A Corpus-Based Study of Identity Construction of God and Goddess Discourse

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Abstract: Identity construction and recognition have long been important areas of academic research. This study compares the lexical collocations and contextual usage of the terms god and goddess, which represent gender identity discourse, using the Sketch Engine retrieval tool within the enTenTen21 corpus. It analyzes similarities and differences between these terms in terms of self and society, drawing on both mythology and reality from the perspective of identity recognition. Additionally, it examines variations in gender identity discourse construction and gender discourse consciousness, thereby uncovering the cultural significance and practical impact of shifts in goddess discourse. The analysis reveals that gender discourse within the corpus highlights distinct identity constructions of gods and goddesses in mythology and reality, showcasing differences in image, temperament, power, and prestige. Furthermore, these discourse identities reflect and project broader trends in the construction and recognition of male and female identities in contemporary society.

Keywords: God; Goddess; Corpus; Discourse; Identity construction

1. Introduction

Mythology, as an integral part of primitive culture, usually boasts protagonists entitled gods. The ancient Chinese classics *Shuowen* (1997) specifies God, the god of heaven, the one who brings forth all things, including both gods and goddesses [1]. Nowadays, specific titles are used to define objects of admiration and to distinguish gender differences, leading to new meanings of god and goddess. In this process of sociolinguistic variation and change, the gender factor is considered a key variable. Language is endowed a certain discursive color by speakers of different genders according to different social and value concepts, resulting in male and female language variants, i.e., god discourse and goddess discourse. Scott pointed out that social relations are based on gender differences, and the shaping of gender is associated with socio-cultural symbols and norms, socially organized relationships, and subjective identities [2]. Since numerous differences exist between gods and

goddesses in discursive activities, and the process of discursive activities implies the process of social identity, the construction of social identity and subjectivity could be affected [3].

Social constructivists hold that human gender is not entirely determined by biology, but is continuously constructed and re-constructed through human interaction and social life. Previous academic researches on gender identity place greater focus on family role discourse construction or female gender discourse construction. For instance, the characteristics of male-female family role discourse construction were analyzed by Xu and Li [4]. The identity construction characteristics of female scholars in the academic community of practice were examined by Guo [5]. Gender relations and sexist ideology in the discursive construction of gender identity in the postmodern context were revealed by Miao [6]. Discourse activities are action-oriented and historical, reflecting the practice of gender consciousness. Gender identity construction is a process that should be examined within a certain context, requiring attention to the influences of history and culture, as well as the constraints of the specific social structure and context of the present [7]. In recent years, the study of variant sociolinguistics with the help of corpora has enhanced the validity and credibility of results related to gender discourse. The feasibility of corpus linguistics in the construction of gender discourse identities (male and female, female scholars) has been explored by scholars such as Holmes, Romaine, Pearce, Duan, and Guo and Guan [8–12].

Given this, the diachronic and synchronic development and changes in the mythological discourse of god and goddess, as well as the trends in their construction and identity, will be examined by this research. The power relations involved in the construction of gender identity will be clarified to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the significance of gender identity construction.

2. Theoretical perspectives

2.1. Identity recognition and discourse identity recognition

Identity generally refers to the social affiliation of the research subject, its role in interpersonal interactions, and psychological tendencies. The formation of identity is related not only to an individual's gender, cognition, personality, emotions, and behavior but also to the social environment, culture, and history. Identities are constructed through the membership of oneself or others in certain groups. Identity constructed based on an individual's unique qualities is referred to as personal identity, while identity constructed based on group membership is known as social identity [13].

Moreover, identity is not a universal entity but a construct of culturally specific discourses. Discourse, as a medium of human interaction, not only produces knowledge, truth, and power but also constructs discursive subjects, knowledge objects, and even social realities and relations [14]. The discursive identity focuses on the projection of real identity in the discursive practices of social subjects. Specifically, the construction of identity by discourse can be divided into two paths: self-construction and social construction. Self-construction corresponds to social construction and is more synchronic and individual. This type of identity is, to a certain extent, an active identity from the inside out, a self-proclaimed identity and label, and the self-construction of identity discourse [15]. In contrast, social discourse gives prominence to the influence of discursive construction by the outside society on individual identity over a long history of transmutation. This type of identity is more diachronic and social and, to some extent, a passive identity from the outside in, a given identity and label, and a social construction of identity discourse.

Hence, the identity of social subjects is dynamically constructed through discourse, influenced by both the inherent self and external society, both of which are indispensable.

3. Research design

We aimed to investigate the terms of god and goddess from the perspective of identity construction, based on the enTenTen21 corpus with the corpus texts themselves and the metadata in the corpus. The Sketch Engine retrieval tool will be employed to search for the terms of god and goddess, and then the collocations and the contextual extensions of these terms will be collected for the analysis of the differences in gender discourse and their discursive construction meanings, to uncover how the discourses of goddess and god are associated with identity construction and their social significance.

The mythological and real-life discourses of gods and goddesses in enTenTen21 are selected to analyze the evolution of the old and new meanings of these discourses of god and goddess, along with their corresponding gender identity constructions and discourse of gender consciousness, to decipher the cultural meanings projected by god and goddess discourses respectively.

3.1. Definition of god/goddess discourse
3.1.1. God/goddess discourse in mythology
The terms god and goddess were created by scholars during the translation of Buddhist scriptures in the medieval period. God emerged as the counterpart to the goddess, expressing the most basic conceptual meaning: God = male + god, and similarly, Goddess = female + god.

3.1.3. God/goddess discourse in reality
In the context of modern society, god and goddess have come into being as social network terms. The connotation of god is social respect for certain outstanding men or idols and is commonly interpreted as generic terms for unattainable individuals. The term goddess has also been extended to indicate a woman who is kind, pure, beautiful, highly qualified, and temperament.

3.2. Research corpus
The enTenTen21 English corpus contains a rich collection related to gods and goddesses, featuring both diachronic and synchronic characteristics from the internet (a subsystem of Sketch Engine). The term god and goddess in the corpus reflects various grammatical relationships, including modification (e.g., a vengeful god), subject-verb (e.g., goddess nurtures), verb-object (e.g., phone goddess), and genitive (e.g., god's goddess). Therefore, we based our analysis on the high-frequency collocations that reflect the external image, internal disposition, power status, and social prestige of god and goddess from both individual and social perspectives.

3.3. Research questions
    (1) Are there any linguistic similarities and differences in the discourse construction of god and goddess in mythology and reality with the reflection of corresponding identity construction at the individual and social levels?

    (2) What does the above sociolinguistic variation mirror from the perspective of identity construction?

3.4. Research methodology
3.4.1. A corpus-driven theoretical analysis perspective
The semantic research is taken as a key orientation in corpus linguistics, owing to its core idea originating from

Firth's Context Theory. To be specific, that is semantic determination through word collocations, i.e., meaning by Collocation. To fully understand lexical semantics or concepts, one can start with words and, through contextual analysis, extend from the immediate context to broader discourse, ultimately achieving word co-occurrence in the socio-cultural context [16]. Utilizing collocations to study identity is a common approach in current corpus-based discourse construction research, with its basic rationale derived from the principle of observing a person in the context of their friends [4]. Similarly, obtaining the high-frequency collocations of the words could help with the observation of an individual in real life. In this research, a corpus-driven analytical mode is adopted to extract examples of interpersonal communication discourse from a large volume of authentic texts in the enTenTen21 English corpus. A comparative study of mythological and real-life god and goddess discourses is conducted as the contextualized analysis to find the externalization and adaptation of self-identity and the internalization and endowment of social identities, thus the objective and dynamic process of self-construction and social construction of identities within the discourse of the god and goddess discourse could be traced.

3.4.2. Research procedures

The Word Sketch and Word Sketch Difference functions in the Sketch Engine retrieval tool are utilized, with the specific steps conducted as follows. The web-based corpus retrieval system (http://www.sketchengine.co.uk) is accessed, and the target set of words is determined, taking god and goddess as an example.

In the enTenTen21 English corpus, god and goddess are separately analyzed via the Word Sketch and Word Sketch Difference functions. Firstly, the Word Sketch function is used to select words that typically collocate with god and goddess, arranged from top to bottom based on the significance of collocation. Then, the Word Sketch Difference function is employed to display both the common and unique collocates of god and goddess, arranged from top to bottom or bottom to top based on the significance of collocation from both ends. Moreover, the inherent high and low significance colors in the enTenTen21 English corpus are used to examine and select high-frequency collocates with god and goddess.

Collocations of god and goddess were to be classified first, then statistically analyzed, and compared. Semantic judgments and analyses based on the data were conducted to discover the discourse construction trends and social construction perspectives of gods and goddesses. Thereby, the co-occurrence significance and social implications after the evolution of discourse could be explored.

4. Findings and discussion

For possible answers to the above research questions, firstly we chose the high-frequency collocations of gods and goddesses, then we attempted to analyze the self-constructed identities (including external image and internal disposition) and socially constructed identities (including power status and social prestige characteristics) embodied in the discourse of god and goddess from the perspective of discourse identity theory, thus exploring the trends and identification of gods and goddesses constructed in myth and reality and revealing how the identity of gods and goddesses constructed, negotiated and identified in specific cultural, historical and social contexts.

4.1. Self-construction

Self-construction primarily refers to the influence of individual factors such as cognition, personality, emotion, and behavior on the formation and development of self-identity construction and recognition. By combing

through the words of high collocation significance with the retrieved words in the enTenTen21 English corpus, we found that the nouns of the meaning of the clothing, and the adjectives of the personality characteristics are the direct expression of individual factors. Accordingly, the external image and internal disposition were selected as important distinguishing criteria for the self-construction of gods and goddesses.

4.1.1. The building of external image

Image refers to a specific form or posture that can evoke thoughts or emotions, and one could express oneself and construct a self-identity system. In view of this, the researchers collected adjectives describing the appearance and power of gods and goddesses, as well as nouns related to clothing from the corpus, which are mainly reflected in the possessive relationships in the discourse of gods and goddesses, as shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1. High-frequency collocations of god/goddess

Nouns	Appearance aspect	Power aspect
God	big, strong, perfect, idol	almighty, awful, mighty, omnipresent, all-powerful, powerful
Goddess	beautiful, young, fair, bright, astral, dress, robe, veil	powerful, omnipotent

The visualization of character images, whether intentionally or unintentionally, reveals the tendencies of self-identity construction and recognition. Goddesses tend to form a style through clothing, lifestyle, and values, serving as cultural symbols for individual identity recognition [17]. The significant differences in the collocations in **Table 1** reflect the varied image positioning of individuals within the community. An overview of the corpus reveals differences in the prominence and richness of adjectives and nouns describing the images of gods and goddesses. The high-frequency words associated with goddesses can be divided into two categories: one is related to appearance and age, such as young, fair, and bright, and the other is related to clothing and adornment, such as dress, robe, and veil. These words are mostly related to appearance, age, or attire, indicating that the image of goddesses in mythology and reality emphasizes visual beauty, with a preference for a more concrete portrayal of external conditions. This corroborates the implicit social norms that seem to always link the standards for goddesses to their appearance. In modern society, characterized by transience, the importance of the goddess image lies more in its referential function, becoming a key indicator of self-positioning and public perception. The attention paid to and expectation over the external conditions of the goddess image gradually integrated aesthetic beauty into the criteria for categorizing goddesses, which established common characteristics of goddesses' beauty across different historical periods, catering to the cultural needs of the audience and creating a space for goddesses to survive in social competition.

The image of god has shifted from adoring power to overall beauty, showcasing different aspects of image identity and enriching their expression of identity. Such words frequently associated with god as almighty, mighty, and all-powerful affirm their greater power and construct their image as powerful beings with strong physiques, prioritizing strength. In modern society, individual identity construction and recognition are dynamic and optional. Consumer culture often positions identity by interpreting individual images, prompting gods to engage in meticulous image packaging before entering public spaces, such as workplaces and public venues [18]. High-intensity words associated with god, including perfect and idol, indicate that gods have begun to pay attention to their appearance, reflecting the audience's expectations for the enhancement of their external image. This diverse pursuit of appearance shows that gods seek individualization and psychological satisfaction in

identity construction, breaking strict gender normative images and practicing the free choice of gender subject identity. By displaying a sense of power, gods differentiate themselves from goddesses, emphasizing their individuality. Simultaneously, gods exhibit a desire for upward mobility, beginning to care about their image, proclaiming self-identity, and constructing a new identity system.

4.1.2. The mapping of intrinsic dispositions

Disposition is a personality trait expressed in an individual's stable attitude towards reality and in the way of behavior corresponding to this attitude. Based on the above research questions, the authors have collected adjectives describing the inner disposition of gods and goddesses from the corpus, as presented in **Table 2**.

Table 2. High-frequency collocations of god/goddess

Nouns	Characteristics of disposition
God	angry, cruel, fickle, petty, indifferent, vengeful, propitious, capricious, jealous, evil, mad, stupid, serpent gracious, faithful, loving, kind, willing, wise, responsible, superior, all-knowing, gifted, omniscient
Goddess	bright, gentle, kind, responsible, skilled, willing

An individual's character is a significant factor influencing identity construction and recognition, which affects how individuals perceive and accept their identity, thereby impacting their identity formation and recognition. In both mythology and reality, goddesses are characterized as gentle and mild. According to statistical data (see **Table 2**), the high-frequency adjectives describing the disposition of goddesses, signify a mild nature. This indicates that goddesses are more elegant and friendly, with greater empathy compared to gods. They strive to avoid contradictions or conflicts with others, refrain from excessive behaviors, and are adept at establishing and maintaining relationships. Consequently, goddesses in myth and reality are often characterized by well-conduct and trustworthiness, playing a role in maintaining social stability and harmony.

The formation of identity is a gradual process that includes selection, creation, maintenance, and management. There are character differences between gods in mythology and reality. Gods in mythology are often depicted as irritable, while gods in reality are portrayed to be gentle. The search by Sketch Engine revealed that the words describing the temperament of mythological gods include angry, indifferent, fickle, and capricious, highlighting their volatile, aggressive, and intimidating nature. This underscores the image of mythological gods as belligerent and conflict-seeking. In the context of the new era, changes in social environment, knowledge structure, degree of socialization, and values inevitably affect individuals' understanding of the connotations and standards of social identity. According to the evaluative standards defined by the discourse of contemporary gods, adjectives associated with real gods include gracious, faithful, loving, willing, responsible, and wise. These reflect a more courteous, proactive, responsible, and sincere aspect of gods. Society uses the evaluative standards of contemporary gods' and goddesses' dispositions to influence the audiences' correct value judgments. Therefore, a diachronic comparison of gods' inner temperaments suggests the impact of the current educational background. It is education that makes individuals gentle yet capable of strength and consciously constructs the image of the intellectual group in which the gods receive education. intelligent yet morally upright, consciously constructing the image of an educated god. Gods gradually construct their understanding of the external world, develop their identity cognition structure, and seek a new balance with the social environment, striving to maintain a positive social identity.

4.2. Social construction

Social construction refers to the influence of factors such as social environment, social relationships, and social interactions on the formation and development of identity, which can be delineated through factors such as occupation, social status, and economic position. An analysis reveals that this semantic tendency is reflected to varying degrees in the subject-verb, verb-object, and possessive structures co-occurring with the retrieved words in the enTenTen21 corpus. Therefore, the discourse related to gender power and social prestige from this corpus is selected to interpret the social construction of gods' and goddesses' identities.

4.2.1. The transformation of power worship

Power is defined as any opportunity to carry out one's will even in the face of opposition within a given social relationship, regardless of its foundation. The verbs and nouns embodying gender power in deities have been collected in **Table 3** and **Table 4** from the corpus, mainly sourced from the search of verb-object, subject-verb, and possessive structures related to gods and goddess discourse.

Table 3. High-frequency collocations of god/goddess

Grammatical relation	God	Goddess
Verbs with god/goddess as subject (god/goddess + V)	fear, damn, know, forbid, ordain, create, command, punish	suckle, birth, bath, nurture, nurse
Verbs with god/goddess as object (V + god/goddess)	thank, serve, believe, please, praise, pray, glorify, damn, blame, reject, overthrow, forbid, renounce, offend	unchain, consort, impregnate, breast, bath, drape, deprave, titillate, debauch
God/Goddess's	earth, truth, commandment, people, law, creature, messenger, word, spirit, promise, goddess, kingdom, judgment, punishment, country, divinity, forgiveness, purpose, power, goddess, child, garden, city-garden, domain	necklace, dormitory, figurine, rite, mirror, womb, robe, breast

Table 4. High-frequency collocations of the genitive case structure of god

Noun	Category	God's + n
Concrete noun	Place	earth, kingdom, garden, city-garden, country, domain
	Person	people, creature, goddess, child, messenger
Abstract noun	Will	truth, commandment, word, spirit, promise, judgment, punishment, purpose, law, forgiveness divinity

In both reality and mythology, gods are often portrayed as authoritative figures who possess more resources, power, and opportunities. As shown in **Table 4**, a further breakdown of possessive structures related to gods reveals two main categories. The first category includes specific people or articles, such as god's goddess, god's child, and god's people, emphasizing the role of gods as possessors and goddesses as possessed, equating them with property and land. The second category includes abstract words, such as god's spirit, god's will, and god's judgment, highlighting the dominant position of gods in discourse and implying the absence of the goddess' discursive power. The structure of god's divinity particularly underscores the divinity of gods, suggesting that goddesses have been reduced from independent divine beings to mere appendages of gods, losing their divinity as their rights are transferred to gods, requiring dependence on them for glory. Additionally, when gods serve as the subject in predicate structures (god + V), high-frequency collocations include damn, blame, reject, overthrow,

forbid, renounce, and offend, indicating that gods are initiators of gender power. This imbalance disrupts gender equality, leading to a belligerent, god-centered society replacing the historically peaceful, goddess-centered society. Gods gradually dominate, establishing a gender power order of god/goddess and dominant/subordinate dichotomy. **Table 3** also lists verbs that collocate with god discourse when they serve as objects (V + goddess), such as thank, serve, believe, please, praise, pray, and glorify, demonstrating that gods are often the beneficiaries of actions. Consequently, the hegemonic power discourse of gods spontaneously results in identity transformations, shaping the subject identity in discourse.

The subject position of gender is not fixed but relative and fluid. As goddesses shift from a dominant to a subordinate position, their gender power correspondingly diminishes. According to **Table 3**, when goddesses function as subjects in predicate structures (goddess + V), high-frequency verbs include nurture, nurse, birth, suckle, and bath, all of which are closely associated with nurturing and life. Ancient humans, guided by fertility beliefs, attributed the origins of all things to the fertility of goddesses, emphasizing their control over reproduction and thus affirming their value and dignity. This recognition established goddesses as life-givers. However, with changes in social production modes, goddesses gradually assumed a weaker position. Analysis of possessive structures related to goddesses reveals that high-frequency collocations primarily involve nouns related to clothing and body parts, such as necklace, mirror, womb, robe, and breast. **Table 3** also presents verbs that collocate with goddess discourse when paired with goddess discourse as the object (V + goddess), indicating that the actions are directed towards the goddess. Examples include drape, which expresses contempt and degradation towards goddesses, constructing them as physically and psychologically vulnerable, susceptible to violence, and of low value. The personal rights of goddesses are not adequately protected, with violations extending beyond physical violence to verbal abuse.

Consequently, the gender power of goddesses has shifted from strength to vulnerability, from life creators to figures susceptible to violence. This shift originates from the initial representation of goddesses in a fertility cult, where reproductive capability earned women some pride during specific periods. Nevertheless, with the rapid development of patriarchy driven by changes in production modes, the power dynamics behind gender were redefined and regulated, granting gods greater authority and nearly entirely diminishing the power derived from goddesses' reproductive functions. The transition of goddesses from principal to subordinate positions has rapidly undermined their exalted status, resulting in a reversal of gender power between gods and goddesses.

4.1.2. The evolution of social prestige

Prestige refers to the comprehensive value assessment of an individual or group by most of society, specifically the degree of social respect they receive. Individuals assume different roles within different groups and encounter varying levels of social prestige. The hierarchical differences in social prestige are more stable and enduring than those in gender power status. Consequently, noun collocations from the corpus that express the social prestige of gods and goddesses are collected in **Table 5**, primarily reflected in the subject-predicate structures.

Table 5. High-frequency collocations of god/goddess

Grammatical relation	God	Goddess
... is a god/goddess	idol, doctor, star, father, Seth, self	mother, ma'am
God/Goddess is ...	glory, witness, sun, Father, ruler, judge, forgiver, life, everything, authority, reality, king, witness, essence, truth, wise, universe, projection, money, mammon, respecter, foundation, protector	Lady, Mother, female, moon, sister, wife, Second, daughter, patron, patroness

The social prestige of gods has been high across different periods but influenced by factors such as history, culture, and social environment, embodying diversity and change. When gods are the subject (e.g., god is a...), high-frequency collocations include mammon and money, affirming that gods have control over production and creation, which gradually leads to surplus or wealth accumulation. The economic base determines the superstructure, and gods play a crucial role in ensuring social-economic expenditures. "In modern society, the positioning of an individual's occupational identity also reflects their status and identity recognition within society. In recent years, gods often refer to social subjects who exert significant influence over themselves and others, commanding high levels of respect. For instance, in **Table 5**, when god is used as a predicate (e.g., ... is god), high-frequency collocations include doctor and Seth, highlighting the impact of professional image on social prestige and reflecting society's high regard for doctors, merchants, and bankers. This aligns with the criteria for evaluating gods and enhances professional identity recognition. Especially during the pandemic, professionals such as doctors, bankers, and merchants have demonstrated medical and business ethics by protecting life and health at the expense of personal interests, establishing the image of modern professional gods. These cases indicate the consistently high social prestige of gods across different periods.

The social prestige of goddesses has evolved with changes in societal concepts and values over time. Historically, goddesses appear more likely to be the second gender, as the existence of the other. When the goddess is used as a predicate (e.g., ... is a goddess) in **Table 5**, high-frequency collocations embody female identity roles such as mother and ma'am. The absence of collocations with specific occupational positions suggests the persistence of the male breadwinner, female homemaker mindset. Goddesses are frequently stereotyped as devoted wives and nurturing mothers, reinforcing the notion that their primary role is within the family, which results in a situation where goddesses are less prestigious than gods in the social system. To overcome this marginalized status, modern goddesses are beginning to assert their demands for collective power and expand their social space. This shift is evidenced by the growing consumer base and increasing purchasing power. It is worth noting that when goddess is the subject (e.g., goddess is ...) in **Table 5**, high-frequency terms such as patron and patroness indicate that, in modern society, more goddesses are experiencing an awakening of social identity, striving for financial independence, and gaining control over their lives.

They are increasingly examining themselves, emerging from the confined domestic space, developing their careers, adjusting their self-identity, and enhancing their economic capabilities. They are transitioning from family members to social individuals, consciously constructing a professional identity for women and challenging male-centered discourse. This transition contributes to a solid psychological foundation for contemporary women's self-respect and survival, playing a decisive role in changing their designation from housewives to goddesses. Moreover, after achieving economic independence, these women often engage in public welfare activities, releasing positive and proactive energy. Such actions facilitate the positive redistribution of social resources, shape their roles in charity work, and position them as advocates and leaders, showcasing the diverse aspects of goddess identity, thus reflecting a fundamental recognition of the benevolent and dynamic spirit of goddesses, and also signifying an enhancement of the discourse power of modern goddesses, which illustrate their growing recognition and status in societal judgments.

From the above comparison of the lexical collocations of gods and goddesses, we found that their construction and identification have experienced dynamical evolution under the dual influences of self-construction and social construction. As society has advanced, early myths have achieved constructive effects on the subtle formation of gender identity achieved constructive effects on the subtle formation of gender

identity, thereby producing and reproducing unequal prestige statuses and establishing distinctly delineated gender images, with gods and goddesses being predominantly represented as independent and dependent figures, respectively.

The perception of male superiority and female inferiority in identification processes cannot be completely eradicated. Thus, the goddess community has not yet undergone a thorough and universal transformation of identity, although progress has been made. As Maslow pointed out, the satisfaction of the need for respect enables individuals to feel confident in themselves, to be enthusiastic about society, and to experience their value and usefulness [19]. Therefore, only by transcending narrow gender perspectives and engaging extensively in social activities can the goddess group achieve a comprehensive and authentic identity characterized by subjectivity. Concurrently, society must continue to deepen reforms, establish sound laws and regulations, foster a supportive group environment, encourage accurate self-categorization among gods and goddesses, strengthen self-shaping awareness, and safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of these groups.

5. Conclusion

Discourse is a product of social interaction, reflecting the group's perception of social phenomena. In the process of communication and application, users are constantly constructing their own or others' gender identities. The evolution of the god and goddess discourse is both a microcosm of economic change and social development and a portrayal of the awakening of individual self-identity. With the changes in time, social environment, and individual experiences, the identity construction of god and goddess also evolves.

Therefore, based on the perspective of social identity construction and relying on the enTenTen21 corpus, the lexical collocation similarities and differences between god and goddess are analyzed. These analyses are conducted across two major dimensions: mythology and reality, examining both self and social levels. From the mythological perspective, gods are constructed with a sense of power, while goddesses are more figurative. Gods are characterized as impulsive, strong, and intimidating, whereas goddesses are gentle, calm, and empathetic. Early goddesses held higher status due to fertility, whereas later gods gained prominence due to wealth accumulation. The construction of gods and goddesses tends toward independent and dependent images respectively, with gods having higher prestige. From the reality perspective, the image criteria for goddesses are higher compared to gods. Both gods and goddesses are characterized as gentle and amicable. Goddesses hold a weaker status, while gods are more influential. Additionally, gods gain higher prestige due to their professional image.

Hence, the construction of gender group identities is closely linked to social needs and historical development. The differences in gender relations have gradually emerged throughout human history and should inevitably diminish and eventually achieve equality with societal progress. The phenomena of god and goddess are products of social and cultural development, influenced by a specific period. The future society should be one of gender reconciliation and collaborative development. Consequently, both men and women should jointly strive for equal development rights in identity construction. The identity construction process facilitates individual self-discipline, autonomy, and a sense of belonging, motivating members within gender groups, which will effectively enhance the identity pride of individuals as members of their group, and encourage them to consciously participate in social activities with a group identity and to strive for the elevation of their group's status, to foster the construction of more high-quality god and goddess identities, promoting the achievement of the significant

societal goal of equal gender identity construction.

It is possible that future research could consider incorporating both synchronic and diachronic corpora to examine the multidimensional development of subjective identity variation, revealing the dynamic negotiation properties of identity. On top of that, corpus analysis cannot be entirely separated from subjective intervention. To enhance the authority of the results, the standardization and computability of the process could be improved. With the development of digital technology, there would be the updated timeliness and richness of corpora. In the future, more empirical data analysis can be utilized, leveraging resource advantages and processing speed to minimize errors and accelerate the pace of linguistic research.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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