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Abstract:

Building on the literature on expertise as interactional achievement, this chapter explores a specific context of service evaluations between hairstylists and their clients. While client-professional encounters may seemingly entail obvious knowledge distribution – namely that one actor (professional) offers knowledge as an expert in a given field, and the other actor (client) is the patron/novice who consumes provided knowledge –, the participants in the haircut evaluation activity evoke and negotiate different domains of knowledge. For instance, while the hairstylists may communicate their knowledge as hair experts, clients may also professionally demonstrate their knowledge of salon rituals as well as their own hair types and lifestyles. The chapter aims to specifically shed light on the clients' knowledge work with a microethnographic analysis of how clients evoke and negotiate relevant and different knowledge by way of various vocal, verbal and material resources. In so doing, the chapter discusses the role of micro-actions in the construction of “professional” clients.

1. Introduction

Knowledge is not static, but a fluid phenomenon that is shaped through various forms of communication (e.g. Engberg, 2022; Fage-Butler, 2021; Kastberg, 2018). One sphere we observe this dynamic nature of knowledge communication is social interaction – where people acknowledge the prior speaker's knowledge (Heritage, 1984), request for certain knowledge from an interactant (Pomerantz, 1980), and evoke and construct shared knowledge (Goodwin, 2013). In so doing, they monitor and manage knowledge distribution among the interlocutors (Drew, 1991). In other words, people's pre-existing knowledge states do not gain existence until interlocutors publicly orient to, evoke and negotiate knowledge territory and asymmetry among themselves through various interactional resources. This knowledge work also shapes communicative context and drives how an interaction unfolds (see also the introduction chapter of the current book for the constructionist approach to studying knowledge communication). For instance, asserting knowledge makes a valid basis for a speaker to expand their turn and interaction sequence (Heritage, 2012), and claiming insufficient knowledge gives a participant the grounds to depart from the expected course of action, such as agreeing with the first speaker's assessment (Tsui, 1991). Knowledge work in interaction then becomes a strategy to achieve various goals.

One interactional achievement that has been widely studied through the knowledge-as-social-project perspective is embodiment of expertise. Interaction scholars have identified various ways of how professionals display knowledge to achieve their expert status, such as journalistic expert (Ekström & Lundell Åsa, 2011), healthcare professionals (Robinson, 1998), therapists (Weiste et al., 2016), emergency assistant call takers (Zimmerman, 1992) and travel agent assistants (Ylanne-McEwen, 2004), just to name a few. These studies captured professional tasks as increasingly dependent on their communicative skills. Taking the interactional perspective, however, this realisation of expertise would not be successfully brought about without the other participant's collaborative work. Accordingly, the

abovementioned studies indicated that the professional's displayed authority and expert role only become recognizable when it is oriented to and aligned with by their clients.

Benefitting from the observed value of the client role among existing literature, the current chapter further sheds light on the clients' interactional contributions by capturing their own knowledge work. It does so by looking at an institutional encounter of hair salon interactions, and specifically at the time of evaluating a new haircut, which commonly takes place towards the end of a consultation. While client-professional encounters may seemingly entail obvious knowledge distribution – namely that one actor (professional) offers knowledge as an expert in a given field, and the other actor (client) is the patron/novice who consumes provided knowledge –, the participants in the haircut evaluation activity evoke and negotiate different domains of knowledge. The hairstylists may communicate their knowledge as hair experts, but clients may also demonstrate their knowledge of salon rituals as well as their own hair types and lifestyles. These different domains of knowledge may not necessarily complement each other, and the participants must constantly negotiate which evoked knowledge is relevant in which interactional moment. The aim of the chapter is to bring to light exactly how clients manage such demanding interactional work by way of various vocal, verbal and material resources, and to discuss the role of micro-actions in the construction of “professional” clients.

2. Client's knowledge work in interactions

In the context of client-professional encounters, professionals are presumably the expert for the given goals and tasks at hand. To preserve this knowledge distribution, clients use communicative tools to align with the expected role/identity of the professional, and co-construct professional's expert knowledge status. This is commonly done by clients displaying low entitlement in terms of their access to bodies of technical or expert knowledge, such as when a patient downgrades their medical report at the time of describing their symptoms (Drew, 1991) and when a customer calling an IT support centre uses pauses, place-holders and question intonations to demonstrate their lack of professional knowledge in describing the problem and to provide room for the technical assistant to interrupt (Baker et al., 2001). Through these communicative actions, clients “orient to the normatively organized social distributions of authoritative access to bodies or types of knowledge” (Drew, 1991, p. 45). In other words, clients' enactment of imbalanced knowledge status between themselves and professionals is not simply the result or representation of different cognitive conditions between them, but the realisation of a context they find themselves in.

Clients may also work on displaying their knowledge, especially when they find themselves in a context where doing so is expected, e.g. when a professional designs their question to make relevant the client's next action to embody certain knowledge through their response. A typical instance of this may be observed when clients finish an incomplete utterance initiated by a professional. In some situations, professionals strategically use “designedly incomplete utterances” to elicit a knowledge display from their clients (Koshik, 2002, p. 303). Koole (2010) unpacked the interactional work learners and teachers engage in distinguishing and displaying various types of knowledge through questioning and responding. In a similar fashion, Llewellyn (2021) approached the social organisation of “consumer knowledge” by examining service encounters at a gallery ticket desk. His observations of interactional moments between service employees and customers revealed how certain knowledge that are relevant at the task at hand (e.g. ticket types, gift-aid option) are embodied by customers through the ways they use their verbal and bodily actions. Categorising and evoking various cognitive stances, then, becomes resources for interactants to successfully accomplish a particular client-professional goal. Professionals and clients

constantly negotiate, monitor and organise who has access to certain knowledge, and whose/what type of knowledge matters at each interactional moment through their talk.

Precisely due to this nature of knowledge work – that it is discursive and interactional – clients may use it strategically to accomplish certain agendas of their own. Design clients may avoid taking responsibilities of decision-making by orienting to their lack of knowledge and orienting to designers as the decision-maker (Oak, 2009). Similarly, Vehviläinen (2003) demonstrated a dilemma that career training counsellors go through when their clients bypass their knowledge work of planning process by consistently expecting that counsellors provide them with expert solutions. Such excessive orientation to professionals' authoritative role may be persistently pursued by clients even when the professionals resist the status, disclaiming their knowledge in the field at hand (Sarangi & Clarke, 2002). Indeed, when people say "I don't know", they are not simply demonstrating their lack of knowledge. Rather, they get things done through claiming insufficient knowledge, such as declining others' requests to assess something (Pomerantz, 1984) and invitations for an activity (Davidson, 1984), avoiding commitment and explicit disagreement (Tsui, 1991), and prepositioning their non-commitment to what follows in the talk (Weatherall, 2011) – although its pragmatic functions may slightly vary in different countries (Grant, 2010). Correspondingly, some studies have examined the strategic display of insufficient knowledge in client-professional contexts. Hutchby's (2002) sequence analysis of child counselling sessions revealed the client's (children's) non-cognitive use of "I don't know" – as a solid means to avoid talk on certain matters, and to resist the counsellor's therapeutic agenda. Looking at a language classroom, Sert and Walsh (2013) observed learner's deliberate process of displaying insufficient knowledge through not only verbal utterance of "I don't know" but also bodily behaviours that precede/accompany the utterance, including lateral headshakes, raised eyebrows and gaze withdrawn. These studies again highlight the dynamics of knowledge work; they are interactional project and outcome, as well as strategic resource to interactionally achieve certain goals.

On the other hand, clients' knowledge work may exceed professional's expectations. In Waring's (2007) study of tutoring sessions at a graduate writing centre, tutees (the client) established the role of co-assessor instead of the role of a passive advice recipient, when accepting advice from their tutor (the professional). Lee's (2011) study of airline service calls revealed that skilled customers deviate from providing information requested by the agents, but their nonconforming responses display their knowledge of - and expedite - the larger activity in which the question is embedded. Baker, et al. (2001) examined software helpline calls to demonstrate clients' methodical design of their turns at talk, such as using narrative and providing evidence of the detective work done prior to the call. By way of these practices, clients presented themselves as knowledgeable software users who help the expert to effectively solve the problem for them. Such interactional methods employed by clients to communicate their own knowledge is also seen in Heath's (2002) study of doctor-patient consultations. Here, patients embodied and revived suffering through a resourceful use of gesture in doctor-patient consultations, publicizing their subjective experiences that cannot be directly inspected by the doctors. Similarly, patients may also skilfully assert their knowledge about their own body through a wide range of embodied responses to the physician's pain question and touch (McArthur, 2019). What we witness here is the clients' knowledge work for asserting their own competence instead of blindly taking the assumed role of novices. Such knowledge work from clients need to be carefully acknowledged by professionals. Otherwise, their expert advice may face client resistance, as seen in studies of interactions between mothers (who portray themselves as knowledgeable carer) and professionals such as social worker and health visitor (Hall et al., 1999). The clients' "keenness to deal with the situation competently" (Hall et al. 1999, p. 302) is also powerfully shown in Ignasi's (2009)

study of child patients. They may solicit parental assistance when experiencing difficulty in answering the doctor's questions, but quickly embed themselves in the parent answering turn to "approve" the parent's answer and be the last person to speak. In this way, they actively construct their client role as the responsible informant of the symptoms. These clients orient to certain knowledge display as a way of competently fulfilling their client role and relevant identities associated to the given client-professional contexts.

Studies on knowledge work in client-professional interactions suggest that professionalisation of clients – whether it being displaying insufficient knowledge or demonstrating certain body of knowledge – is vital to producing a successful outcome. The current chapter builds on this body of literature and sheds light on client's knowledge work in a unique context of hair salon service evaluation, where the professional and the client each has their own entitlement to the evaluative object: hairstylist as the haircut producer, and client as the haircut owner. In so doing, it aims to contribute to enhanced awareness towards clients' artful work of doing knowing and not knowing in a material environment.

3. Methodology

The current study unpacks clients' knowledge work with a microethnographic analysis of service-assessment sequences in hair salons. By adopting the method of conversation analysis (Sacks et al., 1974) and using micro observations of recorded, naturally-occurring interactions, the study looks at how interactants systematically organise talk, physical movements and interactions with material objects in producing collaborative activities (Streeck & Mehus, 2005). This approach helps us demonstrate how "macro" issues – such as knowledge and power – may be boiled down to a number of small and "subtle" actions through interaction. In the context of knowledge communication, microethnographic analysis allows us to observe how interactants engage in knowledge work through micro-actions such as gaze shift (Goodwin, 1980) and inserting a verbal token such as "oh" (Heritage, 1984).

Two crucial processes of microethnographic investigation are worth mentioning here: transcribing and next-turn-proof-procedure. Transcribing "provides the researcher with a way of noticing, even discovering, particular events, and helps focus analytic attention on their socio-interactional organization" (Heath & Luff, 1993, p. 309). The current study employs the system developed by Gail Jefferson (see Have, 1999) to transcribe verbal and vocal actions. I also transcribed various multimodal resources enacted by the hairstylists and clients, including gaze, gestures, body movements and embodiment of artefacts (e.g. a hand-held mirror). These embodied actions are presented as transcriptionist comments, describing events by using double parentheses (Hepburn & Bolden, 2012). Once transcribed, an in-depth analysis of the data was conducted with a fundamental tool of conversation analysis, the "next-turn-proof-procedure", to reveal how interactants display their understanding of what the other's prior turn was about (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). By capturing how interactants negotiate their understanding of each turn, the analysis reveals knowledge work as the "members' work" (Garfinkel, 1996, p. 11) and accomplishments of the interactants (instead of the analyst's).

The three excerpts in this study have been drawn from a larger set of recorded data that was gathered as part of a series of projects concerned with various aspects of client-professional interactions in beauty salons (see Oshima, 2014a; Oshima, 2014b, 2018; Oshima & Streeck, 2015). In all, 60 consultations in 20 different salons in the United States and Japan were recorded. As hair salons are busy and often noisy places, efforts were taken to be as unobtrusive as possible. Tripods were used to generate steady images and to avoid becoming a moving obstacle for stylists. A separate remote microphone was often used to remotely

record participants' conversations. Consent to record was gained from each participant prior to each consultation.

4. Analysis

The following section offers a close look at the client's moment-by-moment knowledge work. The analytical points with each of the three examples include: 1) how clients display their knowledge of the activity procedure at hand, i.e. how the service-assessment should unfold; 2) how clients publicly demonstrate their ongoing, evolving knowledge status of the new haircut; and 3) how clients balance their own knowledge as the haircut owner and the hairstylist's expertise as the haircut producer. The first example illustrates the client's micro-actions for knowledge demonstration, which is aligned by the stylist, facilitating the smooth progression of the service-assessment sequence. The next two examples, on the contrary, show cases where the client's knowledge work seemingly misaligns with the expected actions made relevant by the stylist. These variant cases allow us to observe the intensive interactional work that clients engage in for displaying, monitoring and managing knowledge distributions between them and the stylists.

4.1 Activating knowledge display as responsible client

We start with a simple example to illustrate the participants' consistent and shared orientation to the client's knowledge display of the new haircut. It has been retrieved from a recorded session at a unisex salon that operates on both an appointment and a first-come-first-served basis, due to the high number of stylists on hand. The customer, Chaz, met the stylist, Nita, for the first time on this day, and the two of them talked about miscellaneous events in their lives throughout the cutting procedure. The following segment begins as Nita has just finished cutting and styling the customer's hair and initiates a service-assessment sequence before the session closure. As seen below, the sequence smoothly completes, taking only 7 seconds. The analysis unpacks how Chaz successfully demonstrates his knowledge about the activity at hand and the new cut over the short time taken for the service evaluation.

Excerpt 1

01 Nita: >show you the back ()<
|
((Nita walks off-camera))
02 (1.5) ((Nita grabs a portable mirror off camera; Chaz gazes towards her))
03 (1.4) ((Nita comes back to Chaz, lightly touches the back of his hair and slightly raises the portable mirror as she walks toward the back of Chaz; Chaz looks at the large mirror and pulls his chin in toward his chest, img 1))



Image 1

04 (0.7) ((Nita places the portable mirror behind Chaz, and adjusts its position))
05 (1.0) ((Chaz looks at the back of his hair through the two mirrors))
06 Chaz: o::: a:::[::
|
((Chaz moves his head slightly upwards, img 2))



Image 2

07 Nita: [>everything's good back the[re:??<
| |
((Nita nods)) ((Chaz pulls his chin in towards his chest))
08 Chaz: [yeah,(.)it's good.=
((Chaz looks up))J |
((Nita lowers the mirror and shifts her gaze from Chaz in the mirror to the back of his hair))
09 Nita: ="okay, good"((walks off-camera, lightly touching the back of Chaz' hair))
|
((Chaz looks to the side, img 3))



Image 3

This example is remarkable in that this particular customer coordinates his actions so that they make publicly visible his knowledge about the service-assessment activity, as well as his evolving knowledge status of the new haircut. Firstly, it is noteworthy how Chaz shows his understanding of when to properly begin self-inspection. Nita initiates the service-assessment sequence by indicating that Chaz ought to inspect the back of his hair (line 1). However, the

material environment for performing the inspection is not yet arranged, thus creating a gap between Nita's initiation (line 1) and the moment the condition for its actual performance is properly arranged (line 5). How the participants organize this time period shows their aligned knowledge towards the activity. Chaz shifts his gaze away from the large mirror and looks toward Nita, who goes to pick up a portable mirror, displaying that he is not yet – and should not be – engaged in the inspection (line 2). As soon as Nita picks up the mirror, he looks to the front, and when she comes close to him, he pulls his chin in, starting his inspection (line 3). Thus, Chaz orients to Nita's verbal initiation in line 1 to start preparing for the imminent inspection, and actively displays his understanding that it is not yet time to begin the inspection. Accordingly, he monitors Nita's actions and synchronizes his bodily orientations to aim for the proper timing to begin self-inspection.

Secondly, Chaz embodies the increased knowledge regarding the new cut during self-inspection. As Nita marks the beginning of inspection by placing and adjusting the mirror behind him (line 4), Chaz performs an inspection (line 5) and provides his reactions (line 6). Two observations about his turn here are of interest: 1) vocally, he creates two distinguishing units with the tone of his voice (the vowels "o:::" and "a:::"); 2) he moves his head up as he utters the second unit of the turn (i.e. as he says "a:::"). With these vocal and embodied actions, Chaz makes explicit his process of gathering relevant information for service evaluation, and displays the change of his knowledge status regarding the new cut. Nita treats Chaz's action as an indication that there are no issues, moving on to solicit a final assessment (line 7). Chaz then provides an affirming response, as he looks up and marks the end of his inspection (line 8). This combination of verbal and embodied practices validates his response as a relevantly positioned and informed assessment, and accordingly, Nita closes the sequence (line 9). Beyond this point, Chaz actively avoids looking at himself reflected in the large mirror, showing his understanding of the inspection being no longer relevant (line 9).

The client's actions in this excerpt demonstrate his solid orientation to displaying certain knowledge for satisfactorily playing the role of client. He displayed his knowledge of the service-assessment activity by simultaneously coordinating his physical movement with those of Nita, arranging together the material condition for the inspection and determining when to begin the actual performance (and to avoid beginning his inspection too soon). During the inspection, he made visible the process of gathering information, embodying his evolving knowledge about the new cut. His public display of enriched self-inspection experience contributed to validating his assessment as informed and authentic, leading Nita to initiate the sequence closure. In the end, Chaz again displayed his knowledge of the service-assessing procedure by avoiding making any bodily moves that might be regarded as continuing the inspection, thus altogether embodying the completed status of the activity.

This example represents what Kuhn and Jackson (2008) would identify as "determinate situation", i.e. ordinary and mundane circumstances that require straightforward actions. The client's actions aligned with, and were aligned by, the stylist's preceding and following actions, smoothly progressing the sequence. Yet, such non-problematic activity accomplishment would not have been made possible without the intensive knowledge work that the client engaged in co-developing the service-assessment activity and generating validated service assessment. In addition, through this excerpt, we also observed exhibited client autonomy. The client did not mindlessly go along with what the professional asked for, but demonstrated their individual thoughts and evaluations by way of their knowledge work. It is in this careful coordination of producing independent actions based on the client's own knowledge, and expected actions informed by their shared knowledge about the hair salon culture, that we find the making of professional clients – accountable to the hairstylist, who has produced the haircut and socially deserves the genuinely-positive feedback, and responsible for knowing their own haircut as the hair owner.

4.2 Displaying too little or too much knowledge

The next two excerpts illustrate how client's knowledge work may depart from the professional's demonstrated expectations. The client in Excerpt 2 displays insufficient knowledge, while the client in Excerpt 3 asserts more knowledge than expected. We start with the case where the client insufficiently performs knowledge work made relevant by the stylist's actions. While Excerpt 1 demonstrated the client's active knowledge display as an integral element of a successful sequence progress, we also witnessed how such work by the client was interactionally made relevant and conformed by the stylist. In other words, the stylist did not ask for a mere verbal assessment, but an "informed" assessment validated by the client's knowledge of the new cut. The stylist's keen orientation to the client's knowledge demonstration becomes observable with the following excerpt, where the client does not effectively evoke her own thought and knowledge.

The hairstylist, Tia, and the customer, Chie, met for the first time when this session was recorded, and discussed how a layered cut would help make Chie's hair feel longer and look lighter and more stylish. With the cutting and styling completed, Tia removes the cape around Chie and tells her to examine the cut. Tia aids Chie's inspection by explaining the differences between before and after, and they jointly evaluate the new haircut. The transcript begins with Tia going on to proffer an assessment of the volume of Chie's hair.

Excerpt 2

01 Tia: like, do you like wearing your hair more like (.) st- more flat,
|
((Tia moves in the front of Chie)) | ((Chie looks at Tia))
02 Tia: straight, or you like the volume.
|
((Chie lowers the mirror a little, shifting her gaze from Tia to the mirror))
03 (1.5) ((Chie continues to look in the hand-held mirror, img 4))



Image 4

04 Chie: I guess I don't really do (.) vo[lume
|
((Chie looks at Tia))
05 Tia: [hehehehehe=
06 Tia: =uh-[huh
07 Chie: [but (.) you know I can't do it, basically.
08 Tia: oh, so do you want more volume though, do it closer to the roo[ts, and the- (.)
09 Chie: [oh, okay
10 Tia: you know how I was doing your hair.=
11 Chie: =uh-huh, (just studying your- how you did)=
| |
((Tia smiles and overtly nods, and ((Chie shifts her gaze from Tia
shifts her posture to turn the chair)) to the hand-held mirror))
12 Tia: =yeah::. that's if you want the volume [(.) on the roots.
|
((Tia turns the chair for 180 degrees in relation to its original position, img 5))
13 Chie: [okay.
|
((Chie shifts her gaze from the hand-held mirror to the large mirror in front of her))



Image 5

14 Tia: cause you know it'll go down throughout the da:y
 |
 ((Chie shifts her gaze back but to the portable mirror)) ((Chie momentarily looks up and nods, soon looks back at the portable mirror))

15 Chie: okay=

16 Tia: =you know

17 (0.7) ((Chie continues to hold up the hand-held mirror))

18 Tia: and you want it more edged out on the the (.) bottom of the hair
 |
 ((Chie repetitively nods and looks at the hand-held mirror))

19 (1.0) ((Tia continues to look at Chie in the large mirror, and Chie continues to look into the hand-held mirror, lifting it up slightly))

20 Tia: °yeah° so: (0.3) >does that look oka[y?<
 |
 ((Chie looks back at the large mirror))
 |
 ((Chie lowers the hand-held mirror))
 ((Tia steps toward and looks directly at Chie, img 6))

21 Chie: [oka:y, >yea<.
 |
 ((Chie looks directly at Tia, nodding))



Image 6

22 Tia: alri^{gh}t, (.) awesome.
 |
 ((Tia takes the hand-held mirror from Chie; Chie looks front))
 ((Tia looks away))

23 Chie: thank yo:u

24 Tia: you're welco:me (0.3) thank you

In lines 1-2, Tia seeks certain information from Chie, namely her preference on wearing her hair. The question is designed to evoke Chie's pre-existing and first-hand knowledge that the stylist does not have access to, in other words: within this knowledge domain, the client carries authority. However, Chie's following actions do not fulfil her expected role. Instead of sharing her preference, Chie orients to the response to be generated through self-inspection, as seen in her gaze shift from Tia to the mirror (line 2) and a moment of self-inspection (line 3). When she finally answers the question, she mitigates her own preference ("I guess") (line 4). It may be worth mentioning that Chie had recently arrived in the U.S. from Japan, and her actions may have come out of her motivation for "negative idealization" (Goffman, 1959, p. 40), i.e. under-playing as a novice, which is commonly viewed positively in Japanese society. Regardless, this behaviour did not meet with the stylist's expectations, i.e. the client did not properly fill her responsive slot with a knowledge display solicited by the stylist. This becomes observable when Tia responds with laughter (line 5), possibly treating Chie's response as a disaffiliative action that needs to be managed (Raclaw & Ford, 2017).

Upon receiving Tia's reaction, Chie immediately works on restoring the delicate moment that had been created by her lack of affiliative action. She accounts for her earlier

response by evoking her novice status; she does not wear volume on her hair because she lacks the skill to do so (line 7). Tia quickly aligns with Chie's move and displays her renewed understanding of Chie's knowledge status ("oh" in line 8) and complements Chie's stance by sharing her expert knowledge (lines 8-10). Chie further embodies her novice role by demonstrating her learning, as seen in the way she framed her following verbal moves, using "oh" (line 9) and "studying how you did" (line 11). The interactional problem created by the client's inadequate knowledge display about her personal preference, has now been solved by the client's active display of insufficient knowledge as hair novice.

The service-assessment sequence could end here, given that the parties have achieved mutual understanding. Consequently, at this point, Tia recompletes her talk (line 12), suggesting a shift from the current activity to next (Hoey, 2017). This verbal move is accompanied with her bodily behaviour of turning the chair back to its original position (line 12), hinting at the imminent completion of the physical inspection. However, the sequence expands with Chie's continued self-inspection. In contrast to Tia's initiation for sequence closure, Chie continues to look back and forth at the large and hand-held mirrors (lines 11-13). In the given context, the client's self-inspection makes relevant an assessment based on the knowledge gathered, or it may imply a negative evaluation (hence what we observed in Excerpt 1, where the client actively avoided looking at the large mirror in front of him to communicate his understanding of the activity closure). Accordingly, Tia post-expands her talk (line 14), which provides Chie with responsive slots to relevantly display her further understanding of how wearing volume works or her updated knowledge of the cut based on the continued inspection. Yet, Chie only acknowledges the information ("okay" in line 15) and does not publicize where she is with her knowledge. While Tia minimally expands her turn (line 16) that may yet again show her initiation to terminate the sequence (Schegloff, 2007), Chie does not align with this move. Instead, this is followed by 0.7 seconds of silence, during which time Chie continues her self-inspection, holding up the hand-held mirror (line 17). Tia then adds another bit of advice about the new cut (line 17), which again creates the relevance of some knowledge work from Chie. Regardless, Chie does not progress with either physical or verbal action: she keeps silent and continues to look into the hand-held mirror (line 19). This becomes problematic; Chie's prolonged self-inspection created space for her to further display her own, evolved knowledge of (and appreciate) the new cut, but she is not performing the knowledge work occasioned by her own actions.

Finally, the stylist makes a drastic move to unblock the activity progression. She directly solicits Chie's assessment regarding the cut. As Tia asks the question (line 20), she also produces an embodied action that indicates her engagement in the conversation with the customer: she steps toward Chie and shifts her gaze from the large mirror to her. In other words, Tia makes Chie's gaze shift to herself, away from the hand-held mirror, conditionally relevant; Chie now has to terminate the inspection and provide confirmation. Chie immediately attends to these relevances by providing a verbal response, lowering the hand-held mirror (line 20), and shifting her gaze to Tia (line 21). While Chie's response here (line 21) is nothing extraordinary (she does not upgrade the assessment with "oh" or other adjectives such as "great", but merely confirms that it looks "okay"), Tia subsequently transforms it into a celebratory moment ("awesome") and takes the hand-held mirror back from Chie (line 22).

In this excerpt, we saw that the stylist offered many opportunities for the client to demonstrate her knowledge and embody autonomy as a competent client. At the beginning, the stylist activated their knowledge asymmetry by asking what the client wanted. When the client expanded the sequence with continued self-inspection, the stylist created relevant responsive slots for the client to display knowledge. While the activity still "satisfactorily"

completed, the moment-by-moment analysis revealed the gap between the client's actions and the professional's orientation and expectation towards the client's knowledge work.

The final excerpt examines what would happen in the opposite case, i.e. when the client demonstrates more knowledge than expected. Jack, the customer in this example, visited the salon in the past, but this is his first time with Adel, the stylist. After cutting Jack's hair, Adel takes time to show Jack how to style the new cut with hair wax, and then solicits Jack's feedback.

Excerpt 3

```
01 Adel: something kinda like so?
          |
          | ((Adel, styling the side of the head, looks at Jack and his hair in the large mirror))
02 (0.5)
03 Jack: "sure," yeah I usually go flip it up a little bit more.
          |
          | ((Jack starts lightly fixing the front with both hands, img 7))
          |
          | ((Adel slightly moves her hands to the back of Jack's haircut and continues stroking his hair))
```



Image 7

```

04 Adel:  flip it up a little bit [more?
           |└((Jack starts fixing more aggressively))
           ((Adel retracts her hands from Jack's hair))

05 Jack:                                     [yeah.

06 (1.5)  ((Jack continues to fix the hair; Adel slightly moves from left to right,
           repetitively nodding))

07 Jack:  like that?

08 (0.7)  ((Adel continues to nod; Jack stops his hand movements, img 8))

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Image 8

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09 Adel:  yeah, yeah, (>yeah<).
           |
           | ((Adel nods three times))
           |
           | ((Jack retracts his hands and puts them down))

```

10 (2.5) ((Adel lightly strokes the side of Jack's hair, img 9))



Image 9

11 Adel: cool, (.) I was pushing forward and you were pushing back
 └─┬─┘ ((Adel shifts gaze down, taking out Jack's collar from under the cover))
 ((Adel lightly strokes the lower back of Jack's haircut))

12 Jack: hh alhhrihhght hh
 └─┘
 ((Adel shrugs shoulder))

13 Adel: you know? hehehe
 |
 ((Adel smiles))

14 (6.0) ((Adel fixes Jack's collar, while Jack and Adel continue smiling))

15 Adel: o::ka[::y.
 └─┘
 ((Adel takes off the cover))

16 Jack: [a:lri::[ght.

17 Adel: [darling.=

18 Jack: =right. (.) great.

19 (1.2) ((Jack stands up))

20 Adel: swe[et.

21 Jack: [thank you.

22 Adel: you're welcome.

Having explained to Jack how to style the cut, Adel asks for Jack's approval (line 1), and Jack provides a positive response ("sure, yeah" in line 3). However, Jack's response is followed by a contradictory statement about Adel's styling work (line 4). Here, he explicitly displays his knowledge about his personal preference for styling. Moreover, he starts fixing the front of his cut with both of his hands while Adel is still stroking the back of his hair. While this is possibly a face-threatening moment for the stylist, who has already spent a good amount of time styling the new haircut, Adel does not treat Jack's comment as new or unanticipated. Instead, she calmly repeats Jack's claim in a question format (line 4), making Jack's affirmative answer relevant next, which he performs via an overlapping response (line 5). However, the problem continues when Jack further intensely fixes his cut on his own, and in fact, Adel relinquishes her access to the cut by retracting her hands (line 4). The action of fixing the style is now completely taken over by the client, blurring the boundaries of the participants' knowledge territory as expert and novice, threatening the stylist's status as a professional.

Adel solves this issue by actively involving herself in the fixing process. As Jack works on fixing the hairstyle, Adel watches his behaviour from behind him, while continuously nodding – sometimes deeply, approximately five times (line 6). This not only indicates her understanding of what Jack has meant by "flip it up a little bit more", but registers Jack's actions as "no news" (Heritage, 2012), claiming her epistemic status as an expert. Also, by reacting to Jack's bodily actions through head nods, Adel transforms Jack's

fixing movements into actions that make her response relevant. That way, Adel successfully turns the revision of the style – once taken over by Jack – into a collaborative event that is being validated by Adel’s supervisory approval. This rather unusual event with the client’s radical knowledge embodiment (among the data collected, this is the only case where the client fully takes over the styling) has been managed through the stylist’s knowledge work. What happens next is the client’s delicate interactional work to align with the stylist’s actions and restore knowledge distribution as hair expert and her client.

Jack affiliates with Adel’s expert stance when he seeks her response as he is close to finishing the restyling (line 7). His utterance here is noteworthy in that he evokes Adel’s knowledgeable role by soliciting her approval on his fixing work. Moreover, Jack keeps his hands frozen around his head even after he finishes styling (line 8), and puts them down only when Adel responds (line 9). Such bodily behavior indicates Jack’s orientation toward Adel’s role as an expert who completes the revising activity, as he could otherwise simply lower his hands before he receives Adel’s approval. Adel affiliates with Jack by repeating “yeah” and overtly nodding (line 9). These actions function to affiliate with Jack’s moves and ensure Jack’s satisfaction, but they also serve to ratify Jack’s work as a hair expert. Her role as the professional is further magnified when she brings her hands back to stroke the side and back of Jack’s hair (line 10). Her hand movements here do not seem to contribute much to the appearance of Jack’s haircut, but she still touches his hair and concludes the event of fixing it. These actions by Jack and Adel portray their appropriate roles in the given context: Adel is the expert who has the right to make a final decision of whether the modification has been successful. The sequence of fixing is followed by Adel’s claim that she had not done anything wrong – yet another way of demonstrating her expertise (line 11). Jack treats this as a joke with laughter (line 12), which Adel joins in with (line 13), leading to a peaceful completion of the sequence (lines 15-22). The client’s excessive knowledge display that initially threatened the value of the service (what is the point of service transaction if the client styles his own cut?) was eventually saved by the client’s delicate knowledge work to align with that of the stylist.

5. Discussion

While professional’s knowledge communication skills are crucial for realising successful client-professional activities, so is the client’s knowledge work. The analysis of the current chapter revealed that the client’s knowledge activation of the activity procedure helped the service-assessment sequence to smoothly launch (Excerpt 1). The client’s ongoing publicization of their evolving knowledge of the new haircut was vital to authenticating their positive service-assessment (Excerpt 1), or the stylist may work on soliciting knowledge display from the client (Excerpt 2). However, such knowledge work was not “freely” conducted by the clients. Client knowledge emerged in sequential environments, as the clients closely monitored the professional’s actions and aligned with the expected degree/type of knowledge display that has been made relevant by the professionals’ course of actions. This interactional work on negotiating knowledge distributions manifested in Excerpt 3, where the client activated and deactivated his epistemic entitlement on a moment-by-moment basis. Indeed, while much literature previously presented imbalanced knowledge distribution as something that needs to be dealt with and managed, we also saw how evoking knowledge asymmetry was a tool to navigate complex client-professional relations. At the time of misaligned knowledge communication, the client may work on solving the problem with further knowledge work – as seen in the first half of Excerpt 2, where the client accounted for her disaffiliative response by evoking her lack of knowledge, and the latter half of Excerpt 3,

where the client restored his affiliative course of action by seeking a knowledgeable approval from the stylist.

A micro-look at the knowledge work engaged by the participants alluded to what it means to competently play the role of client in the given context: 1) as the individual actor with autonomous access to the evaluated object; and 2) as the member of the hair salon community. To begin with the former property, we saw how the client's independency – their capability of thinking and acting for themselves – was mutually oriented to by the professionals and clients. Generally speaking, providing a positive assessment or agreement takes less interactional work when this is structurally a preferred action in a given context (Pomerantz, 1984). A haircut evaluation is not an exception. On a micro-level, the stylist initiates the service-assessment sequence with an action that structurally prefers a positive assessment (e.g. “does that look okay?”); on a macro-level, the specific context makes the client's positive assessment a preferred outcome, when the client service satisfaction generates a fair transaction. Therefore, we could imagine that the client's evaluative response can be made effortlessly, especially when they want to simply agree with the stylist. The analysis of the current study, however, suggests the opposite. The clients engaged in intensive knowledge work to produce an assessment that is recognizably “their own”.

Knowledge work facilitates identity work (Raymond & Heritage, 2006), and accordingly, the clients, with above-mentioned actions, constructed a certain identity of autonomous client. The nature of service at hand, a new haircut, cannot be evaluated in clear-cut ways like a quantified service can be with a clear measure of whether something now works or not (e.g. a mechanical repair). Instead, it must be evaluated with people's subjective perspectives and preferences. The client, accordingly, made their inner states publicly available for the stylist. It is such knowledge/identity work of the clients as individual actors, which realised an authentic and valid customer evaluation that is “free from” professional influence.

Yet, we may start to question whether the clients were truly independent, when we observe another demand the client fulfilled with their knowledge work, namely: playing the role of hair salon consumer who shares the cultural-specific knowledge of hair salon community. We, social beings, grow up learning how to manage our epistemic display (Drew, 1991), but our learnings must be constantly adjusted as we construct and reconstruct various contexts. The clients we observed embodied the hair salon rituals through their knowledge work, as seen in the ways they navigated their responsive actions and evaluative performance. Such actions were artfully put together through a number of micro-actions, such as shifting and diverting gaze, holding a hand-held mirror and designing a verbal assessment with “oh”s and accompanying gestures. They were all assembled timely to function as meaningful resources for competently carrying out doing knowing as an independent thinker, and other times, doing not-knowing as a novice. It is these educated skills of using the material environments in contextually relevant ways that shape the shared culture of hair salons. Accordingly, when a client fails in expected knowledge work, they may also fail in becoming a valid member of the community. Outside the salon, the client in Excerpt 2 expressed (to the videographer alone) her unsatisfactory feelings of how their conversation and consultation unfolded. What we captured in the last moments of their session – the misalignment between the stylist's expectation of what the client should know regarding salon rituals and their own preference, and the client's ways of upholding the stylist's expertise through evoking insufficient knowledge – might have led to an unsatisfactory departure from each other, and left the client with the feeling of not belonging.

Indeed, sustaining an “epistemic community” (Goodwin, 2013) and a shared culture requires much interactional labour. For the case at hand, clients must engage in various acts to play a competent member of the given, shared culture, but they must also actively display

their inner state to fulfil their epistemic responsibility as the haircut owner and paying client. Hair salons are typically known as a place to pamper the clients' body and mind (Black, 2004), requiring the professional's emotional labour (Toerien & Kitinger, 2007). Yet, observing the client's tense knowledge work, we may wonder if they may leave the salon feeling relaxed and pampered, or if they may be interactionally consumed and emotionally drained – leading to an increased demand for a “silent” haircut service today (Greenslade 2021). While knowledge work is integral to an accomplishment of complex client-professional activities, we may have to be mindful of not turning the work into knowledge labour, which may be detrimental to healthy and sustainable client-professional relations.

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