Association for Information Systems

AIS Electronic Library (AISeL)

PACIS 2023 Proceedings

Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems (PACIS)

7-8-2023

The Impact of Politeness in Bidding Descriptions on Hiring Decisions in Online Labor Markets

Xiaoyan Wu Shanghai International Studies University, wuxiaoyan0215@163.com

Yi Chen
Shanghai International Studies University, cheny@shisu.edu.cn

Nila Zhang Fudan University, nilazhang@fudan.edu.cn

Follow this and additional works at: https://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis2023

Recommended Citation

Wu, Xiaoyan; Chen, Yi; and Zhang, Nila, "The Impact of Politeness in Bidding Descriptions on Hiring Decisions in Online Labor Markets" (2023). *PACIS 2023 Proceedings*. 74. https://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis2023/74

This material is brought to you by the Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems (PACIS) at AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). It has been accepted for inclusion in PACIS 2023 Proceedings by an authorized administrator of AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). For more information, please contact elibrary@aisnet.org.

The Impact of Politeness in Bidding **Descriptions on Hiring Decisions in Online Labor Markets**

Short Paper

Wu Xiaoyan

Shanghai International Studies University 1550 Wenxiang Road, Shanghai, China 1550 Wenxiang Road, Shanghai, China wuxiaoyano215@163.com

Chen Yi

Shanghai International Studies University chenv@shisu.edu.cn

Zhang Nila

Fudan University 220 Handan Road, Shanghai, China nilazhang@fudan.edu.cn

Abstract

Due to the lack of face-to-face interactions in online labor market, employers often have to rely on bidding descriptions to assess the interpersonal aspects of freelancers. Since politeness is a potential indicator of one's willingness and ability to facilitate cooperation, our study examines the impact of politeness in bidding descriptions on hiring decisions. Based on data collected from Freelancer.com, we differentiate the politeness of bidding descriptions with textual analysis. Surprisingly, our findings reveal that politeness in bidding descriptions is negatively associated with the probability of getting hired, and the association is negatively moderated by the capability of freelancers and the textual similarity of bidding descriptions. Specifically, the association is positive for incapable workers or unique bidding descriptions but becomes more negative for capable workers or bidding descriptions similar to others. The findings contribute novel insights on the contingent impact of politeness in bidding descriptions in online labor market.

Keywords: Online labor market, politeness, bidding descriptions, hiring decisions

Introduction

Due to the epidemics in recent years, a growing number of workers are moving away from traditional fulltime offline jobs and choosing to work online as freelancers, leading to the booming of online labor markets (Hong et al. 2016). Online labor markets such as Upwork, Freelancer, and oDesk have facilitated companies in accessing a global pool of workers, thereby increasing the efficiency of their labor sourcing (Hong et al. 2020). Unlike offline market, the recruitment in online labor market is typically in a form of auction and bidding. Workers apply for their favored tasks or projects by submitting bids, and employers assess applicants by reviewing their bids and profiles (Kokkodis et al. 2015). While the profiles reflect workers' background and experience (e.g., demographics and reputation), the bids reveal information that the workers demonstrate for the specific projects (e.g., price, periods, and descriptions of work plans, etc.). Despite its novelty and efficiency, this recruitment process also brings various operational challenges (Pallais 2014). For instance, new workers who lack the records of past performance may have a hard time getting hired. This highlights the importance to explore how freelancers could better craft their bidding information to stand out from the crowd.

Existing studies on the impact of bids tend to focus on the impact of structured information such as price and skills. For instance, researchers indicated that the bid price remains the most significant determinant of hiring decisions in online labor markets (Scholz and Haas 2011), and structured information regarding worker characteristics, such as skill level and performance ratings, also plays a crucial role in affecting employment outcomes and job remuneration (Beerepoot and Lambregts 2015; Hwang and Banker 2008). However, the limitation of structured information in supporting hiring decision is also obvious. Studies show that reliance on standardized information (e.g., reputation and price) cannot sufficiently differentiate between workers (Hu et al. 2009), and it may sometimes increase the potential for adverse selection (Kokkodis and Ipeirotis 2016). More importantly, such structured information cannot reveal the social or interpersonal aspects of the workers. This is even more prominent in online labor market due to the lack of the traditional screening process (e.g., face-to-face interviews) and the associated social cues. Thus, bidding descriptions, the unstructured information in bids, have emerged as the primary source for employers to assess whether the workers are easy to collaborate with.

Specifically, prior studies demonstrate that the politeness revealed in one's text or language is regarded as an indicator of the person's ability and willingness to facilitate interpersonal cooperation (Prodanovic 2014; Tan et al. 2016), which benefit the individual in obtaining others' support. For instance, researchers demonstrate that politeness will increase the chances of obtaining replies or votes in online technical communities or open innovation platforms (Burke and Kraut 2008; Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. 2013). Hong et al. (2021) reveals that the politeness in direct communication with employers will positively affects the hiring outcomes in online labor market. Despite various studies confirming the benefit of politeness, some researchers have also demonstrated its downsides. For example, prior research found that friendly negotiators tend to be perceived as less competent than assertive negotiators and thus possess less bargaining power in allocation negotiations (Jeong et al. 2019). Similarly, politeness in the bidding descriptions reduce the employers' evaluation of the workers' competence and leads to an adverse effect on hiring (Jessmer and Anderson 2001). Since politeness may create both advantages and disadvantages for workers, it's necessary for us to explore how politeness in bidding descriptions may influence the hiring decisions in online labor market.

To reconcile the contradictory mechanisms from different theoretical lens, our study also attempts to investigate the boundary conditions for politeness, as the impact of politeness on hiring decisions might vary across different applicants or bids. For instance, the impact of politeness in a bid might be contingent on whether employers could successfully differentiate bid from competitors. This indicates that similarities between bids may moderate the impact of politeness. In addition, as employers may associate politeness with incompetence, its negative impact may be less salient for workers whose profiles have already shown a low level of capability. Therefore, the capability of workers may also be a moderator on the effect of politeness.

In sum, our research aims to examine how politeness in bidding descriptions may affect hiring decisions in online marketplaces and whether it works heterogeneously.

Related Literature

In online labor markets, the process of recruitment often takes the form of an auction or bidding system, wherein employers are required to choose the most fitting candidates from a sizable pool of applicants. One important research stream in online labor markets is examining factors affecting hiring decisions (Pavlou and Gefen 2004). The literature can be divided into three categories. First, the bidding characteristics, such as bidding price, period, sequence, are associated with hiring outcomes (Hong et al. 2020). Second, the personal characteristics of freelancers, such as skill level, experience, reputation, have been found as positive factors to employers' hiring decisions (Ghani et al. 2014; Moreno and Terwiesch 2014; Pallais 2014). Finally, the familiarity between employers and workers counts in some circumstances. Risk-averse employers are more inclined to hire candidates who have previously worked well with them (Kokkodis et al. 2015). Familiarity, on the other hand, refers to the linguistic and cultural differences between them. It has been examined that buyers in online gig platforms prefer service providers with smaller cultural differences (Hong and Pavlou 2017).

The current research on hiring decisions in online labor markets mainly focuses on structured information such as price, experience, reputation, and demographic characteristics, with less attention paid to

unstructured information (e.g., bidding descriptions written by workers). In fact, the unstructured information is more abundant in content and can better show the applicant's attitude and specific plans towards the project, thus meeting the screening needs of employers. To the best of our knowledge, only a few studies so far have lay their emphasis on some textual descriptions written by freelancers, such as self-introduction on profile page and the private direct messages sent to employers (Holthaus and Stock 2018; Hong et al. 2021). However, profile information and direct messaging are adopted by part of freelancers on voluntary basis, while the bidding description is a substantial way used by almost all freelancers to convey information. Besides, both the profile information and direct messaging create a private context for communication, in which an employer's attention is concentrated on a specific freelancer, while the bidding descriptions are evaluated based on comparison with others in a public scenario. These differences may lead to employers' different perceptions of politeness. Therefore, it is of great significance to explore and reveal the impact of politeness in bidding descriptions on the hiring decisions of online employers.

Hypothesis Development

Impact of Politeness on Hiring Decisions

According to the signaling theory, freelancers who hold more information about their services may take the initiative to provide additional signals like politeness in order to narrow the information gap and help gain the trust of employers (Bergh et al. 2014). Politeness refers to showing respect to others through words and actions, which is an external manifestation of a person's communicative ability (Stephan et al. 2010). Many studies regard politeness as an important soft skill (Kong 1998; Prodanovic 2014), which helps to build good interpersonal relationships with others and thus bring benefits in online communities (Burke and Kraut 2008).

However, in addition to signaling soft skills, politeness may also reduce the evaluation of competence, which has a greater negative impact on hiring outcomes in employment scenarios as capability is a crucial factor that employers focus on. According to social psychology literatures, warmth and competence are negatively correlated in social evaluations, and people tend to treat them as two mutual-exclusive dimensions of social cognition unconsciously (Cuddy et al. 2011; Judd et al. 2005; Yzerbyt et al. 2008). As a result, when making evaluations on multiple individuals or groups, people hold an assumption that individuals performing well on one dimension will perform poorly on the other, thus perceiving individuals high in warmth as less competent (Kervyn et al. 2009). Consistent with the argument above, researchers also demonstrate that while politeness in one's messages shows deference and low status, it is often attributed to the individual's low capability (Holthaus and Stock 2018; Jessmer and Anderson 2001). In the context of online labor market which suffers from salient information asymmetry and lemon market issue, employers are susceptible to this contrast effect and may assume that polite candidates are less capable (Judd et al. 2005; Wojciszke 2005). Therefore, according to the compensation effect of warmth and competence, politeness in bidding descriptions may diminish employers' evaluation of applicants' capability and increase their distrust, which outweighs the potential benefits of signaling soft skills. Hence, we expect that:

Hypothesis 1. The higher the politeness in bidding descriptions, the less likely the workers are employed.

Moderating Effect of Worker Capability and Bid Similarity

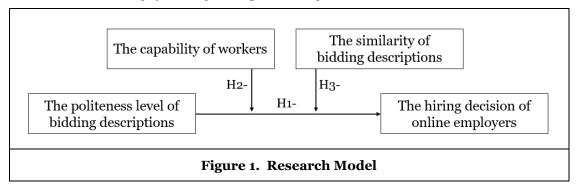
According to the previous discussion, politeness can generate two different effects: a positive effect of expressing respect and signaling soft skills (Hu et al. 2019; Morand and Ocker 2003) and a negative effect of undermining the recognition of competence (Judd et al. 2005; Oleszkiewicz and Lachowicz-Tabaczek 2016). However, the salience of these impacts can be heterogeneous on different individuals. Research has shown that the improvement of politeness doesn't bring benefits to users with higher review scores (Wang 2020). Hence, we propose that the impact of politeness shown in a worker's bid is moderated by the worker's capability. As explained above, when dealing with highly polite bid description, employers may suspect that the applicant is less capable. If the corresponding applicant shows a high-capability signal (e.g., high performance ratings), there will be a mismatch between the capability signal and the perceived capability, resulting in distrust on the worker's actual capability. Given that the high-capability signal is a prominent competitive advantage for capable workers, the damage of reducing the evaluation of competence will outweigh the benefit of signaling soft skills. In contrast, freelancers displaying low-capable signals do not rely on their capability to win the project. The perception of low capability generated from

polite bid will not seriously hurt their competitive advantages. As a consequence, the signaling effect of soft skills is likely to dominant the impact of politeness on uncapable workers. Therefore, we expect that:

Hypothesis 2. The capability of workers negatively moderates the association between politeness in bidding descriptions and employment outcomes, such that the association becomes more negative when worker's capability is high.

In addition, we suggest that the similarity of the bidding description to others within the project will also moderate the impact of politeness on hiring outcomes. A high similarity between the bidding descriptions that an employer receives are likely to be interpreted as a result of shared linguistic norm or imitation. Thus, employers are apt to question the authenticity of politeness displayed in highly similar bidding descriptions, raising suspicion towards the positive signaling effect of politeness (Blach-Ørsten et al. 2018). Besides, it is more difficult for employers to differentiate a bid from similar others, which will reduce their desire to explore the content and evaluate the workers' soft skills (Bawden et al. 1999). As a result, the positive effect of politeness is undermined, and the negative effect becomes dominant. Conversely, for politeness displayed in unique description, employers are less likely to regard it as a result of norm or imitation, thus enhancing the signaling effect of respect and soft skills. Employers are also more exploratory on unique description and are able to process the textual information in depth (Tian et al. 2010). Therefore, they are able to perceive positive intentions such as respect conveyed by a high level of politeness, and the positive effect of politeness is enhanced. Consequently, the benefit of signaling soft skills will outweigh the damage of reducing the evaluation of competence. Based on the above discussion, we expect that:

Hypothesis 3. The similarity of bidding descriptions negatively moderates the association between politeness in bidding descriptions and employment outcomes, such that the association becomes more negative when the similarity of bidding descriptions is high.



Methodology

Data Collection

To examine the above research questions, we collected data from Freelancer.com, the world's largest online outsourcing service platform. Employers post projects on the platform, and freelancers could submit bids to the projects they are interested in. The employer will then select the favorable freelancer for their project. We crawl data on bids and projects on app development from November, 2019 to December, 2020. We also collect data on the profiles of workers. The collected dataset contains information on both bids (e.g., bidding description, bidding price, and bidders' background) and projects (e.g., number of bids and employers' background). After excluding the projects that receive no more than one bid or fail to select any applicants, our final dataset consists of 70,740 bid-level records from 4,132 projects.

Variables

Dependent variable. The dependent variable is whether the bid was chosen for hiring (*Hired*), where 1 for hired and 0 for not hired.

Independent variable. The key explanatory variable is politeness in bidding descriptions (*Politeness*). It is calculated with a text analysis algorithm. We randomly select 500 pieces of bidding descriptions and

manually annotate their politeness. Following the approach in prior study (Hong et al. 2021), we code a text as 1 if is considered polite, and 0 otherwise. We then extract the politeness features in 29 dimensions of these encoded texts through the *Politeness* package in R (Yeomans et al. 2018). Next, we adopted the 5-fold cross-validation to split the training and testing sets. Then we trained and tested models on the relationship between politeness features and manual labels. We test five different kinds of classification algorithms, including *Random Forest*, *XgBoost*, *Logistic Regression*, *Naive Bayes*, and *Support Vector Machine*. In the end, we choose the model based on *Logistic Regression* algorithm to generate politeness, as it outperforms the other algorithms, with an accuracy of 0.838, F-score of 0.837 and AUC of 0.899.

Moderators. This study focuses on two moderators: worker capability and bid similarity. First, the capability of workers (*Capability*) is measured by the average review score the freelancer obtained on the platform up to the time of bidding. Then as for the intra-group similarity of bidding descriptions (*Similarity*), we construct a word vector matrix for each text and then compute the average cosine similarity between the text and the others within the same project according to the previous research (Hong and Pavlou 2017).

Controls. We also control some other variables that may affect employers' hiring decisions, including bidding price (*BidPrice*), bidding periods (*BidPeriod*), the number of words in bidding descriptions (*Words*), the number of reviews freelancers received (*ReviewsCount*), the worker's familiarity with the platform (*PlaformFam*) which is represented by number of days registered on the platform when freelancers bid, and finally, the worker's familiarity with the employer (*EmployerFam*) which is encoded as 1 if they have previously cooperated, and otherwise as 0.

Correlation analysis based on all variables reveal that the highest correlation 0.494, and the highest VIF for our independent variables is 1.43, which indicates that our data does not have serious multicollinearity issue.

Models

As the dependent variable is binary data, and all the bids submitted for the same project constitute a choice pool for the employer' hiring decision. We adopt c-logit model (i.e., choice model) and control the fixed effects of projects to examine the association between politeness in bidding descriptions and their hiring outcomes. The model is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \textit{Hired}_{ij} &= \beta_0 + \beta_1 \times \textit{Controls}_{ij} + \beta_2 \times \textit{Politeness}_{ij} + \beta_3 \times \textit{Capability}_{ij} + \beta_4 \times \textit{Similarity}_{ij} \\ &+ \beta_5 \times \textit{Politeness}_{ij} \times \textit{Capability}_{ij} + \beta_6 \times \textit{Politeness}_{ij} \times \textit{Similarity}_{ij} + \gamma_i + \varepsilon_{ij} \end{aligned}$$

Specifically, i and j represent projects and workers respectively. $Controls_{ij}$ represents all control variables, and γ_i in the model is to capture the project-level fixed effects, while ε_{ij} represents the random error at the individual level.

Results

Main and Heterogeneous Impact of Politeness

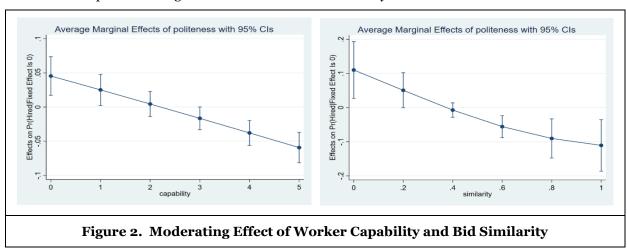
The results are shown in Table 1. Model 1 only includes control variables. In Model 2, we add the explanatory variable *Politeness*. The results reveal that the association between politeness of bidding descriptions and hiring is negative and significant (Model 2, β =-0.10, p<0.05), which supports Hypothesis 1. This indicates that showing politeness does not help the applicant to win the project, but may diminish employers' evaluation of applicants' capability and thus reduce the probability of freelancers being hired.

In order to examine whether the impact of politeness is moderated by the capability of workers, we add the interaction term of *Politeness* and *Capability* in Model 3. The results show that the coefficient of politeness is significantly positive (Model 3, β =0.25, p<0.001), while the coefficient of interaction term is significantly negative (Model 3, β =-0.11, p<0.001). It suggests that the positive effect of politeness apply to workers with low capability, and it is negatively moderated by workers' capability. As workers' capability increases, the impact of politeness on hiring outcomes turns from positive to negative, which supports Hypothesis 2. According to the previous discussion, politeness may be either perceived as a signal that indicates soft skills or a signal of low competence. The negative impact of politeness is greater for highly capable workers, as

the competence is the main advantage they rely on when competing with others. Consequently, the cost of politeness outweighs the benefit it brings. However, for workers with low capability, the competence is not their strength, so the negative effect of politeness is diminished while the positive effect is magnified. The moderating effect of worker capability is further presented in Figure 2, where the average marginal effect of politeness turns from positive to negative with the increase of capability.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5		
PlatformFam	0.00* (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)		
ReviewsCount	0.00* (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)		
EmployerFam	4.04***(0.25)	4.04*** (0.25)	4.05*** (0.25)	4.04*** (0.25)	4.04*** (0.25)		
Similarity	-1.55*** (0.22)	-1.42*** (0.23)	-1.47*** (0.23)	-0.53 (0.36)	-0.77* (0.36)		
Capability	0.03***(0.01)	0.04*** (0.01)	0.12*** (0.02)	0.04*** (0.01)	0.11*** (0.02)		
BidPeriod	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)		
BidPrice	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)		
Words	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)		
Politeness		-0.10* (0.05)	0.25*** (0.08)	0.49* (0.19)	0.69*** (0.19)		
Politeness×			-0.11*** (0.02)		-0.11*** (0.02)		
Capability			0.11 (0.02)		0.11 (0.02)		
$Politeness \times$				-1.30** (0.41)	-1.01* (0.41)		
Similarity				-1.30 (0.41)	-1.01 (0.41)		
Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001							
Table 1. Impact of Politeness on Hiring Decisions							

Next, we include interaction term of *Politeness* and *Similarity* in Model 4 to investigate the moderating effect of the intra-group similarity. The results also show that the positive effect of politeness on the hiring decision is diminished as the level of textual similarity increases (Model 4, β =-1.30, p<0.01), which supports Hypothesis 3. This indicates that the impact of politeness on the hiring outcome is positive initially but becomes negative when the bidding description exhibits a high level of similarity to other bids within the same projects. As explained above, the high similarity of bidding descriptions may be interpreted as imitation, so the respect and good intent embedded in the politeness may not be perceived a signal of soft skill. Consequently, the positive effect of politeness diminishes and is ultimately surpassed by the negative effect. As for unique bids description, however, employers may assign more cognitive resource in processing their content and trust the positive intention of politeness, so the benefit of politeness may outweigh its cost. The moderating effect of bid similarity is also shown in Figure 2, where the marginal effect of politeness also turns from positive to negative with the increase of similarity.



Finally, we include the two interaction terms in Model 5. And the results show that the coefficient of politeness is positive and significant (Model 5, β =0.69, p<0.01), while the coefficients of interaction with capability (Model 5, β =-0.11, p<0.001) and interaction with similarity (Model 5, β =-1.01, p<0.05) are both negative and significant, which further supports Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 3.

Robustness Check

To ensure the findings in the main analysis is reliable, we further conduct a series of robustness tests by applying alternative models and adjusting the measures of some key variables. The details of the robustness tests are as follows:

Measures of politeness. The explanatory variable *Politeness* in the main analysis is binary data generated by machine learning algorithms, which cannot differentiate detailed levels of politeness in bidding descriptions. In this regard, we also obtain the probability of politeness (*PolitenessProbability*) with the machine learning algorithm, which refers to the possibility that the description is predicted as polite. This measure can to some extent represent the level of politeness. The results of analysis based on this new measure are reported in Model 1 of Table 2, which are consistent with our findings.

Measures of worker capability. The moderator *Capability* reflects the average review score assessed by employers. We also try to measure the workers' capability with an alternative variable *Skills*, which shows the number of skills demonstrated by the workers themselves. The results based on the new measure are shown in Model 2 of Table 2, which are consistent with our findings.

Measures of bid similarity. The moderator *Similarity* reflects the vocabulary similarity between the focal bidding descriptions and the others under the same project. To capture their similarity in politeness, we construct an alternative variable *AvgPoliteness*, which refers to the average politeness of bids under a same project except for the focal bid. This measure shows the overall politeness of competitors. The results based on the new measure are reported in Model 3 of Table 2, which are consistent with our findings.

Adjustment of model. We test the robustness with alternative model. Specifically, we replace the choice model with fixed-effect logit model, which can address binary dependent variable and control project-level fixed effects. The results reported in Model 4 of Table 2 are also consistent with the previous findings.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4			
PlatformFam	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)			
ReviewsCount	0.00** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)			
EmployerFam	4.03*** (0.25)	4.00*** (0.25)	4.09*** (0.25)	4.04*** (0.25)			
Similarity	-0.15 (0.44)	-1.68*** (0.23)		-0.77* (0.36)			
Capability	0.14*** (0.02)		0.03*** (0.00)	0.11*** (0.02)			
BidPeriod	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)			
BidPrice	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)			
Words	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)	-0.00***(0.00)			
PolitenessProbability	1.12*** (0.26)						
PolitenessProbability× Similarity	-1.87*** (0.56)						
PolitenessProbability× Capability	-0.15*** (0.03)						
Politeness		0.25** (0.09)	0.51* (0.25)	0.69*** (0.19)			
Skills		0.22*** (0.02)					
Politeness×Skills		-0.12*** (0.02)					
AvgPoliteness			1.12*** (0.32)				
Politeness×AvgPoliteness			-0.72* (0.29)				
Politeness×Similarity				-1.01* (0.41)			
Politeness×Capability				-0.11*** (0.02)			
Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001							
Table 2. Results of Robustness Check							

Conclusion and Implication

In summary, the study shows that freelancers who exhibit high politeness in their bidding descriptions are less likely to be employed, due to the potential compensation effect between politeness and competence in the employer's evaluation. Moreover, our findings also reveal the heterogeneous impact of politeness. For workers who demonstrate high capability, politeness may create negative impression of the workers' competence, thus causing more suspicion and distrust in employers' assessment. Conversely, freelancers

who display low capability are more likely to benefit from politeness. In addition, when a bidding description is similar to other competitors, the positive signaling effect of politeness is reduced, resulting in a reinforced negative effect of politeness. On the contrary, for bids with high uniqueness, the positive impact of politeness is enhanced and showing politeness are more likely to be awarded.

Our research has important theoretical contributions. Firstly, this study focuses on features in unstructured information, bidding descriptions, through text analysis, which provides new insights into the research on hiring decisions in online labor markets. Besides, our research explores the impact of politeness in public circumstances (i.e., bidding descriptions) for the first time, which improves the understanding of politeness in online hiring contexts. In addition, considering both the signaling effect and the compensation effect, our study offers a comprehensive view to the role of politeness. Moreover, the conclusions of our study also provide crucial implications for practice. Firstly, freelancers in online labor markets should be aware of the importance of controlling the expression of politeness according to their own situations. And employers should be conscious of avoiding the prejudice of absolutely associating politeness with low competence and fully examine and evaluate freelancers' background information. Finally, the online labor platforms can offer some tips to remind workers to put in more effort when writing bidding descriptions in order to improve the uniqueness of their paperwork so that those who express interpersonal abilities can stand out.

Acknowledgement

This work is supported by Shanghai International Studies University Innovative Research Team (2020114085) and National Natural Science Foundation of China (72172092, 72272101).

Reference

- Bawden, D., Holtham, C., and Courtney, N. 1999. "Perspectives on Information Overload," *Aslib Proceedings* (51:8), pp. 249-255.
- Beerepoot, N., and Lambregts, B. 2015. "Competition in Online Job Marketplaces: Towards a Global Labour Market for Outsourcing Services?," *Global Networks-a Journal of Transnational Affairs* (15:2), pp. 236-255.
- Bergh, D. D., Connelly, B. L., Ketchen Jr, D. J., and Shannon, L. M. 2014. "Signalling Theory and Equilibrium in Strategic Management Research: An Assessment and a Research Agenda," *Journal of Management Studies* (51:8), pp. 1334-1360
- Blach-Ørsten, M., Hartley, J. M., and Wittchen, M. B. 2018. "A Matter of Trust: Plagiarism, Fake Sources and Paradigm Repair in the Danish News Media," *Journalism Studies* (19.0:SP13.0), pp. 1889-1898.
- Burke, M., and Kraut, R. 2008. "Mind Your Ps and Qs: The Impact of Politeness and Rudeness in Online Communities," *Proceedings of the 2008 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work*, pp. 281-284.
- Cuddy, A. J. C., Glick, P., and Beninger, A. 2011. "The Dynamics of Warmth and Competence Judgments, and Their Outcomes in Organizations," *Research in Organizational Behavior* (31), pp. 73-98.
- Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil, C., Sudhof, M., Jurafsky, D., Leskovec, J., and Potts, C. 2013. "A Computational Approach to Politeness with Application to Social Factors," *Proceedings of the 2013 Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics*, pp. 250-259.
- Ghani, E., Kerr, W. R., and Stanton, C. 2014. "Diasporas and Outsourcing: Evidence from Odesk and India," *Management Science* (60:7), pp. 1677-1697.
- Holthaus, C., and Stock, R. M. 2018. "Facts Vs. Stories Assessment and Conventional Signals as Predictors of Freelancers' Performance in Online Labor Markets," *Proceedings of the 51st Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, pp. 3455-3464.
- Hong, Y., and Pavlou, P. A. 2017. "On Buyer Selection of Service Providers in Online Outsourcing Platforms for IT Services," *Information Systems Research* (28:3), pp. 547-562.
- Hong, Y., Peng, J., Burtch, G., and Huang, N. 2021. "Just DM Me (Politely): Direct Messaging, Politeness, and Hiring Outcomes in Online Labor Markets," *Information Systems Research* (32:3), pp. 786-800.
- Hong, Y., Wang, C., and Pavlou, P. A. 2016. "Comparing Open and Sealed Bid Auctions: Evidence from Online Labor Markets," *Information Systems Research* (27:1), pp. 49-69.
- Hong, Z., Zhu, H., and Dong, K. 2020. "Buyer-Side Institution-Based Trust-Building Mechanisms: A 3S Framework with Evidence from Online Labor Markets," *International Journal of Electronic Commerce* (24:1), pp. 14-52.

- Hu, N., Zhang, J., and Pavlou, P. A. 2009. "Overcoming the J-Shaped Distribution of Product Reviews," *Communications of the ACM* (52:10), pp. 144-147.
- Hu, Y., Tafti, A., and Gal, D. 2019. "Read This, Please? The Role of Politeness in Customer Service Engagement on Social Media," *Proceedings of the 52nd Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, pp. 1-10.
- Hwang, I., and Banker, R. D. 2008. "Importance of Measures of Past Performance: Empirical Evidence on Quality of E-Service Providers," *Contemporary Accounting Research* (25:2), pp. 307-337.
- Jeong, M., Minson, J., Yeomans, M., and Gino, F. 2019. "Communicating with Warmth in Distributive Negotiations Is Surprisingly Counterproductive," *Management Science* (65:12), pp. 5813-5837.
- Jessmer, S. L., and Anderson, D. 2001. "The Effect of Politeness and Grammar on User Perceptions of Electronic Mail," *North American Journal of Psychology* (3:2).
- Judd, C. M., James-Hawkins, L., Yzerbyt, V., and Kashima, Y. 2005. "Fundamental Dimensions of Social Judgment: Understanding the Relations between Judgments of Competence and Warmth," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (89:6), p. 899.
- Kervyn, N., Yzerbyt, V. Y., Judd, C. M., and Nunes, A. 2009. "A Question of Compensation: The Social Life of the Fundamental Dimensions of Social Perception," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (96:4), p. 828.
- Kokkodis, M., and Ipeirotis, P. G. 2016. "Reputation Transferability in Online Labor Markets," *Management Science* (62:6), pp. 1687-1706.
- Kokkodis, M., Papadimitriou, P., and Ipeirotis, P. G. 2015. "Hiring Behavior Models for Online Labor Markets," *Proceedings of the 8th ACM International Conference on Web Search and Data Mining*, pp. 223-232.
- Kong, K. C. 1998. "Politeness of Service Encounters in Hong Kong," *Pragmatics. Quarterly Publication of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)* (8:4), pp. 555-575.
- Morand, D. A., and Ocker, R. J. 2003. "Politeness Theory and Computer-Mediated Communication: A Sociolinguistic Approach to Analyzing Relational Messages," *Proceedings of 36th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, pp. 17-28.
- Moreno, A., and Terwiesch, C. 2014. "Doing Business with Strangers: Reputation in Online Service Marketplaces," *Information Systems Research* (25:4), pp. 865-886.
- Oleszkiewicz, A., and Lachowicz-Tabaczek, K. 2016. "Perceived Competence and Warmth Influence Respect, Liking and Trust in Work Relations," *Polish Psychological Bulletin* (47:4), pp. 431-435.
- Pallais, A. 2014. "Inefficient Hiring in Entry-Level Labor Markets," *American Economic Review* (104:11), pp. 3565-3599.
- Pavlou, P. A., and Gefen, D. 2004. "Building Effective Online Marketplaces with Institution-Based Trust," *Information Systems Research* (15:1), pp. 37-59.
- Prodanovic, M. M. 2014. "The Delicate Mechanism of Politeness as a Strong Soft Skill," *The IUP Journal of Soft Skills* (8:4).
- Scholz, M., and Haas, N. 2011. "Determinants of Reverse Auction Results: An Empirical Examination of Freelancer.Com," *Proceedings of the 2011 European Conference on Information Systems*, pp. 89-102.
- Stephan, E., Liberman, N., and Trope, Y. 2010. "Politeness and Psychological Distance: A Construal Level Perspective," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (98:2), p. 268.
- Tan, H., Teoh, M., and Tan, S. 2016. "Beyond 'Greeting' and 'Thanking': Politeness in Job Interviews," 3L, Language, Linguistics, Literature (22:3).
- Tian, Kelly T., Bearden, William O., and Hunter, Gary L. 2010. "Consumers' Need for Uniqueness: Scale Development and Validation," *Journal of Consumer Research* (28:1), pp. 50-66.
- Wang, Y. 2020. "The Price of Being Polite: Politeness, Social Status, and their Joint Impacts on Community O&A Efficiency," *Journal of Computational Social Science* (4:1), pp. 101-122.
- Wojciszke, B. 2005. "Morality and Competence in Person- and Self-Perception," *European Review of Social Psychology* (16:1), pp. 155-188.
- Yeomans, M., Kantor, A., and Tingley, D. 2018. "The Politeness Package: Detecting Politeness in Natural Language," *R Journal* (10:2).
- Yzerbyt, V. Y., Kervyn, N., and Judd, C. M. 2008. "Compensation Versus Halo: The Unique Relations between the Fundamental Dimensions of Social Judgment," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* (34:8), pp. 1110-1123.