



A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF PRESUPPOSITION IN K-POP DEMON HUNTERS MOVIE SCRIPT

Mardiatun Nissa¹, Daffa Nirwana Wahyudi², Rizki Bobi Baihaki³, Tatu Siti Rohbiah⁴

Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin, Banten, Indonesia^{1,2,3,4}

Keywords

Presupposition; Pragmatic; Movie Script

Abstract

This study examines the use of presupposition in the K-Pop Demon Hunters movie script from a pragmatic perspective. Previous studies on presupposition in film dialogue have mainly focused on identifying presupposition types, with limited attention given to how presuppositions function within character interactions and narrative development. Therefore, this study aims to identify the types of presupposition and explain their realization in the characters' utterances. This research employed a descriptive qualitative method using documentation and content analysis techniques. The findings reveal that existential presupposition appears most frequently, indicating that the film dialogue strongly relies on shared assumptions about characters, objects, and situations within the story world. Presuppositions are realized through various linguistic forms, including noun phrases, WH-question structures, factive verbs, lexical triggers, and conditional clauses. The analysis further shows that presupposition functions as an implicit communicative strategy to strengthen characterization, express conflict, and support narrative coherence in the film dialogue. This study contributes to pragmatic studies by demonstrating how presupposition operates in contemporary popular media discourse, particularly in film-based communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

Film dialogue frequently contains implicit meanings that require contextual interpretation. In pragmatic studies, one important concept used to understand implicit meaning is presupposition, which refers to assumptions considered true or already known before an utterance is produced (Yule, 1996). Through presupposition, speakers can convey information indirectly and construct interaction more efficiently because certain information is treated as shared knowledge between speaker and listener. Film, as an audiovisual medium, functions not only as a means of amusement but also as a tool of communication that conveys various messages, values, and meanings through dialogue between characters (Pendit, 2025). Dialogue in films often contains implicit meanings that require an understanding of context for proper interpretation. Therefore, pragmatic analysis, particularly related to presupposition, is important for understanding how meaning is constructed in dialogue between characters in films.

Previous pragmatic studies on film dialogue have mainly focused on conversational implicature and maxim violation. Agsa & Ambalegin (2022), for example, examined conversational implicature in film dialogue and found that characters often convey meanings beyond literal expressions. Similarly, Florentina & Ambalegin (2022) analyzed maxim flouting in film conversations as a strategy for expressing implied meaning. These studies demonstrate that film dialogue contains rich pragmatic elements that require contextual interpretation.

Several studies have also investigated presupposition in movie dialogue. Kristy et al. (2020) found that existential presupposition frequently appears in film conversations because characters often refer to people, objects, and situations assumed to exist within the story world. Likewise, Al Kahfi et al. (2024) showed that presupposition contributes to delivering implicit meaning and supporting narrative development in film dialogue. However, most previous studies primarily focused on identifying presupposition types and frequencies, while limited attention has been given to how presuppositions are linguistically realized in characters' utterances and how they function within character interaction and narrative context.

This study focuses on the K-Pop Demon Hunters movie script, an animated film combining action, fantasy, and K-pop cultural elements. The film presents dynamic interactions between characters through dialogue containing conflict, emotional tension, and interpersonal relationships, making it relevant for pragmatic analysis. In addition, the film gained international attention through its global popularity and soundtrack achievements, reflecting the growing influence of K-pop-related media in contemporary popular culture. As a cultural text that combines entertainment narratives with implicit communication, the film provides rich data for examining how presupposition operates in character interaction and film dialogue.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the types of presupposition found in the K-Pop Demon Hunters movie script and explain how these presuppositions are realized in the characters' utterances. This study is expected to contribute to pragmatic studies, particularly in understanding the use of presupposition in film dialogue as a form of implicit communication in popular media.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that examines how meaning is interpreted in relation to context (Levinson, 1983). Unlike semantic meaning, pragmatic meaning depends on situational context, shared knowledge, and the relationship between speaker and listener. Yule (1996) explains that pragmatics focuses on how speakers communicate intended meanings and how listeners interpret utterances beyond their literal forms. This view is reinforced by Triyono & Dirham (2022) which states that pragmatics focuses on language in use, namely It explores the practical application of language in everyday circumstances and the ways in which context affects meaning. social factors and the communication context. Noviyenti & Anwar (2023) explains that the meaning of an utterance derives not only from language structure but also from the prior knowledge and context of the speaker and listener. This demonstrates that the understanding of meaning in pragmatics is dynamic and dependent on the interaction between language and context. Therefore, pragmatic analysis is important in understanding implicit meaning in communication, particularly in discourse such as film dialogue where meaning is often conveyed indirectly.

In film discourse, pragmatic meaning frequently emerges through implied assumptions, indirect expressions, and contextual interpretation. Previous pragmatic studies on films have shown that characters often communicate meanings that are not explicitly stated in the dialogue. For instance, Agsa & Ambalegin (2022) found that conversational implicature functions as a strategy for conveying implied meaning in film interactions, while Florentina &

Ambalegin (2022) demonstrated that maxim flouting is commonly used to express hidden intentions and emotional tension. These findings indicate that film dialogue provides rich data for pragmatic analysis because communication in films relies heavily on contextual interpretation.

2.2. Presuppositions

Presupposition is one of the central concepts in pragmatics referring to assumptions that speakers consider true before producing an utterance (Yule, 1996). Similarly, Levinson (1983) explains that presupposition represents background assumptions underlying communication and shared between speaker and listener. From a broader perspective, Cummings (2005) argues that presupposition functions as shared knowledge necessary for successful communication, while Huang (2007) emphasizes the role of linguistic triggers in generating presuppositional meaning. These perspectives show that presupposition is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a pragmatic strategy for managing implicit information in interaction. Wahana et al. (2022) further explain that speakers often assume certain information is already understood by listeners even when it is not explicitly stated. Therefore, presupposition helps facilitate the interpretation of meaning in communication, particularly in discourse containing implicit information such as film dialogue.

According to Yule (1996), presupposition can be classified into six types: existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, and counterfactual presupposition. Existential presupposition concerns assumptions about the existence of entities, while factive presupposition relates to information treated as factual. Lexical and structural presuppositions emerge through specific lexical items and grammatical forms, whereas non-factive and counterfactual presuppositions involve assumptions that are unreal or contrary to reality. These categories are useful for identifying how implicit meaning is conveyed through language structures in communication.

Previous studies on presupposition in films have mainly concentrated on identifying presupposition types and determining their frequency in dialogue. Gustary & Laeli Makiah (2021), for example, found that existential presupposition was the most dominant type in the film *Maleficent* because characters frequently referred to entities assumed to exist within the narrative world. Likewise, Kristy et al. (2020) reported similar findings in *Beauty and the Beast*, showing that presupposition contributes to delivering implicit meaning in film conversations.

However, most previous studies remain descriptive because they primarily classify presupposition types without examining how presuppositions function within character interaction and narrative development. In addition, many studies rely predominantly on Yule's classification without engaging broader pragmatic perspectives on presupposition. Therefore, further research is needed to explore how presuppositions are realized in film dialogue and how they support implicit communication within narrative contexts.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach because the research focuses on interpreting implicit meaning in dialogue through contextual analysis rather than numerical

measurement. According to Creswell (2009), qualitative research is used to explore and understand social phenomena through detailed interpretation. In this study, the qualitative approach was applied to analyze presupposition in film dialogue from a pragmatic perspective. The study adopted Yule's (1996) theory of presupposition to identify and classify presupposition types found in the characters' utterances. The data source of this research was the script of the K-Pop Demon Hunters movie 2025. The script was obtained from an online movie transcript source and cross-checked with the film subtitles and dialogue in the movie to ensure data accuracy. The data consisted of utterances containing presupposition produced by the characters throughout the film dialogue.

The data were collected using documentation techniques. The researcher watched the movie repeatedly, read the script carefully, and identified utterances containing presupposition triggers. Because the study focused specifically on utterances containing presuppositional meaning, purposive sampling was applied to select relevant data. As a result, 173 utterances containing presupposition were selected as the research data. The data analysis employed content analysis techniques adapted from Krippendorff (2018). The analysis process involved several stages. First, the researcher identified utterances containing presupposition triggers in the dialogue. Second, the data were coded and classified into six categories of presupposition based on Yule's (1996) framework: existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, and counterfactual presupposition. Third, the researcher analyzed how presupposition was realized through linguistic forms such as noun phrases, factive verbs, lexical items, interrogative structures, and conditional clauses. Finally, the researcher interpreted the pragmatic function of presupposition in supporting character interaction, conflict development, and implicit communication in the film dialogue.

To improve the credibility of the analysis, the coding results were reviewed through peer checking with academic colleagues familiar with pragmatic analysis. In addition, data interpretation was continuously compared with the dialogue context in the movie to maintain consistency and validity. The following table presents an example of the coding framework used in this study:

Table 1 Example of Presupposition Data Classification

Utterance	Presupposition Trigger	Type of Presupposition	Implied Meaning
Who else could wear a sleeping bag to the Met Gala? (00:02:38)	Who	Structural	There was someone who wore a sleeping bag to the Met Gala.
I wish you were here (00:04:46)	Wish	Non-factive	You are not here
Your new single is on fire (00:13:42)	Your	Existential	You have a new single
You know I'm always on your side (00:55:06)	Know	Factive	I'm always on your side

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Findings of Presupposition Types

The analysis identified 173 utterances containing presupposition in the K-Pop Demon Hunters movie script. Based on Yule's (1996) classification, six types of presupposition were found: existential, structural, factive, lexical, counterfactual, and non-factive presupposition. The frequency and percentage distribution of each type are presented in Table 2.

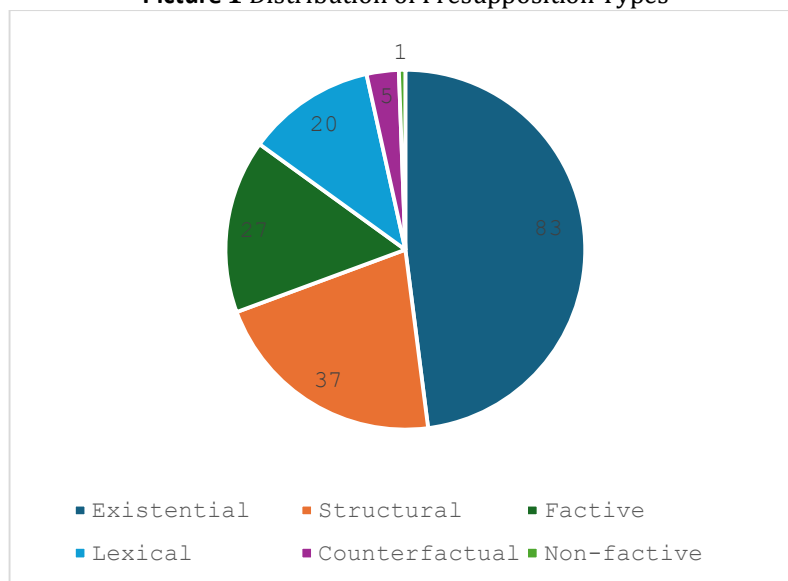
Table 2 Distribution of Presupposition Types

No	Type of Preposition	Amount	Percentage
1	Existential	83	47,9%
2	Structural	37	21,4%
3	Factive	27	15,6%
4	Lexical	20	11,6%
5	Counterfactual	5	2,9%
6	Non-factive	1	0,6%
Total		173	100%

The findings show that existential presupposition is the most dominant type, accounting for nearly half of the total data. This dominance indicates that the dialogue in the film frequently relies on assumptions regarding the existence of people, objects, relationships, and situations within the story world. Structural presupposition appears as the second most frequent category, suggesting that interrogative structures are commonly used to imply information indirectly. Meanwhile, non-factive and counterfactual presuppositions occur less frequently because the dialogue primarily focuses on real events and ongoing conflicts within the narrative rather than hypothetical situations.

The distribution also demonstrates that presupposition functions as an important pragmatic strategy in the film dialogue. Through presupposition, characters communicate information efficiently without repeatedly explaining shared background knowledge. This allows interactions between characters to appear more natural and contextually meaningful.

Picture 1 Distribution of Presupposition Types



4.2. Discussion

a. Existential Pressupposition

Existential presupposition appears as the most dominant type because the dialogue frequently assumes the existence of specific entities, relationships, and social roles within the film narrative.

“Our fans deserve the best.” (00:03:51)

The phrase “our fans” presupposes the existence of a fan community shared by both speaker and listener. Pragmatically, this presupposition reflects the collective identity commonly constructed in K-pop culture, where the relationship between idols and fandoms is treated as socially established knowledge. Rather than explicitly introducing the existence of fans, the dialogue assumes that such social relationships are already recognized within the story world. This strategy allows the film to construct character identity and social affiliation efficiently through implicit communication.

The dominance of existential presupposition also reflects how the film relies heavily on world-building strategies. References to fans, teams, performances, and personal relationships are frequently presented as already familiar information.

b. Structural Presupposition

Structural presupposition frequently appears through WH-question forms that implicitly assume the truth of particular situations.

“Why are you so late?” (00:04:38)

The question assumes that the person being addressed is tardy. More than serving as a grammatical construction, this utterance also generates interpersonal strain between the characters. From a pragmatic perspective, the speaker is not looking for validation regarding the lateness, but instead presents the delay as a given reality. This illustrates how presupposition can act as a communicative tactic for conveying blame, disappointment, or emotional tension in a subtle manner. The relatively frequent use of structural presupposition suggests that the film's dialogue often employs question forms to heighten emotional engagement and conflict. This approach enables characters to express their assumptions while simultaneously preserving the flow of conversation and dramatic tension.

c. Factive Presupposition

Factive presupposition occurs when speakers treat certain information as factual or unquestionable.

“I know you, Jinu.” (00:11:10)

The verb “know” presupposes that the speaker truly recognizes Jinu. In this context, the utterance does not merely provide factual information but also signals emotional closeness and interpersonal familiarity between the characters. Pragmatically, factive presupposition strengthens the credibility of the speaker's statement because the information is presented as an established fact rather than an opinion.

In film dialogue, factive presupposition frequently contributes to character development by emphasizing emotional experience, trust, and certainty. This finding demonstrates that presupposition functions not only as a linguistic structure but also as a discourse strategy for reinforcing character relationships and narrative consistency.

d. Lexical Presupposition

Lexical presupposition emerges through words that imply a previous condition or repeated activity.

“Would you two stop fighting each other?” (00:53:45)

The word “stop” presupposes that the action of fighting has already occurred before the utterance was spoken. Pragmatically, the utterance indirectly reveals the existence of conflict without explicitly describing the previous argument. This allows the audience to infer background information efficiently through lexical choice.

The use of lexical presupposition in the film contributes to narrative economy because characters do not need to explain situations in detail. Instead, the dialogue depends on the audience’s ability to infer implied meaning from particular lexical triggers.

e. Counterfactual Presupposition

Counterfactual presupposition appears in conditional expressions describing situations contrary to reality.

“If hate could defeat GwiMa, I would’ve done it a long time ago.” (00:45:48)

This utterance presupposes that hate cannot defeat GwiMa. Pragmatically, the sentence expresses frustration and emotional struggle while simultaneously presenting an unreal condition. The use of counterfactual presupposition strengthens dramatic effect because it highlights the gap between expectation and reality.

Although this type appears less frequently, its presence contributes significantly to emotional intensity in the dialogue. Counterfactual expressions are commonly associated with regret, impossibility, and unrealized expectations, which are important elements in the film’s conflict development.

f. Non-factive Presupposition

Non-factive presupposition occurs when speakers describe situations that are unreal or imagined.

“I wish you were here.” (00:04:46)

The verb “wish” presupposes that the person addressed is not actually present. Pragmatically, this utterance expresses emotional longing and absence. Unlike existential or structural presupposition, non-factive presupposition emphasizes unreal conditions and emotional imagination rather than factual situations.

The minimal occurrence of this type indicates that the dialogue in the film primarily focuses on real and ongoing events within the narrative world. Nevertheless, its use remains important because it conveys emotional depth and psychological tension in character interaction.

4.3. Pragmatic Functions of Presupposition in Film Dialogue

These findings suggest that presupposition functions not only as a grammatical phenomenon but also as a pragmatic strategy to maintain narrative efficiency and interpersonal meaning in film dialogue. Through presupposition, characters communicate assumptions without explicitly stating all background information, making interactions appear more natural and emotionally dynamic. This supports Levinson's (1983) perspective that

pragmatic meaning depends heavily on shared contextual understanding between speakers and listeners.

In the context of K-Pop *Demon Hunters*, presuppositions also contribute to the formation of social identity and group relationships, particularly through references to fandom, teamwork, trust, and conflict. The frequent use of existential presuppositions indicates that the film relies heavily on shared assumptions to construct its fictional world and maintain narrative coherence. This reflects how communication within K-Pop-related narratives often depends on a collective understanding among idols, fans, and the social groups represented in the story.

Additionally, both structural and factive presuppositions are commonly employed to heighten emotional tension and bolster interpersonal dynamics among characters. For instance, interrogative structures can often act as subtle accusations or expressions of disappointment rather than sincere inquiries for information. In the same vein, factive presupposition enhances emotional certainty by framing information as indisputable truth. These observations align with earlier research conducted by Kristy et al. (2020) and Gustary & Laeli Makiah (2021), which indicated that presupposition in film dialogue plays a significant role in implicit communication and narrative progression.

The results suggest that presupposition in film dialogue functions not just as a linguistic framework but also as a discourse tactic that enhances characterization, fosters conflict, and facilitates implicit communication in modern popular media. Consequently, this research backs pragmatic theories that highlight how meaning in communication is heavily shaped by contextual beliefs and the common knowledge shared between speakers and their audience.

5. CONCLUSION

This study examined the use of presupposition in the K-Pop *Demon Hunters* movie script from a pragmatic perspective. The findings revealed six types of presupposition based on Yule's (1996) classification: existential, structural, factive, lexical, counterfactual, and non-factive presupposition. Out of the 173 instances identified, existential presupposition was the most prevalent type, suggesting that the film's dialogue heavily depends on shared beliefs about characters, their relationships, and the entities within the story's universe. The study also indicated that presupposition is expressed through various linguistic forms, including noun phrases, factive verbs, interrogative structures, lexical triggers, and conditional clauses. These linguistic elements serve as pragmatic strategies that enable characters to convey implicit meanings effectively while enhancing characterization, emotional tension, interpersonal dynamics, and the development of conflict within the dialogue.

Theoretically, this study contributes to pragmatic studies by demonstrating that presupposition in film dialogue functions not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a discourse strategy closely related to contextual interpretation and shared knowledge. However, this study is limited because it only analyzes one film script and relies primarily on Yule's classification framework, which may limit broader generalization and interpretation. Therefore, future research is recommended to examine presupposition in other films, dramas, or digital media discourse and to combine pragmatic analysis with other approaches such as discourse analysis or multimodal analysis to obtain broader insights into implicit meaning in popular media.

REFERENCES

Agsa, J., & Ambalegin, A. (2022). Conversational Implicature in "Central Intelligence" Movie. *Ide Bahasa*, 4(1), 15–24. <https://doi.org/10.37296/idebahasa.v4i1.80>

- Al Kahfi, R. A., Rosdiana, A., & Santos, M. R. (2024). Analysis of Pragmatic Presupposition of Characters in Disney's Luca Film. *KREDO: Jurnal Ilmiah Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 7(2), 249–265. <https://doi.org/10.24176/kredo.v7i2.12302>
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). London: SAGE Publication.
- Cummings, L. (2005). *Pragmatics: A Multidisciplinary Perspective*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Florentina, S., & Ambalegin, A. (2022). Flouting Maxims in "Beauty and the Beast" Movie. *EScience Humanity Journal*, 2(1), 35–46. <https://doi.org/10.37296/esci.v2i1.23>
- Gustary, D. T., & Laeli Makiah, N. (2021). The Analysis of Presupposition in "Maleficent" Movie. *Akrab Juara: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, 6(4), 22. <https://doi.org/10.58487/akrabjuara.v6i4.1567>
- Huang, Y. (2007). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.
- Kristy, Y., Deliana, D., & Harefa, Y. (2020). Presupposition in Beauty and the Beast Movie Script. *Language Literacy: Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Language Teaching*, 4(2), 375–383. <https://doi.org/10.30743/ll.v4i2.2752>
- Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Noviyenti, L., & Anwar, K. (2023). Understanding Pragmatics as a Way to Practice Natural Communication Skills in Various Contexts of Interactions. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 15(1), 1038–1052. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v15i1.3243>
- Pendit, A. K. (2025). Analysis of The Meaning of Moral Messages in Film Is Quite Different. *Akrab Juara: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, 10(2), 669–681.
- Triyuono, A., & Dirham, U. R. (2022). Pragmatic Competence or Pragmatic Knowledge and Its Role in Linguistic Communication. *Journal of Learning and Instructional Studies*, 2(3), 93–106.
- Wahana, B. M., Ambalegin, A., & Handayani, N. D. (2022). Presupposition Found in the BBC News: Corona Virus in Indonesia. *EScience Humanity Journal*, 2(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.37296/esci.v2i1.27>
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.