

Presupposition in the Documentary Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso: A Forensic Linguistic Study

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A B S T R A C T

In 2016, Indonesia was captivated by the sensational cyanide murder case involving Mirna Salihin and Jessica Wongso, which resurfaced in 2023 through Netflix's documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso*. While public discourse focused on the legal drama, little attention has been given to the linguistic mechanisms shaping perception within such forensic narratives. This study addresses that gap by examining how presuppositions construct meaning and potential bias in the documentary's discourse. Utilizing George Yule's presupposition theory within a forensic linguistic framework, the research identifies and categorizes presupposition types embedded in the dialogues. The study applies a qualitative method, collecting fifteen data samples through observation and note-taking of segments containing presuppositional cues. The analysis reveals the presence of 8 existential, 7 factive, 2 lexical, 4 non-factive, 3 counterfactual, and 1 structural presupposition, which indicate that the allegation of murder committed by Jessica Wongso against Mirna Salihin remains inconclusive. These linguistic patterns suggest how narrative framing and implied assumptions may influence audience interpretation of guilt and innocence. Ultimately, this study underscores the role of presupposition analysis as a tool in forensic linguistics for uncovering implicit meaning and assessing the fairness of language in legal discourse.

A R T I C L E I N F O

Paper type:

Research Article

Article history:

Received: 21/12/2023

Revised: 27/11/2025

Accepted: 9/1/2026

Keywords:

- WhatsApp Documentary Film
- Forensic Linguistics
- George Yule
- Jessica Wongso
- Presupposition

1. Introduction

In early 2016, Indonesia was shaken by the death of Wayan Mirna Salihin after consuming cyanide-laced coffee at Café Olivier, Jakarta. The case, involving her friend Jessica Kumala Wongso as the accused, attracted massive media attention and became known as the "cyanide coffee case" who was ultimately sentenced to 20 years in prison (Zenitha, 2023). Beyond its legal dimension, the case evolved into a social spectacle where language, media, and perception intersected. In 2023, the release of the Netflix documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso*, directed by Rob Sixsmith (Sixsmith, 2023), reignited public debate by reframing the narrative surrounding Jessica's culpability and started to suspect other possibilities in Mirna's murder. Viewers began to question the earlier verdict, illustrating how media discourse can influence collective perception of guilt and innocence.

Within this context, forensic linguistics provides a framework to examine how language shapes legal and moral interpretation. Specifically, presupposition as theorized by George Yule serves as a linguistic device that embeds implicit assumptions, influencing how audiences interpret statements as fact or speculation. Levinson further states that presupposition contains the meaning of all background assumptions that can make an action, theory, expression, or speech reasonable. In short, a presupposition is an inference or assumption (Eri, 2012). The mapping of presuppositions in language based on forensic linguistics

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produces meanings of truth that reveal positive and negative attitudes in language (Panggabean & Sinar, 2018). However, the role of forensic linguistics is not to determine whether a person is guilty or not in a case, but rather to establish the status and involvement of each party insofar as it relates to language use (Panggabean, 2022).

Scholars such as Yule (1996) and He Ziran (1997) agree that presupposition functions as an implicit assumption embedded within discourse, yet their frameworks differ in focus: Yule emphasizes pragmatic inference, while He Ziran integrates logic, semantics, and context. This conceptual overlap allows presupposition to be treated not merely as a linguistic structure but as an interpretive mechanism within forensic settings (Wang, 2024). Within pragmatics, presupposition represents the assumptions underlying an utterance (Agustina et al., 2022). Griffiths in (Hadiyani, 2014) further notes that presuppositions need not be true; they are beliefs the speaker assumes the listener also shares to interpret meaning effectively. Thus, presupposition in this study is used to analyze the linguistic forms found in selected samples from the Jessica Wongso documentary through the framework of forensic linguistics.

Yule (1996) categorizes presuppositions into six distinct types. The first type, existential presupposition, denotes the assumption that something exists, typically implied when a speaker uses a noun phrase to describe entities (Alhuseini & Kareem, 2022). The second, factive presupposition, relies on verbs or statements that presuppose the truth of the information that follows, often signaled by verbs like “know,” “realize,” or “regret” (Lathar et al., 2023). Lexical presupposition, the third type, assumes an additional, non-asserted meaning is understood alongside the asserted meaning of a form (Topacio, 2020). The fourth type, non-factive presupposition, presumes the information to be false and is often introduced by verbs such as “dream,” “imagine,” or “pretend”. Structural presupposition, the fifth type, assumes the truth of certain parts of a sentence, often seen in *wh*-questions that suggest the truth of the queried information (Alhuseini & Kareem, 2022). Finally, counter-factual presupposition assumes that the information is not only false but also contradictory to reality (Topacio, 2020).

Forensic linguistics, as an applied branch of linguistics, investigates how language functions as both evidence and an instrument within legal and institutional contexts. Instead of limiting the discussion to definitions, recent scholars highlight how forensic linguistics helps interpret meaning, bias, and power dynamics in spoken and written communication (Kuntarto, 2021; Sugiarto & Qurratulaini, 2020). Within this perspective, forensic linguistics does not merely describe the language of the law but examines how linguistic features across phonetic, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic dimensions are applied to describe and uncover legal cases, focusing on language as a legal product, language in the judicial process, and language as evidence (Shuy, 2022; Suryani et al., 2021).

Based on the above presentation, The researcher found previous studies using similar theories, specifically in forensic linguistics, in (Kusno et al., 2022) identified elements of extortion and threats in online loan collection messages, (Azhari et al., 2023) analyzed forms and representations of crime in a novel, (Halid, 2022) explored speech acts in hate speech and defamation on Facebook and Twitter. Meanwhile, Previous studies that employed presupposition theory within forensic linguistic frameworks include (Azizah, 2023), who examined presuppositions in Detective Conan: Zero the Enforcer; (Ibrahim & Isa, 2025), who analyzed the representation of false religious teachings in the telefilm *Jahil* (Jalan Singkat ke Syurga); (Indriyanti, 2021), who explored presuppositional meaning in *Murder on the Orient Express* by Kenneth Branagh; and (Putri et al., 2020), who investigated presuppositions in Twitter reply columns related to alleged cyberbullying cases.

However, a previous study by (Larisu et al., 2023; Mola, 2023) shared a common object, the documentary *'Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso'*, but focused on examining the role of mass media in shaping public opinion. Eventually based on the previous studies discussed above, a research gap is identified due to the limited number of studies analyzing presupposition as forensic evidence in media-based cases. Most prior research has primarily focused on identifying and classifying types of presuppositions in fictional or social media contexts, without exploring their evidential role in constructing legal narratives or shaping public perception of guilt and innocence. This research, therefore, fills that gap by investigating how presuppositional cues in documentary *'Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso'* construct a particular version of reality, potentially affecting the viewer's perception of guilt and justice.

This study takes language and conversation in the documentary as the objects of analysis. Therefore, the research aims to identify and classify types of presuppositions present in the documentary *'Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso'* using George Yule's theory, adapted to forensic linguistics. Additionally, it aims to analyze and describe the meaning of presuppositions reflected in the documentary,

aligning with forensic linguistics. The study holds academic and practical benefits. Academically, it serves as a reference or contributes specific references, particularly in the linguistic domain. Moreover, this research can contribute to the legal field due to its forensic linguistic approach, emphasizing the connection between language and law. Practically, the study adds experience and insights to the researcher regarding the interplay between language and law.

2. Methods

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, focusing on the linguistic interpretation of presuppositions as forensic evidence within a media-based context. The qualitative design allows the researcher to interpret meaning and bias embedded in the language used throughout the documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso*. The primary data source is the Netflix documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso* (2023). The unit of analysis in this study is each utterance containing a presuppositional trigger, either from narration, interview statements, or dialogue excerpts. These utterances were selected because they reflect the linguistic choices contributing to the construction of legal and moral narratives surrounding the case.

Data were collected through several steps. The first step is Observation and Transcription: the researcher watched the documentary multiple times to capture the context and tone of the conversations. All relevant speech and narration were in English and Indonesian subtitles. The second step is Note-Taking and Scene Identification: each transcript was examined to identify potential presuppositional expressions. The researcher read each part of the dialogue or narration to find sentences that contain presuppositions. The third step is Data Selection: the researcher collected 15 data samples, which were filtered using Yule's presupposition theory. Only utterances related to case framing, interrogation, or evaluative commentary were included to maintain focus on forensic relevance.

Data analysis followed a coding and classification process based on George Yule's (1996) six types of presuppositions: existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, and counterfactual. The analysis was conducted in three stages: (1) Identification, marking utterances that contain presuppositional triggers; (2) Classification, categorizing each utterance according to Yule's six presupposition types, the data sample then categorized as Presupposition Constructing Suspicion, Presupposition Legitimizing Guilt, Presupposition Framing Moral Judgment, Presupposition Reinforcing Ideological Bias, Presupposition Constructing Empathy and Victimhood, Presupposition Delegitimizing the Legal System; and (3) Interpretation, analyzing how these presuppositions operate as forensic evidence revealing bias, intent, or ideological framing within the documentary's discourse.

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the findings, the researcher conducted: Triangulation, comparing linguistic interpretations with relevant forensic linguistic literature and prior studies on presupposition; Peer Review, consulting academic supervisors and peers to confirm the consistency of data categorization and interpretation; and Re-examination, revisiting coded data to minimize subjective bias and maintain analytical rigor.

3. Results and Discussion

The researchers selected 15 data samples from the documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso* on Netflix to be examined in this article. The data consist of interview and narration in the documentary that correspond to Yule's six categories of presupposition. The collected data are presented as follows:

Table 1. Data from the documentary '*Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso*'

| No | Types of Presuppositions | Time | Data |
|--------|---|---------|---|
| Data 1 | Existential Presupposition and Factive Presupposition | 0:09:11 | <p><i>Devi Siagian (Manajer Café):</i> "Sebelah kanan saya ada Jessica, saya sangat curiga sama dia pada saat itu karena dia tidak mau memegang</p> <p><i>Devi Siagian (Café Manager):</i> "Jessica was on my right, I was suspicious due to her unwillingness to assist her friend, despite being right by</p> |

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| | | | <i>temannya padahal benar-benar disampingnya persis. Sehingga saya melihat ini hanya mungkin ada kejanggalan. Ada yang salah dengan Jessica."</i> | her side. I therefore thought that perhaps something was strange. There was a problem with Jessica." |
| Data 2 | Existential Presupposition and Factive Presupposition | 0:09:34 | Devi Siagian (Manajer Café): "Dia tanya, 'what did you put in her drinks'" | Devi Siagian (Café Manager): "She asked, 'what did you put in her drink?'" |
| Data 3 | Existential Presupposition and Non-factive Presupposition | 0:09:34 | Edi Darmawan Salihin: "Anak saya mati, yang beli kopi dia kan gitu?" Wartawan: "Dia siapa nih pak?" Edi Darmawan Salihin: "Yaa, tau sendirilah, semua juga tahu." | Edi Darmawan Salihin: My daughter died, and she's the one who bought the coffee, right? Journalist: "Who are you talking about, sir?" Edi Darmawan Salihin: "Well, you know, everyone knows." |
| Data 4 | Factive Presupposition and Non-factive Presupposition | 0:19:33 | Arief Soemarmo: "Mungkin agak kasar penyampaian Mirna kepada Jessica. "kok lu goblok banget sih", "lu mau sama cowk-cowok yang ini nih". Mendengar itu Jessica tersinggung." | Arief Soemarmo (Mirna's Husband): Maybe Mirna's tone towards Jessica was a bit harsh, like, 'Why are you so dumb?' or 'You want to be with these guys?' Hearing that, Jessica felt offended. |
| Data 5 | Existential Presupposition and Factive Presupposition | 0:30:08 | Ahli toksikologi: "Pada pukul 16.29, beberapa kegiatan tidak satu detik tapi beberapa detik, hingga kopi diletakan diujung itu pukul 16.33." Jaksa: "Dari rentang waktu segitu itu tidak ada orang lain yang ada di sekitar situ, ya disitulah gong nya" | Toxicologist: At 4:29 PM, there were several activities that lasted not just one second but several seconds, until the coffee was placed at the end at 4:33 PM. Prosecutor: "During that time frame, there was no one else around, and that's where the key point is." |
| Data 6 | counter-factual presupposition | 0:32:00 | Jessica: "If the media wasn't really keen on me at that time, it would be different" | Jessica: "If the media wasn't really keen on me at that time, it would be different." |
| Data 7 | Existential Presupposition and Non-factive Presupposition | 0:36:43 | Otto Hasibuan: "Tidak ada bukti dari mana barang sianida itu diambil? Dari kantongnya kah? Dari celananya kah? Dari tasnya kah? Ini engga dijelaskan oleh penuntut hukum." | Otto Hasibuan: "There is no evidence of where the cyanide came from. Was it taken from her pocket? From her pants? From her bag? This wasn't explained by the prosecution." |
| Data 8 | Existential Presupposition and Non-factive Presupposition | 0:38:34 | Otto Hasibuan: "Kunci penting dalam kasus ini adalah mati karena sianida. Tetapi setelah sidang" | Otto Hasibuan: "The key point in this case is the death caused by cyanide. But as the trial progressed and" |

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| | | | <i>berjalan, saksi-saksi mulai diperiksa, kitab isa mulai bongkar sedikit adanya ketidak benaran dalam kesaksian-kesaksian tersebut.”</i> | witnesses began to be examined, we could start uncovering some inconsistencies in those statements.” |
| Data 9 | Factive Presupposition and Structural Presupposition | 0:39:03 | <p>Otto Hasibuan: <i>“Waktu itu saya tanya kepada ahli selamat, ‘apakah anda melakukan autopsi?’”</i></p> <p>Ahli selamat: <i>“Kami tidak melakukan autopsi”</i></p> | <p>Otto Hasibuan: <i>“At the time, I asked the Ahli Selamat, ‘Did you do an autopsy?’”</i></p> <p>Ahli Selamat: <i>“We didn’t do an autopsy.”</i></p> |
| Data 10 | counter-factual presupposition | 0:40:13 | <p>Otto Hasibuan: <i>“Kalau seandainya tadinya otaknya diperiksa...”</i></p> <p>Ahli selamat: <i>“Ya”</i></p> <p>Otto Hasibuan: <i>“...Bisa tidak kemungkinan bisa ditemukan karena strok, umpamanya?”</i></p> | <p>Otto Hasibuan: <i>“If the brain had been examined before...”</i></p> <p>Ahli selamat: <i>“Yes”</i></p> <p>Otto Hasibuan: <i>“...Is it possible that a stroke could have been found, for example?”</i></p> |
| Data 11 | Factive Presupposition | 0:42:09 | <p>Dr. Djaja Surya Atmadja: <i>“Kalau tidak diperiksa seluruh organ, anda tidak bisa tahu sebab matinya. Dan itu dogma di forensik, pak.”</i></p> | <p>Dr. Djaja Surya Atmadja: <i>“If every organ isn't examined, you won't be able to determine the cause of death. And that’s a dogma in forensics, sir.”</i></p> |
| Data 12 | Existential Presupposition | 0:45:53 | <p>Otto Hasibuan: <i>“Saya berkesimpulan adanya sianida di dalam gelas ini sangat mencurigakan. Pasti dimasukan orang lain. Ya kan? Dan kemungkinan itu jelas ada indikasinya.”</i></p> | <p>Otto Hasibuan: <i>“I conclude that the presence of cyanide in this glass is exceedingly suspicious. It must have been placed there by someone else, right? And there are clear indications of that possibility.”</i></p> |
| Data 13 | counter-factual presupposition | 0:58:43 | <p>Bengbeng Ong: <i>“I wouldn't suspect that is sianida. I would consider all the courses including the natural diseases.”</i></p> | <p>Bengbeng Ong: <i>“I wouldn't suspect that is sianida. I would consider all the courses including the natural diseases.”</i></p> |
| Data 14 | Existential Presupposition and Lexical Presupposition | 1:09:30 | <p>Pewarta: <i>“Kasus meninggalnya Mirna Salhin dengan terdakwa, Jessica Kumala Wongso menghadirkan saksi polisi dari Australia. Yang disebutkan di antaranya ada 14 kasus yang melibatkan nama Jessica Kumala Wongso di kepolisian Australia.”</i></p> <p>Edi Darmawan Salihin: <i>“Ya itu kan polisi John Torres bilang, dia pernah mau</i></p> | <p>Reporter: <i>“The case of Mirna Salihin's death with the defendant, Jessica Kumala Wongso, has presented a police witness from Australia. It was mentioned that there are 14 cases featuring the name Jessica Kumala Wongso in the Australian police.”</i></p> <p>Edi Darmawan Salihin: <i>“Yes, that's what Police Officer John Torres said, that she once tried to commit</i></p> |

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| | | | <p>suicide, dia tabrak itu orang, eh rumah jompo itu sampai hancur. Orang, kepala bagiannya aja dia mau bunuh gimana. She said 'you damn shit, I will kill you'."</p> <p>Jaksa:</p> <p>"Dan saat itu terdakwa pernah mengatakan "seandainya saya ingin membunuh orang, maka saya tahu pasti caranya. Saya bisa mendapatkan pistol dan saya tahu dosis yang tepat."</p> | <p>suicide; she crashed into that nursing home and destroyed it. She even wanted to kill her head of division. She said, 'You damn shit, I will kill you.'</p> <p>Prosecutor:</p> <p>"And at that time, the defendant said, 'If I wanted to kill someone, I would definitely know how. I could get a gun, and I know the exact dosage'."</p> |
| Data 15 | Factive Presupposition | 1:10:31 | <p>Pewarta (timothy):</p> <p>"Tersangka Jessica Kumala Wongso menjalani pemeriksaan kejiwaan di Rumah Sakit Cipto Mangunkusumo. Dalam barang bukti yang disita ditemukan obat antidepresan yang biasa digunakan untuk pasien yang menderita gangguan jiwa."</p> | <p>Reporter (timothy):</p> <p>"The suspect, Jessica Kumala Wongso, underwent a pshychiatric examination at Cipto Mangunkusumo Hospital. Among the seized evidence, antidepressant medication was found that is commonly used for patients with mental disorders."</p> |

The murder case surrounding the death of Mirna on January 6, 2016, initially raised suspicions against the defendant Jessica Kumala Wongso. However, when the case regained attention as it became the subject of a documentary, several unresolved aspects came to light. In the documentary *"Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso,"* various presuppositions were identified. The data will be classified according to the six categories outlined by Yule, involving a thorough analysis of these assumptions, their implications, and how they contribute to the understanding or reinterpretation of the case. Here is the data:

Table 2. The number of occurrences of Types of Presuppositions in the documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso*

| No | Types of Presuppositions | Total |
|----|--------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Existential Presupposition | 8 |
| 2 | Factive Presupposition | 7 |
| 3 | Lexical Presupposition | 2 |
| 4 | Non-factive Presupposition | 4 |
| 5 | Structural Presupposition | 1 |
| 6 | counter-factual presupposition | 3 |
| | Total | 25 |

3.1 Presupposition Constructing Suspicion

Presupposition plays a crucial role in constructing suspicion within forensic discourse, as it subtly embeds assumptions that shape how audiences perceive guilt or innocence. These presuppositions operate not as neutral linguistic devices, but as mechanisms that frame suspicion through what is taken for granted in speech. Here is the data sample:

In data 1, **existential presupposition** appears in the statement “Jessica was on my right”, which presumes that Jessica was indeed positioned beside Devi at that moment. In this context, it refers to Jessica’s present next to the speaker during the moment when others were crowding and surrounding Mirna as her condition deteriorated. The statement contains a definite noun phrase that asserts the truth of Jessica’s presence. Compared to (Indriyanti, 2021) research, which highlights the existence of an entity in film and express it as neutral referential information, in this study, the statement functions to emphasize suspicion toward the presence of another entity.

This statement “what did you put in her drinks” in data 2 involves an **existential presupposition** due to the belief that a deadly chemical was added to Mirna's 'coffee', which resulted in her experiencing seizures at that moment. The above is similar to data 12, an **existential presupposition** appears in Otto Hasibuan’s statement, “The presence of cyanide in this glass is exceedingly suspicious” assumes the existence of cyanide in the glass. Otto Hasibuan assumes that another entity inserts a harmful substance in this case cinnaide, into coffee, resulting in someone's death.

The existential presuppositions identified in the documentary Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso reveal how language can construct the illusion of factual certainty in a forensic context. For instance, the utterance “What did you put in her drinks?” linguistically presupposes the existence of an added substance, while Otto Hasibuan’s statement “The presence of cyanide in this glass is exceedingly suspicious” assumes that cyanide indeed existed in Mirna’s drink. Both utterances present evidential. In contrast, the study by (Manshadi et al., 2025) on The Dialogue between Prophet Moses (AS) and Pharaoh demonstrates that existential presuppositions were used to affirm shared theological realities metaphysical truths thus, the existential presupposition becomes epistemik.

3.2 Presupposition Legitimizing Guilt

In a forensic linguistic perspective, language plays a crucial role in shaping how guilt is perceived and legitimized. In the context of the Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso documentary, such presuppositions subtly reinforce public belief in Jessica’s culpability, even before legal validation. Here is the data sample:

In data 1, a **factive presupposition** appears in Devi’s statement, “I was very suspicious of her at that time due to her unwillingness to assist her friend, despite being right by her side”, which implies that her suspicion toward Jessica genuinely existed. This presupposition assumes the truth of the speaker’s suspicion that Jessica’s actions were indeed perceived as suspicious at that moment. Compared to (Ibrahim & Isa, 2025) where factive presuppositions were used to express belief in religious teachings. The statement above falls into the category of factive presupposition since it expresses a belief in the truth of a proposition. This finding shows how a similar structure can signal something very different in a forensic context. compared to Ibrahim and Isa's statement, which has ideological credibility because it does not focus on forensic linguistics, this study is subjective perception and seeks to generate a forensic narrative from a witness. Here, the presupposition reflects a form of linguistic bias that subtly frames Jessica as guilty without directly saying so. In forensic linguistics, this kind of language is important because it reveals how assumptions built into speech can influence how people interpret guilt, truth, or innocence.

In data 2, the statement “what did you put in her drinks” contains a **factive presupposition** that something was put into the woman's drink. This question is assertive and implies a belief that something inappropriate was added to the drink. This contributes to why Jessica Kumala Wongso was identified as a suspect. When everyone was focused on Mirna Salihin's emergency condition, Jessica, with a defensive gesture, inquired about what the café had mixed into the drink she ordered for Mirna. Jessica's statement conveys an assumption of guilt, despite the lack of solid evidence of hazardous organisms in coffee in that time.

Furthermore in data 3, the statement “she’s the one who bought the coffee, right?” generates a **non-factive presupposition**, suggesting that the buyer of the coffee possesses certain traits or behavior already recognized by both the speaker and the listeners. This reflects the reconstructed chronology of Mirna’s death, where she was reported to have died after drinking “Ice Coffee Vietnam” ordered by Jessica Kumala

Wongso.

In Data 5, the statement “At 4:29 PM, there were several activities that lasted not just one second but several seconds” contains an **existential presupposition** that the activities did indeed happen at the mentioned time. In the statement “During that time frame, there was no one else around, and that’s where the key point is” there is a **factive presupposition** that during that time frame, no one else was around except Jessica, and this is proven by CCTV footage. In a forensic context, statements like these might serve as the basis or rationale to conclude that the situation was isolated or didn’t involve a third party during that time span. Thus, only Jessica Kumala Wongso could be considered as a suspect.

In the documentary, several factive and existential presuppositions serve to legitimize guilt through linguistic implication. For instance, utterances such as “what did you put in her drink?” the thing Jessica asked the waiter a question that was corroborated by mirna’s father statement “she’s the one who bought the coffee, right?” presuppose that Jessica has performed a act causing Mirna’s death. These presuppositions do not merely describe facts but linguistically construct an assumption of guilt prior to legal confirmation.

3.3 Presupposition Framing Moral Judgment

Presupposition serves as a subtle yet powerful linguistic device in framing moral judgment toward actions. The assumption here focuses on how a person’s habits or expressions can lead him to become a strong suspect in a case. Presupposition operate pragmatically to shape how audiences interpret person’s habit. In forensic linguistics, presuppositions not only help to reveal implicit facts, but they also impact the perpetrator’s or victim’s moral judgment. Every remark implicitly or habit involves a judgment that influences how the public and law enforcement evaluate what is “guilt” and what is “innocence.” Here is the data sample:

In Data 4, the statement “Hearing that, Jessica felt offended” contains a **factive presupposition** that Jessica did indeed feel offended after hearing Mirna’s comments. This presupposition occurs when there is information that wants to be conveyed with words that indicate a fact or news believed to exist. Arief Soemarmo assumes that Jessica Wongso’s motive for murdering his wife is due to hurt feelings caused by Mirna’s harsh words towards her. However, at the same time, this can also be categorized as a **non-factive presupposition**, since up to the present there is no certainty regarding whether Jessica truly felt upset, and this alleged feeling of resentment is considered as the motive for the murder. Thus, it can be regarded as an assumption made by the speaker.

In data 14, The reporting highlights that the defendant, Jessica Kumala Wongso, was confronted with testimony from a police witness from Australia, who stated that Jessica’s name appeared in 14 separate cases recorded by the Australian police. These cases included incidents such as threats of suicide, crashing into someone’s house, and threatening to kill her employer. This may reinforce the allegation that presupposes Jessica as the one who murdered Mirna. This assumption is further reinforced by her courtroom statement: “If I wanted to kill someone, I would definitely know how” In The Criminal Justice Act 2003, s 101(1)(d) allows the admission of “bad character evidence” or “propensity evidence” relevant to an important matter in issue between the prosecution and defense. In this Criminal Justice, it discusses how in some jurisdictions cases of past crimes can serve as evidence to support allegations of current crimes.

In this case, there is a **lexical presupposition** whereby the information assumes that, based on the 14 cases recorded in the police files, Jessica might be implicated in a murder. More specifically, this lexical presupposition conveys the conventional meaning ‘Jessica has 14 cases recorded by the Australian police,’ while simultaneously implying an unstated meaning, namely ‘the killing of Mirna Salihin,’ which can be inferred by the hearer. As (Hafizh, 2013) and (Liang, 2020) argues, lexical presupposition is a presuppositional mechanism in which conventional meanings are interpreted alongside implied assumptions so that meanings not explicitly articulated can nevertheless be understood.

In the utterance “If I wanted to kill someone, I would definitely know how. I could get a gun, and I know the exact dosage,” several presuppositional effects occur. There is an **existential presupposition** in the clause “I would definitely know how,” which presupposes the existence of a method or knowledge of killing. This clause functions as a hypothetical claim of capability and, in a forensic context, may be interpreted as a veiled threat. The clause “I could get a gun” presupposes the availability of sufficient funds or means to obtain a firearm. The clause “I know the exact dosage” implies knowledge of the precise dose required to kill someone. This utterance also contains a **lexical presupposition**, its conventional meaning “If I wanted to kill someone, I would definitely know how; I could get a gun; and I know the exact dosage”

carries an additional implicature, “jessica could plan to kill if they wished,” which the listener can infer.

The narrative presented by the reporter in data 15 is classified as a **factive presupposition**. It is assumed that mental disorders are believed to be one of the references that can prove that Jessica killed her friend Mirna. “antidepressant medication was found that is commonly used for patients with mental disorders” This can be used as evidence to demonstrate why he may be involved in criminal activities.

Unlike (Habibulloh, 2020) research, which employed presuppositions in a novel about faith, this study employs presuppositions as the idea that a habbit can serve as evidence in a case. However, this shift in focus does not entirely explain how presuppositions move from a religious dimension to an epistemic function in evidence creation.

3.4 Presupposition Reinforcing Ideological Bias

Presuppositions in forensic discourse not only reflect linguistic reality, but also play a subtle function in supporting an ideology and confirming a particular authority's position as the holder of truth. The data sample below demonstrates the reinforcement of meaning guilt or innocence in language. Here is the data sample:

In Data 3, the utterance “My daughter died” illustrates an **existential presupposition**, namely that Edi Darmawan Salihin’s daughter truly passed away after consuming the coffee. Another presupposition appears in the phrase (“she’s the one who bought the coffee”), which assumes the existence of a person who purchased the drink and links that action to the incident of the daughter’s death.

The statement in data 8, “The key in this case is death due to cyanide” contains an **existential presupposition** that cyanide is a crucial factor in the case. In this context, it is explained that the presence of cyanide caused the victim “Mirna” to die. However, after witnesses come forward and are examined one by one, many anomalies begin to emerge. The statement implies a **non-factive presupposition** that there might be inaccuracies in the statments as the trial progresses.

In data 10, the statement “Kalau seandainya tadinya otaknya diperiksa” (If the brain had been checked before), there is a **counter-factual presupposition**, suggesting that the brain examination was not done previously. This implies that Mirna's death might not necessarily be due to cyanide poisoning, as an autopsy was not performed. The question also involves a counter-factual presupposition with the possibility of finding indications related to a stroke. Otto Hasibuan raises the hypothetical scenario that if Mirna's brain had been examined earlier, there could have been a possibility of finding evidence related to a stroke or other conditions. This speculation challenges the assumptions made during the investigation. This presupposition is supported by Liang’s article, which states that one of the characteristics of counterfactual presupposition is the presence of an if-clause accompanied by an assumption that is contrary to reality, namely the absence of an autopsy.

The statement in data 11, “If every organ isn't examined, you won't be able to determine the cause of death)” contains a **factive presupposition**. Dr. Djaja Surya Atmadja assumes that to determine the cause of death, an examination of all organs is necessary. This statement emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive autopsy in forensic science, and the term (dogma in forensics) implies that this is a fundamental principle or belief in forensic science. The statement suggests that a thorough examination of all organs is crucial for a reliable determination of the cause of death.

3.5 Presupposition Constructing Empathy and Victimhood

Presuppositions in discourse not only serve to convey implicit information, but they also impact emotional views of the issue being discussed. Instructing a sensation that the audience interprets as empathy might make the individual appear like a victim. As a result, presuppositions can highlight emotional features, influencing how the audience perceives things. Here is the data sample:

In data 6, the statement “If the media wasn’t really keen on me at that time, it would be different,” there is a **counter-factual presupposition** as it imagines and assumes a condition different from reality. Jessica implies that if the media hadn't paid much attention to her at that time, the situation would have been different. Understanding how the media plays a role in a specific context can influence investigative analysis or legal decision-making. Supported by the findings of (Fahriza et al., 2025), which state that counter-factual presupposition is a supposition about something impossible to occur, referring either to an condition that has already happened or to a situation that is contrary to reality.

Otto Hasibuan's statement in data 12, show that there an **existential presupposition** indicating the presence of someone else "not Jessica" who might have put cyanide into the glass. The phrase "the presence of cyanide in this glass is exceedingly suspicious" assumes the existence of cyanide in the glass. This could be a bias that influences the judge's belief that Jessica is not the perpetrator in Mirna's murder.

3.6 Presupposition Delegitimizing the Legal System

Speakers might call legal institutions into question by making assumptions about their fairness, objectivity, or credibility. In a practical sense, this method works by creating the impression that the judicial system is failing to accomplish its function. Thus, presuppositions serve not just to convey implicit meaning, but also as a rhetorical tool for shaping public judgments of the law's validity and integrity. Here is the data sample:

The statement in data 7, there is an **existential presupposition** that assumes the existence of a cyanide substance whose origin is unknown. The phrase "Ini engga dijelaskan oleh penuntut hukum" (This wasn't explained by the prosecution) creates a **non-factive presupposition** that the prosecutor has not explained the origin of the cyanide. Otto Hasibuan's statement reflects the need for clarification and additional information. It highlights the lack of explanation or evidence regarding the origin of the cyanide and raises questions about potential ambiguity in the presentation of evidence by the prosecutor.

In the statement in data 9, "At the time, I asked the Ahli Selamat, 'Did you do an autopsy?', there is a **factive presupposition** that Otto Hasibuan did indeed ask this question to the Ahli Selamat during the trial. This presupposition is also present in the statement of the Ahli Selamat, "Kami tidak melakukan autopsi" (We didn't do an autopsy), which asserts that the Ahli Slamet genuinely did not perform an autopsy. This statement is crucial in the final decision-making process, determining whether Jessica is guilty of poisoning her friend Mirna to death or if it is merely an accusation.

In data 10, the statement "If the brain had been checked before", there is a **counter-factual presupposition**, suggesting that the brain examination was not done previously. This implies that Mirna's death might not necessarily be due to cyanide poisoning, as an autopsy was not performed. This statment illustrates the oddity in the court's conclusion that Jessica was the guilt of poisoning despite the lack of proof due to the failure to conduct a brain test.

The statement in data 13, which means "I wouldn't suspect that is cyanide. I would consider all the courses, including natural diseases," falls under the category of **counter-factual presupposition**. It assumes that Mirna's death might not be due to cyanide, and the speaker is considering other possibilities, including natural diseases. This statement reflects a holistic and scientific approach to the investigation of death, as it indicates a forensic expert being cautious in considering various factors and potential contributions.

3.7 Presuppositions In Documentary 'Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso': Implications For Forensic Linguistics.

Based on the analysis of the data above, the study on presuppositions in the documentary 'Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso' has important implications for forensic linguistics. The presence of various types of presuppositions, such as existential, factive, lexical, non-factive, structural, and counterfactual, shows how hidden assumptions in language can influence the delivery and understanding of information. In a forensic context, analyzing presuppositions is highly relevant, as it helps uncover biases or premature conclusions drawn in a case. For example, the existential presuppositions found in the data reveal that the narrator implicitly assumes events such as the murder indeed occurred, even though there is no strong evidence to support the claim.

This research also highlights unresolved issues in the Jessica Wongso case, where several elements remain unclear or unproven, such as the signs of death caused by cyanide poisoning. The narrative presented in the documentary builds assumptions that can affect public perception of the case, which, in turn, may directly impact the course of legal proceedings. In this context, forensic linguistics plays a crucial role in examining how the language used by the media shapes public opinion and influences the trajectory of a criminal case, even when the available forensic evidence does not fully support the narrative being presented.

Additionally, factive and counter-factual presuppositions can significantly affect investigative reports and courtroom testimony. Through presupposition analysis, researchers can observe how facts are perceived

or how assumptions are constructed based on claims that may not be fully substantiated. This demonstrates that the language used in legal contexts can have a major impact on the outcome of a case, highlighting the importance of forensic linguists carefully analyzing such language to identify potential bias or manipulation in the language employed.

In addition, as described in the data samples, this documentary focuses more on a perspective that favors Jessica, thereby constructing a narrative that potentially evokes sympathy toward Jessica Wongso. This framing leads the audience to question the complexity and shortcomings of Indonesia's judicial system. As a result, the public highlights the complexity and shortcomings within Indonesia's judicial system. According to (Valentine & Vardiansyah, 2024), this documentary successfully frames an issue by revealing new facts that have never been presented by other media and by highlighting irregularities and injustices in the case.

On the whole, this study emphasizes the importance of forensic linguistics in legal processes, particularly in illustrating how language can be used to influence public perception of a case. The analysis of presuppositions helps identify hidden assumptions within narratives, allowing courts or investigators to be more critical in assessing conclusions derived from language used in the media or legal documents.

4. Conclusion

In the documentary '*Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso*', the data can be examined through the lens of pragmatic presuppositions within the framework of forensic linguistics. The analysis reveals eight Existential Presuppositions, identified in data 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 12, and 14. Additionally, seven Factive Presuppositions appear in data 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, and 15. A couple of Lexical Presupposition is found in data 14, while five Non-factive Presuppositions occur in data 3, 7, and 8. Furthermore, one Structural Presupposition is identified in data 9, and three Counter-factual presuppositions are present in data 6, 10, and 13. Altogether, the findings account for 26 presuppositions distributed across the 15 data points under analysis. These presuppositions operate not merely as linguistic phenomena but as evidential cues that shape how viewers interpret legal narratives and moral accountability.

The release of *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso* significantly reshaped public perception of the 2016 cyanide coffee case. This shift in public perspective demonstrates the persuasive power of media discourse in shaping societal interpretations of guilt and innocence. From a forensic linguistic standpoint, such discourse not only reflects how information is linguistically constructed but also how it manipulates audience perception through presupposition and implied meaning. Upon examining the research under discussion, the researcher finds that the allegation of murder committed by Jessica Wongso against Mirna Salihin remains inconclusive. This is due to several irregularities that have yet to be substantiated, particularly the absence of typical postmortem indications associated with cyanide poisoning in Mirna's body after she was declared deceased.

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