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Service Optimization Strategies for Cross-Border E-Commerce Platforms Under the E-Commerce Politeness Framework: A Critical Incident Analysis Based on User Reviews

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ABSTRACT: Cross-border e-commerce has become a core growth driver of global trade, with industry competition shifting from price wars to consumer experience-centered value competition. After the core of competition in cross-border e-commerce shifted from price to consumer experience, constructing an integrated analytical framework to systematically optimize experience has become crucial, while existing studies have rarely examined the relationship between e-commerce politeness and consumer experience. To address this, this study proposes a comprehensive analytical framework of "e-commerce politeness," aiming to explore the synergistic effects of multidimensional factors on consumer experience. This study adopts the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) for qualitative analysis of 350 Amazon sports and outdoor product reviews, supplemented by expert classification and reliability-validity control to ensure research rigor. Through this study, this study identifies six core dimensions affecting consumer experience, including usage experience, product quality, logistics service, after-sales service, scenario experience, and value-added service. The results show that positive experience is mainly driven by usage experience and product quality, while negative experience is primarily attributed to quality issues; logistics and after-sales service focus more on risk avoidance than on experience enhancement. This study demonstrates that e-commerce politeness is a multidimensional synergistic system, which can mitigate the uncertainty of cross-border shopping by reducing decision-making costs, enhancing transaction reliability, and optimizing contextual adaptability. Through the above research, This study extends interpersonal politeness theory to human-computer interaction, provides empirical support for 'platform as a social actor', and offers practical optimization directions for cross-border e-commerce stakeholders.

KEYWORDS: Cross-Border E-Commerce, E-Commerce Politeness, Platform Service Optimization, Critical Incident Technique (CIT), User Experience, Sports and Outdoor Products

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I. INTRODUCTION

Currently, driven by economic globalization and the advancement of digital technologies, cross-border e-commerce platforms have profoundly influenced the lives and markets of global consumers. The demand for cross-border shopping is growing, and the cross-border e-commerce sector is developing rapidly, with leading platforms such as Amazon playing a pivotal role in the global market. Meanwhile, alongside the improvement of living standards and changes in lifestyles, there has been a global awakening of health awareness and a rising yearning for natural living, making sports and outdoor products gradually become mainstream consumer goods worldwide. Furthermore, the maturity of European and American markets, coupled with the emergence of emerging markets

in Asia, Latin America, and other regions, has enabled the development of sports and outdoor products in cross-border e-commerce to keep pace with the overall development of the cross-border e-commerce industry, establishing them as one of the mainstream consumer products in this field. Notably, the competition among cross-border e-commerce platforms has shifted from traditional dimensions such as price and scale to a greater focus on issues centered on consumer experience—a trend that is particularly prominent in products like sports and outdoor goods that emphasize consumer perceptions. Therefore, optimizing aspects related to e-commerce politeness on cross-border e-commerce platforms, such as convenience, smooth processes, and the level of attentive service, is key to enhancing consumer experience, and the concept of "e-commerce politeness" deserves further exploration..

Existing research achievements in the field of e-commerce are abundant, and most are related to consumer experience; however, studies focusing on the impact of e-commerce politeness on consumer experience in cross-border e-commerce are relatively insufficient, making it difficult for cross-border e-commerce platforms to formulate comprehensive target consumer loyalty strategies. For example, Fei et al. (2025) focus on the sustainable development of efficient logistics; Yoo et al. (2023) explore the impact of online information quality and website design on consumers' continuous purchasing behavior; Kotelevets (2025) examines the influence of cultural differences on consumers' online purchasing behavior. Most of the above literature investigates the service quality of e-commerce from isolated aspects such as technology, quality, or service, and rarely considers the platform as a "social actor" (Nass & Moon, 2000) to explore the relationship between its initiated e-commerce politeness and consumer experience. Platforms, through different designs, functions, and service, convey a kind of "politeness" signal to consumers, effectively reducing the uncertainty of cross-border shopping. At present, cross-border e-commerce platforms can only carry out some strategic rectifications targeting certain parts of consumer experience, but cannot achieve strategic and systematic upgrading and transformation.

To compensate for the insufficiency of existing research, this study is committed to constructing an integrated framework of "e-commerce politeness," thereby systematically explaining the synergistic influence mechanism of various experience dimensions on consumer experience, helping cross-border e-commerce platforms better understand consumers and identify specific directions for optimizing their own design and . In terms of research methodology, this study adopts the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) (Flanagan, 1954), directly analyzing authentic consumer reviews left on Amazon to identify behaviors of "politeness" service and "impoliteness" in cross-border e-commerce, and ultimately to interpret the factors through which these behaviors influence consumer experience.

In summary, compared with existing studies, this research investigates consumer experience from the perspective of e-commerce politeness, defines the basic connotation and fundamental dimensions of "e-commerce politeness," and further analyzes the endogenous mechanism through which "e-commerce politeness" influences consumer experience. In doing so, it provides strong support and practical reference for cross-border e-commerce platforms to better optimize their design schemes and service strategies, and contributes to advancing the construction of actual experiences in related industries that are more aligned with consumer demands.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Research Context and Case Selection

Nowadays, cross-border e-commerce has deeply integrated into the global consumer environment and daily life, and competition among cross-border e-commerce platforms is intensifying. The focus of competition is gradually shifting from early factors such as price and scale to deeper competition within consumer experience, where the convenience, functionality, and thoughtful service of platforms are core factors affecting consumer retention and market reputation (Markovich & Yehezkel, 2022).

Compared to domestic shopping, cross-border e-commerce has higher uncertainties in aspects such as cross-border payments, international logistics, customs procedures, and cross-cultural communication due to its international characteristics. For instance, in the payment section of cross-border e-commerce, barriers related to foreign exchange management make it difficult to achieve breakthroughs. Issues in international logistics can lead to a series of chain reactions, causing demand interruption and reducing consumer satisfaction (Olatunbosun et al., 2024); security risks in cross-border transactions can harm consumers' property safety, continually eroding consumer trust in the platform and long-term damaging the platform's good reputation in the market (Tan, 2025); cultural differences can create cognitive biases in consumers, leading to platforms and merchants being unable to meet the needs of

consumers from different cultural backgrounds, which is one of the constraints on the development of cross-border e-commerce (Gao et al., 2022); and frequently occurring global public events can impact supply chain stability, leading to production interruptions, logistical congestion, and customs delays, ultimately resulting in delayed delivery cycles for goods (Bukola et al., 2023). Thus, consumers' cross-border shopping is likely to be more sensitive than domestic shopping, and this risk still exists. As frontline platforms, merchants, and logistics service providers in cross-border service undergo these services, they will face pressures from external market shocks and various uncertainties (Voorhees et al., 2020).

To conduct an in-depth study on the impact of e-commerce politeness on consumer experience in cross-border e-commerce, combined with the research theme and value, this study selects sports and outdoor products on the Amazon platform as the specific research object. Such products include sports equipment or clothing used during sports, as well as machines applicable in outdoor scenarios. As a leading company in global cross-border e-commerce, the Amazon platform has a large consumer base and transparent review data, making it a good research platform for observing consumers' cross-border e-commerce consumption behavior (Denk Rimakka & Ara, 2023). Products like sports and outdoor goods, which involve high consumer spending, require consumers to engage deeply with the platform's search engine, merchant customer service, and consumer reviews, frequently involving the overall service quality of cross-border e-commerce platforms. Additionally, consumers of such products pay close attention to their experience during usage, which facilitates the accurate analysis of the impact of e-commerce politeness on consumer experience in this study. Meanwhile, driven by improvements in living standards and changes in lifestyles, outdoor sports have gained popularity, resulting in a large consumer base for these products—this enhances the representativeness of the sample and the reliability of the data. Therefore, selecting this research object not only addresses the pain points of consumer service in cross-border e-commerce platforms but also clarifies a real scenario where the service function is significantly amplified, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the essential mechanisms of human-computer interaction service, providing solid and promising research value.

Against the backdrop of the rapid development of cross-border e-commerce, consumer experience has replaced traditional factors such as price and scale, becoming a primary factor in cross-border e-commerce competition, alongside the rise of "e-commerce politness." To study the relationship between "e-commerce politness" and consumer experience, this research, based on its research value, selects sports and outdoor products on the Amazon platform as the research object, using this as a starting point for analysis.

2.2 E-Commerce Politeness

Politeness is a core principle of social interaction, expressed through language and behavior to show respect, maintain the other party's face, and thus promote cooperation and trust (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Extending to the digital business context, e-commerce politeness refers to the positive experience provided to consumers during human-computer interaction. In the interaction between platforms and merchants in cross-border e-commerce, the control is handed over to consumers, providing them with accurate and convenient service, creating a sense of comfort in feeling respected, which is a manifestation of politeness (B. Whitworth, 2005). Therefore, the behaviors exhibited by cross-border e-commerce platforms or merchants based on respecting consumers' time and understanding their needs can provide a comfortable purchasing experience for consumers, facilitating smooth communication between humans and machines (Chen & Huang, 2025). This digital practice of politeness forms the theoretical foundation of "e-commerce politeness."

In the context of cross-border e-commerce, which heavily relies on remote interaction and cross-cultural communication, many consumers have shifted from "buying products" to "buying experiences"(Wang et al., 2025), further emphasizing the importance of e-commerce politeness: in a Unified Messaging and Communication (UMC) platform, merchants promote their products to foreign customers through polite communication (Calista & Kuntjara, 2023); cultures that avoid uncertainty to varying degrees have different impacts on consumer satisfaction and willingness to reuse (Ding et al., 2025); designing gesture guidelines that align with socially acceptable norms provides a reference for platform-based design (Xia et al., 2022). Thus, incorporating social norms and politeness expectations into human-computer interaction systems has become an effective way to build cross-border e-commerce platforms that better serve consumers (Nass & Moon, 2000). The impolite behaviors mentioned in previous research are among the phenomena that Amazon consumers are least willing to encounter and are also a significant factor affecting Amazon's platform reputation (Kiliç & Karatepe, 2021). In this context, e-commerce politeness in cross-border e-commerce is particularly important. Good service provides consumers with rich experiences, thereby increasing consumer stickiness and building a good platform

reputation, which is also the reason why this study uses e-commerce politeness to research consumer experience in cross-border e-commerce.

As mentioned earlier, polite behavior is an important aspect of e-commerce service quality and should be reinforced through standardized interactions (Chen & Huang, 2025). In addition to sports e-commerce, other areas, including but not limited to polite communication, web design, product descriptions, and other value-added service, can form a more complete experience system that provides additional emotional premium to the overall experience of e-commerce platforms (Zou et al., 2025). This is also why the SERVQUAL scale considers polite communication one of the key indicators affecting consumers' perceptions of the platform (Parasuraman et al., 1970).

Thus, it can be seen that the principle of politeness extends into the digital context, forming e-commerce politeness, while cross-border transactions highlight its application value due to cross-cultural factors. Relevant studies have already been conducted from the perspectives of cultural context and computer interaction, indicating that e-commerce politeness plays an important role in consumer experience (Hollebeek et al., 2021).

2.3 Consumer Experience

Consumer experience generally refers to the feeling obtained by consumers after receiving a certain product or service (Hassenzahl & Tractinsky, 2006), which plays a critical role in e-commerce, as it not only determines satisfaction with products but also enhances consumer stickiness. Current research related to consumer experience is not lacking. Some scholars have pointed out that when favorable experiences are present in browsing, searching, payment, and other stages, higher satisfaction with the entire platform is generated (Suastiari & Mahyuni, 2022); other scholars have approached from the policy perspective, exploring how policies influence the e-commerce shopping experience (Younus et al., 2023). Accordingly, it can be concluded that favorable experience cannot be achieved solely through one single aspect.

Consumer experience refers to the overall feelings generated during the use of products or service, occupying a critical position in the field of e-commerce and directly determining satisfaction with products and consumer stickiness. Optimization of experience in browsing, searching, and payment processes can enhance overall satisfaction with platforms, while governmental actions also exert influence on consumer experience and shopping satisfaction. Numerous studies collectively indicate that the construction of high-quality consumer experience cannot rely on a single detail and requires coordinated efforts across multiple aspects.

This study proposes an ecological relationship diagram of cross-border e-commerce based on e-commerce politeness, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Ecological Relationship Diagram of E-Commerce Politeness in Cross-Border E-Commerce

III. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Critical Incident Technique

CIT is a practical and mature research method that explores the reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction by collecting and analyzing specific incidents described by consumers. In addition, the CIT method has unique advantages in capturing complex and contextualized service experiences (De Keyser et al., 2020). This method was first proposed by Flanagan (1954) and has been widely applied as an objective research method in talent selection, job analysis, and performance evaluation; Bitner et al. (1990) used CIT to collect positive and negative critical incidents in customer–employee interactions in the retail and hospitality industries, revealing the specific mechanisms through which employee behavior influences customer satisfaction; Stefanov et al. (1998) applied CIT to analyze and improve internal enterprise information systems; Gremler (2004) conducted content analysis of 141 studies using CIT, demonstrating through large-sample cross-sectional comparison the broad applicability and reliability of CIT in different service contexts; Löffler & Baier (2013) employed CIT to have respondents describe the most critical attributes and performances in actual service situations, confirming that CIT can provide rich and contextualized first-hand data for attribute performance evaluation; in the field of e-commerce, Chen & Huang (2025) applied CIT to study supplier satisfaction.

The advantage of this method lies in its direct and specific characteristics. Important information can be extracted from authentic consumer reviews to avoid the risk of subjective speculation. Therefore, the CIT method is a reliable choice for investigating the issue of e-commerce politeness in this study. This study is based on previous research on consumer behavior and service quality evaluation and has been adjusted according to the characteristics of e-commerce platform review.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopts a research approach primarily based on qualitative analysis, starting from authentic experiential perceptions to extract detailed differences in consumer experience and to conduct in-depth analysis of actual behaviors and feelings. With the aid of the CIT method, consumer reviews are mined and deconstructed to explore the core dimensions of e-commerce politeness and to investigate the complete process through which e-commerce politeness influences consumer experience. On this basis, the entire cross-border e-commerce business process is integrated within the framework of e-commerce politeness. Sports and outdoor products under the category of the Amazon platform are selected as the case background, and Data Scraper is employed to collect consumer review data from January 2023 to October 2025. A total of 350 reviews are obtained, spanning nearly 18 months, including normal evaluations of non-promotional products (175 satisfactory reviews and 175 unsatisfactory reviews). Data influenced by promotional activities are removed to avoid the impact of factors such as top sales rankings, highly trending online events, and other short-term popular topics, with all other irrelevant reviews excluded. Three experts in the field of e-commerce independently classified the two sets of data according to established standards in two rounds, with a two-week interval between the rounds. After classification, reliability and average inter-coder consistency of the data were calculated.

3.3 Data Sources and Sample Selection

3.3.1 Data Sources

Statistical analysis is conducted based on all publicly available consumer review data in the sports and outdoor product category on the Amazon platform. To protect the privacy rights of research subjects, data anonymization is performed after data collection, including desensitization of consumer information and masking of privacy-related data, in order to prevent disclosure issues.

3.3.2 Sample Screening Strategy

A purposive sampling strategy is adopted to select samples, ensuring both market representativeness and sufficient content. Reviews are screened according to specific requirements. First, “sales ranking,” products at the top of the sales chart have larger consumer bases and more reviews, and evaluations of such products can effectively reflect the main choices in the market as well as the opinions of the majority of consumers, thereby ensuring representativeness and authenticity of the sample at the market level. Second, “timeliness,” recent years represent the period during which this category on the Amazon platform has gradually matured, and data collected within this period possess timeliness, thereby ensuring the persistence of data validity. Third, within each selected product, representative reviews are chosen, with 20 reviews ultimately selected for each product as the data sample for this study. Both satisfactory reviews (5-star) and a portion of unsatisfactory reviews (1-star) are considered, and review content is required to be specific and clear, further improving the accuracy of sample selection.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Data processing

This study obtained 350 product reviews of sports and outdoor goods by crawling the Amazon platform, including 175 satisfactory reviews and 175 unsatisfactory reviews, originating from reviews of various best-selling products. The advantages lie in focus (derived from a single platform and the same vertical category), timeliness and sales representativeness, as well as high information density of review content. These characteristics make the dataset a foundational material for exploratory topic mining and provide support for empirical research on consumer experience in this market.

4.2 Classification principles

In this study, a total of 175 satisfactory critical incidents and 175 unsatisfactory critical incidents were collected from valid questionnaires, which were preliminarily reviewed and classified by coders based on the critical incidents. Since the attributes of the two types of incidents are consistent, the detailed items were named identically, with the incidents categorized as, usage experience, product quality, logistics service, after-sales service, scenario experience, and value-added service. Table 1 clearly presents the CIT classification naming and detailed explanations.See Table 1.

Table 1: Naming and Explanation of Critical Incident Categories

Category Naming	Detailed Explanation
Usage Experience	This comprehensively covers the subjective perceptions generated during the process of using the product, including comfort, ease of operation, and degree of preference.
Product Quality	Evaluation of the physical attributes, functional performance, and reliability of the product itself.
Logistics Service	The entire chain of physical delivery experience from ordering to receipt, including logistics efficiency, packaging quality, and information transparency.
After-Sales Service	The interactive experience with the platform or merchant after purchase, aimed at problem resolution or obtaining support.
Scenario Experience	The actual degree of matching between product functions and consumer needs in specific usage environments or purposes.
Value-Added Service	Additional service provided by the merchant beyond the core product, related to the core product.

This classification method covers the main aspects of consumer evaluation, aligns with the multidimensional model in traditional service quality theory (Blut, 2016), and corresponds with the current research trend of measuring e-commerce service quality using advanced technologies. By mapping each comment to the above categories, this study systematically extracts key issues of consumer concern, providing a structured foundation for subsequent analysis.

Table 2 presents the basic information of three coders. These coders possess in-depth knowledge and research experience in the field of cross-border trade and continuously pay attention to the “politness” aspect of platform service when shopping on e-commerce platforms. Based on this dual advantage, this study specifically invited these coders to participate in the classification of consumer comments and provide data support for the orderly development of subsequent research.See Table 2.

Table 2: Background Information of Coders

Classifier	Job Position	Work Experience
Classifier1 1	Lecturer in E-commerce at a university	Served as an e-commerce professional lecturer for many years, possessing extensive theoretical knowledge of e-commerce.
Classifier 2	Manager at a cross-border e-commerce platform enterprise	Engaged in cross-border e-commerce for many years, with understanding of consumer preferences.
Classifier 3	Member of an academic group	Proficient in academic research methods in the field of e-commerce, capable of accurately identifying the core issues in consumer reviews.

4.3 Reliability and Validity Analysis

4.3.1 Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis refers to the research method used to evaluate whether the comment classification process possesses relative consistency and stability. This study adopted the independent classification approach of three coders, during which the reliability of classification results was judged with reference to the inter-rater consistency index as the evaluation standard. Reliability analysis of CIT is generally measured from two dimensions, namely "individual classification consistency" and "inter-coder classification consistency." The former considers the consistency of one coder classifying the same incident at different times, while the latter reflects the extent to which multiple coders classify the same incident into the same category. Flanagan (1954) proposed that when the reliability analysis result exceeds 0.8, the CIT classification outcome can be regarded as possessing acceptable reliability.

（1）Individual Classification Consistency Analysis

Since the critical incident technique involves researchers making subjective judgments and classifications of collected critical incidents, the reliability of classification results serves as evidence of the scientific validity of the study. Andersson & Nilsson (1964) argued that when the degree of agreement among the classification results of more than two researchers exceeds 0.8, the classification can be considered consistent and credible. Based on the two rounds of classification results, the number of incidents classified into the same category by three coders was calculated, with higher values indicating greater classification consistency. Table 3 presents the individual classification consistency counts of this study.See Table 3.

Table 3: Number of Individual Classification Consistencies of Coders—Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Incidents

Classifier / Event	Classifier 1 Satisfactory	Classifier 2 Satisfactory	Classifier 3 Satisfactory	Classifier 1 Unsatisfactory	Classifier 2 Unsatisfactory	Classifier 3 Unsatisfactory
Number of Identical Items	145	158	151	147	165	148
Total Number of Items	175	175	175	175	175	175
Consistency	0.82	0.90	0.86	0.84	0.96	0.85

（2）Mutual Classification Consistency of Coders

Since the classification of critical incident technique relies on the subjective judgment of coders, in addition to verifying individual classification consistency, the interjudge agreement rate among different coders and the handling process when classifications differ among researchers will affect the level of reliability. To ensure that the consistency of classification among coders reaches an acceptable range, namely achieving a fair and objective consistency standard, this study adopts the average inter-coder agreement (A), which is widely used in content analysis, as the measurement (Holsti, 1969), and calculates the overall reliability (R) accordingly. As shown in formulas (1) and (2).

$$A=\frac{\frac{2M_{12}}{n_1+n_2}+\frac{2M_{23}}{n_2+n_3}+\frac{2M_{13}}{n_1+n_3}}{N} \quad \text{(formula 1)}$$

$$R=\frac{(N\times A)}{1+[(N-1)\times A]} \quad \text{(formula 2)}$$

Where:

R=Reliability

N=Number of Coders

A=Average Interjudge Agreement

M=Number of Identical Classifications between Coders (for example, M_{12}represents the number of samples classified identically by the first coder and the second coder)

n=number of samples classified by each coder (for example,$n_1$represents the number of samples classified by the first coder)

According to the following data, the average consistency score of the three coders exceeds 0.8, indicating that the classification results are stable and consistent, with reliability greater than 0.8. This demonstrates that the classification results possess good consistency. The classification process in this study underwent reliability testing, providing a basis of reliable data and reasonable classification for subsequent research. Based on the results in the table, the evaluation outcomes of each evaluator show high consistency, achieving high reliability and meeting the reliability requirements of content analysis. According to the selection frequency and proportion of each category, the classification system can be regarded as stable.See Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4: Number of Mutual Classification Consistencies of Coders—Satisfactory Incidents

Number of Mutual Consistencies	Classifier 1	Classifier 2	Classifier 3
Classifier 1	145	--	--
Classifier 2	129	158	--
Classifier 3	134	119	151

Table 5: Number of Mutual Classification Consistencies of Coders—Unsatisfactory Incidents

Number of Mutual Consistencies	Classifier 1	Classifier 2	Classifier 3
Classifier 1	147	--	--
Classifier 2	132	165	--
Classifier 3	127	119	148

Based on the data in Table 4 and Table 5, this study verifies the inter-coder consistency among the three coders. After calculation using the above formulas, Table 6 presents the classification reliability results. See Table 6.

Table 6: Reliability Table of Classification, Validity Analysis

Classification	Average Degree of Mutual Consistency(A)	Reliability(R)
Satisfactory	0.82	0.94
Unsatisfactory	0.84	0.93

4.3.2 Validity Analysis

Based on the classification of consumer comments using the critical incident technique, this study conducts validity analysis from the perspectives of expert validity, content validity, and face validity to ensure that the conclusions are scientific and reasonable. First, this study reviews the definitions of the three types of validity. Expert validity refers to confirming the rationality of research content and methods through the judgment of domain experts (Lynn, 1986); content validity refers to whether the measurement tools or classification frameworks comprehensively and without omission cover all important aspects of the research concepts (Haynes et al., 1995); face validity refers to whether the measurement methods or data appear reasonable and are easily understood (Nevo, 1985).

From the perspective of expert validity, based on the service quality theory proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1970) and combined with the characteristics and dimensional definitions of cross-border e-commerce consumers, usage experience, product quality, logistics service, after-sales service, scenario experience, and value-added service were selected as the CIT classification dimensions of this study. At the same time, three experts in the e-commerce field were invited to form a classification group, and 350 consumer comments were classified according to the six dimensions. Therefore, this study demonstrates good expert validity. From the perspective of content validity, 350 consumer comments were correspondingly mapped to the six dimensions, and through continuous refinement among categories, it was found that specific experiential details such as “search accuracy,” “logistics transparency,” and “after-sales response speed” could all be categorized into the six dimensions. This indicates that the dimensional setting comprehensively and completely encompasses the details of “e-commerce politeness” on e-commerce platforms, thereby

verifying good content validity. From the perspective of face validity, the classification items of this study match real-world behaviors.

Hence, the study demonstrates good face validity. In summary, these three types of validity indicate that the classification framework of this study possesses scientific soundness and rationality, serving as a valid basis for the research.

4.4 Classification Results

After classifying the collected 350 critical incidents according to the classification naming and calculating the number of cases, in order to further investigate the impact of each item on consumer experience of sports and outdoor products on the Amazon platform, this study selected two incidents as examples from both satisfactory and unsatisfactory critical incidents, and conducted data analysis on each classified incident, including the number of cases per coder, average number of cases, and average proportion. The critical incident examples and data analysis are as follows that Table 7 presents examples of satisfactory critical incidents, Table 8 presents examples of unsatisfactory critical incidents, Table 9 presents data analysis of satisfactory critical incidents, and Table 10 presents data analysis of unsatisfactory critical incidents.

Table 7, focusing on the six dimensions of e-commerce politeness, selects two typical positive cases from each dimension, directly presenting the outstanding performance of the Amazon platform in the field of sports and outdoor products across all dimensions, and clearly revealing the key e-commerce politness behaviors that enhance consumer satisfaction. See Table 7.

Table 7: Examples of Satisfactory Critical Incidents

Event Classification	Example 1	Example 2
Usage Experience	When first using this treadmill, there was concern that operation might be difficult, but each functional button was clear and easy to understand, making operation straightforward.	The fitness gloves previously used were always difficult to handle, whereas after receiving this pair, continuous use for three months demonstrated high comfort.
Product Quality	The pair of running shoes purchased for marathon preparation proved reliable. After three months of daily high-intensity training, the cushioning effect remained effective, with no signs of sole or upper detachment and only minimal wear. Although there was concern that such intensive use would quickly render them unusable, the durability exceeded expectations and the performance was significantly better than anticipated.	During the last hiking trip, two rainfalls occurred, and the camping lamp was thoroughly soaked. Although there was concern about short-circuit and malfunction, after being dried and turned on, it functioned without any problem. The brightness remained unchanged, with no reduction compared to before the rain. Outdoor equipment demonstrating such waterproof performance is highly reliable.
Logistics Service	An order for an air pump was placed on Thursday evening in preparation for weekend camping. The order page indicated expected delivery on the following Monday, which caused concern. However, on Friday an email was received stating that the item had been shipped, with a detailed logistics tracking link attached. Through the link, the transportation route of the package was viewed in real time, and on Saturday morning the package was delivered punctually to the doorstep.	Living in an apartment building, the greatest concern was that the courier might leave the package at the collection station without prior notice. In the purchase of dumbbells, the order was marked with the note “please contact by phone.” On the day of delivery, the courier indeed called ten minutes in advance to confirm presence at home and then completed delivery to the doorstep.
After-sales Service	A tent was received with one package of stakes missing. The “contact seller” option was clicked on the order page, the situation was described, and product photos were uploaded.	The fitness clothing purchased had inaccurate sizing, leading to a return request. On the Amazon return interface, the prepaid

	Two hours later, the seller replied with an apology and informed that the missing stakes had been resent through an expedited package, which was delivered the following day.	return label was directly printed, the clothing was placed into the original box, and then delivered to a nearby collection point. The entire process required no communication with customer service, and the refund was automatically returned to the account after three days, which was highly convenient and satisfactory.
Scenario Experience	The fitness roller was purchased primarily for efficient core training at home. It not only precisely stimulates the abdominal muscles, but the anti-slip design on both sides of the roller effectively prevents wrist slippage. In addition, its design provides good protection for floor tiles, making it highly suitable for home use.	During a six-hour forest hike in 30-degree heat, this hiking fitness garment was worn. After sweating, the garment did not stick to the body, and when resting at the windy mountain top, it dried quickly, preventing chill.
Value-added Service	During the assembly of the single kayak, the accompanying video manual was found to be very clear. Each component package was numbered and corresponded precisely to the steps in the video. When uncertainty arose regarding a connection step, fast-forwarding or replaying the video immediately provided the answer, resulting in an assembly process without any obstacles.	After becoming a Prime member, the fishing rod purchase was made with the option of Prime free delivery. The original one-week shipping time was shortened to two days, enabling participation in the planned weekend fishing trip.

Table 8 lists two negative cases from each of the six dimensions, focusing on problems occurring in product usage, quality, and logistics, and explicitly revealing inappropriate e-commerce responses and impolite behaviors that lead to consumer dissatisfaction. See Table 8.

Table 8: Examples of Unsatisfactory Critical Incidents

Event Classification	Example 1	Example 2
Usage Experience	When attempting to use the course planning function of this fitness app, the system forced the entry of as many as 20 body data items. During the input process, the page repeatedly crashed due to system errors, resulting in three repeated entries before success was achieved.	In attempting to locate the historical data of running heart rate, repeated switching among the three unrelated main menus of “Exercise,” “Health,” and “History” was required, taking more than ten minutes before the data was finally found.
Product Quality	This basketball was used only twice on the school plastic court, with a relatively short usage time. Near the end of the second session, irregular bulges appeared on the ball surface, causing dribbling and passing directions to lose control.	During a light hiking trip, when using this high-strength aluminum alloy trekking pole to support the body while crossing a small stream, one section of the pole suddenly bent and deformed without any prior indication, nearly causing loss of balance.

Logistics Service	The ordered yoga mat was marked as "delivered," yet nothing was found at the doorstep. Customer service only suggested "search again" or "ask neighbors." Three days later, the package was discovered at the porch of an unoccupied adjacent unit, with the outer packaging already damaged by rain.	The carton used for shipping the heavy weightlifting platform should have been more durable, as upon receipt the carton was nearly destroyed.
After-sales Service	During the warranty period, abnormal noise occurred with the treadmill. Following the after-sales procedure, video recording, purchase proof, and self-checking of screw tightness were successively required. This back-and-forth communication lasted for one week, after which the issue was identified as a motor problem. However, it was then stated that the motor model had been discontinued, making repair or replacement impossible, and only a 10% discount coupon for purchasing a new product was provided.	The received sports camera could not be powered on, leading to a return request. After receiving the product, the seller claimed that "the product had scratches" affecting resale and refused to issue a refund. Repeated communication was conducted and photos taken before shipment were uploaded as evidence, yet even after platform intervention, the dispute remained unresolved.
Scenario Experience	When wearing this sports Bluetooth headset for running for the first time, the right earpiece fell off within ten minutes due to poor fit. All of the provided ear tips were tried, yet stability during running could not be maintained.	When using this "outdoor" high-intensity flashlight in the forest at night, its beam produced severe reflection in the humid air, making it difficult to see the road surface clearly.
Value-added Service	A set of combined dumbbells was purchased, but the packaging contained no installation instructions or diagrams. It was necessary to search online for videos of the brand, spending considerable time to assemble with difficulty, and during the process the sequence was mistaken, requiring rework.	The order was placed using the platform's "green packaging" option in the hope of reducing plastic waste. However, upon receipt, a very small product was packed inside an oversized carton, filled with non-degradable foam plastics and bubble wrap.

Table 9 presents the classification results of 175 satisfactory critical incidents, listing the number of cases in each category classified by coders, the average number of cases, the average proportion, and the ranking of proportions. See Table 9.

Table 9: Analytical Data of Satisfactory Critical Incidents

Classification of Satisfactory Critical Incidents	Number of Cases Classified by Coder 1	Number of Cases Classified by Coder 2	Number of Cases Classified by Coder 3	Average Number of Cases	Average Proportion	Proportion Ranking
Usage Experience	73	108	73	84.67	48%	1
Product Quality	61	40	61	54.00	31%	2
Scenario Experience	22	14	23	19.67	11%	3
Value-added Service	11	4	9	8.00	5%	4
Logistics Service	4	5	5	4.67	3%	5
After-sales Service	4	4	4	4.00	2%	6

Table 10 records the statistical results of three coders classifying 175 unsatisfactory critical incidents and provides the relevant quantitative indicators for each dimension.See Table 10.

Table 10: Analytical Data of Unsatisfactory Critical Incidents

Classification of Satisfactory Critical Incidents	Number of Cases Classified by Coder 1	Number of Cases Classified by Coder 2	Number of Cases Classified by Coder 3	Average Number of Cases	Average Proportion	Proportion Ranking
Product Quality	97	97	61	85.00	49%	1
Usage Experience	51	51	84	62.00	35%	2
Logistics Service	11	11	12	11.33	6%	3
Scenario Experience	7	7	11	8.33	5%	4
Value-added Service	5	5	3	4.33	2%	5
After-sales Service	4	4	4	4.00	2%	6

Table 9 reflects significant differences in the impact of different dimensions on positive consumer experience, among which usage experience accounts for the highest proportion, with an average of 48%, serving as the primary factor driving consumer satisfaction. Product quality ranks second, with an average proportion of 31%, second only to usage experience, and is one of the important dimensions reflecting e-commerce politness. Scenario experience has an average proportion of 11%, constituting part of satisfaction events, and when products are designed to fit applicable scenarios, consumer satisfaction can be greatly enhanced. The average proportions of value-added service, logistics service, and after-sales service are 5%, 3%, and 2% respectively, relatively lower, with after-sales service presenting the lowest value and being the least frequently mentioned dimension in all satisfaction events. Therefore, excellent after-sales service do not play a highly decisive role in improving consumer satisfaction.

Table 10, in contrast to the distribution characteristics of satisfaction events, presents different dimensional distributions. As shown in the table, product quality is the category with the highest proportion, with an average value of 49%; usage experience ranks second, with an average value of 35%, and although its proportion in dissatisfaction events is lower than in satisfaction events, it remains an important factor influencing negative consumer perceptions. The average value of logistics service rises from 3% in satisfaction events to 6% in dissatisfaction events, indicating that logistics issues may provoke consumer anger due to certain details, resulting in more complaints. In addition, scenario experience, value-added service, and after-sales service have average values of only 5%, 3%, and 2% respectively, all ranking lower. However, in the after-sales dimension, dissatisfaction arises not only from product quality problems but also from slow after-sales responses and unresolved issues, leading to continued dissatisfaction. Since the usage scenarios do not involve operations such as returns, exchanges, or warranty repairs, such records were not formed.

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the main factors influencing consumer experience are twofold, including usage experience and product quality. For satisfaction events, usage experience accounts for 48% and product quality accounts for 31%, with a combined proportion close to 80%; in dissatisfaction events, the combined proportion of usage experience and product quality also reaches approximately 85%. Therefore, the formation of positive consumer experience requires qualified product quality as well as good experience during usage. In addition, further research indicates that logistics service account for 4% in satisfaction events, while rising to 6% in dissatisfaction events, which demonstrates that good logistics service status does not generate more positive feedback, whereas even minor flaws in service may lead to significant negative emotions. Similarly, although after-sales service is also an important dimension of consumer evaluation, the benefits generated after optimization are more effective in reducing negative emotions, with the effect of improving consumer experience being relatively limited.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

This study constructs a comprehensive 'e-commerce politeness' framework and explores its impact on consumer experience in cross-border e-commerce platforms, aiming to fill the scarcity of literature that investigates the relationship between e-commerce politeness and consumer experience. The systematic review of literature, combined with platform practices, reveals that consumer

experience in cross-border e-commerce includes not only usage experience, product quality, and logistics service, but also scenario experience, after-sales service, and value-added service provided by merchants, all of which constitute unique experiences offered by platforms to consumers.

This study analyzes 350 critical incidents collected from the Amazon platform and finds that e-commerce politeness is not a single-dimensional concept but a multidimensional composite framework. The impact of e-commerce politeness on consumer experience is reflected in three aspects. First, through clear information presentation, precise search matching, and simplified operational processes, e-commerce politeness reduces decision-making and operational costs, thereby improving purchasing efficiency, essentially satisfying the "negative face needs" of consumers. Second, through reliable quality assurance, transparent logistics tracking, and trustworthy after-sales service, e-commerce politeness eliminates uncertainties in the shopping process, reduces potential losses, and enhances the sense of security and trust. Third, through the integration of contextualized design and value-added Service, e-commerce politeness creates a favorable shopping atmosphere, enabling a relaxed and pleasant shopping process and experience. The cumulative effect of these three dimensions helps mitigate inherent uncertainties in cross-border shopping, allowing consumption to be carried out with greater confidence and assurance. This study extends politeness theory from sociology and interpersonal communication to the context of e-commerce human–computer interaction, verifying the applicability of the "computers as social actors" theory and enriching the existing research system. In addition, this study integrates previously fragmented interactive dimensions in the literature under the core concept of "e-commerce politeness" and, through a systematic analytical model, addresses the scarcity of research on consumer experience within the study of e-commerce politeness.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 Recommendations for cross-border e-commerce platforms

According to the above research results, the consumer experience and product quality are the main factors that affect consumer experience. Cross-border e-commerce platforms should collaboratively optimize product quality and consumer experience to consolidate the foundation of user satisfaction.

- The platform can identify the high-frequency defects of each category in its mainstream market and develop a quality risk list for each category, which will serve as requirements for merchants to join the platform. Merchants are required to submit basic materials such as business licenses and brand authorizations, as well as quality testing reports for the products they sell, and to conduct mandatory random inspections on their initial batch of goods. If the inspection results do not meet the standards, the platform can require the merchant to temporarily remove the product from the shelves until the product quality meets the standards.
- The platform can observe the high-frequency gaps of each category in its mainstream market and establish a quality risk list for each category, which will serve as requirements for merchants to join the platform. Merchants are required to submit basic materials such as business licenses and brand authorizations, as well as quality testing reports for the products they sell, and to conduct mandatory random inspections on their initial batch of goods. If the inspection results do not meet the standards, the platform can require the merchant to temporarily remove the product from the shelves until the product quality meets the standards.
- Optimize and rectify the platform webpages for different countries based on local languages and cultures, expanding the range of language translations to include both mainstream and niche languages; for backend communication, commonly used local social software can be employed, ensuring 24-hour human response to avoid prolonged mechanical responses from artificial intelligence (AI).

5.2.2 Recommendations for merchants on cross-border e-commerce platforms

For consumers, the quality of the products and their usage experience are the main reasons affecting their purchasing experience. Therefore, cross-border e-commerce merchants should focus on product and service details, enhance quality control, and improve consumer experience.

- Merchants can place a product quality assurance card inside the product packaging, clearly stating that if any issues arise within 30 days, the merchant will provide a free replacement service, which helps reduce negative emotions among consumers and improves the quality of service that merchants provide to consumers.
- For products that require consumer installation, merchants can optimize the instruction manuals, creating visuals for the installation process, and adding digital tags. They can also upload simple and easy-to-understand instructional videos with voice guidance that clearly explain each step in an accessible manner for easier installation by consumers.
- Merchants should interact more with consumers, compile frequently asked questions from consumers into a list, and make it

available on the online store page for consumers to click and view, or address them in live broadcasts, enabling consumers to promptly resolve any product-related doubts. Additionally, a 24-hour after-sales website can be established in the list for consumers who have unresolved issues to quickly access a dialogue interface to communicate directly with the merchant.

5.2.3 Recommendations for international institutions and government departments

In cross-border e-commerce, issues related to long-distance transportation and communication are challenges that platforms and merchants cannot deeply resolve. Therefore, government departments should provide policy guidance and regulatory support from both logistics and after-sales perspectives to build a sound cross-border e-commerce ecosystem.

Government departments should optimize the cross-border customs clearance process, reduce unnecessary merchant declarations for cross-border logistics reviews, and achieve "online declaration + automatic review" to minimize delays in logistics caused by cumbersome declaration processes and improve logistics service efficiency.

- A unified submission platform for product customs clearance application materials should be provided for merchants, along with corresponding regulatory policies to standardize merchants' cross-border trading behavior. Meanwhile, a logistics tracking function should be set up on the platform to facilitate consumers in tracking product logistics in real-time.
- Government departments can promote the establishment of a cross-border e-commerce after-sales dispute mediation mechanism, collaborating with multiple departments to create a multilingual online dispute mediation platform, offering free mediation Service for businesses and overseas consumers to avoid minor disputes escalating into cross-border complaints. This includes requiring relevant departments to establish and improve a system for after-sales service guarantees, mandating platforms to pay a 5% guarantee deposit based on transaction amounts for after-sales compensation, with any shortfall to be covered by the platform.

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