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Research on the Application of Business English Correspondence in Cross-border E-commerce Business Communication

Qin Huayang[1], Wang Haitao[2]
(Foreign language Department, Panzhihua University, China)

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ABSTRACT: Cross-border e-commerce, as a new business format, has significant strategic importance due to its advantages such as low cost, large traffic, and convenience, which have broken through the barriers among countries and deepened exchanges and trade between people from different countries. However, with the outbreak of the pandemic, traditional economic and trading patterns can no longer work under such circumstances, while cross-border e-commerce has flourished. As one of the main means of communication in cross-border e-commerce activities, business English correspondence plays an important role, bringing convenience to both sides for communicating and delivering business information in fulfilling contracts, improving work efficiency, and finally helping both parties achieve a deal. This article first elaborates on the basic concepts of business English correspondence and cross-border e-commerce, introduces the two main modes of cross-border e-commerce, namely B2B and B2C, and the changes that have occurred in the communication of business English correspondence within cross-border e-commerce. Combined with the writing principles of business English correspondence, it proposes suggestions on writing style and specific applications of correspondence in completing various stages of transactions. These aim to promote trading partners' understanding of the language characteristics of business English correspondence and their proficient and standardized use of it.

Keywords: Business English Correspondence, Cross-board E-commerce, Application

I. INTRODUCTION

In this section, the research background of the thesis, literature review and the significance of the study will be represented.

1.1 Research Background

With the advancement of information technology and the concept of Internet plus, the large orders of traditional foreign trade have been greatly reduced, and China's foreign trade enterprises have begun to transform and upgrade. As a new way of international trade, cross-border e-commerce meets the needs of overseas buyers with its small transactions, low cost, low risk, agility and flexibility, brings new opportunities and challenges to the foreign trade market, and also caters to the trend of world economic development. Foreign trade business began to be solved on the online platform, and the content of business English correspondence has become an important basis for solving these problems, and it is also facing new changes.

1.2 Literature Review

As an important means of communication in the economic field, business English correspondence is an important tool for carrying out foreign economic and trade business and related business activities, and its relevant theories and research have been constantly improving. In 1983, British and Chinese speech scientist Geoffrey Leech, based on his research on the theory of speech behavior (Speech Act Theory), divided it into four categories according to its characteristics: cooperation, competition, harmony, and conflict business English correspondence. At present, many scholars have explored and researched various fields, but they mainly focus on the teaching and writing of business English correspondence. Among them, domestic scholars also study the development role of business English correspondence in international trade or foreign trade, or the principles of writing business English correspondence and specific principles to carry out discussions. Wu Caijiao uses the actual development of business English correspondence in

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the current stage to analyze its role in foreign trade[1]. He Weihua explains the importance of business English correspondence in International trade, and analyzes its application and advantages in International trade[2].

Yang Qiuyi systematically understands the 7C principles and uses them appropriately to effectively improve the equality of correspondence writing and promote the development of import and export trade. There are also studies in cross-border e-commerce, but there are relatively few[3]. Song Chenchen explores the role of the principles of conciseness, cooperation and courtesy in cross-border e-commerce in the light of the actual situation of the transformation of traditional trade methods into cross-border e-commerce in recent years, and proposes that foreign trade professionals must adhere to the customer-centric approach in writing correspondence, and takes note of the typographic of correspondence behaviour and cross-cultural background differences[4]. Wang Yuya and Bai Xinfang integrate the application of foreign trade English correspondence in cross-border e-commerce enterprises, describe the new features of foreign trade correspondence writing and explore the requirements for improving students' ability to do well in cross-border e-commerce business. They also put forward suggestions for reforming the teaching of foreign trade English correspondence[5].

In short, domestic scholars mainly focus on its development status and the difficulties it encounters and put forward corresponding measures, or study the development of cross-border e-commerce in a certain field or location. There are very few scholars who study the application of business English correspondence.

1.3 Research Significance

Starting from the analysis of the relationship between business English correspondence and cross-border e-commerce, this paper analyzes the transformation of cross-border e-commerce in correspondence, and introduces the characteristics that should be reflected in the writing process of correspondence, and the application of writing skills and transaction completion. This article aims to explain the problems embodied in the application of business English correspondence, so that people engaged in the cross-border e-commerce industry can have an understanding, so as to promote the effective development of cross-border e-commerce business.

II. OVERVIEW OF CORRESPONDENCE AND CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE

In this section, the paper will focus on what a business English correspondence is, and the definition of cross-border e-commerce. There is also an introduction to the types of cross-border e-commerce, which can be divided into B2B and B2C models, as well as the transformation of cross-border e-commerce in correspondence communication.

2.1 Business English Correspondence

Business English correspondence is business correspondence conducted in English for foreign trade activities, including business letters, telegrams, telexes, faxes, emails and other communication methods used in foreign trade to ensure economic relationships between buyers and sellers[6]. There are many types of business English correspondence, including enquiry letters, response letters, request letters, notice letters and contract letters. From the specific functions of correspondence, they can be classified into several categories, such as congratulation letters, thank-you letters, introduction letters, etc.

2.2 Cross-border E-commerce

Cross-border e-commerce refers to a new type of International business activity in which different trading partners from different countries or regions conduct transactions through e-commerce platforms, then complete payment settlements and finally deliver goods to buyers through International logistics to achieve cross-border retail transactions. In short, cross-border e-commerce is an extension of locale-commerce in various regions, with transactions between provinces and cities transformed into transactions between regions around the world. Therefore, the most significant difference between cross-border e-commerce and traditional trade lies in the issues of customs clearance and sales in the destination country[7].Cross-border e-commerce can be mainly classified by the types of industrial end-users into B2B and B2C.

B2B (Business-to-Business) refers to cross-border e-commerce transactions between businesses from different countries, in which commercial transactions take place between two business entities through electronic platforms[8]. The characteristics of B2B e-commerce are, firstly, its emphasis on professionalism, which tests the

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professional level of employees in negotiation skills and procurement capabilities. Secondly, it emphasizes reliability because B2B represents business transactions between companies, and it is essential to come across as trustworthy to maintain long-term business relationships. Thirdly, transactions between companies are usually large-scale and are larger in amount compared to B2C, which mainly involve consumer goods such as daily necessities, leisure and entertainment. They are often smaller in amount per transaction. Alibaba is one of the most representative B2B e-commerce platforms. B2C refers to a business model where companies directly offer products or services to consumers. Unlike the traditional B2B model, the core of B2C is selling goods or services directly to end consumers rather than middle men or other businesses. Through e-commerce platforms such as the internet, consumers can browse and purchase goods or services conveniently, while businesses can provide better products and services by understanding consumer demands[9]. The e-commerce platforms for B2C include Ali Express, Taobao and many others.

2.3 The Transformation of Cross-border E-commerce in Correspondence Communication

This section describes the changes that will occur as business English correspondence moves from traditional trade to cross-border e-commerce. It manifests in three main ways, respectively markets expanding via email, offers and counteroffers and changes in after-sales service.

In the age of Internet plus, companies expand their overseas markets through email, which strengthens customer relationships and increases the probability of repeat orders. For the cross-border e-commerce industry, faced with intense competition, it is necessary to build a corporate image, and it is even more crucial to manage email marketing. This places new requirements on enterprise email.

Traditional offers and counteroffers need to be as detailed as possible, while cross-border e-commerce platforms can present product specifications, images, prices and payment methods in a more intuitive way to customers[10]. Therefore, compared with traditional foreign trade transactions, the inquiry process is weakened in cross-border e-commerce. Sellers should emphasizes more on the response letters for counteroffers, allowing customers to place orders more conveniently and quickly.

The scope of after-sales service in cross-border e-commerce is wilder than that of traditional trade. Traditional after-sales service only involves return or exchange, while cross-border e-commerce, there is need to gain “reviews” and “feedback”. “Review” refers to the evaluation of the product itself by customers, which is displayed in the drop-down page of the listing. “Feedback” refers to the evaluation made by customers after purchasing a product, including product quality, service level, delivery speed, and consistency with the product description. This evaluation only occurs when there is a real purchase record. The reason is that positive reviews can greatly enhance the credibility of the enterprise and improve the attractiveness of the products. Simultaneously, retaining old customers is much easier than developing new customers. However, the premise for enterprises to seek positive feedback is permissible without violating platform rules and genuine will of consumers. Therefore, there are higher requirements for writing after-sales letters. The following is an example seeking after-sales reviews :

Dear Friend,

Thank you for your recent order. We strive to provide great customer service and want to make sure you are completely satisfied. If there are any issues, please contact us. Our customer support team is ready to help!

As a small business, you review goes a long way in helping other Amazon shoppers determine if they want to buy from us. Would you please take 30seconds of your time and share your experience below?

Thanks again for shopping with us!

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This is a business letter seeking positive feedback, which is straightforward in expressing its needs and purposes. It is easy for the reader to understand what the author wants to convey, rather than being filled with flowery language or beating around the bush. This not only makes the letter more readable and understandable but also appears more sincere and direct.

III. PRINCIPLES OF BUSINESS ENGLISH CORRESPONDENCE WRITING

Business English correspondence is a commonly used tool in business activities, which can help enterprises conduct international trade and cooperation. Besides the content, expression is also crucial. The writing of business English correspondence needs to follow certain norms and adopt some techniques which can make the correspondence accurately expressed and the language to be fluent, so that both parties are easier to communicate and understand. There are seven writing principles, conciseness, consideration, courtesy, clarity, correctness and completeness respectively.

3.1 Principle of Conciseness

Conciseness is to avoid repeating information when expressing the same communicative meaning, and to use language succinctly. Excessive information sway the receiver into either a wrong direction or into inaction only. The quantum of information should be appropriate, otherwise the reader will not be tempted to read on. The message to be communicated should be as brief and concise as possible. For example:

① I have caused inquiries to be made with a view to establishing the reasons for our inability to supply you order.

It can be replaced that I have enquiried into the reason why we can't supply your order.

②The total balance due will be found on page 2 of this report.

It can be changed to "the balance due is on page 2 of this report".

3.2 Principle of Clarity

Clarity encompasses two aspects. Firstly, the writer should know clearly what he wants to write before drafting the correspondence. Secondly, the recipient of the correspondence can fully understand what the writer intends to convey without any misunderstanding[11].This requires the writer to have a clear mind, organized thoughts, and accurate expression, avoiding the use of ambiguous words or phrases that may cause confusion or uncertainty. Below is an example.

1) We can supply 200tons of the steel only.
2) We can supply only 200tons of the steel.

In the first sentence, "only" simply modifies the steel, describing the items provided, and there are no items here other than those specified. In the second sentence, "only 200 tons" are modified to state that only 200 tons can be supplied, and there will be no more quantities.

3.3 Principle of Correctness

Correctness is the most important principle in business English correspondence. It not only includes correct spelling, punctuation, grammar usage and proper format, but also ensures that the information contained in the correspondence is accurate. Therefore, when writing a business English correspondence, it is necessary to check repeatedly all the information which is consistent with the type of correspondence, such as address, delivery times and unit prices, etc. For instance:

Because it is close to the Spring Festival, so we no longer accept any orders.

The correct expression is that because it is close to the Spring Festival, we no longer accept any orders.

3.4 Principle of Concreteness

Concrete language describes details precisely. It is easier to understand than abstract or general language. The receiver may interpret an abstract term quite differently from the writer's intended message. When the writer use concrete terms and the recipient will have a clearer idea of your meaning[12]. For instance, the sentence "please send us your catalog and price list". The reader may not be able to accurately extract information and effectively carry out the subsequent economic behavior of sending requested catalog and price list due to the large number of products available. And here is an another example "I will send the samples to you soon". The sentence contains ambiguous expression such as "soon", so the correct expression should be "I will send the samples to you next Friday".

In B2B mode, some enterprises adopt certain marketing strategies to promote and advertise their products, and they may seek foreign buyer information online. Therefore, the content of a correspondence writing should follow the principles of consideration and courtesy. On the other hand, in B2C mode, cross-border e-commerce

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is that general merchants directly sell products overseas through the Internet, and customers communicate directly with the merchants. The main focus here is on product flow, and the principles of a correspondence writing should mainly reflect conciseness, clarity, correctness and concreteness.

IV. APPLICATION OF BUSINESS ENGLISH CORRESPONDENCE

Application can be divided into three parts, namely the application of business English correspondence writing skills, the degree of language formality in correspondence and the application of business English correspondence to facilitate business completion.

4.1 The Suggestions of Business English Correspondence Writing

In business communication, using appropriate language and vocabulary is extremely important. Different cultural backgrounds and language habits may lead to mutual misunderstanding, bias or confusion. Therefore, when writing business correspondence or emails, it is necessary to use simple and clear language that both parties can understand. This ensures the accuracy of information transmission and minimizes the potential for misunderstandings or unnecessary trouble, while also demonstrating our professionalism and courtesy.

4.1.1 Determination of the Acceptability of Linguistic Forms

The differences between China and the West, in terms of geography, geographical environment and ethnicity, have led to significant linguistic differences and to the formation of distinctive cultures. Human geography, knowledge, technology, language and script are all cultural factors. However, in the case of language and script, they have a role to play in the culture of the language, by implication and guidance. Thus in business English correspondence writing, the writer need to bear in mind the existence of cultural differences, and be mindful of avoiding language that the other party may not understand or may find offensive. These cultural differences may include polite language, honorifics, forms of address and modes of expression. Furthermore, the writer should also be aware that attitudes and approaches to issues and situations may differ across different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, in business English correspondence, the writer should strive to understand and respect the cultural background and preferences of the other party. And he should also use appropriate language and means of communication to convey information and engage in dialogue, aiming at ensuring communication and establish good commercial reputation. When writing English correspondence for e-commerce transactions, language should be clear and precise, and polite. There are differences in thinking between China and the West, which are also reflected in the use of honorifics. In Chinese, honorifics are used to express respect for the other person by placing them in a higher position, such as “you company ”or “your bank”. However, in English thinking, this way of expression can seem insincere and unproductive. Instead, it is best to maintain an equal relationship in correspondence. Polite language does not mean lowering oneself or appearing arrogant, but rather showing respect to the other person. Equality and respect are important principles in human communication, allowing both parties to communicate on friendly terms and cooperate more harmoniously and joyfully. When writing correspondence, it is important to make the other person feel respected, creating a positive atmosphere for communication and cooperation. In addition, the language used in business English communication should reflect a calm and rational demeanor. The writer should also avoid using words or phrases that are too emotional or subjective, because such language can lead to doubt and make it difficult for the other party to believe you. When dealing with business matters, it is important to maintain a calm and rational mindset in order to make sound judgments. Therefore, it is advisable to use language that is objective and neutral, sticking to the facts and avoiding any unnecessary exaggeration or emotion. This will help ensure effective communication and build trust between parties in e-commerce transactions.

In a business correspondence, one party often gives advice to the other party, and the purpose of the suggestion is to get the other party to accept the proposal. Of course, whether the other person accepts the suggestion depends on various factors, and the writer should consider the expression in English and avoid using words with a commanding tone. For example: “You must…” “You should...”, “You have to…” and other expressions are not easily accepted by the other party. Use “Why don’t you...” “Do you think...”, and other tactful tones can achieve the desired effect.

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4.1.2 Advancement with Times in Writing

People live in a rapidly changing world, and business English correspondence writing must also keep pace with the times, as more and more businesses need to conduct business activities in the international market due to the development of globalization and cross-border trade. As one of the most common ways of business communication, correspondence plays a crucial role in enterprise exchanges. Moreover, with the development and changes in technology, the writing style of business English correspondence is becoming more diverse and responsible. This requires writers to closely monitor updates in various expressions. Specifically, business English correspondence writing should avoid "language mediocrity", which implies the use of popular language. Excessive use of cliches can create obstacles to business communication.

With the increasing diversity and expansion of trade activities, cross-border e-commerce technology and industries have also been updated, and the language style of business correspondence is also changing. Although there are various changes, as long as the correspondence writer master the presentation style and rules of business English correspondences, adhere to the writing mode that keeps pace with the times, and conform to the laws of correspondence writing. International business communication can be achieved eventually. Practice has proved that business English correspondence have played an irreplaceable role in promoting international economic trade and the rapid development of China's economy.

4.2 The Degree of Formality of the Language in Correspondence

Traditional trade is mainly conducted offline, with fixed trading locations, which may be at specialized world commodity trading markets, rather than being virtual like cross-border e-commerce. The traditional method of trade is also more responsible and may involve the use of payment methods such as bills of exchange and letters of credit, without the need for correspondence communications during this process. However, in cross-border e-commerce, finding suitable trading partners is mainly done through correspondence communications. Cross-border e-commerce mainly divided into two modes: B2B and B2C. The language used in correspondence communications for business correspondences also differs between the two modes of operation. In the B2C mode, the correspondence language is relatively concise, clear, relaxed and friendly, emphasizing the affinity and natural fluency of expression. This is because the customer base in the B2C mode is more extensive, including ordinary consumers. When communicating with customers, it is necessary to use easy-to-understand and grounded language to better convey information. Here is an example. "Hey, bro, could you tell me the size of this Star Dew toy? I will buy it for my sister's birthday gift".

In contrast, in the B2B mode, the correspondence language is more formal and rigorous. As cooperation and communication between enterprises are involved in this mode, special attention should be paid to wording to avoid ambiguity or in appropriate language. In business correspondence, some fixed formats and expressions are usually used in the correspondence language to ensure the accuracy and standardization of communication. For example, "we have imported handling toys for many years. Our products have enjoyed a high reputation in the world for their good quality and reasonable price".

Regardless of the mode of cross-border e-commerce, when using correspondence for communication, the corresponding writing principles must be followed to ensure the accuracy and clarity of information.

4.3 The Application of Correspondence for Transaction Completion in E-commerce

In the writing of business English correspondence, it is important to comply with English grammar rules, and expressions should be accurate and appropriate. In cross-border e-commerce activities, most business information is expressed through correspondence, which requires explanations of certain matters in correspondence. To better understand and assess the other party, it is necessary to use affirmative and assertive sentences more often, allowing the other party to feel your confidence and familiarity with the matter at hand. Conversely, frequent use of negative and questioning sentences can make people feel that your image is difficult to approach, impolite, and unprofessional, raising doubts about your familiarity with the business and your confidence in it. Once such an impression is left on the other party, it is likely to affect cooperation between the two sides

In the B2C model, although cross-border e-commerce can sell goods through live streaming, communication still needs to be carried out through written correspondence. In this process, the practitioners of both buyers and sellers may not

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have received formal training, so the language of written correspondence tends to be more colloquial. However, in the B2B model, sellers still need to use written correspondence to find cooperative partners. At this point, e-commerce personnel have undergone professional training and mastered trade-specific terminology, so the language characteristics of written correspondence tend to be more formal.

Here is a detailed description of the various link in cross-border e-commerce business activities for the two modes.

4.3.1 Business Relationship Establishment

Whether it is a newly established company or an established company, seeking to establish or develop new business relationships has always been a top priority for the survival and development of the company. In order to continuously expand the company's business, it is necessary to find potential domestic and e-commerce sales markets for its goods or services, and to continuously develop new business relationships on the basis of consolidating existing business relationships.

In addition to participating in various exhibitions or business trips, establishing business relationships through correspondence is also a more common operation in business dealings, and it is also the most economical way. The seller can gain new customer' information from the following sources, the other company's website, large-scale trade fairs and exhibitions at home and abroad, advertisement published in newspapers and online media, commercial counselor's office of the embassy, business guilds and other channels, such as banks, through other customer referrals, business catalogs. The usual writing format is as follows:

4.3.1.1 Starting by stating the source of the information

Having had your name and address from the Commercial Counselor's office of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Shanghai. We know that you have made a purchase inquiry for electrical appliances.

4.3.1.2 A brief introduction to your company in terms of business scope, products and service

We specialize in exporting Chinese arts and crafts and have been engaged in this business for many years. What's more, we have established many subsidiary companies worldwide and enjoy a good reputation.

4.3.1.3 Purpose of writing the correspondence

The purpose of this correspondence is to explore the possibility of developing trade with your company. We offer top-quality products from our country and therefore have excellent conditions to provide you customers with the most reliable goods in response to your inquiries.

4.3.1.4 Expressing a desire to work with other party and to receive an early response We are willing to enter into business relations with your firm on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and exchanging what one has for what one needs.

4.3.2 Invitation

After establishing a preliminary business relationship, to increase customers' emotional connection with our company and products, the seller may send an invitation letter to invite them to visit the seller's company or attend relevant exhibitions. If they accept the invitation, it shows that they have a genuine interest in seller's products and are willing to cooperate with the company. The seller should take the opportunity to receive them warmly and show hospitality. Such correspondence can help the seller make new friends, deepen mutual understanding, strengthen the relationship, and promote trade. After visiting the seller's company or attending the exhibition, customers will trust the seller more, and when placing orders, they will consider the seller as their priority. When writing the invitation letter, the seller should be concise, enthusiastic, and clear about the time and location. So the seller should make customers feel that the visit is valuable and also show the seller's sincerity. The usual writing format is as follow:

4.3.2.1 Thanking the other party for their cooperation

(1)I would also like to thank you for your trust and support to our bags in this year.

(2)Extending an invitation

To promote further trade partnerships, we warmly invite you to the Ceramic Art Exhibition in Shanghai from 10th to 20th august.

(3) Looking forward to are ply or meeting

It would be a great pleasure to meet you at the exhibition.

4.3.3 Business Negotiation

After the customer has learned about the seller's company and products and agrees to establish a business relationship, the seller should express their gratitude and proactively arrange to send samples for certification as requested by the

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customer. If the certification passes, the seller need to provide a quotation, which is generally sent in the form of a business correspondence. This is a crucial step because business correspondence are legal documents and involve many technical or foreign trade terms. Once they are sent, they should not be changed or revoked at will. Therefore, the writer of correspondence should be cautious when writing such correspondence and consider both short-term economic benefits and long-term interests. The trading negotiation stage mainly includes the four stages of inquiry, offer, counter-offer, and acceptance. The offer and acceptance are indispensable. This type of correspondence shows that both parties have truly entered the transaction stage, similar to face-to-face negotiations. The success of the business depends on the correspondence during this stage. When writing this type of correspondence, the writer should take note of reasonable pricing and comprehensive and prudent expression of all elements. Especially when quoting product technical terms and trade terms, the writer should consult professional personnel if he is unsure to avoid misunderstandings and unnecessary losses. An offer and acceptance are illustrated to be examples:

①The usual format for writing an offer is as follows:

4.3.3.1 Thanking the other party for the enquiry

Thank you for the correspondence of enquiring price for our boy's T-shirt.

4.3.3.2 Specifying details of the specification of the goods and the terms of the transaction

In new single jute bags, each containing 100kilos net. T are weight not less than 1 kilo. As an exception, the best we can do for the trial delivery is to offer you direct payment at sight terms.

4.3.3.3 Writing down the expiry date of the offer

This offer is valid until December 1st. 2023. If you have any further concerns or are not satisfied with the current proposal, please do not hesitate to contact us. Also, please keep in mind the deadline and ensure that any communication regarding the negotiation takes place before that date.

4.3.3.4 Receiving a positive answer hopefully.

We look forward to receiving you order soon so that we can deal with the matter in time.

②The usual format for accepting is as follows:

(1) Thanking you each other for the offer or counteroffer

We are grateful for receiving an offer or counteroffer so quickly, and we will consider it carefully.

(2) Clearly indicating your acceptance or confirmation of acceptance of the offer

We confirm having purchased from 100 sets of Art Ceramics on the following terms and conditions.

(3) Indicating that a contract will be made as ordered

We will e-mail the contract to you within five days./ Please send us the sales contract as soon as possible.

(4) Expressing good intentions

We believe that this initial order will lead to further dealings between our two companies.

4.3.4 Contract Signing

After both parties have reached an agreement on the trading terms after negotiation, they can sign a contract. The usual practice is for one party to prepare a written contract, then sign and stamp it and finally fax it to the other party for countersigning and returning, so that the contract are established. The role of correspondence in this case is to confirm the results of the previous negotiations between the two trading parties, reminding them to sign a written contract so that the transaction can be smoothly carried out. When writing, the writer should be clear in his attitude and pay attention to timeliness because the international market is changing rapidly. Once delayed, all previous efforts may be in vain. When drafting the contract, the seller should carefully review the content of the previous negotiation correspondence to ensure accuracy. The usual format for writing is as follows:

4.3.4.1 Confirmation of trading conditions

The price you quoted is workable. Therefore we have faxed you our acceptance.

4.3.4.2 Indicating that you have faxed or mailed the contract

We have enclosed a copy of our Contract No. 888 for your reference. Please review it and confirm your agreement by signing and returning a copy to us as soon as possible for our records. Thank you very much.

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4.3.4.3 Expressing expectations

We are pleased to inform you that our cooperation has resulted in satisfactory outcomes for both parties, and overall it has been a pleasant experience. We hope that there will be more opportunities for us to work together in the future, and wish your company every success in business endeavors

4.3.5 Follow-up

After the contract is signed, it enters the implementation or follow-up stage. There are many tasks in this stage, including stocking, inspection and quarantine, arranging shipping, insurance, payment and collection, etc. The role of business correspondence at this stage is to convey relevant business information to both parties regarding the complicated trade process, and solve problems that arise during the contract fulfillment, and facilitate the smooth handover of goods and payment collection for both the buyer and the seller. When writing this type of correspondence, we should observe clearly and completely writing out all relevant elements, making the content clear and well-organized, and sending it in a timely manner. This is because there are many links involved in the trading process, such as shipping time and the destination. They all require accuracy and timeliness. Any errors may result in losses that are difficult to estimate. Then this paper will consider that telling the party about the shipment as an example.

4.3.5.1 Reference to relevant contract goods

We are pleased to confirm receipt of your order for kitchen ware and would have entrusted it to Changlv Lun for transportation, which departed on April 15th. This is well within the time you specified. Our bank has confirmed receipt of your draft. For future transaction, we are pleased to grant you credit facilities and shall submit a quaterly statement. Your credit maximum will be $10,000.

4.3.5.2 Informing the shipment details

We would like to inform you of the shipping details as follows. The shipment was loaded on May 20th, 2021 at Renmin Wharf, and the vessel's name is He Ping Hao. It is expected to arrive in approximately two weeks.

4.3.5.3 Additional information

If you have any questions or want to learn more information, please do not hesitate to contact us immediately. We will be happier to answer any questions and provide you with the necessary assistance.

4.3.6 Complaints and Claims

Disputes between trading parties due to issues regarding their respective rights and obligations are not uncommon in cross-border e-commerce. What buyers care about is that delayed opening of letters of creditor with holding payments, while sellers mainly take notice of delayed delivery or product quality issues which can result in disputes. These disagreements are the result of differences in perspectives and are common occurrences in cross-border e-commerce. The purpose of this type of business correspondence is to identify and resolve conflicts, but also to transform unfavorable factors into favorable ones and rebuild customer confidence. The only goal is to promoting healthy business development. For example, if a claim is unreasonable, it can be politely explained, and compensation can be refused. When writing this type of correspondence, it is important to ensure that all necessary details are provided and the relevant situation is clearly and specifically stated, providing logical reasoning and polite language. Sincere and thoughtful attitudes should be maintained while considering issues from both parties' perspective and focusing on long-term cooperation. The usual format for writing is as follows:

4.3.6.1 Acknowledging receipt of complaints and expressing regret

We are very sorry to receive your complaint and we are deeply sorry that our negligence has caused losses for you. We feel guilty and will investigate the cause of the matter as soon as possible. Please believe that we will take effective measures to ensure that similar problems do not occur again in the future.

4.3.6.2 Stating the findings

After a thorough investigation into the incident, we found that our delivery time was in compliance with the contractual requirements. However, the goods were damaged due to unforeseen circumstances during transportation.

4.3.6.3 Proposing a solution

We hope you can understand that sometimes unexpected situations may occur, but we promise to uphold honesty and service quality and do our best to provide you with better services. To compensate for your losses, we will re-send the

requested goods and offer a price discount for the next transaction.

4.3.6.4 Apologizing again

We apologize for the inconvenience caused to your company and hope that this minor error will not affect our long-term cooperation.

V. CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

The transformation and upgrading of foreign trade enterprises has opened up new development space for the trade field in China, and the business process of cross-border e-commerce makes business English correspondence and commercial documents clearer in form, content, and expression. This article briefly introduces the concepts of business English correspondence and cross-border e-commerce, and explains that cross-border e-commerce mainly has two modes: B2B and B2C. Principles are discussed that they should be followed in the writing process of correspondence. Finally, the article reflects the application of business correspondence from three aspects: writing skills of correspondence, formality of language under the two modes, and various stages of completing transactions. The article concludes that although the new sales model of live streaming promotion can be adopted for the B2C mode, the B2B mode still requires communication through business English correspondence. For cross-border e-commerce practitioners, it is necessary to master relevant business knowledge and be familiar with the changes in writing content and techniques.

5.2 Research Limitations

This article studies the application of business English correspondence writing in business communication under the background of cross-border e-commerce. However, during the process of reviewing related literature, it was found that there has been relatively little communication regarding the application of business English correspondence writing in cross-border e-commerce business. Cross-border e-commerce, as an emerging form of foreign trade, is different from traditional trade forms. There are limited and not fully clear understandings on the changes for business English correspondence in cross-border e-commerce. Due to the combination of these two contexts, there is relatively little relevant content at home and abroad, and my own consideration of cross-border e-commerce may be incomplete, coupled with my relatively general professional knowledge, there may be a lack of thorough analysis in my current point of view. However, this also presents an opportunity for innovation. understand the changes in the application of business English correspondence in

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