The Discourse Analysis of Psychological Factors Influencing Interest Contention in Business Dispute Settlement: A Perspective of Discourse Information Theory

Tingting Guo¹, ²

¹ School of Foreign Languages, Zhongyuan University of Technology, Zhengzhou, Henan, China
² School of Liberal Arts, Zhengzhou University, Zhengzhou, Henan, China

Correspondence: Tingting Guo, Zhongyuan University of Technology, No. 41, Middle Zhongyuan Road, Zhengzhou 450007, China. E-mail: 532955649@qq.com

Received: February 16, 2019   Accepted: March 11, 2019   Online Published: April 20, 2019
doi:10.5539/ijel.v9n3p176       URL: https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v9n3p176

Abstract
Interest contention which constitutes the kernel of business dispute settlement is one of the major issues to explore in the studies of business dispute and it structures the whole process of business dispute settlement from beginning to end. Under the influence of various factors, litigants with differing interest orientations and interest demands could make good use of a number of information resources for the purpose of communicating, defending and fighting for the interests of their own. The psychological factors in the context influence the distribution of discourse information resources in the interest contention in business dispute settlement. In view of this, the present study focuses on the discourse analysis of psychological factors influencing the interest contention in business dispute settlement at the stage of litigation from the perspective of Discourse Information Theory (DIT) (Du, 2007, 2013, 2015). It can be found that participants can utilize the psychological factors such as the intentions, consensus changes, and information sharing categories to affect interest contention in business dispute settlement.

Keywords: business dispute settlement, Discourse Information Theory (DIT), interest contention, psychological factor, courtroom discourse

1. Introduction
In the process of business dispute settlement, interest contention constitutes the kernel of business dispute settlement. Many scholars (e.g. Fan, 2007; Vestergaard et al., 2011) have conducted relevant studies concerning the influencing factors of dispute or conflict settlement and found that social, psychological and cultural factors could affect the settlement of conflict or dispute. The influencing factors include social, psychological and cultural factors and they have different manifestations under different circumstances. However, the present study only focuses on how psychological factors influence interest contention in business dispute settlement from the perspective of discourse information theory (DIT). Fan (2007) in her “Social System of Dispute Settlement” proposes the factors influencing dispute settlement. Among the factors, some are related to the psychological factors. Many scholars argue that the psychological factors affect the speaker’s discourse (e.g., van Dijk, 2008; Vestergaard et al., 2011). In van Dijk’s (2008) study, both social and cognitive dimensions have been examined and emphasized and van Dijk (2008) argues that both social and psychological factors affect the speaker’s discourse. And Vestergaard et al. (2011) propose a practice-oriented model of five dimensions of conflict, namely, structural, instrumental, interest, value or personal dimension. Moreover, Vestergaard et al. (2011) argue that the personal dimension is an important perspective to settle conflicts and this dimension is related to the psychological factors. Thus, the psychological factors have been regarded as a key perspective in influencing the dispute settlement. When people are in conflict, they usually have a need that has not been met. This need is often linked to one or more of the five different dimensions.

2. Previous Studies on Discourse Information Theory (DIT)
Du (2007) puts forward the linguistic model of information structure of legal discourse, and this is the core model of Discourse Information Theory. Based on this core model, the Discourse Information Theory has been developed systematically by researchers (e.g., Du, 2007, 2009, 2013, 2015; Zhao, 2011; Chen, 2011; Fan & Du,
2011; Huai, 2014; Huang, 2012; Ge, 2014; Xu, 2013; Zhang, 2016; Guan, 2015; Sun, 2016; Yue, 2016; Guo, 2017) for more than ten years. In contrast to the common practice to consider information as a sentence-level notion, Du (2015) defines information as propositions which are the minimal communication units with a relatively independent and complete structure. Du (2007) puts forward the linguistic model of information structure of legal discourse, and this is the core model of Discourse Information Theory. A series of theoretical and applied studies of DIT are conducted based on this core model.

On the one hand, a number of studies have made further contributions to the theoretical development of DIT. Models and frameworks have been put forward to help solve different problems in the fields of linguistics, forensic linguistics and business English studies in particular (e.g., Zhao, 2011; Chen, 2011; Du, 2015; Xu, 2013; Ge, 2014; Zhang, 2016; Guan, 2015; Sun, 2016; Yue, 2016; Guo, 2017).

On the other hand, through years of research and development, the Discourse Information Theory (DIT) and Discourse Information Analysis (DIA) have been applied to legal discourse analysis (Du, 2015; Ge, 2014; Pan & Du, 2011; Xu, 2013; Zhang, 2016), legal translation and interpreting (Zhao, 2011), legal English teaching (Chen, 2017), authorship attribution (Zhang, 2016), forensic speaker recognition (Guan, 2015), conflict management in business meetings (Yue, 2016), interest contention in business dispute settlement (Guo, 2017; Guo, Zhao, & Han, 2019) and automatic information processing (Du, 2015, p. 368; Sun, 2016).

3. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

3.1 Discourse Information Theory (DIT)

The tree information structure of legal discourse (Du, 2007, 2015) is regarded as the basic and core framework of Discourse Information Theory.

As is shown in Figure 1, a discourse is a hierarchical structure consisting of proposition-based information units that are the minimal, integral and meaningful units that have relatively independent complete meaning and structure. In the development of discourse, the proposition-based information units are woven into an information network and they are related to each other in one way or another. This view of discourse is regarded as the core model of Discourse Information Theory, namely the tree information structure of Discourse Information Theory (Du, 2013, 2015).

In a discourse, each information unit interrelates with other information units in such a way that a subordinate information unit develops its super-ordinate information unit in a certain way. This kind of relationship between subordinate information unit(s) and super-ordinate information unit(s) is termed as information knot (Du, 2013, 2015).

In DIT (see Du, 2015, pp. 30–31), information knots are represented by 15 interrogative words, namely, What
3.2 Research Methodology

The present study mainly adopts the qualitative research method with the assistance of the corpus CLIPS. Specifically, the methods of discourse analysis, Discourse Information Analysis (DIA) and corpus study are employed as the major methodologies for data analysis in the present research.

3.2.1 Data Collection

In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the study, all the data are extracted from CLIPS (the Corpus for the Legal Information Processing System) which consists of transcripts of Chinese and American civil court trials. The data collected are mainly recordings of observed court proceedings, which were collected with professional digital voice recorders with the permission of the court and the consent of both parties (Ge, 2014). All of the discourses in CLIPS have been transcribed and tagged according to transcription and tagging conventions based on Discourse Information Theory (DIT).

3.2.2 Data Analysis

The data analysis can be illustrated by the following sample:

Sample:
01\[J\]:<1,2,2,14,WT>Now check the evidence submitted. <2,14,3,26,WF1>How many copies of evidence has the plaintiff submitted to the court before the hearing?

02\[PA\]:<2,14,3,26,WF2>The plaintiff has submitted 9 copies of evidence to the court before the hearing.

03\[J\]:<2,14,3,27,WF3>Has the defendant received them?

04\[DA\]:<2,14,3,27,WF4>The defendant has received them.

As is illustrated in the above sample, the numbers before the square brackets refer to the turns of speech. The symbols in the angle brackets are the description of the characteristics of information units. Numbers “1, 2, 2, 14” at the very beginning of the transcription represent the level of the information unit in the whole discourse, that is, the 14th unit of the 2nd level (“2, 14”), with its super-ordinate unit being the 2nd unit of the 1st level (“1, 2”). And the signs of information level can help to locate specific information units in the whole discourse. “WT” and “WF” refer to the types of information knots, namely, “What Thing” and “What Fact” respectively. “J” refers to the chief judge, “PA” refers to the plaintiff’s attorney and “DA” refers to the defendant’s attorney.

3.2.3 Research questions

In order to achieve the research objective, two research questions are formulated as follows:

1) What psychological factors influence the interest contention in the courtroom discourse concerning business dispute settlement?

2) How does the specific psychological factor influence the interest contention in business dispute settlement from the perspective of Discourse Information Theory?

4. Psychological Factors Influencing Interest Contention in Business Dispute Settlement

In this section, we will discuss how the psychological factors influence the process of interest contention in business dispute settlement at the stage of litigation. And relevant psychological factors are demonstrated from the effects of intentions, consensus change, and information sharing category.

4.1 Discourse Analysis of the Effect of Intentions

van Dijk (2008, p. 81) defines intentions as (part of) mental models and intending an action is constructing a mental model of an ongoing or future fragment of conduct. For interaction in discourse and talk to be possible at all, participants need to represent the intentions of the other participants as well as their own.
Besides, intentions are different from goals which are the same as purposes in van Dijk’s definition, namely mental models of actions and their wanted consequences.

Intentions, the starting point of a discourse, relate to information potential energy closely. And this information potential energy is the prerequisite of communication according to Discourse Information Theory (Du, 2015). According to DIT, the party who has owned more information possesses more information potential energy and the communication develops from the party with more information potential energy to the one with less.

If the party with more information potential energy does not want to promote the initiation and development of a discourse or communication, then the discourse or communication would not start or develop further. Thus, the information potential energy in the participants’ intentions plays a key role in the manipulation of interest contention in business dispute settlement. For example,

Extract 1

01[J]: <WT1> You mean that I can choose to make my phone number, e-mail be public, is that right?
02[W]: <WA1> Yes. <WF1> If I chose to put them public, then other people can see them.
03[J]: <WT2> As long as you are the user of micro-blog identified through real-name authentication, then you can see the information which is allowed to go public by other users of the blog when you login in the micro-blog through defendant’s ×× software, can’t you? Do you mean that?
04[W]: <WA2> I don’t understand your logic and the micro-blog. <WF2> It is like this way, after I login in the blog I will need to fill out my information, my personal information. I just login in by ×× micro-blog to omit the process of login, but after I have entered the defendant’s ×× software, I have to fill out my personal information again.
05[J]: <WT3> I will make a brief explanation, are you the user identified through real-name authentication of ×× micro-blog before the July and August of 2014? Aren’t you?
06[W]: <WA3> Yes.
07[J]: <WT4> As a user through the real-name authentication of the micro-blog, then you describe simply what information of your mutual micro-blog friends can you see when you login in ×× software by means of your micro-blog before the July and August of 2014? Now what information can you remember? It’s OK to speak them out.
08[W]: <WF3> It is his name, for example, his work experience.
09[J]: <WT5> Can the information about the user’s schools be seen?
10[W]: <WF4> If he wrote the information about his school then I could see it.
11[J]: <WT6> What about the phone number and e-mail?
12[W]: <WT7> Phone number, e-mail and do you mean that if we are mutual friends?
13[J]: <WA4> Yes.
14[W]: <WF5> We can see those information if we are mutual friends, however, under the condition that we are mutual friends, I can see those information if I have his phone number at the same time.
In Extract 1, in respect to information potential energy, the witness for the defense who has been the user of ×× micro-bro and the user of the defendant’s ×× software at the same time for several years has worked in the marketing department of the defendant’s ×× software; therefore, she must be quite familiar with relevant characteristics and information of the web-pages on both ×× micro-bro and ×× software.

Compared with the chief judge, the witness for the defense owns more information concerning the relevant characteristics of the two web apps; therefore, the witness for the defense is the party who has higher information potential energy. In other words, the witness for the defense can control the flow of information owing to this higher information potential energy to a certain extent. In spite of this, the flow of information is also affected by the chief judge’s allocation of speech turns.

Based on the above analysis, it can be found that the witness for the defense owns higher information potential energy. However, WA2 starts to show that the witness for the defense is not so cooperative with the chief judge, which creates the difficulty in achieving effective information wanted by the chief judge. Thus, the chief judge has to adopt a series of WT information units (including WT2, WT3, WT4, WT5 and WT6) to reinitiate the questions to ask the witness for the defense in various ways in order to obtain the information wanted.

Even so, the witness for the defense has only assigned a portion of information in her grasp as the answers to the chief judge’s questions and has avoided supplying more detailed information which is known by her, because the more detailed information may not be in favor of the defendant’s interest contention. For example, in this extract, WA2 and WF2 divert to the details concerning the login process rather than whether relevant information can be seen which is asked by the chief judge. WF3 offers insufficient information to the chief judge. After that, WF4 uses an indirect way to answer whether the school information can be seen. WT7 is used by the witness for the defense to postpone answering the chief judge’s questions. WF5 still provides insufficient and incomplete information the chief judge wanted and emphasizes the conditions when the information can be seen.

From the above data analysis, it can be seen that the intentions of the witness for the defense manipulates the information flow in the interactions between the chief judge and her. Since the information wanted by the chief judge is not in favor of the defendant’s interest contention, the witness for the defense adopts the relatively uncooperative way to deal with.

Apart from the close relationship of intentions and information potential energy in interest contention in business dispute settlement, different intentions of each disputing parties can be found in the different amounts and different types of information units in interest contention.

Extract 2

01[审判长]:<1,2,2,15,WT14>下面，首先针对关于原告被告主体是否适格的证据进行举证、质证。<2,15,3,33,WT15>首先由原告举证。

营的产品，第一组证据。

03[审判长]: <2,15,3,34,WT16>被告发表质证意见。

04[被代一]: <3,34,4,22,WA2>根据原告所诉事实，本案适用反不正当竞争法第14条的后半段，就是……。

<3,34,4,23,WA2>本案原告是原告网站的这个所有和经营者，原告网站对一些软件产品这个提供下载服务，但这个不等于他就是软件的所有者和经营者。

<3,34,4,24,WF11>原告在刚才这组证据中提出有原告安全浏览器，但是本案事实很清楚，同样按照原告的相关证据，本案的诉争事实指向的是原告手机浏览器，不是安全浏览器。

<3,34,4,25,WF12>原告在这组证据中曾经有一个2002年1月份这个上线的原告手机浏览器，但是版本是1.6.1，不是本案的。案的手机使用的使用者应用的原告手机浏览器。

<3,34,4,26,WA3>因此，本案诉争指向的是原告的商品的声音是受到诋毁，而商品作为软件，原告没有证据证明他是所有者和经营者，因此我们不认为原告主体适格，完毕。

As is shown, in Extract 2, utterances 01 and 02 are the plaintiff’s evidence presentation regarding the issue of whether the plaintiff is the eligible subject of this case, while utterances 03 and 04 are the defendant’s challenge on the plaintiff’s evidence presentation on this issue.

Whether the plaintiff is the eligible subject of this case is a fundamental question. If the plaintiff is deemed as the ineligible subject of this extract, then the court will not accept their lawsuit and their litigation appeals will go in vain. Thus, the plaintiff must try his best to present evidence to persuade the chief judge that he is the eligible subject, while the defendant must strive to challenge or be against the plaintiff’s proof presentation.

The plaintiff’s intention is to testify that he is the eligible subject of this case. In order to achieve this intention, the plaintiff has presented the evidence which is in favor of realizing the intention. In contrast, the defendant’s
intention is to challenge the plaintiff’s proof presentation and to prove that the plaintiff is not the eligible subject of this case.

In order to attain their respective intentions, both the plaintiff and the defendant adopt different types and numbers of information units. And the usage and structure of discourse information of Extract 2 can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2 shows the information structure of Extract 2. In the figure, WT2 refers to the court investigation and the information units from WT5 to WT13 are the development of WT2. Among the information units, WT8 is concerned with the issue of whether the plaintiff is the eligible subject of the case. Among the development of WT8 information unit, WT15 is the plaintiff’s evidence presentation to testify his eligible subject of the case, while WT16 is the defendant’s evidence which is to challenge the plaintiff’s presentation.

Moreover, to make it easier to distinguish the plaintiff’s evidence presentation and the defendant’s evidence challenge, the part of plaintiff’s evidence presentation is shown in gray, while the defendant’s evidence challenge part is in scattered dots in Figure 2.

This round of interest contention occurs at the stage of defining conflict and interests. In this round, because the plaintiff wants to testify that he is the eligible subject of the case, he has collected the evidence of WF1, WF2 and WF10 units to realize his intention which is in favor of his interest contention as much as possible and the information units from WF3 to WF9 together with WA1 have presented the evidence in detail. Thus, it can be found that the plaintiff has developed L3, L4 and L5 three levels of information to present his evidence, and that specific evidence in detail is presented by means of seven information units including information units from WF3 to WF9 together with WA1 as the sub-development of WF2 unit. Comparatively speaking, the defendant only uses two information levels of L3 and L4 and five information units, namely, WB, WA2, WF11, WF12 and WA3 to challenge the plaintiff.

In this interest contention, the plaintiff’s usage of so many WF information units (from WF1 to WF10) is to increase the objectivity of the facts and to persuade the court that he is the eligible subject of the case. And those WF information units do help the plaintiff effectively to realize his intentions.

4.2 Discourse Analysis of the Effect of Consensus Change

Liu et al. (2012) argue that the consensus-building process results from the change in mental models between negotiators. And the consensus change is related to the mental or psychological changes. In the process of business dispute settlement, the consensus change of both disputing parties affects the development of their interest contention. And the consensus may expand or contract in this interest contention in dispute settlement. This consensus change, together with different combination patterns of information units, promotes the interest contention in business dispute settlement. Thus, this section deals with the effect of consensus change on interest contention in business dispute settlement.

Extract 3

01[J]: According to the provisions of law concerning your disputes, mediation can be conducted in this court session. What do you think?
02[P]: I agree. Anyway, it’s better to have the money back early.
03[D]: I also agree on mediation. It’s true that I owe the money and I should repay it. However, I do not owe so much as Plaintiff said. We only owe Plaintiff 85,177 yuan. And the practical problem is lack of money before the completion of many of the projects.
04[J]: Plaintiff, is it OK to put off a little? Besides, the sum is not as you said.
05[P]: If you cannot give me now, you may put it off a little. It is OK if you pay 85177
担全部诉讼费。
07[原告]: <WA7> 我同意被告的意见，如果一九九八年五月底前将欠我的工程款 85177.00 元全部付清给我，诉讼费问题我就承担了，如果被告说话不算数，我还找被告要违约金，要利息，被告说话算数按时付就算了，同时应考虑我还收近二万元。
08[被告]: <WA8> 先按 85177.00 元付，<WA9> 至于说应按 100281.87 元付的事，我必须回去和田 XX 共同研究，因为他是具体实施人，他最了解情况，今天就这样调解结案，别的事另说。
09[原告]: <WA10> 可以回去查查再说吧，你先付这八万多。
10[审判长]: <WT3> 请阅读笔录无误签字。

In this extract, the interaction occurs at the stage of testing solutions. At the stage of testing solutions, the possible solutions for the business dispute settlement are proposed and examined through the conflicting parties’ interest bargaining and contention. If the solution is helpful for the dispute settlement, then the solutions will be accepted at the next stage of evaluating solutions. If the solution cannot help to solve the business dispute, then both conflicting parties will resort to other solutions to test whether the solutions are useful to settle the dispute.

As can be found in this extract, the plaintiff’s and the defendant’s consensus on the disputing focus of debt number is changing with the development of the court mediation.

The plaintiff’s and the defendant’s consensus changes are illustrated in Figure 3. The conflicting parties of both the plaintiff and the defendant usually make the concession to give up certain interests or bear more losses proactively in order to achieve more interest (Du, 2009).

In this extract, the plaintiff has made certain concession to conserve a certain amount of the debt, which is also in favor of the successful development of the court mediation. At the beginning, both parties agree to resolve the dispute through court mediation. And the consensus between the plaintiff and the defendant is quite little in that
although the defendant has admitted that he has owed the money and he should repay it, he does not owe so much as the plaintiff has said. After several turns of bargaining, the amount of debt (85,177 yuan) is agreed upon by both parties and the consensus between them has expanded from the original agreement on mediation like “我同意调解” (I agree on mediation) to the agreement on both the postponement of the debt and debt number, e.g. “现在不能马上给可以拖一段也行” (If you cannot give me now, you may put it off a little) and “按85177.00元给也行” (It is OK if you pay 85,177 yuan).

As can be seen in Figure 3, the plaintiff’s and the defendant’s consensus changes are based on both disputing parties’ interest bottom line. And their mutual interest bottom line is “按85177.00元给也行” (the agreement on the 85,177 yuan payment of the debt). Based on this agreement of the least debt payment, the plaintiff is willing to make the concession to give up other interest, such as the litigation cost, the postponement of the debt payment before the end of May in 1998, and the negotiation on the other 20,000 yuan after this court mediation later.

With respect to the information features of the consensus change, both the plaintiff’s and the defendant’s views are mainly expressed by means of WA information units. WA2, WA5, WA7 and WA10 show the plaintiff’s attitudes on the possible solutions to settle the dispute, whereas WA3, WA6, WA8 and WA9 express the defendant’s consensus changes on the possible solutions for the dispute settlement. And the WA plus WF information unit pattern is also used. In this WA plus WF information unit pattern, WF information unit is utilized to provide objective support for the previous attitude conveyance.

Besides, it can be found that the consensus of both parties may expand or contract with the development of the mediation on debt payment in this case. And the dispute settlement process can be continued and prompted if the consensus of both conflicting parties equals to or is more than their interest bottom line of the agreement on the 85,177 yuan payment of the debt. Thus, the plaintiff’s and the defendant’s consensus change on debt payment promotes the settlement of this debt payment dispute.

4.3 Discourse Analysis of the Effect of Information Sharing Category

Discourse information can be classified into six information sharing categories, namely, A, B, C, E, O and D in monologue, a, b, c, e, o and d in question, R, S, T, Y, Z and U in dialogue (Du, 2015). Ge (2014) proposes that these categories are different both in mutual manifestation, acceptability and different degrees of information sharing. Different information sharing categories affect interest contention in business dispute settlement.

Among all the categories, for example, category “e” in question, which refers to information that is unknown to both A and B, has the lowest degree of information sharing. In this way, this category “e” may hinder the information flow and affect interest contention between the disputing parties.

Extract 4

01[J]: <WT, b> Can you explain the supplementary evidence which you have added?

02[原代一]: <WF1, a> The first piece of supplementary evidence is the record read by the defendant’s app port in the microblogging platform. <WF2, a> That is, we just say what kind of content is read by the defendant’s app? Is there any reading of information concerning education and profession? <WF3, a> It is the records of our background. We’ve presented relevant electronic evidence to prove that the defendant has not crawled any information concerning profession and education by logging the defendant’s app. <WY, a> Because the defendant did not have this authority, so the defendant cannot capture the information. <WF4, a> This is the first piece of evidence. <WF5, a> The second piece of evidence is just what teacher Ma said that it must have records if the crawler (a computer program that visits websites and collects information when you do an Internet search) is used to crawl the information, indeed we have the records. <WF6, a> Our second piece of evidence, evidence 20 is the records which crawl the microblogging account, the defendant’s app, ×× network on the microblogging platform. <WF7, a> From 2012 to 2014, we have...
这两个账号在微博上的读取相关情况，他看其他人的相关情况，发现他抓取了大量的其他人的其他账户的教育和职业信息。接下来说，就是被告app没有抓取，而你被告app的微博账号从被告app和××网这两个账号抓取了很多信息，当然他只能通过其他账号去抓取了信息（被打断）

In Extract 4, the questioning occurs between the chief judge and the plaintiff’s agent. In this extract, WF1, WF2, WF3, WF4, WF5, WF6 and WF7 provide several pieces of supplementary evidence which have been applied to be presented by the plaintiff. And the pieces of supplementary evidence are new to both the chief judge and the defendant. And the category “a” embraces relatively low degree of information sharing, which is in favor of the plaintiff’s contention for interest.

Moreover, a new type of evidence, electronic evidence, has been added to Article 63 of China’s Civil Procedure Law according to the amendments to this law in 2002. And this new type of electronic evidence has been presented by the plaintiff lawyer as the supplementary evidence. The new supplementary evidence of WF1 and WF5 provided by the plaintiff focuses on how the defendant has stolen their users’ professional and educational information in particular and the specific records of using crawler, which is crucial to testify the defendant’s unfair competition behavior on how to steal the plaintiff’s users’ information concerning education and profession in large quantity.

Among the six information sharing categories, category A/B concerns personal specific knowledge (Xu, 2013) and thus has a low degree of information sharing (Du, 2015). In this way, the category “a” can help the plaintiff gain the advantage in testifying how the defendant steals the plaintiff’s users’ relative information, which is in favor of the plaintiff’s interest contention in the process of this business dispute settlement.

5. Conclusion

The present study has analyzed the psychological factors that influence interest contention in business dispute settlement. New findings have been found in the present study. From the data analysis, it can be seen that participants can utilize the psychological factors such as the intentions, consensus changes, and information sharing categories to affect interest contention in business dispute settlement. Specifically, intentions, the starting point of a discourse, is closely related to information potential energy. And the information potential energy in the participants’ intentions plays a crucial role in the manipulation of interest contention in business settlement. Moreover, in order to attain respective intentions, disputing parties adopt different types and numbers of information units in their arguments for interest contention. In respect to the consensus change, it is based on disputing parties’ respective interest bottom line, and the consensus changes of both disputing parties may expand or contract with the changes of interest contention in business dispute settlement. Furthermore, both disputing parties’ views are mainly expressed by means of WA information units. In addition, disputing parties’ consensus changes promote the settlement of business dispute. As for the information sharing category, different information sharing categories affect interest contention in business dispute settlement. For instance, category “e” in question, which refers to information that is unknown to both A and B, has the lowest degree of information sharing. And this category “e” may hinder the information flow and affects interest contention between the disputing parties. What’s more, it can be found that the category “a” can help the plaintiff gain the advantage in testifying how the defendant steals the plaintiff’s users’ relative information, which is in favor of the plaintiff’s interest contention in the process of this business dispute settlement.

Author biography

Tingting Guo received her PhD in Business English Studies from GuangDong University of Foreign Studies. Her research interests include discourse analysis, business communication studies, forensic linguistics and comparative study of English and Chinese. She currently works in the Postdoctoral Research Station of Chinese Language and Literature of School of Liberal Arts of Zhengzhou University.

Acknowledgments

The research is sponsored by Ph. D Research Programme of Zhongyuan University of Technology [No. 34110495], and the 13th Five-year Key Project Cultivation Programme of School of Foreign Languages of
Zhongyuan University of Technology. The present research is a partial fulfillment of a joint training postdoctoral program between Zhongyuan University of Technology and Zhengzhou University.

The author’s sincere appreciation goes to the anonymous peer-reviewers and the editor for their comments on the revision of this article. And the heartfelt gratitude also goes to the assistant editor for her timely mail confirmation and supply of help. I am solely responsible for any remaining errors and shortcomings.

References


*Copyrights*

Copyright for this article is retained by the author, with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).