

Research on Implication and Intelligence Participation

XU Li^{[a],*}; LI Juan^[b]

^[a]Foreign Language Teaching Department, Inner Mongolia University for Nationalities, Tongliao, China.

^[b]Foreign Language Department, Mechanical Engineering College, Shijiazhuang, China.

* Correspondence author.

Received 5 November 2014; accepted 17 December 2014
Published online 26 January 2015

Abstract

The inference of implication can not separate from intelligence participation in that the process of intelligence participation needs the participation of the thinking of the brain. And the real meaning which the speaker wants to express requires the hearer to think, judge and infer. Therefore, they are interdependent. Moreover, the thesis summarizes the reasons for leading to the misunderstanding of implication. And these reasons can provide the point of penetration for the hearer so as to analyze the implication correctly. In addition, the thesis also summarizes the relationship between intelligence participation and implication. It can guide the hearer to take an active attitude and correct methods to infer the implication through the analysis of the relationship between them. And it will finally realize successful communication

Key words: Implication; Intelligence participation; Language

Xu, L., & Li, J. (2015). Research on Implication and Intelligence Participation. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 10(1), 41-46. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/sll/article/view/6287>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/6287>

INTRODUCTION

Implication, as a phenomenon of speech, is concerned by more and more linguistics and scholars. The reason is that the implication is closely related to our daily

communication. The so-called implication means that the speaker does not express his or her original meaning directly. At this time, the hearer need judge and infer the speech. Only through this kind of process can communication proceed successfully. Intelligence is the basic concept of psychologists. It mainly refers to the ability of knowledge. It is made up of observation, attention, memorization, imagination, the ability of thinking and the ability of language. And the ability of thinking is the core of intelligence. Participation originates from management and organization behavioristics. It shows the state of adults who involve groups and emphasizes on the perception of individuals in the life of groups and the involvement of the emotion (Wu & Wang, 2002). The relationship between intelligence participation and implication is shown by these four aspects: intelligence participation is throughout the whole process of the analysis of implication; the degree of intelligence participation affects the analysis of implication; the methods of intelligence participation contribute to the understanding of implication; the analysis of implication reflects the level of intelligence participation.

1. REASONS FOR MISUNDERSTANDING IMPLICATION

In daily communication, not all the conversations proceed successfully. Part of the reason is that the hearer is not able to understand the implication of the speaker. The thesis summarizes some reasons for misunderstanding the implication, that is, misunderstanding by the inherent characteristics of language; misunderstanding by different linguistic levels; misunderstanding by lack of context knowledge and misunderstanding of different backgrounds of social culture. These four aspects provide the proofs for understanding the implication. Only by breaking down the barrier to these four aspects can the hearer understand the most suitable implication of the speaker's intention. If the

speaker wants to analyze the implication of the speaker easily, the hearer need possess linguistic knowledge, encyclopaedic knowledge and context knowledge and he or she can also master the knowledge of social background of the speaker. This can reduce the chance of misunderstanding the implication.

1.1 Misunderstanding by the Inherent Characteristics of Language

Due to the phenomena of polysemy and homophony in English language, it will lead to the hearer's misunderstanding of the speaker's speech. This kind of misunderstanding is not the limitation of the hearer's ability of understanding. And the reason is that language itself possesses these characteristics. If the hearer understands the speech without hesitation, it will lead to the barrier to communication. Thus, the hearer need be equipped with linguistic knowledge of English. The so-called linguistic knowledge is the knowledge of some speech sound, vocabulary and grammar of some language. The knowledge involves the use of language. Correctly using linguistic knowledge is one of the keys to successful communication. Without certain linguistic knowledge, it is difficult to transmit some complicated information (Huang, 1996). The misunderstanding caused by lack of linguistic knowledge needs daily accumulation of the hearer so as to understand the intention of the speaker. The inherent characteristics of language can not be broken down and the learners should obey to. If communicators do not master the knowledge above, they may not communicate successfully. For example:

- (a) A: She can not bear children.
 B: What a pity!
 A: Oh, no. I mean she can not tolerate children.

There are two understandings of the word "bear". B misunderstands A's meaning. "Bear" here means "tolerate", not "give birth to somebody".

(b) Did you hear about the Frenchman who jumped off the Eiffel Tower wearing a parachute and landed in the river? The police didn't arrest him because he was clearly in Seine (Tan, 2004).

There are two understandings of the paragraph above, because "in Seine" has the same pronunciation with the word "insane". Seine means the Seine River. And insane means crazy. If the word "insane" is put into the sentence, it is also acceptable.

(c) In English, sometimes one word has many parts of speech. And each part of speech possesses different meanings. This aspect of knowledge is difficult to master and needs daily accumulation. For example:

- ① We didn't go (very) far.

Here, "far" is an adverb. It means "from a great distance".

- ② It's far too hot in this room.

Here, "far" is an adverb. It means "very much".

- ③ Let's walk back to the office; it's not far.

Here, "far" is an adjective. It means "being a long way away".

- ④ He is a supporter of far right ideas.

Here, "far" is an adjective. It means "of a political position"

(*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 2001)

Therefore, in the actual communication, there are many linguistic phenomena. And communicators need to distinguish them carefully in order to guarantee successful communication.

1.2 Misunderstanding by Different Linguistic Levels

The different linguistic levels between the speaker and the hearer will lead to misunderstanding. Suppose that a common person talks with a professional who is well educated. The professional will speak some professional terms. It is difficult for the common person to understand. Therefore, the professional can speak some words which are easy to understand so as to break down the barrier to different linguistic levels. For example:

(One day, a mother took her baby to a hospital. Here is the dialogue between her and the doctor.)

A: What's wrong with my baby, doctor?

B: Morse's disease is one of a small number of known diviral diseases in which the primary and secondary stages are caused by two separate viruses or by two morphologically distinct stages of virus. The primary virus, designated TK-112, retards diffusion of beta-keto acids from cells, particularly in the epidermis. The secondary virus, TK-113 ... (Liu & Zhong, 2003)

Though the doctor and the mother live in the same physical environment, they have different linguistic levels. The mother does not master the knowledge of medicine and knows little about the medical terms that the doctor says. Although the doctor explains the disease to the mother, the mother is still confused. This leads to communication failure. Therefore, professionals had better use fewer professional terms when they communicate with non-professionals. Otherwise they will not achieve what they intend to convey.

1.3 Misunderstanding by Lack of Context Knowledge

Context is the considerable factor in the speech communication. If communicators break away from the context, it is difficult to infer the implication of the speech. However, there is the phenomenon of the misunderstanding led by lack of context. Thus, Lyon points that if a person can judge whether the speech is appropriate or not, he or she need be equipped with the following knowledge: (a) Every participant must know the effect which he or she takes in the whole linguistic activity or the position he or she is in. (b) Every participant must know the time and space of the linguistic activity. (c) Every participant must have the ability of distinguishing the formal degree of the scene

of the linguistic activity. (d) Every participant must know what the communicative suitable intermedium as for this scene. (e) Every participant must know how to make the subject of his or her speech and linguistic activity suitable and the importance of the subject as choosing dialects or languages. (f) Every participant must know how to make the field or scope suitable for his or her speech and the scene of the linguistic activity (Lyons, 1977). Only by mastering the knowledge above can the hearer avoid misunderstanding caused by lack of context. Thus, context knowledge is very important in inferring the real intention of the speaker. For example:

A: Pass me the glass of port.

B: There are so many. Which one do you want?

In this dialogue, B does not know which glass of port A would like to because of lack of the specific context. In fact, before the dialogue, A is talking about some information about red wine to other people. However, B does not know what happened just now. And B lacks the mutual knowledge and misunderstands A.

(b) Flying objects can be dangerous.

There are two understandings of this sentence. One can understand that objects which are flying can be dangerous. We can also understand that flying objects can be dangerous. The correct understanding must be according to the context of the article. The hearer need find what the article narrates. If the article writes the content of flying objects, the first understanding is right. If the article writes something about "to flying objects", the second understanding is correct. The judgment and inference are only according to the context.

1.4 Misunderstanding by Different Backgrounds of Social Culture

Communicators may have different opinions on something because of their different nationalities or cultural backgrounds. In other words, they possess different values and have different evaluations on the same thing. Therefore, the people who have the same cultural background are equipped with common basis of culture. They can control the implied meanings and implication easily. On the contrary, the people who are from different cultural backgrounds sometimes may misunderstand the speech of the other side. They even have no idea of the speech. Moreover, some people like adding the implication which does not exist between lines. Thus, language learners need to know of not only the meaning on the surface, but also break away from the interference of the mother language and master the humanity, geography, society, history and culture of other countries in order to make up for the gap. Whether the language is appropriate or not is decided by the knowledge of the social backgrounds of other countries. For example:

(a) A: You speak beautiful English.

B: Thank you. I had very good teachers in the university.

(b) A: You speak beautiful English.

B: No, no. My English is very poor.

In this example, one side is from an English speaking country. And the other side comes from China. Because of different cultural background, it leads to the barrier to communication. The people from English speaking countries like praising others and the people who are praised are easy to accept. However, Chinese people are modest and take a negative attitude. Thus the different cultural backgrounds bring the misunderstanding of the communication.

(c) Husband: Let's go to visit my boss tonight?

Wife: Why?

Husband: All right, we don't have to go. (Cai, 2000)

In this dialogue, the wife is a native American and her husband is an American Greek. The wife wants to know the reason for visiting the boss. However, her husband understands that she refuses to do that and he does not suggest going. The reason is that Americans belong to the people of direct and active personality. They will not accept the additional implication. And Greek people are indirect and negative and it leads to their speech full of implied words.

2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTELLIGENCE PARTICIPATION AND IMPLICATION

The relationship between intelligence participation and implication is shown by these four aspects: intelligent participation is throughout the whole process of the analysis of implication; the degree of intelligence participation affects the analysis of implication; the methods of intelligence participation contribute to the understanding of implication; the analysis of implication reflects the level of intelligence participation.

2.1 Intelligence Participation Is Throughout the Whole Process of the Analysis of Implication

The analysis of implication can not separate from intelligence participation. Intelligence participation is throughout the whole process of the analysis of implication. When the analysis of implication stops, intelligent participation will stop. Moreover, intelligent participation is always ongoing. Whatever the speaker's speech is, the hearer need judge and infer in order to understand the ultimate intention of the speaker. Intelligence participation can not proceed aimlessly. However, it requires that the hearer should take every factor into consideration. These factors include linguistic knowledge, context and mutual backgrounds. Furthermore, intelligence participation is carried out between the speaker and the hearer alternately because the two sides sometimes will not communicate through one

turn-taking and they need to use several or tens of turn-taking when the two sides communicate. Therefore, the speaker at the beginning becomes the hearer later. The two sides both will proceed intelligence participation. That is to say, intelligence participation exists incessantly in the whole process of the analysis of implication.

Without intelligence participation, the conversation can not carry out successfully. Intelligence participation is the necessity of the correct analysis of implication. The intelligence participation we mention being the inferring process of the speaker's speech and in this process the hearer need stimulate all the factors. If the inference is correct, the conversation will go on. If the inference is wrong, it will bring barriers to the conversation. Thus, intelligent participation plays an important role in analyzing the phenomenon of implication. These kinds of relationship of intelligence participation and implication will illustrate in the following examples:

A: What do you think of my new coat?

B: The style is in fashion.

A: Does it match me?

B: It's ok.

It is a short dialogue. A wants to know B's evaluation about his or her new coat. However, B did not like it at all. And then B said that the style was in fashion in order to avoid embarrassment. A at that time inferred that B did not answer the question directly and suspected that he or she did not match the coat. Then A asked eagerly whether the coat was suitable for him or her. At that time, B understood the implication and he or she answered "It's ok" against his or her will.

A: It's a fine day. Where do you want to go?

B: Go shopping. What can I do for you?

A: Do you mind if I can borrow your notebook for a while?

B: Sorry, my notebook was lent to Jim.

A: Do you know I need it eagerly?

B: But Jim will have it for a long time. I'm so sorry.

A: Oh, it doesn't matter.

B: Well, if Jim returns it, I'll tell you.

A: Thank you.

B: Not at all.

In this dialogue, A first talks about weather in order not so directly to mention the thing of borrowing the notebook. From his or her words, B understands that A wants to make demands of something and then B says "What can I do for you?" A tells B at once that he or she wants to borrow the notebook from A. Because A and B are not familiar with each other, B is unwilling to lend the notebook to A. Thus B says that he or she has already lent the book to Jim. From B's words, A reads that the notebook is not at B's home. But A still wants to borrow. So A says "Do you know I need this notebook eagerly?" Even though the book lends to Jim, A still wants to

borrow. From A's speech, B infers the implication that A wants to know when Jim returns the book. If Jim returns the book, he or she will wait for several days. But B at that time says that Jim will have it for a long time. A infers the implication that the notebook will not be returned temporarily. And then A understands the meaning and says "It doesn't matter". At that time, B feels a little apologetic and says "If Jim returns it, I'll tell you and A expresses his or her gratitude.

There are some turn-takings in these two examples. Moreover, the roles of A and B are changed alternately. They are not only the speaker, but also the hearer. They both need to judge and infer the conversational implicature of the speech. The intelligence participation will not stop until the speech comes to an end.

2.2 The Degree of Intelligence Participation Affects the Analysis of Implication

The degree of intelligence participation refers to the input degree of the analysis of implication. As we all know, input degree is different from one person to another. The reason of it is the inattention and the negative attitude of the hearer. Thus, it affects the hearer to infer the implication to a great extent. The degree of intelligence participation is one of the situations to analyze implication successfully. It requires that the hearer should devote himself or herself to the communication and take an active attitude. Only by doing in this way can the communication be successful. Therefore, the people who are active to proceed intelligence participation can understand the implied meaning thoroughly and consider it from different perspectives. However, the people who take a negative attitude or think that his or her participation is ok may misunderstand or produce ambiguity of the speech, which does not achieve the goal of successful communication. Therefore, the degree of intelligence participation plays a positive role in promoting the correct analysis of implication. For example:

(1) A: There is something wrong with me.

B: I'm sorry to hear that.

In this example, A is not very well and he or she wants to go to hospital accompanied by B. But B is not so devoted to the conversation and only expresses his regret. And it shows that B is not so active in the conversation and it leads to communication failure.

A: I'm a little hungry.

B: Where do you want to have lunch?

Here, A wants to ask if there is something to eat in B's house. However, B does not understand the implication and asks "Where do you want to have lunch?" And at last it leads to misunderstanding the real intention of A.

Therefore, the degree of intelligence participation affects the successful communication. If the hearer can be active, he or she may construct a good relationship with the speaker.

2.3 The Methods of Intelligence Participation Contribute to the Understanding of Implication

The methods of intelligence participation include conventional thinking and reverse thinking. Conventional thinking refers to a kind of model which is established by usage. Most of the people will use this kind of model to think of questions and find out the methods through the right direction for the development of the events. And reverse thinking is a kind of important thinking mode. This kind of mode considers questions conversely and uses the methods which most of the people do not realize to use. It can reach the surprised effect. The advantage of reverse thinking is that it can solve the problems which conventional thinking can not do. And it can make the complicated things simple and improve the work efficiency and effect.

Therefore, the hearer can base on these two methods to judge and infer when he or she is in the process of understanding the implication. When the conventional thinking does not function, the hearer can use reverse thinking to infer. The common goal of conventional thinking and reverse thinking is to infer the real intention of the speaker correctly. When the hearer is in the process of analysis, he or she need to choose which kind of method is suitable for inferring the implication. Although reverse thinking is not used commonly, it is the more effective method to infer the implication when conventional thinking does not function. For example:

- A: Will you play your skateboard tomorrow?
B: Yes.
A: Well, can you lend your badminton to me?
B: Of course.

In this dialogue, B infers the implication of A that he or she wants to borrow the skateboard. Here, B uses the conventional thinking. If not, A will not ask this question. And then A understands that B will play and can not lend him or her. At this time, B uses his or her reverse thinking. Now that B will play his or her skateboard tomorrow, his or her badminton can be lent. Thus, A borrows B's badminton and B agrees. Both conventional thinking and reverse thinking are used in this dialogue. When the hearer understands the implication of the speaker, these two methods are the effective ways. In the conversation, although A can not play the skateboard, he or she changes his mind to borrow others. This will not make A so embarrassed and the result is so harmonious.

- (2) A: It has been raining for several days. Your son's business will not be so prosperous.
B: But my little son will earn a lot of money.

A and B are neighbors. One of B's sons is a businessman who does the business of dyeing cloth. If it rains, his business will be affected. Therefore, B infers A's implication and does reverse thinking. Although his business is affected, my little son who is doing the business of umbrella will make money.

From the example, we can understand the fact that reverse thinking is also an effective way to analyze implication with the conventional thinking. Sometimes, if people can change their thinking mode, they may have an active and optimistic life.

2.4 The Analysis of Implication Reflects the Level of Intelligence Participation

The level of intelligence participation is displayed by the analysis of implication. We have mentioned above that intelligence participation in this thesis refers to the hearer's ability of judgment and inference. The inference has solid argument. When the hearer infers the implication of the speaker, it is the embodiment of the hearer's level of intelligence participation. This kind of ability requires that the hearer should not only use his or her wisdom, but also use his or her accumulated knowledge of all the aspects. Thus, once people reply the same sentence, they will have different understandings. And the results of communication are absolutely different. Some are successful and some may lead to misunderstanding or ambiguity. The successful communication is because the hearer mobilizes positive factors, uses the knowledge of all the aspects which he or she masters and even takes an active attitude to do it. However, the communication which produces misunderstanding or ambiguity is because the hearer participates passively and lacks knowledge. And the factors which he or she need to consider are not enough. Therefore, every conversation reflects the hearer's ability of intelligence participation and also the embodiment of his or her ability of all the aspects. Moreover, different people may have different time in analyzing implication. Some people will use short time to infer it and some people will use long time and even analyze wrongly. From this point, it will show the different levels of intelligence participation.

Therefore, the level of intelligence participation is reflected not only by the linguistic level but also by the analytical level. And different levels also reflect different levels of intelligence participation.

CONCLUSION

It concludes the characteristics and effects of intelligence participation and the types and pragmatic values of implication. The characteristics of intelligence participation can make the hearer clear about how to analyze the implication through it and make the guarantee for correct analysis of implication. And the types of implications can provide proofs and directions for correct analysis of implication. That is to say, when the hearer proceeds intelligence participation, he or she needs to have fast speed, take an active attitude, extend the meanings of words and foresee the possible turn-takings. And the introduction of the effects and pragmatic values of implication in this part plays an important role in speech

communication and English practice in that the effects of intelligence participation let us know the complete meanings of the sentences. Although the sentences are elliptical, the hearer can infer the meanings correctly from different perspectives. And the pragmatic values of implication make us know the aim of using implication. At last, only by understanding the relationship between intelligence participation and implication can it be helpful for the hearer to infer the implied meanings.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, J. R. (1983). *Cognitive psychology and its implications*. New York, NY: W. H. Freeman.
- Cai, S. P. (2000). Discourse implication. *Journal of Lujiang University*, (3).
- George, Y. (2000). *Pragmatics*. China: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press
- Grice, H. P. (1975). *Logic and conversation*. New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Huang, G. W. (1996). Three kinds of knowledge of speech generation and understanding. *Foreign Language and Foreign Language Teaching*, (6), 1-8.
- Huang, Y. (2009). *Pragmatics*. Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Leech, G. (1974). *Principles of pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Liu, S. Z., & Zhong, G. S. (2003). Questioning about “dichotomy” of pragmatic failure. *Journal of Guangxi Normal University*, (4), 35.
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. (2001). The Commercial Press.
- Lyon, J. (1977). *Semantics* (Vol.2). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richard, C. (1999). *Psychology: The science of mind and behavior*. London: Hodder & Stoughton Educational.
- Roach, P. (1983). *English phonetics and phonology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, J. (1975). *Indirect speech acts*. New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Sperber, D., & Wilson, D. (1986). *Relevance: Communication and cognition*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Tan, J. Z. (2004). Analysis of ambiguity of English homophones. *Journal of Zhengzhou Institute of Aeronautics Industry Management*, (6), 60.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1962). *The genetic roots of thought and language*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.L.T. Press.
- Wu, F. W., & Wang, J. J. (2002). On the role and participation degree of intelligence influence during the constructing good cognitive structure of mathematics. *Teaching and Management*, (1), 70.