Analyzing Presupposition and Implicature in Telegram : A Pragmatics-Semantics Perspective

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Abstract

This study explores the use of presupposition and implicature in digital chat interactions among Generation Z users in Indonesia. Employing a pragmatics-semantics framework, the research focuses on naturally occurring Telegram chat messages to examine how implicit meaning is conveyed. Results indicate that both presupposition and implicature are frequently used in short conversations, where speakers rely on shared context and background assumptions. These findings reveal how digital communication depends not only on linguistic form but also on interpretation through contextual understanding.

Keywords: presupposition, implicature, pragmatics, semantics, telegram chat

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of communication technology has significantly transformed the way individuals interact in daily life. Among these developments, instant messaging platforms like Telegram have become central tools for communication, particularly among Generation Z users. These platforms offer fast, flexible, and informal exchanges, often using short messages, abbreviations, and emojis. Although these messages appear simple, they frequently carry complex layers of meaning that depend heavily on context and shared understanding.

In this digital communication environment, two essential linguistic concepts emerge: presupposition and implicature. Presupposition is a type of implied meaning that relies on shared assumptions between the speaker and the listener for a sentence to be meaningful. For example, the statement "She stopped attending the class" indirectly assumes she had previously participated in it. Meanwhile, implicature arises when a speaker conveys additional meaning beyond the literal interpretation of their words. For instance, replying with "I have class early tomorrow" to an invitation subtly communicates refusal without directly declining. Such implicit forms of meaning are especially common in online chats, where users rely on shared social knowledge and minimal text to convey nuanced intentions. Understanding these phenomena is crucial for interpreting digital discourse, as it moves beyond literal interpretation and requires pragmatic awareness.

This study aims to examine how presupposition and implicature function in online chat interactions within Telegram. Through the lens of semantics and pragmatics, the research analyzes naturally occurring conversational data to explore how users construct meaning in efficient yet context-dependent ways. This investigation contributes to a broader understanding of how implicit meaning operates in the digital communication practices of today's generation.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

The study employed a qualitative descriptive method to analyze instances of presupposition and implicature found in 25 anonymized chat excerpts from Telegram. The data selection focused on messages that contained indirect language, implied assumptions, and heavy dependence on context for interpretation. Ethical measures were observed to protect user identity. Data analysis involved identifying instances of presupposition and implicature using established theoretical frameworks. Identification of presupposition was carried out by examining linguistic indicators such as specific noun phrases and verbs denoting changes in state. Implicatures, on the other hand, were analyzed according to conversational maxims concerning quantity, relevance, and manner.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Presupposition in Online Chat

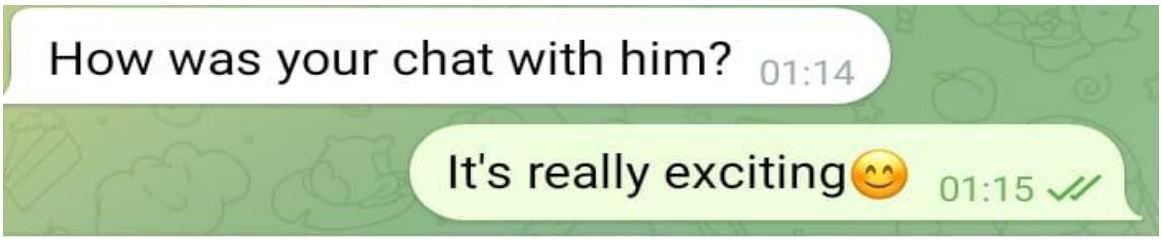
Many messages relied on presupposed information that was not explicitly stated. For example:



This suggests that the individual referred to as "he" was presumed to already be informed. Such examples illustrate existential and factive presuppositions, highlighting the role of mutual background knowledge in shaping understanding. Presuppositions often rely on **definite expressions**, **change-of-state verbs**, or **cleft structures**. Users rarely question presupposed content, which creates efficient but assumption-rich communication.

2. Implicature in Online Chat

Implicatures were found in indirect or sarcastic messages. For example:



Emojis such as "😊" serve multiple pragmatic functions, including strengthening, moderating, or even contradicting the explicit message conveyed. Interpretation is highly context-dependent, showcasing the pragmatic complexity of digital communication. These implicatures are heavily influenced by **context**, tone, and even **typing style**.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the central role of presupposition and implicature in the construction of meaning within Telegram chats. Through contextually rich exchanges, users often convey more than they say, relying on shared understanding to express intentions effectively. Recognizing these features allows a deeper comprehension of digital communication and its reliance on pragmatic competence.

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