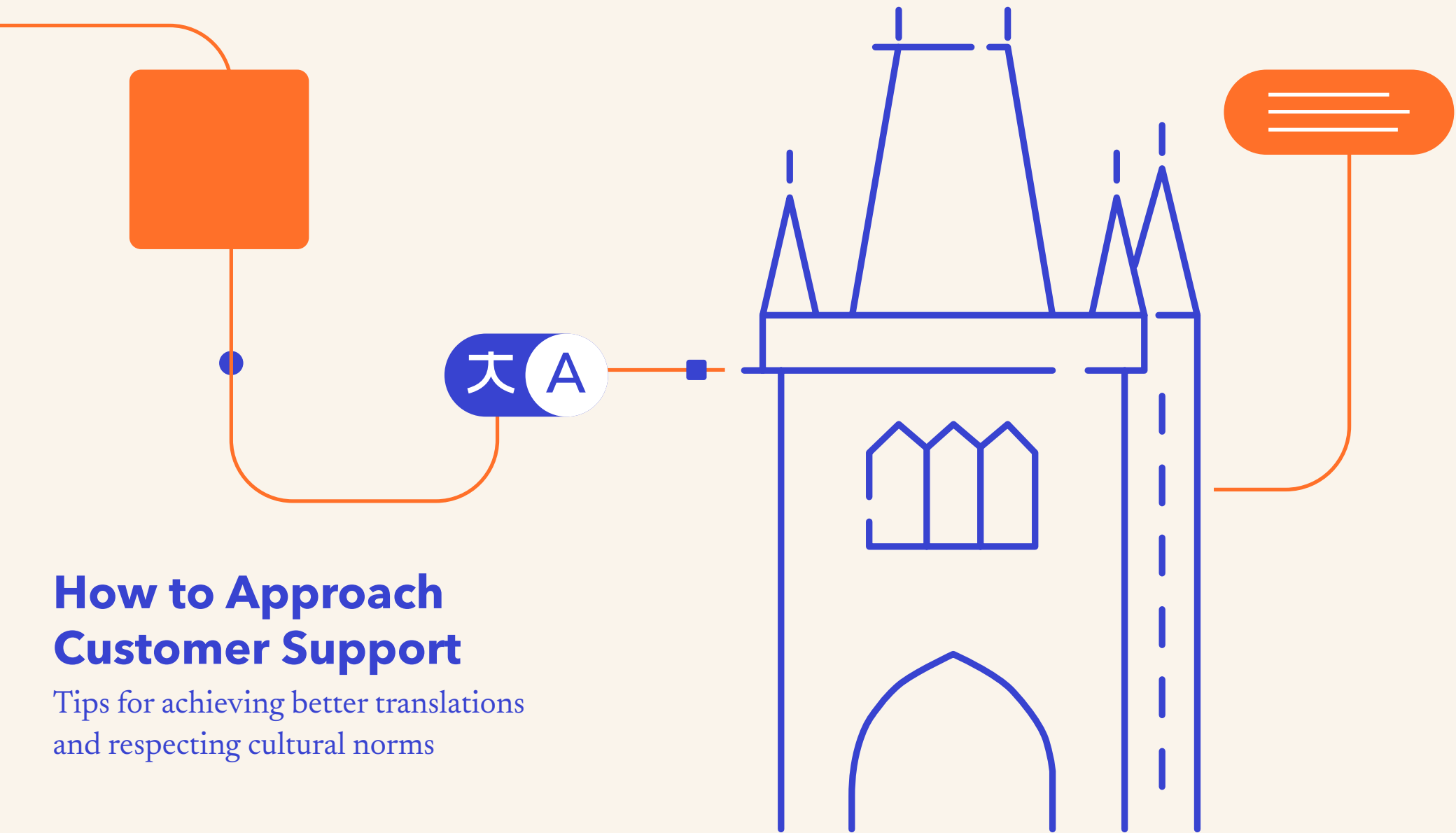


# CZECH



## How to Approach Customer Support

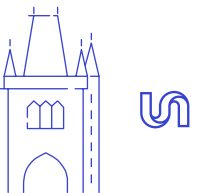
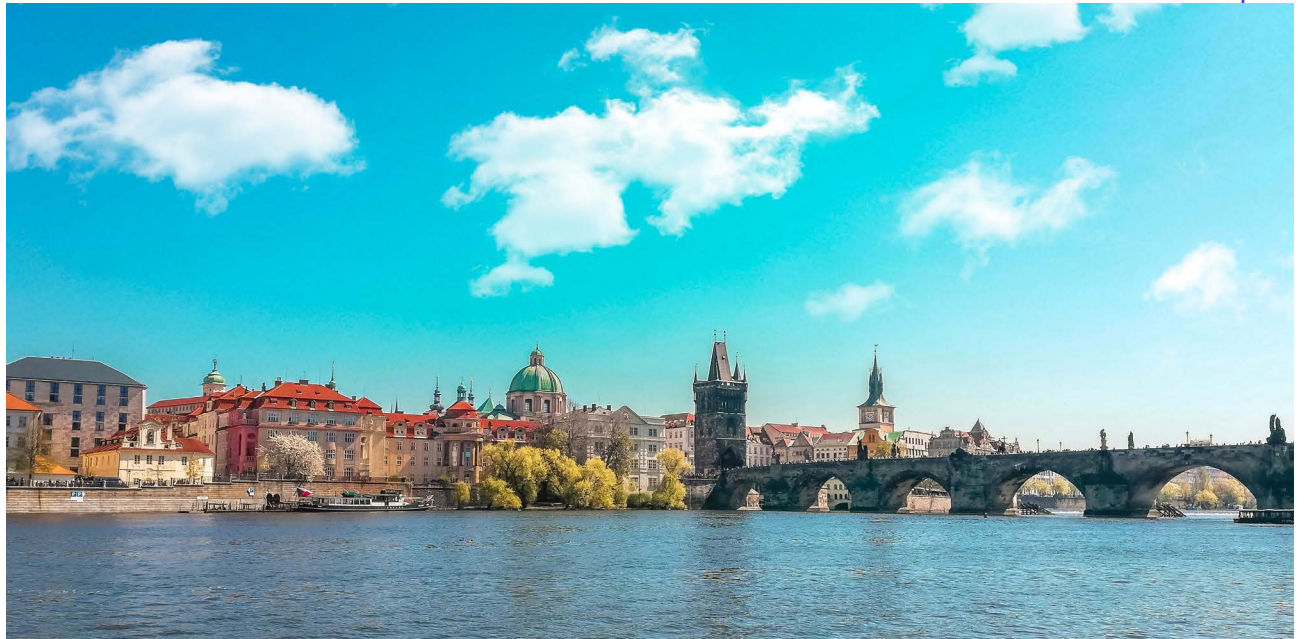
Tips for achieving better translations and respecting cultural norms

# Introduction

Global businesses today serve a diverse set of customers who speak different languages, come from different countries and regions, and have different cultural contexts.

Every one of the more than 6,900 distinct languages spoken around the world is unique, and cultural nuances can vary widely. It's important to understand these factors when providing customer service. Communicating in the customer's native language and behaving in culturally appropriate ways help develop and nurture trust. This is why any customer-centric business should strive to build cross-cultural competency into their customer service organization.

To help you achieve this, Unbabel has put together a series of language guides. Our goal is to provide helpful and illuminating context in an easy-to-digest format. In this guide, we'll cover the Czech language.



# About the Czech language

Czech is the official language of the Czech Republic and is spoken by over 13 million people. It's recognized as a minority language in Poland, Serbia, Ukraine, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Austria. Czech is closely related to Slovak, and the two languages share high mutual intelligibility. Czech is also related to Polish to a lesser extent and is influenced by Latin and German. There are several varieties of Czech: Standard Czech, which signifies the

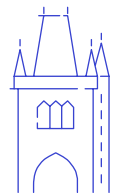
modern literary standard; spoken or colloquial Standard Czech; Common Czech, which is the main Czech vernacular, spoken in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic; and the regional dialects. The regional dialects are classified into Bohemian dialects, which are becoming stigmatized and marginalized, and Moravian dialects, which are still diverse and widespread.



Written Czech has complex capitalization rules. In fact, in a survey among 12,000 Czech speakers, only 59% were familiar with the rules of capitalization. However, in spite of the daunting rules, 89% of Czech speakers were also opposed to changing anything about the language.

DOBŘÍ  
DEN

RÁD VÁS  
POZNÁVÁM



# Core concepts in Czech culture relevant to customer service

## FAMILY

The Czech Republic is a family-focused society, with family being the center of the social structure. Czechs tend to put family above work and other commitments. Compared to most Western countries, the Czech Republic has a refined work-life balance. They love their leisure time, and time away from work is precious and meant to be spent with family. Even employers understand that their employees' first priority is obligation toward family.

## SKEPTICISM AND CONSERVATISM

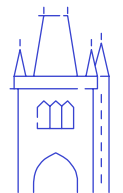
Perhaps because of their history of struggles, Czechs are fairly conservative, and they know how to save, reuse, and harvest. Czechs are not known for their risk-taking. They're generally more comfortable being cautious and with assured stability. They're also suspicious of new people and ideas, which means it takes a lot of convincing to gain their trust. When evaluating anything new, they consider logic, practicality, and efficiency first. They tend to plan carefully and follow rules and regulations, so they can feel a sense of security.

## MODESTY

Czechs are modest people who are not comfortable talking about their personal success. They respect modesty in other people as well. Boastfulness, exaggeration, and overstatements do not go over well with Czechs; they find hard evidence and legitimate achievements more impressive.



Restraint is a common trait in Czechs. They tend to control their impulses and desires and are generally not emotional or passionate, especially when



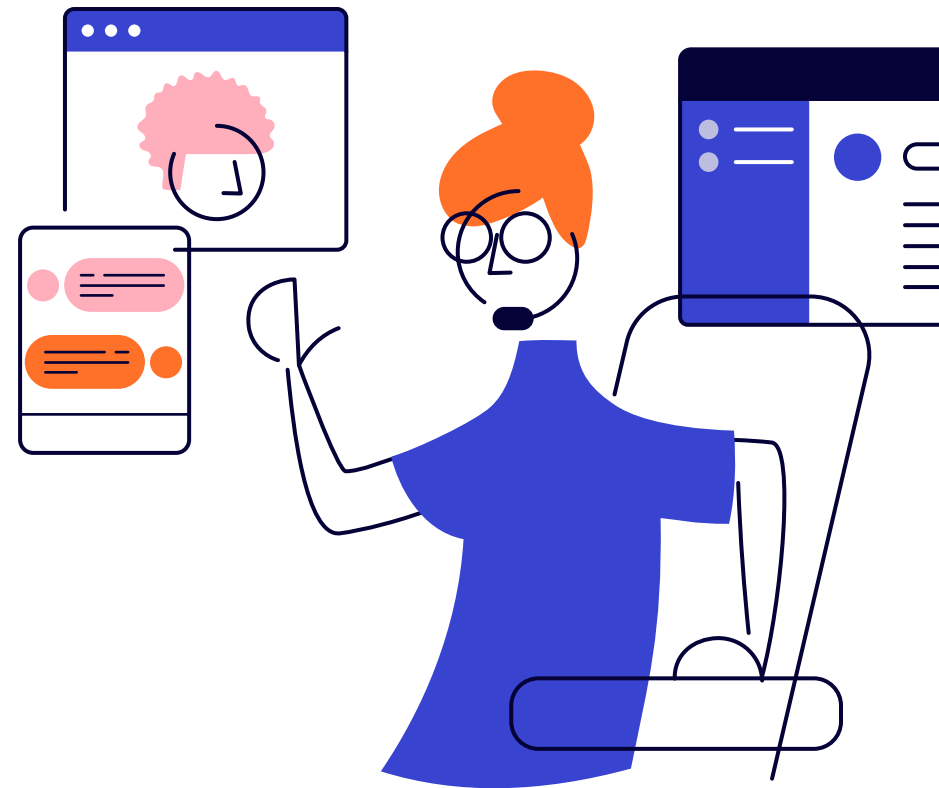
# Best practices for communicating with Czech customers

## VALUE YOUR CZECH CUSTOMER'S PRIVACY

Czechs tend to come across as reserved and private until they get to know you. While it's acceptable to begin conversations with small talk, it's important to restrict it to impersonal, safe topics. While building a relationship with your customer is important to establish trust, excessive small talk is not the way to go about it. Maintain polite formality at all times, and ensure that their questions are answered and problems solved – the trust will come naturally. Practical and efficient solutions are the most effective way to connect with your Czech customers. Czech customers could go a long time without ever learning the first names of anyone except their closest friends and family, so you can imagine the level of formality in their lives!

## BRING PROOFS TO THE DISCUSSION

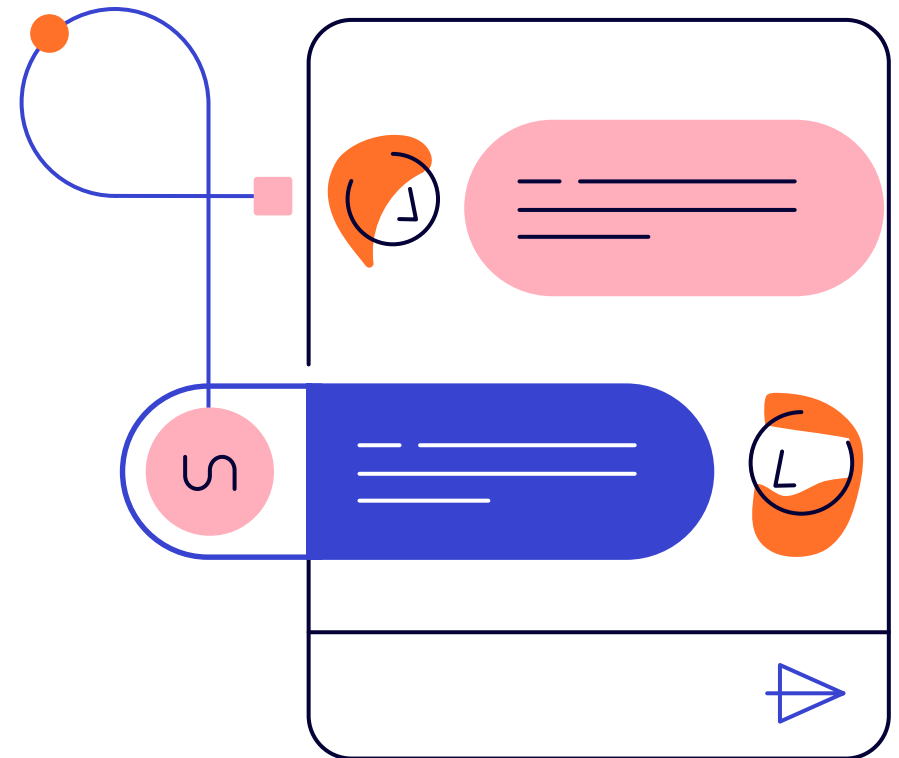
Czechs tend to follow instructions and strictly adhere to protocol. They respond well to clear data and next steps. It might be a good idea to bring charts, data, simple but accurate and thorough presentations, and other documentation to the conversation, since your Czech customer has a keen eye for detail and might ask to see evidence before believing anything that sounds like a tall claim. They're also known to be very patient and expect the same patience in return – just like the Czech phrase, “Trpělivost růže přináší,” which translates to “patience brings roses.”



# Best practices for communicating with Czech customers

## MAINTAIN INDIRECT COMMUNICATION

Czech are friendly and polite, but not excessive in their communication. They're generally direct, especially when voicing their concerns or negotiating with people they know. However, in initial interactions, they might be more evasive and indirect in expressing their disagreement. They're non-confrontational and careful to not offend. The safest bet, even if you know your customer well, is to stick to formality and indirect communication to avoid rubbing them the wrong way. A vague statement like "It's difficult" or "We'll see" is usually a negative, simply because they don't want to directly say no. If you're offering any kind of criticism or feedback, it's better to do it indirectly and soften the blow using cautious language: Direct communication of negative information is seen as impolite and crude.



Czech customers will not react favorably to high-pressure tactics or hard bargains. They believe in paying only as much as a product deserves, so if you oversell a product before you've established trust with them, they'll simply turn the other way.



# Best practices for optimizing machine translation output

When writing in English with the knowledge that the content will be translated into Czech, there are several best practices to follow.



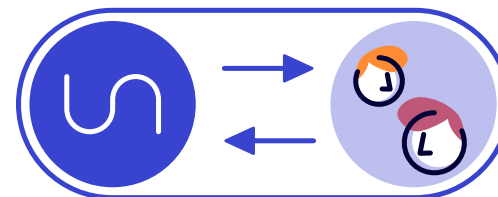
- 1 Avoid long sentences (over 30 words)
- 2 Avoid idioms or slang
- 3 Keep it simple and straightforward
- 4 Copyedit to avoid typos
- 5 Use active voice to reduce ambiguity
- 6 Avoid abbreviations, including contractions like "you're" and "we'd"
- 7 Be consistent, especially with terms like "email" that can be written multiple ways
- 8 Stick to English grammar rules
  - Ensure no spaces are missing
  - Use proper punctuation and capitalization
  - Finish all sentences (do not use fragments)
  - Avoid double subjects (e.g., the noun and a pronoun referencing it)
  - Ensure the word order is correct
  - Check for subject-verb agreement (person and number in singular/plural) and pronoun agreement (person, gender, and number)
  - Format messages correctly (e.g., with no extra line breaks, bullets or asterisks)



# Best practices specific to English-Czech machine translation

## 1 USE THE CORRECT FORMAL AND INFORMAL TONES

In Czech, both formal and informal tones can be used in customer support. However, they require different rules.



### FORMAL GREETINGS

not advised

- Hi!
- Hello,

advised

- Dear Mr. Smith,
- Dear Sir,

### FORMAL CLOSINGS

not advised

- See you!
- Have a great day!

advised

- Yours sincerely,

### INFORMAL GREETINGS

advised

- Hi!

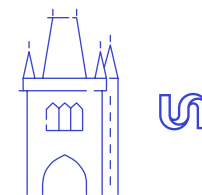
### INFORMAL CLOSINGS

not advised

- See you!
- Bye!

advised

- Goodbye!
- Have a great day!





# Best practices specific to English-Czech machine translation

## 2 AVOID EMOJIS

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### not advised

- Good morning, Stefannie :)

### advised

- Good morning, Stefannie.

## 3 AVOID INTERJECTIONS

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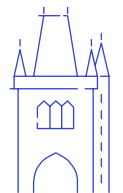
Interjections are another marker for the informal tone of voice and they should be avoided when writing to a Spanish (EU) audience:

### not advised

- Oh, I'm so sorry about that.
- Ah, that's alright.

### advised

- I'm sorry about that.
- That's alright.



# The Golden Rules of Customer Service



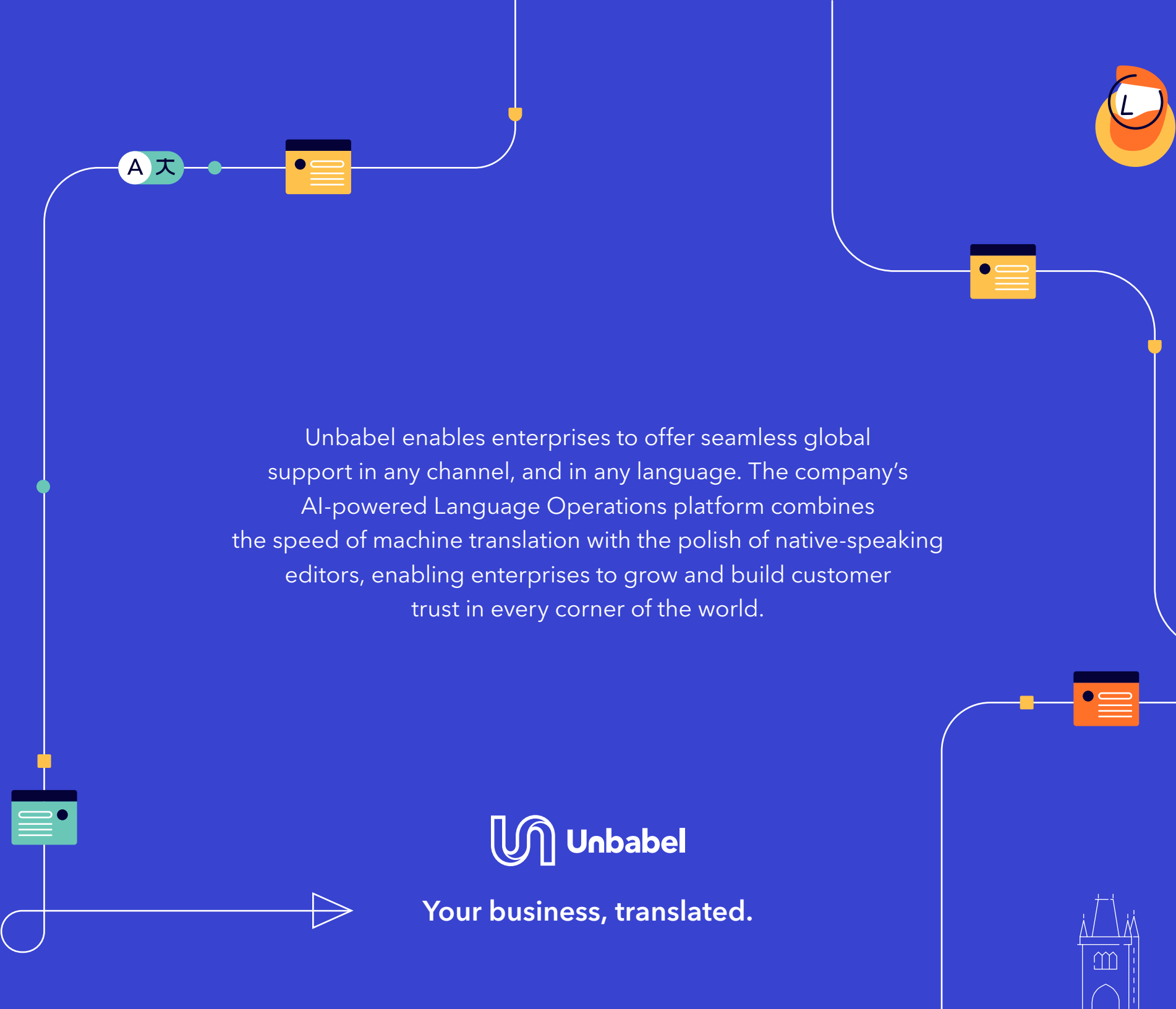
Of course, some best practices do not vary by language and should be applied to every customer service interaction. Here are the nine best practices we recommend.

- 1 EVERY INTERACTION MATTERS.** Always put in the best effort to make each interaction – every single one – a great one.
- 2 READ, DON'T SKIM.** Ensure you do not miss any valuable details or context in the message.
- 3 COMMUNICATE CONCISELY.** Only give the information you need to, helping your customer to find the answers to their questions or queries as fast and as efficiently as possible.
- 4 FOCUS ON GREAT SUPPORT BEFORE FAST SUPPORT.** Speed is important, of course, but it should not take precedence over quality.
- 5 MAKE THINGS EASY.** Always aim to reduce customer effort and take the burden off them when it comes to getting answers or help for their concern.

- 6 BE RESPECTFUL.** Always say “please” and “thank you.” This applies across cultural contexts and demographics. Politeness never goes out of style.
- 7 TAKE A NEUTRAL STANCE ON ISSUES.** There’s no reason to cause friction in a customer service interaction. Don’t take a stance on issues – even ones that seem harmless.
- 8 REMAIN POSITIVE.** This helps customers gain confidence in your ability to help them.
- 9 USE SIMPLE TERMS.** Keep it simple to avoid confusion and mistranslation when working across languages and cultural context, but don’t patronize customers.

In today’s competitive and globalized business climate, businesses who treat their customers with care and respect – including by speaking their language and respecting their cultural norms – will have the most success.





Unbabel enables enterprises to offer seamless global support in any channel, and in any language. The company's AI-powered Language Operations platform combines the speed of machine translation with the polish of native-speaking editors, enabling enterprises to grow and build customer trust in every corner of the world.



**Your business, translated.**