

Research on the Construction of Value Evaluation Model of Pragmatic Function of Spoken English Discourse Markers Under the Perspective of Smoking Cessation Discourse

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Abstract: In view of the needs of the use of spoken English discourse markers in different situations under cross-cultural communication, it is necessary to standardize the language use of communicators and give full play to the pragmatic value of spoken English discourse markers. By establishing the pragmatic function evaluation model of spoken English discourse markers in the context of smoking cessation and tobacco control from the perspective of smoking cessation discourse, English communicative conversation in the context of smoking cessation and tobacco control is studied in this paper. Based on the analytic hierarchy process (AHP), and starting from four layers including the target layer, criterion layer, index layer and scheme layer, this paper designs an evaluation model of pragmatic functional value of spoken English discourse markers from the perspective of smoking cessation discourse through hierarchy theory model construction, judgment matrix construction, hierarchical single ranking and consistency test, hierarchical total ranking and consistency test. The model is used in the context of communication, language training and language assessment. The model is suitable for simulating communicative behavior, language ability training and language ability assessment in smoking cessation and tobacco control scenarios. It can improve the accuracy of the use of discourse markers, facilitate the reasonable choice of discourse markers in special communication scenarios, ensure the efficiency of English communication, and highlight the unique value of discourse markers in different communication scenarios.

Key words: smoking cessation discourse; discourse markers; pragmatic function; analytic hierarchy process

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INTRODUCTION

Oral English discourse markers mainly involve parts of speech discourse markers such as and, besides, when, furthermore; sentence discourse markers such as I think, you see, you know, and phrase discourse markers such as in total and in summary [1]. A correct understanding of the pragmatic functions of spoken English discourse markers is especially essential for communicators or spoken English learners to improve cross-cultural communication skills and acquire oral communication skills. Although the pragmatic functions of spoken English discourse markers have been affirmed by the academic community, regarding how to effectively evaluate the pragmatic functions of spoken English discourse markers, we have not yet formed a systematic evaluation method for pragmatic functions of discourse markers. Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) is a problem-oriented research method that divides the problem into different constituent factors, and determines the mutual weight based on the connection and logical relationship of each factor [2]. The application of analytic hierarchy process in the evaluation of the pragmatic function value of spoken English discourse marker not only helps enhance the scientificity of pragmatic function evaluation, but also helps discourse communicators and spoken English learners to better master oral English communication skills, thus enabling smooth completion of oral English communication.

The paper focuses on the irregular use of spoken discourse markers and unclear understanding of the pragmatic functions of spoken English discourse markers in the process of traditional oral English communication. Through the construction of value evaluation model for pragmatic function of spoken English discourse markers, it aims to form a quantitative evaluation index regarding the pragmatic function of spoken English discourse markers, activate the atmosphere of oral communication, maintain the integrity of conversational information, and enhance the

fluency of oral communication. The paper uses the analytic hierarchy process and draws on the theoretical results to establish a value evaluation model for pragmatic function of spoken English discourse markers. The use of this model helps to overcome the limitations reflected in unclear definition of the pragmatic functions of spoken English discourse markers in the theoretical circle and lack of value evaluation methods for pragmatic function of spoken English discourse markers, thus providing a reference for research in this field.

THE PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF SPOKEN ENGLISH DISCOURSE MARKERS AND THE VALUE OF EVALUATION MODELS

Features of Pragmatic Functions of Spoken English Discourse Markers

In recent years, the academic community's understanding towards the pragmatic functions of spoken English discourse markers has shown dynamic cognitive features. Existing scholars' studies on the pragmatic functions of discourse markers usually focus on the characteristics in the use of discourse markers in different contexts. They mainly analyze the relationship between different spoken English communication contexts and the use of discourse markers, and try to reveal the impact of pragmatic function of discourse markers on the oral English communication effect [3]. In the current research, some scholars generally believe that the pragmatic functions of discourse markers are mainly embodied in the construction of discourse text, the restriction of discourse communication, and the continuity of oral communication [4]. According to the pragmatic functions of spoken English discourse markers, the pragmatic functions of spoken English discourse markers can be divided into four categories: information function, communicative function, conversational function, and interactive function [5], as shown in Figure 1:

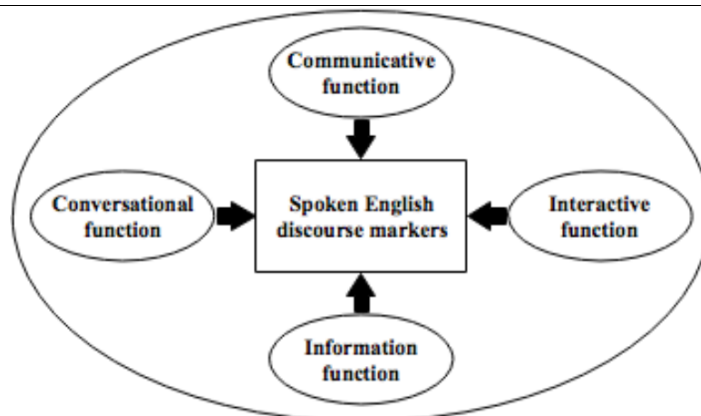


Figure 1 The functional framework of spoken English discourse markers

Information function level

Discourse theory believes that the discourse communication and interaction of communicative participants in communication is both a static process and a dynamic process. Discourse communication is formed under the participation of participants [6]. Seen from the perspective of linguistics, oral communication in English is a process of presentation by a certain group, and language presentation plays a number of roles such as information transmission and information communication. Take you know as an example. In oral English communication, the discourse marker often appears with implicit information. For instance, in a sentence pattern represented by "Well you know, I mean...", after the communicative participant puts forward certain argument, you know will integrate the potential cognitive information and deliver it to the communicative object, which can not only explain and illustrate the information in the main argument, but also help the oral communication participants better understand the other's intentions [7]. In the process of dynamic discourse generation, you know also plays the role of information correction and auxiliary communication. In particular, when discourse communicators find that the previous arguments are insufficient or wrong, they can use you know to correct and adjust the information [8].

Communicative function level

Communicative function is one primary function of spoken English discourse markers, which has multiple values such as interaction in

communicative situations, cohesion of verbal logical relations, and verbal promotion. In oral English communication, despite differences in the oral communication patterns in different occasions and scenarios, some spoken discourse markers have communicative and communication functions, which can shorten the distance between communicative participants and achieve the ideal communicative effect assumed by both parties, thus guaranteeing the smooth progress of oral English communication. Take but as an example. But is usually expressed as a transitional tone, which can link the communication process, carry on the aforementioned language of the communicative participants, and elicit new topics. For example, "I know you are not, but if you were asking me" in the sentence is originally explanatory language in response to the other party, the addition of but can strengthen the tone, making the discourse markers not only reflect the communicative function, but also reflect the communicative participants' verbal care for the other party, which helps us create a communicative atmosphere and dispel bad emotions in oral communication [9].

Conversational function level

Conversational function is the basic functional form of spoken English discourse markers. Seen from the perspective of functional linguistic concept, conversational function is a discourse system formed by the interweaving of spoken discourse markers, social symbol theory, and functional grammar. It can improve discourse state of a certain group in communication, construct the internal and external environment in oral English

communication, and can also drive discourse shift in natural conversation. Take and as an example. The discourse marker runs through the entire process from the beginning of the conversation to the end of the conversation. Depending on the oral communication environment and language skills, it can express sequence relationship, transition relationship, supplementary relationship, coordinating relationship, etc. [1]. For example, in "Jones and Simon had already gone", and represents the coordinating relationship, which plays the role of coordinating structure connection in discourse construction. The discourse marker does not add additional sentence components, but can bring the listener of discourse communication into the communicative atmosphere and enhance the naturalness of the communication process [10].

Interactive function level

In business negotiation, cross-cultural communication and other contexts, the use of discourse markers can highlight the interactivity of oral English communication, explore the emotional function of communicative language, and demonstrate different discourse interaction effects according to changes in context, thus becoming the basic path to gain discourse, shift discourse in communication. Among spoken English discourse markers, many discourse markers show interactive functions. Take after all as an example. Seen from the perspective of Blakemore's relevance theory, this discourse marker has a deep role in participation and behavioral expression. In specific applications, after all is usually used to associate two clauses, implying the relationship between the two clauses, which can also be used to enhance contextual assumptions and create a contextual atmosphere facilitating understanding. For example, in the sentence "Things weren't so bad, after all. I was among friends again", after all strengthens the connection between the two clauses and eases the atmosphere, so that the communicator can correctly understand logic semantic characteristics while understanding the other's intentions.

The Value of Evaluation Model for Pragmatic Function of Spoken English Discourse Markers

Traditional spoken English discourse markers lack a unified evaluation standard for their pragmatic functions, and the conversationalist has a low understanding towards them, which creates an adverse effect on oral communication. The construction of value evaluation model for pragmatic function of spoken English discourse markers can reduce the complexity of some scattered pragmatic function influence factors, form a quantitative evaluation index, and improve the effective application of spoken English discourse markers.

Keep conversational information complete

Oral communication is essentially a process of information exchange and transfer. Through construction of evaluation model for pragmatic function value, it is possible to make the communicator understand the basic flow required for a full conversation as well as important elements of information communication. Through the proper use of the discourse marker, we can strengthen the integrity of the conversation information and reduce misunderstanding owing to information gaps and omissions.

Activate oral communication atmosphere

A suitable oral English communication environment can arouse the desire of both parties to communicate, promote the relationship between the two parties during the conversation, and improve the efficiency of oral English communication. In particular, in cross-cultural communication, oral communication environment is of great significance for the fulfillment of communicative purposes. The construction of evaluation model for the pragmatic function of discourse markers can standardize the use of discourse markers, play a role in promoting speech and creating a communicative atmosphere, thus creating twofold results in conversation with half the effort.

Enhance the fluency of oral communication

In oral English communication, different discourses present the characteristics of interrelationship and content extension. The use of

pragmatic function evaluation models can help communicators understand the connection between different clauses, identify the different effects in application of different discourse markers, and effectively grasp the intention of the communicator, thus facilitating adjustment of oral communication strategy and mode.

CONSTRUCTION OF VALUE EVALUATION MODEL FOR PRAGMATIC FUNCTION OF SPOKEN ENGLISH DISCOURSE MARKERS

Analytic hierarchy process is a multi-criteria decision-making tool. Relying on the hierarchical analysis of key issues, it can identify the key factors that affect the issues, and combine the characteristics of different influencing factors to perform quantitative evaluation and analysis of specific issues. The evaluation model for pragmatic function of spoken English discourse markers based on the analytic hierarchy process is dynamic and quantitative [11]. The value evaluation model for pragmatic function of

discourse markers has more practical significance in oral English communicators due to spoken recognition of key pragmatic functions of different discourse markers and rationality in evaluation of the use of discourse markers.

The Construction of Hierarchical Structure Theory Model

Guided by "Evaluation of the Pragmatic Function of Oral English Discourse Markers", the target level is to build an overall model framework. The criterion level considers the four parts of information function, communication function, conversation function, and interactive function, and combines the characteristics of different functional types to design the criterion level. The indicator level is based on the four criteria of information function, communication function, conversation function and interactive function to reflect the functional types of discourse markers. The plan level uses different discourse markers as the core for determination, as shown in Figure 2:

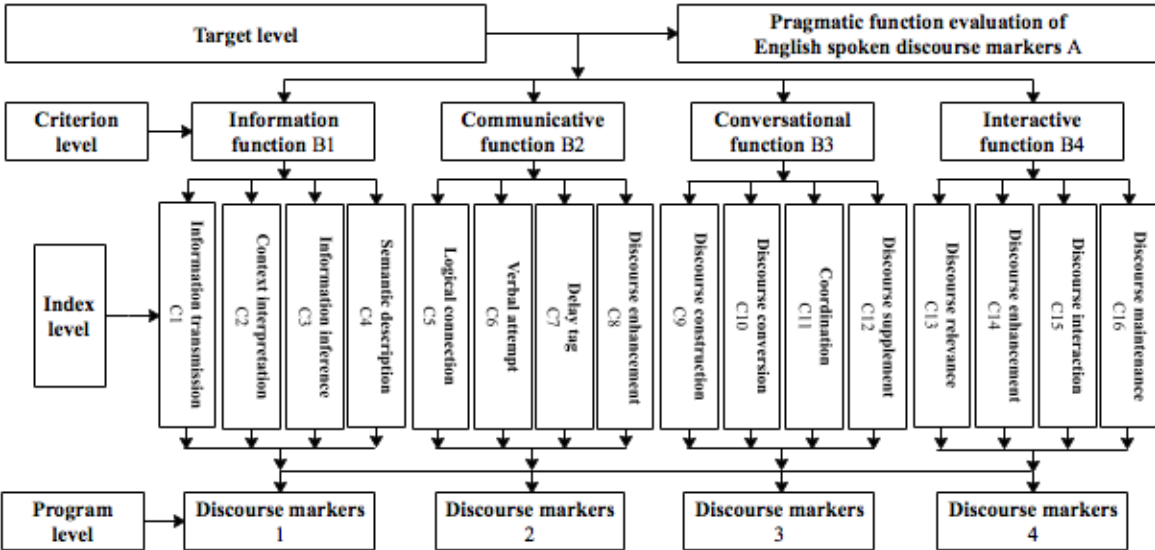


Figure 2 Theoretical evaluation model diagram

As shown in Figure 2, the theoretical model of hierarchical structure consists of four levels, and the indicators of each level are extended on the basis of the impact factors of the previous level. The indicator level consists of 16 secondary indicators including information transmission, context interpretation, information inference, semantic

description, logical connection, and verbal attempt.

Judgment Matrix Construction

When analyzing the weights of impact factors at various levels, if the method of qualitative analysis is simply used, the obtained results may be biased.

Therefore, using the "consistent matrix method" proposed by Santy et al., pairwise comparison and relative scale comparison are adopted to enhance the accuracy of the judgment matrix. If there is a correlation between A_k in the A-level structure and $B_1, B_2 \dots B_n$ in the next level B, the basic expression of the judgment matrix is:

$$A=(b_{ij})_{n \times n} = \begin{bmatrix} b_{11} & b_{12} & b_{13} & b_{14} & b_{15} & \dots & b_{1n} \\ b_{21} & b_{22} & b_{23} & b_{24} & b_{25} & \dots & b_{2n} \\ b_{31} & b_{32} & b_{33} & b_{34} & b_{35} & \dots & b_{3n} \\ b_{41} & b_{42} & b_{43} & b_{44} & b_{45} & \dots & b_{4n} \\ b_{n1} & b_{n2} & b_{n3} & b_{n4} & b_{n5} & \dots & b_{nn} \end{bmatrix} \quad (1)$$

In the above expression, $b_{ii}=1$, b_{ij} is greater than 0, $b_{ij}=1/b_{ji}$. Where, in b_{ji} , $i, j=1,2,3,4,5 \dots n$, b_{ij} is for A_k , b_i means the relative importance value with respect to b_j [12]. In the calculation, the 1-9 scale method in the "consistent matrix method" is used for calculation. The basic scale method is: "1" indicates that the two factors are of the same importance, and "3" indicates that among the two factors, one is more important compared to the other, "5" indicates that among two factors, one factor is obviously more important than the other, and "7" indicates that among the two factors, one is strongly more important than the other. "9" means that among the two factors, one is extremely more important compared to the other. "2, 4, 6, 8" indicates the middle value of two adjacent judgments. In terms of the reciprocal, the factors i and j are compared to a_{ij} , then the factors j, i are compared to $a_{ji}=1/a_{ij}$.

Single Hierarchical Arrangement And Consistency Check

For the judgment matrix, λ_{\max} is the largest eigenvalue, and the eigenvector of the largest eigenvalue can be denoted as W after the normalization process. The sum of each element in the vector is 1 by normalization process. W represents the weight of the relative importance of the impact factor of the same level relative to the impact factor of the previous level in the hierarchical structure [13]. The calculation method of the feature vector W_i is to calculate and analyze the product of each row element of the judgment matrix, and then calculate the N th root of the product of each row element, and normalize the N th root to obtain the feature vector W_i . The maximum eigenvalue is calculated according to the feature vector W_i and the basic expression is:

$$\lambda_{\max} = \sum_{i=0}^n (AW)_i / nW_i \quad (2)$$

To reduce the impact of related interference factors on the consistency of the judgment matrix, after determining the maximum eigenvalue λ_{\max} , the consistency check method is used to calculate the consistency index CI of the judgment matrix and evaluate whether the judgment matrix has satisfactory consistency. The basic expression for consistency evaluation of the judgment matrix is:

$$CI = \lambda_{\max} - n / n - 1 \quad (3)$$

In the above expression, CI is close to 0, indicating that the judgment matrix has satisfactory consistency. When the CI value is 0, it indicates that the judgment matrix has complete consistency. A higher CI value indicates that the judgment matrix inconsistency is more serious. In order to facilitate the test and analysis of the judgment matrix, the consistency index RI needs to be introduced in the consistency check. When $n=1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9$, the RI values are 0, 0.052, 0.089, 1.12, 1.26, 1.36, 1.41, 1.46. Where, the basic expression of the consistency ratio is (when the CR value of the consistency ratio is smaller than 0.1, it indicates that the inconsistency of the judgment matrix is within the controllable range and has satisfactory consistency. On the contrary, when the CI value is higher than 0.1, it indicates more serious inconsistency of the judgment matrix and the judgment matrix needs to be re-adjusted and optimized):

$$CR = CI / RI \quad (4)$$

Based on the above expressions and investigation & analysis methods, the weight vectors of each level are determined [18], and the measured results are as follows: In terms of the relative weight vector of the judgment matrix A-B, the maximum eigenvalue of the judgment matrix is 4.051, $CI=0.017$, $RI=0.89$, $CR=0.019 < 0.10$. In terms of the relative weight vector of the judgment matrix C1-C4-B1, the maximum eigenvalue of the judgment matrix is 4.021, $CI=0.007$, $RI=0.89$, $CR=0.008 < 0.10$. In terms of the relative weight vector of the judgment matrix C5-C8-B2, the maximum eigenvalue of the judgment matrix is 4.116, $CI=0.038$, $RI=0.89$, $CR=0.043 < 0.10$. In terms of the relative weight vector of the judgment matrix C9-C12-B3, the maximum eigenvalue of the judgment matrix is 4.143, $CI=0.047$, $RI=0.89$, $CR=0.052 < 0.10$. In terms of the relative weight vector of the judgment matrix C13-C16-B4, the

maximum eigenvalue of the judgment matrix is 4.265, $CI=0.088$, $RI=0.89$, $CR=0.099<0.10$.

Through calculation of relative weight vector of judgment matrix A-B, calculation of relative weight vector of judgment matrix C1-C4-B1, calculation of relative weight vector of judgment matrix C5-C8-B2, calculation of relative weight vector of judgment matrix C9-C12-B3, relative weight vector of judgment matrix C13-C16-B4, it indicates that each calculation result meets the requirements of the consistency check and conforms to the construction requirements of the judgment matrix. In each test and analysis, the CR value is <0.1 , which confirms that the calculation results can be reliably used for evaluation of pragmatic function value of discourse markers in the context of oral English communication [14].

Total Ordering and Consistency Check

The total ordering is to calculate the weight of the relative importance of the overall factors at a certain level with respect to the overall goal. In the analysis process, the total ordering is often carried out in the order from the highest to the lowest. If there are a total of m factors in the A level, then the factors are $A_1, A_2, A_3, A_4 \dots A_m$, and the order of the factors relative to the overall goal Z is $a_1, a_2, a_3, a_4 \dots a_m$. If B level contains n factors, the hierarchical order corresponding to A_j in the upper level A is $b_{1j}, b_{2j} \dots b_{nj}$ ($j=1, 2 \dots m$).

Combining the calculation results of single hierarchical arrangement, the basic expression of the consistency ratio CR is expressed as follows:

$$CR = \frac{a_1 CI_1 + a_2 CI_2 + \dots + a_m CI_m}{a_1 RI_1 + a_2 RI_2 + \dots + a_m RI_m} \quad (5)$$

In the process of calculating the consistency ratio of the total ordering, CI_j is the consistency index of the single hierarchical arrangement of the factor A_j in the B level relative to the factor A_j in the A level. Where, j in A_j is 1, 2, 3, ... n , and RI_j represents random consistency [15]. When the calculation result CR is less than 0.1, it means that the calculation result of the total ordering has passed the consistency test. On the contrary, the value of the judgment matrix whose consistency ratio does not meet the requirements needs to be adjusted repeatedly until value of the elements in the judgment matrix meets the requirements.

Combining the calculation based on the CR
 calculati

on formula and the analysis of the consistency index CI and RI values, it can be seen that the CR value is 0.013, and $CR<0.1$, indicating that the total ordering test has satisfactory consistency [16].

APPLICATION OF EVALUATION MODEL FOR PRAGMATIC FUNCTION VALUE

The Basic Application Method of the Evaluation Model

Relying on the constructed hierarchical structure model, the basic operation process is as follows: First, the discourse communicator combines the specific communication context, such as smoking cessation and tobacco control, negotiation, discussion, explanation, instruction, etc., to evaluate and score the selected spoken English discourse markers such as and, besides, when, furthermore. By multiplying the scores obtained by the evaluation and the weights assigned by the indicators, the scores of the information function, communicative function, conversational function and interactive function of spoken English discourse markers can be obtained. By summing up the indicator score of information function, communicative function, conversational function, and interactive function, the weighted sum of the scores can be obtained, and the weighted sum indicator is the score of the spoken English discourse markers. The scores can be sorted in descending order, and the evaluator can make a reasonable selection of spoken English discourse markers based on the corresponding spoken English communication context and evaluation results.

Application Scenarios of the Evaluation Model

Application in spoken English communication scenario

The spoken English communication environment is one primary scenario for application of the evaluation model. The model mainly plays a role in standardizing the process and methods of using spoken English discourse markers in the context of oral communication. In special communicative environments such as smoking cessation and tobacco control, business negotiations and foreign economic and trade negotiations, the use of pragmatic function evaluation model can help the discourse

communicator to formulate a thorough plan before the conversation, and select appropriate spoken English discourse markers in the corresponding discourse, thereby facilitating completion of the communicative process. For example, when discussing the views of a certain person, in "I think she has many good qualities besides being very beautiful", "besides" means in addition to. Taking interactive function evaluation as an example, the discourse marker has the role of discourse relevance and discourse enhancement, so the pragmatic function of the discourse marker is scored $0.037+0.018=0.055$. In use, the appropriate discourse markers can be selected based on analysis and comparison of the interactive function scores of different discourse markers.

Application in English speaking ability training scenario

Regardless of English learner or spoken English enthusiast on the Internet, learning of spoken English discourse markers is essential in the context of spoken language training. The impact of spoken English discourse markers on spoken English trainers is mainly reflected in the aspects of deepening knowledge and understanding, regulating the form of spoken speech, and optimizing speech behavior. In the traditional oral training process, the trainers of oral English usually rely on the trainer's own understanding towards context and English linguistics to train the spoken English speech behavior. The evaluation indicators of pragmatic function are not perfect, and the training process is not standardized. As a result, it is difficult to achieve good training results. The evaluation model for pragmatic function of discourse markers can provide trainers with a set of relatively standardized evaluation standards to help trainers correctly understand the application methods of different spoken English discourse markers. For example, in the training of speaking ability, take the information function of discourse markers as an example, the communicator evaluates the information functions of one or more discourse markers, analyzes the differences in the information functions of different discourse markers, and selectively uses discourse markers in view of the context, which can improve the correctness in use of discourse markers.

Application in English speaking ability assessment scenario

Under the environment of college students' English speaking ability assessment, the assessment and evaluation of oral communication ability is generally carried out by means of oral expression in impromptu scene, investigation and questioning, material summary speech, etc. Although this model examines the students' oral communication ability, it often ignores the importance of discourse markers in oral English communication, which cannot fundamentally reflect students' oral communication proficiency. In this regard, we can rely on the evaluation model of spoken English pragmatic function to evaluate the standardization and use skills of spoken discourse markers involved in the evaluation process of the students' speaking ability, so as to facilitate targeted improvements and enhancements. For example, in the test on English speaking ability, in order to master students' understanding of the information function, communicative function, conversational function, and interactive function of discourse markers, the discourse markers with different pragmatic functions can be classified and sorted, and students can be tested in terms of mastery of pragmatic function of each discourse marker, which can be used as a basis for improving and enhancing the students' speaking ability.

LIMITATIONS AND REFLECTIONS OF PRAGMATIC FUNCTION ASSESSMENT MODELS

The pragmatic function evaluation model of spoken English discourse markers based on analytic hierarchy process is formed on the basis of the overall analysis of the characteristics, basic functions, and pragmatic function evaluation needs of spoken English discourse markers. Through the design of a hierarchical structure, it can further quantify various factors and evaluation indicators and appear in the form of relative weights, which can help English learners and spoken English communicators to fully understand the characteristics of different spoken English discourse markers, and can direct speech communicators to apply what they have learned, actively recognize the deviations in their own understanding of spoken English discourse

markers, thus facilitating the smooth completion of discourse communication. However, seen from the evaluation results, the pragmatic function evaluation model also has corresponding limitations. In the pragmatic function evaluation, there are many qualitative components and obvious subjectivity, etc. In particular, in the evaluation index of the pragmatic function of spoken English discourse markers and determination of the index weight, it may be affected by the model builder's own factors [17,18]. Therefore, in the evaluation of the pragmatic functions of spoken English discourse markers, efforts can be made from the following aspects: First, introduce professional procedures and research methods such as the Delphi method and the expert consultation method, conduct regular evaluation and demonstration of the effectiveness of the evaluation model for pragmatic function value of spoken English discourse markers, eliminate unnecessary influencing factors of discourse markers in a timely manner, thus improving the application effect of the pragmatic functions of discourse markers. Second, the use of the pragmatic function evaluation model of discourse markers cannot be separated from the reality of oral communication. We should combine specific context, communication topics, oral communication environment, oral communication purposes, etc., adjust and optimize specific indicators and weights to continuously enhance the accuracy and scientificity in evaluation of the pragmatic functions of spoken English discourse markers. Third, application of pragmatic function evaluation model for spoken English discourse markers needs to actively conform to the current situation and development trend of oral English communication to establish pragmatic function evaluation strategy of discourse markers suitable for the development in the future era [19,20].

CONCLUSION

In view of the increasingly frequent cross-cultural communication in the new era, the paper establishes a pragmatic function evaluation model for spoken English discourse markers. After preliminary analysis, the evaluation model can be used for spoken English communication scenarios, English speaking ability training scenario

s, and English speaking ability assessment scenarios. In evaluation, only quantitative scoring is needed to help users make a reasonable choice of the pragmatic function evaluation model of spoken English discourse markers. However, this research only studies some scenarios at the application level. For the application of this model in other scenarios, a lot of analysis and demonstration are needed, and more application case support is required. In the future, with the increase of Chinese and Western communication and conversation, oral English communication skills will gradually become a necessary ability for business conversationists, college language students and spoken English enthusiasts. The model established by the paper has opened a window for spoken English trainers, spoken English enthusiasts, spoken English communicators, etc. to understand spoken English discourse markers, and provided a strong support for the correct use of spoken English discourse markers, which enjoys great application space.

Conflicts of Interest Disclosure Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest in the authorship or publication of this work. The authors declare no sponsored financial sources by any organization related to tobacco production for the undertaken study.

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