The Intercultural Edge

Communication, Business and AI

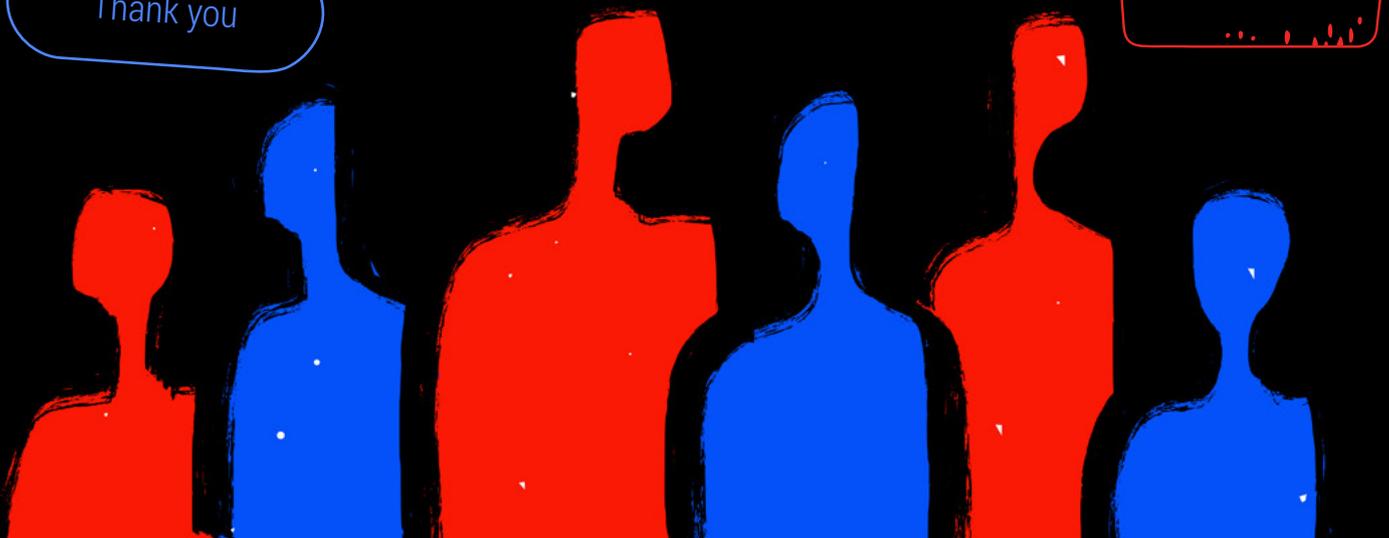好

Politeness in the Digital Age

数字时代的礼貌

感谢

OK!

Sorry

抱歉

Thank you

Introducing the Intercultural Edge: Communication, Business and AI

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *The Intercultural Edge: Communication, Business and AI*, the flagship biannual briefing of the International Research Hub on Intercultural Communication, Business and AI. Designed as a research-plus-practice publication, the briefing translates cutting-edge scholarship into actionable insights for executives, policymakers, educators and technologists working at the intersection of culture, commerce and technology. It is fully bilingual (English-Chinese) and aligns with the Hub's three pillars: Intercultural Communication, Business, and AI.

Why this first theme
Our debut focuses on "Politeness in the Digital Age." As global collaboration moves to email, messaging apps and AI-mediated tools, tiny choices in tone now carry outsized consequences for trust, reputation and deal outcomes. This issue shows how politeness operates across platforms – and what leaders and designers can do to prevent "tone loss" from derailing relationships.

Who it's for – and how to use it
Executives can apply the checklists to de-risk market entry and negotiations; policymakers can adapt protocols for digital-first diplomacy; educators can fold the materials into courses and faculty development; and AI builders can turn the politeness-retention audit into product metrics. Each issue blends evidence, cases and tools you can deploy immediately in your workflows.

We hope this first briefing equips you with practical language for respect in digital channels – and a sharper edge where culture, business and AI meet.

《跨文化前沿：沟通·商业·人工智能》半年刊导刊首发

欢迎阅读《跨文化前沿：沟通·商业·人工智能》创刊号。本刊由国际跨文化沟通、商业与人工智能研究中心倾力打造，旨在将前沿研究成果转化为可操作的实务洞见，服务于活跃在文化、商业与科技交汇领域的企业高管、政策制定者、教育工作者和技术创新者。杂志全刊中英文对照，围绕"跨文化沟通""商业"与"人工智能"三大核心支柱展开。

主题聚焦
创刊主题为**"数字时代的礼貌"**。随着全球协作场景日益转向电子邮件、即时通讯以及AI中介工具，语气和措辞的细微差别如今对信任、声誉和商务结果的影响愈发显著。本期将深入剖析礼貌在数字沟通平台上的运作机制，并探讨领导者和技术设计者如何有效防止"语气流失"对关系造成潜在损害。

适用对象与使用方式
企业高管可将本刊提供的清单与框架应用于市场准入和商务谈判，从而降低沟通风险；政策制定者可借鉴其中的数字外交礼仪；教育工作者可将内容融入课程与教师培训；AI研发团队则可将"礼貌保留"指标纳入产品设计与评估体系。每一期内容都融合实证研究、案例分析与实用工具，便于直接应用于实际工作流程中。

我们希望本期导刊能够为您在数字沟通中表达尊重、维护关系提供有力的语言工具，也为您在文化、商业与人工智能的交汇处，增添一把锋利而稳健的"跨文化之刃"。

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本期亮点 | Highlights of issue 1

主编洞见｜数字时代的"礼貌"：跨文化尊重的迷失与应对
Editorial Lead Insight｜When 'politeness' gets lost in translation: navigating respect in the digital age

本篇由创刊主编项骅博士撰写，聚焦数字时代跨文化沟通中"礼貌"概念的转变。文章探讨语言、语境与科技之间的关系，并思考人工智能如何重塑"尊重"的表达方式。作者呼吁读者重新审视数字时代的礼仪与沟通之道。

This opening essay by our founding editor Dr Xiang contrasts high- and low-context cultures, exploring how digital communication reshapes the expression of politeness and how AI technologies redefine what it means to show respect. It invites readers to reflect on the evolving etiquette of the digital age.

案例聚焦｜AI 可以写信，但能替你说"不"吗？
Case in Point｜Can AI write the letter, but say "No" for you?

本文分享了一项最新对比 AI 与人工拒绝邮件差异的研究，并就此提出如何更有效使用 AI 协助书写商务拒绝邮件的方式方法。

A comparative study shows the difference between AI-generated refusal and human refusal emails. It provides insights on how to use AI more effectively in generating refusal emails in business.

研究综评｜人工智能写作与职场信任的实证研究
Evidence in Review｜Evidence on AI writing and trust in the workplace

本栏目回顾了人工智能在职场沟通中的应用，关注 AI 写作对管理者与员工之间信任和真诚感的影响，并为理性使用 AI 提供新的思考角度。

This section reviews how AI-assisted writing is changing workplace communication — especially its impact on authenticity and trust between leaders and employees — and offers perspectives on adopting AI with care and intention.

聚焦教育｜礼貌如何影响学生对反馈的感知——聊天机器人 vs 人类教师
Education Spotlight｜How does politeness shape students' perception on feedback – chatbot vs human teachers

文章探讨礼貌语言在教育反馈中的作用，比较学生对 AI 与人类教师回应的不同感受，并启发教育者思考如何在教学中平衡技术与人文。

An experiment with 284 students shows polite wording boosts perceived benevolence and communion for both chatbots and teachers, but politeness alone cannot close the trust gap with humans. Best practice: pair polite chatbot feedback with timely teacher follow-up.

洞见数据｜AI 翻译中的礼貌：一项探索性研究
Data Spotlight｜Politeness in AI translation: an exploratory study

本栏目呈现一项关于 AI 翻译中礼貌表达的探索性研究，关注不同系统在语气、敬语与文化细节方面的表现，并为未来研究提供方向。

This section presents an exploratory look at how AI translation systems handle tone, honorifics and cultural nuance, offering directions for further study and refinement.

语言与文化角｜Language and culture corner

本栏目精选"客气""麻烦您""烦请""打扰您了""不好意思"等五个常见礼貌表达，展示词语选择的微妙差异如何体现尊重与谦逊，也启发读者思考语言背后的文化温度。

This corner highlights five common expressions of politeness in Chinese, showing how subtle word choices convey respect and humility, and inviting readers to reflect on the cultural warmth behind language.

精选延读｜Further Reading
预告《异中求和》(Harmony in Differences, 2026) 一书及相关研究文献，帮助读者在理论与实践之间建立更深的连接。

This preview introduces Harmony in Differences (2026) and related research, encouraging readers to connect academic insight with real-world practice.

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When "politeness" gets lost in translation: navigating respect in the digital age

By Dr Catherine Hua Xiang

The two-letter deal breaker

A British executive recently sent what she thought was a straightforward confirmation to her Chinese business partner: "OK."

Two letters. No greeting, no closing, no "thank you." In London, this represented efficiency – crisp confirmation without unnecessary elaboration. In Beijing, it landed as dismissive, even disrespectful. The relationship cooled, and a multi-million-dollar joint venture stalled for weeks.

This micro-moment illustrates a macro challenge facing global organizations today. As business communication increasingly moves through digital channels – email, messaging platforms, and AI-mediated translation – the stakes for cross-cultural politeness have never been higher. Without facial expressions, vocal tone, or shared physical context, microscopic linguistic choices carry outsized weight in building or breaking trust across cultures.

The cultural context divide

The challenge stems from fundamental differences in communication architecture. High-context cultures like China embed meaning in relational signals, shared history, and indirect cues. Low-context cultures like the UK and US prioritize explicit information transfer and task-oriented efficiency.

Recent research in digital discourse reveals that these cultural patterns don't disappear in virtual environments – they're amplified. High-context communicators compensate for lost contextual cues by intensifying relationship-maintenance behaviours: elaborate greetings, multiple expressions of gratitude, and careful attention to hierarchy markers. Low-context communicators, meanwhile, may interpret these as inefficient or performative.

Studies of cross-cultural video meetings show that reduced turn-taking opportunities and poorly timed interruptions correlate with measurably lower rapport scores – even when task completion remains unaffected. This suggests that rhythm, timing, and conversational flow function as critical politeness signals in hybrid work environments, with cultural misalignment creating invisible friction that erodes long-term collaboration effectiveness.

Digital politeness across platforms

Email communication patterns
Chinese business emails typically open with formal honorifics ("尊敬的王总") and close with relationship-nurturing phrases ("祝您工作顺利"). British counterparts favor functional efficiency: "Hi James" and "Best."

The frequency of gratitude expressions differs markedly. British writers typically thank once per exchange; Chinese writers may express thanks multiple times within a single thread to maintain relational warmth and demonstrate reciprocity. Neither approach is inherently superior, but misunderstanding these patterns can signal disrespect where none was intended.

Messaging applications
On WeChat, emoji and sticker usage serves pragmatic functions beyond mere decoration. A simple smiley or "谢谢" sticker can transform potentially harsh directives into collegial requests. However, equivalent emoji usage in British WhatsApp business contexts may be perceived as unprofessional or inappropriately casual.

Voice messages present another cultural divergence. In Chinese business contexts, voice notes convey sincerity and personal investment. In British professional settings, unsolicited voice messages can feel intrusive unless explicitly agreed upon in advance.

The AI translation problem
Artificial intelligence tools systematically diminish politeness nuance in cross-cultural communication. Consider how "麻烦您" – a phrase that acknowledges imposition while making a request – typically reduces to the stark "Please" in machine translation. The original expression conveys humility, recognition of the recipient's effort, and relationship awareness. The translated version strips away these layers, leaving only the functional directive.

Current research indicates that **politeness loss rates exceed 40% in Chinese-English AI translation**, with particularly severe degradation in honorific systems, indirectness markers, and tone calibration. Large language models, despite their impressive fluency, demonstrate persistent brittleness in pragmatic competence – the very skills required for culturally appropriate communication.

This technological gap creates a dangerous illusion: conversations appear to flow smoothly while underlying relationship damage accumulates undetected.

Strategic implications

For business leaders
Revenue at stake extends beyond individual deals. Repeated tone misalignments create cumulative reputation damage that can lock organizations out of entire markets. Direct communication styles that work domestically – phrases like "Let's cut to the chase" or "Bottom line" – can systematically undermine trust-building in relationship-oriented business cultures.

For policy makers
Diplomatic miscommunication risks multiply in digital channels. A single mistranslated softening phrase can derail months of careful negotiation. Traditional diplomatic protocols developed for face-to-face interaction require urgent adaptation for digital-first international relations.

For educational institutions
Students entering global workforces need explicit training in digital politeness variation. Current curricula address spoken politeness but largely ignore the distinct challenges of maintaining respect across cultures in text-based and AI-mediated communication.

40%

"
Politeness loss rates exceed 40% in Chinese-English AI translation.

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> **The ability to maintain respect across cultural boundaries represents both competitive advantage and diplomatic necessity.**

Implementation framework

For organizational leaders

1 **Implement cultural calibration protocols:** Require relationship-building language before task-focused content in international communications

2 **Deploy cultural intermediaries:** Use bicultural team members to review critical external communications

3 **Audit AI communication tools:** Regularly assess whether translation and AI writing tools preserve intended politeness levels

For technology developers

1 **Preserve politeness markers:** Modify training datasets to maintain cultural courtesy indicators rather than optimizing purely for brevity

2 **Enable contextual translation:** Develop systems that adjust formality and politeness based on cultural context and relationship dynamics

3 **Provide user control:** Offer explicit formality and politeness settings rather than defaulting to neutral register

For policy and education

1 **Update diplomatic protocols:** Establish guidelines for digital communication that account for cultural politeness variation

2 **Integrate digital politeness training:** Include cross-cultural digital communication competencies in international business and diplomatic education programs

3 **Support research initiatives:** Fund studies on AI's impact on cross-cultural relationship-building to inform evidence-based policy

The path forward

In an increasingly connected yet digitally mediated world, the ability to maintain respect across cultural boundaries represents both competitive advantage and diplomatic necessity. Organizations that master this balance will build stronger international partnerships, avoid costly misunderstandings, and create more inclusive global teams.

The solution requires both technological sophistication and cultural intelligence: AI systems that preserve rather than flatten politeness, leaders who understand that efficiency without relationship-building is ultimately inefficient, and educational systems that prepare the next generation for nuanced global communication.

As digital channels become the primary medium for international collaboration, those who navigate cultural politeness with skill will find themselves with a crucial edge in building the trust that makes complex global partnerships possible.

数字时代的"礼貌"：跨文化尊重的迷失与应对

项骅博士，《跨文化前沿：沟通、商业与人工智能》创始主编

两个字母引发的商业危机

一位英国高管曾向其中国商业伙伴发送一封她认为简洁明了的确认邮件："OK."。

仅两字母，无问候语、无结束语、无"谢谢"。在伦敦，这代表高效——简洁确认，无需赘言。在北京，却被解读为轻慢乃至无礼。商业关系骤然降温，一个价值数百万美元的合资项目因此停滞数周。

这一微小事件，揭示了当今全球组织面临的宏观挑战。随着商业沟通日益依赖数字渠道——电子邮件、即时通讯平台和AI翻译工具，跨文化礼貌的重要性前所未有地凸显。缺失了面部表情、语音语调或共享的物理语境，微观的语言选择在跨文化信任的建立或破坏中承载着超乎寻常的重量。

文化语境的分野

此挑战源于沟通架构的根本差异。中国等高语境文化将意义融入关系信号、共同历史与间接线索中。英美等低语境文化则优先考量信息的明确传递与任务导向的效率。

数字话语的最新研究表明，这些文化模式在虚拟环境中非但未消失，反而被放大。高语境沟通者通过强化关系维护行为来弥补缺失的语境线索：精心设计的问候语、多次致谢、以及对等级标识的细致关注。与此同时，低语境沟通者可能将这些强化的礼貌信号解读为低效或矫饰。

跨文化视频会议研究显示，发言机会减少与不当打断同亲和感下降存在相关性——即便任务完成度未受影响。这表明，对话节奏与时机构成了混合办公环境中的关键礼貌信号，文化错位将引发无形摩擦，系统性侵蚀长期合作效果。

跨平台数字礼貌表现

电子邮件沟通模式

中国商务邮件常以正式敬语开头（"尊敬的王总"），以维护关系的短语结尾（"祝您工作顺利"）。英国邮件则偏好功能性的直接表达：以 *"Hi James"* 开头，*"Best regards"* 结尾。这些不仅是文体差异，更折射出关于关系建立与职业尊重的深层文化价值观。

感谢表达的频率亦揭示文化分歧。英国沟通者通常每次交流表达一次谢意以维持效率。中国沟通者则可能在单次邮件往来中多次致谢，视重复感谢为维系关系温度与展现恰当回馈的必需。

即时通讯平台动态

在微信中，表情符号与贴纸承担着超越装饰的战略语用功能。策略性地使用笑脸😊或"谢谢"贴纸，可将潜在的严厉指令转化为友好请求。然而，在英国 WhatsApp 的商务语境中，同等表情符号的使用或被视为不专业或过度随意。

语音消息呈现尤为鲜明的文化对比。在中国商务语境中，语音留言传递真诚、个人投入与关系优先。在英国职场环境中，未经请求的语音消息则易被视为突兀与冒昧，除非事先明确约定。

视频会议协议

轮流发言行为在不同平台上承载各异的文化含义。在英国语境中，对话重叠或表示参与热情；在中国语境中，则可能被理解为不尊重的打断。同样，中国参与者用于深思的短暂沉默，可能促使英国同事填补其眼中的"尴尬停顿"，无意间改变会议基调与权力动态。

人工智能翻译危机

当前AI翻译系统系统性地过滤掉文化礼貌标记,制造出表面流畅实则文化失敏的沟通。表达谦逊的短语"麻烦您",在机器翻译中常被简化为生硬的 "Please"。原短语蕴含的谦逊、对收件人付出的认可及关系意识荡然无存,仅余功能性指令。

研究表明,中英 AI 翻译中的礼貌信息丢失率超40%,尤见于敬语系统、间接性标记与语调校准。大型语言模型虽表面流畅度惊人,却在语用能力——即文化适宜国际沟通所需的核心技能上持续显露短板。

这催生了一种危险的错觉:AI 中介的对话看似顺畅,关系损害却在表层之下累积,常在合作意外恶化或谈判无端停滞时才浮出水面。

战略风险评估

商业影响分析

财务影响远超个别交易失败。组织报告显示,累积的语调错位将引发系统性声誉损害,实质性地将企业排除于特定市场之外。在本土成功的表达 (如 "Let's cut to the chase" 或 "What's the bottom line?"),在关系导向的商业文化中可能系统性破坏信任建立。

外交与政策后果

国际关系在数字渠道中面临误解放大的风险。为面对面互动设计的传统外交协议,在基于文本与AI中介的沟通中力有不逮。单个缓冲短语的误译,足以摧毁数月精心筹备的多边谈判,其后果远超个别外交关系。

教育系统缺口

现行教育课程虽涉及口语跨文化礼貌,却大多忽视数字环境中维护跨文化尊重的独特挑战。初入全球职场的学生缺乏明确的数字礼貌素养培训,造成一代人对国际合作的精微沟通要求准备不足。

解决方案框架

组织行动指南

- **建立文化校准协议:**要求国际沟通在任务导向内容前纳入关系建立语言。

- **部署文化中介者:**善用双文化团队成员审核关键对外沟通。

- **审核AI沟通工具:**定期评估翻译与AI写作工具是否保持预期礼貌水平。

技术开发者策略

- **保留礼貌标记:**调整训练数据集以维护文化礼貌指标,而非仅优化简洁性。

- **启用语境化翻译:**开发能依据文化语境与关系动态调整正式性与礼貌度的系统。

- **提供用户控制:**设置明确的正式性与礼貌度选项,避免默认中性语域。

政策与教育建议

- **更新外交协议:**制定考文化礼貌差异的数字沟通指导原则。

- **整合数字礼貌培训:**将跨文化数字沟通能力纳入国际商务与外交教育项目。

- **支持研究倡议:**资助AI对跨文化关系建立影响的研究,为循证政策提供依据。

前进之路

在这个日益互联却高度数字中介的世界,跨文化维护尊重的能力既是竞争优势,亦是外交必需。精于此道的组织将缔结更坚实的国际伙伴关系,规避代价高昂的误解,并构建更包容的全球团队。

解决方案需融合技术精妙与文化智慧:开发保护而非消解礼貌的AI系统;培育深谙"无关系建立的效率终归低效"的领导者;建设为下一代精微全球沟通赋能的教育体系。

随着数字渠道成为国际合作的主媒介,那些娴熟驾驭文化礼貌密码者,将在构建维系复杂全球伙伴关系的关键信任上赢得决定性优势。

40%

"中英AI翻译中礼貌缺失率超过40%"

Case in point | 案例聚焦

Can AI write the letter, but say "No" for you?

Refusals are among the most difficult tasks in business communication: one must be clear while maintaining relationships. Wilson and Rose (2025) compared refusal emails generated by ChatGPT3.5 and Gemini with those written by humans. The study focused on two scenarios: turning down a colleague or manager's request to cover a workshop, and refusing a client's request to exceed participant limits, each adapted to different audiences.

Thirty-six business English and professional skills instructors participated, with one to 25 years of teaching experience (median 12.5). Most were based in Asia (81%), with others in Europe (11%), the Middle East (6%), and Central America (3%). In blind assessments, they rated clarity, credibility, and connection, and judged whether texts were human- or AI-written.

Results showed that AI-generated refusal emails tended to be formulaic, lacking empathy and cushioning strategies. Structurally, AI tools were more likely to present the refusal before providing explanations, whereas human writers followed a more indirect order that aligns with business communication norms. Over two-thirds of raters correctly identified AI texts, primarily citing their flat tone and lack of contextual detail. Scoring results revealed that human-written texts received the highest ratings, Gemini texts were rated significantly higher than ChatGPT, and the difference between Gemini and human texts was not statistically significant – indicating that Gemini's output was closer to human writing quality overall.

Implication: AI can draft refusals efficiently, but human revision is essential – adding personal details, empathy, appropriate wording, reasons or alternatives, and a positive closing – to preserve both clarity and rapport.

AI可以写信，但能替你说"不"吗？

在商务沟通中，拒绝请求是最具挑战性的任务之一：既要表达清楚，又要维护关系。Winny Wilson和 Heath Rose (2025) 比较了由 ChatGPT3.5 和 Gemini 生成的拒绝邮件与人工撰写邮件的差异。研究聚焦于两个情境：一是拒绝同事代为主持工作坊的请求，二是拒绝客户超出参与人数上限的要求，并针对不同受众调整了写作情境。

共有36名商务英语与职业技能培训教师参与研究，他们的教学经验从1年至25年不等，中位数为12.5年。大多数受访者来自亚洲（81%），其余分布于欧洲（11%）、中东（6%）和中美洲（3%）。在盲评过程中，他们对文本的"清晰度""可信度"和"关系连接性"进行了评分，并判断文本是由人类还是AI撰写。

结果显示，AI 生成的拒绝邮件通常显得模式化、缺乏人情味，欠缺同理心与缓冲策略。在结构上，AI 更倾向于在解释理由之前直接给出拒绝，而人类作者多采用更委婉的顺序，更符合商务拒绝的语用规范。超过三分之二的评审者正确识别出AI 文本，其主要依据是语气生硬、缺乏情境细节。评分结果表明，人类撰写的文本得分最高，Gemini 生成的文本评分显著高于 ChatGPT，与人类文本的差异不显著，整体更接近人工水准。

研究启示：AI可以高效起草拒绝信，但必须经过人工润色，补充个性化信息、同理语气、恰当措辞、理由或替代方案，并加入积极的收尾，这样才能在传达拒绝的同时维护清晰表达与人际关系。

Reference: Wilson, W., and Rose, H. (2025). A genre, scoring, and authorship analysis of AI-generated and human-written refusal emails. *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly*. Advance online publication.

参考文献：Wilson, W, Rose, H. 人工智能生成与人工撰写的拒绝邮件：体裁、评分与作者身份分析[J]. 商务与职业沟通季刊, 2025. 在线优先发表
doi.org/10.1177/23294906251322890

Evidence in review | 研究综评

Evidence on AI writing and trust in the workplace

AI-assisted writing can enhance professionalism while potentially weakening interpersonal trust. Peter W. Cardon and Anthony W. Coman (2025) examined how different levels of AI involvement influence employees' perceptions of messages sent by their supervisors. The study surveyed 1,100 working professionals. Participants were randomly assigned to eight scenarios varying by sender (self vs. supervisor) and level of AI support (low, medium, or high – with or without detailed prompt). They evaluated a congratulatory email on message authorship, communication effectiveness, relational impact, writer characteristics (professionalism, sincerity, caring, confidence), and comfort with AI use.

Professionalism ratings remained consistently high across conditions (68.8%-94.9%). However, higher levels of AI use by supervisors significantly lowered perceptions of sincerity (to 39.7%), caring (32.6%), and confidence (53.9%). When AI generated more than 30-50% of the message, many respondents no longer believed their supervisors were the true authors. Open-ended responses showed participants valued AI's efficiency and clarity but found relational messages less sincere and more impersonal. While acceptable for routine or factual communication, heavy AI involvement was viewed negatively in contexts requiring warmth or appreciation.

Implication: AI can enhance clarity and professionalism in workplace communication, but overreliance may undermine trust and authenticity. Excessive AI use can make messages feel detached, prompting employees to doubt the sender's sincerity and engagement. A balanced approach – using AI to support structure and language while preserving the human voice – is essential to maintain both efficiency and genuine interpersonal connection.

人工智能写作与职场信任的实证研究

AI辅助写作可以提升职场沟通的专业性,但也可能削弱人际信任。Peter W. Cardon 和 Anthony W. Coman (2025) 研究了不同程度的AI介入如何影响员工对上级信息的感知。研究调查了1100名职场人士。受访者被随机分配到八种情境,情境因"发件人(自己或上级)"和"AI使用程度(低、中、高,是否有详细提示语)"而异。参与者针对一封祝贺邮件在"作者身份、沟通效果、人际关系影响、作者特征(专业性、真诚度、关怀度、自信度)以及他们对AI使用方式的接受程度"等方面进行了评分。

结果显示,在所有情境中,专业性评分始终较高(68.8%-94.9%)。但当主管使用AI的比例较高时,真诚度(39.7%)、关怀度(32.6%)和自信度(53.9%)显著下降。当AI生成的内容超过30%至50%时,许多受访者不再相信邮件出自主管本人。开放式反馈显示,参与者普遍认可AI提升效率与清晰度的作用,但认为其使人际互动类信息变得生硬、疏离、缺乏温度。对于例行或事实性沟通,AI的使用相对被接受;但在表达情感或感谢的场景中,过度依赖AI则被视为负面。

研究启示:AI能够提升职场沟通的清晰度与专业性,但过度依赖可能削弱信任与真实感。过多的AI介入会使信息显得疏离,从而导致员工质疑发送者的真诚度与投入度。要在效率与人际连接之间取得平衡,关键在于让AI辅助结构与语言,而非取代人类的表达与情感。

References: Cardon, P. W., and Coman, A. W. (2025). Professionalism and trustworthiness in AI-assisted workplace writing: The benefits and drawbacks of writing with AI. *International Journal of Business Communication*. Advance online publication.

参考文献: Cardon PW, Coman AW. AI 辅助职场写作中的专业性与信任感:使用 AI 写作的优势与局限[J]. 国际商务传播期刊, 2025. 在线优先发表

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Educational spotlight | 聚焦教育

How does politeness shape students' perception on feedback – Chatbot vs human teachers

Politeness plays an important role in how students perceive AI feedback. Brummernhenrich, Paulus, and Jucks (2025) examined whether polite wording increases students' perceived trustworthiness of feedback for both chatbots and human teachers, and whether politeness can narrow the gap between them. The study focused on how language style shapes students' perceptions of expertise, benevolence, integrity, agency, and communion.

A 2 × 2 between-subjects experiment was conducted with 284 university students. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four short writing feedback texts, varying by feedback source (teacher vs chatbot) and language style (polite vs bald-on-record). In the polite condition, face-threatening acts were adjusted using Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies, while in the direct condition, the same messages were given without polite redress. Sixty-two percent of the text remained identical across conditions. After reading, students rated the feedback giver's epistemic trustworthiness (expertise, benevolence, integrity) and social cognition dimensions (agency, communion).

Results showed that polite language increased perceptions of benevolence and communion, whereas direct language increased perceived agency. Human teachers were rated as more benevolent than chatbots, even when chatbots used polite wording. There were no significant effects on expertise or integrity. These findings indicate that while politeness enhances warmth and benevolence, it cannot fully close the trust gap between humans and AI.

Implication: Politeness helps chatbot feedback sound warmer and more supportive, improving students' perception of benevolence and communion. However, politeness alone does not replace the relational trust between teacher and student. Combining polite chatbot feedback with teacher follow-up may provide both clarity and relational connection in educational feedback.

礼貌如何影响学生对反馈的感知 ——聊天机器人 vs 人类教师

礼貌在学生对 AI 反馈的感知中起着重要作用。Brummernhenrich、Paulus 和 Jucks (2025) 研究了礼貌性表达是否能提升学生对聊天机器人和教师反馈的信任感，并探讨礼貌是否能缩小两者之间的信任差距。研究重点考察了语言风格如何影响学生对专业性、仁慈性、诚信、主动性和共融性的感知。

本研究采用 2 × 2 被试间实验设计，共有 284 名大学生参与。受试者被随机分配到四种反馈文本情境之一，操纵的变量为反馈来源（教师或聊天机器人）与语言风格（礼貌或直接）。在礼貌条件下，研究根据 Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage (Brown & Levinson, 1987) 的礼貌策略，对具有面子威胁的表达进行了调整；在直接条件下，信息未经过礼貌修饰。两种条件下有 62% 的文本保持一致。阅读反馈后，学生对反馈提供者的认知信任维度（专业性、仁慈性、诚信）和社会认知维度（主动性、共融性）进行了评分。

结果表明，礼貌性表达提升了对仁慈性和共融性的感知，而直接表达提升了对主动性的感知。即使在使用礼貌表达时，教师的仁慈性评分仍高于聊天机器人。在专业性和诚信方面未发现显著差异。这说明礼貌虽能增强温度感和仁慈性，但无法完全弥合人类与 AI 之间的信任差距。

研究启示：礼貌性表达能让聊天机器人的反馈更具温度和支持性，提升学生对仁慈性和共融性的感知。然而，仅靠礼貌无法替代师生之间的信任关系。将礼貌型机器人反馈与教师的后续回应相结合，可能更有助于在教育反馈中兼顾清晰度与人际联结。

References: Brummernhenrich, B., Paulus, C. L., and Jucks, R. (2025). Applying social cognition to feedback chatbots: Enhancing trustworthiness through politeness. *British Journal of Educational Technology*. Advance online publication.

参考文献： Brummernhenrich B, Paulus CL, Jucks R. 将社会认知应用于反馈聊天机器人：通过礼貌提升信任感[J]. 英国教育技术期刊, 2025. 在线优先发表.

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Data spotlight｜洞见数据

Politeness in AI Translation: an exploratory study

This study investigates politeness retention in AI translation within cross-cultural business communication, focusing on whether Chinese business politeness phrases preserve their functions when rendered in English. The dataset comprised 50 phrases frequently used in Chinese business settings, covering requests, thanks, and closings, translated by ChatGPT, DeepSeek, and Google Translate. Outputs were scored on a three-point scale: 0 = no politeness feature, 0.5 = partial, 1 = full retention. Politeness features included hedging (e.g., could, might, etc.), deference (e.g., kindly, would appreciate, etc.), thanks/ apologies, closings (e.g., best regards, etc.), expectation expressions (e.g., look forward to, etc.), and notices (e.g., for your records, etc.). For requests, both hedging and thanks/deference were required for full credit. Results show ChatGPT achieved the highest politeness retention (73.5%), followed by DeepSeek (64.7%) and Google Translate (50.0%). Limitations of this study include the small dataset, reliance on keyword-based coding, and the fact that the politeness retention model was generated with ChatGPT, which may introduce bias.

> "
> **The dataset comprised 50 phrases frequently used in Chinese business settings, covering requests, thanks, and closings.**
>
> **该数据集包含了 50 个中文商务场景中常用的表达短语，涵盖了请求、致谢、结束语等内容。** "

Figure 1. Politeness Retention in AI Translation (n = 50)

图1. AI翻译中礼貌保留度对比 (n = 50)
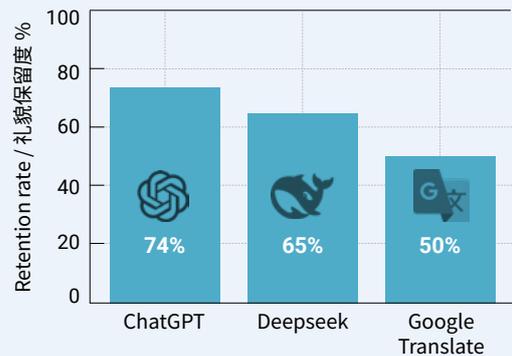
Note: Retention = the extent to which the English output preserves the original politeness function

保留率＝英文译文对原中文礼貌功能的保留程度

AI 翻译中的礼貌：一项探索性研究

本研究关注 AI 翻译在跨文化商务沟通中礼貌保留度的表现，旨在考察中文商务礼貌短语译成英文时能否保留原有礼貌功能。研究对象为中国商务场景中常见的 50 个礼貌短语，包括请求、致谢、结尾祝语等，ChatGPT、DeepSeek 和 Google Translate 翻译。

译文按三档评分：0 分为无礼貌要素，0.5 分为部分保留，1 分为完整保留。礼貌要素包括缓和词（如 could、might 等）、敬辞（如 kindly、would appreciate 等）、致谢/致歉、结尾祝语、期待表达及提示语（如 for your records 等）。在请求类中，只有同时具备缓和与致谢/敬辞才计满分。

结果显示，ChatGPT 的礼貌保留度最高(73.5%)，DeepSeek 为 64.7%，Google Translate 最低 (50.0%)。本研究的局限性在于样本有限、判定依赖关键词，且礼貌保留度评分模型由 ChatGPT 生成，可能存在偏差。

Language and culture corner
语言文化角

欢迎来到语言与文化角落！

在这里，您将学习与本期简报主题相关的实用中文词汇和表达方式。以下是五个常用的礼貌用语，并附有使用说明，帮助您在日常交流中更加得体自然。

Welcome to the Language and Culture Corner, where you will be introduced to useful Chinese words and expressions related to the theme of the briefing. Below are five commonly used politeness expressions in Chinese, along with explanations on how to use them.

Chinese term	English term
"客气" (kèqi) *kèqi* centers respect, modesty, relational warmth.	**"polite/ politeness"** English "politeness" is more procedural and clarity-oriented.
Example: 您太客气了！(Nín tài kèqi le!) You are too polite!	
"麻烦您" (máfan nín) Self-lowering request that acknowledges imposition.	**"please"** "Please" lacks the same self-effacing nuance.
Example: 麻烦您审核文件。(Máfan nín shěnhé wénjiàn.) Please review the file.	
"烦请" (fánqǐng) High-politeness request marker in formal writing.	**"kindly"** "Kindly" can sound archaic or brusque if misused in EN.
Example: 烦请本周内回复。(Fánqǐng běn zhōu nèi huífù.) Kindly reply within this week.	
"打扰您了" (dǎrǎo nín le) Pre-apology showing respect for time.	**"sorry to bother you"** EN is common but less self-effacing.
Example: 打扰您了，想请教个问题。(Dǎrǎo nín le, xiǎng qǐngjiào gè wèntí.) Sorry to bother you. May I ask a question?	
"不好意思" (bù hǎo yìsi) Softens intrusion with self-conscious modesty.	**"sorry/excuse me"** EN is briefer, more transactional.
Example: 不好意思，能占用两分钟吗？(Bù hǎoyìsi, néng zhànyòng liǎng fēnzhōng ma?) Sorry, may I take two minutes?	

You are too polite!

烦请本周内回复。

Sorry, may I take two minutes?

您太客气了！

Kindly reply within this week.

不好意思，能占用两分钟吗？

Further reading | 精选延读

Book – out soon:

Xiang, C. (2026). *Harmony in Differences: An Introduction to Politeness in Intercultural Communication with China.* London: LID Publishing.

This is the second title in the "Navigating China" series of books written by leading experts in the field of international business and cross-cultural communications. The book examines the importance of "politeness" when communicating and doing business in China, and what you should and should not do to make your experience a success.

In the business world, politeness is more than just social etiquette – it's a cornerstone of success. Relationships are at the heart of business, and politeness acts as the glue that keeps those relationships strong. However, the way politeness is expressed can vary significantly across cultures, particularly for foreigners doing business in China. Politeness in China is deeply rooted in respect for hierarchy, relationships and cultural traditions. A simple business request in the West might be direct and efficient, but in China, it often requires more careful consideration of tone, humility and relational context. This book will help anyone doing business in or with China to navigate the hidden traps and understand how politeness works across cultures, which can then be the key to new opportunities.

Journal article

Spencer-Oatey, Helen, and Dániel Z. Kádár. "Managing Politeness across Cultures." In *Intercultural Politeness: Managing Relations across Cultures*, 195-316. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

新书-即将出版

项骅. 异中求和：跨文化交际中的中国礼貌研究导论[M]. 伦敦: LID出版社, 2026.

《异中求和》是《走进中国》系列图书中的第二本，由国际商务与跨文化交流领域的权威专家撰写。本书探讨了在中国交流与经商过程中"礼貌"的重要性，以及哪些行为值得提倡，哪些应当避免，从而助您在华取得成功。

在商界，礼貌不仅仅是社交礼仪，更是成功的基石。人际关系是商业活动的核心，而礼貌正是维系关系的关键纽带。然而，不同文化对礼貌的表达方式存在显著差异，尤其是对于在中国经商的外国人而言更是如此。在中国，礼貌深深植根于对等级、关系与传统文化的尊重。在西方，一个简单的业务请求可以直截了当、追求效率；而在中国，则往往需要更细致地斟酌语气、谦逊态度以及关系背景。

本书将帮助所有在中国或与中国开展业务的人，识别隐藏的交流陷阱，深入理解跨文化背景下的礼貌原则，从而把握关键机遇，开启更广阔的发展前景。

期刊论文

Helen Spencer-Oatey, Dániel Z Kádár. 跨文化礼貌：跨文化关系的管理: 跨文化礼貌管理. 剑桥: 剑桥大学出版社, 2021: 195-316.

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