THE PRESUPPOSITION TRIGGERS IN THESIS ABSTRACT

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Abstract

Abstract drew a summary of the author's writing in a thesis or others publication research. It was outlined some essential points to ease the reader toward the whole investigation. Regarding the presupposition, this study purposed to see the triggers used in students' thesis' abstract and the way authors presuppose in their abstract writing from its motivation in the form of linguistic features. The finding showed that the existential type is mainly used in the abstracts by qualitative research. In the condition of the definite noun phrase and some possessive form, the findings stated the existence of the background knowledge having within the truth value found by the thesis writers. A presupposition was known as a general property of language use has been defined as those taken-for-granted and shared implicit claims inherent in the explicit meaning of a text. The abstract writers formulated and summarized the main point of their research, and thus it provided much potential information and knowledge from the thesis.

Keywords: Thesis Abstract, Presupposition Triggers, Abstract

Introduction

Mastering writing will help the students produce any written text such as articles of journals, research papers, producing English written text for communication purposes, doing the exam for the academic sense, etc. (Rahmawati, 2017:2). Writing a thesis is a must for university students. As the last examination of having as a study in university, students were asked to be able to write. One of the main parts of the thesis is the abstract. Writing an abstract is the essential part of the thesis as a cover of the idea. In the case of publication, an abstract was considered to describe the overall research conducted. "The abstract is used to let readers know quickly what your assignment says. It is a summary of the whole paper. It is placed right at the front immediately after the title page" (Packham et al. in Suharno, 2011: 34).

Moreover, abstracts included significant points of the research. They explained why it was necessary, its purpose, how the procedure and method went together to conduct it, the result, and the conclusion. This combination placed well in writing an abstract for any published article.

In addition, an abstract is compiled with a set of facts in research. The abstract must make the readers interested and motivate their curiosity to read a complete description of writing (Djuharie & Suherli, 2001: 13). An abstract must be a fully self-contained, capsule description of the paper. It can't assume (or attempt to provoke) the reader into flipping through looking for an explanation of what is meant by some vague statement (Koopman, 1997). So writing an abstract must be concise in the description. Thus abstract wasn't written as an assumption, but there were findings of the use of words and phrases taken for granted. Look at the following example 1 and 2 below.
1. The data analysis technique used is the associative method with the help of the SPSS version 16.0 program. (Abs -5)

2. Emotional Competence is the most dominant employee's competency affecting service quality compared to intellectual rate. (Abs-6)

The two sentences showed presupposition triggers as a shared assumption based on the example above. The sentence (1) occurred the use of the definite description 'the' in noun phrase 'the data analysis technique used' presupposed 'there is the usage of a technique for doing data analysis. The noun phrase 'the associative method' presupposed 'a method called associative existed in data analysis. The noun phrase 'the help of SPSS version 16.0 program' presupposed 'a program namely SPSS version 16.0 existed it'. The use of the definite description 'the' here was as trigger to 'give the signal this reference…. referring to something that you know about"(Griffiths, 2006: 158). Besides, sentence (2) showed the use of comparison degree. The excellent form presupposed that emotional Competence was one of the competencies in service quality and led among the others. This sentence contained inference that assumed them as a part of the author's common knowledge of the research. Therefore, presuppositions are not in terms of truth-conditions but in terms of whether they were part of this common knowledge (Stalnaker, 1973).

Those samples above formulated this study which purported to see the use of presupposition type and how the linguistic forms triggered them in making presupposed meaning in the abstracts. As the preliminary data on the sample above, the focus of the study was the occurrences of presupposition triggers, which was analyzed using Yule's theory on types of presupposition in the abstracts. The abstracts were written in English by undergraduate students.

**Literature Review**

Presupposition carried background assumption and shared knowledge from the speaker 'to be the case before making utterance' (Yule, 1996: 25). Not only in the form of utterance but presupposition can also be found in any written text as a form of writer's idea. They can be described as uniformly characterizing the consequences for interpreting sentences of a class of lexical items, syntactic constructions, and intonational phenomena called the presupposition triggers (Zeevat in Deemter & Kibble, 2002: 61).

Presupposition was seen in two strategies, semantic and pragmatic, in defining the background assumption. 'Semantic presupposition is held to be a relation between sentences. It is often defined by entailment along the following lines' (Oualif, 2017: 47). At the same time, the pragmatic one is based on the concept of appropriate usage. It views sentences as utterances of individuals communicating through the language (Siagian, et al, 2015). The following examples can be seen as the differences of presupposition projection.

- The Bishop of Morocco is wise.
- The Bishop of Morocco does not drink
  (taken from Qualif, 48-50)

The projection meaning of the sentence (1) is true if there is a Bishop of Morocco. Should not such a person exist, the question of whether the sentence is true or false does not arise (Qualif, 2017: 48). So it means the semantic relied on the truth-value condition. While if the sentence projected in pragmatic meaning in a sentence (2), it presupposed that there is Bishop of Morocco. Whether it was true or false, the advocates of pragmatic presupposition would say that it is inappropriate. So in meaning, it referred to the background knowledge that existed as the element of the speaker's utterance within the context.

There is no more way to find the presupposed meaning without the projection in the form
of a word, phrase, or sentence. Those language features are called presupposition triggers. Triggers are referred to as reflecting claims that these items correlated with the presence of specific presupposition (Potts, 2014: 5). Yule (1996: 27) formulated the triggers into the type of presupposition, namely existential presupposition, factive presupposition, lexical presupposition, structural presupposition, non-factive presupposition, and counter-factual presupposition. The following table summarized the language features as the triggers of potential presupposition.

Table 1. Type of Presupposition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Linguistic Features (Triggers)</th>
<th>Samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Existential</td>
<td>the assumption of the existence of the entities named by the speaker</td>
<td>-Demonstrative pronoun</td>
<td>Mary’s sister got married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Possessive form</td>
<td>&gt;&gt; Mary has a sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Definite Noun Phrase</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Factive</td>
<td>the assumption that something is true due to the presence of some factive verb</td>
<td>- factive verbs; know, realize, show, regret, be aware, be odd, be glad, etc.</td>
<td>John knows his phone is lost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;&gt; John’s phone is lost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lexical</td>
<td>The assumption refers to using one word, the speaker can act as if another meaning will be understood.</td>
<td>- Verbs: manage, stop, start, again, etc.</td>
<td>Mary stopped crying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;&gt; Mary used to cry before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Structural</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>-Wh-questions</td>
<td>Why does John arrive late at class?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;&gt; John arrives late at class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Non-Factive</td>
<td>The assumption referred to something that is not true.</td>
<td>-Non-factive Verbs: dream, imagine, pretend, wish, etc.</td>
<td>Mary dreamed that she had a car.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;&gt; She didn’t have a car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Counter-Factual</td>
<td>the assumption to what is presupposed is not true or contrary to facts.</td>
<td>-Conditional Sentence (Type 2)</td>
<td>If John came late, Mary would be angry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;&gt; John doesn’t come late.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the table above, The researcher can trigger presupposition projection through those linguistics features, and they were used to analyze in the thesis abstract.

Moreover, none of any studies conducted this analysis, but many studies have analyzed
presupposition in written text. Bonyadi & Samuel (2011), Fitriani (2016), Harahap (2017), Manu (2020), and Al-Zubeiry (2020) analyzed the presupposition triggers in editorials text in newspapers. Their studies focused on analyzing linguistics form that triggered the presupposed meaning. The findings were varied in terms of the data source. Analysis of presupposition in the advertisement also was conducted in some researches. Yingfang (2007), Pang (2016), Siagian, R.O., et al. (2015), and Hikmah (2017) analyzed the presupposition triggers in the advertisement. By analyzing through its phrases and sentences, the findings showed that most of the phrased presupposed meaning delivers new and focused information in publicity and is easily conveyed. The advertising language becomes brief, diversifying, and attractive (Pang: 125). Those researches concentrate on the analysis of written text or discourse in defining the use of presupposition trigger—those reflected what this study also conducted in writing, especially thesis abstract.

Research Method

This study was designed in focus to analyze the presupposition triggers in the abstract. The researcher chose qualitative research to be the methodology of the study in which "the goal is a comprehensive summarization, in everyday terms, of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals" (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). The researcher conducted some research as they looked for specific and selected sources to be examined and summarized. The researcher took the data source from students’ thesis in Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, which selected ten English abstracts written by Management study program students in English. The view was written in English and was published in 2019 as the final examination for university study. The abstracts were taken randomly with the principle of purposive sampling. They were considered to find some data for the use of presupposition triggers. This study conducted a documentary technique, in which The researcher took the abstract directly from the library.

Collecting data begins with taking ten abstracts selected randomly published in 2019. The abstract was captured and rewritten to get them all into sentences in the form of print. After that, The researcher analyzed the sentences using Yule's presupposition theory. Then the analysis process went into each sentence in the abstract being examined to find whether they used one of the triggers in the type of presupposition. Then the data reduction was conducted to eliminate some unnecessary or no finding data. Similar occurrences were not included in calculating. After that, the events were categorized and counted into tabulation focus to data related to the study. Then finally, the result was summarized to answer the questions formulated for this study.

Results and Discussion

This study focused on investigating the presupposition triggers in the thesis abstract. The process of analysis was conducted by marking the occurrences by using Yule’s theory on type of presupposition on the sentences. Frequency of occurrences and percentage was brought out and the findings were normalized. After validation of the data and preliminary findings, the indication showed various types of presupposition triggers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>Existential</th>
<th>Factive</th>
<th>Lexical</th>
<th>Non-Lexical</th>
<th>Structural</th>
<th>Counter-factual</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Abs 1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Abs 2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Abs 3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Abs 4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Frequency of occurrences of presupposition triggers in thesis’ abstract
Based on table 2 above, the data described the occurrences towards triggers in defining presupposition. The most one led to the existential type with 72 occurrences or 89%. The abstracts mostly used definite noun phrases and some possessive form in stating the existence of the background knowledge within the truth value found by the thesis writers. Then factive type found 5 occurrence (6%), structural type found 2 occurrence (1.5%) and non-factive type found 1 occurrence (0.5%). Meanwhile, the lexical and counter-factual types were not found in any abstracts.

Regarding the findings, the factive type occurred the verb 'show' to present the data described in the thesis' abstract. The structural type was found in the form of an indirect question to determine the purpose of the study in the thesis. While the non-factive type was found the word 'expect' in one of abstract written. The researcher can explain the sample findings in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Type of Trigger</th>
<th>Occurrence in Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1  | Existential     | The writing of this thesis aims to explain data analysis using the structural equation modeling method which… (Abs 1)  
>> there is a method analysis called structural equation modeling. |
| 2  | Factive         | Data analysis using multiple regression analysis showed that the service quality of State Polytechnic of Medan was 40.65% influenced by intellectual, emotional, and social competencies. (Abs 6)  
>> the service quality was influenced by the published data, intellectual, emotional, and social competencies. |
| 3  | Non-Factive     | Employees are expected to hone their knowledge, skill continually, and ability to be better …… (Abs 5)  
>> Employees don't file their knowledge, skill, and power. |
| 4  | Structural      | This study aims to analyze how much influence the company value and stock price through profitability, investment decisions, funding decisions, and dividend policy. (Abs 2)  
>> The company value and stock price influenced such factors. |
| 5  | Comparison Degree | The workload is the most dominant factor affecting employees’ work stress compared to work time and punishment. (Abs 10)  
>> The workload is one of the work stress factors |

The occurrences in table 3 provided the realization presupposed meaning for some types of presupposition in abstracts. The event in the sentence was marked with bold, while the projection meaning was marked with ‘>>.’ Another finding can relate to express writers' background knowledge in the form of comparison degree. The result in which used superlative form described the occurrence provided a background assumption. That occurrence is implied
that the workload was part of the factors on work stress. Because the basis of comparison is often implicit, the addressee must infer the ground from the broader context (Harahap, 2017: 61). Hopefully, the additional finding can bring many background assumptions from thesis writers in writing the abstract.

Therefore, triggers are mostly found as events in presets related to preset triggers of the existing type. It happened because the abstract writers formulated and summarized the main point of their research, and thus, they provided much potential information and knowledge from their thesis. This study needed to explore more in the analysis of presupposition triggers to determine background knowledge or assumption shared by the writer.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study analyzed presupposition triggers in the form of linguistic features found in students' thesis abstracts. Using Yule's theory on type of presupposition, the findings showed that the use of existential type was mostly found in this abstract. The linguistic features used for this type are described indefinite noun phrases and possessive forms. It implied that the writers used this type of presupposition to state the existence of the background knowledge or the truth of the entities mentioned in abstracts. It can be seen in the findings as to the data of this study.

References


