Journal of Education and Educational Research
ISSN: 2957-9465 | Vol. 8, No. 1, 2024

A Pragmatic Study on English Listening Comprehension from the Perspective of Grice's Conversational Implicature Theory in High School

-- Taking Texts on "Travel" as an Example

Junjiao Yang

School of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, 401331, China

Abstract: For high school students, English listening is a crucial part of English examinations. Over the years, researchers all over the world have made significant contributions to the study of English listening, and they have found that conversational implicature theory can be applied to listening instruction to make students understand the implicit meaning of conversations. But previous studies have usually failed to summarize the main features of conversations that violate the principle of cooperation and lack corresponding suggestions for listening instruction. In this paper, the high school English listening texts related to travel will be studied from the perspective of conversational implicature theory. With careful analysis, the characteristics of the listening text are summarized. The text always adds new information, reject invitation euphemistically or using complex sentences by violating cooperative principle. In addition, a quantitative analysis of the text on the theme of "travel" that violates the cooperative principle is carried out, which leads to corresponding teaching suggestions: teachers should introduce relevant pragmatics knowledge in listening teaching, and students are obliged to pay attention to the accumulation of cultural knowledge when learning English.

Keywords: Conversational Implicature Theory; Cooperative Principle; Pragmatic Study.

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

Listening is a significant part of language learning, and is an important indicator of a language learner's level. In the listening part of an English test, the ability of students on comprehending, reasoning, and converting phrases into synonyms are tested. The listening part usually accounts for 30 marks in the English examination in high school, which is a crucial part. At present, although English teachers attach great importance to listening training, the listening training for students focuses mainly on mechanical practice but lacks the analysis of text and the development of students' comprehension and reasoning ability. To address this problem, this paper studies communicative language in high school English listening from the perspective of Grice's Conversational Implicature Theory. It mainly focuses on listening texts with the theme of "travel", and proposes corresponding opinions on the shortcomings of high school listening teaching in order to improve high school students' abilities and strategies in listening.

1.2. Research Purpose and Significance

In recent years, the requirements of the English test in high school for students' comprehension ability, synonymy transformation ability, inferential ability have been increasing gradually. Therefore, it is crucial to improve English teaching methods on listening. Previously, there have been a host of researches on English listening at home and abroad, many of which explore listening teaching methods on the basis of practice, but there is a lack of detailed theoretical analysis on the characteristics of daily dialogue in the listening texts of the English test in high school. This paper aims at making a pragmatic analysis of daily dialogue in college entrance examination English papers from the perspective of Conversational Implicature Theory (taking the travel-themed listening text as an example), and finding out the characteristics of the text and topic of daily dialogue in college entrance examination English listening, then putting forward suggestions on students' listening learning as well as teachers' emphasis on listening teaching.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Foreign Studies on Language Learning from the Perspective of Conversational Implicature Theory

In the 1960s, pragmatics became an independent branch of linguistics and was studied by many linguists. Since Grice first proposed a discussion on the conversational implicature, the theory has become popular among linguists. Grice himself further refined the conversational implicature theory and proposed cooperative principle. Grice suggested that both speakers of a conversation should contribute appropriately to the conversation according to a common purpose (Grice, 1975).

Since the appearance of the conversational implicature theory, more and more theories about meaning of conversation have been put forward. G. N. Leech (1983) came up with the politeness principle as a supplement to the cooperative principle.

With the development of the conversational implicature theory and the cooperative principle, many researchers began to study the language teaching under the theories. Lawrence F. Bouton (1994), through comparative tests, found that when the conversational implicature was not deliberately imparted to students in the process of learning second language,

students acquired the second language slowly.

Broersma David (1994) investigated whether learners of English as a Second Language could learn implicature through explicit teaching. Data was drawn from an earlier experiment and analyzed for this purpose. Subjects were foreign university students with advanced English proficiency. The result showed that when the professor taught the students to analyses conversational meaning, the language performance of students improved significantly.

Michael Buckhoff (2004) claimed that teachers should teach students the conversational implicature theory proposed by Grice in order to improve their listening skills. In his research, he found that students who received explicit instruction of conversational implicature theory got higher scores than those students who did not know the co nversational implicature theory.

2.2. Domestic Studies on Language Learning from the Perspective of Conversational Implicature Theory

Domestic research related to listening instruction began in the 1990s. Shu Yunxiang (1992) divided the listening process into three steps, identifying speech information, understanding phrases and sentences of the material, and finally understanding the discourse. With the study of English listening in China, the theory of conversational implicature has been widely used in listening teaching. Early studies mainly introduced this theory from different perspectives, such as He Zhaoxiong (1994), Xiong Xueliang (1997) and Jiang Wangqi (2000). Later, scholars began to study the role of conversational implicature theory in listening practice.

Li Yalin (2003) studied the connection between listening teaching and conversational implicature, and she pointed out that teachers should conduct listening teaching based on the theory of conversational implicature and encourage students to make reasonable inference.

Ni Xiuying (2008) further studied the relationship between conversational implicature theory and listening comprehension. He thought that whether the theory of conversational implicature could be deduced correctly was the key to solve the listening problem.

Song Xiuxian (2013) conducted practice in high school English teaching and concluded that teaching students conversational implicature theory and other relevant pragmatic knowledge helped improve students' accuracy in listening tests.

Previous studies have gradually proved that the theory of conversational implicature is of great help to foreign language teaching and listening comprehension. However, these studies also have some shortcomings. For example, in the process of studying middle school English listening, researchers lack a summary of the characteristics of listening texts, which will be discussed in this paper.

3. Theoretical Foundation

3.1. The Introduction of Conversational Implicature Theory

H. P. Grice (1967) proposed the theory of conversational implicature when he gave a lecture at Harvard University. Grice said that speakers in a conversation expect the conversation to be truthful, relevant, clear, brief, and informative as it is supposed to be. But if the literal meaning fails to meet these expectations, the listeners will search for another possible meaning for that utterance in that particular context, then they tend to assume the latter meaning to be the message the speaker intend to convey. Thus, it becomes a common phenomenon that the speaker's words go beyond the literal meaning and require the listener's speculation. Obviously, such speculation does not affect the communication between speakers.

Grice divided the meaning of conversation into natural meaning and non-natural meaning. He proposed that the natural meaning was the literal meaning of the words and sentences themselves, which was not affected by the speakers or the background information. For example, “those spots mean measles”. This sentence shows the literal meaning that those spots are the symptom of a kind of disease called measles. This symptom is not an artificial creation but an objective fact that cannot be changed by human’s will. So in this example the verb “mean” is the natural meaning.

As for non-natural meaning, according to Grice (1975: 180), it tends to be artificial, which means that the non-natural meaning shows the intentions of the speakers. For example, “Those three rings on the bell mean that the bus is full”. It is not hard to see that, unlike the previous example of the natural meaning, the "bell ringing means the bus is full" in this example is a rule that created by human beings. That is the reason why Grice believes that the “means” in this example shows non-natural meaning.

3.2. The Characteristics of Implicature

According to Grice (1975:180), conversational implicature has five characteristics.

Calculability

As long as both sides of the conversation have enough common information, such as the same language, linguistic and situational context, and relevant background knowledge, then even if the speaker says something illogical or meaningless, the listener can easily infer the speaker's meaning.

Cancellability

The presence of a conversational implicature depends on the factors such as the conventional meaning of words used, the Cooperative Principle, the linguistic and situational context, etc. So the implicature can be cancelled by the change of any of these factors.

Non-detachability

When it comes to the conversational implicature of the utterance, the decisive factor is the content of the conversation instead of the means of the conversation. Therefore, if the words in the conversation are replaced by their synonyms, the conversational implicature will not change.

Non-conventionality

The meaning of a conversation is not simply literal. It may change as each element of the conversation changes, for example, the context, the background information and the language that speakers use.

3.3. The Cooperative Principle

3.3.1. The Four Maxims for Conversation

Grice (1976: 101-102) proposed four maxims for conversation, namely, the maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relation, and maxim of manner.

The maxim of quantity: Make your contribution as informative as required, and no more.

The maxim of quality: Try to make your contribution one that is true.

i. Do not say what you believe to be false.

ii. Do not say what lack evidence.

The maxim of relation: Make your contribution relevant.

The maxim of manner: Make your contribution perspicuous.

i. Avoid obscurity of expression.

ii. Avoid ambiguity.

iii. Avoid unnecessary prolixity.

iv. Be orderly.

3.3.2. Violation of the Maxims

Ideally, speakers should follow the four maxims above to achieve the most effective exchange of information. However, the conversation in reality often has to violate the Cooperative Principle. People often deliberately violate the Cooperative Principle in order to make the listener understand what they mean beyond their words. At the same time, listeners should infer the intended meaning of the speaker based on common sense, the speaker's tone, the context, and other actual factors.

Violations of the maxim of quality

He is made of steel.

Obviously, a person cannot be made of steel, so this sentence violates the maxim of quality. (It aims at showing that he is very staunch.)

Violations of the maxim of quantity

A: How old is your kid?

B: Six years old. He is kind of naughty.

In this conversation, the speaker B adds information that is irrelevant to the question, clearly violating the maxim of quantity.

Violations of the maxim of relation

A: Actually I don't like him.

B: Well, ah, it is a fine day today.

To avoid unpleasantness, the speaker B violates the maxim of relation by saying something that is totally irrelevant to what the speaker A says.

Violations of the maxim of manner

A: Do you want some snack?

B: OK, but I don't want to eat C-H-O-C-O-L-A-T-E.

It is obvious that the speaker A wants a clear and concise answer, but the speaker B, in order to express that he dislikes chocolate, violates the maxim of manner.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Questions

4.1.1. What are the Characteristics of High School English Listening?

4.1.2. How Should We Improve Teachers' Teaching and Students' Learning According to the Characteristics of Listening Texts?

4.2. Subjects

In this study, listening texts in high school English examinations are analyzed. Primarily, the frequency of violation of the cooperative principle in English listening in the last five years of the college entrance examination is counted, from which it can be seen that the maxim of quantity is violated most frequently and the maxim of manner is violated the least. Additionally, In high school English listening, some typical dialogues that violate the cooperative principle are also analyzed in detail in order to derive their main features.

4.3. Research Methods

In this paper, literature induction method is used to summarize the domestic and foreign listening teaching related to conversational implicature. Using qualitative analysis, this paper mainly analyzes the listening texts in the high school English examinations and summarizes the characteristics of the texts. Moreover, by studying the statistics on the number of violations of the cooperative principle, this paper adopts a quantitative analysis method. Also, it finds out the relevant requirements of daily conversations in English college entrance examination questions on students' listening ability, and then puts forward suggestions on listening teaching.

5. Analysis of Listening Text on "Travel"

In high school English listening, violation of the cooperative principle is a very common situation, and characters in the conversation often show their implied intention by violating the cooperative principle. In this section, the frequency of violation of the cooperative principle in the last five years of high school English listening will be counted, and then examples from high school English exams about travel will be discussed.

5.1. Statistics on the Number of Violations of the Cooperative Principle

Table 1. Statistics on the Number of Violations of the Cooperative Principle in the English National Examination of the Previous Five Years

	Violating the maxim of quantity	Violating the maxim of quality	Violating the maxim of relation	Violating the maxim of manner
2023 National Paper I	6	2	3	0
2022 National Paper I	5	3	4	0
2021 National Paper I	6	2	2	1
2020 National Paper I	7	3	2	0
2019 National Paper I	4	2	1	1
2018 National Paper I	5	2	2	0

In order to count the frequency of violating the cooperative principle, the violations of the principle of cooperation in English listening in the 2017-2022 college entrance examinations are counted in this paper.

According to the data, it can be seen that the distribution of violations of the principle of cooperation in English examinations is uneven. It is easy to see that violations of the quantitative principle are the most common, occurring every year and in high numbers. While the fewest texts violate the modal principle, and in some years, there are even no violations of the modal principle. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to analyses the texts from the perspective of Grice's conversational implicature theory and conclude the dominant and recessive features of them to improve the listening skills of students.

5.2. Analysis of Examples Violating the Cooperative Principle

5.2.1. The Violation of the Maxim of Quantity

Example 1: (January, 2021, Zhejiang Province)

A: Hey, let's go for a picnic somewhere this weekend.

B: Good idea. Can Jack go with us? He's tired of taking exams these past two weeks.

A: I don't think so. He's going on a trip this weekend with his school.

Q: What will Jack do this weekend?

In Example 1, the speaker A invites the speaker B to go for a picnic. But the answer of the speaker B violates the maxim of quantity. The reason is that the speaker B wants to go with Jack. If we assume that speaker B is willing to cooperate, then it can be inferred that B is willing to go to the picnic, except that he wants to invite Jack to come along. The question of the text is what Jack will do this weekend. It also examines the students' ability to filter information.

The speaker B violates the maxim of quality because he wants to provide some unrelated information-Jack took exams in the past two weeks. There are many students who do not understand the meaning of the dialogue and mistakenly believe that Jack will be taking some tests. But the key message is in the last sentence of speaker A - Jack will travel with the school next week.

Example 2: (2021, National Paper)

A: David, how was your holiday?

B: Great, I climbed Mount Fuji. It was really beautiful. Now I can check one more thing off my list.

A: Your list?

B: Yes. When I was 12, I made a list of things I wanted to do some day.

Q: What is on David's list?

It is obvious that in Example 2, the speaker A asks only about the holiday. The answer of "Great, I climbed Mount Fuji. It was really beautiful" is enough. But the speaker B gives some unrelated information that the speaker A does not ask, violating the maxim of quantity. Also, the extra information makes the text more difficult and requires more comprehension from students. Speaker B's violation of the cooperative principle also indicates that he does not just want to discuss the topic of travel, but to tell A some new information about the to-do list he made for himself when he was 12 years old. The question of this text is also about this list, which also requires students to be able to understand the whole text as much as possible, so the answer to the question will not be placed at the beginning of the text but in the later part.

5.2.2. The Violation of the Maxim of Quality

Example 3: (2020, Jiangsu Province)

A: If it is rainy tomorrow, we may as well give up the idea of going hiking.

B: But the weather forecast says it will be sunny tomorrow morning.

Q: What does the woman imply?

In Example 3, the speaker A says he won't go out if it rains tomorrow, and the speaker B says the weather forecast predicts a sunny day tomorrow. Here the speaker B violates the maxim of quality, because she is not sure if tomorrow will be a sunny day. It is not difficult to infer what she wants to express beyond her words. She is very hopeful that she could go for a hike tomorrow, which is why she says something she wasn't sure about. This requires students to be able to infer the intention of the speaker B from her words.

Example 4: (2020, Tianjin Municipality)

A: I want to invite Rose to travel with me but I don't know if she has time.

B: That's great, but I heard she's planning to volunteer in Africa this summer. Maybe I can go with you.

Q: What Rose might do this summer?

In the Example 4, the speaker A expresses a desire to travel with Rose, while the speaker B says that Rose might go volunteer. It is not difficult to infer that the speaker B is not sure whether Rose is going to volunteer. Although it is just hearsay and the source is not always reliable, the speaker B tells speaker A the news. The speaker B violates the maxim of quality by saying something that lacks of evidence. Students should infer what Rose will be doing this summer through the words of the speaker B.

5.2.3. The Violation of the Maxim of Relation

Example 5: (January, 2020, Shandong Province)

A: How about driving to the beach this weekend?

B: There are too many people there. I prefer a picnic in the woods or by the lake.

A: Then let's go to the lake. It's just an hour's drive from here. We can bike around the lake and swim after the picnic lunch.

B: You're always so sporty. Bring your bike if you like. But I will bring a good book with me.

Q: What will the speakers do?

In Example 5, A asks B if she wants to go to the beach by car. The speaker B does not directly answer whether she would go to the beach, but she said that there were too many people, which was not directly related to the speaker A's question. The answer of the speaker A violates the maxim of relation. Actually, it is a euphemistic rejection of the speaker A's invitation. Therefore, B then offers her suggestion of a picnic in the forest or by the lake. This type of question requires students to be able to understand the speaker's intentions through the speaker's violation of the cooperative principle. For example, when speaker B says that there are too many people, she actually want to express that she does not want to go to the picnic. If students want to get the correct answer, they have to infer this intention of the speaker B. Otherwise, they will make mistakes.

Example 6: (2020, National Paper I)

A: Hi, Henry, did you say you are going to take a vacation next week?

B: Actually, I'm leaving for San Francisco this weekend.

A: Cool. But I can't get away until the end of August.

Q: When will Henry start his vacation?

The speaker A asks The speaker B whether she is going to take a vacation. Actually, an answer of " yes" or "no" is enough. The speaker B, however, does not answer the question directly. She violates the maxim of relation and says something that is irrelevant to the question- She will go to San Francisco this weekend. In fact, this is a negative answer to A's question that the trip starts on this weekend but not the next week. This requires students to be able to correctly understand the meaning that speaker B is trying to convey.

Such kind of example is quite common in English listening, and they mainly test whether students can understand the meaning of key phrases such as "take a vacation" and "leave for". In addition, the text of this question is relatively short and requires students to concentrate and understand the conversation correctly in a short period of time. Consequently, students need to focus on practicing such questions.

5.2.4. The Violation of the Maxim of Manner

Example 7: (2020, Shanghai Municipality, Model test 2)

A: Didn't John go skiing with you last week?

B: Even if he hadn't so much work to do, he would prefer staying at home to participating in sports.

Q: What did John do last week?

The maxim of manner requires the speakers in conversations speak with brief and clear words. The speaker A asks the speaker B whether he will go skiing with John. Speaker B could have simply said "John didn't go with me", but he chooses to use subjunctive mood and complex expression to explain that John didn't go because he had a lot of work to do.

This dialogue is very difficult for students to understand, because it requires them not only to understand the meaning of simple phrases, but also to master the subjunctive mood. Students often fear such questions because they combine listening, vocabulary and grammar. So students need more practice with this kind of listening tests.

Example 8: (2021, Shanghai Province)

A: Hi, John ! Haven't seen you for quite a while. Are you fine ?

B: Oh, yes. But luck seemed to be against me. When I traveled in America, I had a car accident; only some minor injuries, though.

Q: What happened to John ?

In Example 8, the speaker A asks the speaker B how he is doing recently, and the answer of the speaker B violates the maxim of manner. The speaker B says "luck seemed to be against me", which may confuse students, because they do not understand the meaning of the sentence. Even though the speaker B says he has been well lately, it is clear that according to the redundant information that follows, he had a car accident. So he violated the maxim of manner because he didn't want to make the speaker A worried. Therefore, the student should also be able to infer what the speaker B means--although the speaker B has suffered a car accident, he should have recovered well by now and should not need to worry. But the key information in this question is after the "but", so filtering out the correct information is not difficult for students.

5.3. The Characteristics of the Text

5.3.1. Violating the Maxim of Quantity Most Frequently

As can be seen from the statistics above, violations of the maxim of quantity are the most common in English listening, while violations of other maxims are less frequent. In listening tests, speakers add additional information by violating the quantity principle, and the key to answering questions is often in the section where the quantity principle is violated, which requires students to infer the speaker's true intentions. As Examples 1 and 2 demonstrate, speakers express their views or opinions by violating the quantity principle to provide additional information.

5.3.2. Adding New Information by Violating Cooperative Principle

In these conversations, the speakers often add new information by violating the cooperative principle, and the questions left for the student are usually not at the beginning but in the middle or at the end of the conversation. The reason why they violate the maxim of cooperative principle is that they have something more to tell. And in most cases, the question is concerned about the new information, as in the first example of the cases that violate the maxim of quantity. Consequently, students should be fully attentive at all times during the listening test, and to be sensitive enough to the presence of new information.

5.3.3. Rejecting Invitation Euphemistically by Violating Cooperative Principle

These conversations about travel often involve a situation in which one speaker invites another speaker to go out on a trip. While the invited person will always be unable to go for some reason, such as being sick, already having an appointment with someone else and having a work assignment. Therefore, they tend to respond by saying something seemingly unrelated to the questions to express a euphemism for refusal. Students, if they want to understand the intention of the speakers beyond literal meaning, they should not only understand the meaning of the words and phrases, but also determine in context why the person says something that is not relevant to the question.

5.3.4. Using Complex Sentences to Increase Difficulty by Violating Cooperative Principle

In some areas where the English test is more difficult, the listening text may even use more intricate sentences or contain more difficult grammar. As for the example mentioned above, the speaker B uses the subjunctive mood when he says "Even if he hadn't so much work to do", which may bewilder many students with poor grammar. Therefore, students should focus on not only the vocabulary in listening, but also the grammar part. Because it is likely to increase the difficulty of the text by increasing the difficulty of grammar in listening tests.

6. Suggestions on English Listening Teaching and Learning

6.1. Necessary Pragmatic Theories

Conversational implicature theory is instructive in understanding extra-verbal meaning, so teachers can introduce the introduction of conversational meaning theory in the process of listening instruction, which should be used as an aid to listening instruction because it is complex and difficult for students to fully understand. At the same time, teachers should carefully choose the content and methods of teaching to ensure the scientific and effective teaching of listening.

The teacher is the designer of the teaching content and the

guide of the students. The teacher should be clear about the content and methods of teaching and what he or she wants to achieve in the teaching process. Many students have difficulty in improving their listening skills because they lack some necessary knowledge of pragmatics, for instance, the conversational implicature theory mentioned in this paper. Therefore, it is necessary and helpful for the teacher to impart some theoretical knowledge to the students.

In the process of listening teaching, teachers need to introduce the conversational implicature theory into the class and explain the application of the conversational implicature theory in four aspects: the violation of the maxim of quality, the maxim of quantity, the maxim of manner, and the maxim of relation. At the same time, the teacher should combine the pragmatic theories with actual examples to make the students comprehend them better. After the students understand the relevant theories, they are then asked to analyze the intention of the speakers.

In addition, teachers should impart necessary knowledge of pragmatics and important theories, such as the conversational implicature theory, the speech act theory, and the politeness principle. Understanding these essential theories is beneficial to enhance the listening skills of students.

6.2. Relevant Cultural Background

It is widely recognized that language is the carrier of culture and culture finds a better representation through language use. In the process of learning a foreign language, it is not only vocabulary and grammar that hinder learners, but also cultural factors.

Cultural differences refer to the differences in language, knowledge, values, way of thinking and behaviors formed by people living in different natural and social environments. In the process of English learning, most of the listening material we use is real language material, and the history, social background, social identity, status, knowledge and cultural literacy of both sides of communication will have an impact on the inherent meaning of the conversation. For example, in the daily conversation, Chinese people tend to be modest and polite, while Westerners are more straightforward and enthusiastic; Chinese people often ask about age, marriage and income, while Westerners think these questions are invasive of privacy and kind of offensive.

Consequently, when teachers use conversational implicature theory to guide listening instruction, teachers should also supplement cultural knowledge so that students understand the common sense and customs of the target culture in order to better comprehend the conversation.

Example 9:

A: Have you seen Johnny recently?

B: Of course. I saw him many times. He always drops by just at lunch. And I would be happier if he could call ahead.

Q: What does the woman mean?

In example 9, the speaker B said she would be happier if Johnny could call ahead before visiting her, which involve a cultural factor. In western countries, people should call ahead before visiting others. If students are familiar to the relevant cultural background, they can easily draw a conclusion that the speaker B is annoyed because Johnny came to her house without calling ahead.

Introduce knowledge of intonation

Listening tests in high school require not only students' vocabulary, but also their ability to infer emotions and attitudes from the intonation of the speaker. Basically, English has three types of intonation that are most frequently used: the falling tone, the rising tone, and the fall-rise tone. Each of them shows different attitudes. For example, the rising tone often shows doubts or question, and the fall-rise tone always expresses implied message. For example, “really” with a rising tone shows that the speaker feels suspicious.

6.3. Appropriate Methods of Teaching

Traditionally, in the process of teaching English listening, the most common method is playing the recording directly and repeatedly. Students listen to the recording, complete the questions, then correct the answers. Some teachers will explain the difficult vocabulary and phrases, while some even ignore the key words. Obviously, such listening learning is grossly mechanical and makes it difficult for students to improve their listening skills and competence. Especially when listening to some conversations that are subtle and implicit, students are puzzled by the dialogue between the two speakers. But in most cases, their troubles are not taken seriously and addressed by teachers.

Conversational implicature theory helps high school students improve their English listening skills, and it makes teachers and students focus on the intended meaning of conversations.

In terms of teaching methods, teachers should pay attention to three aspects. Primarily, teachers should select daily conversation material. In English listening tests, most conversations is likely to appear in daily lives, which will help students get familiar with the topics and material of the listening test. Apart from that, teachers should instruct students on appropriate ways to solve the questions. Before listening, students should take time to read the questions, predict the context of the conversation, and search the relevant cultural background in their memories. During the listening process, students should quickly adjust their predictions according to the content of the conversation and understand the implicature meaning of the words according to the context and the tone of the speaker. After the recording, students should review the questions based on the conversation and make the correct choices.

6.4. Suggestions on English Listening learning

For English listening learning, students are advised to focus on the following aspects.

Firstly, students should attach great importance to pragmatic theory. Conversational implicature theory plays an important role in guiding listening instruction and improving students' listening skills. Therefore, students should learn as much as possible about pragmatic theory, including the cooperative principle, conversational implicature theory, and Leech's principle of politeness. Secondly, students are obliged to comprehend the importance of culture in the process of language acquiring, and to learn about the culture of English-speaking countries actively. Students can experience the unique culture of English-speaking countries by reading original English books, watching English TV series, and listening to English songs after school. Finally, students should adopt effective ways to improve their listening skills. Before listening, they should skim the questions swiftly. And during the process of listening, they should grasp the topic of conversations and take some notes. After the listening, students should review the questions and make correct answers.

7. Conclusion

Guided by Grice's conversational implicature theory, this paper analyzes the texts about “travel” in high school listening exams to get the main characteristics of dialogues in high school listening exams. The are four characteristics: violating the Maxim of Quantity Most Frequently, adding new information by violating Cooperative Principle, rejecting invitation euphemistically by violating Cooperative Principle and using complex sentences to increase difficulty by violating Cooperative Principle.

And according to the study, relevant suggestions to high school English teachers on teaching contents and methods are put forward--imparting pragmatic theories, necessary information and appropriate learning methods. In addition, there are also some effective suggestions on study habits of high school students. Still, there are some shortcomings in this paper. There is no experimental test to examine the effect of listening tests before and after students learn conversational implicature theory. Further studies are supposed to conduct contrast tests to confirm the performance of conversational implicature in English listening.

References

[1] Broersma D. 1994, Do Chickens Have Lips? Conversational Implicature in the ESL Classroom [J]. Classroom Communication: 27.

[2] Bouton, L. F. 1994. Conversational Implicature in a Second Language: Learned Slowly When Not Deliberately Taught [J]. Journal of Pragmatics, (2):157-167.

[3] Grice, H. P. 2003. Studies in the Way of Words [M]. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

[4] Huang,Y.(2012). Neo-Gricean Pragmatic Theory of Conversational Implicature. Oxford University Press.

[5] Oller, J. W., & Krashen, S. D. 1988. The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications [J]. Language, 64(1), 171

[6] O’Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. 1990. Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition [M]. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[7] Underwood J. 1990. Computers and Learning; Helping children acquire thinking skills [J]. Oxford, OX, UK and Cambridge, mass. USA.

[8] Yang, Y.-T. C., Chuang, Y.-C., Li, L.-Y., & Tseng, S.-S. 2013. A blended learning environment for individualized English listening and speaking integrating critical thinking [J]. Computers & Education, 63, 285–305.

[9] Feng Zongxin, 2008, Forty years of Grice Principle [J], Foreign Language Teaching, No.133(05):1-8.

[10] Guo Huanxin, 2021, A study on senior high school English Listening Teaching from the perspective of Conversational implicative theory [D]. Liaocheng University.

[11] Zhou Xiangli, 2002, The application of Schema Theory in English Listening Teaching [J], Foreign Languages and Foreign Language Teaching (10):24-26.

[12] Zhou Xinyi, 2022, A Comparative analysis of English and Western translations of Contemporary Chinese novels in Dialogue from the perspective of Conversational implicature Theory [D]. Beijing Foreign Studies University.