

An Analysis on the Application of Positive Language in Amazon Customer Service English

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Abstract. The rise of E-commerce has made online shopping a mainstream for people's consumption. The quality of customer service has become important for business companies to achieve their competitive advantages. This thesis carries out a research on the effective communication skills of positive language, taking Amazon customer service as the research target and positive language as the theoretical basis. The paper uses the methods of literature research and case study, together with discourse analysis to finish the research. The main body of the thesis takes consideration of Amazon's pre-sale, on sale and after sale cases and aims to figure out the application and validity of the positive language in customer service English. It makes a deep analysis on the application of positive language in customer service English. Additionally, through this study, the author aims to provide some corresponding application strategies related to positive language usage in customer service, and put forward solutions for Amazon Customer Service to solve common problems in the aspects of positive language when they provide services.

1. Introduction

The rise of E-commerce has expanded the scope of global business and trade activities, and online shopping has become a mainstream for people's consumption under the opening environment of Internet. Amazon is one of the largest online e-commerce companies in the United States and the largest web retailer with most types of merchandise in the world. It provides customers 24-hour service of all day long through telephone, e-mail and chatting service. Good customer service has played an important role in expanding corporate business. It has made Amazon change its position as an e-commerce company three times. The first time happens when it becomes the largest bookstore in the world, the second time it becomes the largest integrated online retailer, and finally it becomes the most customer-centric one. These facts are enough to prove that a good customer service is very important for an e-commerce company. As for Amazon's Customer Service, how to communicate smoothly with customers to expand its foreign business, apart from a good service mentality, effective communication skills are also essential.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Positive Language

Positive language is a language that triggers positive emotions in the conversation among people, and this theory can be known from a positive language study about the perspective of positive psychology (Sarah 74-76). She points out that positive language plays an effective role in developing individual cognition, emotion, action and so on. For example, it can create pleasurable experience for yourself and others and help to build active interpersonal relationships. Besides, positive language is also an effective communication skill in customer service. Positive phrasing and language have some qualities, for example, tells the recipient what can be done; suggests alternatives and choices available to the recipient; sounds helpful and encouraging rather than bureaucratic; stresses positive actions and positive consequences that can be anticipated. Positive language can literally change our brain, and positive words like "certainly," "greatly" and "definitely" strengthen areas of the brain's

frontal lobes, and promote cognitive function. In simple terms, hearing and using positive language can make you feel great - physically, mentally and emotionally. On the flip side, negative language can block the brain's natural de-stress mechanisms. Such as the everyday phrases like "No problem" can be change into positive word "Definitely", "Can't complain" can be altered into "Everything's going well, thanks", and "Don't throw the ball inside" can be changed as "Please take the ball outside", so after turning those words or phrases into positive language, they would have more positive meaning.

2.2 Customer Service

Customer service is the act of taking care of the customer's needs by providing and delivering professional, helpful, high quality service and assistance before, during and after the customer's requirements are met. The factors affecting customer satisfaction include business factors, product factors, marketing methods and service systems, but the one of the important factors is the communication skill of customer services. For the English Service Department of foreign trade companies, marketing and service system and communication factors are the key to improve customer satisfaction (Sarah 243-244). So the customer service plays an important role in an organization's capability to earn more revenue and that depends on the good communication skills of the customer service used. Walter Johnson has more than 20 years experience as a professional American writer. He mainly focused on economic topics, Johnson reads Russian and has published in journals such as "The Salisbury Review," "The Constantian" and "The Social Justice Review." He proposed that the theory of customer service is about retaining customers and loyalty remains the key element. It is by nature an intensely practical theory.

3. Analysis of the Application and Validity of Positive Language in Pre-sale Cases

3.1 The Introduction of Pre-sale Cases from Amazon CS

The first case is about pre-case from Amazon on Black Friday. Amazon.com had several awesome items at insane prices. One of these items was a really nice laptop, regularly \$1000, discounted to \$300 for 250 lucky people. A customer was not one of those lucky people. There was one item in particular that caught this customer's eye: The HP Pavilion TX1305US Notebook PC for the discounted price of \$299. He had planned on using this laptop to write epic novels while sipping mochas at his local Starbucks. Sadly, he wasn't randomly selected to be offered this deal and that made him very upset. By this point, he felt like it was important to escalate his complaint and then wrote an email to Amazon's president, Jeff Bezos. After three days later of Black Friday, the customer received an e-mail from Autumn Walker of Amazon.com Executive Customer Relations. The second pre-sale case is about a customer who named Chris Williams, he had experienced in Amazon shopping website. Williams contacted with Amazon's customer support team to block an email address because he found that someone named "Brittni" was "phishing" his email address.

3.2 Sample

My name is Autumn Walker of Amazon's Executive Customer Relations. Jeff Bezos received your email and has asked me to reply on his behalf, taking any action necessary to assist you.

I understand and fully empathize with your desire to write epic novels using the "HP Pavilion TX1305US Notebook PC" offered in the "Amazon Customers Vote" promotion. I had similar hopes of producing my own work of greatness when I cast my vote.

In this point, Amazon customer service showed sincere service attitude toward customer with positive language at the beginning of email replying. The tone or the way of customer service said "taking any acting necessary to assist you" will make customer feel assuring, they might think the customer service is responsible and their problems probably can be solved effectively. Then customer staff expressed deep sympathy for the problem which customer met and used the word "fully" makes the sympathy moved on a higher level to show a sincere concern, otherwise the customer service's

compassion is not sincere if didn't use that word, and the communication between both sides will be hampered. With the above guarantee words and sympathetic attitude, which will pave the way for customer service in persuading customer why he didn't win the discount, then the customer may not has too much negative emotions if Amazon customer service given the reason why the customer cannot be offered the discount of HP Pavilion TX1305US Notebook PC from Amazon website. Therefore, the positive language can make the words achieve positive effect and then avoid conflicts.

This means that I will certainly be on hand to help you find exactly the right Sharpie should you wish to persevere in your brilliant endeavor.

In this part, the Amazon customer service expressed his comfort to customer who didn't get the discount notebook in Black Friday, and explained himself and other Amazon employees were also not get that random discounts to customer. Then the customer service explained to customers that is company's regulation and promotion can only be done in a limited time and told a story about Norman Mailer who written best-selling novels without a notebook so as to encourage the customer continues writing his novels and convince the customer move on even if destiny was against him.

3.3 Analysis of the Application and Validity of Positive Language in After-sale Cases

Customer: Tracking shows delivered but shipment not received.

Amazon: Warmest greetings... My name is Thor.

This dialogue shows that Amazon customer service greeted customer with the warm welcome by using the most advanced form of the word "warm" in the begun, which showed a sincere attitude toward to the customer. The customer called himself as Odin, the father of Thor when the Amazon customer service introduced his name is Thor. However, the customer service was not angry because he was considered as Thor (Thor in Nordic Mythology) by the customer, but replied to the customer with humorous way in order to create pleasant conversation between both sides.

Customer: I'm afraid the book I ordered to defeat our enemies has been misplaced. How can we keep Valhalla intact without our sacred book?

Amazon: This is blasphemy! Wherever this book has been taken to, I shall make it my duty to get it back to you! I fear it is Loki but I dare not blame him for such things. I share have your fortune returned to you and thereafter we can create a new quest in order to get the book back to you.

The customer said he wasn't received the package even if the logistics information has been displayed in delivery. The Amazon customer service also replied the customer with the role of Thor in Nordic Mythology: he said that wherever this order (book) has been taken to, he shall make it his duty to get it back to the customer in order to make him feel assuring. In this point, such a response like that is also an embodiment of positive language, the Amazon customer service was not only put customer's shoes on his, but also made a certain commitment to customer that he will try his best to help find the missing package for customer. That made customer's concerns had been reduced.

Amazon: Allow me some time to round up my allies and complete this, my father.

Customer: Do it for me Thor, but most importantly do it for the mortals whose destiny (and grades) rely on this book.

Amazon: Alas, the treasure has been returned to you. You now need to reinstate your book into your archive so that you may yet receive it soon. I shall have the Valkyrie deliver it to you as fast as their wings can move.

4. Summary

This study takes Amazon customer service English as the research material and makes a deep analysis on the application of Positive Language in Customer Service English. The questions about the application and validity of positive language in Amazon Customer Service, the deficiencies of Amazon Customer Service in the use of positive language are researched in this study, and also the suggestions about application strategies has been put forward for Amazon customer service in the using of positive language. Through the analysis of the thesis, the basic information of positive language and customer service has been reviewed. Secondly, the application and validity of the

positive language in customer service English have been proved effectively in the main body of the thesis which combined with Amazon's pre-sale, on sale and after sale cases to do the research. Last but not least, some corresponding application strategies related to positive language usage in customer service were put forward for Amazon Customer Service solving common problems when they provide services to the customers, from which can help create a long, trustful relationship between customers and Amazon Customer Service. Therefore, using positive language in the conversation is a win-win strategy that benefits both customers and customer service representatives.

This thesis approved that Positive language is an effective communication skill in customer service. It is a powerful and professional tool for building a calm, safe communication climate between customers and customer service and could build active interpersonal relationships. Through the analysis of the cases from above contents, it can be clearly seen that positive language is an effective communication skill to improve customers' satisfaction and is also the best way to keep long-term relationship between customers and enterprises. Besides, the analysis results and the corresponding suggestions according to the deficiencies in the cases has been put forward for Amazon Customer Service related to the positive language to help them provide more professional reply and master good communication skill to customers in the future, at the same time, the usage of positive language in the process of providing services, Amazon's churn rate of customers could be reduced and customer service representatives' service quality will be improved gradually.

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