

## PRESUPPOSITION AND COMMON GROUND OF THE CHARACTERS IN THE MOVIE *GIFTED* (2017)

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### ABSTRACT

This study is aimed to identify the kinds of presupposition and the triggers used by the characters in the movie *Gifted*. It is also aimed to interpret the implicit meaning in them and to describe the common ground between the speakers and the listeners. This study is a qualitative research using descriptive analysis method. The data are collected by using uninvolved observation and note-taking technique. The analysis result shows that there are 54 data of presupposition usages and common ground. According to the analysis, presupposition and common ground commonly appear more in daily communication caused by the triggers of implicit assumption, the close relationship between the speakers and the listeners, and the community they are attending.

**Keywords:** common ground; presupposition; character.

### I. BACKGROUND

In the process of communication, speaker sometimes gives information without telling it explicitly to the listener through his assumptions. Speaker tells his assumptions and believes that the listener already knows what the speaker's assumptions are. These assumptions are a representation of presupposition. Nababan (1984:47) in Abdullah and Achmad (2013:139) explains that presupposition can be interpreted as a guess or an assumption based on references.

A Listener have to understand the presupposition that is told by the speaker. In order to understand and gain information, the listener must draw inferences (conclusion) based on the speaker's assumptions. Inference can be fined as a process that must be done by the listener or reader to understand the implicit meanings that are not thoroughly told by the speaker (Anton M. Moelino, 1998 in Abdullah and Achmad, 2013:143).

Presupposition in communication can be caused by common ground. Jucker and Smith (1995:3) explain that common ground is something owned by both the speaker and listener, that can be shared by each other in their communication. The close relationship

between speaker and listener may create more common grounds and owned by them. Common ground also has a connection with context and by understanding context, the common ground can be understood. Furthermore, presupposition also can be understood in communication.

### II. II. METHODS OF RESEARCH

This study is a qualitative research using descriptive analysis method. Qualitative research is used to reveal holistic-contextual phenomena to become data collections from natural setting by using the researcher as an instrument key (Hidayat and Sedarmayanti, 2011:200). Descriptive analysis method is a method in analysing the status of human groups, objects, set of conditions, and system of thought by making description, view, or image about facts, characteristics, and the relation between investigated phenomena systematically, factually, and accurately (Nazir, 1985:63).

There are four analysis techniques in this study. First, the context is explained in the data to understand the situation in the conversation. Second, the dialogues contain presupposition and common ground are attached. Next, the dialogues are classified according

to the kind of presuppositions and knowledge of actions and situations and shared knowledge of relationships and identities. The first type of shared knowledge is a common ground between speaker and listener that has same activity and community, while the second type of shared knowledge is a common ground between speaker and listener that has social relationship with each other.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of presupposition and common ground that are found in the characters' conversations in the movie will be explained further to answer two problems in this study.

#### Structural Presupposition

##### Data 1

The conversation happened between Justin and Mary in the classroom. Bonnie and Mary's other classmates are also involved in their conversation. Mary brought Fred, Mary's beloved cat, to be told in front of the classroom for the school assignment. Mary told about how she found Fred the first time. Justin, one of Mary's classmates, asked about how Fred lost one of his eyes. Mary answered and told the story further.

(14) *Justin* : How did **he** lose his eye?

(15) *Mary* : I don't know. I wasn't there. Just found him inside a trash can next to the bottle of alcohol or something. He is a smart, smart cat, but no one realizes that. No one understands him. No one. (00:13:17)

Utterance (14) presupposes **Fred lost his eye**. Justin's assumption is based on the fact of Mary's story and the condition of Fred's eye that only has one eye. The common ground between them is **Fred is Mary's beloved cat**. This common ground can be understood from the context of the conversation because of Mary's story about Fred and the physical condition of Fred. Mary's story about Fred becomes the beginning of common ground between them exists. Because of that, the relationship between Mary, Justin, Bonnie, and Mary's other classmates is created as part of the community, the first grade taught by Bonnie.

#### Existential Presupposition

##### Data 2

The conversation happened between Mary and Frank. When Frank picked up Mary and they wanted to enter the car, Bonnie, Mary's teacher, called Frank from afar. Frank and Mary turned around to Bonnie. Mary stared cynically and underestimated Bonnie when she approached Frank and Mary. Frank immediately told Mary to get in the car in order to make Mary stop underestimating Bonnie.

(16) *Mary* : Oh, look it's **my** teacher. Probably she wants to remind me what one plus one is.

(17) *Frank* : Go to the car, okay? (00:08.11)

Utterance (16) presupposes **Mary has a teacher** and **there is a teacher**. Mary's assumption is the fact that believes Bonnie's existence as her teacher. The common ground between them is **there is Mary's teacher**. It can be understood from the context conversation because Frank and Mary heard and saw Bonnie calling Frank then she approached them. This common ground is based on the family relationship, so the type of this common ground is personal common ground.

#### Factive Presupposition

##### Data 3

The conversation happened between Roberta and Frank. Roberta saw Frank accompanied Mary to the school bus from her window's house. Roberta got worried and thought that Frank's decision was wrong. When Frank walked to his house, Roberta knocked her window's house in order to make Frank see her and stop. Frank saw her for a moment and ignored her. Roberta went outside and called Frank, but he still ignored her. Frank entered his house and locked the door.

(18) Roberta: (KNOCKING) Mmmmm-mmmmm. Frank! Frank I **know** you hear me. Frank!

(19) Frank : (LOCKS DOOR) (00:02:53)

Utterance (18) presupposes **Frank actually hears Roberta**. Roberta's assumption is based on Frank's act that actually heard Roberta calling him, but he ignored her and walked to his house quickly. The common ground between them is **Frank's decision of sending**

**Mary to school.** It can be understood from the context conversation because Roberta saw Frank's act from her window's house and those events becomes the beginning of their conversation. It is also created by the social relationship as a close neighbour, so the common ground type is personal common ground.

### Counter-Factual Presupposition

Data 4

The conversation happened between Roberta and Frank. Roberta met Frank after she saw him accompanied Mary to school bus. Roberta disagreed with Frank's decision and made herself worried. She worried something bad will happen to Mary. Frank calmed Roberta down and said that his decision was the best decision for Mary. Roberta quite believed Frank but threatened him if something bad happens to Mary.

(20) Roberta : *Maybe. But if anybody takes that baby away, I'll smother you in your sleep.* (00:04:22)

Utterance (20) presupposes **anybody does not take Mary away.** Roberta's assumption is a wrong statement and the opposite with the fact when the conversation happened. In fact, nobody takes Mary away and she still lives with Frank. This assumption is based on Roberta's worries of Mary and Frank's decision. The common ground between them is **sending Mary to school may be the best decision.** It can be understood from the context conversation because both of them are talking about Frank's decision of sending Mary to school and Frank's act that calmed down Roberta made her start to believe Frank's decision. It is also based on the social relationship as a close neighbour, so the common ground type is personal common ground.

### Lexical Presupposition

Data 5

The conversation happened between Frank and Bonnie. Frank explained about Trachtenberg method used by Mary when she answered difficult math problems in the classroom to Bonnie. After Frank explained it, he apologized to Bonnie because of Mary's rude attitude toward Bonnie and the school principal. Frank also promised that Mary will behave better and will not create any problems in school again.

(21) Frank : *I learned it when I was eight. Do I look gifted to you? It kind of gone out of vogue since the invention of the calculator. ..but...uh, I can still win a drink at the bar using it. Sorry for today. Won't happen again.*

(22) Bonnie : *Okay.*  
(00:09:22)

Utterance (21) presupposes **Mary's bad attitude in school happened before.** Frank's assumption is the fact that Mary's bad attitude that caused problems for Mary already happened in the first day in school. Because of that, Frank tried to make Mary did not behave rude again to Bonnie and the school principal. The common ground between them is **Mary caused problems in the school.** It can be understood from the context conversation because in the end of the conversation, Frank promised to not let the same mistake happen in the future. It is also based on the social relationship between student guardian and teacher, so the common ground type is personal common ground.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Presupposition as a part of pragmatics actually often happens in daily conversation. It is caused by presupposition triggers and common ground between speaker and listener. Presupposition can be analysed by focusing on its triggers. The triggers, words that caused presupposition happens, can reveal the assumption either implicitly or explicitly. The existence of presupposition is also connected by common ground that becomes the main factor of why presupposition exists in conversation.

Five kinds of presupposition are found in this movie, such as structural presupposition, existential presupposition, factive presupposition, counter-factual presupposition, and lexical presupposition. Non-factive presupposition is not found because there is not any presupposition triggers for this presupposition type. Presuppositions found in the movie have their own implicit or explicit meanings. The meanings have to be understood by doing interpretation that is adjusted with the context conversation. Common ground usually exists in a community (communal common ground), such as in the court and school. Not only is Common ground owned by two persons in their daily lives, but

also in a community that has more than two persons. Also, common ground is based on the close relationship between speaker and listener (personal common ground). The closer the relationship between speaker and listener is, the possibilities for common ground that will create presupposition in the conversation will be increased. On the other hand, if the relationship between speaker and listener is not close enough, it will decrease the possibilities of common ground and presupposition exist in their conversation.

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