

## AN ANALYSIS OF PRESUPPOSITION ON BRAD COHEN'S CHARACTER IN *FRONT OF THE CLASS* MOVIE

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### ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research were to describe the types of presupposition used by the main character in *Front of the Class* movie and identify the meanings of utterances containing presupposition used by main character in *Front of the Class* movie. Yule's theory of presupposition is used by the researcher to answer the formulated research questions. This research was a qualitative study applying descriptive-qualitative method. The subject of this research is a movie entitled *Front of the Class* directed by Peter Werner. The data were some scenes including the utterances said by speaker and heard by hearer. The data analysis was conducted by identifying and classifying the data to find the inferences. The findings of the research are as follows: in *Front of the Class* movie, all Yule's six types of presupposition are found. Those are; existential presupposition, factive presupposition, non-factive presupposition, lexical presupposition, structural presupposition and counterfactual presupposition. The meanings of utterances containing presupposition used by main character in *Front of the Class* movie are gained by analyzing the context because in pragmatic study, context is essential to figure out the implied meaning. The context of the Brad Cohen's utterances in *Front of the Class* movie is gained through three factors. They are; the participants, the context of situation and the shared knowledge.

**Keywords:** Pragmatics, Presupposition, Existential Presupposition, Factive presupposition, Non-factive presupposition, Lexical presupposition, Structural presupposition, Counterfactual presupposition, Utterance, Tourette's syndrome.

### ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan jenis-jenis presuposisi yang digunakan tokoh utama dalam film *Front of the Class* dan mengidentifikasi makna ujaran yang mengandung presuposisi yang digunakan tokoh utama dalam film *Front of the Class*. Teori presuposisi Yule digunakan oleh peneliti untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian yang dirumuskan. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif-kualitatif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah film berjudul *Front of the Class* yang disutradarai oleh Peter Werner. Data tersebut berupa beberapa adegan termasuk ucapan yang diucapkan oleh pembicara dan

didengar oleh pendengar. Analisis data dilakukan dengan mengidentifikasi dan mengelompokkan data untuk mencari kesimpulan. Temuan dari penelitian ini adalah sebagai berikut: Dalam film *Front of the Class*, ditemukan enam tipe presuposisi Yule. Yaitu; presuposisi eksistensial, presuposisi factive, presuposisi leksikal presuposisi non-factive, presuposisi struktural dan presuposisi kontrafaktual. Makna tuturan yang mengandung presuposisi yang digunakan tokoh utama dalam film *Front of the Class* diperoleh dengan menganalisis konteks karena dalam kajian pragmatis, konteks sangat penting untuk mengetahui makna yang tersirat. Konteks ucapan Brad Cohen di film *Front of the Class* diperoleh melalui tiga faktor. Mereka adalah ; peserta, konteks situasi dan berbagi pengetahuan.

**Kata Kunci** : Pragmatik, Presuposisi, Presuposisi Eksistensial, Presuposisi Factive, Presuposisi Non-factive, Presuposisi Leksikal, Presuposisi Struktural, Presuposisi Counterfactual, Ucapan, Sindrom Tourette.

### A. BACKGROUND

Language is very important for communication. When a language comes to the conversation, what is intended by the speakers sometimes is not in accordance with what they said. In this case, both the speakers and the hearers will experience misunderstanding. sometimes the speaker's utterances are confusing and they make the hearers cannot identify the correct information from the speakers. In the field of linguistics, this kind of problem is studied in pragmatics. Yule (1998:3) states that pragmatics is concerned with the study of speaker's meaning in communication and its interpretation by the hearers. Pragmatics becomes a systematic way of explaining language used in context. In communication, misunderstanding between the speaker and hearer do not only occur due to the differences of background knowledge but also occurs because the utterance that is conveyed by the speaker contains multiple meanings, so that the hearer have difficulty in assuming the utterance. This occurrence is called as presupposition. Yule (1996: 25) said that presupposition means to believe that something is true or is known by the hearer before it has been proved. The phenomenon of presupposition can be found in the movie because the language that is used in the movie is not different with the language that is used in real life. The use of presupposition by the characters in the movie must be appropriate, so that the audience can understand the character's conversation. One of the movies that use a lot of presupposition in the dialogue of its characters is entitled *Front of the Class*. *Front of the Class* tells about a boy named Brad Cohen who has tourette syndrome and he wants to be a teacher. Brad Cohen is bullied by people around him because he always makes weird sounds called tics due to his tourette syndrome. He tries not to care with his disorder where he utters his utterances with implied meaning in order to hide his disorder so he can be more confident to face the world and no one can underestimate him.

Based on the background above, the aims of this study are (1) To identify the types of presupposition used by the Brad Cohen's character in *Front of the Class*

movie. (2) To identify the meanings of utterances containing presupposition used by main character in *Front of the Class* movie.

## **B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Presupposition is the assumption that someone has in mind when the people utter an utterance or sentence. Speakers, not sentence, have presupposition. According to Yule (2000: 25), presupposition is something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to make an utterance. Yule (2000: 27) sees that presupposition has been associated with the use of a large number of words, phrases, and structures. These linguistic forms are considered to be indicators of potential presupposition, which can only become actual presupposition in context with speakers. Thus, he states that there are six types of presupposition which are: *the existential, the factive, the non-factive, the lexical, the structural and the counterfactual*. Below are the further explanations of the six types of presupposition: The existential presupposition is assumed to be present either in possessive constructions or in any definite noun phrase as in using expressions. Factive presupposition is shown by the use of some verbs that can be treated as a fact. Non-factive presupposition is the assumption that is assumed not to be true. Lexical presupposition is the use of a form with is asserted meaning is conventionally interpreted with the presupposition that another, non-asserted meaning is understood. Structural presupposition is the assumption of certain sentence structure that is the part of sentence structure and is already assumed to be true. Counterfactual presupposition, this type is contrary from the facts or the opposite of what is true, or contrary to fact. According to Yule (1996:86), there are three elements that support the understanding and emergence of presuppositions. These elements are participant, the context and the same background knowledge.

## **C. RESEARCH METHOD**

### **1. Research Design**

This research is a qualitative research. Qualitative research is a research method which produces descriptive data in the form of words written or spoken of the person (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975:5). This research is done as qualitative research since the researcher uses no numeric data or statistical procedures in analyzing the data. This research deals with the descriptive way to show the data and the analysis. Isaac and Michael (1995:46) stated that the aims of descriptive method is to describe systematically the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest, factually and accurately. By using descriptive method, the researcher is able to describe what is happening on *Front of the Class* movie and examine the Presuppositions that are contained in Brad Cohen's utterances.

## **2. Research Instrument**

In doing a qualitative research, the key instrument of the research is the researcher himself (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992: 97). As the key instrument, the researcher directly does the observation, collection, analysis, identification and classification the data. Furthermore, the researcher uses his own critical assessment to analyze the data and answer the research questions.

## **3. Data and Data Source**

The data sources of this research are a movie script and scene of *Front of the Class* movie which was directed by Peter Werner. Data in this research are the Brad Cohen's utterances containing presupposition in *Front of the Class* movie.

## **4. Data Collection**

In collecting the data, the researcher does some steps. First, the researcher does observation by watching *Front of the Class* movie repeatedly to gain deep understanding about the story of the movie. Second, the researcher reads the script of *Front of the Class* movie to improve the accuracy of the data. Third, the researcher writes some dialogues and utterances that are produced by Brad Cohen's character to gain a clear description about Brad Cohen's character as the object of the analysis. The last step is the researcher selects and picks the data which are related with the research questions.

## **5. Data analysis**

Data analysis is done through some steps. First, the researcher identifies the speaker's presupposition forces found in the *Front of the Class* movie. Second, the researcher classifies the utterances based on the types of presupposition whether existential presupposition, factive presupposition, lexical presupposition, structural presupposition, non-factive presupposition and the last is counterfactual presupposition. Third, the researcher describes and analyzes the chosen utterances which include the types of presupposition and the presupposition contained in Brad Cohen's character in *Front of the Class* movie. The last step is concluding. The conclusion is made based on the result of the steps that is done before. After discover the types of presupposition that are exist in the movie, the researcher can describe the presupposition contained in Brad Cohen's character in *Front of the Class* movie.

## **D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In this part, the researcher classifies the data found in *Front of the Class* movie based on Yule's, theory there are six types of presupposition : existential presupposition, factive presupposition, non-factive presupposition, lexical presupposition, structural presupposition and counterfactual presupposition. From the total data there are 130 data of types of presupposition 96 of the are existential presupposition, 10 of them are factive presupposition, 6 of them are non-factive presupposition, 3 of them are lexical presupposition, 10 of them are

structural presupposition, and then for the last 5 of them is counterfactual presupposition. Below is the further explanation of each types of presupposition found in *Front of the Class* movie.

## 1. Existential Presupposition

The existential presupposition is assumed to be present either in possessive constructions or in any definite noun phrase as in using expressions, in which the speaker presupposes the existence of the entities named (Yule, 1996: 27).

The utterance at 00:37:37-00:37:41

Brad Cohen: *I want it really bad. But I would never ever work for a man who does not care about **his students**.*

The utterance '**his students**' is classified in the existential presupposition because it shows that the speaker mentions the existence of people by using possessive contraction that he has students. The utterance above is said by Brad Cohen when he spoke to the principal. At that moment, he refused the job as a teacher that was offered by the principal because Cohen felt like the principal was very ignorance toward his students. In the utterance above, Cohen said the word '**his student**' to the principal which meant that the principal had students but he did not care about them and it made Cohen very angry to him.

## 2. Factive Presupposition

The presupposition is shown by the use of some verbs that can be treated as a fact, e.g *know, regret, realize, be aware, and glad*. In factive presupposition, the speaker makes the hearer trust and the information of the utterance in a fact (Yule, 1996:27).

The utterance at 01:15:57-01:16:05

Thomas : *Busted.*  
Brad Cohen : *Where did you learn those words, Thomas?*  
Brad Cohen : ***You know, you're not supposed to leave the class without asking permission?***  
Thomas : *(nod)*  
Brad Cohen : *Well, you're going to clean that up.*

The bold utterance above is classified in factive presupposition because it is triggered by factive verb using the word '**know**'. This utterance was said by Cohen when he found that one of his students named Thomas was leaving the class. Then, Cohen counseled Thomas to obey the rule in the school that the students had to ask permission to the teacher whenever they wanted to leave the class. The word 'know' in the utterance is followed by the fact that Thomas could not leave the class without the permission from Cohen.

### 3. Non-factive Presupposition

Non-factive presupposition is the contrary of factive presupposition. Non-factive presupposition is associated with the words that indicates something that is not true for example *dream*, *imagine* and *pretend* (Yule, 1996:28).

The utterance at 00:54:00-00:54:04

Brad Cohen as a narrator: *I look down at the roster **like** I was announcing the starting line-up for an all star baseball game.*

The utterance above is classified in the non-factive presupposition because the word '**like**' is indicate something that is not true. It presupposes that is actually not the roster of starting line-up for an all star baseball, but it is the roster of second grade students. The utterance above is stated by Brad Cohen as the narrator when he was just accepted as a teacher in the school. He walked into the class room and read the roster of the second grade where it would become his students soon. Cohen was very happy because after many failures he got, he finally accepted into a school and became a teacher.

### 4. Lexical Presupposition

When a sentence conventionally asserts one meaning and then there is another meaning which is not asserted but understood, it is called as Lexical presupposition.

The utterance at 00:33:35-00:33:50

Principal : *Well, why can't you just get cured?*

Brad Cohen : *There isn't any cure. **I don't like making noises anymore.** They're even worse when I get stressed. When you don't accept that I can't stop them. But when I feel accepted, then they're not so bad.*

Principal : *What can we do? And I mean everyone in this school. What can we do to help you, Brad?*

The iterative *anymore* can be seen as a trigger of Lexical presupposition that refers to a form of repeating act. In the dialogue above, Cohen stated that he does not like making noises anymore. Cohen's utterance can be interpreted that before he talked to the principal, he kept making noises. In the dialogue above, the school was holding a music performance. However, Cohen kept making noises because of his tourette syndrome. All people in that school were very disturbed by Cohen's noises. In the end of the performance, the principal asked Cohen to come in front of all people and questioned why Cohen cannot be silent during the performance. Cohen then explained that he had tourette syndrom. After the principal inquired about the cure, Cohen explained there was not any cure of his syndrom. Cohen then said to the principal that he does not like making any noises again.

## 5. Structural Presupposition

This kind of presupposition can be found in the uses of Wh-question construction in English. Structural presupposition is associated with the use of certain words or phrases, to presuppose with particular structure means the part of the structure is already believed to be true.

The utterance at 01:09:48-01:09:52

Brad Cohen : ***Where is Maxim and her big red truck going to be on Tuesday?***

The bold utterance is classified in structural presupposition. The WH-question '**where**' that is used by Cohen becomes a form of utterance in structural presupposition. In this utterance, Cohen wonder about Maxim's existence. When the utterance above is said by Cohen, the part Maxim and her big red truck go somewhere on Tuesday is already assumed to be true. The utterance above happened when Cohen taught about Geography to his students in the class. Cohen used his friend named Maxim who was a truck driver as an object of studying map. He taught his students about the regions that Maxim and her truck usually went through for a week. In the end of the class, Cohen then ask his students about the existance of Maxim and her big red ruck on Tuesday.

## 6. Counterfactual Presupposition

Counterfactual presupposition is a presupposition that is contrary to the fact, which means it indicates that it is not true. The presupposition of this type can be seen in the use of *if-clause* construction where the information is not true at the time of utterance.

The utterance at 00:40:09-00:40:15

Bard Cohen as a narrator : ***If the principle was not in. I'd give my resume to a secretary or a janitor and asked them to drop it off when the principle returned.***

The bold utterance is classified in the counterfactual presupposition. The *If-clause* form above shows that the condition is not true or contrary to the fact. The utterance that is stated by Cohen above presupposes what actually happen is that the principal is in his office so that Cohen's resume was not given to the secretary or a janitor. In that moment, Cohen as a narrator of the story told about his experience when he was about to spread his resume to the schools in his town. He said that he wanted to give his resume directly to the principal and if the principal was not in his office, Cohen would give the resume to the principal's secretary or even to the janitor. Luckily, during looking for the job as a teacher, Cohen always met the principal and directly had his interview.

## E. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and discussion, there are two conclusions that can be drawn related to the research questions. First, In *Front of the Class* movie, all Yule's six types of presupposition are found; ninety six data of existential presupposition, ten data of factive presupposition, six data of non-factive presupposition, three data of lexical presupposition, ten data of structural presupposition and five data of counterfactual presupposition. Second, The meanings of utterances containing presupposition used by main character in *Front of the Class* movie are gained by analyzing the context because in pragmatic study, context is essential to figure out the implied meaning. The context of the Brad Cohen's utterances in *Front of the Class* movie is gained through three factors. They are (1) the participants, (2) the context of situation, (3) the shared knowledge.

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