Chapter 7
The Intersubjective Valuation of Service

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7.1 Introduction

Value is a central concern for service, and practitioners aim to increase the value of their services. While customers seek high-value services, we know little about service value itself. In the case of products, we can design a product better in terms of its aesthetics, functionality, performance, and cost. However, services are comprised of more than products; specifically, we can increase value by creating better offerings—such as food, in the case of restaurants, and a well-designed space—but service is more than and differs from its offerings and environment.

In fact, design principles appear to differ between products and services. Regarding the former, we can make the products easier to use, less confusing to users, and aesthetically pleasing, or use human-centered design (Norman 2013; Stickdorn and Schneider 2011). In contrast, many services are designed to be difficult and confusing. For example, upscale restaurants sometimes intimidate customers unaccustomed to such establishments. Their menu lists are cryptic, and often written in professional jargon or sometimes in foreign languages. Further, customers must master many esoteric mannerisms. The food and drinks offered in upscale restaurants can be so subtle, nuanced, and norm-breaking that inexperienced customers cannot easily appreciate them.

If we cannot simply design services to be easier, more transparent, and aesthetically pleasing, then how should services be designed? We need a proper theoretical basis to answer this question. While no existing theory seems to offer a full answer,

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we can draw on some recent developments in service-related theory, or particularly service-dominant logic (Lusch and Vargo 2014; Vargo and Lusch 2004). This suggests that value is always co-created by the involved parties, which include both customers and service providers, as "the customer is always a co-creator of value" (Lusch and Vargo 2014, p. 15). This suggests that service cannot be considered on the traditional assumption of subject-object separation in which someone—such as a customer—is simply observing an object—the service—and subjectively judging its value. Service lies not in the individual, but in the transaction between these parties—hence, service can be considered "intersubjective" (Edvardsson et al. 2010; Helkkula et al. 2012; Löbler 2011; Peters et al. 2014; Yamauchi 2018).

We develop a theoretical perspective to explain service value by drawing on an empirical analysis of actual service practices. Specifically, we examine sushi bars in Tokyo and a classical restaurant in France. Our empirical analysis reveals that customers are often tested and pressured to exhibit their knowledge and skills, and illustrates the intersubjective nature of value.

7.2 Value of Service

7.2.1 Problems with Value

Value is said to be determined phenomenologically: "Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary" (Lusch and Vargo 2014, p. 15). Therefore, no value exists in essence, but each person experiences and constructs value through his or her own perceptions. Namely, value is largely subjective depending on how the person perceives it. We need this phenomenological value to refute the supposition that value resides in goods, as phenomenology examines how things manifest themselves to humans, and not the things themselves. Naturally, the person does not have to be fully conscious of this subjective value, as the person experiences the value in their embodied act within a concrete, material situation, and not internally. Nonetheless, value is unique to the person and the situation the person experiences, and therefore, such value is said to be "idiosyncratic" (Lusch and Vargo 2014, p. 23).

This conceptualization of value is problematic in many ways. First, this value is simply inaccessible: Each person determines value on his or her own, and there is no way we can predict, estimate, or assess such value, as it depends on the individual. Thus, the value is as useful as it is random, and practically useless because regardless of what the service provider does, idiosyncratic value is determined elsewhere.

Lusch and Vargo (2014, 2016) anticipated this problem, and have since emphasized the institutional aspects of value (Lusch and Vargo 2014; Vargo and Lusch 2016). Value is institutional in the sense that it is not something arbitrary that

can be determined only within ephemeral and contingent practices; it is determined in the social structures that produce and are reproduced by these practices. We can reasonably predict the value. Yet, how can we reconcile this institutionalized value and idiosyncratic value? Phenomenologists themselves have long struggled to explain intersubjectivity through subjective perceptions (Husserl 1950; Merleau-Ponty 2002).

The second problem is that while this value relies on the subject that faces an object, service cannot be an object. Service is defined as "the application of competences (knowledge and skills) for the benefit of another entity or the entity itself" (Lusch and Vargo 2014, p. 12). Thus defined, service is not something that we can count and compile. The service is "singular" (Lusch and Vargo 2014, p. 20), distinguished from "services" in plural, and the former cannot be a type of object that a person can easily confront and perceive. Therefore, it is too simplistic to suggest that a beneficiary can determine a service's value as if the subject can determine the value of an object.

7.2.2 Intersubjective Value

How should we consider the value of service? An important clue to answering this question is the claim that value is co-created. One person cannot unilaterally create value, as it is always collectively created by the parties involved, including customers. This principle stems from the assumption that service always involves a joint achievement among involved parties, and anyone participating in the service cannot simply receive the service, but actively constructs it. If this is the case, then the service cannot be reduced to any one participant, but rather resides between them. That is to say, service is intersubjective (Yamauchi 2018). Value is co-created when the service is jointly achieved.

Intersubjectivity can have many definitions; here, it refers to the social reality that is achieved among people through their interactions. Unlike phenomenologists, we do not need to begin with subjectivity to understand intersubjectivity, as we can begin with the interactions among people, and analyze how other people will present themselves to us. We focus on what happens between people and the actions they present to one another, which cannot be reduced to any of their cognitive intentions or internal sensations.

Intersubjective value can be understood in various ways. First, when we talk about a service's value, all participants are implicated in the service. They all jointly produce the service, and therefore, are inseparable from it. Subsequently, the service's value encompasses the value of the participants, who are inseparable part of the service. Therefore, each party must present and negotiate who he or she is.

Service providers in this intersubjective realm presenting high-value services cannot satisfy customers solely with high value, as these customers must ascend to that high value to value themselves as equal, if not higher. For example, patrons visiting an upscale restaurant may often experience anxiety or concern about their behavior.

This demonstrates that the individual's value as a consumer is relevant, and especially the extent to which they are experienced, knowledgeable, and sophisticated. A type of intersubjective struggle occurs in services in which value is co-created.

Second, value as an intersubjective achievement resides not in the perceptions of any one participant, but in the interactions between them. Therefore, we focus on how a person presents value to others and not what the person has in mind, as this is not accessible to others in the situation—nobody can read other's mind. What is presented to each other is the sole mechanism by which service is jointly achieved; this value is therefore only as presented, and does not exist elsewhere, such as in another consumer's perceptions. Subsequently, each person's perceptions relate to—but exist external to—the intersubjective value.

This presentation of value does not need to be conscious or verbal. Individuals affected by something often exhibit this affect through body language in general, and in particular facial expressions, postures, body movements, and tones of voice. Goffman (1961, p. 35) noted, "Although an individual can stop talking, he [sic] cannot stop communicating through body idiom; he must say either the right thing or the wrong thing. He cannot say nothing." This also means that the value presented is not always determinate, and we can often only guess what a particular body idiom means and sometimes misinterpret it. Nonetheless, people can function in most everyday situations without substantial problems, often by repairing any misunderstandings along the way. Therefore, value is achieved through such open interactions.

Third, we may need to evolve beyond the traditional notion of intersubjectivity given the recent "material turn" in the social sciences (Carlile et al. 2013; Pinch and Swedberg 2008), in which materiality is emphasized in an effort to decenter the sovereign human subject. This modernist thought on soverign human subject has been criticized for its emphasis on human subjects that can unilaterally constitute the world. Further, the agency of any human action cannot be reduced to the subject or its intentionality, but instead distributed among various other elements (Latour 2007). Consequently, we must examine both material objects and the humans implicated in service.

For instance, the upscale restaurant is not any arbitrary space, but is carefully designed. The menu is often cryptic in these establishments, and often no written menu is provided. The wine list is also obscure unless the customer has extensive prior knowledge. Employees exhibit formal behavior and everyone is properly dressed and performs their rituals well. Such material arrangements are consequential for intersubjective value. While customers can highly value these material arrangements as something non-quotidian and sophisticated, they are also tested regarding their sufficient qualifications to participate in this environment. In this sense, intersubjectivity in this scenario also involves materiality.

As this study aims to illustrate these ideas regarding intersubjective value through an empirical analysis, we will explain our empirical studies.

7.3 Research Design

We examine intersubjective value in two different settings: sushi bars in Tokyo and a classical restaurant in France. The restaurant setting is suitable for this study as it presents prototypical service situations. We began our research with sushi bars and discovered that the service value was intersubjective (Yamauchi 2018; Yamauchi and Hiramoto 2016). Nonetheless, this finding was often questioned, as sushi bars are highly culture-specific and an extreme case. Customers are typically intimidated by sushi bars, as customers must possess substantial knowledge of sushi to appreciate the service. Further, little guidance is provided, the chefs are not necessarily caring, and no prices are indicated—intimidating because of the uncertain final bill.

Therefore, we also chose to study service in another culture. France is considered as a country with one standard of service within the western world, with the restaurant as a service establishment invented in France just before the French Revolution (Spang 2000). This service form was then diffused to various other parts of the world, with French-style table manners as a global standard.

Our work draws on an ethnomethodological perspective (Garfinkel 1967; Sacks 1995; Schegloff 2007), as this is helpful in addressing such intersubjective value. Ethnomethodology seeks to explain how people work together to create social order in their activities. Essentially, social order is achieved by participants who understand one another although they cannot read each other's minds. Ethnomethodological research examines how participants themselves present their accounts of actions. One takes actions that are not arbitrary, but something intelligible; therefore, this perspective seeks to capture intersubjectivity.

We set up at least four cameras and several voice recorders in four different sushi bars to capture patrons' interactions; we also analyzed drink orders throughout. We chose traditional, high-end sushi bars in Tokyo, in which customers are seated at a counter across from the chef who prepares the sushi (Fig. 7.1). There are two different styles: *okonomi* and *omakase*. *Okonomi* is the "as you please" style; you order one sushi, the chef makes it, you eat it, and then repeat this. *Omakase* (or chef's choice) is

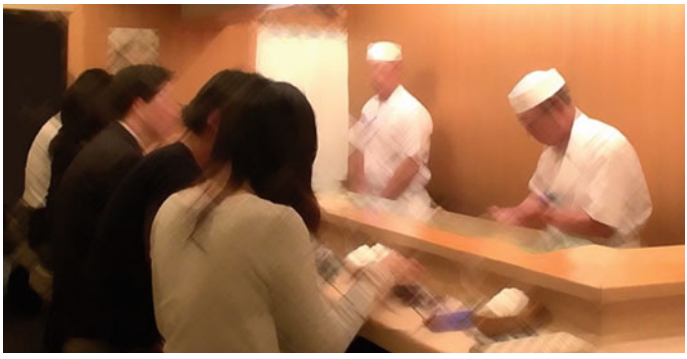

Fig. 7.1 A sushi bar

Fig. 7.2 The French restaurant

a newer style with a pre-prepared course. However, customers in this case are asked to order additional sushi after the course. Two of the four sushi bars we studied were *okonomi* and the other two *omakase*.

Among the various interactions between the service providers (chefs) and customers, we determined that order-taking was particularly noteworthy because customers presented themselves in these interactions, as our following analysis will demonstrate. Other interactions, such as serving food and drinks and some other general conversations, were less salient in this regard. We transcribed these interactions according to the standard system used in conversation analyses (Appendix).

Our analysis then examined wine-tasting practices in a classical restaurant in France, in which customers must present their knowledge and experience as with order-taking in sushi bars. Figure 7.2 illustrates one of the rooms we used, with interactions between the sommelier and customers videotaped and analyzed in detail. We installed cameras on tripods, both from a distance and on the table with a 360 degree lens; and voice recorders, both on the table and on the sommelier.

We observed the interactions involving these customers and either one professional sommelier or one professional *maître-d'hôtel* (head waiter). All the interactions occurred in French. The original French transcript is followed by an English translation in grey. All the figures containing participants are anonymized with an image filter.

7.4 Placing Orders at Sushi Bars in Tokyo

We begin with the following interaction that occurred just after the customers arrived and were guided to their seats. The chef (hereafter, "Chf") asked "What would you like to drink?" as the customers were seated. At this moment, no written menu was

provided and no explanation was provided about this sushi bar and its offerings. These customers had not previously visited this establishment.

```
01 Chf U::m .hhh to begin (0.5) [What] would you like to drink.=
02 A1a                          [Yes-]
03 A1a =Mm::::(.)because it is <humid>: I'll have ddraft beer:
04 Chf >Let's go with draft b[eer<
05 A1a                       [Is dra[ft okay¿
06 Chf                              [>Yes it is<
       ((continues))
```

Responding to the chef's question, the customer (A1a) stammers, "draft beer," with prolonged end sounds for "beer." The customer looked down when responding, but looked up at the chef while prolonging the sound. This indicates that the customer was orienting his action toward the chef's feedback and presenting uncertainty in his action. In this case, the customer also prefaced this order item with the phrase "because it is humid," which demonstrates that he needed to qualify, rationalize, or justify his choice. Accepting this answer, the chef then responded, "Let's go with draft beer." The "let's" suggests that the chef chose to involve himself in this order, effectively presenting his agreement with the customer's choice.

Through this interaction, we can see that the chef asked the question rather abruptly without any clue. This question was challenging, although issued as if it were easy and benign. The customer then exhibited some uncertainty in his reply, which reflected the customer's experience. The chef then accepted the uncertain answer.

This can be contrasted with the next fragment at a different sushi bar. The same question is issued with the same timing; again, this is a first-time customer.

```
01 AS  What would you like to dr[ink
02 B3                          [Beer please
03     (.)
04 AS  As for beer (.) We have large and small [bottles
05 B3                                         [We↑:ll
06 B3  All right then a small bottle.
07     (0.2) ((AS nods))
```

This customer (B3) answers the server's (AS) question—in this case, the server approached and very concisely asked for a drink order with the same timing. In this case, the customer began to answer before the server's question ended, which demonstrates that he had anticipated this question. This answer reveals that the customer had some experience with sushi bars. This customer did not exhibit uncertainty, either. The consice answer "Beer please" without any prolonged sound or a glance back at the server.

The next fragment illustrates a case in which the customer (A3a) could not answer promptly, unlike the previous two fragments, and the chef provided some hints.

```
01 Chf What would you like to drink
02            (0.5)
03 A3a We::ll uh::m (1.2) (........)[do you have
04 Chf                              [Ah beer,
05 A3a °un:°=
06 Chf =sake,
07 A3a Yes.
08 Chf U:m shochu.
09     (0.4)
10 A3a °hum°=
11 Chf =a glass of (0.3) white wine or, champagne° `
12 [or something°
13 A3a                                                [huh:
14 A3a .hh uh:m <for me> beer(0.3)for beer how many kinds do
15     you have
       ((continues))
```

A noticeably long 0.5 s pause occurs after the chef's usual question, "What would you like to drink?" The chef could recognize that the customer's answer was not forthcoming, and most likely the customer could not answer. The chef then provided some beverage examples as hints, such as beer, sake, and *shochu*. These hints indicate that the chef understood that the customer could not answer without assistance.

These analyses reflect general patterns in these conversations, as the service provider asks a question abruptly and without any clues when the customer is about to sit. Through this question, the service provider tests whether the customer can reply, as his or her answer clarifies the customer's experience. In this short, seemingly benign interaction, we observe that the customer is implicated in the service, and the customer's value—who he or she is—matters.

7.5 Wine Tasting in a Restaurant in France

7.5.1 Tasting Wine

We now examine how customers taste wine. When they order a bottle, tasting is required to approve the wine—they cannot refuse it unless it is corked, or a bad cork. Customers can also comment on the wine, or whether they like it. Whey they order a glass of wine, which is typically based on the sommelier's recommendation, customers can make more judgmental comments regarding whether they like it. In this tasting, the customers' knowledge and skills become salient.

Fig. 7.3 The sommelier staring at the customer

```
01 SOM Je me permets de vous faire goûter si vous voulez (.)
       I allow myself to make you taste if you want (.)
02     Chablis. ((inhale))(0.4) La cuvée Saint Martin du
       Chablis ((inhale))(0.4) The cuvée Saint Martin form
       the
03     domaine la Roche sur les millésimes 2016 madame
       domain La Roche on the vintage 2016 madam
04 CL2 Mer[ci
       Thank you
05 SOM    [Je vous en prie?
          [Please
       ((omitted))
11     ((SOM pours champagne to the next customer)) (11.0)
12     ((SOM looks at CLI2, Figure 3)) (4.0)
13 CL2 Ben oui il est bon. ((laughs))
       Well yeah it is good.
14 ALL clients (laugh)
15 SOM Vous avez vu je vous ai mis de la pression hein?
       Have you noticed I put the pressure on you isnt'it?
16 CL2 Ouais
       Yep
```

In this interaction, the sommelier (SOM) stares at the customer without saying anything (Fig. 7.3). The customer (CL2) notices this and responds. However, as soon as she says, "Well, yeah, it is good," she laughs and the other customers laugh as well. This laughter appears to suggest that the customer did not follow the rule by approving of the glass of wine, but instead had the sommelier wait. In this case, the sommelier's visible action of waiting for an approval pressured the customer. As many customers cannot perform the wine-tasting ritual naturally, the customer's unease is made salient in this case, although humorously.

Typically, the sommelier describes the wine before the customer tastes it, then presents the *etiquette* (label) and discusses the *cuvee* (batch), *domaine* (vineyard), and the vintage. In some cases, the sommelier pours wine for tasting without these explanations. In the following fragment, a customer tries to guess the wine.

```
       ((Other customers have already approved their glasses
       before two female customers))
54 SOM Mesdames.
       Ladies.
55     (2.0)
56 CL3 Très bien
       Very good
57 CL4 Très très bien.=
       Very very good.=
58 SOM =Parfait  ((set the bottle back on the rolling table))
       =Very well
59 CL4 <Ça aussi c'est, c'est un Bourgogne?>
       <this one too is, it is a Burgundy?>
60 SOM ((sees the CLI4 and leans in))
61 CL4 C'est un Bourgogne?
       It is a Burgundy?
62     (0.4)
63 SOM Pas [du tout.
       Not [at all.
64 CL4     [Pas du tout. [(2.0) J'ai tenté!
           [Not at all.  [(2.0) I gave it a try!
65 ALL     [((laugh))
```

The sommelier prompted the two female customers to comment on the wine (line 54). The customers (CL3 and CL4) then approved their wines (lines 56 and 57). CL4 then guessed that her wine was Burgundy. The sommelier reacted to this with a frown, jokingly, and said, "Not at all" (line 63). The customers laughed. The sommelier then began to discuss the wine and added, "It is quite aromatic, which is why it gives rise to a bit of confusion with Burgundy wines."

Whether one can tell the difference is an important theme. We have consistently found this type of guessing in our dataset, as most customers could not tell or guessed in error, but this seems to be a part of the "game."

7.5.2 Behaving in a Proper Manner

Customers also orient toward the norms in a situation. In this kind of classical restaurant, customers presented their understanding that they should behave in a proper manner. In the following fragment, three male customers and one female customer were seated at the table. One of the male customers (CL3) ordered a bottle, but when tasting, he noted that the female customer (CL4) should taste it first (lines 6 and 7).

```
05 SOM à qui puis-je faire goûter? (0.4) le chab[lis?
       to who may I have the wine tasted? (0.4) le Chablis?
06 CL3         [ah ben à madame? (.)
               [ah wellto madam? (.)
07     hein pourquoi pas?(0.1) non? qu'est-ce t'en penses? hein
       why not? (0.1) no? what do you think of it?
08     (0.3)
09 CL4 (bon bon) allez (2.0) cassons les codes (2.0) merci
       go (2.0) let's break the codes (2.0) thank you
10 SOM je vous en prie
       please
11     (9.0)(CLI4 tastes the wine)
12 CL4 ((nods)) [ouais]
                [yeah ]
13 SOM          [(ça va?)]
                [(alright?)]
14 CL4 trés bien
       very well
15 CL3 ça se goûte?
       is it tasty?
16 CL4 oui (0.2) ah ouais il est super bon
       yes (0.2) ah yes it is super good
17     (4.0)
18 CL4 ouais (.) il est succulent ((smiles))
       Yes (.) it is succulent
19 CL1 merci  ((to SOM))
       thank you
20     (4.0)
21 CL4 il est délicieux
       it is delicious
```

When CL3 said CL4 should taste the wine, he tried to justify his act by saying, "Why not?" then sought approval from the female customer with "What do you think of it?" CL4 then accepted it, but commented, "Let's break the code," referring to the rule that the person who ordered the wine should taste it. At this point, they are both oriented toward the social code to which they should behave.

She first described the wine as "super good (*super bon*)" in line 17, then upgraded the expression to "it is succulent" (line 19). The "super good" is casual, while "succulent" is a more formal expression that is not commonly used; CL4 therefore corrected her first expression with one that is more proper. She then added, "Delicious," bringing an ordinary expression into the conversation and exhibiting three different behaviors: casual, formal, and ordinary.

This interaction reveals that customers orient toward a norm in both their rituals and manner. If a casual way of speaking is their quotidian reality, then they are performing a formal, specialized role. These customers' behaviors then indicate not only how they value themselves, but also how others evaluate them. Nonetheless, this is all done through humor; for example, CL4 smiled when she used an uncommon expression. These customers do not necessarily adhere to norms completely, but instead may distance themselves from them to some extent.

7.5.3 *Presenting Negative Evaluation*

Next, we examine a conversation fragment in which customers negatively evaluate glasses of red wine; they had ordered one fish and one meat course prior to ordering the wine. One customer at this table (CL1) performs the tasting ritual quite seriously, taking ample time with each step:

```
       ((SOM pours wine for CL2))
01 SOM puis-je me permettre
       Can I allow myself
       (5.0) ((SOM pours wine for CL1))
02     on va goûter sur des (2.0) des belles Syrah sur les
       we will taste (.) beautiful Syrah on the
03     Saint-joseph la Cuvée du Papy de Stéphane Montez en
       20<15>
       Saint-joseph the Cuvée du Papy of Stéphane Montez in
       2015
04 CL1 du Syrah Saint-joseph? ((nods))
       some Syrah Saint-joseph?
05     (25.0) ((CL1&2 smell and look at the wine, Figure 3))
06     (4.0) ((CL1&2 drinks the wine))
07     (13.0) ((CL1&2 examine the finish))
```

The customers took some time to taste the wine while the sommelier waited, still holding the bottle (Fig. 7.4). These customers first observed the glasses of wine for only 25 s, then began drinking. This performance in front of the sommelier indicates the customers' confidence in scrutinizing the wine.

After more than 40 s of tasting, the customer (CL1) speaks, beginning with a general positive comment ("pleasant"), then an elaborate negative one ("a little bit young"). In this case, we can also observe that the general positive comment ("pleasant") was not highlighted using, for example, "very (*très*)," which typically occurs.

Fig. 7.4 Smelling and observing the wine

Fig. 7.5 Shaking head

```
       ((CL1 nods while shaking the head))
08 CL1 Tch oui? il est agréable
       Tch yes? it is pleasant
09 SOM comment?
       How's that?
10 CL1 il- il est agréable oui (.) j'aurais peu- un petit peu
       it is pleasant yes (.) I would may- a little
11     mieux: si- il est peut être un petit peu jeune encore
       better:  if it is perhaps still a little bit young
12     peut être je sais pas non non?
       maybe I don't know no no?
```

This evaluation was in fact anticipated by his shaking of the head (Fig. 7.5), which conveyed that the customer had more to say; this explains why the sommelier then issued a further "How's that? (*Comment?*)" to solicit more information. The customer took this as a solicitation for further elaboration of the negative impression in this case.

We omit the sommelier's response for brevity, but he essentially wants to propose something different and asks what the customer would prefer; the customer replies with a more elaborate explanation.

```
26 CL1 j'aurais peut être un petit peu plus:.(3.0) il
       I would maybe a little more:. (.) it is
27     a un accueil agréable en nez mais: c'est vrai qu'en:
       pleasantly welcoming in the nose but: that is true
       that:
28     (2.0) il a peu de mmm: peu de persistance en bouche ou
       it has a little mmm: a little persistence in mouth or
29     quelque chose comme ça peut être j'en attendais
       something like that maybe I was expecting perhaps
30     peut-être un peu plus derrière=
       a little bit more behind
```

This customer suggests that the wine lacks “persistence in the mouth,” although it had a “pleasant welcoming (aroma) in the nose.” As he had expected something more in the wine’s finish, the sommelier then explains that he chose this less powerful wine to pair with the fish course:

```
31 SOM =d'accord. (2.0) c'est pour ça que je voulais
       okay (.) that is why I wanted to pair it with the
32     l'accompagner avec le poisson (5.0) ce coté sans trop
       fish (.) this side without
33     avoir de puissance justement
       having too much power precisely
```

This can be interpreted as an excuse, as the sommelier could not openly disagree with the customer, but simultaneously had to present himself as a skilled professional. Subsequently, the customer agrees with this assertion (“it will maybe pair well with the fish”), begins to concede, and ultimately agrees with the sommelier.

```
34     (2.0)
35 CL1 voilà
36 SOM Mais après [on peut on peut on peut
37 CL1            [effectivement vous avez raison [il va-
       that’s it (.) indeed you are right it will-
38 SOM                                            [no no non
                                                  [no no no
39 CL1 il va peut-être bien [aller avec le poisson
       it will maybe well pair with the fish
40 SOM                     [no no non quand je dis j'ai raison
                           [no no no when I say I am right it
41     c'est juste que- je vous dis ce que j'ai fait (.) après
       is just that- I tell you what I did (.) then
42     moi j'ai pa-pas forcément rai- raison j'ai pas la science
       I am no-not necessarily ri-right I don’t know everything
43     infuse faut pas:. vous inquiétez pas mais je peux essayer
       don’t. don’t worry but I can try
44     de vous faire goûter quelques chose?
       to make you taste something?
```

The customer aligns with the sommelier’s justification: “Indeed, you are right; it will maybe pair well with the fish.” The customers eventually decide to choose this wine rather than try something else. In fact, the customer began to smile when hearing the sommelier’s longer remark in line 12. The customer’s comment in line 37—“Indeed, you are right”—indicates that whether the sommelier is right is an issue in addition to the quality of wine, or specifically, the valuation of the sommelier himself is relevant.

In summary, we observe a more marked negotiation of value than in the previous fragment, as the customers performed a thorough tasting routine for over 40 s in front of the sommelier. The customer negatively evaluated the wine and conveyed his expectations of something with at least a better finish, which clearly indicated

his extensive knowledge of wine. The sommelier conceded and suggested different wines, but also presented his own justification, which ultimately compelled the customer to become less confident.

7.6 Discussions

Our empirical analysis revealed the intersubjective nature of value. In sushi bars, chefs defined their service by posing a difficult question without any clue as if it were an easy one, as their customers should be able to easily answer this question. In a sense, the chefs were valorizing their service. Consequently, the customers could not simply evaluate the service, but needed to demonstrate that they were qualified for the service as defined by answering the question as if it were simple. However, many customers also presented impressions that they were not fully qualified through their body as well as their talk, while other more experienced customers could answer the question confidently.

The French restaurant scenario included a norm that customers should comment on the wines that they taste. Customers' knowledge was tested here; specifically, some inexperienced customers felt pressured to behave properly in performing the ritual and using sophisticated language. Alternatively, experienced customers could present themselves as more than simply qualified to participate in the service. They often meticulously performed tasting routines—which conveys that they know how to appreciate and judge wine—and made negative comments to demonstrate their knowledge.

We began with the question, "How can we explain the value of service when it differs from that of products?" A service is often designed to be difficult, intimidating, and aesthetically subtle, while products must be easy to use, empowering, and aesthetically pleasing. The answer to our question rests on the intersubjectivity of service, which implicates all participants who co-create value. The service's value encompasses the value of all parties, while the customer's value refers to whether the customer's knowledge and experience is sufficient to qualify for the service.

A service is designed to be difficult for users for two reasons: First, service providers must present the value of their services, and a valuable service should illustrate something that customers do not already know, as a familiar service is not perceived as worthy. Therefore, the service space and artifacts must not be simple or transparent, which is even the case for casual services. For instance, popular coffee shops use Italian words that most customers do not know; they present their service as non-quotidian and perhaps as authentic Italian espresso bar culture. Faced with this presentation, customers then must demonstrate that they are qualified for what they are not necessarily familiar with; hence, customers are pressured to present themselves.

Second, customers do not simply want to receive a high-value service, but also want to prove themselves and gain recognition. This can be observed in cases of experienced customers who present themselves as knowledgeable and serious about

wine. However, other customers also orient toward this recognition when seeking to smoothly perform the ritual and use the proper language. These customers are all interested in how others perceive them.

7.6.1 Dialectic of Value

This recognition from others is at the heart of intersubjectivity, and we can formulate this using a Hegelian dialectic. Hegel's (1977) lord-bondsman dialectic illustrates that a person as a self-consciousness struggles with others because it seeks recognition from them. This is because when one's self-consciousness seeks recognition from others, it must present its competence, but this denotes a competence over others in the intersubjective relationship, negating the others. This person is in turn negated by others, creating a "life-or-death" struggle. In a service context, the service provider negates customers by presenting the value of the service that is typically beyond the customer's competence; the customer also negates the service provider by demonstrating their superior knowledge.

Hegel (1977) then explains that if one abandons this struggle, one becomes a bondsman to the other, who becomes the lord. At this moment, the lord can obtain the perfect recognition that he or she has sought from the onset, but this recognition is already meaningless because it is the recognition from someone subservient to the lord, rather than independent. The lord ultimately enjoys what the bondsman can produce. This leads to another moment that determines whether the bondsman can secure his own certainty given the material labor needed to produce objects, while the lord now depends on the bondsman.

This dialectic demonstrates that customers cannot obtain recognition from a subservient service provider; in other words, customers must be negated by an independent service provider, then seek to prove themselves. Only then can they achieve recognition. This is the reason why a service is often cryptic, obscure, and intimidating to customers: This struggle is a part of the service, and the customers are negated. If a service provider attempts to satisfy a customer, then the customer cannot be satisfied, as the service provider becomes subservient to the customer and his or her service is no longer valuable.

Nonetheless, this entire discussion is not necessarily firmly grounded in a Hegelian dialectic. In our case, the customer pays the service provider to serve him; this differs from the lord, who has total domination over the bondsman. In a sense, we repeat the same dialectic in capitalism: The customer becomes the master, but only while paying for the service. If the service provider seeks to satisfy the customer, it is not to serve the lord but to serve himself, and to profit from the customer. As this is principally a one-time relationship, it is therefore not binding: Strangers will meet briefly during the service, and will not meet again after (Callon 1998).

The service dialectic in our current highly capitalist society can be said to be a rather pure form of the dialectic, as we can assume that individuals who enter into this struggle are both free and independent—mutual recognition requires such

free, independent individuals. A credible grand narrative no longer exists to allocate individuals within a given social structure; "each individual is referred to himself [sic]" (Lyotard 1984, p. 15). Individuals can—or must—principally make decisions on their own, but all simultaneously refer to themselves, as "each of us knows that our *self* does not amount to much" (Lyotard 1984, p. 15). Free, independent individuals are converted into atoms that must become secured by relating to others. Given this, we seek mutual recognition, and it is now upon us as to how we prove ourselves.

Serivce mediates a majority of social relationships in capitalism. In this situation where free individuals confront one another, the dialectic struggle works well but only to the extent that this is all part of a "game" (Lyotard 1984, p. 16). One seeks recognition only to profit; the struggle is far from "life-or-death." Therefore, the dialectic is repeated in such a way that once realized in its purity, the dialectic struggle is no longer what it aimed to be. The dialectic struggle we observed is a game in which individuals participate to seek mutual recognition. Eventually, this recognition is doubly dialectical; first, it is no longer meaningful when it is obtained from someone subservient, and second, it is only meaningful as part of a game.

7.6.2 Contradictory Designs

Value in this instance is intersubjective, as it lies not in one of the involved parties, but only between them. This value cannot be concentrated in a single place, or even in multiple places, and manifests only within the interaction. This does not mean that the value is not real, as value is not fixated within a person or an object, but it is performed (Dewey 1939; Muniesa 2011). Thus, we should discuss valuation as a verb, and not value as a noun. Our empirical analysis has revealed how such valuations are presented and negotiated in interactions.

The customer certainly has some judgment about a service, even when he or she does not express it. Even expressed appreciation of a service is not certain. While smiling and commending the service, he or she may then never return. This study's proposed intersubjective framework suggests that customers cannot simply express their thoughts, but their expressions are a part of their self-presentation. For instance, an upscale restaurant's aesthetic often forces customers to distance themselves from visceral reactions (Bourdieu 1984), and thus, the idea that we can understand customers' true evaluations is a myth. Whatever the customers express—or choose not to express—is a part of their performance. Similarly, asking for evaluations—such as through customer satisfaction surveys—is also a part of this performance; the customer can recognize that the service provider is interested in his or her evaluation, and this alters their relationship and the evaluation itself, rendering the service provider relatively subservient to the customer.

Nonetheless, we cannot ignore subjective judgment; in fact, service providers themselves orient toward customers' judgment, and the former assesses customers' actual satisfaction in many ways. By directly interacting with customers, sushi chefs have many opportunities to observe customers' reactions. Similarly, one customer

in the French restaurant verbalized a positive comment of "pleasant," but only while shaking his head, which prompted the sommelier to sense a problem and further clarify the customer's judgment.

Therefore, it is important to understand that subjective value is also relevant, while a service's value is inherently intersubjective. When the value is subjective, the subject separates from the object. In this framework, it makes sense to design the object to be easier for users, as there is no reason to render it to be more difficult and challenging. Subsequently, it is not relevant to ask who the subject is. As we observed, we must do the opposite when the value is co-created and therefore intersubjective: The service must be difficult. How can we reconcile these opposing design directions?

In a way, services must be designed to be simultaneously easy and difficult, although services are not inherently designed to be difficult for difficulty's sake. Service is difficult because easy and familiar services are typically of no value to customers. Further, customers cannot prove themselves and become recognized unless they are not faced with the independent other, who is opaque to them. If the service is only difficult, without the opportunity for customers to prove themselves, they will simply perceive the service as meaningless. Therefore, the service's design depends on its customers: it can be designed to be more difficult for highly knowledgeable customers who are prepared to engage in a struggle to prove themselves or those who want to see themselves this way. If customers are not ready, then the service must be designed to be somewhat easier.

Casual restaurants use written menus with foreign languages. For example, an Italian restaurant in Japan we studied had Italian words that few customers could understand. On the one hand, the service was designed to be difficult with such obscure language. On the other hand, the menu had substantial information to help customers make easier selections; each item was labeled alphabetically so that customers would not need to verbalize the unknown names. Similarly, popular coffee shops often use Italian words, such as "*grande*" or "*venti*" to denote cup sizes, yet the menu is made simpler with photos, and employees are friendly and willing to help customers. The design has both easy and difficult components. Alternatively, the high-end sushi bars and upscale French restaurant in this study were designed to be more esoteric and foreign.

Subjective and intersubjective value may be separated. For instance, customers may post anonymous reviews on such websites as TripAdvisor or Yelp! that appear to represent largely subjective judgments, or in which customers express their opinions without implicating themselves. Consequently, anonymous users may more easily post negative reviews, and negative reviews on these websites significantly affect businesses. Therefore, these anonymous review sites create a privileged vantage point for customers to make judgements from a safe distance, while in reality customers are implicated in participating in services and cannot maintain such a distance.

One common sense view is that customers can judge the value of a service as they please. This is understandable, as the subject-object separation retains a strong hold in modern life. Further, modernist thought has relied on sovereign human subjects that constitute and can change the objective world, which is stable and inanimate. As Heidegger (2002) demonstrated, the subject stems from an underlying basis, or

subiectum. This was a way for the subject to secure safety and certainty by surrounding himself or herself with these solid objects, and particularly after modernity began by eliminating the gods and losing the transcendental center that used to give us certainty.

The shift from product to service coincides with the collapse of this modernist ideal; we can no longer trust either the value of objects themselves or the value of the subject that can dictate the objects' value. Currently, value is decentered as the subject is decentered. As value lies in the action and not in the thing, valuation as a verb should be considered. The value of service must also be understood in this historical context.

Appendix Transcription System

Symbols	Description
[	Point of overlap onset
]	Point of overlap outset
=	Connecting two lines represent no discernible silence between the lines
(1.2)	Pause in seconds
(.)	Hearable but not readily measurable short silence (less than 0.2 s)
.	Falling intonation contour, not necessarily the end of a sentence
,	Low rising intonation contour, not necessarily a clause boundary
?	High rising intonation contour
:	Stretched voice
Word	Stressed talk
°	Relatively quieter voice
–	A hyphen denotes a cut-off
> <	Relatively rushed or compressed talk
<>	Markedly slow talk
(word)	Parentheses around a phrase denote the transcriber's guess at what might be said
↑	Rising intonation shift
h	Exhaling
.h	Inhaling

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