

<https://jurnal.unigal.ac.id/index.php/jall/index>

ISSN: 2598-8530

September 2017, Vol. 1 No. 2

English Education Program

Faculty of Teacher Training and Education

Galuh University

Received:	Accepted:	Published:
July 2017	August 2017	September 2017

PRESUPPOSITION TRIGGERS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN ORAL NEWS AND WRITTEN ONLINE NEWS DISCOURSE

Luthfiyatun Thoyyibah

luthfiyatun20@gmail.com

English Education Program, Galuh University – Ciamis

Abstract

Information becomes a crucial thing that someone gets in everyday terms. Dealing with the digital era, people can get the information through any communication devices. Then, language still has its own rule in communication. As part of linguistic features, the notion of presupposition and its triggers have been studied by many scholars, linguists and philosophers, but as far as the researcher knows, the comparison between presupposition triggers on news broadcast and online transcript has not been explored yet. Therefore, the present research tries to identify the main presupposition triggers used in both transcripts. This is a descriptive qualitative study where it is designed to describe the case of the study by words or sentences rather than numbers. The object of the study is presupposition found in both CNN different news style. Accordingly, two transcripts were analyzed in terms of presupposition triggers, namely existential, factive, lexical, non-factive, structural, counter-factual, adverbial, and relative. The analyses of the transcripts revealed that the most frequently used presupposition trigger in both varieties of oral discourse was existential. It refers to the ability of existential presupposition in diverting attention to other parts of the sentence or utterance.

Keywords: presupposition, triggers, presupposition triggers, discourse

INTRODUCTION

Language has important role in our daily communication. It has been argued by many people that language is a mean of communication in daily activities. We cannot communicate in any real sense without language. Because language helps people socialize each other and can give some kind of information. Basically, language can be divided into two ways, spoken and written language. Spoken language is typically more dependent on its content than written language. Spoken language usually refers to language utterance, and the written language is refers to language which is written down (Gerot & Wignell, 1994).

In one simple logic, written language can be said as the written form of spoken language. But it's not as simple as being stated. Spoken and written language have their own role in communication. Moreover, Zhang (2013) points out both spoken and written language perform different functions in society. Although written and spoken language are production processes, people tend to use different words and sentence structure in expressing the same thing in writing and speaking.

Language is essential thing to human. Then, linguistics is academic discipline that concerns on human language. People communicate in every single day. They talk each other about everything, unexceptionally about the recent news. Moreover, nowadays, people deal with technology. Dealing with various and different activities one to another, people are helped by the existence of communication gadget like smartphone to get up to date with the information. Through the use of it, they can access whatever and whenever they need. The need of information is facilitated through the communication gadget in which they can get the information anytime they need.

Information becomes a crucial thing that someone gets. Besides the affection of choice of words in spoken and written language, that is because people have different point of view on such kind of information they receive. That is also determined by different wordings used in both speaking and writing. Eventually, information and news from the media influence people's way of thinking. One people can act roughly to one information while another could just calm down. It refers to the way they understand the language from the information presented and actually it is mostly presented on a broadcast television. It is strengthened by a research conducted

by Entman (1992) states that people tend to more racist watching television news. They get much more information from the choice of words and its image presented.

It has been stated earlier that linguistics studies a human language. Pragmatics is one of the branches of linguistics which concerns on language meaning. The study of language meaning is concerned with assign meaning and the assumption. That is why the way speaker utters and in what context the information is presented influences audience's understanding. Semantics is also part of linguistics that is also concerned with meaning.

Basically, people act differently to the news presented in television or even in online forum. They have different respond to those news. Many factors affect people's response. Those responses are influenced by two things. Those come from intrinsic and extrinsic level. From intrinsic level, there are background knowledge of the people, background education level which somehow determine way of thinking, and people's mind. Meanwhile from the extrinsic level, the influence comes from the news itself. The gesture, the tone, and the diction of the news itself could influence audience.

As it has been mentioned earlier that there are oral and written communication which ends in oral and written information. In oral and written information, there are two basic kinds of information, given (old) versus new. Given information is something that familiar to the audience. It can refer to something that has appeared earlier in the text, or it can be given in the sense of common knowledge. New information is what drives the discourse forward. It's where we expect our audience to pay special attention (Borjars & Burridge, 2010). In other words, Haviland and Clark (1974) point out that given information is what a person thinks the audience is already knows, while new information is what a person thinks the audience does not already know.

Suppose an old information is presented in the beginning while a new information is presented later. A new information is considered new and listeners rarely credit it as fact (Zare, Abbaspour, & Nia, 2012). By so doing, the author or speaker consciously or unconsciously change the readers or listeners' interpretation of the presented information. That is why conducting a study on presupposition trigger in media's use of language is truly important. This notion provides the grounds for this study which is aimed at broadcast news discourse and online electronic news discourse.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis aims at exploring and revealing hidden meanings consciously or unconsciously embedded in an utterance (Fairclough, 1995). In other words, Critical discourse analysis tries to open the ideological values of text writers reflected in the discourse. Widdowson (2000) describes critical discourse analysis as “the uncovering of implicit ideologies in texts.

In line with the purpose of this study which aims at investigating presupposition triggers, critical discourse analysis supports the analysis of selected news transcripts. Presupposition is one of the properties of language which shapes reader or listener’s understanding of facts and events through using linguistic devices and construction is considered an argumentative concept in critical discourse analysis (CDA). The critical discourse analysis is something related to our daily life as we face many text types. With critical discourse analysis, someone can reveal the intention or the meaning of a discourse.

Presupposition

Presupposition is assumption of the speaker to be the case prior to making an utterance (Yule, 1996). Meanwhile Huang (2007) defines presupposition as an inference or proposition whose truth is taken for granted in the utterance of a sentence. Presupposition has close relationship with speakers, not sentences. Moreover, Grundy (2008) discusses presupposition as a background knowledge necessary for utterance to be appropriate to say and it is accommodated by the addressee.

In many book’s discussion, the concept of presupposition is treated as a relationship between two propositions. Moreover, Werth (1993) cited in (Zare, Abbaspour, & Nia, 2012) elaborates basic properties of presupposition as being embedded in referring phrases and temporal clauses, being constant even in their negated counterparts, and determining the accuracy of the assumption of a sentence. That’s the assumption of a sentence is true only when the presupposition is true.

Furthermore, Yule (1996) points out that presupposition is generally described as constancy under negation. It means that a presupposition of a statement will remain constant even when that statement is negated.

- a. Everybody knows that John has got married.
- b. >> John has got married.

- c. Everybody doesn't know that John has got married.
- d. >> John has got married.

(From Yule, 2010: 27)

As the example explains, sentence (a) and its negated counterpart (c) both presuppose the same meaning (b) and (d).

There are two approaches in studying presupposition, semantic and pragmatic presupposition. It is based on the aspect of logic and pragmatics respectively. Furthermore, Grundy (2008) highlights the accommodated beliefs necessary for an utterance to make sense are known as semantic presuppositions while the accommodations needed for an utterance to be appropriate are known as pragmatic presuppositions. In other words, semantic presupposition aims at making sense of the utterance by the addressee. Meanwhile, pragmatic presupposition aims at making appropriate or suit to the utterance.

Additionally, presupposition is a special thing in pragmatics. The thing that makes presupposition special is that various respects in which the behavior of presupposition sharply differs from other aspects of meaning.

As it has been mentioned earlier, presuppositions can be tested by using the constancy under negation principle. It means that semantic presuppositions will remain true after negation. Most importantly, Verschueren (1978) cited in (Zare, Abbaspour, & Nia, 2012) asserts, there are some pragmatic presuppositions that do not remain constant under negation. In other words, pragmatic presuppositions and their negated counterparts do not presuppose the same meaning.

Presupposition Trigger

Presupposition has long been used as a property of language to shape the audience's ideology. Using presupposition triggers, the author or speaker may subject to the reader's or listener's interpretation of facts and events, establishing either a favorable or unfavorable bias throughout the text.

Presupposition deals with implicit meanings conveyed by the speaker through the use of particular words. There are six types of presupposition or presupposition triggers (Yule, 1996). Those are existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, and counter-factual. Karttunen cited in Levinson (1983) further mentions about cleft construction, relative, and adverbial presuppositions briefly which still included to structural presupposition. Examples below are types of presupposition or triggering elements taken from Yule (1996).

1. Existential presupposition is the assumption of the existence of the entities named by the speaker. It is signed by the use of noun phrases and possessive construction.
 e.g. *The teacher taught Math* >> there is a teacher
 e.g. *Andy is a professor* >> there is a professor/ *Andy is an old man*
2. Factive presupposition is the assumption that something is true due to the presence of some as "know", "realize", "be glad", "be sorry", "regret", "aware", "odd" etc.
 e.g. *She didn't realize he was ill* >> she was ill
 e.g. *We regret telling him* >> we told him
 e.g. *I wasn't aware that she was married* >> she was married
 e.g. *It isn't odd that he left early* >> he left early
 e.g. *I'm glad it's over* >> it's over
3. Lexical Presupposition refers to using one word, the speaker can act as if another meaning will be understood. In this case, the use of word "stop", "start", "again" presuppose another (unstated) concept.
 e.g. *He stopped smoking* >> he used to smoke
 e.g. *They started complaining* >> they complaining before
 e.g. *You're late again* >> you were late before
4. Structural presupposition refers to the assumption associated with the use of certain structures. The listener perceives that the information presented is necessarily true rather than just the presupposition of the person asking the question.
 e.g. *When did he leave?* >> *he left*
 e.g. *Where did you buy the bike?* >> *you bought the bike*
5. Non-factive presupposition is an assumption referred to something that is not true.
 e.g. *I dreamed that I was rich* >> I was not rich
 e.g. *We imagined we were in Hawaii* >> we were not in Hawaii
6. Counter factual presupposition is the assumption that what is presupposed is not only untrue, but is the opposite of what is true, or contrary to facts.
 e.g. *If you were my friend, you would have helped me* >> You are not my friend
 e.g. *If I were not short, I would have become a stewardess* >> I am short
7. Relative and adverbial: Relative and Adverbial clauses are also found to presuppose information.

e.g. the incident occurred in a region *where there is a large Kurdish population* >> there is a large Kurdish population [Relative]

e.g. it started *when Tehran's vice president this week warned* >> this week Tehran's vice president warned [Adverbial] cited in (Zare, Abbaspour, & Nia, 2012).

METHOD

This study was designed to investigate types of presupposition triggers in two different types of news with the same topic. It deals with broadcast television news transcript and online news available on the internet. Considering those points, thus, this study employs qualitative descriptive design.

The rationale for choosing qualitative descriptive design is that because “the goal of qualitative descriptive study is a comprehensive summarization, in everyday terms, of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals” (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). It relates to the specific news report that's trying to be investigated. Moreover, Khaleel (2010 No. 2 Vol. 21) mentions that investigating presupposition in journalistic texts is appropriate using qualitative descriptive design.

In line with that, Malik&Hamied (2014) strengthened that qualitative descriptive study can be used for document analysis in which this study's trying to figure out types of presupposition performed in broadcast and online news transcripts.

To perform the investigation of the study, CNN broadcast news and CNN online news transcripts were used as two samples of news channels. Those sampling were taken from CNN news channel with the principle of purposive sampling. As the nature of qualitative study, purposive sampling is considered to be adopted for this present study. Data collection technique in this research is applying documentary technique. Documentary technique is documenting all required data in this study based on its purpose, which is find the utterances which contained presupposition. Therefore, the researcher collected utterances data that related with six types presupposition based on pragmatics theory which were found on both broadcast news television transcript and online news discourse. After the data were collected, it performed data reduction, whereas data which considered unimportant for study had been eliminated and the researcher will only focus to data which related with the study.

Afterwards, the data gathered were subjected to discourse analysis in terms of utilized presupposition categories. Based on the presupposition trigger classification put forward by

Yule (1996), the frequency and percentage of the occurrence of presupposition triggers were enumerated and tabulated. After the gained data were enumerated and tabulated, the researcher identified the frequency of presupposition triggers on both the transcript of broadcast and online news from CNN. Then, the number and frequency of presupposition triggers found from both transcript were being compared each other. Ultimately, the most and the least frequently utilized presupposition triggers in the discourse of the two were elaborated based on its function and characteristics from Yule (1996) and Huang (2007).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing both transcript of broadcast and online news from CNN channel, this study found that there are several presupposition triggers used in both texts. This study classifies the presupposition triggers detected in the transcripts under the rubrics of existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, adverbial, and relative with the adverbial and relative categories added to the classification. Table 1 and 2 show the occurrence frequency of each presupposition trigger in the transcripts.

Table 1. Presupposition triggers identified in CNN news broadcast transcript

No	Presupposition	Total number of presupposition triggers
1	Existential	11
2	Factive	4
3	Lexical	1
4	Structural	-
5	Non-factive	-
6	Counter factual	-
7	Adverbial	2
8	Relative	5

As table 1 indicated, the existential presupposition or through nominalization and possessive construction is the most frequently used linguistic construction. The used of existential presuppositions glow the intended meaning in CNN broadcast news transcript.

Using existential presupposition, as Yule (2010) maintains, the speaker and hearer are committed to the existence of entities.

Utterance: First story takes us to the fifth most populated country in the world, the Pacific island nation of Indonesia, home to more than 258 million people

Therefore, this utterance is classified into existential presupposition because it shows that the speaker in this conversation is committed to the existence of the entities named the Pacific island nation of Indonesia and it also as a home for more than 258 million people.

The analysis of the chosen English news broadcast reveals that oral English puts into service presupposition triggers. Using these linguistic constructions, the author tries to bring and influence listeners' interpretation of facts and event. This is supported by Schmid (2001) notes that discourse writers share their views by presenting them disguised as truths in presuppositions. That can be the answer of facts that some people who watch news broadcast would get much influence to the thing presented. In other words, the writer of the transcript wants the audience having the perspective that the author intended.

Further inquiry shows that existential presupposition being the most frequently used category is a constant property of news discourse. With its simple structure composed of possessive constructions or definite noun phrases, existential presupposition is considered the most readily credited for presupposition.

Besides, factive presupposition were found in the CNN broadcast news transcript. The utterance "... and that swell can be as tall as buildings" presupposes "the swell is as tall as buildings". The appearance of factive presupposition means presupposing the truth of their complement clause. In addition to that particular presupposition trigger, Crystal (1997) highlights that "factive" is used in the classification of verbs, "referring to a verb which take a complement clause, and where the addresser "factive" because they presupposes the truth of their complement clauses".

Another presupposition found in the transcript was lexical presupposition. The utterance "... and that authorities have to move fast" presupposes "... that the authorities has been moved slowly". Lexical presupposition might be thought of as one of the best ways to express implicit proposition. Due to its non-assertive function, lexical construction can best trigger meaning (Zare, Abbaspour, & Nia, 2012).

Additionally, adverbial clauses are used as adverbials in the main clause. Those clauses trigger presupposition. Therefore, utterance “*the Ring of Fire is also known for tsunamis produced when the ocean floor is either forced to rise or fall*” presupposes “*the ocean floor is either forced to rise or fall*”. The adverbial clauses have freedom of positioning, they are usually put in the beginning either at the end of sentence or utterance Biber et al (1999) cited in (Khaleel, 2010 No. 2 Vol. 21).

Last but not least, relative presupposition were also found in the transcript of CNN news broadcast. Relative presupposition has the second most frequent presupposition used in the transcript. The frequency of adverbial and relative presuppositions also indicates their importance in oral discourse. In fact, adverbial and relative clauses can be considered sound textual devices in that they enable the writer to make listener believe what a person asserts. Even though in the broadcast news contains another types of communication, like gesture, which helps conveying the meaning, adverbial and relative presuppositions help to strengthened beliefs of the utterance.

Table 2. Presupposition triggers identified in CNN online news transcript

No	Presupposition triggers	Total number of presupposition triggers
1	Existential	38
2	Factive	3
3	Lexical	6
4	Structural	-
5	Non-factive	-
6	Counter-factual	1
7	Adverbial	1
8	Relative	4

As it is indicated in table 2, existential construction is the most frequently occurring category of presupposition in CNN's online news in sparking off unstated meaning. Furthermore, lexical presupposition triggers are among frequently employed presupposition triggers. After lexical presupposition triggers, relative presupposition triggers become the next frequently used in online news discourse. The least frequently used presupposition triggers include factive, adverbial, and relative presupposition triggers. There is no structural and non-factive presupposition triggers applied in the transcript.

From the analysis of presupposition triggers in this transcript, existential presuppositions become most frequently used. As a matter of fact, existential presupposition is stronger or more difficult to detect in comparison to other categories. This can be described to its ability in diverting attention to other parts of the sentence. Schmid and Caffi mentions in Liang&Liu (2016) "are among the scholars who strongly stress that existential presupposition is one of the least refutable presuppositions ever used". Interestingly, in an earlier study of written news discourse, Alireza & Moses (2011) concluded that existential or presupposition through nominalization is among the most frequently used presupposition triggers.

In the beginning of the transcript, the utterance "*Rescuers are combing through the rubble for survivors after an earthquake Wednesday morning in Indonesia's Aceh province*" is categorized into existential presupposition triggers. That utterance presupposes "*rescuers are exist and there was an earthquake on Wednesday*". It also means that the writer of the transcript is trying to make sure the existence of referents. Whereas, some of existential presuppositions with "non-definite" names do not triggers a presupposition since they lack reference.

Moreover, lexical presupposition deals with "unstated concept" (Yule, 1996) or "asserted meaning" (Khaleel, 2010 No. 2 Vol. 21). The utterance "*Additional medical personnel have gone to the region*" presupposes "*additional medical personnel are there before*". Another utterance "*.... rescue team continue to dig*" presupposes "*.... rescue team was digging before*".

Another presupposition triggers found is factive presupposition. Factive presupposition triggers relate to the presence of some verbs indicated something is true. As it has been mentioned earlier, the verbs are "know", "realize", "regret", etc. The utterance "*nightfall had affected ongoing search and rescue missions*" presupposes "*nightfall affected ongoing search and rescue*". From the transcript, we can see that the transcript writer wants the audience to know and realize that nightfall really affects the ongoing search and rescue.

As it has been tabulated in the CNN news broadcast transcript, the number of adverbial and relative presuppositions indicates their importance in oral discourse. Even though the second transcript was taken from written news transcript, it still consists of live conversation with the reporter on the spot of the news event. That's why it still relates to the importance of oral discourse. The utterance "*some residents fled to safety in the hills*" presupposes "*there are some residents*". Another utterances found in the transcript is "*large earthquakes are relatively common in Indonesia*" presupposes "*there is a large earthquake*". Even though oral and written language performs different function in communication, they both equip each other.

Additionally, there was found the counter factual presupposition trigger. It is signed by the existence of if-cleft. Counter-factual constructions presuppose the falsity of the proposition expressed in the complement clause. Therefore, what is presupposed is the opposite of what is true, or contrary to facts, (Crystal, 1997). The utterance "if needed" is categorized as counter-factual presupposition. What is presupposed is not only ot true, but the opposite of what is true. "as *counterfactual presupposition* because the structures mean *I should be studying* that what is presupposed is not only not true but is the opposite of what is true. The counter factual presupposition trigger which is found in the transcript indicates that the author raised the hidden meaning or intended meaning which he/she prefer to utter it in different way. The author tries to figure out the intended meaning by uttering if-cleft. It was uttered to give a modesty of the utterance.

CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing presuppositions from both CNN news broadcast and CNN online news, this study assumes that the audience get the presupposed information that uttered by the speaker and the writer. The meaning of presuppositions can be analyzed by considering the context of its utterance. Presuppositions can be used to reveal the information or meaning that contained in an utterance that conveyed by the speaker. Understanding presupposition helps the audience to reveal the intended meaning of the writer or the speaker.

In brief, types of presupposition triggers mostly found in the both discourse is existential presupposition triggers. The use of presupposition triggers helps to better communicate the message of the news and also consequently grip the audience. However, some differences might be witnessed in their frequency of use which can be attributed to writers' different attitudes toward certain linguistic constructions. As Levinson (1983) notes, the detected presupposition

triggers confirm the idea that propositions are triggered by parallel linguistic structures in different languages or varieties of languages. The present study of presupposition triggers in oral and written news transcripts hopes to contribute to better understanding of composition of oral and written news transcripts.

REFERENCES

- Alireza, B., & Moses, S. (2011). Linguistic nature of presupposition in American & Persian Newspaper Editorials. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 3(1). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/openview/a61d6c8b61c9e021acdb0f9edf07e076/1?pq-origsite=gscholar>.
- Borjars, K., & Burridge, K. (2010). *Introducing English grammar*. Great Britain: Hodder Education .
- Crystal, D. (1997). *A dictionary of linguistic and phonetics*. Oxford : Blackwell Publisher Ltd.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis* . London : Longman.
- Gerot, L., & Wignell, P. (1994). *Making sense of functional grammar*. Sydney: Antipodean Educational Enterprises.
- Grundy, P. (2008). *Doing pragmatics* . London: Hodder Education .
- Huang, Y. (2007). *Pragmatics*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- Khaleel, L. M. (2010 No. 2 Vol. 21). An analysis of presupposition triggers in English journalistic texts. *Journal of College of Education for Women* .
- Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Qualitative descriptive research: An acceptable design. *Pacific Rim International of Nursing Research*.
- Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics* . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Liang, R., & Liu, Y. (2016). An analysis of presupposition triggers in Hilary's First campaign speech. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v6n5p68>.

Malik, R. S., & Hamied, F. A. (2014). *Research methods: A guide for first time researchers*. Bandung: UPI Press.

NN. (2016, December 8). *CNN*. Retrieved from CNN news transcript: <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/1612/08/sn.01.html>

NN. (2016, December 9). *Indonesia earthquake: Rescuers search for survivors after 100 killed*. Retrieved from CNN News: <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/12/06/asia/indonesia-earthquake/>

Schimid, H. J. (2001). Presupposition can be a bluff. *Journal of Pragmatics* , 33, 152-173. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166\(01\)00027-3](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(01)00027-3).

Widdowson, H. G. (2000). On the limitations of linguistics applied. *Applied Linguistics* , 21, 3-25. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/applin/21.1.3>.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zare, J., Abbaspour, E., & Nia, M. R. (2012). Presupposition trigger- a comparative analysis of broadcast news discourse. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 4(3) pp. 734-743. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v4i3.2002>.