

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Presupposition in English And Uzbek: A Comparative Analysis and Its Implications for Forensic Linguistic Expertise

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Abstract

Presupposition constitutes one of the fundamental mechanisms through which speakers encode information that is assumed to be accepted rather than explicitly asserted. Although extensively investigated within pragmatics and discourse analysis, its comparative realization in English and Uzbek remains insufficiently explored, particularly from the perspective of forensic linguistic expertise. This study examines the structural, semantic, and pragmatic characteristics of presupposition in English and Uzbek conflict discourse and evaluates its evidential significance in forensic linguistic analysis. The research employs a qualitative comparative methodology integrating semantic analysis, pragmatic interpretation, discourse analysis, and contextual reconstruction. English and Uzbek linguistic data are analysed to identify factive, lexical, structural, existential, non-factive, and counterfactual presuppositions and to determine their communicative functions within conflict-oriented texts. The findings reveal that although both languages share universal pragmatic principles, they employ different grammatical and discourse strategies for encoding presupposed information. English primarily utilizes syntactic structures, auxiliary constructions, and lexical triggers, whereas Uzbek frequently relies on agglutinative morphology, discourse particles, and culturally conditioned communicative conventions. The study proposes an integrated comparative framework for identifying presupposition in forensic linguistic expertise and demonstrates how objective linguistic evidence may assist in distinguishing implicit factual assumptions from explicit assertions without exceeding the methodological boundaries of linguistic expertise. The proposed framework contributes to comparative pragmatics, forensic linguistics, discourse analysis, and cross-linguistic studies by providing a systematic model applicable to multilingual forensic investigations.

KEY WORDS

Presupposition; comparative pragmatics; forensic linguistics; English; Uzbek; discourse analysis; semantic inference; linguistic evidence.

INTRODUCTION

Presupposition occupies a central position in contemporary linguistic theory because it explains how speakers communicate information that is treated as already known, accepted, or taken for granted by participants in

communication. Unlike explicit propositions, presupposed information remains linguistically embedded within utterances and generally survives under negation, interrogation, and other grammatical transformations. This characteristic

distinguishes presupposition from ordinary semantic entailment and makes it one of the most significant pragmatic mechanisms influencing discourse interpretation.

The concept of presupposition has developed through several theoretical traditions, including formal semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, and philosophy of language. Early semantic approaches considered presupposition a logical property of propositions, whereas pragmatic approaches interpreted it as a communicative phenomenon emerging through interaction between linguistic form, contextual knowledge, and speaker intention. Contemporary linguistic research increasingly recognizes presupposition as a multidimensional phenomenon operating simultaneously at lexical, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, and discourse levels.

Within forensic linguistic expertise, presupposition acquires particular importance because legally significant meanings are frequently communicated indirectly. Statements containing accusations, defamatory implications, hidden assumptions, or implied factual information often rely on presuppositional structures rather than direct assertions. Consequently, forensic linguistic experts must determine whether disputed information is explicitly stated or merely presupposed, while carefully distinguishing linguistic interpretation from legal evaluation. This methodological distinction ensures that expert conclusions remain grounded in objectively demonstrable linguistic evidence rather than subjective inference.

Despite considerable international research devoted to presupposition, comparative investigations involving English and Uzbek remain limited. Existing studies primarily examine presupposition within individual languages or focus on theoretical classifications without systematically comparing how different linguistic systems encode presupposed information. Moreover, relatively little attention has been given to the role of presupposition in forensic linguistic expertise, particularly within multilingual communicative contexts where typological differences between languages may influence linguistic interpretation.

English and Uzbek provide an especially productive basis for comparative investigation because they belong to different typological families. English, an analytic language, generally expresses presupposition through lexical triggers, auxiliary constructions, cleft sentences, interrogative structures, and factive predicates. Uzbek, an agglutinative language, often employs verbal morphology, particles, contextual markers,

information structure, and culturally conventional discourse patterns to activate comparable presuppositional meanings. Comparing these systems makes it possible to distinguish universal pragmatic mechanisms from language-specific grammatical realizations.

The present study therefore aims to investigate the structural, semantic, pragmatic, and discourse characteristics of presupposition in English and Uzbek through a comparative linguistic analysis while evaluating their significance for forensic linguistic expertise. The research further proposes an integrated analytical framework capable of identifying presupposed information objectively across both languages without extending beyond the scientific competence of linguistic expertise.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Presupposition has remained one of the most extensively discussed phenomena in modern linguistics because it explains how speakers encode information assumed to be shared by interlocutors without explicitly stating it. Over the past five decades, research on presupposition has gradually shifted from formal semantic interpretation toward pragmatic, discourse-oriented, cognitive, and forensic approaches. This theoretical evolution demonstrates that presupposition cannot be adequately explained through a single linguistic perspective but requires an interdisciplinary framework integrating semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and contextual interpretation.

The earliest systematic treatment of presupposition is generally attributed to Gottlob Frege, who distinguished between the asserted meaning of an utterance and the background assumptions necessary for interpreting that utterance. Frege argued that certain expressions remain meaningful only if particular conditions are accepted as true beforehand. Although his discussion emerged within the philosophy of language rather than linguistics, it established the conceptual foundation upon which subsequent semantic theories of presupposition were developed.

Building upon Frege's work, P. F. Strawson proposed that presupposition should be interpreted as a property of language use rather than a purely logical relation between propositions. According to Strawson, the successful interpretation of an utterance depends upon the existence of contextual assumptions shared by participants in communication. His pragmatic reinterpretation significantly

influenced later developments by demonstrating that presupposition arises through communicative interaction instead of formal logical structure alone.

A further theoretical advancement was introduced by Robert Stalnaker, whose concept of the common ground transformed the understanding of presupposition within pragmatics. Stalnaker argued that communication proceeds through a constantly evolving body of shared assumptions accepted by interlocutors. Under this view, presuppositions represent information that speakers assume already belongs to the common ground and therefore does not require explicit assertion. This perspective provides an important explanation for why presuppositions often remain implicit while still guiding discourse interpretation.

The linguistic classification of presupposition was considerably refined by Lauri Karttunen, who introduced the notion of presupposition triggers. Karttunen demonstrated that lexical items such as *know*, *stop*, *continue*, *regret*, and *again* systematically generate presupposed information irrespective of sentence polarity. His trigger-based classification remains one of the most influential models in contemporary pragmatics and has become fundamental in comparative linguistic research.

Within pragmatic linguistics, Stephen Levinson further expanded presupposition theory by integrating it with conversational inference and discourse interpretation. Levinson emphasized that presupposition should not be viewed independently of implicature and contextual reasoning because actual communication requires the simultaneous operation of multiple pragmatic mechanisms. His work established an important bridge between semantic structure and communicative interpretation.

Similarly, George Yule described presupposition as background information that speakers assume listeners already know or are willing to accept during interaction. Unlike formal semantic approaches, Yule's explanation highlights the communicative function of presupposition within naturally occurring discourse, making his framework particularly useful for applied linguistic analysis and intercultural communication.

More recent theoretical developments proposed by David Beaver and Bart Geurts have shifted attention toward dynamic models of discourse processing. Their research demonstrates that presupposition is continuously negotiated throughout communication rather than remaining fixed within isolated

sentences. Dynamic approaches therefore emphasize discourse coherence, contextual updating, and information management, providing more comprehensive explanations for naturally occurring communication than earlier sentence-based models.

Despite substantial international research, comparatively little attention has been devoted to presupposition within forensic linguistics. Scholars such as Roger W. Shuy, Malcolm Coulthard, Alison Johnson, John Olsson, and Janet Gibbons acknowledge that hidden assumptions frequently influence legal interpretation, particularly in cases involving threats, defamation, coercion, and disputed communicative intent. Nevertheless, most forensic studies discuss presupposition only indirectly within broader analyses of pragmatic meaning, speech acts, or discourse interpretation. A systematic comparative methodology specifically designed for identifying presupposition in forensic linguistic expertise has yet to be fully developed.

Research conducted within Uzbek linguistics has likewise addressed pragmatic meaning, discourse interpretation, and communicative interaction, although presupposition itself has rarely been investigated as an independent object of comparative analysis. The works of Sh. Safarov, N. Mahmudov, A. Nurmonov, M. Hakimov, and other Uzbek linguists provide valuable insights into pragmatics, discourse, and communicative semantics. However, these studies generally concentrate on language-specific pragmatic phenomena rather than cross-linguistic comparison or forensic linguistic application. Consequently, the interaction between presupposition and forensic linguistic expertise remains insufficiently explored in Uzbek linguistic scholarship.

The review of previous research therefore reveals three principal research gaps. First, comparative analyses of presupposition in English and Uzbek remain limited despite the typological differences between the two languages. Second, existing classifications predominantly describe presupposition within theoretical pragmatics while paying comparatively little attention to forensic linguistic interpretation. Third, no integrated analytical framework has yet combined semantic analysis, pragmatic interpretation, discourse organization, and contextual reconstruction into a unified model suitable for comparative forensic linguistic investigation.

The present study addresses these gaps by proposing a comparative analytical framework that examines the structural realization, semantic characteristics, pragmatic functions, and

forensic evidential value of presupposition in English and Uzbek conflict discourse. By integrating contemporary theories of semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and forensic linguistics, the research seeks to establish a reproducible methodology capable of objectively identifying presupposed information across typologically different languages.

Methods

1. Research Design

The present study adopts a qualitative comparative research design to investigate the structural, semantic, pragmatic, and discourse characteristics of presupposition in English and Uzbek. Rather than examining presupposition as an isolated grammatical phenomenon, the research treats it as a dynamic communicative mechanism whose interpretation depends upon the interaction between linguistic structure, contextual knowledge, and discourse organization. The comparative approach enables both universal pragmatic principles and language-specific realization patterns to be identified across two typologically different languages.

The investigation combines theoretical analysis with empirical examination of naturally occurring linguistic data. The analytical framework integrates concepts from comparative linguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, semantics, and forensic linguistics in order to provide a multidimensional explanation of presuppositional meaning.

2. Research Corpus

Type	Typical Trigger	English	Typical Uzbek Trigger	Primary Function
Existential	the, my, John's	egalik referensiya	qo'shimchalari, aniq	Assumes existence
Factive	know, realize, regret	bilmoq, anglamoq, afsuslanmoq		Assumes truth
Lexical	stop, continue, again	yana, davom etmoq, to'xtamoq		Assumes previous event
Structural	Wh-questions	so'roq konstruktsiyalari		Assumes background information
Non-factive	imagine, pretend	tasavvur qilmoq, go'yoki		Assumes non-reality
Counterfactual	if..., wish...	agar..., edi...		Assumes opposite reality

This classification provides a common analytical basis for comparing English and Uzbek presuppositional structures while accommodating language-specific grammatical realizations.

4. Analytical Procedures

The research corpus consists of English and Uzbek texts representing communicative situations in which presupposition performs an essential interpretative function. The corpus includes conversational discourse, media texts, online communication, public statements, interview fragments, judicially relevant discourse, and linguistically constructed examples reflecting authentic communicative patterns.

To ensure comparability, English and Uzbek materials were selected according to identical criteria:

- presence of identifiable presupposition triggers;
- comparable communicative situations;
- contextual completeness;
- linguistic authenticity;
- potential forensic relevance.

The comparative corpus was balanced with respect to discourse type so that both languages contained similar communicative environments.

3. Classification of Presupposition Triggers

The analysis follows a functional classification of presupposition triggers adapted from contemporary pragmatic theory and comparative linguistic research. Six principal categories were investigated:

Each example included in the corpus was analysed through a six-stage procedure specifically developed for comparative presupposition analysis.

Stage 1. Identification of the presupposition trigger

The lexical, grammatical, or syntactic element responsible for

activating presupposition was identified.

Stage 2. Explicit semantic description

The literal propositional meaning of the sentence was established independently of contextual interpretation.

Stage 3. Reconstruction of presupposed information

Background assumptions encoded by the trigger were reconstructed according to pragmatic principles.

Stage 4. Comparative analysis

Equivalent constructions in English and Uzbek were compared to determine similarities and differences in linguistic realization.

Stage 5. Contextual verification

The communicative context was examined to determine whether the presupposition remained stable across different discourse environments.

Stage 6. Forensic linguistic interpretation

Finally, the evidential value of the presupposition was evaluated from the perspective of forensic linguistic expertise while maintaining the methodological distinction between linguistic analysis and legal qualification.

5. Comparative Analytical Framework

The analytical model proposed in the present study integrates four complementary linguistic levels.

Analytical Level	Main Question	Linguistic Evidence
Semantic	What is explicitly expressed?	Lexical meaning, proposition
Pragmatic	What information is presupposed?	Trigger, speaker assumption
Discourse	How does surrounding discourse support interpretation?	Context, coherence
Comparative	How is the same presupposition expressed in English and Uzbek?	Cross-linguistic correspondence

Unlike traditional sentence-based analyses, this framework evaluates presupposition as a discourse-dependent phenomenon whose interpretation emerges through interaction among multiple linguistic components.

6. Reliability and Validity

To enhance analytical reliability, all English and Uzbek examples were examined according to identical analytical criteria. The same classification of presupposition triggers, interpretative procedures, and comparative parameters was applied throughout the investigation. This methodological consistency minimizes subjective interpretation and facilitates

reproducibility of the analytical results.

Furthermore, the study distinguishes between linguistically recoverable presupposition and individual subjective inference. Only those background assumptions that can be objectively justified through identifiable linguistic triggers and contextual evidence are treated as valid presuppositions within the scope of the present analysis. This distinction is particularly important for forensic linguistic expertise, where expert conclusions must be supported by demonstrable linguistic evidence rather than speculative interpretation.

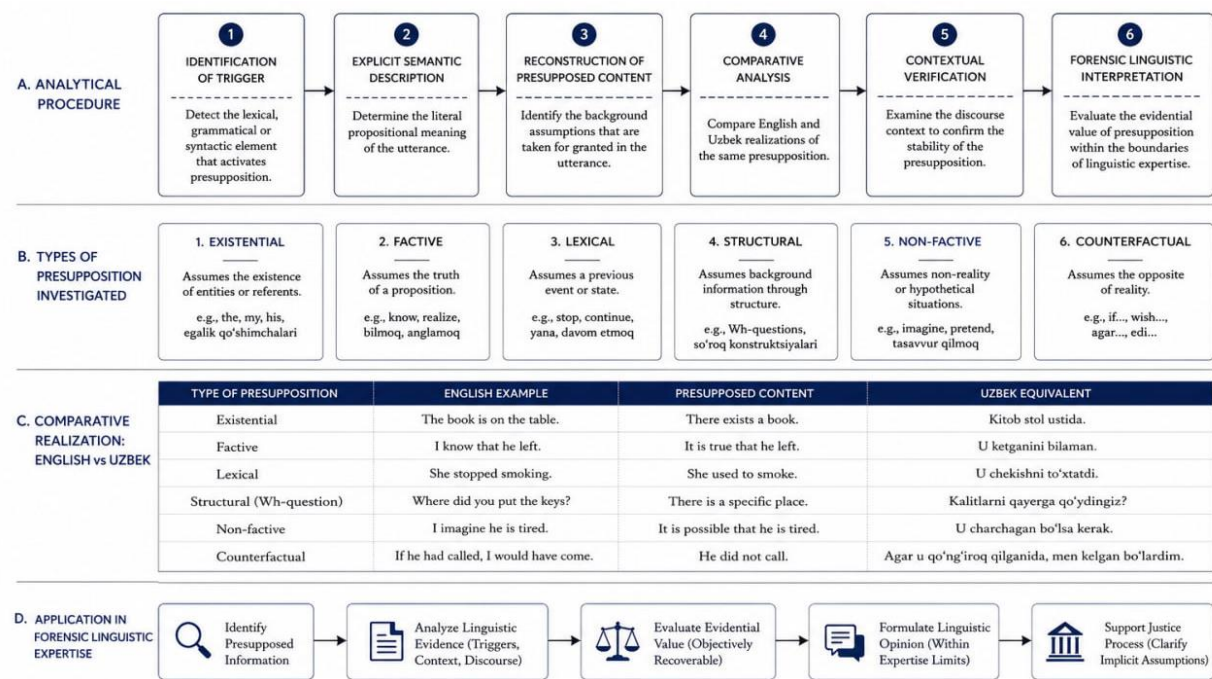


Figure 1. Comparative Analytical Framework for Presupposition Identification in English and Uzbek: A Forensic Linguistic Perspective

RESULTS

1. Existential Presupposition in English and Uzbek

Existential presupposition is one of the most fundamental categories of presupposition because it assumes the existence of an entity, person, object, event, or concept referred to in an utterance. Unlike other presupposition types, existential presupposition is generally activated through definite noun phrases, possessive constructions, or contextually identifiable referents. Since the existence of the referent is treated as already established, speakers normally do not present it as new information. Instead, it functions as shared background knowledge between interlocutors.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that English and Uzbek employ different grammatical mechanisms for expressing existential presupposition while achieving the same communicative effect. English predominantly relies on definite articles, possessive determiners, proper nouns, and demonstrative constructions. Uzbek, lacking a grammatical article system, expresses comparable assumptions through possessive suffixes, demonstrative pronouns, contextual definiteness, and discourse-based reference.

Example 1 (English)

Sentence

John's laptop has been repaired.

Explicit proposition

The speaker reports that John's laptop has been repaired.

Presupposed information

John exists.

John owns a laptop.

The laptop existed before the repair.

Linguistic trigger

Possessive construction (John's).

Pragmatic interpretation

The speaker assumes that both interlocutors recognize John as an identifiable individual and accept the existence of the laptop without requiring additional explanation.

Example 2 (Uzbek)

Gap

"Azizning noutbuki ta'mirlandi."

Oshkora mazmun

Azizning noutbuki ta'mirlangani haqida xabar beriladi.

Presuppozitsiya

Aziz mavjud.

Azizning noutbuki bor.

Noutbuk ta'mirdan oldin ham mavjud bo'lgan.

Lingvistik trigger

Egalik konstruksiyasi (Azizning).

Pragmatik talqin

Gap tinglovchi Aziz va uning noutbuki haqida oldindan

ma'lumotga ega ekanligini nazarda tutadi. Shaxs yoki predmetning mavjudligi alohida isbotlanmaydi, balki kommunikativ asos sifatida qabul qilinadi.

Comparative Analysis

Although English and Uzbek differ typologically, existential presupposition performs an identical pragmatic function in both languages. English employs grammatical definiteness through articles and possessive determiners, whereas Uzbek compensates through morphological marking and contextual definiteness. Consequently, the interpretation of existential presupposition depends less on grammatical form than on shared communicative knowledge.

Table 1. Comparative Features of Existential Presupposition

Feature	English	Uzbek
Principal trigger	Definite article, determiner	Possessive suffix, contextual definiteness
Grammatical article	Present	Absent
Context dependence	Moderate	High
Shared background knowledge	Required	Required
Forensic significance	Identification of assumed entities	Identification of assumed entities

The findings indicate that existential presupposition is comparatively stable across both languages despite structural differences. From a forensic linguistic perspective, identifying these background assumptions is particularly important because disputed texts frequently contain references whose existence is never explicitly asserted but is nevertheless treated as established by the speaker.

2. Factive Presupposition

Factive presupposition is triggered by predicates that present the embedded proposition as true. Verbs such as know, realize, regret, discover, and remember in English, together with their Uzbek counterparts bilmoq, anglamoq, afsuslanmoq, eslamog, automatically presuppose the truth of the proposition that follows. Unlike existential presupposition, which concerns the existence of referents, factive presupposition concerns the truth status of events or situations.

Example 3 (English)

Sentence

She knows that the document was forged.

Explicit proposition

The speaker states that she possesses knowledge.

Presupposed information

The document was forged.

Trigger

know

Pragmatic interpretation

Regardless of whether the sentence is affirmed (She knows...) or negated (She does not know...), the proposition the document was forged remains presupposed. Thus, the truth of the embedded clause functions as shared background information rather than newly asserted content.

Example 4 (Uzbek)

Gap

"U hujjat soxtalashtirilganini biladi."

Oshkora mazmun

Gap shaxsning bilimiga oid xabarni ifodalaydi.

Presuppozitsiya

Hujjat soxtalashtirilgan.

Lingvistik trigger

biladi

Pragmatik talqin

Fe'l adresatni voqeaning haqiqat ekanini oldindan qabul qilishga undaydi. Gapning inkor shakli (bilmaydi) ham mazkur presuppozitsiyani saqlab qoladi.

Comparative Analysis

The comparative evidence demonstrates that factive presupposition operates almost identically in English and Uzbek. Both languages employ cognitive predicates that encode the truth of subordinate propositions independently of sentence polarity. This universal characteristic explains why factive presupposition frequently becomes a source of misunderstanding, manipulation, or evidential dispute in legal communication.

3. Lexical Presupposition in English and Uzbek

Lexical presupposition arises when the lexical meaning of a word inherently implies the occurrence of a previous event, state, or action. Unlike factive presupposition, which concerns the truth of a proposition, lexical presupposition is encoded in the semantic properties of specific lexical items. Verbs such as *stop*, *continue*, *return*, *begin*, and adverbs such as *again* automatically activate assumptions about an earlier situation. Because these assumptions are embedded in lexical meaning, they remain relatively stable across different grammatical environments.

The comparative investigation demonstrates that both English and Uzbek possess rich inventories of lexical presupposition triggers. However, the two languages differ considerably in the grammatical realization of these triggers. English primarily expresses lexical presupposition through lexical verbs and adverbs, whereas Uzbek frequently combines lexical meaning with derivational and inflectional morphology, producing more explicit temporal relations within discourse.

Example 5 (English)

Sentence

She stopped smoking.

Explicit proposition

The speaker reports that smoking has ceased.

Presupposed information

She used to smoke.

Smoking occurred before the reported event.

Presupposition trigger

stopped

Semantic analysis

The verb *stop* denotes the termination of an ongoing activity. Therefore, the previous existence of that activity is necessarily presupposed.

Pragmatic interpretation

The listener automatically reconstructs the earlier habit without the speaker explicitly mentioning it. The communicative focus falls upon cessation rather than prior behaviour.

Forensic linguistic interpretation

Within forensic discourse, lexical presupposition may introduce background information that influences judicial interpretation. The expert therefore distinguishes between explicitly asserted facts and presupposed historical information embedded in lexical meaning.

Example 6 (Uzbek)

Gap

"U chekishni to'xtatdi."

Oshkora mazmun

Shaxs endi chekmaydi.

Presuppozitsiya

U ilgari chekkan.

Chekish odati mavjud bo'lgan.

Lingvistik trigger

to'xtatdi

Semantik tahlil

Fe'l davom etayotgan harakatning yakunlanganligini bildiradi va shu orqali avvalgi holatning mavjudligini nazarda tutadi.

Pragmatik talqin

Gapning asosiy maqsadi harakatning tugaganini bildirish

bo'lsa-da, tinglovchi avvalgi odatni avtomatik ravishda tiklaydi.

Sud-lingvistik talqin

Bunday konstruktsiyalar bahsli matnlarda tarixiy faktlarni bilvosita kiritishi mumkin. Shu sababli ekspert presuppozitsiya orqali uzatilayotgan axborotni ochiq bayon qilingan ma'lumotdan ajratib ko'rsatishi zarur.

Comparative Analysis

The comparison reveals a high degree of functional equivalence between English and Uzbek lexical presupposition. In both languages lexical triggers encode assumptions regarding previous events or states. Nevertheless, Uzbek frequently strengthens these assumptions through verbal morphology and contextual sequencing, whereas English relies primarily upon lexical semantics.

Table 2. Comparative Characteristics of Lexical Presupposition

Feature	English	Uzbek
Primary trigger	Lexical verb	Lexical verb + morphology
Typical examples	stop, continue, return, again	to'xtamoq, davom etmoq, yana
Previous event assumed	Yes	Yes
Context dependence	Moderate	Moderate-High
Forensic relevance	Historical assumptions	Historical assumptions

The comparative evidence indicates that lexical presupposition constitutes one of the most stable cross-linguistic categories because its interpretation depends largely upon lexical semantics rather than complex contextual reasoning.

4. Structural Presupposition in English and Uzbek

Structural presupposition is generated by grammatical constructions rather than lexical meaning. Certain syntactic patterns inherently assume the existence of specific background information, irrespective of the lexical items they contain. Among the most productive structural triggers are Wh-interrogatives, cleft constructions, and comparative structures. These constructions guide interlocutors toward accepting particular assumptions before responding to the explicit communicative purpose of the utterance.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that English and Uzbek employ structurally different grammatical devices while preserving equivalent pragmatic functions. English predominantly relies on interrogative syntax and cleft constructions, whereas Uzbek achieves comparable effects through interrogative morphology, constituent order, and discourse prominence.

Example 7 (English)

Sentence

Where did you hide the documents?

Explicit proposition

The speaker requests the location of the documents.

Presupposed information

The documents were hidden.

The hearer hid them.

Structural trigger

Wh-question

Pragmatic interpretation

The speaker does not ask whether the documents were hidden. Their concealment is treated as already established.

Forensic linguistic interpretation

In investigative interviews such questions may unintentionally communicate assumptions of guilt. Therefore, linguistic experts should identify whether structural presupposition influences interpretation independently of explicit accusation.

Example 8 (Uzbek)

Gap

"Hujjatlarni qayerga yashirdingiz?"

Oshkora mazmun

Gap joy haqida savol beradi.

Presuppozitsiya

Hujjatlar yashirilgan.

Ularni adresat yashirgan.

Lingvistik trigger

So'roq konstruktsiyasi

Pragmatik talqin

Savol harakat sodir bo'lganini oldindan qabul qiladi va faqat uning tafsilotlarini aniqlashga qaratilgan.

Sud-lingvistik talqin

Sud jarayonlarida bunday savollar ehtiyotkorlik bilan baholanishi kerak, chunki ular ayblov mazmunini bevosita emas, balki grammatik tuzilma orqali uzatishi mumkin.

Comparative Analysis

Structural presupposition demonstrates perhaps the strongest functional similarity between English and Uzbek. Although the grammatical mechanisms differ, both languages employ interrogative structures capable of presenting disputed information as already accepted. From a forensic perspective, this category possesses particularly high evidential significance because it may influence witness testimony, interrogation discourse, and courtroom interaction without explicit assertion.

5. Non-factive Presupposition in English and Uzbek

Non-factive presupposition is associated with predicates that present the embedded proposition as hypothetical, imagined, or unreal rather than factual. Unlike factive predicates, which presuppose the truth of an event, non-factive predicates indicate that the event has not necessarily occurred. Such constructions are particularly significant in discourse because they enable speakers to discuss unreal situations while simultaneously guiding the listener toward a specific interpretation.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that English and Uzbek employ comparable pragmatic strategies despite structural differences. English typically relies on verbs such as *imagine*, *pretend*, *dream*, and *suppose*, whereas Uzbek frequently uses verbs such as *tasavvur qilmoq*, *xayol qilmoq*, *go'yoki*, and *faraz qilmoq*. In both languages, these predicates establish an unreal communicative space that contrasts with objective reality.

Example 9 (English)

Sentence

She imagined that she had won the competition.

Explicit proposition

The speaker reports an act of imagination.

Presupposed information

The proposition she had won the competition is presented as imaginary rather than factual.

Linguistic trigger

imagined

Semantic analysis

The verb *imagine* introduces a mental representation rather than an actual event.

Pragmatic interpretation

Listeners distinguish between the imagined situation and objective reality through the lexical meaning of the predicate.

Forensic linguistic interpretation

Within forensic discourse, non-factive predicates reduce the evidential status of the embedded proposition because they explicitly signal that the information belongs to a hypothetical cognitive domain.

Example 10 (Uzbek)

Gap

"U tanlovda g'olib bo'lganini tasavvur qildi."

Oshkora mazmun

Gap shaxsning tasavvur qilish jarayonini ifodalaydi.

Presuppozitsiya

G'olib bo'lish voqeligi emas, balki uning xayoliy modeli ifodalanadi.

Lingvistik trigger

tasavvur qildi

Pragmatik talqin

Gap voqelikni emas, ongdagi modelni tasvirlaydi.

Sud-lingvistik talqin

Ekspert bunday bayonotni fakt sifatida emas, balki mental konstruktsiya sifatida baholaydi.

Comparative Analysis

Both English and Uzbek employ non-factive predicates to separate imagined events from factual reality. The principal distinction lies in grammatical realization rather than

communicative function. Consequently, non-factive presupposition possesses relatively limited evidential value within forensic linguistic expertise because it explicitly marks uncertainty or imagination.

6. Counterfactual Presupposition in English and Uzbek

Counterfactual presupposition represents one of the most cognitively complex categories of presupposition because it describes situations contrary to reality. Such constructions presuppose that the actual state of affairs differs from the hypothetical scenario expressed by the speaker. Counterfactual reasoning is particularly common in legal discourse, witness testimony, and argumentative communication.

English generally expresses counterfactuality through conditional constructions involving if, wish, and modal auxiliaries, whereas Uzbek employs conditional suffixes together with modal expressions such as agar, edi, and bo'lganida.

Example 11 (English)

Sentence

If he had told the truth, the accident could have been avoided.

Explicit proposition

The speaker presents a hypothetical situation.

Presupposed information

He did not tell the truth.

Linguistic trigger

If...had...

Pragmatic interpretation

The conditional construction presupposes that the opposite situation actually occurred.

Forensic linguistic interpretation

Counterfactual constructions frequently appear during legal argumentation because they reconstruct alternative scenarios rather than describing observed facts.

Example 12 (Uzbek)

Gap

"Agar u rostini aytganida, hodisa sodir bo'lmas edi."

Oshkora mazmun

Gap ehtimoliy vaziyatni tasvirlaydi.

Presuppozitsiya

U rostini aytmagan.

Lingvistik trigger

agar... edi

Pragmatik talqin

Haqiqiy voqelik va taxminiy voqelik qarama-qarshi qo'yiladi.

Sud-lingvistik talqin

Ekspert ushbu konstruksiyani faktni tasdiqlovchi dalil sifatida emas, balki alternativ voqelik modeli sifatida izohlaydi.

Comparative Analysis

Counterfactual presupposition functions similarly in English and Uzbek because both languages distinguish hypothetical reality from factual reality through conditional constructions. The principal difference concerns grammatical encoding rather than cognitive interpretation.

7. Comparative Typology of Presupposition

The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek demonstrates that the six investigated categories of presupposition constitute a coherent functional system despite typological differences between the two languages. Each category performs a distinct communicative function while simultaneously contributing to the construction of implicit meaning.

Table 3. Comparative Typology of Presupposition in English and Uzbek

Presupposition Type	English	Uzbek	Comparative Similarity
Existential	Definite articles, possessives	Egalik qo'shimchalari, kontekst	High
Factive	Cognitive predicates	Bilmoq, anglamoq	Very High
Lexical	stop, continue, again	to'xtamoq, davom etmoq, yana	High

Structural	Wh-questions, clefts	So'roq konstruksiyalari	Very High
Non-factive	imagine, pretend	tasavvur qilmoq, faraz qilmoq	High
Counterfactual	If..., wish...	Agar..., edi...	Very High

The findings indicate that English and Uzbek differ primarily in their grammatical realization of presupposition rather than in the underlying pragmatic mechanisms. English predominantly employs analytic structures, auxiliary constructions, and lexical triggers, whereas Uzbek frequently relies on agglutinative morphology, contextual reference, and discourse organization. Nevertheless, both languages exhibit remarkably similar cognitive principles governing the interpretation of presupposed information.

Furthermore, the analysis demonstrates that factive and structural presuppositions display the highest degree of cross-linguistic similarity, whereas existential presupposition reveals the greatest structural divergence due to the presence of articles in English and their absence in Uzbek. Lexical, non-factive, and counterfactual presuppositions occupy an intermediate position, combining universal pragmatic principles with language-specific grammatical realizations.

From the perspective of forensic linguistic expertise, all six categories possess evidential value, although their diagnostic strength varies considerably. Factive and structural presuppositions provide the strongest linguistic evidence because they encode relatively stable background assumptions. By contrast, non-factive and counterfactual presuppositions require greater contextual interpretation since they describe hypothetical or imagined realities rather than objectively verifiable events.

The proposed comparative typology therefore demonstrates that presupposition should be analysed as a multidimensional phenomenon integrating lexical semantics, grammatical structure, pragmatic inference, discourse organization, and contextual knowledge. Such an integrated approach enables forensic linguistic experts to distinguish objectively recoverable presupposed information from purely subjective interpretation, thereby strengthening the methodological reliability of linguistic expertise.

DISCUSSION

The present study demonstrates that presupposition represents a universal pragmatic phenomenon whose linguistic realization varies according to the structural

characteristics of individual languages. Although English and Uzbek belong to different typological families, the comparative analysis revealed that both languages employ remarkably similar pragmatic mechanisms for encoding background assumptions. The principal differences are therefore grammatical rather than cognitive or communicative.

The findings support the theoretical position advanced by Stalnaker (1974), who argued that presupposition functions through the establishment of a shared common ground between interlocutors. The English and Uzbek data analysed in this study indicate that speakers consistently assume the existence of common knowledge before introducing new information. This observation confirms that presupposition is fundamentally a discourse-oriented phenomenon rather than a purely semantic property of isolated sentences.

The results also extend Karttunen's (1973) classification of presupposition triggers. While Karttunen primarily examined lexical and grammatical triggers in English, the present comparative analysis demonstrates that analogous communicative functions are realized through different structural resources in Uzbek. For example, English frequently relies on definite articles and auxiliary constructions, whereas Uzbek employs possessive morphology, contextual definiteness, and discourse organization. These findings suggest that typological differences influence the formal realization of presupposition without altering its communicative purpose.

The comparative evidence further supports Levinson's (1983) pragmatic interpretation of presupposition as a mechanism operating in close interaction with conversational inference. Across both languages, presupposed meanings were rarely interpreted independently of contextual information. Instead, successful interpretation required integration of lexical meaning, grammatical structure, discourse continuity, and shared background knowledge. This multidimensional interaction indicates that presupposition should not be analysed separately from broader pragmatic processes.

From a forensic linguistic perspective, the findings reinforce the methodological principles proposed by Shuy (1993) and

Coulthard and Johnson (2007). These scholars emphasize that linguistic experts should identify objectively demonstrable linguistic evidence while avoiding legal qualification. The present study adopts the same methodological principle by distinguishing presupposed information from judicial evaluation. Rather than determining whether an accusation is legally justified, the proposed analytical framework identifies the linguistic mechanisms through which background assumptions are communicated.

One of the principal contributions of the study lies in demonstrating that different categories of presupposition possess different evidential strengths in forensic linguistic expertise. Factive and structural presuppositions proved comparatively stable because their interpretation depends primarily on grammatical structure and lexical semantics. Existential and lexical presuppositions require greater contextual support but nevertheless remain relatively reliable. By contrast, non-factive and counterfactual presuppositions display greater interpretative variability because they refer to imagined or hypothetical situations rather than factual events.

The research further demonstrates that presupposition cannot be analysed solely through sentence-level semantics. Instead, interpretation depends upon interaction among semantic structure, pragmatic inference, discourse organization, and communicative context. Consequently, forensic linguistic expertise should employ an integrated analytical model capable of evaluating multiple linguistic levels simultaneously. Such an approach substantially reduces subjective interpretation and improves methodological transparency during expert analysis.

Another important finding concerns cross-linguistic equivalence. Although English and Uzbek differ considerably in morphology, syntax, and information structure, both languages employ presupposition to achieve comparable communicative goals. This observation suggests that presupposition constitutes a cognitively universal pragmatic mechanism whose linguistic realization reflects typological variation rather than conceptual differences. Such findings contribute not only to comparative pragmatics but also to cognitive linguistics and intercultural communication studies.

The proposed analytical framework may also contribute to applied forensic practice. The systematic identification of presupposition triggers, combined with semantic, pragmatic, discourse, and contextual analysis, offers a reproducible methodology suitable for multilingual forensic investigations.

Because every analytical stage is explicitly documented, expert conclusions become more transparent, verifiable, and scientifically defensible.

CONCLUSION

The present study investigated the structural, semantic, pragmatic, and discourse characteristics of presupposition in English and Uzbek through a comparative linguistic perspective. The findings demonstrate that despite substantial typological differences between the two languages, presupposition performs remarkably similar communicative functions and is governed by common pragmatic principles.

The comparative analysis identified six major categories of presupposition: existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, and counterfactual. Each category exhibits distinctive linguistic properties while contributing to the construction of background assumptions that guide discourse interpretation. The investigation further revealed that English primarily realizes presupposition through analytic grammatical structures, lexical triggers, and auxiliary constructions, whereas Uzbek relies more extensively on agglutinative morphology, contextual definiteness, and discourse organization.

A major contribution of this research is the development of an integrated comparative framework for presupposition analysis. Unlike previous approaches focusing on individual linguistic levels, the proposed model combines semantic description, pragmatic interpretation, discourse analysis, contextual reconstruction, and forensic linguistic evaluation into a unified methodological procedure. This multidimensional framework provides a more objective basis for identifying presupposed information across typologically different languages.

The study also demonstrates the practical relevance of presupposition within forensic linguistic expertise. Presupposed information frequently influences the interpretation of disputed discourse without being explicitly asserted. Consequently, linguistic experts must distinguish objectively recoverable background assumptions from subjective interpretation while maintaining a clear methodological boundary between linguistic analysis and legal decision-making. The proposed framework contributes to this objective by providing transparent analytical criteria applicable to multilingual forensic investigations.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings enrich

comparative pragmatics by illustrating how universal cognitive mechanisms are realized through language-specific grammatical resources. The research also contributes to discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, and forensic linguistics by emphasizing the interaction between linguistic structure, communicative context, and pragmatic inference in the interpretation of presupposed meaning.

Future investigations may expand the proposed model through quantitative corpus analysis, multilingual comparative studies, computational identification of presupposition triggers, and artificial intelligence-assisted discourse processing. Such research may contribute to the further standardization of forensic linguistic methodology while enhancing the role of linguistic evidence in contemporary judicial practice.

Scientific Contributions of the Study

1. The principal scientific contributions of the present study may be summarized as follows:
2. A comparative model of presupposition in English and Uzbek has been developed from semantic, pragmatic, discourse, and forensic linguistic perspectives.
3. Six categories of presupposition have been comparatively described and systematically analysed across two typologically different languages.
4. An integrated analytical framework combining semantic, pragmatic, discourse, contextual, and forensic linguistic analysis has been proposed.
5. Language-specific differences in the realization of presupposition have been identified while demonstrating the universality of its communicative functions.
6. The evidential significance of different presupposition types has been evaluated within the methodological framework of forensic linguistic expertise.
7. A reproducible methodology suitable for multilingual forensic linguistic investigations has been developed.

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