication & Tipping

14. Are you aware of what is typically referred to as nonverbal communication?
15. What types of behaviors would you classify as nonverbal communication?
16. Based on your experience what is a good tip size? A bad tip size?
17. Generally speaking, what kinds of things affect tip size?
18. In the service interaction what specific behaviors do you identify as good service, bad service?
19. Do you use nonverbal communication in your service interactions?
20. Do you think that your nonverbal communication can affect the tips you receive? Why or why not?

How Nonverbal Communication is used in the service interaction

21. How do you use nonverbal communication in your interpersonal interactions with restaurant customers?
22. Do you consider some of your nonverbal communication tactics positive or negative? If so, what tactics are positive and which are negative?
23. Do you believe your NV communication behavior promotes customers to tip more? If so how, or what behaviors promote customers to tip more?
24. Do you believe certain NV behaviors promote customers to tip less? Can you identify those behaviors?
25. Do you believe you use nonverbal communication effectively?

26. What NV behaviors do you use most often in the service interaction?
27. When you implement NV tactics does it ever feel or seem awkward? If yes, provide example.
28. Have you ever studied ways to improve your service interactions with customers?
29. What specific steps did you take to improve your service interaction and where did you get your information?
30. Have you ever received negative feedback from customers about your service? If yes, can you link any feedback to your use of NV communication? If so, please provide a memorable example.
31. Are there certain behaviors you feel more comfortable using?
32. Do you ever feel awkward using particular NV communication behaviors? If so, what behaviors feel awkward or uncomfortable?
33. Do your first impressions of a customer affect your use of nonverbal communication? Provide an example.
34. Does the type of customer you are interacting with cause you to change or alter your NV communication behaviors? If so, in what ways?
35. In your experience can you identify an instance where you misunderstood a customer's nonverbal communication? How did this effect your interaction?
36. To what do you attribute the misunderstanding in the service situation you just identified?
37. If you could improve certain aspects in the situation described what would you have changed and why?
38. Are there some NV communication behaviors you might choose not to use with some customers? If so, can you provide a hypothetical situation illustrating how you might alter your NV communication?
39. In what specific ways does NV communication affect positive or negative tipping behavior?

Questions about tipping behavior

40. What factors or behaviors do you engage in that influence the tips you receive?
41. Do you use any particular strategies to enhance the service interaction and therefore improve your tip? If yes, what kinds of strategies do you use?
42. If you could identify one behavior of good service that would affect tipping behavior what would it be?
43. Do you believe some customers tip differently than others? Can you provide an example from your experience?
44. Have you ever been trained to use specific strategies to create a positive interaction with customers?
45. Where did you get the training information and what strategies were suggested?
46. Have you ever been trained to implement Nonverbal strategies? If yes, where did you get the information and did you use it?

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: **Nonverbal Communication and Restaurant Personnel**
Principal Investigator: **Dr. Celeste Walls, Speech Communication**
Co-Investigator(s): **Carleen Drago, Speech Communication**

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

You are being invited to take part in a research study designed to look at servers' perceptions of nonverbal communication within the service interaction.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM?

This consent form gives you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask any questions about the research, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in this study or not.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You are being invited to take part in this study because you are currently working in the restaurant industry.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY AND HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

During the interview you will be asked a series of questions relating to your nonverbal communication interactions in the restaurant industry. If you agree to take part in this study, your involvement will last for one hour.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY?

There are no foreseeable risks to any participants within this study. Participants will be asked not to use names or other identifying material when answering interview questions.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

There are no direct benefits to participants.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION I GIVE?

The information you provide during this research study will only be revealed to the principle investigator, co-investigator, and subsequent members of thesis committee. We will only use any demographical analysis for the use of statistical purposes and later destroyed. Your identity will be protected through the use of pseudonyms and I ensure anonymity throughout the publication process.

The interviews will be audio taped in order to transcribe the interviews. The only people to come in contact with the transcribed interviews will be the principle investigator and co-investigator. The tapes and transcribed interviews will be protected by way of locked cabinets and password protected electronic files.

If the results of this project are published your identity will not be made public. Pseudonyms will be used to protect identity and ensure anonymity. The principle investigator and co-investigator will only have access to the audio tapes and relevant information. The final research paper will only be seen by the members of my thesis committee: Dr. Trischa Goodnow, Dr. Darlene Russ-Eft, and Dr. Deanna Kingston.

DO I HAVE A CHOICE TO BE IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering.

You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. You may also choose not to answer any questions are asked during the interview. If you choose to withdraw from this project before it ends, the researchers may keep information collected about you and this information may be included in study reports.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact: Dr. Celeste Walls, (541) 737-5396, drwalls@oregonstate.edu or Carleen Drago, (541) 737-5391, dragoc@onid.orst.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Protections Administrator, at (541) 737-4933 or by email at IRB@oregonstate.edu.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Participant's Name (printed):

(Signature of Participant)

(Date)

Principal Investigator's Name
(printed):

(Signature of Principal Investigator)

(Date)

Co-Investigator's Name
(printed):

(Signature of Co-Investigator)

(Date)

Appendix C

Definitions of Behavioral Cues (Grahe and Bernieri, 1999, p. 268)

1. *Expressivity* refers to the extent to which interactants' total behavior was active, animate, and exaggerated.
2. *Synchrony* refers to the extent to which the behaviors and the behavioral stream of each interactant was similar to, and coordinated with, each other.
3. *Money Monopolization* refers to whether the play money was handled by one interactant or shared by both (i.e., neither or both held the money at some point). High values indicate monopolization of money by one interactant.
4. *Gestures* refers to nonverbal acts that had direct verbal translations or were used to illustrate or punctuate speech.
5. *Posture Shifts* refers to the frequency with which the interactants changed their posture or appeared to shift their weight in the chair.
6. *Proximity* represents the average distance separating the interactants' noses, chairs, and closest knees.
7. *Map Focus* refers to the amount of time both interactants spent mutually attending to the map (as opposed to attending to each other).
8. *Smiling* refers to the total time spent by both interactants smiling.
9. *Forward Lean* refers to the total time spent by the interactants maintaining a postural configuration where their head was forward of the upright vertical position relative to their hips.
10. *Mutual Eye Contact* refers to the total number of seconds the interactants were gazing into each other's eyes.
11. *Racial Similarity* refers to the similarity of the racial composition of the interaction dyads.
12. *Pointing Frequency* refers to the number of times an individual directed his/her partner's gaze to specific location on the map in front of them.
13. *Adaptors* refers to the manipulation of one's own body such as rubbing, scratching, preening, and in the present study, rhythmically swiveling the chair back and forth.

Appendix D

Studies of Rapport in Several Contexts, Gremler and Gwinner, 2000, p.84

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Author(s)- Context(s)	Descriptions of Rapport	Antecedents of Rapport	Outcomes of Rapport
Education			
Bernieri (1988) High school teachers and students	Interaction characterized as harmonious, smooth, “in tune with” and “on the same wave length” (p.121)	~ Coordinated movement ~ Behavior matching	Successful interactions by certain professions (i.e., psychotherapists, physicians, counselors & teachers)
LaFrance and Broadbent (1976) College instructors and students	Sharing a common viewpoint	~ Mirroring ~ posture sharing ~ listener attention ~ environment feature	----
LaFrance (1979) College instructors and students	Sharing a common viewpoint	~ posture sharing	-----
Perkins et al. (1995) College instructors and students	Expressing an individual interest in student’s opinions and feelings and encouraging interaction between instructor and students	----	Positive (student) evaluation of instructor
Roommate			
Carey, Hamilton, and Shanklin (1986) college roommates	Relationship characterized by satisfactory comm. And mutual understanding	----	----
Carey, Stanley, & Biggers (1988) college roommates	Not defined	time of peak alertness during the day	----

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Studies of Rapport in Several Contexts, Gremler and Gwinner, 2000, p.84

Carey et al. (1988)—college roommates	quality of relationship characterized by satisfactory comm.. and mutual understanding	---	---
Saidia (1990)--- college roommates	quality of relationship characterized by satisfactory comm.. and mutual understanding (Carey et. al. 1986)	~ interpersonal understanding	~ satisfaction and success in college
Interviewing Berg (1989)— qualitative interviewing	not defined	~ interviewer appearance ~ interviewer demeanor	~ successful qualitative interviews
Goudy & Potter (1976) qualitative interviewing	(various definitions of rapport provided)	~ interviewer characteristics (gender, age, education, race, previous experience) ~ similar characteristics of interactants ~ perceptions of both parties in the social interaction	~ respondent motivation ~ generation of free and frank answers
Aburatani (1990)— Life-psychoanalysis	An emotional tie between the interviewer & respondent that includes good chemistry	----	~ better interviewer understanding of the respondent

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Studies of Rapport in Several Contexts, Gremler and Gwinner, 2000, p.84

Psychotherapist

Anderson & Anderson
(1962)—
Psychologist/ counselor and
client interactions

Effective communication in
counseling sessions (p. 20)

~ improved interactions

Charney (1966)—
psychotherapy

Level of relatedness in
relationship

~ posture mirroring

Gfeller, Lynn, & Pribble
(1987)—hypnotist-subject
interaction

Quality of relationship

~ personal disclosure
~ verbal reinforcement

Harrigan & Rosenthal (1983)-
--
Clinical psychology

Open, interested, and warm
relationship

~satisfaction w/ health care
provider
~ intention to stay in
relationship

Kritzer (1990)—therapists-
client interactions

A “good” interaction (p. 51)

~ skill of therapist
~ behavioral coordination

~ better therapist-patient
relationship

Sheehan (1980)-- hypnosis

Positive interaction

~ countering (hypnotized
subject responds as intended
to hypnosis)

General interactions

Bernieri et al. (1994)
experiential setting mutual
planning task

Overall perceptions of an
interaction

~ interactional synchrony
(movement synchrony and
posture similarity)

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Studies of Rapport in Several Contexts, Gremler and Gwinner, 2000, p.84

Bernieri et. al. (1996) experimental setting: debate on controversial issue & cooperative activity	A quality in the relation or connection between interactants, especially relations “marked by harmony, conformity, accord, affinity” (p.113)		
Gillis, ,Bernieri, & Wooten (1995)—experimental setting: role-play on controversial issue	Not defined	~ various nonverbal cues: mutual eye contact, forward body lean, mutual silence, body orientation, smiling, posture, mimicry, racial similarity	----
Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal (1990)—general applications	Expressed when “people clicked together” (p.286)	~ mutual gaze ~ posture mirroring ~ various NV behaviors	----
Tickle- Degnen & Rosenthal (1987)	A generally good interaction among individuals (p.114)	~ coordinated behavior	~ coordinated behavior
Miscellaneous Crook and Booth (1997)-- Electronic mail	Establishing a trusting, harmonious relationship (p. 6)	---	~ improved comm.. in email messages
Dougherty, Turban, & Callendar (1994)--- interviewer-job applicant interactions	Not defined	~ positive first impression ~ positive regard	---

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Studies of Rapport in Several Contexts, Gremler and Gwinner, 2000, p.84

Efstation, Patton, & Kardash (1990)—supervisor- trainee interactions	Supervisor support and encouragement of trainees A Harmonious, empathic, or sympathetic relation or connection to another self	---	---
Brooks (1989)-- Salesperson customer interaction	Includes “hitting it off” or “being comfortable with the relationship” (p. 103)	~ understanding of another’s model of the world ~ self disclosure	~ increased likelihood of purchase
Dell (1991)-- Vendor-idustrial customer interactions	The perception that the relationship has the right “chemistry” and is enjoyable	~ continuity of vendor personnel ~ amount of time customer spends with vendor ~ respect, trust, honesty	~ organizational customer loyalty ~ overall quality of customer vendor relationship
LaBahn (1996)— advertising agency and client	Not defined	~ cooperativeness ~ diligence	~ client trust ~ client disclosure
Marks (1994)—salesperson-prospect interaction	Not defined	~ matching body language ~ using pacing statements ~ sales person appearance ~ small talk ~ using humor	---
Moine (1982)—salesperson-client interactions	---	~ hypnotic pacing ~ telling stories ~ properly using customer’s name in conversation	~ increased likelihood of purchase

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Studies of Rapport in Several Contexts, Gremler and Gwinner, 2000, p.84

Nancarrow & Penn (1998) – Telemarketing	(other's definitions of rapport provided)	~ harmony of purpose ~ salesperson capabilities ~ similarity of business and personal values ~ expressive behavior ~ neuro-linguistic programming, which includes pacing behavior, matching voice patterns, posture, gestures	~ development of a relationship
Nickels, Everett, & Klien (1983)— Salesperson-customer interactions	The perceptions of having established similarity with another person		~ trust ~ increased sales
Spiro, Perreault, & Reynolds (1977)—industrial salesperson-customer interactions	Not defined	~ perceived ideological similarity ~ supporting self-image of customer ~ empathizing with customer	~ progress in the sales- interaction process
Weitz, Castleberry, & Tanner (1992) – salesperson- customer interactions	A close, harmonious relationship founded on mutual trust	~ common links (e.g., mutual friends, common hobbies, attendance at same schools	~ greater customer receptivity to the salesperson
Service Contexts Ashforth, & Humphery (1993)—services in general	A sense of genuine interpersonal sensitivity and concern (p. 96)	----	~ good service

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Studies of Rapport in Several Contexts, Gremler and Gwinner, 2000, p.84

Berry (1995)—services in general	Not defined	---	~ability to customize service to customer's specification
Ford and Etienne (1994)—Customer service encounters	Not defined	~courteous service	---
Ketrow (1991)—bank customer interactions	Immediacy (similar to rapport) is the directness and intensity of interaction between two parties	~ body orientation toward customers ~ forward leans ~ physical distance between provider and customer ~ head nods and shakes ~ eye contact	~ customer satisfaction
Shapiro (1989)—restaurant customer interactions	the ability to enter another's world and make him or her feel a common bond has been formed	~observation ~flexibility ~mirroring	~creation of a personalized service delivery