



**Presupposition in Meme Comments on a Video Post in Instagram
(Pragmatic Analysis)**

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Abstract

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This study examines the use of presuppositions in Instagram comments, applying Yule's (1996) theory to explore how presuppositions shape online interactions. Presuppositions, which rely on shared knowledge, facilitate efficient communication by indirectly implying truths. The study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to identify presuppositions and classify their types. Key findings suggest that existential presupposition is the most common, contributing to brevity, engagement, and emphasis. Case studies from the @savagecomedy account illustrate how presuppositions enhance information that is not explicitly stated within a given context. This research highlights the evolving role of language in digital spaces and suggests further investigation into presupposition strategies across social media platforms.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is the process of conveying ideas and feelings or conveying information to others. In communication, there are at least two participants and two processes. The participants are the speaker and the listener, while the process is speaking and listening. According to Clark and Clark (1977, p. 3) In speaking, people put ideas into words, talking about perceptions, feelings, and intentions they want other people to grasp. In listening, they turn words into ideas, trying to reconstruct the perceptions, feelings, and intentions they want to grasp. Language is the main communication tool for humans to establish relationships. Through language, humans socialize, express their feelings, thoughts, and opinions. Dell Hymes (1972) emphasize that communication is not just about the transmission of information but also about understanding the social and cultural contexts in which it occurs. In his *Ethnography of Speaking* model, Hymes highlights how factors such as the participants, setting, and purpose shape how communication unfolds. This broader perspective underscores that effective communication requires more than just language—it depends on context, intention, and mutual comprehension.

Pragmatics, a branch of linguistics, focuses on the relationship between language and context, exploring how people interpret meaning in real-world interactions. According to Levinson (1983), pragmatics is also the ability of language users to associate sentences with their appropriate contexts. according to Yule (2020), the physical surroundings have a significant influence on how an expression is interpreted. Yule assume that context aids in understanding the reference of a term. It goes beyond the literal meaning of words to consider how context, speaker intentions, and social norms influence understanding. George Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener. This field addresses concepts like implicature, deixis, and speech acts, which reveal how language users rely on context to infer meaning. Pragmatics highlights that communication is not only about what is said explicitly but also about what is implied or assumed within a given situation.

Presupposition is a key concept in pragmatics, referring to the assumptions speakers make about what their listeners already know or believe. These assumptions are critical for efficient and meaningful communication, as they allow speakers to focus on the main message without explicitly stating background information. George Yule (1996) explains presuppositions as “assumptions the speaker makes about what the listener already knows,” emphasizing their role in shaping how messages are constructed and interpreted. Furthermore, according to Cummings (2009), presuppositions are conclusions or assumptions that are implied in certain language statements. For example, the sentence “Her brother is a doctor” presupposes that the listener knows she has a brother. Studying presuppositions provides insights into how shared knowledge and implicit meaning contribute to effective communication, making it a central focus of pragmatic research. Social media platforms like Instagram offer unique contexts for examining how these mechanisms operate in real-time interactions. This study explores the types and usage of presuppositions found in Instagram comments, leveraging existing theories from pragmatics to analyze data collected from various accounts.

George Yule (1996), categorizes presuppositions into six main types, *Existential Presupposition*, this assumes the existence of the entities mentioned in a statement. For example, “*The King's palace is magnificent*” presupposes that a king and a palace exist. *Factive Presupposition*, this involves clauses introduced by verbs or expressions that indicate fact, implying the truth of the embedded proposition. For example, “*She realized that she was late*” presupposes that she was indeed late. *Lexical Presupposition*, certain words imply another action or state has occurred. For instance, “*He stopped smoking*”

presupposes that he used to smoke. *Structural Presupposition*, specific sentence structures imply something to be true. For example, a wh-question like "When did you arrive?" presupposes that the listener did arrive. *Non-factive Presupposition*, unlike factive presuppositions, these are assumptions implied by verbs or expressions that do not necessarily indicate truth. For instance, "He dreamed that he won the lottery" presupposes that he didn't actually win. *Counterfactual Presupposition*, this involves situations contrary to reality. For example, "If I were you, I would apologize" presupposes that the speaker is not the listener.

Several studies have explored presupposition and its types based on George Yule's theory. The first related study, *A Pragmatic Analysis of George Yule's Presupposition in the News Article of The Jakarta Post* by Sapar et al. (2022), examines the types of presuppositions present in the titles of selected articles from *The Jakarta Post*. The second study, *Pragmatics Analysis of Presupposition as Found in the Tagline of Horror Movie Posters* by Roza and Ayumi (2020), investigates how tagline triggers in horror movie posters create assumptions, identifying four types of presuppositions across fourteen posters. The last study *Analysis of Pragmatic Presupposition of Characters in Disney's Luca Film* by Kahfi et al. (2024) analyzes the types of presuppositions found in the dialogue of characters from Disney's *Luca* film.

These studies reveal certain gaps that this research aims to address. One notable gap lies in the diversity of objects analyzed—Sapar et al. (2022) focused on news article titles. This study used mixed methodology to analyze the various types of presupposition, Yule's (1996) theory used in this research. Roza and Ayumi (2020) on horror movie poster taglines. This study used descriptive qualitative methods. The data were analyzed using two theories, presupposition triggers by Kartunnen (1973) and Yule's presupposition types (1996). While Kahfi et al. (2024) on characters in a film. This study used qualitative approach and applies Yule's theory (1996). Additionally, the studies vary in their objectives, with some not emphasizing how trigger words generate presuppositions. However, as Sudo (2016) points out, presupposition is not solely reliant on trigger words, and its mechanisms are more complex than rigid rules. Therefore, this study narrows its focus to identifying types of presuppositions using Yule's (1996) framework.

This study focuses on classifying types of presuppositions. This study introduces something new in identifying words, phrases, or sentences from comments on a meme account on Instagram. By applying George Yule's presupposition theory to the analysis of presuppositions found in comments, this paper is innovative. This study is different from previous studies that examined presuppositions in Jakarta Post articles, and horror poster taglines, and presuppositions on a character in a film. This study offers insight into modern language and techniques. Furthermore, this study conducts a thorough examination of several types of presuppositions, including existential, lexical, counterfactual, structural, factive, and non-factual, to show how information that is not explicitly stated can appear in an utterance delivered in comments on meme accounts. Thus, it can be concluded that this study is different from previous studies because of its object, source, targeted data collection, and time frame which can then be considered as current research.

METHODS

This study will involve a qualitative descriptive method on the types of presuppositions contained in comments on a video on a meme account on Instagram. In this case, the comments analyzed are comments that appear on a post on a meme account, which contain

presuppositions and thus become a relevant source of data. Comments in a meme account @Savagecomedy are the source of data for this study. The data is limited to a post that contains 273 comments in it. From this post, 20 comments containing presuppositions were selected as samples for analysis. The qualitative descriptive analysis process is the process of obtaining meaning from text and image data. This process includes preparing data for examination, conducting various analyses, and gradually gaining a deeper understanding of the information (Creswell, 2007). This method is applied to the study of presuppositions in comments on a video on a meme account. This approach will allow for a systematic examination of embedded linguistic choices and assumptions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study focuses on analysis meaning and types of presupposition in a post video meme comments of @Savagecomedy account. The study found 20 comments as data from the meme comment in @Savagecomedy account. From the data of the comments, we can conclude the result of analysis in the following table:

Table 1. Type of Presupposition

No	Presupposition	Number of occurrences
1.	Existential	12
2.	Counter Factual	4
3.	Non-Factive	1
4.	Factive	0
5.	Structural	3
6.	Lexical	0

From the entire table, this study found existential presupposition is the most frequently occurring type of presupposition, which is 12 comments out of 20 comments. followed by counter factual presupposition as much as 4, and the third is followed by Structural presupposition as much as 3, then non-factive presupposition as much as 1. However, the rest of the types of presupposition, factive and lexical were not found in the comments. Therefore, this study describe the emergence of presuppositions found in instagram comments according to Yule's (1996) presupposition theory:

Existential presuppositions

Existential presuppositions are one of the most fundamental types of presuppositions, as identified by Yule (1996). They occur when a statement assumes the existence of a specific entity mentioned in the utterance. In digital communication, such as Instagram comments, existential presuppositions frequently appear when users refer to people, objects, or groups as already known and established within the discourse.

This study identified instances of existential presuppositions in meme comments, where users make implicit assumptions about the existence of certain entities. The following examples illustrate this phenomenon:

1. **Example: "My bestfriend act like this and he has social anxiety with it, No. idea how does it but I love him lol."**

This comment appears under a meme video depicting how men without anxiety disorders behave in public. The phrase *"my bestfriend"* presupposes that the user has a best friend. Additionally, the clause *"he has social anxiety"* further assumes that this best friend exists and possesses the condition of social anxiety. These presuppositions are not explicitly stated but are taken for granted as shared knowledge between the speaker and the audience. The use of personal pronouns ("my" and "he") reinforces the assumption of existence, making it a clear case of existential presupposition.

2. Example: "That's my group."

In this comment, the user refers to a group of people portrayed in the meme video. The phrase *"my group"* presupposes the existence of a specific group to which the user belongs. Even though the commenter does not explicitly state that they have a group, the use of the possessive pronoun *"my"* implies prior knowledge of the group's existence. This aligns with Yule's (1996) notion that existential presuppositions are triggered by possessive constructions, which assume that the referenced entity exists.

These examples demonstrate how existential presuppositions function in everyday online interactions. By assuming shared knowledge of certain people, relationships, and social contexts, users streamline communication, making their messages more efficient and relatable. In meme culture, such presuppositions contribute to humor, engagement, and a sense of community among commenters who recognize or identify with the depicted scenarios.

Counterfactual Presupposition

Counterfactual presuppositions occur when a statement implies a hypothetical or unreal situation—one that is contrary to reality. Yule (1996) defines counterfactual presuppositions as assumptions based on conditions that are not true at the time of speaking. These presuppositions are often triggered by words such as *if* and *wish*, which indicate a contrast between an imagined scenario and the actual state of affairs.

In online interactions, particularly in social media comments, counterfactual presuppositions allow users to express hypothetical situations, regrets, or desires for an alternative reality. The following examples illustrate how counterfactual presuppositions function in meme-related discussions:

1. Example: "If I'm with my friends I will literally act so stupid."

This comment appears under a meme video showcasing how men without anxiety disorders behave in public. The phrase *"If I'm with my friends"* sets up a hypothetical situation, implying that the speaker is not currently with their friends. The structure of the sentence presupposes an alternative reality in which the speaker's behavior would change if they were in the presence of their friends.

The presence of the conditional *"if"* triggers a counterfactual presupposition because the situation described (acting "so stupid" with friends) has not actually occurred. The user is imagining how their behavior would change under different circumstances. The humor in this comment likely stems from a shared understanding

among viewers that people often behave differently in the company of close friends, reinforcing the social and relatable nature of meme culture.

2. Example: "I wish I could do this but I'm a girl."

In this comment, the user reacts to the video by expressing a desire to participate in the activity depicted but states that their gender prevents them from doing so. The phrase "*I wish I could do this*" presupposes that the speaker cannot actually do the action being referenced. The verb *wish* is a common counterfactual trigger because it implies that the desired action is not possible in the current reality.

The second clause, "*but I'm a girl*", provides the reason why the speaker believes they are unable to perform the action. This reinforces the counterfactual nature of the statement—the speaker imagines a scenario in which they could participate, but acknowledges that, in reality, they cannot. This type of comment reflects how language users on social media playfully engage with gender roles and perceived limitations, often using counterfactual statements to highlight societal norms or personal experiences.

These examples demonstrate how counterfactual presuppositions are used in online interactions to express hypothetical or imagined scenarios. By framing their statements with *if* and *wish*, users communicate alternative realities that contrast with their present experiences. This type of presupposition is particularly relevant in digital spaces where humor, exaggeration, and relatability play a key role in engagement.

In meme comment sections, counterfactual presuppositions allow users to express thoughts about how they *would* act in a certain situation or how things *could* be different if circumstances allowed. This contributes to the broader social function of memes, which often thrive on shared assumptions, humor, and exaggerated scenarios that resonate with audiences.

By examining counterfactual presuppositions in meme comments, this study highlights how users shape meaning and interact with content in digital spaces, reflecting broader linguistic and social trends in online communication.

Non-Factive Presupposition

Non-factive presuppositions occur when an utterance implies an assumption that is not necessarily true or does not reflect reality. Unlike factive presuppositions, which assume the truth of an embedded proposition (e.g., "*She realized she was late*," which presupposes that she was indeed late), non-factive presuppositions are triggered by verbs and expressions that indicate speculation, imagination, or hypothetical scenarios. These include verbs like *imagine*, *think*, *assume*, *suppose*, and *dream*, which suggest that the proposition being stated is uncertain or possibly false (Yule, 1996).

In online discourse, particularly in social media interactions, non-factive presuppositions allow users to create hypothetical scenarios, often for the sake of humor, speculation, or creative exaggeration. The following example illustrates how non-factive presuppositions function in meme comments:

1. Example: "Imagine a group of 4 friends who are all like that."

This comment appears under a meme video that humorously portrays how men without anxiety disorders behave in public. The phrase "*Imagine a group of 4 friends who are all like that.*" presupposes the possibility of such a group existing, but it does not confirm that this group actually exists in reality.

In the analysis of non-factive presuppositions, the word "*Imagine*" plays a crucial role as a linguistic trigger. By using this term, the speaker constructs a hypothetical scenario rather than making a factual statement. The phrase "*who are all like that*" further reinforces this presupposition, as it suggests that the behavior depicted in the video could hypothetically describe a real group of friends. However, there is no concrete evidence or assertion that such a group actually exists.

This type of presupposition allows the speaker to interact with the meme in a playful manner, engaging with its humor by prompting other users to visualize an exaggerated or hypothetical reality. By doing so, the comment invites the audience to mentally participate in the humor, enhancing the overall comedic effect of the meme. In this way, non-factive presuppositions serve as an effective tool for creating relatability and amusement in digital discourse.

Non-factive presuppositions are particularly common in meme-related discourse, where exaggeration, hypothetical scenarios, and playful speculation contribute to engagement and relatability. In this example, the user is not stating an objective fact but rather prompting others to visualize a humorous or extreme situation. This aligns with the nature of memes, which often rely on hypothetical exaggeration to entertain and create a sense of shared amusement among viewers.

Structural Presupposition

Structural presupposition occurs when certain grammatical structures, particularly interrogative sentences (WH-questions), imply the truth of an embedded assumption (Yule, 1996). This type of presupposition is triggered by the structure of a question itself rather than explicit lexical choices. The listener is led to assume that a certain fact is already established or taken for granted by the speaker.

In digital communication, particularly in social media interactions such as meme comments, structural presuppositions play a significant role in shaping how users interpret content. By asking WH-questions, commenters assume background information is already known or accepted. The following examples illustrate how structural presupposition is employed in meme discourse:

In the analysis of structural presuppositions in meme comments, several examples illustrate how question structures inherently assume certain truths.

One such example is the comment, "Why did he do that in public?" This remark appears under a meme video that humorously portrays how men without anxiety disorders behave in public. The structure of the question itself, particularly the use of "*why*," presupposes that the individual in question did, in fact, perform an action in public. The commenter does not challenge the occurrence of the action but rather seeks an explanation for it. In this way, the presupposition is embedded within the question format, guiding the audience to accept the event as a given while shifting their attention to understanding the motivation behind it.

Another example demonstrating structural presupposition is the comment, "Where do I get these friends?" In this case, the speaker implies that such friends exist and can be found, thereby presupposing the existence of a specific type of friend group. The use of "*where*" suggests that there is a location or method for acquiring friends like those depicted in the meme. The humor in this comment likely stems from the exaggerated assumption that one can "obtain" friends with particular behaviors, making the interaction more engaging and relatable within the meme's context.

Similarly, the comment "Who are these people?" exemplifies another instance of structural presupposition. By asking "*who*," the speaker inherently presupposes that the individuals shown in the video exist and are acknowledged within the discourse. The question does not doubt their existence but rather seeks to identify them. This comment conveys curiosity and possibly humor, as the user reacts to the meme by questioning the identity of the people featured.

Through these examples, it becomes evident that structural presuppositions are a fundamental part of online interactions, subtly shaping meaning by embedding assumptions within the grammatical structure of questions. This linguistic phenomenon contributes to the humor, engagement, and interpretive framework within meme culture, allowing users to interact with content in a way that feels both natural and socially engaging.

Structural presupposition is a common linguistic phenomenon in online interactions, particularly in meme-related discussions, where users frequently pose rhetorical or exaggerated questions to engage with content. The presence of WH-questions in meme comments reflects how users interact with visual content in a way that assumes shared understanding and participation.

CONCLUSION

This study examines presuppositions in Instagram comments on the meme account *@Savagecomedy*, applying George Yule's (1996) framework of presupposition types. An analysis of 20 comments reveals that existential presupposition is the most frequently occurring type, followed by counterfactual and structural presuppositions. Non-factive presuppositions appear less frequently, while factive and lexical presuppositions are absent.

The findings highlight the role of presuppositions in shaping meaning in online interactions, emphasizing the implicit assumptions conveyed through words, phrases, and sentence structures in meme-related discourse. This study distinguishes itself by examining presuppositions in social media comments, a dynamic and informal communication medium, offering new insights into how implicit meanings are constructed in modern online discourse. By identifying presupposition types in meme comments, this research provides a nuanced understanding of how context, assumptions, and linguistic structures interact in digital communication.

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