



BUILDING GROUP RAPPORT IN INSTITUTIONAL FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS: AN EXPLORATION OF KOREAN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

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Abstract

When people are engaged in any interaction, they are likely to respond to each other's verbal and nonverbal cues. Such responsiveness is a crucial factor in the notion of rapport. In this paper, the author posits that the same human dynamics that govern everyday conversations are at play in the context of institutional conversations, specifically among participants of classroom discourse. The purpose of this study is to develop key aspects of "conversational involvement" (Duranti, 1986; Goodwin, 1986; Gumperz, 1982; Tannen, 1985) as group rapport within language classroom discourse, and to provide observable phenomena, including participants' verbal and nonverbal cues, that characterize rapport in informal and formal conversation. This study involved nine participants: a Korean professor teaching an elementary Korean language course at a major U.S. university and eight undergraduate students whose first language was English. Three fifty-minute classroom sessions were videotaped, and segments that illustrated rapport-facilitating behaviors by the teacher and students were transcribed and qualitatively analyzed. The frequency of the teacher's display of verbal and nonverbal cues that appeared to foster rapport was documented. The study found that in this classroom, akin to in everyday conversation, the participants demonstrated their desire to listen to, be responsive to, and be influenced by the other individuals in the group. The participants were part and parcel of achieving their goals in the classroom. They created a particular alignment to achieve their goals and signaled that they were involved in the interaction. As a result, the students would engage more with the target language through participation in classroom activities, which is a key outcome of building good rapport.

Keywords

Group Rapport, Conversational Involvement, Verbal Immediacy Behavior, Nonverbal Immediacy Behavior, Interpersonal Coordination, Language Classroom Discourse, Posture Mirroring

Introduction

When people are engaged in interaction, they are more likely to listen to, respond to, and be influenced by individuals with whom they feel a genuine connection. This responsiveness to another's influence seems to have been crucial in the concept of rapport, which will be the main focus of this study. Rapport has been studied in various ways and relates to conversational phenomena such as involvement, engagement, and adjustment. Over the past years, researchers such as Duranti (1986), Erickson & Schultz (1982), Goodwin (1986), and Tannen (1985) have argued for an understanding of face-to-face interaction being accomplished through joint or co-authored efforts between speakers and listeners. Gumperz (1982) claims that interlocutors typically provide cues indicating a willingness to be engaged in the interaction and value each other's contribution. He terms this affective stance, which has much in common with cooperation, "conversational involvement" (1982: 2). Duranti (1986) also points out that in any human exchange, people tend to construct cooperative interaction "as the collective activity of individual social actors" (p.239). He further argues that "the form and content of talk is continuously reshaped by the co-participants, through their ability to create certain alignments and suggest or impose certain interpretations" (p.242). The effectiveness of the speaker's signaling information and the audience's collaborative interaction process seem to be important ingredients in facilitating group rapport. The question for language teachers is whether we can expect the same patterns of rapport to play out in classroom discourse, where the primary speaker (i.e., teacher) and the audience (i.e., students) jointly create affective alignments through selected verbal and nonverbal cues that have been associated with the practice of good rapport.

Bernieri (1988) points out that rapport is likely associated with positive emotional affect or attitude. His notion of rapport relates to the Affective Filter hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1982). According to Krashen, a learner's negative emotions, such as anxiety, embarrassment, and negative attitudes, which he terms the "Affective Filter," can prevent the process of language acquisition (Dulay et al., 1982). Krashen's Affective Filter hypothesis suggests that when a learner's negative attitudes or emotional states are raised, they block learning. His hypothesis implies that language teachers should create an atmosphere that lowers learners' affective filters. Language teachers should provide a relaxed environment where their interactions are carried out smoothly and in harmony, rendering the relationship between teachers and students less tense (e.g., Nguyen, 2007; Wilson & Ryan, 2012).

Theoretical Framework and Empirical Studies on Group Rapport

To define nonverbal behavior in group dynamics, Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1987; 1990) approach rapport as an aspect of the interaction among participants engaged in a conversation. They present three essential components of rapport: (1) mutual attention and involvement, (2) positivity, and (3) coordination. They find that nonverbal behavior correlates with the three elements mentioned above, which function as an antecedent to participants' feelings and ratings of rapport and are, in turn, influenced by participants' feelings about the unfolding rapport. They further elaborate that behaviors of mutual attention enhance feelings of mutual interest; positive behaviors are connected to feelings of friendliness and warmth, and coordinated interactional behaviors are related to feelings of balance and harmony. Moreover, they point out that rapport follows a development course and requires active maintenance. The concept of rapport is associated with any situation where participants communicate to achieve their goals (which includes classroom discourse). The degree of rapport affects the efficiency and quality of the progress toward goal achievement. Thus, the degree of rapport contributes to the outcome of classroom interaction.

Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal's (1987) theoretical claim for the relationship between rapport and interpersonal coordination is examined empirically by Bernieri's (1988) study, which focuses on high school students in 19 teaching dyads, measured for their degree of interpersonal coordination and rapport. To rate the degree of interpersonal coordination, judges viewed silent video clips of high school students teaching each other a list of imaginary words. There are four aspects of interpersonal coordination: (1) simultaneous movement, (2) tempo similarity, (3) coordination and dance-like smoothness, and (4) behavior matching. Two types of movement coordination were identified and rated: the degree of perceived movement synchrony (i.e., the precise timing and coordination of movements coinciding with the timing or rhythm of the movements of another) and the extent of behavior matching (i.e., posture similarity and mirroring). The results reveal that movement synchrony is strongly correlated with rapport and suggest that although movement synchrony and behavior matching are correlated, the two should be considered separately and may reflect different interactional processes. Bernieri further claims that "movement synchrony may reflect an active and involved type of positive rapport associated with feelings of high positive affect, motivation, interest, and talkativeness whereas behavior matching, a relatively more static measure, appeared to be reflective of a passive and strained state within an interaction" (p.136-137).

The correlation between posture mirroring and rapport was further presented by LaFrance (1982). LaFrance defines posture mirroring as the degree to which two or more people adopt mirror-imaged postures vis-à-vis each other in a face-to-face interaction. Her empirical study tackled the following questions: (1) whether mirroring is only expressive of an underlying social psychological disposition, and (2) whether it contributes to the establishing of that disposition. LaFrance employs a longitudinal design that investigates 95 students in 14 college classrooms in natural settings. Adopting a design that addresses these two issues from an observer's perspective, LaFrance came to the following conclusions: (1) posture mirroring could facilitate the subsequent establishing of rapport by creating interpersonal coordination; (2) rapport, once created, could be manifested through the display of posture mirroring; (3) both posture mirroring and rapport could be simultaneously caused by unknown third variables; and (4) both variables could be affecting each other in a positive feedback loop.

Christophel's (1990) study on learner outcomes highlights the importance of teacher-student rapport. In an attempt to determine the relationship between teacher immediacy (i.e., the degree of perceived physical and psychological closeness between people [p. 325]) and student motivation and these factors' combined impact on learning outcomes, Christophel recruited graduate and undergraduate students, teaching assistants, and faculty from a wide range of university classes. Self-reported measures of teachers' behavior, adopted by Gorham (1988), were given to the subjects based on a preceding or intact class they attended. The results point out that student perceptions of teacher verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors such as vocal expressiveness, eye contact, gestures, smiling, and a relaxed body position are positively associated with the student's motivation and perceptions of their learning experience. Furthermore, the findings reveal that nonverbal immediacy correlates more highly with learning than verbal immediacy. Therefore, Christophel's study confirms the findings of previous studies (e.g., Anderson, 1979; Anderson, Norton & Nussbaum, 1981; Anderson & Withrow, 1981; Gorham, 1988; Plax, Kearney, McCroskey & Richmond, 1986), which indicate that the presence of a relationship between teacher and student supports the latter's learning. The verbal and nonverbal behaviors that contribute to the outcome of the interaction are crucial ingredients in developing and maintaining rapport.

Gorham (1988) examined teachers' verbal immediacy behaviors contributing to increased student learning. Forty-seven undergraduate students enrolled in primary, non-required communication courses participated in a small-group brainstorming exercise. They were asked to think of the best teachers they ever had. Then, the participants were asked to select from a list of the specific behaviors that characterize those teachers. The list included twenty verbal behaviors, followed by fourteen nonverbal behaviors (adopted by Richmond, Gorham, and McCroskey (1987), identified as immediacy behaviors. The subjects indicated that teachers' verbal and nonverbal behaviors influenced which teachers they remembered as their best. The teacher's use of humor, praise of students' work, actions, or comments, and frequency of initiating and willingness to be engaged in conversations before, after, or outside of class were particularly significant verbal immediacy cues. Students also identified the following teacher behaviors: (1) self-disclosure; (2) asking questions or encouraging students to talk; (3) asking questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions; (4) following up on student-initiated topics; (5) reference to class as "our" class; (6) asking how students feel about assignments, due dates or discussion topics; and (7) invitations for students to telephone or meet with them outside of class. Nonverbal behaviors, such as vocal expressiveness, smiling, relaxed body position, gestures, eye contact, movement around the classroom, and touch, were found to be nonverbal immediacy cues that significantly related to student's perceptions of their favorite teachers. Both sets of behaviors are associated with notions of rapport.

A study by Sanders and Wiseman (1990) reinforces the findings of the Gorham study. In the Sanders and Wiseman study conducted in multicultural classrooms (White, Asian, Hispanic, Black), 952 college students participated in a survey concerning teacher immediacy and perceived cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning. By using modified versions of Richmond, Gorham, and McCroskey's (1987) nonverbal behavior index and Gorham's (1988) verbal immediacy behavior scale, they found that teacher immediacy was positively associated with increased learning for all groups, regardless of ethnicity, although the levels of association vary. Their findings suggest that teacher immediacy creates a supportive learning environment for the class.

In sum, a number of studies have suggested that immediacy behaviors, which signal approach, openness for communication, and warmth, enhance teacher-student relationships and, potentially, student learning (e.g., Frymier & Houser, 2000). This concept of immediacy behavior aligns with linguists' postulations regarding normal face-to-face interaction, as mentioned in the introduction. The elements identified by linguists as essential aspects of conversational involvement overlap with the behaviors identified by researchers in immediacy behaviors. That is, recognition of co-construction in face-to-face interaction is consistent with patterns of interaction in classroom settings that are described as having good rapport. Therefore, one of the ways to analyze group rapport in classroom discourse is to incorporate the elements identified by previously mentioned conversational studies into immediacy behaviors.

Despite the extensive body of previous research, little attention has been given to face-to-face interactions specific to group rapport between the teacher and student and, more importantly, among the students themselves. This study analyzes naturally occurring classroom discourse in institutional face-to-face interactions by focusing on a Korean language teacher and her eight students. The discourse analysis is supplemented by students' self-reports about the teacher and a quantitative analysis of an entire classroom session. Specifically, the study examines the co-construction of group rapport by a Korean language teacher and her eight students, whose first language is English. It also highlights various rapport-building elements in contexts such as before and after class interactions and formal classroom exchanges.

The Present Study

Research Design

Subjects

The subjects were a Korean professor in charge of a beginner Korean language course at an Asian language department at a major U.S. university and eight students (four males and four females) attending her class. The experienced Korean professor, in her forties at the time the study was conducted, had lived outside Korea for over 20 years. All eight students were undergraduates, from first-year students to seniors, and their first language (L1) was English. Focused on integrated skills in Korean, this was a six-credit, regular course that met for 50 minutes daily, from Monday to Thursday.

Methodology

Two methods were conducted: (1) the self-report scale for students' teacher evaluation and (2) observational analysis supplemented with quantitative analysis. To design the scale for the students' rating of the teacher's performance, the Immediacy Behavior Scale was adopted to describe the teacher's verbal immediacy behaviors (adopted by Gorham, 1988) and nonverbal immediacy behaviors (adopted by Richmond, Gorham & McCroskey, 1987). Items on the scale were modified and added to match the requirements of this specific class. Thirteen behaviors were selected for verbal immediacy and 16 for nonverbal immediacy, completing a 29-item scale. The 29 items were rated to reflect the frequency of the teacher's use of these behaviors on a five-point scale: never=0,

rarely=1, occasionally=2, often=3, and very often=4.

Different behavior patterns that distinguish contexts and facilitate group rapport were identified for the observational analysis. Additionally, differences and similarities in behaviors observed in typical language classrooms in Korea were explored and analyzed for comparison. Items used for analyzing the teacher's behaviors and those noted by Gorham (1988) as indicative of low rapport were included to support the analysis. The frequency of these items in a single class session was recorded. Seventeen items—nine verbal and eight nonverbal—were selected and counted.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Three 50-minute classroom sessions were videotaped, and field notes were taken during the observations. The observations started a month before the first recording, allowing participants sufficient time to establish group rapport. Segments illustrating the behaviors of both the teacher and students that contribute to rapport were extracted and transcribed from the three sessions. The frequency of the teacher's rapport-building behaviors was documented to support the observational analysis, and contrastingly, low rapport-building elements were also noted whenever possible.

Results

The students' questionnaire and the observational analysis reveal that group rapport is built, developed, and maintained in this classroom through verbal and nonverbal cues among the participants. The questionnaire results will be presented first, followed by reporting the gathered observational data concerning the interaction between the teacher and the students.

Results of the Questionnaire: The Teacher's Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors

Using Gorham's (1988) verbal immediacy scale, the results of students' ratings of verbal teacher immediacy are summarized in Table 1, which shows the number of students and the corresponding percentages for each item. The bold characters indicate the scales that the students choose most frequently. One hundred percent of the students chose the 'very often' (scale of 4) for items 2 (encourages students to talk) and 4 (uses students' names). One hundred percent of the students chose 'very often (scale of 4)' or 'often (scale of 3)' for items 7 (refers to 'our' class) and 11 (praises students' work). Eighty-six percent of the students choose 'very often' for item 3 (uses humor). Interestingly, 100% of the students chose 'never' (scale 0) for item 13 (addresses by first name). Instead, the students addressed their teacher by her last name, *sungsang-nim* (teacher-honorific title) or *kyoswu-nim* (professor-honorific title). The students were familiar with Korean culture and addressed the teacher with honorific titles.

TABLE 1: Students' Views on Teacher's Verbal Immediacy

Items \ Scales	0	1	2	3	4
1. Uses personal examples			2 (29%)	3 (42%)	2 (29%)
2. Encourages students to talk					7 (100%)
3. Uses humor			1 (14%)		6 (86%)
4. Uses students' names					7 (100%)
5. Has conversations before and after class		1 (14%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	4 (57%)
6. Refers to "my" class or what "I" am doing*	2 (29%)	3 (43%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	
7. Refers to "our" class				3 (43%)	4 (57%)
8. Provides feedback on assignments	1 (14%)		1 (14%)	2 (29%)	3 (43%)
9. Asks about assignments		1 (14%)		2 (29%)	3 (43%)
10. Invites students for outside discussions		2 (29%)	1 (14%)	2 (29%)	2 (29%)
11. Praises students' work				1 (14%)	6 (86%)
12. Criticizes students' work* ¹		2 (29%)	3 (43%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)
13. Addresses by first name	7 (100%)				

*Presumed to be nonimmediate items.

¹ After surveying the students, item 12 was found to be problematic. It was unclear whether the students interpreted this item as the teacher's implicit or explicit corrective feedback on their oral performance or assignments. One possible interpretation is that they took it to mean feedback for oral errors, which the teacher provided implicitly or explicitly. When the teacher mostly corrected the students' responses, she did it implicitly. However, when the occasion demanded explicit feedback, the teacher immediately mitigated her action by calling the student out and correcting her, 'You rascal, you little devil,' or touching them, or imitating their responses, or laughing. Another possible interpretation of this item was as a criticism of the students' behavior. For example, one occasion was observed where the teacher mentioned casually that a student had closed his eyes under his hat (i.e., suggesting he was napping in class). She brought it up the very next day, rather than calling him out on the spot, and she did so in an amusing way, smiling as she said: 'he was meditating or something,' which made the class laugh. The students may have interpreted this as a form of criticism.

The results of students' ratings of nonverbal teacher immediacy are summarized in Table 2, which shows the number of students and the percentages for each item. Again, the bold characters highlight the scales chosen most frequently by the students. One hundred percent of the students chose the 'very often (scale of 4)' for item 23 (smiles at individual students). One hundred percent of the students chose the 'very often' (scale of 4) or the 'often' (scale of 3) for items 27 (nods to students while listening) and 28 (uses her facial expressions). Eighty-six percent of the students choose 'very often' or 'often' for items 16 (gestures while teaching), 18 (uses a variety of vocal expressions), 20 (maintains contact while writing), and 22 (smiles at the class as a whole). These nonverbal behaviors function as antecedents to feelings and ratings of rapport, as mentioned by Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1987). Concerning the descriptions of negative behaviors, 100% of the students chose the 'never' (scale of 0) or the 'rarely' (scale of 1) for items 17 (uses monotone/dull voice) and 24 (has a very tense body position). As suspected, 100% of the students chose 'very often' or 'often' for item 14 (sits on a desk while teaching).²

TABLE 2: Students' Views on Teacher's Nonverbal Immediacy

Items \ Scales	0	1	2	3	4
14. Sits on a desk while teaching*				3 (42%)	4 (57%)
15. Moves around while teaching		2 (29%)	4 (57%)	1 (14%)	
16. Gestures while teaching			1 (14%)	2 (29%)	4 (57%)
17. Uses monotonous/dull voice*	6 (86%)	1 (14%)			
18. Uses a variety of vocal expressions			1 (14%)	1 (14%)	5 (71%)
19. Maintain eye contact while writing	1 (14%)		3 (43%)	1 (14%)	2 (29%)
20. Maintain contact while writing			1 (14%)	3 (43%)	3 (43%)
21. Looks at board/notes while teaching*	3 (43%)	2 (29%)	2 (29%)		
22. Smiles at the class as a whole			1 (14%)		6 (86%)
23. Smiles at individual students					7 (100%)
24. Has a very tense body position*	4 (57%)	3 (43%)			
25. Has a very relaxed body position			2 (29%)	2 (29%)	3 (43%)
26. Touches students in class			5 (71%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)
27. Nods to students while listening				5 (71%)	2 (29%)
28. Uses her facial expressions				4 (57%)	3 (43%)
29. Moves her mouth to help students			2 (29%)	1 (14%)	4 (57%)

* Presumed to be nonimmediate items.

Features of Face-to-Face Interactions with High Group Rapport Informal teacher-student interaction before and after class.³

The teacher and students engaged in small talk before and after class. The conversational patterns found in this small talk reveal that rapport is "built," "developed," and "maintained" in this class.

² This is because all participants sit in a circle on two big attached desks, which results in physical closeness in a small classroom.

³ Transcription symbols used in excerpts:

/	Rising tone
\	Falling tone
~	Fluctuating intonation
Italic	Korean language
Bold	English translation
[Overlapping
()	Nonverbal cues
:	Lengthening
=	Latching
(0.3)	Pause, three tenths of a second
{ }	Reconstructed elements in translation

Abbreviations used for grammatical terms in excerpts:

TM	Topic Marker
HD	Honorific Declarative
CD	Casual Declarative
ACC	Accusative Marker
VOC	Vocative Marker
ST	Statement Ending
SM	Subject Marker

(1) *Small talk between the teacher and the students*

Wheeles (1976; 1978) found that self-disclosure and solidarity were positively related, and meaningfully higher levels of self-disclosure were associated with high solidarity relations. The following exchange demonstrates how the participants of the conversation are in tune with one another:

<Exchange 1>

(Alex waved her hand to the teacher when she made eye contact with the teacher)

1. T: (laughing and holding Alex's hand simultaneously) You look so sick!
2. Alex: (smile)
3. Matt: Hey! (extending his arm toward Alex and about to touch Alex)
4. T: You know I missed you anyhow that was =
5. Alex: =I slept all day yesterday =
6. Matt: = GOO:D.
7. T: You are lucky. You know what I am thinking. **You're a student. You are a head. You can be sick. But me? I cannot be sick.**
8. Alex: You can't be sick?
9. T: (Nodding her head) **No, and also at home, I'm sick nobody cooks** (sticking her tongue out)
10. Alex: (laughing and taking her coat off)
11. T: You understand? Then carry out [inaudible]

Immediately after Alex came in, the teacher acknowledged that Alex was absent from class the other day because she had been ill. Matt also acknowledged Alex's presence. In lines 6 ("good") and 7 ("you are lucky"), the participants demonstrated how the process of assessment can be analyzed as a collaborative interactive activity. These assessments show empathy and mark a certain kind of relationship, indicating that the participants are close and, thus, are well attuned to one another's behavior. Through collaborative assessment, the participants created a state of heightened mutual involvement (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1989, 1992). At the same time, in line 7, the teacher tries to show sympathy and concern and recognizes the student as a person. By revealing her personal experience, the teacher showed a willingness to relate to the student. Revealing her personal experience sends a message to the student that the teacher is a person and being a teacher. Thus, the students become interested in her as a person. All three participants demonstrate high engagement and interest in both the conversation and each other through their fast speech rate, latching, and synchronized body movements.

The following exchange of relatively insignificant details about daily life is valued for its metamessage as a rapport of caring (Tannen, 1989: 149).

<Exchange 2>

1. T: Did you get a reply from your: this no What is it? (tapping the table) This this sholarship
2. Chris: Not yet =
3. T: =Not yet? When do they give you?
4. Daniel: [inaudible]
5. Chris: I know\ I wish I can [inaudible].

In line 1, by tapping the table, the teacher demonstrated that she was searching for a word (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986). Then, in line 2, Chris understood the gesture as an appropriate time to interact by cooperatively overlapping. In line 3, the teacher clarifies Chris' utterance by repeating it, indicating that the teacher valued his involvement in the conversation. Hence, rapport is established by showing an interest in the student's matter and their enthusiasm for co-participating in the conversation.

Formal teacher-student interaction during the session

During class, the teacher takes a leadership role by directing the lesson. This more formal section will examine various rapport-building elements the participants use to achieve their goals.

(2) *Eliciting information from the students*

The teacher asked the students a question and waited for 5 seconds before pursuing the answer with further questions. As Mora (1995) noted, silence engages students in a sustained interaction and can create opportunities for them to articulate their ideas and express them clearly:

<Exchange 3>

1. T: ah *nalssi-ga deowo-seo* I don't like to study because the weather is hot. How do you
 weather- SM hot- because
 ah because the weather is hot
 How do you say/ I don't like to study (0.2) (looking around, making eye contact with the students, and tapping her fingers together)
2. Ann: go *sipeoyo*=
 would like to/
3. T: =**That's right. That's what I want =**
4. Ann: = *nalssi-ga deowo-seo\ hankukmal-eul an an kongbu-hago sipeo-yo?*
 weather-SM hot-because Korean - ACC not not study-want like - HD
 Because the weather is hot\ I don't like to study Korean.

The teacher opens the floor by asking an explicit question, and then she looks around, making eye contact with the students and tapping her fingers together while she waits to hear from them. Then, Ann bids for the floor. Immediately and enthusiastically, in line 3, the teacher responds to her answer by giving her positive feedback. The teacher's upbeat, energetic response to the student's first utterance signals to the entire class that she values what the students say and is eager for them to participate in the conversation (Wolfson, N. & Manes, J., 1980). Furthermore, with a longer preparation time, Ann responds to her question in more advanced language and logic (e.g., in line 4, Ann utters a complete sentence without interruption). By leaving longer pauses, the teacher allows students to respond to her (e.g., Mercer, 1995: 28). Uttering an uninterrupted, complete sentence would leave the students satisfied with their accomplishment and provide meaningful opportunities to produce more complex syntax.

The following exchange shows an example of how the teacher replaces spoken conversation with nonverbal messages:

<Exchange 4>

1. T: Doris, *Na-neun jigeum pigonhae-seo/*
 I - TM now tired-because
 Doris, Because I'm tired now/
2. Doris: *sukje-reul an hae-yo.*
 homework-ACC not doing-HD
 {I am} not doing {my} homework.
3. T: Ung? (**leans forward to Doris, showing her ear**)
 huh?
4. Doris: *ssukje-reul an hae-yo.*
 homework-ACC not doing-HD
 {I am} not doing {my} homework.

The teacher cupped her hand behind her ear to indicate that she did not hear what a student had said. This non-lexical contextualization cue (such as a gesture), which accompanies a verbal cue, helps clarify and shape the teacher's message, giving the student a deeper understanding of what is being communicated verbally. Doris received a signal from the teacher to repeat her utterance more clearly and loudly. This nonverbal behavior also softens the teacher's request, encouraging student cooperation. As a result, the teacher engaged the students fully in the classroom activity, successfully achieving the lesson's goals. These nonverbal cues also foster a warm, friendly environment, enhancing the teacher's and student's teaching and learning experience.

(3) *Mirrors each other's behavior*

LaFrance (1982) suggests that posture mirroring may both contribute to and reflect the processes underlying the formation of "interaction rhythms." When interaction is appropriately coordinated, the participants may describe the encounter as one in which they appear to be 'in tune with' one another:

<Exchange 5>

1. T: *biseuthaji/ jayo chayo jjayo mwo-ga jjayo/ mwo-ga jjayo/*
 what is what was salt/
 similar/ sleep\ cold\ salty what-SM salty/ what-SM salty/
 {They are} similar/ sleep\ cold\ salty. What's salty/ what's salty/
 what is what was salt/
 (looking around at the students and mimicking the sound 'so- 'with her lips)

2. Ss: so: [inaudible]

3. T: um? Sogeum sogeum-i jjayo what's mean jjayo? That's what?
 Um salt salt-SM salty salty
 Um? salt salt is salty. What does *jjayo* mean? That's what?

In line 1, the teacher opens the floor to the students by asking a question. To encourage their involvement, she looks around at the students and mimics the sound "so-" with her lips. The students then try to match the sound and mimic her posture. The teacher frequently mimics her lips when students attempt to take the floor throughout the session. This gesture signals to the entire class that she encourages participation and values their contributions. As a result, the students feel more inclined to engage in the interaction without fear of making mistakes.

The following posture mirroring started when the students prepared for their group performance. When the teacher was talking to one group, a student asked about the next day's test, and the teacher then responded:

<Exchange 6>

1. T: Don't worry. You don't worry, right?
 2. Alex: (nodding)
 3. Chris: I'm ready! (banging the desk) I'm ready! (**banging on the desk harder**)
 4. T: (**looking at Chris and banging on the desk**) So, you ready? O.K.

The student sent a message that he was ready and banged on the desk to get the teacher's attention. After the teacher noticed Chris's action, the teacher banged on the desk. By mirroring the students' behavior, the teacher indicates that she constantly monitors their behavior and shows an interest in their behavior and progress. Then, it is fair to say that position mirroring is a cue to the presence of interpersonal involvement or an interactional element whose purpose is to establish communality. This co-occurrence of movement is interpreted as the smoothness of a conversational stream and a kind of rhythmic togetherness between the participants in the context of a focused interaction (Bernieri, 1988).

(4) Dealing with the students' errors

Most of the time, when the students made grammatical or word choice errors, the teacher corrected them implicitly by explaining the phrase, using repetition, or asking them a question. The teacher never responded with explicit negative feedback such as "No, that's wrong form" or "No, you're wrong" to the students' answers. We imagine that such explicit negative feedback could be more face-threatening and discouraging.

<Exchange 7>

1. T: Today, I give you some quiz. (smile) Right? (looking around at the students)
 2. Ss: (silent)
 3. T: Right? (looking at Daniel)
 4. Daniel: *ani-yo*.
 No-HD
 No
 5. T: *Mwo gajitmaljangi* ~
 What liar
 6. Ss+T: (laugh)
 7. T: *Gajitmal* is:
 lie is
 8. Bryan: Liar
 9. T: **Liar/ lie and gajitmalJANGI is:**
 liar
 10. Bryan: Liar

In line 7, the teacher asks for the English word for *gajitmal* (lie in English). In line 8, Bryan responds with a *liar*, which translates to *gajitmaljangi* in Korean. In line 9, the teacher corrects his response by repeating what he said with a rising tone, providing the correct answer, and then emphasizing *JANGI*, which refers to a person in Korean. In line 10, Bryan finally understands what *gajitmaljangi* means in Korean by responding with a *liar*.

The following exchange occurred, indicating a situation when words needed to be explicitly explained. The teacher explained the words the students mentioned and praised them for bringing up these new words. This praise functions as face-saving, as well as to build students' confidence:

- <Exchange 8>⁴
1. T: to finish?
 2. Doris: *kkeutna-da*
finish-ST
to finish
 3. T: to end?
 4. Doris: *kkeutna-da*
end-ST
to end
 5. T: to finish is: *kkeutna-da*
finish-ST
to finish
 6. Ann: *sijak-hada*
begin-ST
to begin
 7. T: to fini to end is *kkeutna-da*. To begin is *sijak-hada*.
end-ST begin-ST
 8. Ann: ah
 9. T: **Yeah, that's good. no, no.**

In line 6, Ann overlapped with the teacher's response, attempting to engage in the conversation by saying *sijakada* in Korean, which means *to begin*, while the teacher and Doris were discussing how to say *to finish* or *to end* in Korean. In line 7, the teacher clarified how to say *to end* and *to begin* in Korean, and in line 8, Ann realized her response was incorrect. However, the teacher did not criticize Ann by saying, "No, that's wrong." Instead, she praised her participation, saying, "That's good, no, no, (it's OK)."

(5) Various ways of complimenting

As Wolfson (1983) and Wolfson & Manes (1980) suggested, compliments represent a social strategy in which the speaker attempts to create or maintain rapport with the addressee by expressing admiration or approval. The teacher assessed the students positively by giving them various words of praise, both verbally and non-verbally. The following exchanges illustrate some of these examples:

- <Exchange 9>
- 1.T: Oh, today, you know what I want to do with you. Before we started, **Daniel gave me such a wonderful idea.** Sing a song! (laughter), which we learned yesterday. Right? (banging on the table and touching Ann) You didn't.
 2. Daniel: (looking at Ann) You missed the song~~ You need to sing a song~~
 3. Ann: (Laughter)

- <Exchange 10>
- While the teacher reviewed the vocabulary that the students learned, Willy, who the teacher thought had less knowledge than other students, answered her question correctly. The teacher said and acted:
- T: **MAN, you make me happy + this guy (High five with Willy)**

- <Exchange 11>
1. T: *Nalssi-ga* this time COLD!
Weather-SM
The weather is this time COLD!
 2. Wily: *chuwo-yo?*
cold-HD?
Cold?
 3. T: Because the weather is cold:
 4. Wily: uh *Nalssi-ga chuwo-seo:*
Weather-SM cold-because
uh because the weather is cold
 5. T: um what do you do? (hand movement)
 6. Wily: *Coffee-reul*
coffee-ACC
Coffee

⁴ Note that in Korean, *kkeutnada* can be roughly translated as either *to finish* or *to end*.

7. Ss: (laugh)
 8. Wily: *masyeo-yo*.
 drink-HD
 { I am }drinking {coffee}.
9. T: *Coffee-reul* *masyeo-yo*. ihi! **This man is GOOD!** (tapping on his shoulder) O.K.
 coffee-ACC drink-HD \
 { I am } drinking coffee. Hurrah! This man is good! O.K.

<Exchange 12>

1. T: *wiheomhae-yo*. Oh oh dangi dangi (laughing) what do you say? (looking at Matt)
 dangerous-HON
 {It's} dangerous. Oh, oh danger danger
2. Matt: uh *wiheomhae-yo*
 uh dangerous-HD
 uh {It's} dangerous
- 3.T: uh Matt, **You're so sharp. I should say awesome dude, nowadays.**
4. Doris: (giggling)

Responsiveness attests to the presence of empathy among the interactants. The teacher reinforces desired behavior by complimenting students and encouraging their involvement in class activities.

(6) Students helping their classmates

The students in this class often initiate and respond to the teacher and their classmates. When they receive signals that their classmates are facing difficulties understanding, or when they ask for help, they voluntarily help each other:

<Exchange 13>

1. T: *geu daeume*\ *na-neun gippeoseo*/
 next I - TM happy
 next \ because I'm happy
2. Matt: ah:
3. T: ah ah ah~
4. Matt: wha wha
5. Wily: **Happy**
6. Matt: huh?
7. Wily: **Happy?** (looking at the teacher)
8. T: uh happy *gippeoseo* Happy
 happy

After Wily notices that Matt is having trouble looking for the meaning of *gippeoseo* in English, he involves himself in an exchange by simply uttering the word *happy*, which shows that Wily supports his classmate. In addition, line 7 demonstrates that Wily was willing to help his classmate out, even though he was unsure about the word himself. This three-way exchange also illustrates that the students are co-participants and that the interaction is cooperatively achieved.

So far, we have seen how the teacher and the students engage verbally and nonverbally in informal and formal interactions before/after and during class to accomplish the task that they are involved in. The information in Tables 3 and 4 shows the frequency of the teacher's verbal and nonverbal cues.

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Teacher's Verbal Cues in a Single Class Session⁵

⁵ When referring to the students' names, addressing forms such as 'our/my + [students' name]' and '[students' name] +ya' are used by the teacher. The use of nicknames did not occur in the particular classroom. However, it appears that the teacher began using nicknames spontaneously from time to time as the class continued. 'Praise' is an explicit form of complimenting, such as 'good,' 'that's right,' and 'wonderful' in response to the student's oral performance or commentary. Repetition of the students' utterances or nonlexical backchannel was excluded. 'Criticism for students' oral production' is used to give feedback, such as: "No, you did it wrong. What you need to say is this," which never occurred in this class. 'Complaints about students' behavior' is to provide a warning in either an indirect form, such as "I wish you would do more homework," or a direct form, such as "You need to come to the class on time," where the teacher expressed that she was displeased with her students. Neither behavior occurred in this class. In one instance observed with interest, the teacher called on a student who appeared to be falling asleep and said very casually, "He was in another world or something," which was not categorized as a complaint. The teacher's mimicking of the students' non-lexicon 'uh,' 'ne,' and 'a-ha' with exaggeration flowed with the rhythm of the conversation, and showed that the participants were in tune with one another. When the teacher disagreed with the students'

Verbal Cues	High Rapport	Low Rapport	Total
(1) Uses casual forms of Korean			
(2) Use honorific forms of Korean*	28	2	30
(3) Addresses students by their first name:			
(4) Addresses students by their last name*	41	0	41
(5) Praises students' oral responses or comments			
(6) Criticizes faults in students' oral responses or comments*	31	0	31
(7) Complaints about students' behavior*			
(8) Mimics students' non-lexicon utterances	10		10
(9) Employs friendly teasing or casual remarks such as 'you rascal' or 'you little devil'	7		7
Total	117	2	119

*Indicates low rapport.

Table 4: Frequency Distribution of Teacher's Nonverbal Cues in a Single Class Session

Nonverbal Cues	High Rapport	Low Rapport
(1) Touches students	25	
(2) Has tense body position*		0
(3) Uses gestures to encourage students	69	
(4) Uses a monotone/dull voice*		0
(5) Nods to students	81	
(6) Looks at board or notes"		6
(7) Smiles at individuals	69	
(8) Moves her mouth to help the students	43	
Total	287	6

*Indicates low rapport

Discussion

The present study of group rapport is carried out under two assumptions: (1) the elements identified by linguists such as Duranti (1986), Goodwin & Goodwin (1986,1989,1992), Gumperz (1982), and Tannen (1985,1989) are important aspects of conversational involvement that seem to be connected to behaviors identified by researchers such as Gorham (1988) and Richmond, Gorham, and McCroskey (1987) in immediacy behaviors; and (2) even if the participants consist of the teacher, who has authority and talks more than listens, and the students, who listen more and talk less, they tend to construct a cooperative interaction and create certain interactional rhythmicity. Thus, this paper incorporated aspects of conversational involvement into the classroom rapport, wherein the teacher and the students behave like ordinary people involved in face-to-face interaction.

Before class, while the teacher and the students waited for more students to arrive, she often shared small talk with them and acted as if she was their friend, frequently resorting to humor and friendliness. She was very open and attempted to approach her students like peers. This attitude creates a cheerful, relaxed classroom environment and lifts students' spirits (Frisby & Housley Gaffney, 2015; Frisby & Martin, 2010). The teacher also showed concern for the students who had missed previous classes, and she readily welcomed latecomers. The teacher's concern for each student sends the entire class a metamessage that she is not only willing to know every student well, but that she also values each student as an important member of this community.

Before the official start of class, the students shared small talk, bringing up topics they were mutually interested in. DePaulo & Bell (1990) associate warm, friendly, comfortable, interested, involved, and "in sync" dynamics among participants in a particular interaction with the notion of rapport. This classroom atmosphere implies that group rapport is built, developed, and maintained through a high degree of verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors. These elements help interactions go smoothly, thus contributing to a state of rhythmic "togetherness" between the teacher and the students.

During class, when the teacher was more in control, she created a warm, friendly, comfortable, positive, and easy-going atmosphere that encouraged student participation. In addition, she used very casual, informal words, frequently called out the students' first names and nicknames, and used inclusive pronouns (our +students' name). These words include the speaker and the listener in the same category and increase communicator solidarity rather than distancing the speaker from the listener (Gorham, 1988). Furthermore, the teacher's instructions were

responses, she teased them amicably by saying 'you rascal' or 'you little devil' with laughter or touch, which lightened the students' embarrassment.

influential in building a friendly and warm relationship. By using casual forms of Korean, the teacher understated her power and status so that she could stand on a more equal footing with her students. Therefore, the teacher succeeded in creating a non-threatening environment where the students could make mistakes comfortably. In other words, her way of giving instructions yielded a feeling of togetherness.

Smile and laughter can help teachers increase warmth or “class cohesiveness” (Gorham, 1988). To encourage the students to interact more, the teacher used a high degree of “immediacy” behavior, for example, a cheerful voice, forward-leaning, touch, direct body orientation, dancing eyes, eyebrow-raising, lip movements, head nodding, openness of arms, and hand movements. These nonverbal behaviors focus the group's attention and contribute to the participants' perceptions of interactional involvement and attentiveness (Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal, 1987; 1990). As Goodwin & Goodwin (1992: 88) note, “When talk and gesture occur together, they typically function as mutually contextualizing phenomena with the talk providing resources for the interpretation of the gesture, while for its part the gesture elaborates and further guides the interpretation of what is being said within the talk.”

During class, the students behaved as active participants. The students exhibited a specific alignment toward the presented information and the teacher through selected verbal and nonverbal cues. By being responsive to the teacher and maintaining regular eye contact with her, the students exhibited interest and enthusiasm in the material being presented. They nodded, made facial expressions to show understanding of the activity, and looked straight toward the teacher when they were called on. The students repeatedly mimicked the teacher's verbal expressions and mirrored her postures. The students also voluntarily helped their classmates when they hesitated to answer a question, and they relied on humor. The participants collaboratively constructed their utterances and shared responsibility within the group dynamic. All these students' affective alignments signal to the teacher that they have paid attention to and are involved in the classroom interaction.

After class, the teacher invited her students to ask questions. This invitation tells the students she cares about them and has a personal stake in their progress. The students also asked about the next day's quiz, indicating they were concerned about their progress and the class activities. The atmosphere at the end of the class was very relaxed and warm. All these ingredients combined are the key to maintaining group rapport. Interaction represents two-way communication. As Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1987) note, “both” interactants must feel rapport and experience nonverbal expressions along with verbal ones of positivity, attentiveness, and coordination.

Conclusion

The current study has shown verbal and nonverbal behaviors that facilitate group rapport in three contexts: teacher-student informal conversation before, after, and during formal classroom conversation. First, the relationship between the teacher and the students is near-equal in making small talk before and after class. Second, the teacher is more in control when tasks are handed out during class. Although she assumes more power in her role as the teacher, she continues to develop rapport through verbal and nonverbal cues. As active participants, the students demonstrate their responsiveness through selected verbal and nonverbal cues. Hence, the students' affective alignment gives a message to the teacher that they are involved in the interaction. Toward the end of class, the teacher provides positive feedback in Korean to the entire class as a signal that the class is ending. This positive feedback sends a cheerful feeling to the students, so they leave class with a sense of achievement and reassurance that they have learned something that day.

The present study on how group rapport is applied is limited since it is conducted within the U.S., where classroom environments, teachers, and students' personalities may differ from those outside the U.S. For instance, Korean teachers in Korea may seem more distant and have different ways of dealing with their students, which may be more appropriate and effective within the prevailing cultural norms. Furthermore, as far as students are concerned, some students may prefer a more relaxed, comfortable environment. In contrast, others may prefer a more disciplined environment, depending on their needs and the subject matter, even though Krashen (1982) claims that the Affective Filter is universal. It is evident, however, that students in this particular language classroom prefer having an enjoyable learning experience where they can participate freely and openly in-class activities. If Krashen is right, all students may find more interactive language classes with good rapport preferable, even in countries like Korea. If this is the case, these L2 teachers will likely need pre-service and in-service instruction to aid their development of group rapport within the classroom.

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