

# Presupposition Used by the Student and the Lecturer

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## ABSTRACT

This research conducted the presupposition used by the lecturer to respond the student's proposal to be the student's supervisor. Presupposition is the expression used by the speaker to give assumption to the hearer on the speech delivered by the speaker. The research had three research questions, the first is what the type of presupposition used by the lecturers is? The second research question is what is the meaning of presupposition used by the lecturers? The third is how do the lecturers use each presupposition? The method which was used in this research was qualitative research. The finding resulted that there are five (existential, lexical, structural, factive, and non-factive) types of presuppositions. The meaning of those presupposition is basically based on what the theory said. For example, the meaning of existential is to show something to be existed, the meaning of lexical is based on the word contextual meaning used in the utterance, the meaning of structural is based on the use of W-H question words, and the meaning of factive is based on the word and verb that means a fact, while the meaning of *of* non-factive is the contrary of factive. The presuppositions used by the lecturers are 39 presupposition (12 existentials, 3 factives, 16 lexicals, 6 structurals, and 2 non-factives). There are 8 students who received more than one type of presuppositions response from the lecturers, and there are 21 students who received one type of presupposition response from the lecturers.

**Keywords:** *Presupposition, speaker's assumption, lecturer's response, whatsapp*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the world of communication, every people has their own way to deliver their ideas to their interlocutors. During their communication, every people needs their audience understand and believe on what they say. Ariyanti [1] mentions that every speaker has to be persuasive to his audience that is why a speaker needs to adopt a possible linguistic theory to serve certain purposes. In their persuasive utterances, some people may deliver statements that might acceptable and unacceptable by their audience. In some cases, several speakers have considered various assumptions that might be used as tools to refine the intent and purpose of the statement.

This study analyzes conversations based on the realm of the Pragmatics field because Pragmatics deals with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). Yule stated [2]. Pragmatics is a study of the meaning of speakers. Basically, speakers and speakers converse in a context with the aim of exchanging information or messages. The speech participants use linguistic elements to convey their meaning. However, sometimes the interlocutor is late in understanding or does not understand because the background knowledge, experience, and feelings possessed by speakers and speakers are not the same. This means that a speech in

the form of a conversation will be well understood by both the speaker and the interlocutor because there is the same knowledge, experience and feeling that speakers and speakers have.

According to Yule [3], presuppositions are what speakers use as a common basis for conversation participants. Another opinion was also expressed by Rahardi [4], that a speech can be said to presuppose another speech if the incorrect position of the speech results in untruth or truth. Presupposition is a speech that contains the meaning of truth or untruth in accordance with the speech.

From the definition of presupposition above, it can be concluded that presupposition is the speaker's initial conclusion or assumption before speaking that what will be conveyed is also understood by the speech partner. To make this clearer, consider the following example:

(1) A: "I bought Mr. Udin's book yesterday"

B: "Got a 30 percent discount, right?"

The example of the conversation above shows that before speaking, A has the presumption that B knows what it means, that is, there is a book that is being discounted.

Mistakes create presuppositions of effects in human speech. In other words, the right presupposition can enhance the communicative value of an utterance that is expressed. The more precisely the presupposition is hypothesized, the higher the communicative value of an

utterance that is expressed. According to Chaika [5], in a number of ways, discourse can be sought through presuppositions. It refers to a meaning that is not stated explicitly.

Example:

(2a) "My father came from Surabaya".

(3a) "The drink is finished".

From example (2a) the presuppositions are: (1) I have a father; (2) Father is in Surabaya. In example (3a) the presumption is please drink it. Therefore, the function of presupposition is to help reduce barriers to people's responses to the interpretation of a speech.

Based on the background of the problem above, the following research problems can be formulated: (1) What is the type of presupposition used by the lecturers? (2) What is the meaning of presupposition used by the lecturers? and (3) How do the lecturers use each presupposition?.

## 2. METHODS

Based on the research questions, this research was aimed to analyze the presupposition utterances expressed by the lecturers. Qualitative method was chosen as a device to explain the types of presuppositions that include existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, and counterfactual expressions.

This research consisted of 29 participants. These 29 participants were taken because of two reasons. Firstly, in this semester, they have to propose a supervisor to supervise their thesis proposal writing. They have to do this because both the student and the lecturer can do the consultation on a well-agreed thesis. Secondly, during the pandemic of COVID-19, the students cannot meet their lecturers face to face, so the only polite means of communication is through WhatsApp chat.

The object of this research was the lecturers' responds in giving feedback of agreement and disagreement on the proposed thesis by the students. The subjects of the research are the lecturers of linguistics and the students of 2017 who programmed linguistics in English Literature study program.

The data consist of WhatsApp conversations screenshot which have been conducted by the lecturers and the students of English Literature 2017. The conversations were produced by the 29 participants. The contents of these conversations are presupposition that are used by the lecturers in responding the students' consultation. The data collection and data analysis were performed by the researcher.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Existential Presupposition

Yule [2] states that existential presuppositions are presuppositions that are not only assumed to exist in a possessive arrangement, but are also more general or broader into certain noun phrases. This presupposition shows ownership, but more broadly the existence or existence of the statement in the speech.

This type presents an online conversation or discussion occurs between the student and lecturer A (see picture 1). The student asked lecturer A to become her supervisor since lecturer A has the same field related to her topic. The conversation begins with a greeting and self-introduction. Then, the student explains the focus of her thesis along with the title and Research Questions. Unfortunately, this conversation did not produce any type of presupposition because lecturer A did not reply to the message.

In the next conversation (see picture 2), the student tried to contact lecturer A again to make sure she would interest with my topic or not. Finally, lecturer A replied her message.

Lecturer A utters "Okay" it is classified as Lexical Presupposition since lecturer A use only one word which its asserted meaning is conventionally interpreted with the presupposition that another meaning is understood.

Therefore, lecturer A also replied "Read a lot of journal articles related to your topic, so you can get a lot of references" the word "Journal articles" in there can be classified as Existential Presupposition because this is the assumption supposed to be committed by the speaker to the existence of the names of the entities and assumed to be present in the noun phrase. So it means that lecturer A's utterance "okay" (Lexical presupposition) means she agrees to help the student in the creating of a thesis proposal, moreover lecturer A uses lexical presupposition to indicate one word with asserting meaning.

Besides, lecturer A also gave the student some advice 'Read a lot of journal articles related to your topic, so you can get a lot references' which has made the 'journal articles' exist. This can mean as Existential Presupposition.

### 3.2 Factual Presupposition

Yule [2] mentions factual presuppositions with factive presuppositions. According to Yule, factive presuppositions are presupposed information that follows a verb that can be considered as reality. Given that the speech is not necessarily a verb, it can also use an adjective.

Factual Presupposition can be seen in picture 3 which shows the lecturer's response after a long conversation, finally lecturer B says 'Ok then, I am willing to be your supervisor. In this case, based on your results (previous study), you should have good recommendation.' The word 'willing' in this response presupposes that: Lecturer B knows that the topic was great enough. (Factive Verb), wants to be the supervisor (Definitive description), and needs more information about the progress of the topic (Factive Verb).

### **3.3 Lexical Presupposition**

Lexical Presupposition can be seen in picture 4 and 5. The presupposition in this utterance is included in lexical presupposition. It is lexical presupposition because there is the use of one form with its asserted meaning is conventionally interpreted with the presupposition that another meaning is understood. "would you accept my proposal ma'am?" indicates that the student asked her to be the student's supervisor. The presupposition is triggered by the use of words "would you". And by saying "Hahahahaha... Okay," Lecturer C agrees with the student's proposal. Besides, since the student already let the lecturer knows about the topic, it means that she agreed with the student's topic because she said "Okay".

This explanation reveals that the type of presupposition used in this conversation is a lexical presupposition. By analyzing the type of presupposition above, it was found that lecturer C accepts the student's proposal. Moreover, it is considered as lexical presupposition since the speaker can make the hearer understand by only using or delivering one word which is "Okay". She agrees that she would be the student's supervisor since the lecturer's main focus in linguistics is the same with the student's thesis topic.

### **3.4 Structural Presupposition**

Structural presupposition is a structure of certain sentences that have been analyzed as a regular and conventional presupposition that the truth of the part of the structure has been assumed [2]. Structural presuppositions are presuppositions expressed through speech whose structure is clear and immediately understood regardless of the words used.

Picture 6 shows a sentence 'So, how? Are you interested with that (topic)?' that has a structural meaning. The structure of that sentence itself is based on its question sentence form. When the lecturer D asked the student whether the topic is interesting, it shows the lecturer's agreement on the topic proposed by the student.

### **3.5 Non-factive Presupposition**

Picture 7 shows non-factive presupposition that was used by lecturer E. Lecturer E expressed her agreement by using affirmative sentence. The sentence feel free to ask if you have any questions has the word 'if' that has a meaning of non-factive.. It shows that the lecturer approves by telling suggestion. Moreover, she is willing to give a consultation to the student related to her thesis proposal by saying "feel free to ask if you have any questions".

The utterance above may contain some presuppositions below:

- (1) The lecturer does not mind for the student to ask questions.
- (2) The lecturer expects the student to have questions.

In other words, the presupposition used by the lecturer implies she is interested in the student's topic and expects her to ask question, therefore, from here on we know that she has accepted the proposal and has agreed to be the student's supervisor as she is expecting the student's to do a consultation with her.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

There are 29 students who received responses from the lecturers. The responses were in the form presuppositions. Generally, there are 6 types of presupposition (existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive and counterfactual). The only one presupposition that was not used was counterfactual presupposition but the other 5 presuppositions were used. The meaning of those presupposition are basically based on what the theory said. For example, the meaning of existential is to show something to be existed, the meaning of lexical is based on the word contextual meaning used in the utterance, the meaning of structural is based on the use of W-H question words, and the meaning of factive is based on the word and verb that means a fact, while the meaning of non-factive is the contrary of factive. The presuppositions used by the lecturers are 39 presupposition (12 existentials, 3 factives, 16 lexicals, 6 structurals, and 2 non-factives). There are 8 students who received more than one type of presuppositions response from the lecturers, and there are 21 students who received one type of presupposition response from the lecturers.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

This work was supported by Universitas Negeri Surabaya especially the Language and Art Faculty.

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