

# Lexical Presuppositions in Japanese Language

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In understanding a conversation, we need to understand the meaning implied in the stated text. An understanding of the context of speech is also required. Presuppositions that are part of a conversation play an essential role in trying to understand the context of the discussion as a whole. Japanese, which is one of the higher context languages, in understanding each conversation, requires an understanding of the presupposition context. In this study, the types of speech and features of presupposition were discussed from a case study in one of the Japanese dramas entitled *Ohitori Sama*. From the results of the analysis carried out we can analyse the most lexical presuppositions in expressive speech and the most characteristics.

**Key words:** *Presuposisi leksikal, wacana, tuturan.*

## Introduction

Understanding of a discourse or text (in Japanese called *danwa* or *tekusuto*) is necessary in a study, especially a study which determines its meaning based on a particular context, namely a pragmatic study. Of course, in understanding a discourse we must know in advance what elements are contained in a context. For example the existence of internal elements which include words and sentences, and extraneous elements which include deixis (designation), implicative and presuppositions or presuppositions.

Basically, before someone reveals something, he has assumptions expressed through sentences which then occur in a conversation discourse with his/her tutoring partner which is expressed by choosing the right words so that the assumption can also be captured by his partner. In a sense, this assumption is the first step for speakers and speech partners in understanding a discourse; a knowledge that is raised by the speaker implicitly about the speaker, to be understood by the said partner. These assumptions which are external elements of a discourse are called presuppositions or presuppositions or in Japanese called *zentei*.

As an example, in a conversation on the telephone, A called B's family, and the one who picked up the phone was a woman and the woman said 「主人はゴルフに出掛けて今晚帰ってきます。」 'My husband went to golf and later that night it was coming home'. The speech contains three presuppositions, namely:

1. Bさんは結婚している。'Mr B is married'
2. Bさんはゴルフの趣味がある。'Mr. Hobbies likes to play golf'
3. 今は不在である。'Now it's not at home'

The three assumptions are general assumptions contained in the above statement. In addition there are other things or other example where the assumptions or presuppositions are implied in a word, such as the example of "He stopped smoking". The word stop implies that "he used to smoke" in the past. Such things are called lexical presuppositions or lexical presuppositions; the use of special expressions by speakers to prescribe another concept (not stated). (Yule, 2006)

The discussion of this paper will be limited to lexical presuppositions. What are the forms of lexical presuppositions in a discourse, how to understand the type of lexical presuppositions in a speech by using the characteristics of the presuppositions.

### **Research Methodology**

The research method that I use is a literature study with a descriptive method. The data is obtained through direct recording of data sources. Under this method, the authors conducted a series of activities as research techniques, namely:

1. Literature study  
Data is taken from Japanese drama scripts entitled 'Ohitori Sama'.
2. Classification  
Data is classified according to the type of speech and presupposition characteristics.
3. Analysis  
Analysing existing data to get an overview of the problem. First of all, the author analyses the existing data to overview of the problem. Second, data is analysed based on the type of speech presuppositions. After that, it is analysed from the presupposition feature.
4. Conclusion  
The final stage is where conclusions are drawn from and about what the author has carefully examined and analysed.

## Theoretical Review

### 1. Definition of Presupposition

Pre-presumption (presupposition) comes from the word to pre-suppose, in English this means to suppose beforehand, in the sense that before the speaker or writer says something he already has a previous guess about the friend to talk or the matter being discussed. According to (Yule, 2006), presuppositions / presuppositions are something assumed by a speakers as events before producing a speech. The nature of presupposition is usually explained as regularity under denial. Basically, security under denial means that the presupposition of a statement will remain steady (i.e. true), even though the sentence statement is made to deny.

a1: “The Budi Guitar is new”

a2: “Guitar Budi’s guitar is not new”.

Presupposition: Budi has a guitar

Sentence (a2) is a negative form of the sentence (a1). The prediction in sentence (a1) is Budi having a guitar. In sentence (a2), it turns out that the presumption does not change even though the sentence (a2) contains denial of sentence (a1), which has the same presumption that Budi has a guitar.

In the book *Gengogaku to Komyunikeshon* it was revealed that the presuppositions were:

われわれは、ある発話通して、いろいろなことを推測できる。これが前提で(presupposition)ある。

*Presuppositions are various assumptions or estimates contained in speech.*

For example in question sentences:

(a) What is Mary reading?

「メアリーは何を読んでいますか」

(b) Mary is reading something.

「メアリーは何かを読んでいます」

In utterances (a) What Mary is reading, calculates an estimate or assumption that (b) that Mary is reading something.

In Nadar (2009) there are some definitions of presuppositions of some of them are:

- Levinson (1983: 172) of Strawson (1952: 175) defines that :  
*‘a statement A presupposes a statement B if B is a precondition of the truth and falsity of A’.*
- Karttunen (1973:169-170) said that:  
*“Sentence A pragmatically presupposes a proposition B if whenever A is uttered sincerely, the speaker of A assumes B and assumes that his audience assumes B also”*
- An utterance A pragmatically presupposes a proposition B if A is appropriate only and if B is mutually known by participants (Levinson, 1983:202)

From some of these definitions Levinson concludes that the definitions of pragmatic presuppositions contain two main points, namely the compatibility of 'appropriateness' or satisfaction with 'mutual knowledge' or 'common ground' or 'joint assumption'.

Thus from the above meanings it can be concluded that the characteristics of presupposition are under-denial, compatibility with 'appropriateness' and shared understanding of 'common ground' in a speech. And these characteristics will be used as a way to understand lexical presuppositions in speech.

### ***Lexical Presuppositions***

In general, in lexical presuppositions, the use of a form with meaning expressed conventionally is interpreted by the presupposition that another meaning (which is not stated) is understood. Every time you say that someone is 'carrying out' to do something, the meaning that is confirmed is that the person is successful in several ways. If you say that someone is 'not doing something', then the meaning affirmed is that the person is not successful. But in both cases, there is a presupposition (which is not stated) that the person is 'trying' to do something. So 'executing' is conventionally interpreted as a statement 'produced' presupposition 'which is endeavoured'.

### ***Speech Act***

According to Yule (2006), there are 5 types of general functions shown by speech acts, which are:

1. Declarative or *sengenteki* (In Japanese) is the type of speech act that changes the world through speech. Speakers must have a special institutional role, in a specific context, to display a declaration appropriately. In Japanese for example, ここに開会 'opening here'(declare)
2. Representative or assertive or *dangenteki* (In Japanese) is the type of speech act that states what the speaker of the case believes or not. Statement of facts, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions.  
In Japanese for example, 「今雨が降っている」 'It's raining now' (delivering information)
3. Ekspresif or *hyoushutsuteki* (In Japanese) is the type of speech act that states something felt by the speaker. Reflect psychological statements and can be statements of excitement, difficulty, joy, hatred, pleasure, or misery.  
In Japanese for example, ご結婚おめでとう」 'congratulation for your wedding' (statements of excitement)
4. Directive or *shijiteki* (In Japanese) is the type of speech act used by speakers to tell others to do something. Declare what the speaker wants, including orders,

reservations, requests, giving advice and the form can be positive and negative sentences.

In Japanese for example, 「窓を開けるように」 'close the door!' (command or order)

5. Komisif or *genmeiteki* (In Japanese) is the kind of speech that the speaker understands to bind himself to future actions. Can be in the form of promises, threats, rejections, pledges, and can be displayed by speakers or speakers themselves as group members. In Japanese for example, 「あした、品物をおとどける」 'tomorrow the goods will be sent' (promise).

## Result and Discussion

The following is a discussion of lexical presuppositions from data taken from drama scripts entitled 'Ohitori Sama'.

### Data 1:

Situation: At night in Akiyama's apartment, Akiyama's mother told of her son's independence and helping attitude which had been shown as a child to Kamisaka who was Akiyama's junior at the school where they worked, and who was staying in Akiyama's apartment a few days ago, because he didn't have money to rent a place to live. The mother spoke while packing her belongings because she would go home to her the next day.

01 神坂 : 秋山先生、今、生徒のこととかで頑張ってるんです。

*Kamisaka* : *Akiyama sensei, ima, seito no koto toka de ganbatterun desu.*

*Kamisaka* : Akiyama Sensei, now trying very hard because of one of his students.

02 お母さん : あの子、子供の頃から何でも一人で頑張ろうとする子ですね、困った人ほっとけないし、つい自分でいろいろしよい込んじゃうの。

*Okaasan* : *Ano ko, kodomo no goro kara nandemo hitori de ganbarou to suru ko desune, komatta hito hottokenaishi, tsui jibun de iroiro shoi kanjau no.*

*Mother* : That child, since he was little, he always tried to solve everything himself, he could not leave people who were in distress, finally he always carried many different burdens.

03 神坂 : 同じだ、秋山先生がお母さんのこと言ってたのと。

*Kamisaka* : *Onaji da, Akiyama Sensei ga okaasan no koto itteta no to.*

*Kamisaka* : Well, that's exactly the same what he's talking about you.

04 お母さん : ええ？

*Okaasan* : *Ee?*

*Ibu* : *What?*

05 神坂 : 困ってる人をほっとけないって、やっぱり親子なんですね。

*Kamisaka* : *Komatteru hito wo hottokenaitte, yappari oyako nan desu ne.*

*Kamisaka* : He said that you can't let someone in trouble alone, you two are indeed mother and child, huh.

*(ohitorisama, ep 7)*

#### Analysis 1:

From the dialogue above, said *Kamisaka* on (01), *Akiyama sensei, ima, seito no koto toka de ganbatterun desu* 'Akiyama Sensei, now trying very hard because of one of his students.' The speech can be changed to the sentence below so that the point is clearer:

a1: *Akiyama sensei wa seito no koto toka de ganbatterun desu.* (Akiyama Sensei, now trying very hard because of one of his students)

The word *ganbatterun*, which is originally from *ganbaru* "try", includes a verb. The above statement is an assertive speech where the speaker tells a situation that is believed to be in the form of facts that are happening (Saudi et al., 2019).

>> There is something Akiyama Sensei is doing for others.

The assumptions or presuppositions (>>) of the above utterances have a core assumption that is lexically indicated by the use of the word *ganbatterun* which contains a presupposition that *there is something Akiyama Sensei is doing for others*. Such presuppositions are not expressly stated in the sentence, but are implied by the word *ganbatterun*.

And one of the characteristics of presuppositions also includes being consistent from a denial, can be seen from the explanation below:

a1: *Akiyama sensei wa seito no koto toka de ganbatterun desu.* (Akiyama Sensei is trying hard for his students)

a2 : *Akiyama sensei wa seito no koto toka de ganbatterun dewaarimasen.* (Akiyama Sensei is not trying hard for his students)

>> There is something Akiyama Sensei is doing for others.

The above presuppositions remain consistent even though they are under denial. In addition, the characteristic of presupposition is the appropriateness or satisfaction of felicity and mutual understanding of 'mutual knowledge'. This is made clear by the utterances of 02, namely the response from Akiyama's mother who explained that from childhood Akiyama likes to help other people, she does not want to see other people feel troubled.

#### Analysis 2:

On *Kamisaka*'s statement (03), *Onaji da, Akiyama Sensei ga okaasan no koto itteta no to* 'Well, that's exactly the same what he's talking about you'.

The word *onajida* which is the usual form of *onajidesu* ‘exactly the same’. The above statement is an assertive speech where the speaker tells an affirmation of an event.

>> There is a similarity between Akiyama Sensei and his mother.

*Onajida* ‘exactly the same’ which marks the presupposition that there are similarities between Akiyama Sensei and his mother (Sinaga et al., 2019). Although one characteristic of the presupposition is that it is consistent in a denial, in this case the presupposition in the above data is determined by the presupposition characteristic and the suitability of ‘appropriateness’ or satisfaction ‘felicity’. This was made clear in the speech by Kamisaka (05), who explained that it was, as Akiyama said about his mother, that his mother could not let someone in trouble be alone. This means that both (Akiyama and his mother) have the same traits and characteristics which are not expressed in sentences, only marked with the words ‘*onaji da*’.

#### Data 2:

Situation: At night in his apartment, Akiyama and Kamisaka who toast and discuss the problem of one of the female students named Saegusa who is known for having parties with her male friends at nightclubs. As a teacher, Kamisaka, who knows this, feels responsible and tries hard to let Saegusa know and realize that what she did was wrong. Akiyama who was also told about this by telephone helped by trying to speak heart-to-heart with Saegusa so she could realized her mistake.

01 秋山 : ホント驚いたんだから～あなたから電話がかかってきたときは。

*Akiyama* : *Honto odoroitan dakara ~ anata kara denwa ga kakattekita toki wa.*

*Akiyama* : I was shocked when I got a phone call from you.

02 神坂  
: すいません、秋山先生に頼らないでたまには僕だけで何とかしなきゃって。

*Kamisaka* : *Suimasen, Akiyama sensei ni tayoranai de tama ni wa boku dake de nantoka shinakyaatte.*

*Kamisaka* : I'm sorry, even though I decided that I would not depend on you and do something occasionally alone.

03 秋山  
: でも、三枝さんのことすごく心配してたでしょ、あなたも少しは教師らしくなったんじゃない？

*Akiyama* : *Demo, Saegusa san no koto sugoku shinpai shiteta desho, anata mo sukoshi wa kyoushi rashiku nattan janai?*

Akiyama : But you are very worried about Saegusa right. You have at least behaved like a teacher right?

04 神坂 : いえ、そんな...

Kamisaka : *Ie, sonna...*

Kamisaka : Ah No...

*(Ohitorisama, ep 5)*

### Analysis 3:

From the dialog above, Akiyama's speech at (01), there is a saying *Honto odoroitana dakara ~ anata kara denwa ga kakatte kita toki wa* 'I was shocked when I got a phone call from you'.

The word odoroitana which is the usual form of odoroitana is 'shocked'. The above statement is an expressive utterance in which the speaker tells a psychological state; at that moment he is experiencing is feeling shocked (Abdullah et al., 2018).

>> Something happened.

Odoroitana said "shocked" implying that there was something that had happened, which became a presupposition marker in the speech. In this case, the presuppositions in the data above are determined by the presupposition characteristics that there is a conformity of 'appropriateness' or satisfaction of 'felicity'. This is made clear by Akiyama (03) who said that Kamisaka preached the condition of Saegusa, which in the context of the dialogue above also explained that Saegusa had been known to hold parties with her male friends at nightclubs.

### Analysis 4:

In the statement (03), Akiyama said that *Demo, Saegusa san no koto sugoku shinpai shiteta desho* 'But you are very worried about Saegusa right. You have at least behaved like a teacher right?', The word *shinpai shiteta* derived from the word *shinpai* 'worry' which Akiyama said was an expressive speech in which Akiyama revealed the psychological condition that Kamisaka was worried about the conditions of Saegusa (Taib et al., 2018).

>> There was something that had been done by Kamisaka.

*Shinpai shiteta* said 'worried' implying that there was something that had been done by Kamisaka, because he was worried about Saegusa's condition. In this case the presupposition in the above data is determined by the presupposition characteristic that the appropriateness of this is clarified in the context of the dialogue above and tried hard to let Saegusa know and realize that what he was doing was wrong.

### Data 3:

Situation: During the morning in the principal's office, the principal pointed out and asked Akiyama's willingness to become the head teacher of the 2nd grade students. Akiyama

responds to the principal's request by expressing doubts and uncertainty about accepting the job. Then, in order to get rid of Akiyama's hesitation and insecurity while persuading him to accept the offer the principal explained why he chose and entrusted the position to Akiyama and gave praise. While working as a teacher, the school principal saw Akiyama's sincerity and self-determination so that he was worthy of that position. And in the end Akiyama was convinced and accepted the offer.

- 01 校長 : 秋山先生、ちょっと。  
*Kouchou* : *akiyama sensei, chotto.*  
Kepala sekolah : Akiyama sensei, come here for a while.
- 02 秋山 : はい。  
*Akiyama* : *Hai.*  
*Akiyama* : Okey.
- 03 校長 : あなたにお願いがあるの。  
*Kouchou* : *Anata ni onegai ga aru no.*  
*Kouchou* : I want to ask you something.
- 04 秋山 : はい。  
*Akiyama* : *Hai.*  
*Akiyama* : With pleasure.
- 05 校長 : 二年生の学年主任をやってちょうだい。  
*Kouchou* : *Ninensei no gakunen shunin wo yatte choudai.*  
Kepala sekolah : I want you to be the head teacher for all second grade students.
- 06 秋山 : 私が... 学年主任! ?  
*Akiyama* : *Watashi ga... gakunen shunin!?*  
*Akiyama* : You want me to be the head teacher?
- 07 校長 : 山岡先生が退職された後空席でしょ、他の学年の先生を回そうって意見もあつたんだけど、あなたを昇進させるのが一番いいって、私の考えなの。  
*Kouchou* : *Yamaoka sensei ga taishoku sareta ato kuuseki desho, hoka no gakunen no sensei wo mawasoutte iken mo attan dakedo, anata wo shoushin sareru no ga ichiban itte, watashi no kangae na no.*  
Kepala sekolah : This position has been empty since Yamaoka's teacher resigned, some people think this position is suitable for other head teachers, but I think that it is best to promote you to this position.
- 08 秋山 : でも... まだ経験も足りないし早すぎます。  
*Akiyama* : *Demo... mada keiken mo tarinai shi hayasugimasu.*  
*Akiyama* : But ... my experience is not enough yet, and it's too fast.

09校長

: もう十分よ。学年主任ともなれば責任も重くなるし能力も要求されるけど、あんたなら大丈夫、どう？

Kouchou

: *Mou juubun yo. Gakunen shunin to mo nareba sekinin mo omoku naru shi nouryoku mo youkyuu sareru kedo, anata nara daijoubu, dou?*

Kepala Sekolah

: You already have enough experience. If you become the head teacher, then you will have more responsibility and all your abilities will be tested, but I know you will be fine, how?

10秋山

: わかりました。

Akiyama

: *Wakarimashita.*

Akiyama

: I see.

*(ohitorisama, ep 1)*

#### Analysis 5:

At (03) the principal said *Anata ni onegai ga aru no* 'I want to ask you something'.

From the statement above there is a word *onegai ga aru* 'to ask something', the speech confirms the desire of the speaker to the speaking partner so that it includes expressive speech (expressing the feelings or desires of the speaker).

>> There was something the principal wanted Akiyama.

In the words *onegai ga aru* 'to ask something', there was something that the headmaster wanted from Akiyama. In this case, the presupposition in the above data is determined by the presupposition characteristic that there is an appropriateness of 'appropriateness', this makes it clear that the thing that the headmaster wants is in speech *Ninensei no gakunen shunin wo yatte choudai* 'I want you to be the head teacher for all second grade students'.

#### Analysis 6:

In statement (07), the principal said *Yamaoka sensei ga taishoku sareta ato kuuseki desho, hoka no gakunen no sensei wo mawasoutte iken mo attan dakedo, anata wo shoushin sareru no ga ichiban itte, watashi no kangae na no* 'This position has been empty since Yamaoka's teacher resigned, some people think this position is suitable for other head teachers, but I think that it is best to promote you to this position.'

From the above utterances there is the word *dakedo* 'but' where the utterances confirm the suggestions expressed by other teachers to promote the position of the head teacher that is empty to other teachers where the advice is different from what the principal thinks. From this, it can be seen that the above utterances are included in expressive speech (expressing something which is certainly related to the feelings and thoughts of the speaker).

>> Something planned by the school principal, which was different from the suggestions from other teachers about the position.

The word *Dakedo* or 'but' implied that there was something planned by the headmaster which was different from the suggestions from other teachers about the position of the teacher's head that was empty. In this case, the presuppositions in the above data is determined by the presupposition characteristic that there is an appropriateness of this matter, it is made clear that the thing that the principal wants is in the same speech, *anata wo shoushin sareru no ga ichiban itte, watashi no kangae na no* 'I think that it is best to promote you for this position'.

#### Analysis 07:

In utterances 08 Akiyama revealed *demo... mada keiken mo tarinai shi hayasugimasu* 'But ... my experience is not enough yet, and it's too fast'.

From the speech above, there is the word *mada* 'still', in which the speech confirms the self-distrust of Akiyama who says that he is still not experienced enough to become a head teacher. The speech is an expressive speech in which Akiyama tells the condition or condition of himself who feels insecure and is not ready to become the head teacher.

>> Akiyama sensei does not yet have the confidence to become a teacher head.

The word *Mada* said "still" implied that Akiyama Sensei did not yet have the confidence to become a head teacher. In this statement the presuppositions that can be taken are based on the compatibility of 'appropriateness' and the shared understanding of 'mutual knowledge', this is made clear by the statement 09, namely the principal's response which convinced Akiyama that he already had enough experience, by expressing this so that Akiyama added her confidence.

#### Analysis 8:

In statement 09 Akiyama's said that *mou juubun yo. Gakunen shunin to mo nareba sekinin mo omoku naru shi nouryoku mo youkyuu sareru kedo, anata nara daijoubu.* 'You already have enough experience. If you become the head teacher, then you will have more responsibility and all your abilities will be tested, but I know you will be fine.'

From the above utterances there is the word *mou* 'already' which confirms an affirmation in order to convince Akiyama that in fact he has sufficient experience and deserves to be the head teacher. The principal's speech is an affirmation of something. From this, the above expression includes assertive speech.

>> Akiyama sensei deserves to be a head teacher.

The word *mou* 'already' implies that Akiyama sensei deserves to be a head teacher. In this statement the presuppositions that can be taken are determined by the compatibility of 'appropriateness' and mutual understanding of 'mutual knowledge', this is clarified in the same utterance (utterance 09), namely the principal's response which convinced Akiyama that he already had enough experience.

#### Analysis 9:

In statement (10) Akiyama said that *wakarimashita* 'I see'.

From the above remarks there is the word *wakarimashita* 'I See' where the utterance confirmed an ability in Akiyama, where he received an offer from the principal to become a head teacher. Akiyama's speech is a speech that implies a conclusion that he accepted the offer. Such speeches are included in assertive speeches. Lexically the word 'I see' does not mean 'yes I understand and know my abilities' but indirectly or without being stated in the sentence that Akiyama accepted the offer to be the head teacher.

>> Akiyama sensei accepted the headmaster's offer to become a head teacher.

The word 'wakarimashita', meaning 'I see', implies that Akiyama sensei accepted the principal's offer to become a head teacher. In this statement the presuppositions that can be taken are determined by the appropriateness and mutual understanding of 'mutual knowledge', which implies that lexically the word 'I understand' does not mean 'yes I understand and know my abilities' but indirectly or without being stated in the sentence that Akiyama accepted the offer to be the head teacher, as explained in the context of the above discourse, also that in the end Akiyama sensei received an offer from the principal to become the head teacher.

#### **Conclusions**

From the data analysis above it can be concluded that this lexical presupposition is mostly found in expressive speech and the most characteristic that is used as a way to determine presuppositions is from the appropriateness in the speech. For more details, see the chart below:

**Table 1:** Lexical and way to determine preaupposition

No.	Lexical	Meaning	Type of speech	way to determine presuppositions
1.	Ganbatteru	Berusaha	Assertive	Consistent, appropriateness, mutual understanding
2.	Onaji da	Exactly the same	Assertive	appropriateness
3.	Oodoroitan	Shocked	Expressive	appropriateness
4.	Shinpai shiteta	Khawatir	Expressive	appropriateness
5.	Onegai ga aru no	Meminta tolong	Expressive	appropriateness
6.	Dakedo	But	Expressive	Kesesuaian
7.	Mada	Not yet	Expressive	appropriateness, mutual understanding
8.	Mou	Already	Assertive	appropriateness, mutual understanding
9.	Wakarimashita	I see	Assertive	appropriateness, mutual understanding

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