

Presupposition Triggers in the Royal Address of His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor

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ABSTRACT

Public controversies involving socioreligious sensitivity, community welfare, and environmental responsibility require institutional responses that are firm, measured, and socially calibrated. This study examines presupposition triggers in selected royal address texts of His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor concerning the issue of pig farming activities in Selangor. Specifically, it investigates how presupposed meanings are linguistically embedded and how they function within royal institutional discourse. Using a qualitative content analysis approach, the study analyses three official royal address texts published by the Selangor Royal Office. The analysis is guided by Huang's framework of presupposition triggers, focusing on definite descriptions, factive predicates, change-of-state predicates, iteratives, implicative predicates, temporal clauses, cleft sentences, and counterfactual constructions. The findings reveal that presupposition in the selected texts operates mainly at the lexical level. Definite descriptions emerged as the most dominant trigger, followed by iteratives and implicative predicates, while cleft sentences and counterfactual constructions were absent. These triggers presuppose the existence of a specific public issue, prior royal directives, ongoing concern, administrative responsibility, and the need for resolution. More importantly, the presuppositions do not merely convey implied meanings; they organise the issue as an existing and unresolved matter that requires moral, administrative, and civic response. The study concludes that presupposition functions as a strategic pragmatic resource in Malaysian royal discourse by enabling the Sultan's address to assert authority, assign responsibility, and guide public conduct with linguistic restraint. This article contributes to pragmatic studies by showing how royal institutional discourse constructs authority and social order through controlled implicit meaning in a multicultural Malaysian context.

Keywords: presupposition triggers, royal address, Sultan of Selangor, pragmatics, institutional discourse, Malaysian royal discourse, socio-religious discourse

INTRODUCTION

Presupposition is not merely a device for implying meaning; it is a pragmatic mechanism through which certain assumptions are made to appear prior, shared, and difficult to dispute. In pragmatics, presupposition refers to background assumptions embedded in linguistic forms and treated as already known or accepted before an utterance is produced (Levinson, 1983; Yule, 1996). Its force becomes especially significant in political and institutional discourse, where speakers often need to guide interpretation without stating every position explicitly. By presenting selected meanings as already established, presupposition allows institutional voices to frame public issues, reinforce authority, and reduce the space for overt contestation. In Malaysia, the royal address occupies a distinctive position within institutional discourse because it carries constitutional, religious, symbolic, and moral authority. The Sultan does not speak as an ordinary political actor; the royal address draws its force from the institution of monarchy, the constitutional position of the Ruler, and the custodial role over Islamic affairs within a multiethnic and multireligious society. This is particularly evident in the official addresses of His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor, which often respond to matters involving public order, community welfare, environmental responsibility, and interreligious harmony. In such contexts, the royal address

functions as more than ceremonial communication. It becomes a measured form of intervention that defines acceptable conduct, marks institutional boundaries, and directs public understanding without relying on openly confrontational language.

Despite the analytical value of such discourse, presupposition in Malaysian royal addresses remains underexplored. Existing studies have examined presupposition in political speeches, diplomatic discourse, media editorials, and monarchical discourse in other geopolitical contexts, but less attention has been given to how presupposition operates within Malaysian state-level royal discourse (Al-Smaiheeyen & Abdul Latiff, 2018; Lathar et al., 2023; Youssef & Albarakati, 2021). This gap matters because royal discourse in Malaysia does not operate through political persuasion alone. It also works through moral positioning, institutional restraint, and culturally embedded authority. Therefore, this study aims to examine the presupposition triggers in selected royal address texts of His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor which focusing on public controversies involving socioreligious sensitivity, community welfare, and environmental responsibility. It focuses on lexical and structural presupposition triggers proposed by Huang (2007). These presupposition triggers embed assumptions about obligation, compliance, accountability, and social harmony. More importantly, it argues that presupposition enables the royal address to assert authority and assign responsibility while preserving the measured tone expected of royal institutional discourse in Malaysia's socioreligious context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Presupposition in Political and Royal Discourse

Presupposition has become a productive analytical tool in the study of political and institutional discourse because it reveals how authority is often exercised through what is assumed rather than what is openly asserted. In political communication, speakers rarely present every ideological position as a direct claim. Instead, they embed assumptions within linguistic structures so that selected meanings appear already known, already accepted, or already binding upon the audience. This makes presupposition a powerful pragmatic strategy: it can legitimise a position, guide public interpretation, and limit the possibility of direct challenge without the speaker having to argue explicitly for every claim (Al-Smaiheeyen & Abdul Latiff, 2018; Youssef & Albarakati, 2021). Studies of political discourse have shown that presupposition is frequently used to construct unity, responsibility, credibility, and institutional legitimacy. Lathar et al. (2023), for example, examine President Joe Biden's victory speech and demonstrate how presuppositional structures contribute to the construction of national reconciliation and collective responsibility. Silalahi and Napitupulu (2026), in their study of President Prabowo Subianto's United Nations address, show that presupposition may also operate within diplomatic discourse, where leaders need to project authority while maintaining international decorum. Lavadia et al. (2026), in their analysis of online political editorials, further indicate that presupposition is not restricted to spoken political speeches. It also shapes written political commentary by positioning readers to accept assumptions about public issues, political actors, and contested events.

These studies are useful because they establish presupposition as a persuasive mechanism across political genres. However, political discourse and royal discourse should not be treated as identical. Political speeches often derive their force from electoral legitimacy, ideological alignment, or party-based persuasion. Royal discourse, particularly within a constitutional monarchy, operates through a different configuration of authority. It carries ceremonial dignity, constitutional recognition, moral expectation, and symbolic continuity. This distinction is important because a royal address does not merely persuade the public; it often defines the moral and institutional frame through which an issue should be understood. Research on royal and monarchical discourse is therefore more directly relevant to the present study. Youssef and Albarakati (2021), in their analysis of King Salman's speech on terrorism, show how royal discourse employs presupposition to frame sensitive political concerns and reinforce sovereign authority. Al-Smaiheeyen and Abdul Latiff (2018), in their study of King Abdullah II's political speeches, similarly reveal that presupposition can be used to construct legitimacy, guide public perception, and present certain political values as shared commitments. Khater et al. (2024) further demonstrate that royal addresses may construct national identity, historical continuity, and social unity through pragmatic and rhetorical strategies.

Although these studies provide a strong foundation, the Malaysian context requires a more specific analytical lens. Royal discourse in Malaysia is shaped by the constitutional position of the Malay Rulers, the custodial role of the Ruler in matters of Islam, and the need to preserve harmony within a multiethnic and multireligious society. At the state level, a royal address may respond to public issues involving governance, religious sensitivity, community welfare, environmental responsibility, and civic conduct. In such contexts, presupposition is not merely a linguistic feature. It becomes a disciplined form of institutional intervention. It allows the royal voice to affirm what should already be accepted, mark what has been breached, and direct public conduct while preserving the measured tone expected of royal discourse. Despite the growing body of work on presupposition in political speeches, diplomatic discourse, editorials, and Middle Eastern monarchical contexts, limited attention has been given to presupposition in Malaysian royal discourse, especially at the level of state constitutional monarchy. This gap is significant because Malaysian royal addresses are not reducible to ceremonial texts. They may function as authoritative responses to sensitive public controversies, where language must be firm enough to guide conduct but restrained enough to maintain social harmony. The present study addresses this gap by examining how presupposition triggers operate in selected royal address texts of His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor. It focuses not only on identifying the triggers, but also on interpreting how they contribute to the construction of royal authority, administrative accountability, moral legitimacy, and shared civic understanding.

Huang's Presupposition Triggers Framework

The study of presupposition triggers is central to pragmatic analysis because presuppositions are not activated randomly. They are often signalled by identifiable linguistic items or structures that lead hearers or readers to infer certain background assumptions. Huang (2007) defines presupposition triggers as linguistic expressions that activate presupposed meanings in the cognition of the listener or reader when an utterance is produced. In other words, a trigger is the linguistic site through which an assumption is projected as already available within the discourse. Research on presupposition in political discourse has developed considerably over the past two decades. Earlier studies such as Li (2010), Du (2012), and Liang and Liu (2016) examined presupposition in political campaign speeches and presidential addresses, including those of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. These studies show that presupposition is especially relevant in political communication because speeches often contain implied assumptions about leadership, national identity, public responsibility, crisis, reform, or moral obligation. Understanding presupposition triggers therefore allows researchers to move beyond surface meaning and examine how political or institutional discourse quietly organises what audiences are invited to accept as given.

This study adopts Huang's (2007) framework of presupposition triggers because it offers a systematic classification of lexical and structural triggers. The framework is suitable for analysing royal address texts because such texts are formally composed, institutionally authoritative, and linguistically dense. The triggers are not treated as isolated grammatical items, but as pragmatic resources that help construct implied meanings within a wider discourse of authority, governance, and social responsibility.

Table 1 Framework of Presupposition Triggers (Huang, 2007)

Level	Presupposition Triggers	Description
Lexical level	Definite descriptions	Linguistic expressions that presuppose the existence of a particular entity, person, institution, event, or issue. This includes proper nouns, possessive constructions, and certain wh-phrases. This type is commonly associated with existential presupposition.
	Factive predicates	Verbs or adjectives that presuppose the truth of the proposition that follows. These include cognitive or epistemic factives related to knowledge and awareness, as well as emotive factives that express emotional or evaluative stance toward an assumed fact.

	Change-of-state predicates	Verbs or expressions that presuppose a previous state before a change occurs. Such triggers indicate that something has begun, stopped, continued, increased, decreased, or shifted from an earlier condition.
	Iteratives	Lexical items that presuppose repetition or prior occurrence. These include iterative verbs and iterative adverbs that indicate an action, event, or condition has happened before.
	Implicative predicates	Predicates that carry implications about the completion, non-completion, success, or failure of an action. These triggers are often associated with lexical presupposition because the meaning of the predicate itself activates the assumption.
Structural level	Temporal clauses	Clausal structures that presuppose the occurrence of an event in relation to time, duration, sequence, or period. These are commonly associated with structural presupposition.
	Cleft sentences	Sentence constructions that foreground a particular element while presupposing the rest of the proposition. These may include complex clefts and pseudo-cleft structures.
	Counterfactual constructions	Structures that presuppose a situation contrary to fact. These are commonly associated with counterfactual presupposition because the construction implies that the stated condition is not true or did not occur.

As shown in Table 1, presupposition triggers may operate at both lexical and structural levels. At the lexical level, definite descriptions presuppose existence, factive predicates presuppose truth, change-of-state predicates presuppose an earlier condition, iteratives presuppose prior occurrence, and implicative predicates presuppose the consequence or status of an action. These triggers are important because they allow the speaker to embed assumptions within individual words or phrases without making those assumptions the explicit focus of the utterance. At the structural level, presupposition is activated through sentence construction. Temporal clauses presuppose the occurrence of an event situated in time, cleft sentences presuppose a broader proposition while highlighting one element, and counterfactual constructions presuppose a contrast between the expressed condition and reality. These structural triggers are especially relevant in formal institutional discourse because they allow the speaker to organise responsibility, sequence, causality, and contrast in a controlled manner.

In this study, Huang's framework provides the basis for identifying presupposition triggers in the royal address texts of His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor. However, the analysis does not stop at classification. Each trigger is interpreted according to its pragmatic function within the royal address. This is crucial because the value of presupposition in royal discourse lies not only in what it implies, but in what it authorises. Through presupposition, the royal address can present certain duties, breaches, values, and expectations as already established within the moral and institutional order of the state.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design through pragmatic content analysis to examine presupposition triggers in selected official royal address by His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study does not seek to measure frequency alone, but to interpret how linguistic forms activate implicit assumptions and how these assumptions contribute to the construction of royal authority, administrative responsibility, and public accountability. The data consisted of three official royal address (RA) concerning the issue of proposed large-scale pig farming project in Selangor. The first royal address (RA1) was an official statement dated 10 February 2026, which outlined the Sultan's position on the proposed pig farming project in the state. The second royal address (RA2) was delivered during the opening of the Fourth Session of the 15th Selangor State Legislative Assembly on 20 April 2026. The third royal address (RA3) was

an official media statement dated 7 May 2026, which reaffirmed the Sultan's position on the matter. All three texts were retrieved from the official Facebook page of the @Selangor Royal Office, which serves as an authorised public communication platform for official royal statements and addresses.

The three royal addresses were selected through purposive sampling. They were chosen because they form a chronologically and thematically connected set of royal discourse on the same public controversy. Each text had to be published through an official communication channel of the Selangor Royal Office. Besides that, the text had to contain a statement or address directly attributed to His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor. It also had to address the same public controversy concerning pig farming activities in Selangor. The complete text had to be publicly accessible for linguistic analysis. Lastly, the texts had to form part of the development of the royal position between February and May 2026. Texts that merely reported the controversy without reproducing or conveying the Sultan's official position were excluded from the corpus. These criteria produced a bounded and thematically coherent corpus rather than a representative sample of all Malaysian royal discourse. RA1 introduced the royal position, RA2 incorporated that position into a formal legislative address, and RA3 reaffirmed it following continued public and administrative responses. The three texts therefore represent different communicative stages within the same institutional discourse event. Their selection enabled the study to examine how presupposed assumptions were introduced, maintained, and reinforced across a developing sequence of royal communication. This study does not claim that these texts represent all royal discourse practices; instead, it provides an in-depth case-based account of presupposition within a specific sociopolitical controversy.

The selection is significant because the royal address does not represent isolated statements. Instead, they show how the royal position was introduced, reiterated, and reinforced across different moments of public response. This allows the study to examine how presupposition operates not only within individual utterances, but also across a developing institutional discourse. The analysis was guided by Huang's (2007) framework of presupposition triggers. The framework classifies presupposition triggers into lexical and structural categories, including definite descriptions, factive predicates, change-of-state predicates, iterative expressions, implicative predicates, temporal clauses, cleft constructions, and counterfactual constructions. In this study, each royal addresses were read closely to identify linguistic items or structures that activated presupposed meanings. The unit of analysis consisted of lexical items, phrases, clauses, and sentence structures that carried presuppositional force.

The analytical process involved four stages. First, the selected royal addresses were compiled and examined to establish their immediate discourse context. Second, potential presupposition triggers were identified based on Huang's framework. Third, each trigger was interpreted according to the assumption it activated, such as the existence of a public issue, prior non-compliance, ongoing concern, administrative obligation, or the need to preserve social harmony. Finally, the identified triggers were analysed in relation to their pragmatic functions within the royal address, particularly in terms of asserting authority, assigning responsibility, legitimising institutional concern, and guiding public conduct. To strengthen analytical consistency, the study did not treat every implied meaning as presupposition. Only linguistic forms that could be linked to recognised presupposition triggers were included in the analysis. This distinction is important because royal discourse contains many forms of implication, advice, instruction, and evaluation, but not all of them operate as presupposition. The analysis therefore focused on cases where the linguistic structure itself projected an assumption as already known, accepted, or institutionally binding. The study is limited to three selected official texts concerning one public issue in Selangor. As such, the findings do not claim to represent all forms of Malaysian royal discourse. Rather, they provide a focused account of how presupposition triggers function within a specific sequence of royal addresses dealing with a sensitive issue of governance, environmental responsibility, and social harmony.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis identified 64 instances of presupposition triggers across the three selected royal address texts. The distribution shows that presupposition in the Sultan of Selangor's royal discourse is not evenly spread across all categories. It is concentrated mainly in lexical triggers, particularly definite descriptions, iteratives, and implicative predicates. This pattern suggests that the royal address texts rely more on naming, continuity, and implied obligation than on complex syntactic structures to project background assumptions.

Table 2 Distribution of Presupposition Triggers in the Selected Royal Address Text

Presupposition Triggers	RA1	RA2	RA3	Total	Percentage
Definite descriptions	11	6	8	25	39.1
Factive predicates	3	0	2	5	7.8
Change-of-state predicates	2	2	2	6	9.4
Iteratives	6	2	5	13	20.3
Implicative predicates	4	3	3	10	15.6
Temporal clauses	2	1	2	5	7.8
Total	29	14	22	64	100

Table 2 shows that RA1 recorded the highest number of presupposition triggers, with 29 instances. This is expected because the first text functions as the initial official positioning of the Sultan on the proposed pig farming project. It establishes the issue, names the relevant location, refers to earlier statements and meetings, and constructs the basis for royal concern. RA3 recorded 22 instances, showing that the final media statement does not merely repeat the earlier position but reactivates prior assumptions about the Sultan's stance, the seriousness of the issue, and the need for closure. RA2 recorded the lowest number, with 14 instances, because the royal address delivered during the opening of the State Legislative Assembly treats the issue more briefly within a wider institutional speech.

The most frequent trigger was definite descriptions, with 25 (39.1%) instances of the total data. This dominance is significant. Definite descriptions allow the text to treat the issue, location, royal position, public concern, and administrative responsibility as identifiable and already established. Iteratives formed the second highest category, with 13 (20.30%) instances, indicating that the issue was not framed as a sudden or isolated matter but as something continuous, recurring, or requiring sustained attention. Implicative predicates appeared 10 (15.6%) times, showing that the texts frequently encode assumptions about obligation, compliance, refusal, and continuity of stance. By contrast, structural triggers were less frequent. Temporal clauses appeared 5 (7.8%) times, while cleft sentences and counterfactual constructions did not occur at all. This suggests that the presuppositional force of the royal texts is carried mainly by lexical choices rather than by marked sentence structures. The absence of cleft sentences and counterfactual constructions indicates that the presuppositional force of the royal address texts is not produced through syntactic foregrounding or imagined alternative realities. Instead, it is anchored in lexical precision, institutional reference, and the presentation of the issue as an existing and unresolved matter requiring administrative and moral response.

Definite Descriptions

Definite descriptions were the most dominant presupposition trigger in the data, with 25 instances identified across the three royal address texts. This category presupposes the existence of a specific entity, issue, location, statement, or event that can be identified by the audience. In the selected royal address texts, definite descriptions are crucial because they transform the controversy from an abstract public concern into a concrete and institutionally recognisable issue. One clear example is:

“... *projek ternakan babi berskala besar di Bukit Tagar daerah Hulu Selangor.*” (RA1)

[... the large-scale **pig farming project** in Bukit Tagar, Hulu Selangor district.]

>> There is pig farming project in Bukit Tagar

The phrase presupposes that there was a specific proposed large-scale pig farming project in Bukit Tagar. The issue is not introduced as a vague possibility, but as a concrete matter with a specific location, scale, and administrative relevance. Pragmatically, this allows the royal text to proceed directly to evaluation and directive positioning without having to establish the existence of the issue from the beginning. The assumption of existence is already embedded in the noun phrase “*projek ternakan babi berskala besar*” [the large-scale pig farming project]. This gives the royal address a firm referential basis and helps frame the issue as one requiring official attention.

Factive Predicates

Factive predicates appeared five times in the data. Although less frequent than definite descriptions, their function is significant because they present the Sultan’s position as one grounded in consideration, awareness, and evaluative judgement. Factive predicates presuppose the truth or existence of the proposition or matter that follows. An example can be seen in the following expression:

“Pendirian tersebut dibuat setelah **mengambil kira** implikasi penternakan babi...” (RA3, L5)

[The position was made after considering the implications of pig farming...]

>> His Royal Highness of Sultan Selangor has known the implications of pig farming project.

The expression “*mengambil kira*” (considering) presupposes that the implications of pig farming existed as relevant matters for consideration before the royal position was made. The presupposition is not merely that His Royal Highness had knowledge of the issue, but that the position was reached after weighing its consequences. This strengthens the administrative and moral weight of the royal stance. The decision is not framed as arbitrary, symbolic, or reactionary. Instead, it is presented as a reasoned position based on identifiable implications. This trigger is important in royal discourse because it legitimises the Sultan’s intervention. By presupposing that the implications had already been considered, the text frames the royal position as informed, responsible, and institutionally grounded.

Change-of-state Predicates

Change-of-state predicates were identified six times in the data. These triggers presuppose a prior condition before a change occurs. In the selected texts, they are used to present the issue as unresolved, ongoing, or requiring decisive closure. A clear example is:

“...isu penternakan babi ini dapat **dihentikan dan dimuktamadkan**...” (RA1, L38)

[...this issue of pig farming can be stopped and finalised...]

>> The issue still being debated among the assembly representative.

The verbs “*dihentikan*” (stopped) and “*dimuktamadkan*” (finalised) presuppose that the issue was still ongoing and had not yet reached a final resolution. The phrase does more than express a hope for settlement. It constructs the continuation of the issue as undesirable and closure as necessary. The presuppositional force here is directive. The text does not need to state directly that the issue has remained unresolved for too long. The change-of-state predicates already project that assumption. In the context of royal discourse, this allows the Sultan’s position to be conveyed firmly while maintaining a measured and institutionally appropriate tone.

Iteratives

Iteratives appeared 13 times in the data, making them the second most frequent presupposition trigger after definite descriptions. Iteratives presuppose repetition, continuation, or prior occurrence. Their presence is significant because they construct the pig farming issue as a matter with history, not as a sudden or isolated controversy. The following instance is the example of iteratives.

“...isu penternakan babi yang **sudah lama** berlaku...” (RA1, L35)

[...the issue of pig farming that has existed for a long time...]

>> Pig farming issue has been ongoing for an extended period.

The phrase “*sudah lama*” (a long time) presupposes that the issue had been ongoing for an extended period. This is not a neutral temporal reference. It gives the controversy a history and implies that the matter had remained unresolved despite prior awareness. This presupposition strengthens the urgency of royal intervention. By framing the issue as persistent, the text legitimises the need for a clear institutional response. The Sultan’s position is therefore not constructed as a reaction to a new dispute, but as a response to an issue that had already accumulated public, administrative, and moral significance.

Implicative Predicate

Implicative predicates were found 10 times in the data. This category is especially important because it activates assumptions about compliance, refusal, continuity, or the status of an action. In the royal address texts, implicative predicates are closely tied to authority and obedience. A clearer example is:

“... **enggan** untuk mematuhi titah Beta.” (RA2, P14)

[... **refused** to comply with my royal command.]

>> A royal command had been issued, and certain parties were unwilling to comply with it.

The predicate “*enggan*” (refused) presupposes more than non-compliance. It implies unwillingness. The presupposed meanings are that a royal command had already been issued and that certain parties were unwilling to comply with it. This shifts the issue from a technical or administrative disagreement to a matter of obedience to royal instruction. This is one of the most institutionally charged examples in the data. The phrase assigns responsibility without requiring an extended accusation. Its force lies in its economy. In royal discourse, such implicative predicates allow authority to be asserted directly but without excessive confrontation. The judgement is clear, yet the tone remains controlled.

Temporal Clauses

Temporal clauses appeared five times in the data. These triggers presuppose the occurrence of an event in relation to time, sequence, or prior action. In the selected texts, temporal clauses help organise the controversy as a sequence of official events rather than scattered public remarks. An example of this presupposition triggers is:

“**Berikutan** dengan pertemuan itu...” (RA1, L5)

[Following that meeting...]

>> The statement given after a meeting.

The phrase “*Berikutan*” (Following) atement. It also positions the following statement as a response to that meeting. The temporal trigger therefore constructs a chain of institutional events: a meeting occurred, the matter was discussed, and a royal position followed. This is significant because it gives the royal address procedural weight. The Sultan’s position is not presented as an isolated statement, but as part of an official sequence involving prior engagement, discussion, and response. Temporal clauses therefore contribute to the construction of institutional order and legitimacy within the discourse.

No cleft sentences or counterfactual constructions were identified in the data. This absence is analytically meaningful. It shows that the presuppositional force of the royal address texts is not produced through marked syntactic foregrounding or imagined alternatives to reality. The texts do not rely on structures such as “What concerns His Royal Highness is...” or “If the matter had been resolved earlier...”. Instead, the presuppositional

work is carried mainly by lexical triggers. The absence of cleft sentences suggests that the royal texts do not require dramatic syntactic emphasis to highlight institutional concern. The authority of the discourse is already carried by the royal voice, definite references, and evaluative expressions. Similarly, the absence of counterfactual constructions shows that the issue is not framed through speculation or hypothetical alternatives. It is presented as an existing matter with prior history, identifiable implications, and a need for resolution. This pattern reinforces the central finding of the study: presupposition in the selected royal address texts operates mainly at the lexical level. The texts rely on precise naming, continuity markers, expressions of consideration, and implicative predicates to construct authority, assign responsibility, and guide public conduct.

Overall, the dominance of lexical triggers indicates that the royal address texts construct presupposition through precision rather than syntactic complexity. The Sultan's authority is not linguistically built through elaborate sentence structures, but through definite reference, continuity, evaluative judgement, and implied obligation. This pattern reflects the nature of royal institutional discourse, where meaning is conveyed with restraint, but the directive force remains unmistakable.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that presupposition in the selected royal address texts of His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor operates primarily through lexical precision rather than syntactic complexity. The analysis identified six active categories of presupposition triggers: definite descriptions, factive predicates, change-of-state predicates, iteratives, implicative predicates, and temporal clauses. Among these, definite descriptions formed the most dominant category, followed by iteratives and implicative predicates. This pattern shows that the royal texts construct implied meaning by naming specific issues, locations, positions, prior actions, and obligations as already known or institutionally established. The findings indicate that presupposition in the royal address does not function merely as a background meaning. It carries directive and legitimising force. Through definite descriptions, the issue of pig farming is presented as concrete and identifiable. Through factive predicates, the Sultan's position is framed as considered and reasoned. Through change-of-state predicates and iteratives, the issue is constructed as ongoing, unresolved, and requiring closure. Through implicative predicates, the texts encode questions of compliance and responsibility without resorting to excessive accusation. Temporal clauses further organise the issue as part of an official sequence of engagement, deliberation, and royal response.

Equally significant is the absence of cleft sentences and counterfactual constructions. This absence confirms that the presuppositional force of the royal address texts is not produced through dramatic foregrounding or speculative alternatives. The texts do not need marked syntactic structures to strengthen authority. Nor do they frame the issue through imagined realities. Instead, they treat the matter as an existing public concern with prior history, identifiable implications, and a clear need for resolution. This supports the central argument that the royal address relies on controlled lexical choices to project authority, assign responsibility, and guide public conduct. Therefore, this study concludes that presupposition functions as a strategic pragmatic resource in Malaysian royal discourse. In the context of a sensitive issue involving environmental responsibility, community welfare, and socioreligious harmony, presupposition enables the royal voice to intervene firmly while preserving institutional restraint. The Sultan's authority is not asserted through confrontation, but through linguistic forms that make certain values, obligations, and concerns appear already recognised and binding. This reveals the subtle force of royal discourse: it does not merely state a position; it organises how the issue should be understood.

This study contributes to pragmatic research by showing how presupposition operates within Malaysian state-level royal discourse, a context that remains underexplored in studies of political and institutional communication. It also shows that royal discourse cannot be read only as ceremonial language. In this case, it functions as a form of moral, administrative, and civic regulation. Future research may extend this analysis by comparing royal addresses across different Malaysian states or by examining how presupposition interacts with other pragmatic strategies such as implicature, modality, stance, and directive speech acts.

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