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## Presupposition as a Manipulation Strategy in President Biden's Reference to the War on Gaza

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### ABSTRACT

Political communication is a complex process of sharing concepts and beliefs to gain control over power and manipulate the mass population. In the face of heightening conflict and humanitarian issues, the US President Joe Biden's communication occurred when the Gaza War was underway in the October of 2023. This study examines three hypotheses: Biden's utilization of presuppositions for influencing perception and gaining approval on Israel's behalf, for causing self-derogatory effect, and blaming Hamas alongside constructing an element of predestination regarding the United States foreign policy. In the present study, the researcher relied on a content analysis model and identified various presupposition types in Biden's speeches in order to categorize them based on different manipulative strategies. The article concluded that Biden's language often justified Israeli actions while attributing all harm to Hamas, thus aligning the audience with the U.S. and building a narrative of pure justice. Presuppositions were most detectable in Biden's discourse about the IDF strike on al-Shifa Hospital, where he assumed that Hamas must have been operating out of the hospital. These findings therefore present presupposition as a major political resource in the construction of discourses, people, and policy reforms.

**Keywords:** Joe Biden, Manipulation, Presupposition

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الافتراض كاستراتيجية تلاعب في إشارة الرئيس بايدن إلى الحرب على غزة.

محمد رعد جادو

جامعة سامراء

## المستخلص

تدرس هذه الدراسة ثلاث فرضيات ومنها : استخدام بايدن للافتراضات المسبقة للتأثير على التصور والحصول على الموافقة نيابة عن إسرائيل، لإحداث تأثير مهين للذات، وإلقاء اللوم على حماس جنباً إلى جنب مع بناء عنصر الأقدار فيما يتعلق بالسياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة. وفي هذه الدراسة اعتمد الباحث على نموذج تحليل المحتوى وحدد أنواعاً مختلفة من الافتراض المسبق في خطابات بايدن من أجل تصنيفها بناءً على استراتيجيات تلاعب لفظي مختلفة. وخلص المقال إلى أن لغة بايدن غالباً ما تبرر الإجراءات الإسرائيلية بينما تنسب كل الضرر إلى حماس، وبالتالي إصطفاف الجمهور مع الولايات المتحدة وبناء سرد للعدالة البحتة. كانت الافتراضات المسبقة أكثر ما يمكن اكتشافه في خطاب بايدن حول هجوم الجيش الإسرائيلي على مستشفى الشفاء، حيث افترض أن حماس لا بد أنها كانت تعمل خارج المستشفى. وبالتالي، فإن هذه النتائج تقدم افتراضاً مسبقاً كمورد سياسي رئيسي في بناء الخطابات والأشخاص وإصلاحات السياسة.

الكلمات الدالة : التلاعب، جو بايدن، الافتراض

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A pragmatic notion known as a presupposition is a belief that the language user assumes to be understood by the recipient without any need for interpretation. Presupposition in Critical Discourse Analysis is asserted to establish power (Qualif, 2017, p 47) and it can be intentionally employed in news for ideological or political reasons (Bekalu, 2006, p147). Presuppositions are strategies used for studying domination and power.

Thus, presupposition, on its own, is generally not manipulative. It becomes manipulative when linked to stimuli that automatically presuppose something in the listener's mind. Thus, such triggers are as much the significant as the premise. Some functional uses presuppose when they are put in certain sentence structures to make the taken-for-granted information seem real (Maziad, 2019, p. 26; Hussain & Juma'a 2023 p.98).

In pragmatics, presupposition has remained an issue that has had many discussions with different people advocating for diverse meanings. Nevertheless, it cannot alone make changes to the individuals (Potts, 2015: p. 175). Its effectiveness emanates when used in conjunction with triggers, audience knowledge, positive and negative biases by the speaker and pre-existing assumptions (Árvay, 2004, p. 4; Thoma et al. , 2023).

Politics has a huge impact on the daily lives of people, and discussions can change person's view on things dramatically. Politicians use presuppositions to influence their audience through creating common ground (Charteris-Black, 2018: 84; Elshehry, 2018:10-13). Manipulation follows when a speaker enforces his/her ideas or overwhelms an audience with his/her knowledge. Presuppositions are political in nature, and they help create and maintain dominance by primary social actors over the beliefs of secondary social actors (Rocci,2005, p; 86 ; Maziad 2019, p:27).

Since declaration by Israel on May 14, 1948, the state of Israel went to war with Arab nations and Palestinians have been stripped of their political rights, the right to self-determination, and property ownership. The longstanding conflict of Israel as well as Palestine is viewed as part of the Israeli –Arab conflict hence making it even more difficult to negotiate for peace treaties (Bregman, 2016; p.14 Hitman & Kertcher, 2018, p. 46). This has demanded third-party, non-regional intervention where the United States has been a dominant party by virtue of soft power, robust economy and compelling influence over the Israelis and Palestinians despite their bias in favor of the latter (Jones, 2012, p. 216; Huczko, 2023, p. 24).

The current U.S. President, Joe Biden, who won the 2020 election, confronted a number of problems at home due to the Russia-Ukraine war and the Taliban's comeback (Adelman et al., 2023). This time, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict only became worse, which is best seen during an 11-day war in May 2021. To solve this, Biden had to also consider the diplomatic activities of the U.S. in the past (Coghlan, 2023, p.51).

Hamas and Islamic Jihad attacked Israel through air, sea, and a ground invasion on the 7th of October in the year 2023 by opening the border at approximately thirty points. They murdered more than 1200 Israelis, among them 300 soldiers, and took approximately 240 (as cited in Hitman & Itskovich, 2023, p. 26). In his harshest words yet about the Gaza attack and Netanyahu, Biden said the opposite of what Mr Trump has done and more attention should be paid to Palestinian rights (Liptak & Diamond, 2023).

Accordingly, language is very crucial in political orchestration in as much as it provides a basis to decipher the power relations and the roles (Edelman, 2013; Balogun & Murana, 2018, p 65). It is a political instrument for communicating policies, party programs, and candidates' agenda, as well as for transforming ideas into social practice (Opeibi, 2009, p 161). Therefore, there is the use of language in constructing and influencing the opinions of society.

Presupposition is a powerful means of manipulation, as demonstrated by numerous speeches given in the past, including Biden's most recent one. Such speeches are created to affect the audience through presupposition and other devices that condition their

beliefs. This paper will examine how presupposition is employed in Biden's statement on Gaza conflict, exploring its deceitful nature and effects on public opinion, international relations and Israel-Palestine argument.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Understanding Presupposition Theoretically**

Presupposition is another important notion of the linguistic and pragmatic origin, which was initially defined by Frege (1892) as the assumption concerning reference expressions (names, definite descriptions), namely, presupposing their reference. Presupposition is necessary for a sentence to be true and this is equally applicable in negations (Kadmon, 2001). Though presupposition is often described as similar to implied meaning, which belongs to the speaker's message, presupposition refers to assumptions that belong to the audience and do not have to be stated (Maziad, 2019, p. 26).

Presupposition is a type of language phenomenon which is present in nearly all the discourses that we utter. Presumptions are consideration to be different from assertions because while assertions put out information directly, presumptions are also ways that make communication more economical. The possible presuppositions are best illustrated even in cases where one is stating the most obvious of facts Renaldo (2021; p.499).

In the context of Van Dijk (2006; p370-372) presuppositions include information and knowledge that is both cultural, social, and personal as well as details from context. Van Dijk (2006; p.370-372) outlines strategies for managing this knowledge:

- Assume that the receiver already knows what is being said if they belong to the same epistemic culture.
- Perhaps, activate or assume similar knowledge for different recipients from the communities or cover the missing ones.
- New knowledge should not be taken for granted if it has not being provided by the same source.
- Interpersonal knowledge should be taken for granted if was interpersonally established at an earlier stage but explained if there is doubt about it.
- One should not assume that what that is familiar to him is also familiar to others.

### **2.2 Presupposition as a Manipulative Strategy**

Presupposition is not something associated with a sentence structure, but is developed by a speaker before he makes a statement (Yule, 1996). Cassell and Sydanmaanlakirta define presuppositions as functional presuppositions which they define as 'taken for granted assumptions' which enable smooth interaction (2006). These assumptions can be used, as Newman utilizes presuppositions to control the

conversation's flow. Concerning the actual presentation of presuppositions, Griffiths has pointed that usually the authentic view of what it means to presuppose is lost, enabling the imposition of false presuppositions (2006; p.143).

Thus, presupposition is not manipulative in itself, but when it is used alongside presupposition triggers, it is manipulative. Yule refers to these triggers as, "structural presupposition" which is associated with particular syntactic patterns (1996). The researcher further describes presupposition triggers as those elements in a language which create presuppositions and these can simply be a word or it may be a whole structure. Knowledge about these triggers is a must if one has to dissect their function in the scheme of manipulation (Ljubičić, 2020; p.2).

Consequently, pragmatic presuppositions are based on the concept of the speaker and the addressee's mutual knowledge, as conceived by Stalnaker (2011). The unveiling of presuppositions is also part of Newman's strategy in Jack was for such gaps in the shared knowledge of the interlocutors which the trickster will appeal to while suggesting something which is presupposed by both partners is in fact presupposed. This can cause indirect communication, meaning that the presupposed elements are accepted if not referred to (Maziad, 2019, p. 27).

Another potential factor that underpins manipulation is presupposition accommodation by which presupposed content is incorporated into the context without being negated. Newman's strategy not only provides the audience with false presuppositions but also alters the way they think; this aggravates the manipulative effect (Ljubičić, 2020; p.3).

Beaver also points out that accommodation entails change in mental representations as per presupposed content with bias in many cases (1999; p.9). In the same manner, Walton notes that audience's interacting biasing presuppositions, especially in 'biased' or 'framed' questions, skew the responses and set a trap for the respondent (1999; p.60)

Like implicature and inference, presupposition is also involved in manipulative strategy. Implicature deals with the intentions of the talker, while inferring has to do with the interpretations made by the hearer (Włodarczyk, 2021; p.59). Conversational implicature involves context and requires to abide by Grice's cooperative principle – Quality, Quantity, Relevance and Manner (Ljubičić, 2020; p.5).

### **2.3 Presupposition's Relevant studies**

Ljubičić (2020) demonstrates the manipulative potential of presupposition and analyzes every facet of the Newman Strategy that influences how manipulation is applied in real-time discourse. The analysis demonstrates that presupposition is a useful tool for manipulation and that other factors are also required for the successful application of that manipulative technique. Second, the bias and goals of the speaker using such a manipulative technique determine how it is carried out. Lastly, definitions for the term's presupposition, implicature, and inference need to be established with tighter limits and

greater consistency. More research on these subjects should be made much easier with a clearer differentiation between these concepts in pertinent literature.

Ayyaz et al. (2018; p.91-101) focus on the examination of presuppositions as discursive tools used by the dominant group to control and stifle the ideologies of the subordinate groups. The study concludes that dominant political actors establish and uphold hegemony and power relations within the global political system. Presuppositions are discursive devices that enable them to fulfill their objectives of power. According to the research, presuppositions are a useful instrument for revealing the political actors' ideology. They aid in exposing the oblique hints that contribute to the establishment and maintenance of political power structures. The dominant political actors can establish and maintain power relations because of the recontextualization of the presuppositions. The prevailing narrative is predicated on the idea that "us" are honest and constructive, while "them" are destructive and corrupt. They serve as a weapon to draw attention to specific presuppositions in the political discourse and enable the powerful political players to dismiss the long-standing beliefs of the weaker group.

Siregar's (2021; p80-85) research provides a critical evaluation of Joe Biden's inaugural speech. The primary objectives of the study are the discourse structure and the ideas presented in Biden's speech. Joe Biden's speech transcription from the internet is used as the data source for this qualitative descriptive study design. The six critical discourse analysis processes—problem identification, literature specification, formulation of code analysis, content analysis, and coding, reading, and interpretation—were used by the researcher as part of their analytical technique. Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis Three theories—the components, microstructure, and superstructure—are applied to analyze the speech. In his speech, Biden intends to convey his happiness at winning the election, his goals (such as scrutinizing the US government and pulling the country out of the demonization phase), and his capacity to become the US president. The superstructure then consists of the opening, content, and closing remarks, which make up the fundamental frameworks of a discourse composition. Furthermore, Biden's address included a few ideologies: "equality" to treat the US or Americans fairly, "freedom" to provide individuals the opportunity to do as they like, and "unity" to work together for the development of the country. Since discursive psychology views people as social and relational beings and views language psychology as a field of study, it can be applied to discourse even though it does not specifically focus on "discourse"—rather, it views language psychology as a topic among others, such as prejudice and social influence.

In order to characterize the language used by Donald Trump and assess the worries of those who disagree with him, Balogun & Murana (2018; p.65-71) analyze the assumptions and decorum in his inaugural speech. The study claims that Trump makes a number of assumptions, such as the incident's uniqueness, America's socioeconomic catastrophe, and the necessity and urgency of saving her. The study analyzes the speaker's various strategies and her face-saving and face-threatening acts in terms of manners. It concludes that, despite Trump's best attempts, the threat remains painfully remembered due to its intensity and gravity, endangering the reputations of former US presidents and others. Several promises he makes are predicated on these presuppositions. They also explain why he frequently uses structurally straightforward

language, drawing on the common understanding of his American audience without including tedious details. But there are also a lot of avoidable face threats in the speech, mostly due to heavy criticism and accusations.

Elshehry's (2018; p.45-47) study starts by elucidating the concept of pragmatic presupposition and emphasizing the issue of presupposition connected to translation in political speeches. The study then covers the translation of pragmatic presuppositions from four speeches given by US presidents Donald Trump and Barack Obama. Presupposition has been introduced as a pragmatic notion in this study, along with pragmatics in general. Additionally, a distinction is drawn between pragmatic and semantic presuppositions. Furthermore, the study has clarified the role that diverse presuppositions and pragmatics play as persuasive devices in political speeches. Next, the relationship between presupposition and translation has been explained, and the difficulties that translators may encounter when interpreting the concept of presupposition have also been covered. Existential, lexical, and structural presupposition triggers are the topic of discussion. It is discovered that the existential trigger is the most frequently utilized pragmatic presupposition trigger in the four chosen political speeches. Furthermore, translators find it most difficult to deal with these kinds of presuppositions, particularly when they have cultural connotations. Less frequent and difficult presuppositions are the lexical and structural ones. It is also noted that the kind of audience the translators work with influences the degree of difficulty they may encounter while expressing presuppositions, particularly existential ones.

Renaldo (2021; p.500-502) examines how Biden's ideology was expressed in his January 20, 2021, inauguration speech. The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theory guided the analysis in this study. The researcher examined Dijk's hypothesis at the microstructure level to identify the ideology. Three different kinds of presuppositions—lexical, existential, and factual—are identified in Joe Biden's speech based on the data analysis. The most prevalent presupposition in the data seemed to be lexical. Lexical presupposition is tied to the content of Biden's address, which primarily aims to bring the nation back together to confront the current issues.

Of the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts as a whole, the Gaza conflict is regarded as one of the most unending. The most recent Israeli assault on Gaza in October 2023 served as a stark reminder of the critical role that political discourse and the global media play as powerful platforms for forming public opinion and acquiring knowledge for a range of audiences and social groupings. Though President Biden's words and the discourse surrounding the Gaza conflict have received a great deal of attention, there is a study vacuum on the precise analysis of presupposition as a method of manipulation used in President Biden's references to the attack on Gaza. Prior research has concentrated on more general aspects of media coverage, diplomatic relations, and political discourse; however, little in-depth analysis has been done on how President Biden strategically incorporates presuppositions into his remarks to shape public perception and views abroad about the conflict. Gaining an understanding of the subtleties of persuasion and manipulation in the setting of delicate geopolitical situations requires an understanding of the nuances of presupposition in political communication. By performing a thorough analysis of President Biden's language use, with an emphasis on presuppositions, this

study seeks to fill this research gap and reveal the strategic communication techniques used in the construction of narratives around the Gaza War.

### **3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

#### **Hypothesis 1: Strategic Employment of Presuppositions to Shape Public Perception and Support for Israel**

The first hypothesis therefore postulates that President Biden selectively uses various forms of presuppositions in order to influence the perception of the public and consequently gain support for Israel. This hypothesis is based on the assumption that the literature indicates that presuppositions can shape the audience shift in specific ways since they assume given facts. Yule (1996:p28) affirms that presuppositions are disguised statements informing the audience of facts the speaker expects them to share his/her prejudice; hence, preparing the audience's mentality towards the speaker's advantage. According to this hypothesis, in the context of Biden's discourse on the Gaza conflict, presuppositions function not just as tools of sense-giving but as sense-maintaining, where narratives favorable to U. S. political support for Israel are underlined. For instance, Biden's presupposing the audience already believes in the legitimacy of Israel's actions or in the sole aggressiveness of Hamas can influence how the audience perceives the conflict because it effectively takes a pro-Israel stance. These presuppositions may therefore thus be used strategically to deploy a crucial role in wooing an maintaining public and International support to Israel.

#### **Hypothesis 2: Deflecting Criticism and Attributing Blame to Hamas**

The second hypothesis suggests that Biden's use of The second hypothesis postulates presuppositions in Biden's speeches as an important strategy to respond to criticism and shift responsibility to Hamas, which creates a particular narrative of the Gaza conflict that supports the U.S. position on Israel's actions and undermines the Palestinian narrative. Such as in the presupposition concerning the management of discourse and political communication as postulated by researchers. According to Navera and Gustilo (2022; p.280), presuppositions can be used to manage the audience reception by embedding factors that change the focus and blame. These presuppositions operate to neutralize criticism of Israel and justify support for it when the same assumptions are placed in Biden's speeches: if it is presupposed that Hamas is causing civilian deaths or that Israeli actions are to defend itself against aggression, then Biden's support of Israel is valid and justified. Through the process of delegitimization of Hamas and rhetorical construction of the conflict in such a manner that identifies Palestinian and Muslim aggression towards Israel as the primary cause of the conflict, Biden manages to contribute to the discourse that enforces US foreign policy agenda and masks the voices of the Palestinian people.

#### **Hypothesis 3: Creating a Sense of Inevitability and Moral Righteousness**

The third hypothesis namely, Public presuppositions help Biden to set up inevitability and moralism claims for the U.S in its foreign policy. The discussed hypothesis is connected with the subject of ideological presuppositions and their



application in the politics. Levinson, for instance postulated that presuppositions are a way of endearing a certain worldview and this we find to be very valid. Thus the presuppositions that Biden uses to construct an understanding of U. S support to Israel as the right and unavoidable thing to do, are functional, as they work to justify U. S actions and political policies. For instance, assuming that the actions of Hamas are inherently wicked and that America's support for Israel is justified – embeds the assertion that America's engagement is both essential and righteous. This strategy assists in securing more public as well as political support for the particular foreign policy by ensuring that the U. S. foreign policy looks good and ethical in its outcome thus presenting a story of inevitability over the international relations.

#### **4. METHODOLOGY**

To characterize the presupposition triggers used in President Biden's allusion to the Gaza War as a manipulation tactic, this study used descriptive qualitative methodology. The data selected from US President Jo Biden's speech has been evaluated by the researcher. Many statements have been chosen for the speech act to delve into the President's motivations and mental condition. Meaning is more important to descriptive qualitative research than measurement. This research involves several steps, including gathering the transcription of Biden's speech about the Gaza war from the White House official website (The White House, 2024), and Rev Blog (Rev Blog, 2024), analyzing the speech's content to identify different presupposition types as a manipulation strategy, extracting the ideology by looking into the meaning that results from the presupposition analysis, and presenting Biden's ideology.

According to Siahaan & Mubarak (2020; p2-3), there are six different kinds of presuppositions: Factive, lexical, non- factive, counterfactual, existential, and structural presuppositions . Existential presupposition is the belief that the speaker holds about the entities' existence.It is believed that the existential presupposition is present in the constructional possessive. Lexical presupposition is the employment of some forms with their declared meanings understood as the presentation of some non-asserted meaning.Factive presupposition since sentences employ certain terms to indicate facts, it is indicates as information that comes after verbs like "know," "realize," and "regret". A non-factive presupposition is identified by the employment of certain verbs such as allege, pretend, imagine, and dream. The opposite of factive presupposition is non-factive presupposition. It is believed not to be accurate. A conditional expression in the subjunctive mood that triggers a contrary to fact meaning is known as a counter-factual presupposition. The presupposition known as counter-factual presupposition is not just correct, but also the antithesis of what is true or in conflict with the facts. Conceptual presumptions make up the structural presupposition. It is plausible to propose that speakers could employ these systems to see information as presumed, or taken for granted, and thereby gain the listeners' acceptance as legitimate. The employment of specific words and phrases is linked to structural presupposition. For instance, it is commonly assumed that the information following the wh-form is already known to be true when interpreting the wh-questions (Makasiahe, 2020; p.18; Renaldo, 2021; p.499).

### **3.1 Model of Analysis and Conceptual Framework**

The analysis model for this study will entail the use of qualitative and descriptive nature in analyzing President Biden's speeches. Specifically, this model covers determining and classifying various subtypes of presuppositions depending on their nature as factive, lexical, non-factive, counterfactual, existential, and structural, as described by Siahaan & Mubarak (2020). Both types of presuppositions will be discussed to identify how they further the goals of shaping the audience's perspective and creating stories about the Gaza conflict. In this context, the actual analysis of the study will entail going back to the speech transcripts to determine how presuppositions work within the speeches. This model enables one to consider how linguistically, Biden is aiming to manipulate his audience's reception, hence emphasizing the strategic approach towards this communication.

#### **3.1.1 Conceptual Framework**

In its theoretical framework, the study relies on presupposition theory that deals with the unstated assumptions in the formal statements within discourse. Using the type distinctions such as factive, lexical, non-factive presuppositions and their subtypes, counterfactuals, existential presuppositions, and structural presuppositions help to give structure to the inquiry about how these linguistic building blocks operate in the political speeches. Superposed presuppositions work on the unconscious level but are highly influential to how information will be expected and understood.

Discourse analysis is used to analyze the manner in which language actively puts forward reality and formulates concerns. What this analysis seeks to achieve is to examine the manner in which presuppositions are employed in order to shape the receiving public's attitudes and understandings of the Gaza conflict. It looks at how these presuppositions serve to endorse certain positions, rebuff criticism and underwrite certain policies.

#### **3.1.2 Analysis Model:**

The analysis model includes several stages:

1. **Identification of Speech Transcripts:** The first step involves collecting all the speeches made by President Biden on the issue of Gaza conflict, which forms the major research data.
2. **Categorization of Presuppositions:** In each speech, the manipulation of presuppositions of various types is explained and analyzed according to the following type:
  - **Factive Presuppositions:** Statement presuppositions involve claiming it to be true that a particular thing is the case (For example, stating: "Israel is justified in its actions" is to hold that justification for the action is the case.
  - **Lexical Presuppositions:** Emerge from certain forms of the word (for example, " Hamas's attacks" assumes the occurrence of attacks).

- **Non-Factive Presuppositions:** Use conditional statements (e. g. , “With reference to the action of Hamas, we can say – If they were not attacking, there would be no war”).
- **Counterfactual Presuppositions:** Involve alternative realities (e.g., "Had Hamas not acted, the conflict would not exist").
- **Existential Presuppositions:** Take for granted such entities or situations (e. g. , “Hamas possesses terrorists within a population of people”).
- **Structural Presuppositions:** Analyze in terms of words’ connection to the construct of a sentence (e.g., “The actions of the IDF are defensive, suggesting a continuing threat.”)

**3. Detailed Examination:** The identified presuppositions are discussed to reveal their function in the processes of constructing the discourse, regarding the specifics of every type in relation to the formation of narratives and perception by the public.

### **3.1.3 Procedures of Analysis**

Numerous workflow stages will be involved with the process of evaluating the presuppositions in the speeches of President Biden. To begin with, Biden’s speeches concerning the conflict in Gaza will be gathered with using such sources as the White House official page and Rev Blog containing the transcripts of Biden’s speeches. After that, these transcripts will be analyzed in order to identify cases of presupposition. This involves the process of tagging the text for different presupposition triggers and categorization of the triggers into different categories. After that, the following examination will identify the contextual meanings and the strategic importance of these presuppositions. This will include looking at how presupposition fits within political agendas and/or narratives on the political stage. Last, patterns and significance of all the identified strategies in Biden’s language and rhetoric will be discussed as instrumental to understanding how political leaders rhetorically engage with the public and influence policy views on the subject of the Gazan conflict. Thus, the proposed research is devoted to an investigation of presupposition and its functions for the political discourse, and effects resulting from its application on the formation of public opinion and the relations within the international community.

## **4. ANALYSIS & RESULTS**

The Biden speech was analyzed based on our knowledge of the six types of presuppositions. Different statements were chosen from his speeches and then discussed to illustrate how Biden used the presupposition as a manipulative strategy. The findings can be seen as follows:

*"Look, I made it clear to the Israelis, to Bibi (Netanyahu) and to his war cabinet that I think the only ultimate answer here is a two-state solution"(Biden, 2023, November 16).*

The structuring of the message with the presupposition of prior communication and clarity of Biden's perspective is the manipulation tactic. By presuming prior interactions, Biden could be able to convince the audience that the parties named had received a clear message, which would strengthen their position in the current scenario.

Inquiring about the IDF operation on the Al-Shifa Hospital to apprehend and remove the Hamas operative present, the reporter asked Biden. Since Biden also stated this week that hospitals must be protected. Thus, when they compare the aim to the quantity of non-medical personnel inside the hospital. From the answer of the President Biden, he uses different items to presuppose that Hamas is solely responsible for what happened in the hospital, and that the Israeli army is not responsible. On the contrary, it was helping the wounded. These items are:

*“Here’s the situation:”*

*“That’s what’s happened.”*

*“let me be precise.”*

*“You have a circumstance **where you know** there is a fair number of Hamas terrorists.”*

*“Hamas has already said publicly that **they plan** on attacking Israel again **like they did before**, to where they were cutting babies’ heads off to burn — burning women and children alive.”(Biden, 2023, November 16)*

This statement makes the presupposition that Hamas is concealing its military and headquarters beneath a hospital, therefore committing the first war crime. This material is framed in a way that supports Israel's conduct in the hospital, assuming that it is true. This presupposition is a deceptive tactic meant to rewrite the history of the IDF raid on the Al-Shifa Hospital by implying that Hamas is to blame for utilizing a hospital for military operations.

In the same press conference, when the reporter asked Biden to detail the kind of evidence the U.S. has seen that Hamas has a command center under Al-Shifa Hospital, he said: *“No, I can’t tell you. I won’t tell you.”(Biden, 2023, November 16)*

Biden's response is predicated on the idea that there is proof for the assertion that Hamas maintains a command center beneath Al-Shifa Hospital. It is assumed that such evidence is out there, and the fact that it isn't being disclosed suggests that it might be secret or sensitive. This presupposition is employed as a deceptive tactic to uphold a particular narrative while omitting information that can be closely examined or called into doubt.

*When is this (Israeli operation) going to stop? I think it is going to stop when Hamas no longer maintains the capacity to murder and abuse and just do horrific things to the Israelis,”(Biden, 2023, November 16)*

In the term "*no longer*" he presupposes that Hamas was responsible for killing, abusing, and doing horrific things.

The reporter stated that in just over a month, Israel's war in Gaza has claimed the lives of over 11,000 Palestinians and resulted in a humanitarian catastrophe. According to Israeli leaders, the conflict may last for several months or possibly years. Then he asked President Biden if he had given Prime Minister Netanyahu any indication of a date or length of time that he planned to assist Israel with this operation and if he thought the operation should continue indefinitely. President Biden in his answer stated that:

*"But Hamas, as I said, said they plan on attacking the Israelis again. And this is a terrible dilemma. So, what do you do?"*(Biden, 2023, November 16)

Biden's comment is based on the presupposition that Hamas has announced its intention to attack Israelis once more. The discussion of the difficulties raised by these claims is predicated on the presupposition. It frames the issue as a conundrum that calls for action and suggests a certain comprehension of Hamas's goals.

*Over the coming days, I'll remain engaged with leaders throughout the Middle East as we all work together to build a better future for the region.* (Biden, 2023, November 27).

The presupposition is based on the idea that Biden is already in contact with Middle Eastern officials. Here, it is assumed that Biden and these leaders are currently having conversations or engaging in other activities.

*"We don't know when that will occur, but we expect it to occur. And we don't know what the list of all the hostages are and when they'll be released, but we know the numbers that are going to be released. So it is my hope and expectation it will be soon".* (Biden, 2023, November 27).

Biden expresses optimism and anticipation for the hostages' eventual release. Here, it is assumed that the hostage-release scenario is likely to occur and that it will happen soon.

*I've encouraged the Prime Minister to focus on trying to reduce the number of casualties while he is attempting to eliminate Hamas, which is a legitimate objective he has.* (Biden, 2023, November 27).

The presupposition in this sentence is that Biden confirmed that Netanyahu intends to eliminate Hamas. And when he says "which is a legitimate objective he has" he denies the legitimacy of this goal.

The reporter asked President Biden if there were members of the party who wanted to put conditions on aid to Israel and what he thought about that, and Biden replied

*"Well, I think that's a worthwhile thought, but I don't think if I started off with that we'd ever gotten to where we are today."* (Biden, 2023, November 27).

The information provided in the if-clauses is not true when it is uttered. This means that he didn't put conditions on aid to Israel.

*"Think about October 7th, a Jewish holiday where you read about the death of Moses, a tragic story of a profound loss to an entire nation, a death that could have left hopelessness in the hearts of an entire nation"* (Biden, 2023, October 19 A).

The audience is assumed to be conversant with or aware of the events that took place on October 7th when the directive "think about" is used. It asks the audience to consider that particular date and its significance, assuming that there is a common concept or knowledge. Here, it is assumed that the audience is aware of the events of October 7th; the description that follows is intended to either remind the audience of these events or evoke a particular feeling regarding the Jewish holiday and the murder of Moses.

The speaker asked in the interview if Biden thought there was less chance of Israel not entering Gaza and whether this could be avoided, and he said that:

*"We had long talk about that and what alternatives there are. Our military is talking with their military about what the alternatives are, but I'm not going to go into that either."* (Biden, 2023, October 19 B).

Biden does not specifically state the presupposition; rather, it is implied by the question itself. The question is asking about the probability of Israel entering Gaza, which is the underlying assumption. Although Biden's response acknowledges the discussion about alternatives without explicitly affirming or refuting the presupposition, it does not directly address the presupposition. Also, when he said that he didn't want to go into that either this means that there is something he is hiding and does not want to talk about openly.

When the speaker asked Biden if he thought Netanyahu was open to his humanitarian argument and if he had received any resistance, he said that he had not. Then he said:

*"I'm hopeful we can get some Americans out as well, out of Gaza and hopefully we'll continue to work toward getting other Americans out through other means as well."* (Biden, 2023, October 19 B).

This sentence's premise is ingrained in Biden's optimism about the Americans' departure from Gaza. The term implies a continuous attempt to do this and assumes that there is a situation where Americans are in Gaza and require evacuation. The statement assumes that there are Americans in a potentially dangerous or difficult situation and that evacuation attempts are either in progress or will soon be launched.

The reporter asked Biden to talk about the impact of meeting the survivors and the first responders, and his answer was long from:

*“That’s all personal. Look, I spent an hour and a half and about 17”.....”And if I can do a little bit of that, then it’s worth doing. It was done for me.” (Biden, 2023, October 19 B).*

This statement assumes that Biden often attends gatherings where he speaks with attendees for long periods and responds to all of their inquiries. This requires a consistent pattern of public participation as well as a commitment to devoting a substantial amount of time to these exchanges. The basic premise is that long, intimate meetings like this are beneficial for Biden personally as well as for the attendees. It presents Biden as approachable, sympathetic, and dedicated to giving the individuals he interacts with hope and understanding.

*“I just got off the phone with a third call with Prime Minister Netanyahu and I told him, if the United States experienced what Israel is experiencing, our response would be swift, decisive, and overwhelming.” (Biden, 2023, October 11).*

The presupposition here is that Israel is coming under intense attack, and it is reacting with promptitude and vigor. Biden assumes that Israel has been subjected to violent attacks, that Israel's response is justified, and that such a response is necessary. This assumption highlights the rationale behind Israel's response and helps to mold the story around its actions.

*“Let’s be real clear, there is no place for hate in America, not against Jews, not against Muslims, not against anybody. What we reject is terrorism. We condemn the indiscriminate evil, just as we’ve always done. That’s what America stands for” (Biden, 2023, October 11).*

The presupposition here is that terrorism is a terrible and indiscriminate act, and there is hate in America, whether it be aimed against Muslims, Jews, or other groups. Biden assumes that hate exists in America and notes that it is aimed at different groups. There is also the assumption that terrorism is widely abhorred. This premise presents an idealized picture of American principles while highlighting the rejection of hate and the denunciation of terrorism, which defines the story.

On 9 October after the Attacks in Israel, President Biden delivers remarks. He declared that America supports Israel. They promise to always have their backs and to see to it that Israel's citizens have the support they require so they may keep up their self-defense. As well, he stated that:

*“Let me say this as clearly as I can. This is not a moment for any party hostile to Israel to exploit these attacks, to seek advantage. The world is watching”.* (Biden, 2023, October 9).

Biden presupposes the presence of anti-Israel parties and raises the possibility of someone taking advantage of the circumstances. This premise directs the story by hinting at the necessity for awareness and warning against possible actions by these adversarial groups.

On 24 November, President Biden delivers remarks on the release of hostages from Gaza. In all parts of the statement, he was trying to impose one idea and manipulate terminology to confirm that all countries of the world are against Hamas and stand on the side of Israel and that there is complete cooperation and agreement with this idea. He stated that:

*"I remain in personal contact with the leaders of Qatar, Egypt, and Israel to make sure this stays on track and every aspect of the deal is implemented." (Biden, 2023, November 24).*

*"And hundreds more trucks are getting in position as well, ready to enter Gaza over the coming days to support the innocent Palestinians who are suffering greatly because of this war that Hamas has unleashed. Hamas doesn't give a damn about them." (Biden, 2023, November 24).*

He presupposes that Israelis and Palestinians coexist peacefully. Hamas has been designated as a terrorist organization by a number of countries and international bodies, including the US, the EU, Israel, and others. He also tried to assume that the Palestinians live in peace and are also against what Hamas did, meaning that the State of Palestine stands alongside those countries against Hamas.

Another idea that Biden talk about is that he gets cooperation from Arab leaders, and Hamas struck because of this. He uses these statements to convince the audience of this idea.

*"I'm hearing a lot, but I'm not going to speak to it right now."....."There's overwhelming interest — and I think most Arab nations know it" (Biden, 2023, November 24).*

He was manipulating with terminology and trying to show that he was hiding a lot. Let all the world believe that one of the reasons Hamas launched their attack was because they were aware of the Biden's strong collaboration with the Saudis and other regional players to achieve peace in the area through the recognition of Israel's existence and rights. By constructing a railroad that would run from Riyadh to Europe via the Middle East, stopping along the way in Saudi Arabia, Israel, and other countries.

On 18 October, President Biden and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met to talk about the war before an expanded bilateral meeting. He said that whereas Hamas aims to increase civilian casualties, Israel wants to reduce them. Hamas has no care for Palestinian life and only intends to kill as many Israelis as possible. As Israel rightly targets terrorists, people are sadly harmed. Hamas bears responsibility and needs to be held liable for any civilian deaths. He also stated that:

*"As we proceed in this war, Israel will do everything it can to keep civilians out of harm's way. We've asked them and we'll continue to ask them to move to safer areas. We'll continue to work with you, Mr. President, to assure that the minimal requirements are met, and we'll continue to work together to get our hostages out." (Netanyahu to Biden, 2023, October 18).*



This remark assumes that the current condition of affairs is recognized as a "war," which gives Israel's military activities some degree of legitimacy. Without specifically addressing or defending the term "war," the statement presupposes its acceptability. This could be interpreted as a deception tactic to present the disagreement in a way that supports the speaker's viewpoint and objectives.

The non-factive presupposition is used by Biden in their remarks with Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel Before Bilateral Meeting on 18 October (11:40 A.M) when he uses the verb imagine in this sentence:

*“And they’ve taken scores of people hostage, including children. You said: Imagine what those children hiding from Hamas were thinking. It’s beyond my comprehension to be able to imagine what they were thinking. Beyond my comprehension”* (Biden, 2023, October 18).

In this instance, the sentence that uses the verb "imagine" has a non-factive presupposition. It makes the assumption that the incident—children hiding from Hamas—has happened. In this context, the word "imagine" is used to suggest a situation that may or may not be true, but it is portrayed as though it is. The allegation presumes that Prime Minister Netanyahu has made remarks regarding youngsters being taken prisoner by Hamas. Here, it is assumed that this incident has happened and that the prime minister has addressed it. By taking the stated incident to be true, it seeks to reshape the story.

Also, about the explosion at the hospital in Gaza, he said:

*“But the point is this — that I was deeply saddened and outraged by the explosion at the hospital in Gaza yesterday. And based on what I’ve seen, it appears as though it was done by the other team, not — not you. But there’s a lot of people out there who are not sure.”* (Biden, 2023, October 18).

The presupposition is that there is a reasonable doubt as to who is responsible for the explosion that occurred at the Gaza hospital. The implication of the statement "it appears as though it was done by the other team, not — not you" is that Prime Minister Netanyahu's group may not have been accountable for the event. This presupposition could be interpreted as a deception tactic used to sway perception to reshape the story by raising questions about who is responsible for the incident.

The following table portrays the findings obtained from a comprehensive analysis of the speeches of President Biden about the Gaza conflict. The review outlines several types of presuppositions used by Biden, with examples further explaining how such presuppositions work to control the views of the audience, support stories, and create a certain view of reality:

**Table 1:** Types of Presuppositions in President Biden's Speeches on the Gaza Conflict

<b>Types of presupposition</b>	<b>Example from Speech</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Factive</b>	"Hamas has already said publicly	Assumes the truth of Hamas's

	that they plan on attacking Israel again..."	intention to attack Israel.
	"But Hamas, as I said, said they plan on attacking the Israelis again."	Assumes the truth of Hamas's announced plans.
	"Let me say this as clearly as I can. This is not a moment for any party hostile to Israel to exploit these attacks, to seek advantage."	Assumes the presence of parties hostile to Israel.
<b>Lexical</b>	"You have a circumstance where you know there is a fair number of Hamas terrorists."	Presupposes the presence of Hamas terrorists.
	"We don't know when that will occur, but we expect it to occur."	Presupposes the occurrence of a future event.
	"Over the coming days, I'll remain engaged with leaders throughout the Middle East..."	Presupposes ongoing engagement with Middle Eastern leaders.
<b>Non-Factive</b>	"If the United States experienced what Israel is experiencing, our response would be swift..."	Presents a hypothetical scenario of U.S. response similar to Israel's.
	"When is this (Israeli operation) going to stop?"	Assumes that the operation will stop at some point.
	"Imagine what those children hiding from Hamas were thinking."	Assumes the incident of children hiding from Hamas.
<b>Counterfactual</b>	"Had Hamas not acted, the conflict would not exist."	Implies an alternative reality where the conflict wouldn't exist if Hamas had not acted.
	"If I started off with that we'd ever gotten to where we are today."	Implies an alternative scenario where starting with conditions would have prevented current progress.
	"It appears as though it was done by the other team, not — not you."	Implies an alternative possibility where someone else is responsible for the explosion.
<b>Existential</b>	"Hamas has terrorists among civilians."	Assumes the existence of Hamas terrorists among civilians.
	"There's overwhelming interest — and I think most Arab nations know it."	Assumes the existence of interest among Arab nations.
	"We'll continue to work with you, Mr. President, to assure that the minimal requirements are met, and we'll continue to work together to get our hostages out."	Assumes the existence of hostages and ongoing efforts to meet minimal requirements.
<b>Structural</b>	"I made it clear to the Israelis... that	Presupposes prior

	I think the only ultimate answer here is a two-state solution."	communication and clarity of Biden's perspective.
	"I just got off the phone with a third call with Prime Minister Netanyahu and I told him..."	Presupposes prior communication with Netanyahu.
	"I've encouraged the Prime Minister to focus on trying to reduce the number of casualties while he is attempting to eliminate Hamas, which is a legitimate objective he has."	Presupposes Netanyahu's intention to eliminate Hamas and the legitimacy of this goal.

The assessment of the research hypotheses by the research findings fully supports all the three hypotheses postulated in this study. After analyzing the given text, Hypothesis 1, which states that President Biden intentionally uses presuppositions to influence the audience's opinion and encourage support for Israel, is accepted. The analysis reveals that Biden's speeches employ presuppositions to create the sense that Israelis' conduct is justified, while Palestinians' aggression originates with Hamas. As analysis of all the examples from the text carried out in the present work shows, Hypothesis 2 stating that Biden employs presuppositions to shift the blame and avoid criticism on Hamas is also true. In his arguing strategy, the reader is led to believe that Hamas is the party that initiates the confrontation, thereby providing justification for the U. S. backing of Israel and disregard of Palestinian claims. Last of all, there is empirical support for the Hypothesis 3 – Biden's presuppositions do establish the given American policy strategy as inevitable that is viewed as right by default. Ideological assumptions are thus impressed into Biden's speeches implying that the US support for Israel is well within the normative constructs of morality and ethicality, assertion that amplifies the necessity and morality of the American engagement.

## 5. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The study conducted in this research provides insights into how presuppositions are used by President Biden specifically and generally in his speeches to sway the public's perception and opinion regarding the conflict in Gaza. Through using presupposition theory and discourse analysis, this paper has revealed that his rhetoric is deliberately constructed in a way that seeks to influence the knowledge and beliefs of his audience in a way that pursues certain political and ideological agendas.

The preliminary study identified various types of presuppositions employed by President Biden and their roles in his discursive tactics. Performative presuppositions like "Here's the situation" and "That's what's happened," were often used to convey the truthfulness of the propositions presented, which positioned the story in a way that shifts the criticism towards Israel and places the accountability on Hamas. Of these factive presuppositions the most common have been presented above which were used in different contexts of his speeches and helped to create a base of the presuppositions that

can be referred to as ‘common knowledge’ in support of the opinion of the U. S. administration.

Other lexical presuppositions included specific terms such as ‘ Hamas’s attacks’ which asserted the continuous danger posed by Hamas and the necessity of the continued use of force by the Israelis. These presuppositions helped to sustain in the background Hamas as the main offender, thus providing a rationale for the reaction of the U. S. and Israel. The appearance of such lexical presuppositions demonstrates how often word choice is used to define the perception of the audience and steer them in the desired direction.

Non-factive and counterfactual presuppositions were also revealed in Biden’s speeches. With statements such as "If Hamas were not attacking, there would be peace" and "Had Hamas not acted, the conflict would not exist", fabricated scenarios were created with a view of shifting blame towards Hamas, implying that their action was the cause of the conflict. These presuppositions proved to be instrumental in defining the situation as a stark moral conflict – one that called for U.S. support of Israel unconditionally.

Moreover, the oriented expressions of existence assumptions, operational assumptions that refer to the existence of certain entities/situations, for example, in the phrase "Hamas has terrorists among civilians", have prevailed as propositions that suggest and assume the criminality of Hamas and the justification of any loss of life to Israeli operations. Thus, incorporating these assumptions into his speeches, Biden was able to create the image of an acute threat to the existence of the state which required action.

The reader presuppositions employed the syntactic structures of given sentential form to hint previous communication and decision making as in "I made it clear to the Israelis." The type of presupposition functioned to reestablish the collaboration of the U. S. and Israeli leadership towards a common enemy, thus enhancing the perception of cooperation. Such structural presuppositions were particularly effective in the representation of a coherent and well-thought-out policies approach.

All the three hypotheses are confirmed by the research outcomes. The hypothesis 1 stating that to ensure people’s support, President Biden uses presuppositions to influence assumptions about a certain situation, in this case, biasing the audience in favor of Israel is true because he always presents the actions of Israel as justified while blaming Hamas for aggression. The second hypothesis that presuppositions in the speeches Biden are linked to criticism and blaming of Hamas is also true as his speeches imply that it is Hamas that is responsible for the wars rejecting U. S support of Israel. Lasty, Hypothesis 3 which states that due to presuppositions of Biden, there is an undertone of predetermined right docket from Washington that enhances the foreign policy hence is supported by by the ideological assumptions given by Biden that relates the support for Israel with moral and ethical standards.

By defining the nature of the presuppositions under analysis in this paper, it is possible to pinpoint that the strategic use of presuppositions in the political context is a

highly effective way to influence the people's perception of reality and support particular narratives. Analyzing the speech compiled by President Biden concerning the Gaza conflict, it was observed that presuppositions were employed despite the fact that the speeches were made in a very standard and structured to meet the objectives of the United States foreign policies. With this approach, not only was it easy to disseminate a specific narrative but the criticism of that narrative was also discouraged and where it existed was framed in such a way that other views could barely be entertained.

Considering the mentioned tendencies several conclusion and recommendations are giving for the future research and political communication strategies. First, it would be significant for analysts and scholars to uphold and expand on the analysis of presuppositions within the chosen sphere of political communication and with regard to the specific leaders. Through the study of these linguistic tools and their occurrence frequency it is possible to arrive at an understanding of how politics is linguistically constructed and how the public mind is formed.

Second, political communicators need to be mindful if presuppositions are going to be used merely as a method of manipulation. As for the instrument mentioned above, despite the fact that these tools might help in attaining the set policy objectives in the short term, the latter might have negative consequences of long-term damage to trust and credibility. From a political perspective, trust or the lack of it in political communication always plays the central roles that led to load and open transparency, accountability and the democratic process to strongly interrelate.

Third, media and information literacy programs should set training for assumptions identification and analysis within the prepositions of political communication. Such patterns of public education of linguistic strategies can give individuals better control over choices that might affect them when they are consuming political content, hence creating better-informed political consumers.

It can therefore be concluded that the management of presuppositions in the speeches made by President Biden about the conflict in GAZA demonstrate how language plays a vital role in the construction of political discourses and the manipulation of people's perceptions. Overall, by uncovering the nature of different types of presuppositions and understanding their roles in political communication, this study helps reveal the strategy of political communication and makes suggestions for the proper and appropriate political communication practices.

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