

A Study on Good-News Messages Conveyance in Adjustment Letters from the Lexical Perspective-in the Light of Politeness Strategies

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ABSTRACT. *As the link and bridge of business communication between enterprises, business English correspondence plays an increasingly important role in international foreign trade activities. This paper studies how good-news message is conveyed through words in adjustment letters in the light of the politeness strategies. The purpose is to help businesspersons convey the positive message of this type of letters in a more appropriate way to further promote the success of the business activities.*

KEYWORDS: *Good-news message conveyance, Adjustment letters, Politeness strategies*

1. Introduction

Although economic and technological development makes the business communication means changed greatly, English business letters still play an indispensable role in communicating business messages. A polite and well-worded business letter can bring business to the company; On the other hand, a letter with poor politeness and misspoken language can give the company a negative assessment, destroy the company's painstaking image, and cause the company to lose business. Businesspersons should use words appropriately, fully embody the principle of politeness, in order to make friends and achieve career. (He Yongbin, 2005(04): 31-34) In business practice, disputes or conflicts may sometimes occur in the process of business transactions. When dealing with problems or conflicts in business transactions, adjustment letters are the conventional choices for businesspersons. Since the adjustment letters are adopted to achieve the communicative purposes and reconcile the relationship between claimants and defaulters, skillful writers should know the features and functions of lexical in the adjustment letters very well.

2. Politeness Strategies

Leech put forward the principle of politeness in his book *principles of pragmatics* in 1983. Its core content is: “in language communication, both parties should try their best to show politeness and reduce impolite expressions in order to gain good impression from the other party, promote the smooth communication and ultimately gain more benefits for themselves.” He believed that in communication, the interests of the others should always be put in the first place and be considered so as to make the other party feel respected and win the favor of others to successfully achieve the purpose of communication. (Leech, 1983) Brown and Levinson also argue that “politeness is a remedial action to balance destructive face-saving threats”. They believe that politeness is the rational behavior of typical people to satisfy their face, so they divide it into positive face and negative face. Among them, positive face is defined as people’s appreciation and understanding of their own public image and their expectation of being recognized by others. (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

3. Good-News Message Conveyance

A good-news letter that is polite in essence is a letter that conveys good news or information that the reader would like to receive. It is a letter that conveys a positive message, such as a thank you letter, a confirmation letter, an adjustment letter, etc. A well-written adjustment letter, for example, may help you to make a profit in new business, help to promote and develop your relationship with customers, eliminate misunderstandings, narrow differences and soothe hurt hearts, etc.; on the contrary, you may incur new conflicts, lose customers and fail to achieve the purpose of business communication. (Zhao Shimin, Li Yanju, 2007(19: 235) Therefore, in the business letters conveying good-news message, particularly in the adjustment letter, needs transfer its beneficial information to maximize meet the demand of the recipient’s positive face so as to achieve the business’s success.

4. Adjustment Letter

An adjustment letter is a kind of reply to a complaint with an aim to solve problems. It is also with an intention to convince the other side that the mistake occurred is only a slip. This kind of letter is more sensitive than the general trade letter because it involves the dispute of interests between the two parties. If it is not appropriate, the cooperative relationship between the two parties will be seriously affected. In any partnership, it’s much easier to offend a customer than to win one. An adjustment letter is short, formal and positive in order for communication to continue until the purpose is achieved. Therefore, the proper words and appropriate tone should be carefully selected to show a positive attitude. It is meaningful to make a clear understanding of international function of letters of adjustment.

5. Lexical Analysis

The adjustment letters belong to the language of the commercial field, is a formal official style with legal efficiency, which represents the image of a company and is related to the further business contacts between the two parties. The proper application of vocabulary can directly reflect the professionalism of the company and the attitude and ability to face and deal with problems. Therefore, in this letter, the choice of vocabulary has its unique tendency. (Zhang Xintian, 2013) In this part, some positive lexical strategies in good-news business letters for the consideration of politeness will be analyzed.

It is a polite way of expression to choose words with positive and positive meaning to express one's own demands in a euphemistic way, so as to satisfy the other party's face and make it easier for the other party to accept. Using positive words in a letter makes the reader feel respected and valued more than a common verb. Therefore, in adjustment letter pleasure, often using the words that express positive feelings, such as, *pleased, glad, appreciate*; or *unfortunately, scarcely, really*, to weaken the negative tone. For instance, We would be very *grateful* if you could let us take delivery before the selling season; It gives us much *pleasure* to receive the catalogue and samples you sent us.

In addition, in an adjustment letter, if the claimant is not aware of the effect of these words and uses the rude, negative words, these words will cause dissatisfaction with the client, which will cause irreparable damage to you and your company's image. Try to compare: a. It is *not* our *fault* if you *don't* check whether the goods are satisfactory or *not* on delivery. b. I am *afraid* customers are expected to check that goods are satisfactory on delivery. Clearly, the sentences in group b are more positive and polite than those in group a.

From the above analysis, it is obvious that choosing the appropriate and positive words should be paid more to in adjustment letter in compliance with the politeness principles. The purpose is to make the claimant fully feel the sincerity of apology and the attitude towards dealing with problems from the defaulting party. And sometimes this may lead to more business orders in the future.

6. Conclusion

With the rapid development of economy, it is inevitable that there will be frictions and conflicts in the process of communication. Therefore, the adjustment letters have become particularly important as an important communication tool in the process of solving problems. In terms of politeness strategies, this paper analyzes the lexical strategies in the adjustment letters to help calmly and reasonably resolve their disputes to further promote the success of the business activities.

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