Exploring Presuppositions In Podcast Interviews: A Pragmatic Analysis Of Shawn Mendes' Narrative On Jay Shetty's Youtube Channel

Cindy Febryanis Gee[1], Atha Almisa Floren Agustina[2], Ananda Rizky[3], Mia Perlina[4]

[1,2,3,4] Universitas Pamulang

Abstract: This study investigates the role of presuppositions in spoken media, focusing on podcast interviews, to understand how they shape audience perceptions. Presupposition, a concept in pragmatics, refers to implicit assumptions embedded in a speaker's words, which are often accepted by listeners without question. This research applies Yule's (1996) presupposition theory to a podcast episode featuring Shawn Mendes on Jay Shetty's YouTube channel. Employing a descriptive qualitative methodology, the study categorizes six types of presuppositions: existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, and counterfactual. The analysis highlights how these presuppositions structure Mendes' personal and professional narrative, guiding listeners' interpretations in real time. The study concludes that identifying presupposition types contributes to understanding the subtle ways spoken media influences audience engagement and narrative construction. This research provides insights into pragmatic analysis in digital spoken media, offering a foundation for further exploration in this dynamic field.

Keywords: Spoken Media, Podcast Analysis, Presupposition, Pragmatics, Narrative, Yule's Theory.

Introduction

Language plays an essential role in communication by conveying information and imparting implicit meanings that shape relationships. Communication is foundational in all areas of human life, facilitating interaction across varied domains such as the workplace (Haerazi & Nunez, 2021; Seraj & Hadina, 2021) and classrooms (Sari et al., 2023; Wulandari, 2023), where it serves distinct purposes. According to Apriyanto (2020), these purposes include expression, information, exploration, persuasion, and entertainment. Language achieves these communicative functions through spoken, written, gestural, or signal forms. As a specialized branch of linguistics, pragmatics offers insights into how these language functions are interpreted in specific contexts, focusing on language use, context, appropriateness, and linguistic awareness (Nurdiana, 2019). Pragmatics examines how environmental and background factors affect the intended meaning of language use (Damanik et al., 2024) and emphasizes the role of presuppositions—assumptions speakers take for granted during communication—as essential elements in contextual meaning.

Pragmatics specifically focuses on how communicators convey meaning and how listeners interpret it, a notion supported by Sianipar (2020) and Roza (2020). In a broader sense, speakers often construct their messages based on what they assume listeners already know, an approach that shapes everyday communication, even though these assumptions may sometimes be inaccurate (Chukwu, 2024). This approach includes examining intent, presuppositions, objectives, and communicative strategies. According to Sukma et al. (2022), effective communication relies on listeners' ability to recognize these presuppositions in the speaker's discourse, making it a foundational element of understanding within pragmatics.

The ideal use of presuppositions in spoken media is to foster meaningful connections, where communicators use implicit assumptions to guide listeners' understanding. In podcasts, for example, presuppositions can frame narratives, enhancing the listener's perception and emotional engagement. Research has shown that presuppositions in spoken media can create a strong narrative effect. Widiastuti & Santoso (2024) demonstrate how repetitive presuppositions in Denny Sumargo's podcast intensify emotional impact, aligning the speaker's language with the listener's perspective. This phenomenon is further evidenced by Rahmat's (2024) analysis of Aaron Mate's interview, where existential presuppositions effectively shape an understanding of sensitive topics, such as geopolitical issues. Similarly, Irayanti & Liliani (2022) identify existential and factive presuppositions in Deddy Corbuzier's podcast as tools that subtly guide listeners' interpretation of social themes.

However, there remains a gap between the ideal role of presuppositions in facilitating effective spoken communication and their varied applications in digital media. Although these studies highlight presupposition use within specific contexts, a comprehensive exploration of presuppositions across conversational media is still lacking. This gap points to the need for a focused study that examines how presuppositions influence real-time listener perception in podcast interviews, a format characterized by dynamic, unscripted conversation.

To address this gap, the present study examines an episode of Jay Shetty's YouTube podcast titled "Shawn Mendes Reveals The Truth About His Two-Year Hiatus & Opens Up About His New Album," in which Mendes shares insights into his life and career. By applying Yule's (1996) presupposition theory, this research identifies and categorizes presuppositions, analyzing how they shape narrative understanding in real time. This approach extends presupposition analysis into the domain of spoken digital media, contributing to a broader understanding of how implicit meanings in conversations shape real-time audience interpretation.

Methodology

The research employed a descriptive qualitative methodology. The data collection process involved listening and note-taking techniques to identify presuppositions within the podcast. Then, the data is analyzed with human instruments, and researchers analyze, interpret, and make conclusions on their findings (Sugiyono, 2016). The researchers manually transcribed the podcast dialogue to facilitate analysis. Using Yule's (1996) presupposition categories—existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, and

counterfactual—the researchers categorized and analyzed the data. Human instruments, including the researchers' interpretative skills, were employed to analyze, interpret, and draw conclusions from the data based on the theoretical framework.

Result and Discussion

Yule (1996) suggested that there are six types of presuppositions. The six types are a) existential presuppositions, b) factive presuppositions, c) lexical presuppositions, d) structural presuppositions, e) nonfactive presuppositions, and f) counterfactual presuppositions.

The results showed that the six types of presuppositions were found in the speech between the speaker and the speech partner. Existential presuppositions of 16 utterances, 21 utterances of factive presuppositions, 12 utterances of structural presuppositions, 19 utterances of lexical presuppositions, 25 utterances of counterfactual presuppositions, and 13 utterances of non-factive presuppositions. The following are some of the findings in the research on presuppositions which are presented in the table.

Table 1. Types of presupposition in podcast interview Shawn Mendes in Jay Shetty Youtube channel.

No	Presupposition Type	Frequency
1	Existential	16
2	Factive	21
3	Lexical	19
4	Structural	12
5	Non Factive	13
6	Counterfactual	25
	Total	106

The findings reveal that Shawn Mendes' narrative in the podcast heavily utilizes counterfactual and factive presuppositions, which account for the largest portions of the identified utterances. Counterfactual presuppositions, used 25 times, highlight Mendes' reflective and hypothetical thought processes, emphasizing emotional complexity and self-discovery. For example, phrases like "I assumed you would say something encouraging…" illustrate Mendes' introspective nature and his emotional connection to his audience. Similarly, factive presuppositions (21 instances), such as the use of "I remember…", validate the authenticity of Mendes' experiences, building credibility and trust with listeners.

These results suggest that different presupposition types contribute uniquely to shaping Mendes' narrative. Existential presuppositions establish a concrete connection to physical spaces, such as his favourite studio, while lexical and structural presuppositions frame timelines and emphasize continuity in his career story. Together, these types create a multi-dimensional narrative that engages audiences both emotionally and cognitively.

Discussion

Presupposition refers to the hidden assumptions or beliefs embedded in a speaker's words. Yule (1996) explains that different types of presuppositions allow speakers to convey information indirectly. This discussion examines six types of presuppositions—existential, lexical, factive, non-factive, counterfactual, and structural—using examples from a podcast interview with Shawn Mendes. Each type demonstrates how language can subtly convey meaning and shape how listeners interpret the message.

1. **Existential Presupposition**

Yule (1996) describes that the presence of a referent identity that is stated in a specific term is shown by the existential assumption. Obviously, this presupposition applies to both the existence or nonexistence of assertions in these utterances and phrases that indicate ownership. Existential presuppositions demonstrate how presuppositions may be used to communicate the existence of something.

The following speech provides examples of this kind of presumption based on the evidence:

Context of speech: In this podcast interview, Shetty, the interviewer, conducted this podcast interview in Shawn's favourite room. Shetty allows Shawn, the guest, to describe the place they use for the interview.

*Shawn: "This is **the room** that, oh man, I mean, I've made all of my albums here,"* The existential presupposition in the speech above is in data. The presupposition "This is the room that, I've made all of my albums here" is built in a descriptive noun phrase. In the content of speech "the room", what is presumed by the content of the speech is that it exists; the room is a significant physical space where creative work happens. It implies that this specific location has played a crucial role in the speaker's life. Also, there's an assumption that the act of creating an album is closely tied to this room, suggesting that the room has facilitated artistic expression.

2. **Lexical Presupposition**

Yule (1996) assumes that speech is understood through affirmation leads to this assumption. Lexical presuppositions, as opposed to factual presuppositions, are implicitly declared utterances. This allows for the confirmation of the presupposition to be received after the utterance has been given. In this lexical assumption, some linguistic units—such as start, finish, continue, bring, leave, and stop—are employed as markers.

The following speech provides examples of this kind of presumption based on the evidence:

Context of the speech: Shetty read the caption of Shawn's post, which showed that he decided to take a temporary hiatus. In the caption, Shawn said it was the hardest thing he has done since starting his career.

*Shetty: ",,**I've been touring since I was 15** and to be honest, it's always been difficult to be on the road away from friends and family after a few years off the road, "*

This presupposition is contained in the data "I've been touring since I was 15,". The presupposition of the speech >>"Shawn started his career touring at the age of 15". The word "since" here functions as a temporal marker, creating an implicit assumption that

Shawn's touring career starts at 15 and continues to this day. In Yule's theory, words like "start", and "continue" are considered lexical markers that signify certain background assumptions in a sentence.

3. **Factive Presupposition**

Yule (1996, p.46) stated that a factive presupposition is one in which the information that is meant to follow the verb is seen as actual. Verbs that convey the precise meaning of the utterance are the words in the speech that can state the facts. In a speech, the terms "say," "know," "realize," and "want" are statements of fact. The reality of a statement that arises in presumptions may be observed from the speech, the circumstances, and what everyone knows, even when there are no words like this in the discourse.

The following speech provides examples of this kind of presumption based on the evidence:

Context of speech: Shetty remembers where he read Shawn's post about cancelling his tour. Shawn also recalled that he tried to message Shetty that night about what he should do about his decision.

*Shawn: "I just **remember** feeling so much like,"*

In the data statement, "I just remember feeling so much like ". The presupposition of the utterance >> "Shawn has had experiences that he remembers feeling strongly about". The data that Shawn said contains factive verbs, like "remember," presuppose the truth of the clause that follows them. In this case, Shawn's use of "remember" suggests that his feeling of difficulty in asking for advice is not merely a subjective opinion; it is a recollection of an experience.

4. **Non-Factive Presupposition**

Yule (1996) assumes that it is thought that a non-factive assumption is a wrong one. The use of vague or unclear language raises the possibility that this assumption may be misinterpreted. Furthermore, nonfactual presuppositions can be inferred from statements whose veracity is still debatable in light of the facts being presented.

The following speech provides examples of this kind of presumption based on the evidence:

Context of speech: Shawn Mendes talks about how he tries to convince himself to accept a non-ideal reality and find peace in the uncertainty.

*Shawn: "I know it **might not** look like what you thought it was supposed to look like,"*

In data speech that contains the word "might". The use of the word "might" indicates uncertainty, indicating that the assumption could be wrong or not match the actual reality.

The phrase "might not" indicates possibility or uncertainty. This shows that Shawn is acknowledging the possibility that the situation or feeling he is experiencing does not match his previous expectations or hopes. In this case, Shawn's assumptions about how something should look or feel are speculative rather than factual.

5. **Counterfactual Presupposition**

Yule (1996) assumes that The term "counterfactual presupposition" refers to a belief that is not merely false but also the antithesis of reality or truth. The utterance is

not meant exclusively; rather, it implies a task that has to be completed, such as locating the speaker's business location or phone number. This assumption causes the remark to be interpreted in an overly dramatic or contradicting way. The results show that the above assertion is not true.

The following speech provides examples of this kind of presumption based on the evidence:

Context of speech: Shawn Mendes talks about how he tries to convince himself to accept a non-ideal reality and find peace in the uncertainty.

*Shawn: ", and I remember **assuming** you were going to reply something along the lines of You can do it"*

In data speech, Shawn implies that the motivating response he anticipated is false by using the phrase "I remember assuming..." because it never happened. The word "assuming" indicates that this idea was confined to anticipation rather than actuality.

Because Shawn expected a particular reaction, such as encouragement or motivation, that did not materialize, this line contains a counterfactual premise. Given that the actual reaction differed from Shawn's expectations, it is assumed that Shawn anticipated a response that was not in line with reality. According to Yule's concept of counterfactual presupposition, this produces a situation in which the presupposition suggests a difference between what was supposed and what was true.

6. **Structural Presupposition**

Based on Yule (1996), the concept of structural presupposition refers to the formulation of specific phrases that have been analyzed using established and conventional assumptions, which are part of a structure that is already considered true. This can be observed in yes/no questions, alternative questions, and interrogative phrases, which are typically understood through interrogative terms (such as "when" and "where") after being recognized as a query. In simpler terms, this idea is demonstrated by speech that remains comprehensible even when the specific words are not clear.

The following speech provides examples of this kind of presumption based on the evidence:

Context of the speech: Shetty's conversation confirmed to Shwan the question of the tour limit Shawn was able to exceed and Shawn confirmed the limit was 50 tours.

*Shetty: ", and I remember asking you **at what point** you feel like you can't do another show"*

In the data, "and I remember asking you at what point do you feel like you can't do another show", the sentence "at what point" can be interpreted as presupposition because the structure of this question presupposes that >> "There was indeed a certain point where Shawn felt that he could no longer continue.". According to Yule's theory, the use of interrogative words such as "when" often establishes assumptions that are considered true in a conversational context, hence the phrase "at what point" becomes a sentence where the focus of the question is not to confirm the existence of the feeling, but to find out the details of the time. As such, this phrase leads the listener to accept that the boundary exists, following the concept of structural presupposition.

The findings align with previous studies on presuppositions while expanding their scope to the podcast format. Widiastuti and Santoso (2024) highlighted the role of repetitive presuppositions in intensifying emotional engagement, which is similar to how counterfactual presuppositions in Shawn Mendes' narrative enhance its reflective tone, making his story relatable and impactful. Rahmat (2024) found that existential presuppositions clarified sensitive topics, such as geopolitical issues in Aaron Mate's interviews; this study corroborates these findings by showing how existential presuppositions ground Mendes' narrative in tangible contexts, such as his music studio, enhancing authenticity. Similarly, Irayanti and Liliani (2022) observed how existential and factive presuppositions directed listener interpretations of social themes in Deddy Corbuzier's podcast. This study extends its findings by demonstrating how these presuppositions frame both personal and professional narratives in dynamic spoken media. While prior studies focused on specific presupposition types in written or scripted media, this research reveals how diverse presuppositions function interactively in real-time, unscripted conversations, adding depth to the analysis of spoken digital media.

In contrast to the previous studies, this research specifically applies presupposition analysis to podcast interviews, expanding the scope of presupposition research into real-time, unscripted conversations. By examining how different types of presuppositions function in this format, the study highlights their role in shaping narratives and guiding listener perceptions. These findings emphasize the practical implications for content creators and podcast hosts, showing how the strategic use of presuppositions can enhance both emotional and cognitive engagement with audiences. Moreover, this study contributes to the broader field of pragmatics by advancing the understanding of presuppositions in dynamic spoken media, an area that has been less explored compared to written or visual media.

However, despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that must be acknowledged. The analysis focuses exclusively on one podcast episode, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other formats or genres of podcasts. Additionally, the qualitative approach, while rich in detail, relies heavily on subjective interpretation, which may introduce bias. Another limitation is the lack of direct measurement of audience reactions or engagement, making the conclusions about listener perception inferential rather than empirical.

To address these limitations and further build upon this study, future research could consider analyzing multiple podcast episodes or comparing podcasts with various hosts and guests to assess the generalizability of presupposition patterns across different contexts. Additionally, incorporating quantitative methods, such as surveys or interviews with listeners, would provide more direct evidence of the impact of presuppositions on audience engagement. Finally, exploring the use of presuppositions in cross-cultural podcast formats could reveal how different linguistic and cultural contexts shape the construction of narratives, offering a broader understanding of presuppositions in spoken media.

Conclusion

This study shows how presuppositions in Shawn Mendes' podcast interview with Jay Shetty shape his personal and professional narrative, providing understanding into his decision to take a two-year break. Using (Yule, 1996) presupposition theory, the study found existential, factual, lexical, structural, non-factual, and counterfactual presuppositions that influence audience perception. These presuppositions indicate Mendes' professional difficulties and his reflections on missed expectations, emphasizing the emotional complexity of his hiatus. Mendes enables the audience to comprehend his journey of self-discovery and the importance of taking time to prioritize personal well-being by incorporating implicit assumptions into his narrative. This examination focuses on how spoken media can effectively deliver subtle, meaningful stories.

References

Apriyanto. (2020). Language as a communication tool in human life. *Sean Institute*, *10*(2), 45–54. https://doi.org/10.58471/justi.v10i02.91

Chukwu, O. F. (2024). Presupposition and deixis-in the conversations of Nigerians. *Journal of Language Studies and Arts*, *2*(1), 120–135.

Damanik, S., Sipayung, K. T., & Sidabutar, U. (2024). Pragmatic presupposition main characters in the animation movie Big Hero 6. *Jurnal Review Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran (JRPP)*, *7*(2), 5042–5046.

Haerazi, H., & Nunez, J. L. (2021). Promoting intercultural competences and communication skills through english textbooks within multilingual education: intercultural language learning; English Textbooks. *Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, *1*(2), 75–82.

Irayanti, S., & Liliani, E. (2022). The presupposition "Dinar Candy arrested!? My country is so funny anyway!!" In Deddy Corbuzier Podcast edition on August 6, 2021. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature & Translation*, *5*(1), 219–225.

Nurdiana. (2019). Understanding pragmatics and pragmatic competence in elt materials. *Journal of English Language and Culture*, *10*(1), 30–40.

Rahmat, F. J. (2024). An analysis of presupposition in aaron mate's interview about Palestine on the trt world youtube channel [Doctoral dissertation]. UIN Raden Intan Lampung.

Roza, Y. (2020). Pragmatics analysis of presupposition as found in the tagline of horror movie posters. *Journal Of Language And Literature*, *9*(2).

Sari, I. A., Seneru, W., Sumarwan, E., Wibawa, R., & Rapiadi. (2023). The influence of communication skills toward social interaction students in Buddhist College. *Journal of Communication, Religious, and Social Sciences*, *1*(1), 1–12.

Seraj, P. M. I., & Hadina, H. (2021). A systematic overview of issues for developing EFL learners' oral english communication skills. *Journal of Language and Education*, *7*(1), 229–240.

Sianipar, M. O. C. (2020). An analysis of pragmatic presupposition in maturity episode on Golden Ways Show. *Saltel Journal (Southeast Asia Language Teaching And Learning)*, *3*(2), 51–57.

Sugiyono. (2016). *Metode Penelitian Kombinasi* (8th ed.). Alfabeta.

Sukma, D. E., Laudry, A. F., Farhan, M., Rahmah, R., & Dara, E. S. (2022). Presupposition and entailment in the film Beauty and the Beast by Stephen Chbosky and Evan Spilotopoulos. *Jurnal JOEPALLT (Journal of English Pedagogy, Linguistics, Literature, and Teaching)*, *10*, 2338–3739.

Widiastuti, Y., & Santoso, A. (2024). The presupposition of repetition speech flavour in Denny Sumargo's podcast with Laura Anna. *KEMBARA: Jurnal Keilmuan Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pengajarannya*, *10*(2), 402–413.

Wulandari, W. (2023). Student effective communication. *Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Sosial*, *33*(1), 16–28.

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