

Original Article

Pragmatic Analysis of Presupposition in Vaccination Discourse in Kenya

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Abstract - Presupposition is what the speaker assumes before making an utterance. This research aims to identify the types of presuppositions used in vaccination discourse by stakeholders in the Ministry of Health in Kenya. This study aimed to classify and describe presuppositions used to shape vaccination discourse in Kenya. Anchored in Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory, the study employed a descriptive design, analyzing vaccination discourse on infectious diseases from ten purposively selected speeches by Kenyan health authorities, sourced from mainstream media archives. The researcher transcribed all expressions and identified the presupposed utterances. This study reveals that presuppositions, especially existential, factive, lexical, structural, and non-factive presuppositions, are instrumental in profiling the discourse surrounding the topic of vaccination in Kenya. It classifies and examines 54 expressions in ten formal extracts to demonstrate how each type of presupposition is aimed at influencing how the audience interprets a message, minimizes resistance, and increases clarity. The study also found that presuppositions played a key role in shaping vaccine communication. Presuppositions helped to present vaccination as necessary and already accepted, guiding interpretation without appearing forceful. Non-factive presuppositions appear only occasionally in the vaccination discourse, while counterfactual presuppositions are absent. This study suggested that further researchers examine presuppositions in other contexts. This research adds to the body of work on presupposition, extends the application of Relevance Theory, and highlights global tendencies in pragmatic strategies within public discourse, thereby offering a basis for enhancing health communication practices.

Keywords - Pragmatics, Presupposition, Relevance, Vaccination, Infectious Diseases.

1. Introduction

In communication, pragmatics plays a crucial role in shaping how messages are conveyed and interpreted, making it particularly relevant to persuasion. This is because pragmatics in linguistics is concerned with how language is used in specific social contexts and how context shapes the interpretation of meaning in communication. Unlike semantics, which focuses on the literal meaning of words, pragmatics focuses on implied meanings, intentions, and the situational factors that affect how language is understood. [1] It is posited that pragmatics emphasizes contextual meaning, where the interpretation of language is linked to the speaker or writer's purpose, reflecting the relationship between language and its user.

Vaccines serve as highly effective tools in public health, promoting individual well-being and alleviating the burden of infectious diseases. Their impact is profound, with an estimated six million lives saved annually through vaccination [2]. Furthermore, this life-saving influence extends beyond health outcomes, encompassing reduced

medical costs, improved workforce productivity, and fostering financial benefits and economic growth. Despite these substantial benefits, vaccine safety tends to receive more public scrutiny compared to vaccine efficacy, primarily due to the preventive nature of vaccines rather than their curative nature. Since the positive effects of a properly functioning vaccine may not be immediately visible, there is a tendency to overlook or underestimate its advantages while focusing on exceedingly rare adverse events [2]. This may lead to vaccination hesitancy, which is a concern of this study.

This paper presents a review of presuppositions, which are crucial in understanding hidden ideas and beliefs within a discourse. It helps reveal how language can influence people by embedding assumptions that are difficult to notice or challenge. This is especially useful for identifying strategies that make certain ideologies seem natural or unquestionable in communication. Presupposition refers to an underlying assumption a speaker holds prior to making an utterance. According to [3], it is the background



knowledge or assumption that precedes speech production and contributes to the interpretation of meaning. It is important to note that presupposition involves the assumptions that accompany a statement. [4] links this to the use of particular words, phrases, and syntactic structures that serve as linguistic markers of implied meaning. In pragmatics, presupposition emphasizes both the semantic content of an utterance and the situational context in which it occurs. As [5] notes, sentences are regarded as communicative acts expressed through language. Thus, identifying the intended meaning of a presupposition requires consideration of form, meaning, and context. This perspective underscores that presuppositions rely on background and shared knowledge between interlocutors, without which the speaker's intentions may be difficult to interpret

[6] also gives valuable information on the strategic application of presuppositions in institutional communication. She describes that presupposition, when used in a formal context like in government, health, or legal speech, is used by a speaker to present a particular claim as one that is already agreed upon or beyond doubt. This is a strategy that can assist in the interpretation of the message by the listeners and minimise the chances of challenge or disagreement. Placing the most important details in the background of a sentence, as opposed to introducing them as something to be argued about, the speaker's influence on what the audience thinks is subtle. Presupposition is an effective persuasion technique when time, authority, or clarity matters. [6] is keen to point out that this strategy enables institutions to take charge of the message, even as they seem informative and balanced. Such a view is highly applicable to the present research, which examines the use of presupposition in vaccination discourse in Kenya with the aim of shaping the population's reaction. [7] adds that government representatives and health officials tend to incorporate beliefs about the vaccine safety, effectiveness, and responsibility into presupposed statements as facts, as opposed to opinions. This research exploits this gap.

[8] analyzed five news articles from three Ethiopian newspapers written in English. His study examined the types of knowledge journalists assume their readers already possess and the mental effort required by readers to comprehend these presuppositions. The findings showed that some journalists embed assumptions unfairly, often making specific issues appear more complex or mysterious. [8] continues to argue that such presuppositions obscure important issues, requiring readers to work harder to achieve the intended understanding. His study considers journalists and their techniques, but the point he makes is that presuppositions determine how people communicate. These insights helped to analyze vaccination discourse in Kenya, focusing on how presuppositions may affect public perception, with the assumption that presuppositions make

communication more straightforward and not more complicated.

In doctor-patient interaction, presuppositions are studied by [9], in which they determine the role of presuppositions as implicit reasoning processes using cultural assumptions. To be logical and to avoid contradictions, communication must be based on these assumptions, which must match existing beliefs. Messages that resonate with the audience's cultural context can be more persuasive and more successfully address public concerns by incorporating relevant assumptions. In the current context, this perspective has helped assess narratives that not only inform but also influence public attitudes towards vaccine acceptance or hesitancy, thereby shaping vaccination discourse.

[10] study how illocutionary acts, meaning, and intentions work together in the judicial system's communication practices. In their study, they look to answer how presuppositions, so often employed by prosecutors and lawyers in questioning, help balance narrative with persuasion. The findings indicate that presuppositions make evidence more admissible, make witnesses more credible, and make narratives more coherent and convincing. Presuppositions are commonly used in cross-examinations to question the reliability of opposing witnesses and destroy the opposing lawyer's story. The study finds that presupposition can be used to verify facts and call credibility into question. This is relevant to the current study because it demonstrates how presuppositions influence perceptions and how discourse is shaped to persuade citizens of Kenya when they must make decisions about vaccination.

Presuppositions play a significant role in moving the audience during political campaigns. [11] discusses the presuppositions and politeness strategies employed by President Donald Trump in his inauguration speech. The study finds that Trump's assumption that the event was unique, that America faced economic and social challenges, and that solutions were urgently needed, were all embedded. In addition, it presents examples of how Trump used face-saving and face-threatening politeness strategies to persuade his audience and to assert his authority. The relevance of the study to vaccination discourse in Kenya lies in how presuppositions can shape public messages and draw attention to the urgency, challenges, and solutions.

Although many studies have been conducted to understand the concept of presupposition in relation to the teaching of journalism, politics, health interactions, and legal aspects, few have addressed this in relation to the Kenyan case of vaccination discourse. Such a gap in research is important since vaccine hesitancy in Kenya is not only influenced by medical issues, but also by

information that is linguistically encoded and presented to the population. The gap, then, is in the knowledge of how presuppositions in the official messages about vaccination shape the public perception and acceptance. The research aims at bridging the gap by examining the discourse of vaccination in Kenya on a pragmatic level, but with particular emphasis on the kind of presuppositions that are being encoded at the utterance level when real communicative events take place. The connection of linguistic form and persuasive intent in the study gives us insight into how health communication strategies may be tailored towards increasing vaccine acceptance.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Types of Presupposition

[3] Identifies six categories of presupposition, namely existential, factive, non-factive, lexical, structural, and counterfactual. The study at hand examined how presuppositions are used in vaccination discourse to shape it. The following are the types of presuppositions, as outlined by [3].

2.2. Existential

Existential presupposition, the first type, signals the assumed existence of an entity or object mentioned by the speaker, often through possessive constructions or definite noun phrases [3]. It reflects the assumption that the entity, object, or concept referred to in an utterance already exists within the discourse context. This is a presupposition because it assumes the key subjects are present without explicitly stating them.

2.3. Factive

Factive presupposition arises when information is presented as true through the use of factive verbs or expressions [3]. Such words—like *know*, *realize*, *regret*, *be glad*, *be odd*, and *be aware*—imply that the proposition they introduce is a fact. Thus, the presupposed content is assumed to be true because it is conveyed through linguistic forms that inherently signal factuality. [11] provides a comprehensive study of factive presuppositions and the peculiar strength that they have in determining communication and belief. According to him, these presuppositions are produced when a speaker employs some verbs that automatically evoke the idea that what comes after them is true. The power of factive presuppositions is that often the listeners do not question them; they are assigned to the background knowledge, which both the speaker and the audience are expected to possess [11]. This implies that factive statements have the capacity to sneak in beliefs or claims without the necessity to demonstrate them. They lead to robust conclusions and lower the listener's intention to reject or critically evaluate the information since they imply an underlying truth. Consequently, these presumptions are tactical weapons of persuasion,

particularly in communicating to the masses, whereby achieving a consensus in a short period is of the essence.

2.4. Non-Factive

Non-factive presupposition, in contrast to factive presupposition, involves assumptions about propositions that are not presented as true [3]. It is triggered by non-factive expressions such as *dream*, *imagine*, *wish*, *hope*, and *pretend*, which convey unreal or hypothetical states, and indicate a viewpoint, not a fact, and they usually trigger this type. Non-factive presuppositions occur in discourse to mark out subjective or hypothetical scenarios, and are frequently employed in introducing alternative perspectives. [13] examines the effect of non-factive expressions on the communication process, as they encourage listeners to remain mentally active and critically engaged. He describes that non-factive verbs like *think*, *believe*, *assume*, or *suspect* indicate that the veracity of the information that comes after them is either doubtful or can be interpreted. This ambiguity gives rise to what [13] terms epistemic vigilance, where the audience is highly alert and considerate as opposed to being passive receivers of the message. Non-factive expressions do not present the information as the absolute truth; instead, they leave room for reasoning and personal reflection. This trait qualifies them as applying to persuasive situations, particularly those where the speaker is keen to make the listener feel a part of the decision-making process or where they do not (at least verbally) want to appear too pushy.

2.5. Lexical

Lexical presupposition arises when the use of a particular lexical item conventionally implies an additional, unstated meaning [3]. Words such as *manage*, *stop*, *start*, and *again* trigger this type, as their interpretation presupposes another proposition. Unlike factive presuppositions, lexical presuppositions rely on the inherent meaning of specific expressions to signal implied content. This type of presupposition hints at a second interpretation beyond what is said.

[14] discussed the application of lexical presuppositions in the political speeches of King Abdullah II. They paid attention to such words as *continue*, *protect*, and *start*, which make some assumptions but do not mention them directly. A combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis in the research demonstrated how these lexical items have implicit connotations, leading the audience to interpretation, and they influence collective meaning. Their results showed that some presupposition triggers are repeated in political language in order to secure authority and establish a feeling of shared ground. This paper contributes to the present analysis of vaccination discourse by providing a straightforward procedure for identifying and analyzing triggers of lexical presupposition in institutional messages. The study conducted by [14] demonstrated that such word selection can be used to uncover some strategic messaging

methodology and lead to a better comprehension of how presuppositions can be used to achieve a persuasive end in the context of communicating in the field of public health. This research identified a gap in the present study, which aims to establish how presuppositions shape vaccination discourse.

2.6. Structural

Structural presupposition, the fifth type, is triggered by the use of certain syntactic forms, particularly in interrogative constructions, where some information is conventionally assumed to be true [3]. This is evident in questions (e.g., *what, who, why, where, when, how*), which presuppose the existence of specific information that the listener is expected to recognize as given once the question is posed. A significant breakthrough in the comprehension of structural presuppositions in language was made by [15]. He looked at how the structure of complex sentences, especially when they are connected by words such as *and/or*, or when they are embedded under conditionals, has embedded assumptions.

[15] also presented a model of following up on which presuppositions remain alive and which do not within such compound sentences. His discussion made clear that the structure of a sentence can either make presupposed information active or filter it out due to the structure. This discovery enhanced the realization of the interaction between grammar and presupposition to create meaning. Another concept used by [15] in the context of pragmatic interpretation was the concept of context update. Structural presuppositions of a sentence should be in congruence with the context, or the speakers make the listeners match their shared assumptions. This system of dynamics makes communication coherent and relevant, which is a key objective of the current study.

2.7. Counterfactual

Counterfactual presupposition, the final type, occurs when an utterance conveys a meaning that contradicts reality by employing a conditional structure (if-clause) [3]. In such cases, the conditional form signals that the proposition expressed is assumed to be false. In the case of counterfactual presupposition, an item is assumed to be true that is known to be false. It is used in conditional statements that assume what would have happened if it were not for something.

When evaluating Ingredients of Counterfactuality, [16] examines the building and interpretation of counterfactual statements in natural language. She also dwells on the conditional sentences which express something against the known. The study claims that these structures are constructed with the help of specific grammatical markers, indicating that the speaker does not describe reality but creates a vision of an alternative situation. In describing the

study, tense and mood, in particular the past tense and subjunctive mood, are also seen as important features of conveying the idea that the event under discussion did not occur. She bases her analysis on some of the languages, which indicates that the structure of grammatical markers used to construct counterfactual meaning is systematic, as well as cross-linguistically regular. [16] also describes the fact that counterfactuals are pragmatically potent. Since they suggest that something did not happen but that it was possible to happen, they, of course, guide the attention of the listener toward what could have been different in other conditions. This hypothetical framing may focus on regret, blame, or caution, depending on the situation. The study demonstrates how speakers can convey their attitude or influence others by biasing their words and not making direct claims, instead differentiating between counterfactual and factual conditionals.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive qualitative research design. Qualitative methods are especially appropriate when it comes to inquiry and a detailed description of the phenomena [17]. This design allowed the researcher to give an account of the observable patterns in the data in a systematic way and to interpret them based on the objectives of the study. According to [18], qualitative research seeks to describe, explain, and interpret meanings of communicative practices, which in this case are presuppositions in the context of the vaccination discourse.

3.2. Population

The population to be targeted was all the discourse on the topic of vaccinating communicable diseases that had been developed by the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Kenya and its related stakeholders. These discourses were based on the press releases, media briefs, and official communications archived in mainstream media repositories. The research was targeted at the materials created in the period of 2013-2023.

3.3. Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was used to focus on the communicative events of interest. Purposive sampling involves the researcher involving data sources that he/she finds most helpful in answering research questions [19]. In accordance with this principle, ten official vaccination-related communications were identified, each of which was supposed to produce at least ten presupposition-bearing expressions, which meant that about fifty-four expressions were to be analyzed. Such a limited, well-chosen sample is representative of qualitative research traditions, which are more concerned with depth of understanding rather than breadth [20]. This method enabled the close analysis of MoH officials' communicative practices in the context of the specific setting.

3.4. Research Instruments

The primary data source was official vaccination discourses retrieved from the MoH media repositories using the Chrome downloader tool. After retrieval, the discourses were systematically reviewed, and a checklist was developed to identify different types of presupposition. The checklist was also used to record contextual details, ensuring that each presupposition could be interpreted within its communicative setting. When presupposition markers were found, they were highlighted, transcribed, and entered into the research notes for further analysis.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection involved three steps. First, a survey of MoH vaccination discourses available in mainstream repositories was conducted to confirm their relevance. Second, the identified discourses were downloaded and printed. Finally, the texts were examined pragmatically, using the checklist to identify and categorize presuppositions while noting contextual features that shaped their interpretation.

3.6. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed qualitatively. Utterances that contained background assumptions presumed to be shared by the audience were transcribed and examined. The checklist served as a guide for identifying presupposition types, which were then interpreted with reference to Relevance Theory. Particular attention was given to the contextual dimensions of each utterance, recognizing that meaning emerges from the interplay between linguistic form and communicative situation.

3.7. Ethical Consideration

Although the study relied on publicly available vaccination discourses from official Ministry of Health (MoH) repositories and mainstream media outlets, ethical principles were still observed. To ensure transparency and accountability, only verified and officially published materials were used, avoiding any alteration of the original content. Since the data were institutional texts rather than personal communications, the study posed minimal risk to individuals' privacy. However, care was taken not to misrepresent the intent of the communicators, and interpretations were presented within their appropriate contexts. In line with standard ethical practice in discourse studies, all sources have been properly acknowledged, and the analysis was restricted to the communicative purpose of the materials rather than personal attributions to individual authors.

4. Results and Discussion

Presupposition refers to background information that a speaker assumes to be known, accepted, or taken for granted by the listener. Unlike direct statements, presuppositions are

embedded in a sentence and usually remain constant even when the sentence is questioned, denied, or altered. In persuasive discourse, presuppositions can be powerful tools because they enable speakers to introduce implicit assumptions into their communication without drawing attention to them. These assumptions subtly shape how information is received, interpreted, and accepted, often guiding the audience toward particular conclusions without requiring explicit argumentation.

Presuppositions enhance communication by providing cognitively efficient pathways to meaning. Since they rely on shared background knowledge or commonly accepted beliefs, presuppositions reduce the processing effort needed to interpret a message while still delivering contextual effects. The audience is not required to evaluate the truth of the presupposed information; instead, it is treated as given. This enhances the relevance of the communication by enabling speakers to focus on new or persuasive content while building upon accepted assumptions. In health discourse, particularly in vaccination campaigns, this is a strategic approach to presenting key health messages while reinforcing compliance and trust.

In the current study, the expressions in the vaccination discourse were examined for presupposition triggers and meanings. Over the 10 identified extracts in the current analysis, a total of 54 expressions were identified, within which five types of presuppositions were identified. These include: factive, non-factive, existential, structural, and lexical presuppositions. Each type plays a unique role in shaping how audiences process and respond to vaccination messages. The details of these categories are outlined in a discussion as follows:

4.1. Existential

In the current study, existential presupposition refers to the assumption that something or someone mentioned in a statement exists. It is triggered by definite noun phrases such as names, possessives, or specific references. From the perspective of Relevance Theory, existential presuppositions help speakers reduce processing effort by building on what the audience is already assumed to know or accept. By referring to people, places, or things as if their existence is already established, the speaker focuses attention on new information without questioning the background context. In vaccination discourse, this allows health officials to discuss diseases, vaccines, institutions, and citizens as established realities, making the message smoother and more direct. In this study, various expressions demonstrated this strategy, confirming that existential presuppositions were commonly used to support persuasive communication.

In the first extract, which focuses on the flow of vaccines, a senior health official addresses the public to

explain the progress made and to encourage continued vaccine uptake. In the discourse, various presuppositional strategies, existential, factive, structural, and lexical, are used to strengthen the message and make it more convincing. The speaker, in Exp1, uses existential presupposition;

Exct 1, Exp 1:

Based on the data we get from the Pharmacovigilance platform, we have recorded 615 cases..."

This type of presupposition assumes the existence of a system (the Pharmacovigilance Platform) that collects and monitors vaccine-related data. The speaker does not question whether the platform exists or functions properly; it is assumed to be a given. By referring to a specific, ongoing data source, the speaker implies that the information is credible and systematically gathered. This helps build public trust, as it suggests that vaccine safety is being monitored professionally and continuously. Presupposition, in this case, supports the larger message that the vaccination process is both transparent and reliable.

In the second extract, which focuses on the Covid-19 booster vaccine shot, Existential presupposition is contained in Exp 9, arising from the mention of specific statistics—427 people testing positive out of a sample of 3,307. This presupposes the existence of widespread testing systems and confirmed COVID-19 cases, thereby reinforcing the idea that the virus remains active in the population. The use of numbers presupposes an objective and ongoing threat, which heightens the perceived urgency for preventive action such as vaccination. Equally, Exp58 uses existential presupposition by stating that the Ministry of Health has started a booster shot campaign.

Ect 2, Exp 9:

427 people tested positive for Covid-19 from a sample size of 3307

Exct 2, Exp 58:

The Ministry of Health has embarked on the COVID-19 booster shot campaign.

This assumes the campaign already exists and is underway, indicating that the government is actively responding to the pandemic. It also suggests that the situation is serious and needs urgent action. Together with Experiment 9, this presupposition helps demonstrate that the virus remains a significant threat and that vaccination is a crucial and timely solution endorsed by the government.

Exct 3, Exp 60:

The Ministry of Health has launched an oral cholera vaccination campaign targeting 1.5 million people...

In Exp 60, the phrase has an existential presupposition, to the effect that not only is there a public health emergency (Cholera), but an institutional response is already in progress. The sentence does not reveal why the campaign is

required; it just puts it as a fact into the background, thus determining the dramatic nature of the danger and the liability of the state. Such a presupposition is aimed at simplifying communication, because this way it is not necessary to explain the reason in detail. However, it is implied that the matter is already known and being implemented. It presents the campaign as a necessity, an organized and urgent effort, in a way that makes the population want to cooperate, given that the government is already trying to save lives. Such a strategy reduces skepticism and covertly coerces people to follow what has already occurred.

Exct 3, Exp 17:

We have two types of brands... we are going to administer one dose...

In Exp 17, the speaker makes an assumption that both brands of vaccines are already known, available, and safe. Whether the vaccines work is not the concern, but which one will be utilized, which is a subtle way of acknowledging that both are valid. This will strengthen confidence and eliminate doubt concerning the quality of the vaccines. The speaker also presupposes the safe nature of the vaccines by focusing on logistical concerns instead of effectiveness, which enables the rest of the audience to follow the provided information and minimizes potential opposition, while also helping to calm the population.

The existential presupposition deployed here enhances the persuasive power of the message, as it presents the variety of vaccines as a prepared and considered choice rather than an issue that requires attention. These applications are existential presuppositions plausible with what [20] suggests, by saying that these assumptions are used to spell out shared background knowledge in communication.

Precisely, [20] believes that existential presuppositions are frequently employed to provide a content that appears uncontroversial or already agreed upon, which lowers cognitive opposition in the listener. On the same note, according to [21], presuppositions in the context of institutional discourse are strategic tools in the sense that they are important in shaping the interpretation process since they are given as already established, and, as such, the listeners are not expected to take them as new information but rather as an established truth that has been agreed upon.

In Exct 4, existential presupposition in Exp 64 presumes the existence of both a vaccination plan and a large unvaccinated population. This presupposition highlights that the government has sufficient resources and is actively working to address vaccine gaps. It also signals that the campaign is necessary and timely, especially with the threat of new COVID-19 variants.

Exct 4, Exp 64:

The health ministry has unveiled a rapid result vaccination campaign targeting 14 million unvaccinated Kenyans.

Exct 5 centers on the government's launch of the HPV vaccine to combat cervical cancer in Kenya. This move is framed within both national progress and global alignment in health efforts. In Exp67, the existential presupposition arises;

Exct 5, Exp 67:

Kenya becomes the 16th country in Africa to introduce this vaccine.

This presupposes the existence of at least 15 other African countries already implementing the same vaccine, situating Kenya within a broader continental and global movement. By referencing Kenya's position in a sequence of adopters, the statement normalizes vaccination as a standard, expected step for responsible governance. It implicitly argues that failing to follow suit would signal backwardness or neglect. This boosts the persuasive weight of the message by embedding it within an accepted global norm.

Additionally, in Exct 6, the speaker in Exp 70 assumes that the outbreak already exists and does not question its presence. The speaker presents it as accepted knowledge, which increases the urgency of the message. By pointing to a nearby outbreak, the speaker highlights the immediate threat to Kenya and justifies the need for quick action. This kind of presupposition avoids debate and helps the audience focus on the importance of the vaccination campaign, making the message more relevant and easier to accept.

Exct 6, Exp 71:

The campaign will run from July 11 to July 15 this year."

Exp 71 introduces an existential presupposition that the campaign has a fixed timeframe. This depicts the existence of a scheduled national exercise and, by implication, a limited opportunity for participation. The mention of specific dates anchors the campaign in real time, adding immediacy to the message and encouraging caregivers to act promptly. Through this presupposition, the discourse maximizes relevance by highlighting a narrow window for vaccination, reducing ambiguity, and prompting timely decision-making.

In Exp 34, an existential presupposition has been used by the speaker. This expression reveals that there is a vaccinated and an unvaccinated population and implies that hospitalization is more common among those who have not received the vaccine.

Exct 7, Exp 34:

Over 95% of those people who are hospitalized are unvaccinated..."

The presupposition positions vaccination as the logical and practical choice to avoid severe illness. By not

explicitly stating the risk for the unvaccinated but allowing the audience to infer it, the discourse increases cognitive relevance and encourages people to align with the implied recommendation. Notably, Exp 44 and Exp 73 both use existential presupposition.

Exct 8, Exp 44:

Starting from the President of this country, Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta, who was the first to be vaccinated...

Exct 8, Exp73:

When we know that a mother is protecting a child. When we know that a brother is protecting a sister. When we know that a husband is protecting a wife...

The expressions assume the natural and ongoing presence of these familial roles and their responsibilities. The speaker builds on these accepted relationships to emphasize the idea of protecting one another through vaccination. This promotes the idea that just as people already protect each other in everyday life, they should do so through vaccination.

Similarly, through Exp 44, the speaker presupposes the existence of the highest authority through existential presupposition, who is the President, and that the authority has validated the safety of the vaccine. Through this statement, the vaccine project depicts its reliability and safety to end users. The discourse assumes the general public should not have any legitimate resistance towards vaccination because its leadership figures have already accepted inoculation. The authority of public figures confers both authority and a sense of urgency when positioned in this way, so it becomes expected of people after the first set of actions.

The use of existential presuppositions is supported by linguistic research that shows how speakers use shared social knowledge to persuade. [3] argues that by assuming the existence of people, roles, or actions, such as leaders getting vaccinated or family members protecting one another, speakers create a sense of shared reality. This makes the message stronger because it does not introduce new or debatable information, but instead draws from what listeners already believe or expect. [3] explains that existential presuppositions rely on background knowledge that is taken for granted, which makes communication more efficient and persuasive. Similarly, [21] notes that such presuppositions reduce the processing burden for the audience by embedding meaning in what is already assumed to be true. In health communication, this strategy is powerful because it subtly guides people toward accepting vaccination as a normal act within trusted relationships and public life.

Exct 9, Exp 77:

We are here today on a happy moment to witness the delivery of some of the largest contingents of vaccines that Kenya has ever received.

In Exp 77, the speaker announces the arrival of a large shipment of vaccines with a tone of celebration and national achievement. The phrase assumes that vaccine shortages, which may have been a challenge earlier in the campaign, are no longer a barrier. The statement presupposes that the vaccine is now widely available, and as such, excuses related to shortage or inaccessibility are no longer valid. It also creates a sense of relief and optimism, suggesting that the government has fulfilled its role in vaccine acquisition, hence increasing the message's cognitive efficiency. The message, therefore, positions vaccine access as a reality, not a future goal. As a result, any hesitation based on a lack of supply is indirectly dismissed.

This kind of presupposition serves two significant purposes. One is that it fosters the trust of the citizens since it acts as a sign that the government has fulfilled its earlier promises, so that they can now act without any more hesitation. Second, it introduces a change in tone, which is emotional, from anxious to hopeful. The usage of the term a happy moment explains that even in this situation, the speaker is trying to lessen the resistance level and the tendency to accept vaccination because it is connected to the development and the prosperity of the nation. This corresponds with the Relevance Theory, according to which the communication process becomes more effective when it adds some input that is directly comprehensible with the least processing effort. Exp 54 presupposes the existence of caregivers in the region.

Exct 10, Exp 54:

We are urging all caregivers in the Lake Region

In the above expression, the speaker refers to “all caregivers in the lake region,” which presupposes that such caregivers already exist and are known as part of the community health structure. An explanation regarding who they are and what their role is does not happen, so the identification and significance of their existence must be grasped by the audience. It is a clear issue of existential presupposition where the existence of a group is assumed and the existence takes the centre stage of the message. It presupposes that these people are dynamic, accessible, and accountable in issues concerning health and care in society.

4.2. Factive

A factive presupposition arises when a speaker uses verbs that assume the truth of the information that follows. In persuasive communication, especially in health discourse, this type of presupposition is powerful because it presents critical information as factual and beyond question. It influences the audience to accept the embedded message without critically evaluating it, which can facilitate faster decision-making and compliance.

According to Relevance theory, factive presuppositions enhance relevance by reducing the audience's processing

effort. When a message presents information as already known or accepted, the listener is more likely to treat it as shared knowledge and focus on what is new or important in the statement. This makes communication more efficient and persuasive, especially when addressing issues such as public health, where building trust is crucial. In the current study, several expressions used factive presuppositions to strengthen the authority of the message and present key claims.

Expressions Exp 3 and Exp 5 in Exct 1 reflect factive presuppositions, where information is presented as already established and true.

Exct 1, Exp 3:

The benefits of the vaccine outweigh the side effects

Exct 1, Exp 5:

More than 90% of the mortalities are those who are aged 50 years and above

In Exp 3, the statement that vaccine benefits outweigh side effects presupposes both the existence and comparison of those effects, guiding the audience to accept vaccination as a safe and reasonable decision. Exp 5, by citing that over 90% of COVID-19 deaths occurred among people over 50, presupposes the accuracy of mortality data and draws attention to the vulnerability of this age group. Both expressions use assumed truths to enhance message relevance and promote vaccination as a logical and necessary response.

Exct 2, Exp 11:

In Siaya County, we have lost three people. That shows that Covid is still lethal...

In Exp 11, a factive presupposition is used to emphasize the seriousness of the pandemic through information presented as already accurate. The speaker refers to confirmed deaths in Siaya County to support the claim that COVID-19 remains a deadly threat. This presupposition frames the message as one based on facts rather than opinion. This makes the need for vaccination appear urgent and justified. From a Relevance Theory perspective, the expression reduces cognitive effort by building on shared or verified knowledge, making it easier for the audience to accept the message and recognize its importance without needing further proof.

Exp 61 is another good example of factive presupposition, where the sentence presupposes that whatever is being said is true. The numbers are not quoted as estimates or guesses, but as confirmed facts. This has a great emotional and logical effect on the readers. By saying that the number of people who have already been affected is so significant, the speaker emphasizes that the outbreak is serious, and the necessity to get vaccinated becomes urgent and inevitable. The presupposed truth, in this case, helps the speaker to achieve his or her aim of persuading people to do something as soon as possible.

Exct 3, Exp 61:

By July 25th this year, 11,872 cases of Cholera and 194 deaths had been reported.

Exct 3, Exp 16:

From January to date, a total number of 2,263 cases have been admitted... resulting in 15 tragic deaths.

The speaker continues with the same method in Exp16, using factual numbers, and the word 'tragic' lends more emotional appeal to the message. What the speaker does is presuppose that the audience believes that these are true and serious events. This presupposition is carried out by grounding the message in the actual world and not engaging in debates. It implies that the outcomes of Cholera are already occurring and that stalling of action may result in further damage. Similar to Exp 61, this statement is based on proven information that supports the use of the vaccination campaign.

[12] supports these findings, explaining that factive presuppositions are quite persuasive since they put forward claims as self-evident truths. Beaver points out that when presented as a fact, especially by a particular verb or by a confirmed report, listeners will have less tendency to question it. They take it as collective knowledge instead. This means that factive presupposition is a good communication tool in society, particularly in health campaigns, where speed is required in taking action. The speaker establishes a sense of trustworthiness by incorporating serious claims into the background facts and invites people to accept the information without questioning or contention.

Exp 65 makes use of factive presupposition as well, because it presents the existence of new COVID-19 variants and the link between human behavior and resurgence as accepted facts.

Exct 4, Exp 65:

Once you relax, it comes with another variant with much force.

It is presupposed that both relaxation and the emergence of stronger variants have already occurred and continue to occur. The presupposition is not hypothetical but based on factual knowledge that new variants follow lapses in public caution. This factive framing strengthens the vaccination discourse by shifting the focus from debate to responsibility. It urges the audience to stay alert and get vaccinated, reinforcing that viral resurgence is a confirmed consequence of public complacency.

Exct 4, Exp 23:

We have lost mothers. We know what happens when you lose a mother. The whole society collapses.

Exct 4, Exp 68:

And that is why we need your help as the media and as representatives of the communities, and all of you in your

capacities, you have a role to play to get these girls to get this vaccine, because it's not a usual age group. The vaccine is safe, the vaccine is tested, the vaccine is effective, highly effective in preventing cervical cancer.

In the fourth extract, Exp 23 presents a factive presupposition, which presumes a shared truth that the loss of mothers has already occurred and carries deep consequences for the community. This framing heightens emotional impact and moral urgency by rooting the need for vaccination in widely accepted and emotionally resonant truths.

The use of presupposition further continues in Exp 68, in the same extract, where the speaker, through a factive strategy, leaves no room for doubt; the audience is not invited to question the safety or efficacy of the vaccine. Instead, these qualities are stated as verified and accepted facts. The repeated use of affirmatives ("safe," "tested," "effective") reinforces trust and discourages hesitancy. By establishing such statements as background knowledge, the discourse shifts its focus to the action from the audience's perspective. This form of presupposition is further seen in Exct 6.

Exct 6, Exp 28:

The polio campaign has been necessitated by the detection of poliovirus within the sewerage system...

In Exp 28, the speaker assumes as a given fact that the virus is present in the environment. This presupposition not only validates the need for intervention but also implies that the affected area is currently at risk. When the speaker puts these details on a common ground, the discourse avoids questioning the campaign's justification, shifting attention to public compliance and urgency.

Factive presupposition in Exp 35 assumes economic reopening to advance while vaccination and lower infections determine its achievement.

Exct 7, Exp 35:

Reduced infection rates and increased vaccinations are two important ingredients in the continued opening of our economy

The structure presents an already approved connection that spares the speaker from explaining its basis. The factual statement grants the speaker increased credibility while making it easier for listeners to accept the fundamental point without argument. As a result of this approach, the audience moves away from doubting the method toward finding their role in contributing, thus maximizing communicative relevance, as described by [24]. In Exp 61, a factive presupposition is evident in the direct statement:

Exct 1, Exp 61: "Either you have the vaccine or you don't travel."

This Exp speaks of the fact that travel requirements include being vaccinated as a given fact. It does not present

a hypothetical and controversial condition, but rather an actual and imposed state of affairs. The syntax connotes that the rule is established and familiar to the speaker and the listener. The underlying assumption in this case is that the travel can be achieved only with a vaccination, which is true in the framework of the message. This strategy reinforces the speaker's authority and makes the message more convincing because it can be interpreted based on the existing reality. The audience is given no choice but to oblige, since the repercussions are already determined and non-negotiable in case of failure to vaccinate.

In Exp 72, a factive presupposition is evident through the speaker's direct statement about penalties.

Exct7, Exp72:

There'll be a penalty on the facility and the individuals.

The expression introduces the penalty, the result of non-compliance, as unquestionable and definite. It assumes that punishment will undoubtedly take place if non-observance of the rules associated with vaccination is not observed. That is not something the speaker presents as a possibility or future danger but as an objective consequence of a failure. Such a presupposition plays a persuasive role in inculcating the concept of punishment into the audience's background knowledge, enabling them to act willingly without resisting. Since the consequence is not under discussion, the message sounds more official and urgent, supporting the seriousness of the vaccination policy and encouraging people's cooperation.

Exp 74 demonstrates a Factive presupposition, which arises from the use of the verb "*sleep*" in a context that assumes prior claims or beliefs about the inability to sleep after vaccination.

Exct 8, Exp 74:

Others say, 'You won't be able to sleep.' That if you get the jab, you won't sleep. I've been vaccinated—and I sleep. I sleep very well. Completely well.

This presupposes that the action of being vaccinated has already occurred and is accepted as accurate. The factive element lies in the verb phrase "I have been vaccinated," which assumes the vaccination as a real, completed action. By adding that they sleep well, the speaker indirectly challenges any prior belief or rumor suggesting vaccination causes sleep problems. The presupposition serves to correct misinformation by presenting a personal experience as a factual counterexample, thereby reinforcing trust in the vaccine and increasing the relevance and credibility of the message. This factive presupposition in Exp 74 is in line with what [3] says about the occurrence of factive presupposition, which is that it occurs when the speaker is talking about something which the listeners would already have known to be true or have no reason not to think as such. According to [3], the presuppositions are made

because of the presence of some verbs or phrases that have the assumed truth associated with them. When the vaccination is mentioned in the phrase, '*I have been vaccinated and I sleep*,' it is not in the form of a possibility or a plan; it is taken as an accomplished fact. This is in line with the opinion of Yule that factive presuppositions are employed to ground the information in an everyday reality, such that the audience would not easily refute or reject the message. The integration of the action with real experience allows the speaker to dispel incorrect presumptions without resorting to frontal attacks, and this is the factor that facilitates persuasion in health communication.

In Exp 75, the speaker uses a factive presupposition to emphasize the direct link between vaccination and disease prevention:

Exct 8, Exp 75: *"If you are not vaccinated, you will catch this disease."*

The given statement presupposes that the disease exists, is harmful, and can be prevented by means of vaccination. The assumption here is that anyone who is not vaccinated is set to develop the disease, and this has been proven. The phrase "you will catch this disease" does not warn the youth to be vaccinated and avoid infection at all costs, but rather to recognize that they will contract an infection because they failed to be vaccinated. This makes a very persuasive impact because it approaches the danger of becoming ill as an absolute outcome, but not as a hypothetical situation. The factual representation offers less scepticism and stimulates instant response, so that the audience will feel that by doing nothing, they will do some harm, which they can prevent by following the recommendation of the speaker.

In Exp76, the speaker uses a factive presupposition to emphasize the serious consequences of not being vaccinated:

Exct 8, Exp 76: *"If you catch it, you'll have to go to the hospital."*

This presupposes the fact that hospitalization is an inevitable and unwanted consequence of the disease acquisition. The consequence introduced in the verb phrase you will need to go to the hospital makes the consequence already accepted and expected, and thus harder to challenge or overlook by the audience. This presupposes that when you get sick, you get an anticipated answer of being hospitalized, which is a deterrent. It strengthens the suggestion that the disease is real and also serious enough to warrant treatment. This fact framing enhances the urgency of the message and promotes compliance by making it appear to have a direct cause-and-effect relationship. In such a way, the speaker enhances the effectiveness of his argument that vaccination is the most reasonable method to prevent such a negative and factual outcome. Exp 78 illustrates a factive presupposition through the clause.

Exct 9, Exp 78:

Germany is doing this at a time when they are having severe challenges. The disease is affecting other countries as well, and they are having very serious challenges.

This argument is presented as an accepted truth. The speaker assumes the audience already acknowledges Germany's difficulties, making the statement about their actions during the crisis more impactful. This presupposition subtly reinforces the seriousness of the pandemic by showing that even well-resourced nations are struggling. In the context of vaccination discourse, this strengthens the argument for urgent and collective action, especially in less-resourced settings. By presenting the challenges as factual, the speaker legitimizes the need for proactive measures, such as vaccination.

Further, the Factive presupposition is clearly portrayed through Exp 55 and Exp 57.

Exct 10, Exp 55;

The vaccine was safe and well tolerated, and there was a reduction in severe malaria by 30 percent...

Exct 10, Exp 57;

We are working in a tight resource environment...

The initial expression presents vaccine security and performance as established elements that cannot be contested. The reduction in severe malaria stands as an indisputable fact that the author presents to support the vaccination argument. The second expression assumes the program operates under limited resource availability and presents this condition directly to the audience. These factive presuppositions influence the discourse by establishing these points as accepted truths, reinforcing the credibility of the vaccination program and its constraints, thus shaping the audience's perception of the ongoing challenges and the vaccine's effectiveness.

The analysis of factive presuppositions in the current study reveals that vaccination discourse frequently relies on already known or true information to strengthen its persuasive appeal. By embedding facts into statements rather than presenting them as arguments, speakers shift the audience's focus from questioning content to considering the appropriate response. This use of assumed truth helps streamline communication, especially in public health contexts where urgency and trust are essential. In the examples discussed, factive presuppositions enabled health officials to emphasize the severity of the pandemic, highlight the effectiveness of vaccines, and frame vaccination as a necessary and reasonable measure. These strategies enhance communicative efficiency and guide public opinion without requiring deep processing or critical evaluation from the audience.

These findings align with existing literature on presupposition and pragmatic communication. [12] explains

that factive presuppositions carry substantial inferential weight, often treated as background knowledge, making them powerful tools in persuasion. Similarly, [6] notes that presupposition serves a strategic function in institutional discourse, allowing speakers to shape interpretation and limit resistance by presenting key claims as uncontested. In the framework of Relevance Theory, such presuppositions increase relevance by reducing the effort needed to access meaning while maximizing cognitive effect. This confirms that the use of factive presupposition in vaccination discourse is not incidental but a deliberate and effective pragmatic choice in persuasive health communication.

4.3. Non-Factive

Non-factive presupposition refers to assumptions made by a speaker about something that is not necessarily true or confirmed. These presuppositions often appear in statements that express hope, belief, doubt, or possibility. In persuasive communication, non-factive presuppositions allow speakers to suggest ideas or expectations without claiming them as facts. This softens the message and reduces resistance, as the audience is not forced to agree with a definite truth but is instead encouraged to consider a possible or desired reality. From the perspective of Relevance Theory, non-factive presuppositions help maintain audience engagement by introducing information that is meaningful but not demanding in terms of cognitive effort. They create room for reflection while still guiding the audience toward the intended conclusion, making the message relevant and persuasive even when certainty is not possible. In the current study, this was noted in Exct 2 and Exct 4.

Exp 59 employs a non-factive presupposition, which presents a hope or expectation rather than a known truth.

Exct 2, Exp 59;

The ministry hopes that Kenyans will come to the realization that the country is not yet out of the woods.

This expression implies that this realization has not yet occurred. The presupposed idea that the pandemic is ongoing is treated as a viewpoint the public is encouraged to adopt. This softens the message by presenting it as a concern rather than a confirmed reality. Within Relevance Theory, non-factive presuppositions still support effective communication by prompting the audience to consider meaningful information, even if not yet universally accepted. It encourages reflection while maintaining a low processing burden, thus reinforcing the persuasive intent. In Exct 4, Exp 20, the presupposition is non-factive, presenting a viewpoint rather than a fact.

Exp 20: This Covid-19 lies to us, it makes you unaware, so that you relax,

This reflects a personal or subjective interpretation of the disease's effects. This type of presupposition does not assume the statement's truth but instead reveals the speaker's

perception that COVID-19 deceptively reduces people's alertness. In the context of vaccination discourse, such non-factive presuppositions shape public attitudes through emotional or anecdotal framing rather than verifiable information, possibly influencing behavior based on belief rather than fact. These findings are supported by existing linguistic research that recognizes the strategic value of uncertain or assumed content in persuasive communication. [23] explain that non-factive contexts allow speakers to present propositions without committing to their truth, which reduces pressure on the audience and invites them to evaluate the message more openly. This indirectness is especially useful in sensitive or uncertain topics, such as health crises, where not all outcomes can be guaranteed. Similarly, [13] notes that non-factive expressions promote what he terms "epistemic vigilance," where listeners remain engaged and reflective rather than defensive. This makes the communication more effective, as it balances persuasive intent with cognitive comfort.

4.4. Lexical

Lexical presupposition occurs when specific words or verbs in a sentence carry an implied assumption about an earlier action, state, or condition. In persuasive communication, lexical presuppositions enable speakers to present specific ideas as accepted or ongoing without explicitly stating them. In the context of Relevance Theory, these presuppositions reduce the listener's processing effort by building on assumed background knowledge, allowing the audience to focus on the speaker's central message. They also enhance the relevance of the communication by guiding the audience to draw inferences that support the speaker's intent without introducing resistance. In this study, five expressions were found to use lexical presupposition to reinforce messages related to vaccination and public health. Lexical presupposition through the expression "are back to normalcy" as seen in Exp 8, assumes that there was a prior disruption, and that recovery has now been achieved in other European countries.

Exp 8: We are seeing that other European countries are back to normalcy with their activities. Even when it comes to football, their sporting activities are back to normal with spectators in the stands. What are these other countries doing that Kenya cannot do, or African countries cannot do, to resume normalcy?

By referencing their return to everyday life, it implicitly presupposes that Kenya has not yet reached the same point. The lexical choice of "back" triggers the presupposition that normalcy existed before, was interrupted, and has now been restored elsewhere. In the context of vaccination discourse, this comparison subtly motivates the Kenyan audience by implying that vaccination is the missing link to resuming ordinary life. The strategy enhances relevance by inviting the audience to draw a contrast with their current reality and adopt a proven path toward recovery.

In Exp 62, the speaker employs lexical presupposition with some words, such as taking responsibility and will be feeding.

Exct 3, Exp 62:

The cause of Cholera is unsafe food. So we are taking responsibility for some of that, and we will be feeding your children in school as part of our school feeding program. So, in September, beginning August 28, we will start serving children in public primary and ECD schools.

Such utterances indicate that the government is no longer denying that there was a problem but is also going to deal with the issue actively. The taking verb supposes that the responsibility was present before the speech, but it might not have been grasped publicly. The same applies to feeding; it assumes that it will occur in the future because of a previously acknowledged responsibility to guard school children. These wordings suggest a mutation of the potential idleness into organized action, which gives the audience an inference to consider the government intervention as inevitable and at the right time.

This can be interpreted to concur with the explanation on lexical presupposition by [3], which specifically means an assumed meaning to some perceived words without being explicitly mentioned. When the speaker explains that they are taking responsibility, this means that responsibility already existed somewhere, even though it was not recognized before. The choice of words causes the audience to assume that some issues need to be dealt with by the government, without the speaker having to say this directly. [3] goes further to outline that this use of lexical items facilitates more efficient communication because the message is understood by the other parties circuitously.

Exct 4, Exp 66:

To ensure that our people have received the vaccine and have been assisted.

This presupposes that receiving the vaccine and getting assistance are ongoing or expected outcomes. Using the verb 'ensure' triggers the presupposition that the events (vaccination) are intended to have already occurred or are in progress. This lexical framing shifts focus from the need to prove government involvement to emphasizing the outcome, which is public protection. The audience, therefore, interprets the message as evidence of state accountability and logistical readiness. Within the framework of Relevance Theory, this presupposition enhances cognitive efficiency by bypassing the need to question whether the government is involved; instead, it leads the audience to process how they can align with that effort. Exct 6, Exp 33 also presents the lexical presupposition.

We stress the element of safety... because in the past, there have been issues raised about this.

The speaker makes this assumption on the basis that society has expressed doubts about vaccine safety at some

point in the past. The speaker acknowledges historical issues because refuting them could create resistance, but presents assurance as a means to address them indirectly. This method handles audience opinions by confirming past safety doubts and keeping the present campaign trustworthy. The alignment of fresh material with collective knowledge bases enables a message to become more agreeable to its receivers while requiring lower cognitive efforts.

The use of lexical presupposition in the above expression agrees with [3], who states that such words presuppose a repeated or prior action. Here, the use of the verb stress indicates that the speaker has stressed the issue of safety in the past, an aspect that suggests there has been an issue of concern in the past. [3] asserts that such presuppositions are not explicitly mentioned but are activated when certain words, which convey some implicit meaning, are used. In the same manner, [14] revealed that lexical presuppositions in the political speeches of King Abdullah II served to confirm common history and values and endorse national unity. Accepting the hardships or struggles in the past, the king earned the trust of the people and minimized their doubts. As in Exp. 33, they found that lexical presuppositions can help a speaker avoid being unbelievable and deal with delicate subjects with care. In both situations, such a strategy enables the speaker to influence the audience's thought process without being pushy or defensive.

Exct 7, Exp 36:

It's essential then that we are not left behind in this new world order, mainly because we are a tourism destination of choice to many people around the world.

Through the use of lexical methods in Exp 36, the text establishes that Kenya must adapt to a preexisting "new world order." The verb "left behind" creates a sensation of being behind others and compels social assessment and instant action. The selected words in the text help readers understand that ongoing changes require participation through vaccination. The presupposition here motivates conformity and national progress by aligning personal action with global expectations.

The use of lexical presupposition in vaccination discourse allows speakers to frame specific ideas as already accepted or underway, which strengthens the persuasive effect of their message. These presuppositions reduce resistance by building on what the audience already assumes or relates to, rather than presenting new or debatable information. In the context of Relevance Theory, this strategy increases the efficiency of communication by directing the audience's attention to the intended message without requiring additional explanation. As [3] observes, lexical presuppositions often operate subtly in discourse, yet play a crucial role in guiding interpretation and supporting persuasive goals. The above expressions show how lexical

presupposition helps embed public health messages within familiar narratives, making them easier to process and more likely to influence behavior.

4.5. Structural

Structural presupposition occurs when the grammatical structure of a sentence leads the listener to assume that certain information is accurate or already known. In persuasive communication, especially in public health, structural presuppositions help present ideas as accepted facts simply through sentence form. This reduces the audience's tendency to challenge the information and keeps attention on the main message. According to Relevance Theory, such structures guide interpretation by prompting the audience to accept implied information with minimal effort. In the current study, two expressions were identified that used structural presupposition to subtly reinforce vaccine-related assumptions.

Exct 3, Exp 63:

When you are given the first dose, do not complain...

Exp 63 relies on a structural presupposition introduced by the clause, which assumes that every individual will receive at least one dose of the vaccine. The structure implies that receiving a single dose is necessary and expected, even if it differs from full-dose standards elsewhere. It anticipates resistance and aims to neutralize complaints by emphasizing the protective value of one dose. This type of presupposition strengthens compliance by making vaccination seem routine and unavoidable, thereby aligning with the campaign to maximize relevance and reduce resistance.

In Exp 56, the speaker uses structural presupposition using the clause of when a clinician says to you. This kind of presupposition is based on sentence structure to assume supposedly known information.

Exct 10, Exp 56:

When a clinician tells you... We no longer get severe diseases.

The construction, in this case, assumes that clinicians are in the midst of conveying a given message already; that is, severe diseases have decreased. This is not a challenge to assume, and thus it is provided as what should have been assumed. The listener is put in a position to believe that vaccination has already yielded its health benefits, namely, the decrease in the severity of the disease cases. This aligns with Relevance theory, which asserts that efficient communication is most likely to transmit the information that can be easily processed and obviously profitably used. The speaker makes use of a familiar conditional phrase in order to minimally structure the information they are trying to convey and maximize the effects by getting the message across a familiar conditional frame. The audience does not need to wonder whether the vaccine is effective or not; this

statement is portrayed as having been tested by medical experts. It therefore enhances the efficacy of messages and reinforces persuasion since the listeners are directed to believe in vaccination as effective and continuous, and should not be prompted to show evidence. The structure itself also predetermines understanding so that the argument will sound more persuasive and adjusted to the context.

This observation concurs with that of [15], who examined how sentences are structured, particularly in conditionals and embedded clauses, and that they have presupposed meanings. [15] was of the view that some grammatical forms would cause an assumption to come to the mind of the listener automatically. For instance, phrases beginning with "when" rather than "if" suggest that something is already true, not hypothetical. In Exp 56, the clause "*when a clinician tells you...*" functions exactly this way. It inculcates the notion that the benefits of vaccines, including the decreased severity of the disease, are factual and already known by medical experts. This proves the theory of [15], who believes that structure itself may convey persuasive, non-questionable meaning, sub-consciously leading the listener to acceptance.

5. Conclusion

This research addressed the types of presuppositions and how they shape vaccination discourse. The study identified existential, factive, structural, lexical, and non-factive presuppositions across various official statements. These presuppositions served as subtle yet powerful tools for presenting background assumptions as shared truths, thereby reducing resistance and guiding interpretation without overt assertion.

The study reveals that presuppositions, especially existential, factive, lexical, structural, and non-factive presuppositions, are very instrumental in profiling the discourse surrounding the topic of vaccination in Kenya. It classifies and examines 54 expressions in ten formal extracts to demonstrate how each type of presupposition influences how the audience interprets a message, minimizes resistance, and increases clarity. As an example, existential presuppositions are based on vaccination campaigns, institutes, and diseases, which normalize and legitimize any work in public health. Factive presuppositions, by contrast, enshrine important health messages, including the efficacy and safety of vaccines, in the discourse as facts already known and, as such, prompt immediate acceptance and obedience. These types of presupposition, among others, direct the listeners to the desired understanding without arguing against the points

that need to be assessed. Therefore, this discussion achieves the study's goal by demonstrating that implicit assumptions embedded in official health messages can be used to frame their interpretation by the population in a specific way, thereby creating trust and provoking action without necessarily making explicit arguments or being confrontational.

Structural presuppositions shaped expectations and consequences. Lexical and non-factive presuppositions also reflected institutional attitudes or hoped-for public behaviors. However, while factive, existential, structural, and lexical presuppositions were commonly employed, non-factive presuppositions appeared only rarely. Counterfactual presuppositions were not observed in the data, indicating a preference for assertions grounded in shared or accepted truths rather than hypothetical outcomes. Through the use of these presuppositions, communication remained persuasive without appearing forceful. As supported by Relevance Theory, the aspect of presupposition helped to shape meaning economically, using shared context to influence interpretation. Ultimately, presupposition worked in tandem with persuasion to subtly frame the vaccination narrative as logical, necessary, and urgent.

Compared to the previous research on the communication and vaccination discourse, where the general focus has been on the strategies of rhetoric and framing, as well as on direct persuasion, the present research offers a more detail-focused account of the implicit meaning-making based on presuppositions. Although past literature has shed light on the issue of linguistic framing in the context of public health messages, little research has categorically and explicitly identified the various forms of presuppositions in the Kenyan vaccination scenario. This study produced improved outcomes since it involved a presupposition typology that was supplemented by Relevance Theory, which helped identify how implicit assumptions work to influence interpretation and reduce resistance more accurately. In contrast to state-of-the-art methods, which tend to be more superficial or explicitly concerned with rhetorical techniques, the present study revealed the nuanced processes of trust, acceptance, and urgency construction that are discursively determined. The findings introduce depth and local relevance into the analysis by situating the analysis within the context of the communicative practices that took place over a decade, thus enriching the literature that is currently available and offering a more refined perspective on persuasion as it is applied to the topic of public health.

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