Analysis of the Conversational Implications of Dialogues in Young Sheldon from the Perspective of Politeness Principle

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Abstract: Politeness plays an important role in people's daily communication, and it is a norm for the relationship between people. The politeness principle which was put forward by Leech is a principle to be followed in daily conversations, and it includes six maxims. But sometimes people do not abide by the politeness principle in the dialogue for some reasons, and the whole dialogue contains more implied meaning. The current researches on conversational meaning only from the perspective of the politeness principle are not sufficient. The author chooses the popular American drama Young Sheldon in recent years as the research object. This study adopts the corpus method, and 20 dialogues of the characters selected and analyzed in the first three seasons of Young Sheldon. These dialogues are divided into eight groups from the perspective of observing and violating the politeness principle. According to the context in which these dialogues occur, the author analyzes the implied meaning of the speaker's words and analyzes the reasons how the speaker abides by or violates the politeness principle. It can be found that in most cases, the speaker will abide by the politeness principle and show generosity, praise, agreement and sympathy to the listener. There are also some situations that he violates the principle, such as for self-interest or when both parties have trouble, so the author is able to analyze the deeper conversational meaning of the speaker's words. We can analyze the overall conversational meaning of the dialogue, so that the listener can better understand the speaker's intention and readers could better understand the character's characteristics and the author's real intentions. And it is useful for people's daily communication.

Keywords: Politeness Principle; Conversational Implicature; Young Sheldon

1. Introduction

In 1983, the famous British scholar G. N. Leech explained the important role of politeness in language communication in the book Pragmatics Principles. He proposed the politeness principle for the first time and hold the view that the politeness principle (PP for short) and H. P. Grice's cooperation principle (CP for short) are two principles followed in communication. Leech divides politeness principles into six categories, each category including one rule and two sub-standards.

Young Sheldon, a TV series broadcast on CBS in 2017, is a spin-off prequel of the sitcom The Big Bang Theory. Zoe Perry and Anne Potts were nominated for Best Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series at the 24th American Critics' Choice Awards. In addition, Young Sheldon mainly tells a series of stories of Sheldon Cooper in his childhood in Texas with his family. Sheldon, a boy with high intelligence quotient, so that he is going to high school at the age of nine. He has his own personality and is trying to adapt to the world. His family, classmates and neighbors try to cope with his particular intelligence and social challenge.

In this research, the author wants to make a deep analysis of the conversational implicature (CI for short) of the TV show *Young Sheldon* from the perspective of the PP. The study is to interpret what conversational implicature could be inferred from those dialogues observing or violating maxims of PP and its sub-maxims in *Young Sheldon* and to account for the reasons why people in Young Sheldon violate maxims of PP when they have a communication with each other. At the same time, the character traits can be better revealed by analyzing conversational implicature which is beneficial to understand the plot.

The research scope of conversational implicature theory has become more and more extensive, from the initial research on theoretical knowledge in textbooks to the current research on novels,

dramas, film and television series and so on. However, the current researches on the conversational meaning of the characters in film and television dramas is mostly from the perspective of the CP, and the research from the point of view of the politeness principle is not sufficient. Under the theoretical framework of the principle of politeness, this thesis analyzes the CI of dialogues in Young Sheldon to show how CI is produced by observing or violating the principle of politeness, and illustrates the application of PP to language communication.

2. Literature Review

This part is a general literature review about the relevant researches of the politeness principle overseas and at domestic.

2.1. Relevant Research Abroad

Brown P and Levinson S C proposed that face includes negative face and positive face in Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage in 1987. And they pointed that politeness includes the positive politeness and negative politeness. The former refers to enhancing the degree of politeness of polite words as much as possible, such as expressing agreement and giving praise, while the latter refers to minimizing the degree of impoliteness of impolite words, such as not infringing on the rights of others.

In the book Principle of Pragmatics, Leech put forward the politeness principle (PP for short) in 1983. With the development of the principle of politeness, many researchers have analyzed conversational implicature in novels, dramas, film and television series from the perspective of the PP.

2.2. Relevant Research at Home

In domestic, Ma dengge argued that people can use phonetic and vocabulary methods to express politeness to the listener in English, such as using promotion words or changing the personal pronouns[1]. In 2002, Xiong Xueliang proposed the listener model of the politeness principle, and he believed that the politeness principle is only the basis of polite communication and the corresponding effect on the listener should be considered to judge the real effect[2].

From then on, people began to associate the principle of politeness with conversational meaning. Yang Liu made an analysis of conversational implicature in Pride and Prejudice from the perspective of the cooperative principle and the politeness theory in 2004[3]. Liao Xunqiao believed that as far as the polite effect in "actual politeness" is concerned, whether it is a positive expression or a negative expression, it is possible to produce two polite effects, positive or negative[4]. Now most of the research on the conversational implicature is mainly from the point of view of violating the CP and PP, and there is only a small part of the study of the implied meaning of dialogues in film and television dramas just from the perspective of observance and violation of the principle of politeness.

2.3. Previous Research on Young Sheldon

Since the TV series *Young Sheldon* was broadcast, there have been three main aspects of domestic research on it. The first is the study of subtitle translation. Yuan Lei and Cong Li took the subtitle translation of the American TV series season one as an example and summed up several subtitle translation strategies based on the relevance theory[5]. The second is the study about discourse markers. Xia Xuyuan analyzed the pragmatic function of the discourse marker "oh" from the perspective of relevance theory[6]. The third is the study about the pragmatic analysis of verbal humor. However, there is no research and analysis on the conversational meaning of the character dialogue of the TV series. The dialogues in *Young Sheldon* is very close to the daily life, and there are a lot of dialogues which observe or violate the politeness principle. Therefore, the author will analyze the conversational implicature of the dialogues in Young Sheldon from the perspective of the politeness principle.

3. Theoretical Framework

This part mainly presents a systemic introduction of the theoretical framework of this research, including the main contents of the politeness principle. In his book Principle of Pragmatics, Leech put forward the politeness principle (PP for short) in 1983.

3.1. Nation of Politeness Principle

Leech argues that PP can have a new perspective to explain why people always tend to use an indirect way in expressing their ideas. PP and Grice's cooperative principle (CP for short) are two important principles in communication, and Leech says "the PP can be seen not just as another principle to be added to the CP, but as a necessary complement, which rescues the CP from serious trouble" [7]. There are two examples by Leech to support his ideas.

> A: We'll all miss Bill and Agatha, won't we?
> B: Well, we'll all miss Bill.
> Parent: Someone's eaten the icing off the cake.
> Child: It wasn't ME.

In the first dialogue, we can clearly see that B's answer does not comply with the CP to express his politeness. What A asks is that "we'll all miss Bill and Agatha", but B' answer doesn't mention Agatha. The reason for his answer may be that he does not miss Agatha, but he wants to reply in a polite way.

The second example is a dialogue between a parent "P" and a child "C". We can suppose that P knows that C ate the icing off the cake, but he does not directly use the second-person pronoun "you" but the impersonal pronoun "someone", which is because P wants to use a more polite way to talk with C. Clearly, C understands the implication of P and knows that "someone" is talking about himself, so C's reply is " it wasn't ME".

3.2. Maxims of Politeness Principle

As a general point, Leech reckons that politeness is about a communication between two parties whom we could call self and other. In a conversation, self refers to the speaker, and other denotes the listener or a third party. The speaker would obey the PP to use a polite way to communicate with others. There are six maxims of the PP by Leech in Principle of Pragmatics and they are: Tact Maxim (minimize cost to other and maximize benefit to other), Generosity Maxim (Minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self), Approbation Maxim (Minimize dispraise of other and maximize praise of other), Modest Maxim (minimize praise of self and maximize dispraise of self), Agreement Maxim (minimize disagreement between self and other and Maximize agreement between self and other) and Sympathy Maxim (minimize antipathy between self and other and maximize sympathy between self and other). [7]

From the content of these six maxims of PP, we can see that the tact and the generosity maxim are bipolar and they deal with the cost-benefit scale. The approbation maxim and the modest maxim also can be regarded as one pair because the relationship of the speaker and the hearer or the third party on the scale of praise-dispraise is opposite. The maxim of agreement and the maxim of the sympathy are not relative to each other, for their focus is different.

4. Research Analysis

This part is devoted to the research methodology and the case analysis. Dialogues between characters in Young Sheldon will be analyzed from the perspective of the politeness principle.

4.1. Research Methodology

The main methodology in this research is the qualitative approach. There are three seasons in the American sitcom Young Sheldon. Three seasons include 65 episodes and each episode lasts 20 to 25 minutes. This sitcom is chosen by the author as the data source due to the following three reasons: Firstly, This drama is filled with a lot of daily conversations, which is of great reference to our daily lives. Secondly, this drama was premiered in 2017 and is still being updated now, which is conducive to the future research. Thirdly, there is no such research on the conversational meaning of the dialogues between the characters in this show from the perspective of the principle of politeness.

From this TV series Young Sheldon, 23 dialogues which use or violate the principle of politeness are classified into 8 categories. The author analyzes their respective characteristics and infer the conversational meaning of each conversation based on the theoretical framework of the PP and the CI.

4.2. PP Maxims Applied in Young Sheldon

Maxims of the politeness principle are applied in Young Sheldon. When the characters communicate with each other, they will follow the PP maxims to express the politeness to others. The author classifies all of the dialogues which use the PP maxims into four groups, because the Tact maxim and the Generosity maxim can be regarded as one pair and the Approbation maxim and the Modesty maxim can be regarded as one pair. Each conversation will be analyzed according to the plot and the characteristics.

4.2.1. The Use of Tact Maxim and Generosity Maxim

The first two maxims are the tact maxim and the generosity maxim. These two maxims can be regarded as one pair for both of them are concerned with one aspect about cost and benefit. For the first maxim, the speaker ought to minimize cost and maximize benefit to the hearer or the third party, while the generosity maxim requires that the speaker minimize benefit and maximize cost to himself. So in conclusion, people should benefit others whereas maximizing the cost to themselves. There are two cases that use these two maxims.

Example 1

Mary: You know what, it's okay. The timing wasn't right. Maybe when the kids are older.

George: Okay.

Mary: I guess I'll go get dinner started.

George: How about this? Go ahead and take the job. Yeah, if it turns out Sheldon and Missy can't look out for themselves for a couple hours after school, then... well, we will cross that bridge when we come to it.

(Season 1, Episode 14)

The dialogue takes place between Mary and George after Connie who is Mary's mother refuses to keep an eye on the twins from 3:00pm to 6:00pm five days a week. Elizabeth Sohinki who is the church secretary is currently seeking treatment for a little problem with the under-the counter medications, so the pastor hopes that Mary could fill the position. Mary want to get the job opportunity but no one can take care of Sheldon and Missy after school, so Mary decides to give up the chance in order to look after the kids. But George suggests that "Go ahead and take the job. Yeah, if it turns out Sheldon and Missy can't look out for themselves then, we will cross that bridge when we come to it." for Mary's interests. Mary choose to minimize benefit to herself and George choose maximize benefit to his wife Mary.

Example 2
George: I turn it down.
Missy: Cause you're afraid of Mom?
George: Cause I don't want to live in Oklahoma. We're not moving.

(Season 2, Episode 9)

This dialogue takes place between George and Missy after George turned down a good job offer. George has a shot at a better job as a "Special Teams Coach" at University of Tulsa in Oklahoma. However, Mary doesn't the whole family to move there, because the kids are all settled in with school and friends and Mary got a job at the church. Therefore, even though George wants to accept the job, he still refused it for his whole family. George gives up his career and sacrifices his own interests for the benefit of his family, so his behavior meets the requirements of the generosity maxim.

4.2.2. The Use of Approbation Maxim and Modesty Maxim

The approbation maxim and the modesty maxim are concerned with praise and dispraise, so the two maxims also can be put into one group. For the requirement of the maxim of approbation, the speaker should minimize dispraise and maximize praise of the hearer or the third party. That is to say, people should minimize the dispraise and maximize the praise of other while minimizing the praise and maximizing the dispraise of self. There are three examples that apply the approbation maxim and the modesty maxim.

Example 3
Sheldon: So why did it take people so long to believe in continental drift, when it's obvious that Africa and South America fit together like a puzzle?

Libby: People didn't understand continental drift because they didn't understand seafloor spreading.
Sheldon: I'm both threatened and delighted by your brain.

(Season 1, Episode 15)

This conversation takes place between Sheldon and Libby. Libby is a new friend of Sheldon and Tam. She is very interested in and good at geostatistics. This day, when they eat in the library, Sheldon asked Libby a question about continental drift. Libby give him a wonderful answer, so Sheldon give a big praise to Libby by saying "I'm both threatened and delighted by your brain".

Example 4
Mary: Gene, this is my mother, Connie.
Gene: Now, I would've bet she was your big sister.
Connie: I thought you said he was a good actor.

(Season 2, Episode 6)

Gene Lundy is a teacher and an actor. It is a conversation among Mary, Gene and Connie. When they first meet, Gene praises that Connie looks very young by saying that she was Mary's big sister. Gene's behavior meets the requirements of the Approbation maxim. Connie responded in a modest way to Keane's praise. Her implication is that "I thought you were a good actor, but I can see that you are acting, you are just complimenting me." Her answer is a performance of modesty and conforms to the Modesty maxim.

Example 5
Connie: Mary, you need to know you're doing a fantastic job with those kids.
Mary: You really mean that? I can't remember the last time someone said I was a good mom.
Connie: It's not a job that gets a lot of compliments.

(Season 2, Episode 14)

This dialogue takes place between Connie and Mary. Missy is not allowed to wear makeup but she want to be beautiful, so she took her grandmother's makeup from the bag before she takes school pictures. When Mary asks her about the makeup, she lies that her meemaw gives it to her. Therefore, Mary is so angry because Missy steals things and she lies about it. Missy like Connie for she thinks her mom is not cool, but then Connie tells Missy that "you are the reason she's such a good mom, which she is. And next time you hurt her feelings--which you will--you might remember how much you mean to her." Later, when Mary drops Missy off at school, Missy hugged Mary in front of her friends. Mary tell this event to Connie, and Connie knows her daughter has done a wonderful job with the family, so she gives compliments to Mary. Connie's behavior meets the requirements of the Approbation maxim.

4.2.3. The Use of Agreement Maxim

For the requirement of the maxim of agreement, people should minimize disagreement and maximize agreement between self and other in the conversation. The following two examples use this maxim.

Example 6
Principal Petersen: Now, I understand Sheldon is an exceptional child, all right, but, when he willfully disobeys the order of a teacher, there needs to be some consequences here.
George: Oh, we couldn't agree more.

(Season 1, Episode 13)

This dialogue takes place between the principal Petersen and George after Sheldon leaves the class without a hall pass. Victoria MacElroy who is the teacher of Sheldon has two sneeze at class during the flu season, and Sheldon thinks that "a second sneeze means a plague is upon the land and it's every man for himself", so he immediately packs up and leaves the classroom in order to stay away from the teacher so as not to get sick. Sheldon breaks the rules of the school so the principal thinks Sheldon should be punished in some way. George agrees with the headmaster's idea, and they agree with each other.

Example 7
Mary: And I don't like us making fun of each other. We are family and this should be a place that is safe, where we can talk about anything.
Sheldon: I agree.

(Season 3, Episode 1)

This dialogue takes place between Mary and Sheldon when the family eat dinner. Dr. John Sturgis is a brilliant scientist in the field of theoretical physics. He had a mental illness and enters the mental hospital a while ago. Mary is very worried that Sheldon will be psychologically unhealthy and will be lonely in the future, so she has been particularly concerned about Sheldon's mental health recently. At

the same time, Sheldon feels that Mary seems preoccupied lately and he is also worried about her mental health. So at the dinner, what Mary said is actually to Sheldon, and she hopes Sheldon could communicate more often with the family. Shelton agrees with what his mother said because he hopes his mother can express her worries.

Example 8
Ballard: Uh, I might be able to leave Georgie in charge.
Connie: My grandson?
Ballard: That'd be the one.
Connie: I want to go, so I am just gonna say "good idea."

(Season 3, Episode 20)

This conversation takes place between Connie and her new boyfriend Ballard who is Missy's baseball coach when she accompanied the coach to work late at night. Ballard has a sports shop, and Georgie works part-time here. Ballard says that it is not a bad idea to maybe venture out of Medford once in a while, and Connie thinks that it is even better to go away for the weekend. Ballard suggests that George can look after the store when he is out. In Connie's opinion, she thinks George might not be competent, but she still agrees with his idea because she wants to go.

4.2.4. The Use of Sympathy Maxim

For the requirement of the maxim of sympathy, people should minimize antipathy and maximize sympathy between self and other in the conversation. There are four examples of using the sympathy maxim.

Example 9
Mary: Why didn't you call for help?
Sheldon: I tried, but no sound came out.
Mary: Your poor thing.

(Season 1, Episode 20)

This conversation takes place between Mary and Sheldon when Sheldon was frightened by a dog. Sheldon has been always terrified of dogs. To Sheldon, dogs are nothing but big, funny question marks with teeth. When Sheldon was experimenting in the garage, a dog came in, and he was so scared that he lost his voice and hid in the garage until Missy came and asked him to have lunch. Mary expresses sympathy for Shelton's experience.

Example 10
Missy: Why math is hard for me and so easy for Sheldon?
Mary: I don't know. But you don't have to worry that because you have your own talents.
Missy: Really? I have my own talents?
Mary: Yeah...your hair is very pretty.

(Season 2, Episode 11)

This dialogue takes place between Missy and Mary when Missy has trouble in doing math problems. Missy is very sad because his twin brother Sheldon is very good at math and she is not good at it. Her mother Mary comforts Missy that she also has her own gifts. Although the gift of owning the pretty hair is not like Sheldon's ability to solve math problem, it also make Missy return to be happy. Mary's behavior meets the requirements of the Sympathy maxim.

Example 11
Georgie: I just can't stop thinking about her with another guy, and it is making me crazy.
Mary: Aw. Why don't you come eat something? You'll feel better.
Georgie: I can't. I feel like I got punched in the stomach.
Mary: Trust me, this'll pass. You will meet other girls.

(Season 2, Episode 13)

This is a conversation between Georgie and Mary after Georgie knew Veronica has a boyfriend. Georgie like Veronica very much so he wants to invite her to hang out on Saturday night, but Veronica says that her boyfriend's taking her to dinner. Georgie is so sad when he hears the word "boyfriend" that he doesn't want to eat something. Mary comes to comfort him and show the sympathy to him.

4.3. Conversational Implicature Created by Violating the PP Maxims

Characters in Young Sheldon sometimes deliberately violate the principle of politeness due to the needs of the storyline or other reasons, and in this case, the deep conversational meaning often can be inferred in their conversations. According to their violation of different PP maxims, all of the dialogues

are classified into different classes. In this part, the author will analyse the conversational implicature of the dialogues from the perspective of the violation of the PP maxims.

4.3.1. Implicature by Violating Tact Maxim and Generosity Maxim

Sometimes people will choose to violate the tact maxim and the generosity maxim in order to protect their own interests. Here are three examples.

Example 12
Sheldon: Starting today, I am done helping the football team.
Tam: But if you do that, girls will no longer greet me like this.
Sheldon: I'll greet you like that.

(Season 1, Episode 5)

There is a time when Sheldon has arithmetic ideas for the football team to win the game. Tam tells others he helps Sheldon with math problem, so they become popular in their school. But later, Sheldon makes a mistake on a math test. In his exhaustion, he does all the calculations in his head and forgets to show his work, so he got B+. For him, a B+ is the beginning of the end of his life, and he decides to make some changes. But Tam only wanted to be popular in school and did not consider that Sheldon should focus on his studies.

Example 13
Georgie: How much are we getting paid today?
Connie: You're not getting paid squat. You are helping out your meemaw.
Missy: That doesn't seem fair.
Georgie: Yeah, we should get something.

(Season 2, Episode 7)

This conversation takes place among Connnie, Georgie and Missy. This day, Georgie and Missy help Connie at her yard sale, and they don't want to work for free, so they want some pay. Georgie and Missy don't obey the Generosity maxim. Connie wants them do it for nothing, so Connie doesn't obey the Tact maxim.

Example 14
Georgie: Let me tell you the move: You mix a bag of these with a bag of these... mm, heaven.
A schoolmate: You just want me to buy two bags.
Georgie: I just want you to be happy.
A schoolmate: Fine.
Georgie: And now I'm happy.

(Season 3, Episode 3)

The dialogue takes place between Georgie and a schoolmate. Recently, Georgie orders a box of candy from the Mountain View Candy Company and he is making money selling sweets in the school. He tells his classmates that it is more delicious when these two packs of candies mixed together. He says that "I just want to be happy", but it's not like that. In fact, he wants classmates to buy two packs of candies to make more money. So Georgie seems to think about others, but he actually defends his own interests.

4.3.2. Implicature by Violating Approbation Maxim and Modesty Maxim

Sometimes people will choose to violate the maxim of approbation and generosity maxim when they have a communication with others. At this time, the implied meaning of the conversations usually can be inferred. Here are two example.

Example 15
Dr. Sturgis: Now, does anyone know what happens to quarks when we combine them to make mesons and baryons?
Paige: We can ignore the Particle masses at the individual quark level.
Dr. Sturgis: Correct. You are really...That was correct, Peige.

(Season 2, Episode 2)

It is a conversation between Dr. Sturgis and Paige. Peige is a brilliant girl and is invited to audit Dr. Sturgis' course after Dr. Sturgis heard about her research on quantum chromodynamics at high temperatures. So Sheldon and Paige have classes together. Sheldon might be jealousy because Dr. Sturgis is paying attention to Paige now and Sheldon is no longer the only smart kid in the class. Connie Connie told the professor about Sheldon's emotions, so this time there was no praise for Peige's answer.

Example 16
Ms. Hutchins: Oh, hey. 95. Good job.
Sheldon: Really? I'm here every day and it is like you don't know me at all.

Ms. Hutchins: Oh, okey. Aw, 95, too bad.
Sheldon: There we go.

(Season 2, Episode 15)

The dialogue takes place between Sheldon and Cheryl Hutchins who is a school librarian. The very first grade Sheldon ever received was a "super-duper". Even as the difficulty of assignments grew, he maintained the same level of excellence. In every class, in every subject, he is perfect. But this day, he gets 95 at Dr. Sturgis's test. He thinks Dr. Sturgis made a mistake, so he cut class to work on the math problem in the library. For Ms. Hutchins's praise, Sheldon does not respond modestly, and what he says means that "you should understand me very well. Is 95 points good for me?" So she turned to say that it was too bad. So Sheldon's behavior violates the maxim of modest and what Ms. Hutchins says later does not observe the maxim of approbation.

4.3.3. Implicature by Violating Agreement Maxim

According the maxim of agreement, the participants should increase agreement of the speaker and the hearer as much as possible in communications, but people may not agree with others for some reasons sometimes. There are four examples of violating the agreement maxim.

Example 17
Connie: Well, I don't understand hoe you could turn this down. This place looks fantastic.
Mary: It is 200 miles away, Mom.
Connie: I know where Dallas is. I used to buy my marijuana there.

(Season 1, Episode 10)

This dialogue takes place between Connie and Mary when Mary refused the chance to go to the Wilmot Academy for Gifted Children which is a private school because the school is three hours away. Mary thinks Sheldon is a just "a wee little thing", so they cannot ship him off to Dallas though the school will look for a local family for him to live with. However, in Connie's opinion, this would be a great opportunity for Sheldon because the curriculum in the high school is not challenging enough for Sheldon and he should express himself in the most productive way. Both of them are thinking of Sheldon, but they does not agree with each other.

Example 18
Mary: I can't believe you didn't make him go to class.
George: You told me to handle it. I handle it.
Mary: You didn't handle it. You didn't do anything.

(Season 3, Episode 2)

The dialogue takes place between Mary and George when George and Sheldon came home from school. Sheldon thinks that he can not learn anything in class, so he spends his day in a broom closet in the library which he regards as "a citadel of higher learning". He has learned many things by himself, like the applications of gravitational lensing and Faraday's law of magnetic induction. George works as a football coach at Sheldon's school, so it is more convenient for him to deal with Sheldon's affairs than Mary. But George was used to finding Mary to solve the family's affairs, so he called her. However, Mary also has a job, so she asks George to solve it by himself. As you can imagine, George did not solve the problem. They two do not reach an agreement on this matter.

4.3.4. Implicature by Violating Sympathy Maxim

According to the sympathy maxim, the participants should minimize antipathy between the speaker and the hearer and maximize sympathy between the speaker and the hearer, but communicators may not show their sympathy for some reasons in daily conversations sometimes. Here are two examples.

Example 19
Sheldon: Mom! Meemaw swatted me on the bottom!
Mary: What? Why?
Sheldon: I want something, and then she said no, and then I called her selfish, and then she went crazy!
Mary: Let me call her.
Missy: Really? You don't want to thank her in person?

(Season 3, Episode 3)

This dialogue takes place among Sheldon, Mary and Missy when Shelton runs home to complain about his grandmother Connie. Connie told Sheldon that they might not go to that robotics lecture because Dr. Linkletter may be using Sheldon to spend time with her, but Sheldon does not believe it and calls to Dr. Linkletter to ask him about this thing. Dr. Linkletter lied to Sheldon and Sheldon comes to Connie to tell her that she is wrong and she is incredibly selfish. Actually Sheldon is the man who cares about himself and does not care about others want, so Missy says to Mary that she should go to Connie to thank her. Missy does not express sympathy for Sheldon.

Example 20
Sheldon: And then my mother said I was not mature enough for college. Can you believe it?
Tam: Absolutely.
Sheldon: So you are on their side, too?
Tam: I am Vietnamese. In my culture, until your parents die, you are basically a baby.

(Season 3, Episode 18)

This dialogue takes place between Sheldon and Tam after Dr. Sturgis finished writing the thesis and he allows Shelton to read it. After Sheldon read it, he found a critical error in the paper and made suggestions. He completely rewrite the whole thing from scratch. Sheldon believed that his name should be put on this paper, but the doctor does not agree with him. And then Sheldon accuses Dr. Sturgis of plagiarism. Mary thinks that Shelton should apologize to the doctor and it is time to take a break from his college classes. Shelton wants to get support and comfort from Tam, but Tam does not comfort him, which violates the sympathy maxim.

5. Conclusions

The dialogues occupy a great part in TV series. The implied meaning of dialogues is called conversational implicature. This study conducts a tentative research to analyse the implicature. The author selects representative conversations from Young Shelton and analyzes the implied meaning of each dialogue related to the observance or violation of the politeness principle.

On the one hand, the occurrence and interpretation of implicature have a great relationship with the PP. In most cases, the maxims of the politeness principle will be observed in daily conversations, because observing the principle of politeness is conducive to maintaining a good interpersonal relationship with others. People should consider the interests of others and look at the problem from the perspective of others. On the other hand, the characters may violate some certain maxims of the politeness principle for some reasons sometimes, and once the principle is violated, the dialogue usually can be inferred the implied meaning according to the events of the story and the characteristics of the characters.

In spite of the achievements mentioned above, there are lots of limitations in this research due to some reasons. The following are the main aspects. Firstly, the data collected should be expanded. The study takes some dialogues from Young Sheldon season one to three as the research object. There are 61 episodes in three seasons, and it lasts almost 1,200 minutes. The author chose not enough dialogues chosen by the author is not enough to analyze more objective results. And the fourth season of this American TV series is being updated, so the future corpus can be selected from the fourth season. Secondly, this paper takes the Leech's PP as the theoretical framework to analyze, and there are other theories that can be adopted to analyze the implicature, such as Face-saving Theory proposed by Brown and Levinson [8]. Third, it is concerned with the limitation of the author's time and ability. There is a possibility that some typical examples about the observance or violation of the maxims of PP are not mentioned in the paper, while they are worth analyzing.

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