Vol.1 No.8 2020
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.cer.2020.083
Communication & Education Review

The Identity Classification and Construction of the Low-power in the National College Students' Speaking Contest

Baoxia Zuo*
Foreign Languages Department, Tianjin Tianshi College, Tianjin, China
*Corresponding author, e-mail: zuobaoxia123@126.com

Abstract: *This paper uses the discourse construction theory and identity construction theory in critical discourse analysis to observe the multiple construction and features of the identity of the low-power (contestant) in the National College Students' Speech Contest. By analyzing the discourse sequence of the judges in the English Speech Contest, this study found that the low-power (contestant) was regarded by the high-power (judges) as having two different identities: speaker and student. At the same time, the low-power (contestants) construct their self- identities : knowledge-deficient contestants, submissive contestants and challenging contestants. Through the research and analysis of the corpus, this study found that when the low-power person participates in the discourse practice of questioning and answering as a challenging contestant, some personal characteristics of the low-power contestants will be manifested with the advance of discourse interaction.*

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA); Speech contest; Q&A; Identity classification; Identity construction*

Introduction

Identity and its construction has always been a very important topic in the study of humanities and social sciences, which has been concerned by many disciplines (Ren & Wei, 2013). In the process of verbal communication, the construction of identity is inseparable from discourse. One of the most basic ways to establish your identity and show others who you are is to use language (Thornborrow, 2004). There is an interactive relationship between discourse practice and identity, and the identity reflected in the discourse interaction affects the communication between people (Tracy & Robles, 2013).

As for power, Foucault (1990) pointed out that power is a kind of power relationship, which is strengthened or weakened or even completely changed in the process of constant conflict and contest. It has the characteristics of internal struggle, coordination and challenge. As the power relationship develops and changes in the movement, it is dynamic. As a kind of relationship, power takes language as an important medium, which is generated in the process of communication (Leezenberg, 2002) and realizes its own changes in this process. Therefore, language becomes the carrier of these power conflicts (Mills, 1997) and the means to construct power relations (Leezenberg, 2002). Therefore, as the carrier and construction means of the power relationship, speech act not only reflects the existing power relationship between the communication parties,

Vol.1 No.8 2020
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.cer.2020.083

but also has the function of regulating such relationship.

The National English Speech Contest for College Students is a discourse interaction that takes place in the institutional domain of colleges and universities. Therefore, the discourse practice and discourse interaction between the judges and contestants in the English speech contest are characterized by institutional discourse. Power is one of the intrinsic characteristics of institutional interaction (Mayr, 2008). Institutions and power are inseparable. Different levels of power give participants in discourse practice dual unbalanced institutional roles: experts and non-experts. Among them, the expert status is the representative of the organization who is endowed with the authority of the organization, while the non-expert usually refers to the client who must abide by the rules of the organization (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). The above division of institutional roles fully reflects the social relations between participants in discourse practice and the hierarchical status of institutions. From the perspective of verbal communication, social verbal interaction, whether formal or complex, reflects the distribution of power among participants (Watts, 1991).

Literature Review

Based on different theoretical research frameworks and perspectives, many scholars have conducted in-depth studies and detailed discussions on the identity of language practitioners in institutional discourse in universities and colleges and the construction of their identities. For example, Oliverira (2007) studied how professors and students constructed their unique identities from five language variations: vocabulary, syntax, discourse structure, prosody and poetic discourse. Xia Fang (2009) used the modality of systemic functional linguistics as the main analysis tool to investigate the identity characteristics of teacher's discourse in thesis defense. From the perspective of institutional discourse, Sun Yongmei (2013) adopts the theory of social identity as the theoretical framework and takes the plural first-person pronoun "we" as the identity marker. By analyzing the discourse interaction of a tutor group composed of three graduate supervisors in the graduate thesis report, she discusses the construction of collective identity of the tutor group in the institutional context. Ren yuxin (2013,2014, 2016), based on the opening report of his doctoral thesis in Chinese context, used the theory of linguistic adaptation to study the identity construction of expert advisers in the proposed discourse, and explored the identity construction of mentors in the opening report of his doctoral thesis from the perspective of personal pronouns. Colombia, xin-ren Chen (2015) to English teachers in the national contest of college English teaching for the students in the class of classroom interaction practice as the corpus, the research on college English teachers' classroom discourse construction of pragmatic identity types, pragmatic strategy and contextual adaptability, the study found that teachers' classroom verbal behavior mainly construct knowledge type teachers, authoritative, affinity teacher and fellow teachers' multiple identity of pragmatics. Teachers construct their identities through different types of speech ACTS and different ways of implementing command speech ACTS. Li Yi (2017) surveyed the doctoral tutor of both Chinese and English under the different cultural background, to provide the guidance and doctoral students to carry out the process of communication, and with them in the context of the same politeness strategies adopted by the as the clue, examines the teacher and students in the context of academic exchange between the two countries on how to use the language practice to build power relations and the influence on the development of the power relation to the students' innovative ability. Ren Yuxin (2018) systematically analyzed the discourse of the chairman of the Defense Committee in Both Chinese and English contexts, and investigated the multiple construction of

institutional power in academic interaction. It is found that the direct communication objects of the chairman of the defense committee are diverse, mainly including the respondent, members of the defense committee, and all participants.

The above scholars mainly interpret the construction of the identity of discourse practitioners from the perspectives of pragmatics and language communication, emphasize the adaptability of language choice to contextual factors, and regard the success of communication as the purpose of language choice (Tian & Zhang, 2007). This exactly implies that context is a one-way determinant of discourse output, and identity construction becomes a by-product of the unconscious language selection process, ignoring the subject status of language users and the social function of discourse (Tian, 2012) At the same time, most of the research on identity construction in the field of university institutions focuses on the default group of high power (teachers or experts and scholars), while insufficient attention and in-depth research are paid to the default group of low power (students). Most of the existing studies focus on the power construction of the acquiescent high-power party, but there is little discussion on the power construction of the acquiescent low-power party (Ren, 2020). In addition, from the perspective of the current situation of domestic research, although there are some researches on identity and its construction in verbal communication, most of them focus on the analysis of social identity at the macro level, but pay insufficient attention to the dynamic construction of identity at the micro level of communicators in the specific context (Ren & Wei, 2013).

In view of this, this paper adopts the critical discourse analysis method and takes the discourse interaction and discourse practice between the questioning judges and the contestants in the questioning session of the National College Students English Speech Contest as the research corpus to study the identity construction and a series of dynamic characteristics of the default low-power (contestants).

Identity construction has interactive characteristics (Tracy & Robles, 2013; Ren, 2014), “The identity held by a communicator during discourse interaction will affect his way of speaking, and the discourse practice selected by a person will shape the identity of himself and the object of communication (Tracy & Robles, 2013)”. In the questioning part of English speech contest, the identity construction of the contestants can be realized through two ways: one is constructed by their own words, and the other is constructed by the words of the questioning judges. But from announces the beginning of the game and speech, according to a high content of the speech to answer questions from the judges of the proposed question off the cuff, words to interact to announce the end of the game, the two sides of the whole discourse communication process dominated by questions from the judges, and the competitors in the dominant position, mainly to answer questions from the judges in the discourse interaction proposed question off the cuff, the discourse rights to have limited, less use their own words to construct their own identity. Therefore, this study mainly focuses on the question judges’ question discourse sequence. First, it explores the question judges’ identity construction of contestants and the language selection in the process of identity construction; then, it studies the construction of contestants' identity by their own words; finally, it studies a series of characteristics of contestants’ identity.

Theoretical Basis and Analytical Framework

In this study, the construction of the identity of the default low-power person (the participant in the speech

Vol.1 No.8 2020
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.cer.2020.083

contest) is mainly based on the general classification of the identity of communicators by Karen Tracy & Jessica S. Robles (2013). They believe that identity belongs to the social category and has social attributes as well as unique attributes of individuals (Tracy & Robles, 2013). They divided the identities of the communicators into three categories: Master identities, Interactional identities and Personal identities. Native identity refers to some specific attributes of a person that are relatively stable and do not change easily, such as gender, race, age, nationality and regional attributes. Such native identity does not change with the change of the situation. Interactive identity refers to the specific role (including social role, behavioral role, etc.) that people play in the context of communication. For example, a person is a teacher in front of students, a colleague in front of other teachers, a subordinate in front of school leaders, and a parent in front of his own children. This specific role also includes the behavioral role determined by one's utterance and behavior. For example, one is a speaker when making a speech, a discussant when discussing problems with others, a questioner when asking questions, and a negotiator when participating in negotiations. This kind of interactive identity is deeply influenced by different situations and different social relationships. Personal identity focuses on a person's personality characteristics and personality characteristics, which is reflected in the relationship between the individual and others and the individual's attitude towards events, affairs and others. On the one hand, it includes the relatively stable self-characteristics of the individual, such as tolerance and narrow-mindedness, seriousness and humor, friendliness and indifference, cowardice and courage. It also includes the important dimensions of an individual's relationship with others, such as friendliness and hostility, intimacy and estrangement, level, and superior and subordinate.

In the process of verbal communication, the communicator's discourse mode and specific language means are important strategies for constructing identity (Ren, 2013), and discourse construction strategy is an indispensable and important content in the study of identity relations. Therefore this paper xin-ren Chen (2013) on the identity construction of the type of discourse practice, combining with the existing status in the study of discourse construction strategies related to explore, trying to inductive discourse construction strategy from the following five aspects: first, the form of language level, such as words (including address, personal pronouns, modal words, technical terms, etc.), syntax (such as interrogative sentences, imperative);Second, pragmatic behaviors: various pragmatic behaviors (such as inquiry, suggestion, command, request, praise, criticism, scolding, commitment and dissent expression); Third, the level of conversation structure: the content of conversation analysis (such as conversation wheel conversion, conversation wheel control, speech right, intervention, interruption, pause, silence, etc.), the duration of speech and the amount of speech, etc. Fourth, non-verbal information level: body language (such as expression, gesture, etc.); Fifth, context level: Context factors always participate in identity construction with different degrees of prominence (Ren, 2013).

In terms of the concept of context, this paper mainly refers to Van Dijk's definition of context. Van Dijk (2012) believes that context is the subjective construction or definition of the social context in which the discourse interacts by the participants from the psychology of mental models (getting model) is put forward context model (the context model), not only focus on subjective construction based on personal experience, and combining with the social psychology involves the subjective construction of more social factors related to communication, with discourse analysis "criticism" color, also known as cognitive context analysis, critical discourse analysis from the perspective of cognitive another path (Tian, 2013), and further reflects the interdisciplinary features of critical discourse analysis (Tian, 2011; Tian, 2012; Zhang & Tian, 2009) and Van Dijk (2012) regard context model as the intermediate interface between discourse and social situation,

and believe that what directly affects discourse is not social situation, but the subjective construction of social situation by participants, namely context.

The discourse practice in the Q&A session of the English speech Contest is mainly based on the discourse interaction of the contestants' ability to answer questions impromptu. The quality of the answers to the questions is determined by the input of the contestants' preliminary competition preparation and their personal ability. Therefore, contestants' personal characteristics, especially their ability to improvise in English speech and their attitude towards the competition, are very important. Such ability and attitude are directly reflected in the process of their improvisation in answering questions raised by the judges. At the same time, in the process of answering questions, the relationship between the contestants and the judges, especially the power/power relationship, is particularly obvious. Considering many characteristics of English speech contest, this study ignores native identity and focuses on interactive identity and personal identity among the three identity categories. As for interactive identity, this paper will analyze social roles and behavioral roles one by one. As for personal identity, this paper will focus on the analysis of self-characteristics. Name different identities based on interactive and personal identity traits.

Research Design

Research Problem

Based on the English speech contest to answer the question of language communicative phenomenon of observation, this study suggests that the contestants multiple construction is mainly manifested in direct communication with the identity of the object (questions from the judges) dialogue interaction, also embodied in the interaction of various pragmatic behavior, at the same time also will be affected by the influence of context (national college students English speech contest). In the discourse interaction practice of speech contest, there are mainly two sources for the construction of the identity of the contestants as the default low power: the construction of the identity of the contestants by the discourse output of question judges. The construction of the contestants' identity by their own discourse output. The identity of the competitors at the same time has a series of obvious characteristics.

In view of this, this study intends to answer the following questions in order to investigate the multiple identity construction and characteristics of the contestants who default to low power in the National English Speech Contest for College Students:

1) What are the different identities of those who default to low power (contestants) and those who default to high power (question judges)? How are the multiple identities of the contestants constructed by questioning the judges' discourse output?
2) How are the multiple identities of the acquiescent low power (contestants) constructed by their own discourse output?
3) What are the characteristics of the identity of the default low-power (contestant)?
4) How is the multiple identity of the default low-power person (contestant) affected and restricted by the context?

Vol.1 No.8 2020
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.cer.2020.083

Corpus Source

The corpus in this study mainly comes from two approaches:

First, the audio recordings of the impromptu question answering session of the third session of the 2019 "FLTRP Guocai Cup" National English Speaking Competition in Tianjin Division were collected through the live recording, and then transcribed into text. This corpus was recorded on the morning of October 13, 2019. The competition venue was a university auditorium in Tianjin. The participants were 7 judges (including a question judge) and 25 contestants. In the impromptu question-and-answer session, only English is allowed. The recording duration is 1 hour, 14 minutes and 38 seconds, and the English characters after transcribed into text are about 6580 words.

Second, by watching foreign language teaching and research press on public display in CNP Uchallenge series of exclusive website (http://uchallenge.unipus.cn/) from 2015 to 2018, four years in the national English speech contest winning player (a total of 24) answer this question off the cuff link video game, after transcription as text. This corpus was recorded on January 13, 2020 during the period of 20 solstice. Participants were 9 members of the judging committee (including two question judges) and 24 contestants. In the impromptu question and answer session, only English is allowed to appear. The cumulative viewing time is 1 hour, 11 minutes and 52 seconds, and the English characters after transcribed into the text are about 6875 words.

In the transcript and the post-analysis, J stands for Judge in the contest jury, and C stands for Contestant, where "n" in Jn and Cn stands for the Contestant who asked the question or answered the question.

The Analysis of Contestants' Identity Construction in English Speech Contest from Perspective of Judges

Through the analysis of corpus, it is found that the question-asking judges constructed two different identities for the contestants, namely, the identity of speaker and the identity of student.

Speaker Identity

The discourse practice interaction between the judges and the contestants mainly revolves around the theme and content of the topic speech. (The final speech is the first competition session before the impromptu question answering session. It is a 3-minute prepared unscripted speech based on the speech theme given by the competition committee.) The jury will ask a series of questions about the knowledge involved in the speech, and the contestants will have to make an impromptu response based on the questions raised by the judges. In the process of asking and answering questions, both sides of discourse interaction should understand and be familiar with the technical terms and rules of English speech. Although both parties have different levels of speaking experience and speaking ability, the first prerequisite for the communication and interaction between the two parties must be to ask the judges to regard the contestants as speakers. When the judges ask a contestant a question that is the core of the final speech, the contestant is expected to respond

as a speaker. Therefore, the lecturers will choose lecturers such as “speakers”, “lecturers” and “orators” to contribute their lecturers, as shown in the following corpus:

[1] J1: Thank you very much for your excellent speech, you are a very persuasive lecturer. It seems there are a lot of big fish in the tank already : Kindle, I Bookstore, QQ Reading APP. So what is the advantage of your product ?
C1: The difference is that we were targeted at college students. College students are in their formative years that really needs shaping and really needs those good education and the things we’re proposing, it’s classic reading. Classic reading is very different from those mass amounts of books like proposed by kindle. Thank you.

[2] J2: Thank you very much for your moving speech. You are a speaker full of imagination. You mentioned that, on your 15th birthday you plan to arrange a funeral and I think all of us hope that, you know everything goes well and when the actual funeral takes place much later and late in 2099. When does it happen, what words would you wish the people you love say to you when they deliver the eulogy?
C2: Thanks for your question. You mean “My Lover”?

In example [1], J1, the question judge, gives recognition and direct praise to contestant C1’s previous speech and USES words like “speech” and “lecture”. In example [2], judge J2 first highly praised contestant C2 for the content of her speech before the question. She thought C2 was a moving speaker full of imagination and used such phrases and short sentences as “Moving speech” and “You are a speaker full of imagination”. In the above two examples, the two question judges invariably use language forms related to the speaker’s meaning. Obviously, the question judges have positioned the contestant as a speaker. Therefore, at the level of language form and pragmatic behavior, the question judges construct the identity of the contestants as speakers.

Student Identity

Student identity is mainly constructed through language form and conversational structure. Specifically, the questioning judges adopt the repeated heuristic way of speaking in class (Ren, 2014) or directly adopt some words, phrases or statements highly related to student identity to construct the student identity of the contestants, as shown in the following materials:

[3] J1: Thank you so much for your speech. You mention that ,when you are the freshman in the university, you would like to become environmental scientist or environmental pretention activist after your graduation. So why do you have that kind of dream? Do you want to be a role model and why?
C3: In the first year of my university, I have learned several courses which related with environmental pretention, and I also have read a lot of books about the environmental crisis on the earth. So I have a dream to become an excellent environmental scientist.

[4] J2: Thank you so much for your speech. So for you, what would be the most inspiring example from history or your personal experience when a big smiling unmanageable problem was eventually solved by creating a win-win situation?
C4: Sorry. Pardon?

Vol.1 No.8 2020
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.cer.2020.083

J2: OK! So mentioned that it's important to solve problems by trying to create win-win situation. What is the most inspiring example of that the one motivate that?
C4: OK. Thank you for your question. I think, …nowadays….

In example [3], question judge J1 helped contestant C3 to briefly review his career dream when he first entered the university before asking questions. Become an environmental scientist or environmentalist. The question judge J1 USES the language forms of "freshman in the University" and "After your graduation" to construct the student identity of contestant C3. In cases of [4], the questions from the judges J2 after put forward his own problems, the contestants C4 did not grasp the meaning of the judges questions immediately, to ask for the repeated problems, ask questions, step by step, the judges J2 lead C4 gradually grasp the question inspired C4 organize and refine their answers, this heuristic discourse communication form is common in the classroom, to ask the judges will choose this session structure discourse participants to switch to the social relationship between teachers and students, construct the contestant student status.

In the special discourse context of An English speech contest, both the judges and the contestants share the knowledge of the unequal powers granted to them by the organization. Question judges' power plays a dominant role, which is mainly embodied in two aspects, personal power and positional power (Chiang, 2009). Personal power is endowed by individual ability, while position power is given by social relations and status. In the discourse interaction, the judges use the language form, semantic content and conversational structure to construct the speaker and student identities of the contestants actively.

The Analysis of Contestants' Identity Construction in English Speech Contest from Perspective of Contestant

With the continuous discourse interaction in the competition, the discourse output of the contestants is also constructing the establishment of their self-identity. The personal characteristics of different aspects of the identity of the contestants have been constantly highlighted. Some players' interactive identity and personal identity are constantly adjusted to the identity of the knowledge deficient player, the identity of the submissive participant and the identity of the challenging player.

Identity of Knowledge Deficiency Contestant

The identity of knowledge deficient contestant is constructed by semantic content, conversational structure and non-verbal information. Specifically, semantic content involves the propositional content of discourse. The structure of conversation involves the content of conversation analysis (such as pause and silence), the length of speech and the amount of speech. Nonverbal information involves body language (e.g., expressions, gestures, body postures). As shown in the following example:

[5] J1: Thank you so much for your speech. So, in your opinion, what are the ways we could use to help all the people who are sometimes are reluctant to fully embrace the future. What are the ways we can help them overcome initial fears of technologies entry their lives?
C5: Ur,…I didn't get your point. Sorry. Pardon?

J1: Repeat the question for the first time.
C3: I think, this question is little bit difficult for me to answer. May I ask for more details and tips of this question?
J1: Repeat the question for the second time and also make some detailed explanations to the contestant.

[6] J2: Thank you for your speech. Given the latest advances of technology how do you think the role of interpreter would change in the next few decades and would it will be such respective job in 2049 as it is today?
C6: Thank you for your question. Er……, Ur….., I think…… (silence for long time)

[7] J1: Thank you for such a moving speech. What kind of first step we should take on the way to save planet? What would be initiative look like? What will motivate people to take an active part in this movement?
C7: Thank you for your question. Actually, I……, (silence for long time and the her facial expression is embarrassed and awkward).

In example [5], contestant C5 did not understand the question raised by the questioning judge J1, and asked J1 to repeat the question but still could not provide a reasonable response immediately, thinking that the question was too difficult for him, he asked J1 to give more instructions and hints. The discourse output of C5 fully and directly constructs his identity of knowledge deficiency player from the semantic content dimension. However, in example [6], after J2 throws a question, contestant C6's language output after acknowledgement is intermittent, resulting in silence at last, and the length and amount of speech is very small. The discourse output of C6 directly constructs his identity of knowledge deficiency player from the dimension of conversational structure. In example [7], three related questions were put forward in succession in J1, and C7 had been dealt with in a state of silence for a long time, accompanied by embarrassed and embarrassed facial expressions. The output of C7 silently constructs her identity of knowledge deficiency player from the dimension of non-verbal information.

Identity of Submissive Contestant

The construction of submissive Contestant's identity is mainly realized through linguistic form and semantic content. In short, language forms involve the use of vocabulary (including address words, personal pronouns, modal words, technical terms, etc.),syntax (such as interrogative sentences, imperative sentences), etc. Semantic content involves the propositional content of discourse. As shown in the following example:

[8] J1: So the question is, What is Our World Made of? Who determines what "our" is? And what's the criteria for that?
C8: Well, thank you very much for your questions, respective judges. I would like to answer the above 3 questions one by one. Our world means the universe, the criteria for that is everything we have in this universe.
J1: So, according to you, our world is made of all those physical stuff, but what about the thoughts?
C8: I'm not denying that we don't have minds or things like that, we are living in a physical world and we have thoughts and minds, so I wanna to emphasize...

Vol.1 No.8 2020
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.cer.2020.083

J1: So it seems that you have the question like subjective preference? It's a question of subjective preference, right?
C8: I have to say that we don't have minds and thoughts but what matters is we have different visions to tackle these problems; therefore, we'll have different opinions that would advance our technology and our civilization.

In example [8], the competitors C8 use the term "respective" for questioning the judges, suggesting that they have trusted the judges' authority by default, and that they have behaved respectfully towards them. C8 also uses "I would like to answer.....", "I'm not denying...", "I have to say that...The series of expressions show that the contestants are compliant and willing to answer relevant questions in accordance with the requirements of the judges. Contestant C8's utterance output constructs his submissive contestant's identity from the dimension of language form.

Identity of Challenge Contestant

The construction of challenging contestant's identity is mainly realized through linguistic form, semantic content and non-linguistic information. As shown in the following example:

[9] J2: So except embracing diversity, what else can we get as a benefit by answering your questions?
C9: Well, we would appreciate diversity. You know as a student of physics, I would study things like, you know, why are we seeing each other? Why am I moving on the earth?
J2: If you're a physicist and I don't understand when you tell me from a physicist perspective, I don't get the criteria. How do you extend your knowledge in a way that is understandable for me?
C9: I see is a matter of perspective. If I were to be a physicist someday, which I would be very happy to, I explain to you physics things in my own terms. If I were a musician right now, you probably don't understand what I'm talking about with rhythms and sounds. But yes, that is a matter of perspective, because that is the way how I convey my ideas to you. It's not about the question "what is our world made of ". It's about the question "how should I explain to you what is our world made of". (with the confident facial expression)
J2: So is the sense, is the sense here then made ,then is the construction by an individual and not by the sense of the way we understand the planet itself?
C9: I disagree, because what is... (with the serious facial expression and some hand gestures, at the same time he made eye contact with the judge)
J2: I was asking you a question, I wasn't making a statement.
C9: Oh, now you make me forget the question. What was it again?
J2: The sense of making, right? Making presumes specific understanding of it. So how does one make? And therefore, you know, how do I understand what it means to be made?
C9: Well, we have different perspective of this world. It is true but in my humble opinion, our world is objective, because we have different kinds of points of...
J2: How could our world be objective? You just told me as a physicist you see the world in one way and I see it in a different way if I'm a musician etc. That is not objective , that is subjective.
C9: Yeah, exactly. It is because I see this world different from the way you see it. So that we can advance, we have different kinds of ideas...
J2: So except embracing diversity, what else can we get from by answering your questions?

C9: Oh, we can appreciate similarities just like you said.

In the example [9], contestant C9 is full of interactivity in the discourse practice of questioning judge J2, which highlights the antagonism and challenge of the weaker party in the conversation. After answering the second question of J2, C9 directly commented on the question raised by J2, It's not about the question 'What is our world made of', and It's about the question 'how should I explain to you what is our world made of', with an expression of full confidence. After J2 asked the third question, C9 bluntly stated that he could not approve the judges, and immediately explained his reasons clearly, with a serious expression and gesture language, and made intense eye contact with the judges. Then with a clear challenge, C9 throws out a sentence: Oh, now you make me forget the question. What was it again? J2 repeats the question at his request. C9 and J2 then continued their discourse interaction, in which C9 used the personal pronoun "we" several times to communicate with J2. Obviously, at this time, the identity of contestant C9 has been blurred, and it is no longer just an ordinary contestant. However, the gorgeous turn has been upgraded to a challenging player, which has a great advantage in the multi-round discourse competition with J2. Therefore, the discourse output of contestant C9 constructs the identity of other challenging contestants from the dimensions of linguistic form, semantic content and non-linguistic information.

Conclusion

By analyzing the speech sequence of the question judges in the Q&A session of English speech contest, this paper finds that the default low power (contestants) is regarded as the default high power (question judges) as having two different identities: speaker and student at the same time. The construction of self-identity of the underprivileged (contestants) is represented by the following three identities: those who lack knowledge, those who are submissive and those who challenge. Through the research and analysis of the corpus, this study finds that when the acquiescence low-power participants participate in the discourse practice of questions and answers as challenging contestants, some personal characteristics of the acquiescence low-power participants will be fully demonstrated with the promotion of discourse interaction. At the same time, it is found that the identity of the default low power (contestants) has a series of dynamic characteristics: the dependence of identity construction on the context, the similarity of identity construction, and the competitivity of identity construction. These three characteristics affect each other and are closely related.

Identity and its construction is a very complex phenomenon, involving many contents. For example, identity is linguistic constructivism; Identity has psychosocial attributes; Identity is diverse and multidimensional; Identity has dynamic constructivism; Identity can be used as a pragmatic resource to achieve certain communicative purposes. These together determine the diversity of identity and its research perspective. To sum up, each perspective has its own emphasis, and it is difficult to fully include identity and all the contents of its construction. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate these different research perspectives so as to examine the identity and construction phenomenon in speech communication in a multi-dimensional way. This will be the basic trend in the study of identity and its construction. In addition, from the perspective of the current situation of domestic research, although some studies have discussed the identity and its construction in verbal communication, most of them focus on the analysis of the social identity of those who acquiesce in high power, but pay insufficient attention to the dynamic construction of the identity of those

who acquiesce in low power (vulnerable groups) in specific context. We expect to see more domestic research in this area.

Funding

This academic paper is funded by the "The 10th batch of China's Foreign Language Education Fund" Research Project *The Discourse, Power and Identity Construction of the Low-power in the College Students' Contests* [No. ZGWYJYJJ10A100].

References

Benwell, B., & Stokoe, E. (2006). *Discourse and Identity*. Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh.

Chiang, S. (2009). Personal power and positional power in a power-full 'I': A discourse analysis of doctoral dissertation supervision. *Discourse & Communication*, 3 (3), 255-271.

Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power* (2ed edition). London: Longman.

Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Fairclough, N. (2015). *Language and Power* (3rd ed.) . London and New York: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1990). *Method. In M. Foucault, The History of Sexuality Vol.1*. Translated by R. Hurley. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books. 92-102.

Hall, S. (1997). *The work of representation*, In Hall, S. (Ed.) Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. London: Sage, 15-36.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1985). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.

Hutchby, I. (1996). Power in discourse: The case of arguments on a British talk radio show. *Discourse & Society*, (7), 481-497.

Lazzaro-Salazar, M.V., Marra, M., Holmes, J., & Vine, B. (2015). Doing power and negotiating through disagreement in public meetings. *Pragmatics and Society*, 6(3), 444-464.

Jenkins, R. (1992). *Pierre Bourdieu*. London: Routledge.

Leezenberg, M. (2002). Power in communication: Implications for the semantics pragmatics interface. *Journal of Pragmatics*, (34), 893-908.

Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (2001). *Discourse and Discrimination Rhetoric of racism and antisemitism*. London: Routledge.

Mayr, A. (2008). *Language and Power: An Introduction to Institutional Discourse*. London: Continuum.

Mills, S. (1997). *Discourse*. London: Routledge

Tian, H.L. (2011). Joint review of van Dijk's discourse and context and society and discourse. *Language in Society*, 40 (1):116-121.

Tracy, K. & Robles, J. S. (2013). *Everyday Talk: Building and Reflecting Identities* (2nd ed.). London: The Guilford Press.

Oliveira, A., Sadler, T., & Suslak, D. (2007). The linguistic construction of expert identity in professor-student discussions of science. *Cultural Studies of Science Education*, 2(1), 119 -150.

Thornborrow, J. (2002). *Power Talk: Language and Interaction in Institutional Discourse*. London: Pearson

Education.

Thornborrow, J. (2004). *Language and identity*, Thomas L.et al. Language, Society and Power (2nd). London, New York: Routledge.

Van Dijk, T.A. (2008). *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Van Dijk, T.A. (2012). Critical Context Studies. In Tian H. & Zhao P. (eds.). *Critical Discourse Analysis: Essential Readings*. Tianjin: Nankai University Press.

Verschueren, J. (1999). *Understanding Pragmatics*. London: Arnold.

Watts, R. (1991). *Power in Family Discourse*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Wodak, R. (2012). What Critical Discourse Analysis Is About? In Tian, H. & Zhao, P. (eds.). *Critical Discourse Analysis: Essential Readings*. Tianjin: Nankai University Press.

Chen, X.R, Ed. (n.d.). *Research on Identity and Communication from the perspective of Pragmatics*. Beijing: Higher Education Press, 118-153.

Li, Y. (2017). Power Relations and Innovation Ability—A Comparative Study of Language Communication between Teachers and Students in China and England. *Linguistics Research*, (2), 40-52.

Li, Y. (2015). Law and The Authority of Law Enforcers—The Construction of Police's Law and Self-Authority in the Context of Law Enforcement. *Discourse Research Group*, (1), 25-37.

Ren, Y.X. (2012). Research on identity Construction in the Interaction of Academic Suggestions from the Perspective of Adaptation Theory. PhD. Dissertation. CHN: Nanjing University.

Ren, Y.X. (2013). Research on the Adaptability of Individual Identity Construction of experts in Academic Suggestions. *Foreign Languages and Foreign Language Teaching*, (6), 6-10.

Ren, Y.X., & Wei, X.L. (2013). Multiple Perspectives and Integration of Identity Research in Speech Communication. *Journal of Guangzhou University (Social Science edition)*, (1), 62-67.

Ren, Y.X. (2014). *Identity Construction in Academic Suggestions*. Tianjin: Nankai University Press.

Ren, Y.X. (2015). Pragmatic Analysis of the Construction of power Relations in Academic Interaction. *Modern Foreign Languages*, (2), 147-158.

Ren, Y.X. (2016). Research on the Construction Function of Personal Pronoun Identity in Academic Conversation. *Foreign Language Studies*, (2), 23-28.

Ren, Y.X. (2018). Multiple Constructs of institutional power in the interaction of academic discourse: Discourse Analysis based on the Chairman of Dissertation Defense Committee in Chinese and English Contexts. *Journal of Zhejiang International Studies University*, (6), 14-25.

Ren, Y.X. (2020). Characteristics, Trends and Suggestions of power Research in Discourse. *Modern Foreign Languages*, (2), 272-281.

Sun, Y.M. (2013). Research on discourse Construction of collective Identity of Graduate Tutor Group -- Taking the use of "we" in tutor group as an example. *Foreign Language and Foreign Language Teaching*, (6), 11-14.

Tan, S. (2019). Dynamic Characteristics of the identity of the respondent in Thesis Defense. *Discourse Research Papers*, (7), 98-111.

Tian, H.L. (2006). The Unequal Relationship of Discourse Power: Pragmatics and Sociology. *Journal of Foreign Languages*, (2), 7-13.

Tian, H.L., & Zhang, M.Z. (2007). Postmodern Features of Language Selection. *Journal of Foreign Languages*, (6), 8-12.

Vol.1 No.8 2020
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.cer.2020.083

Tian, H.L. (2012). Discourse Function and Contemporary Chinese New Discourse. *Journal of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies*, 23(6), 8-11, 22.

Tian, H.L. (2012). Sociolinguistic Attributes of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Chinese Sociolinguistics*, (1), 107-116.

Tian, H.L. (2013). Cognitive Oriented Critical Discourse Analysis: Two Paths and Their Characteristics. *Foreign Language Studies*, (2), 1-7.

Tian, H.L. (2014). Discourse Theory and Linguistic Semiotics—Foucault and Bakhtin's Enlightenment on the Study of Postmodern Language. *Journal of Tianjin Foreign Studies University*, (6), 14-20.

Xia, F. (2009). Research on Teachers' Discourse Identity Characteristics in Thesis Defense -- A Case Study of English Master's Thesis Defense. *Chinese Foreign Language Education*, (3), 26-33.

Xu, M., & Chen, X.R. (2015). Identity Construction and Adaptability of College English Teachers in Classroom Context. *Foreign Language Teaching*, 36(3), 50-54.

Zhang, X., & Tian, H.L. (2009). The Interdisciplinary Characteristics of CDA from its Theoretical Origin. *Journal of Tianjin University of Commerce*, 29(4), 65-67.

Zhao, P. (2016). Discourse Construction and Legalization of Expert Knowledge -- Discourse Strategy Analysis of Drug Promotion in a TV Program. *Journal of Tianjin International Studies University*, (6), 24-28.

Zhao, P. (2017). Advertising In Gentle Language Violence—A Narrative Pragmatic Analysis of Language and Power. *Linguistics Research*, (2), 30-39.

Zhao, P. (2015). Rhetoric in Lei Feng's Activities—Research on Argumentative Strategies Based on Critical Discourse Analysis. *Contemporary Rhetoric*, (4), 41-46.