A Pragmatic Analysis of Presupposition Triggers in Coronavirus News Headlines

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ABSTRACT: *Since news headlines are design to grab the reader's attention, specific language variants are used to meet the two objectives of the news headlines writing process: conciseness and informativeness. While the second criteria necessitate a reversion to pragmatics, the first can be satisfied with a few grammatical variations. Presupposition a pragmatic construct that is used to the news producers' advantage since it enables readers and listeners to easily grasp headlines and assess their value. To understand how presupposition affects news interpretations, this study looks into and evaluates the presupposition triggers found in news headlines. To that goal, coronavirus-related news articles are chosen for analysis. Sixty-six headlines are picked, including 29 from Fox News and 37 from BBC News. The findings show that lexical presupposition triggers show significant occurrences in both Fox news and BBC news. Due to the nature of the stories covered, iterative verbs are used often.*

KEY WORD: presupposition, lexical triggers, news headlines.

INTRODUCTION

It is stated that news headline plays a crucial role in attracting people's attention to read the story the news introduces. It is the first thing that people overlook and then they determine whether to read the news or not. Accordingly, it is the role of the editor to use all the possible means to make it as sparkle as possible. This, in turn, requires designing a brief, impressive and persuasive headlines with heavily loaded information. In this realm, Ludwig & Gilmore (2005, p. 107) state "The best headlines both 'tell and sell', that is, they tell the reader quickly what the news is and persuade the reader that the story is worth reading".

The requirement of making sparkle headlines pushes the editor to linguistically deviate the norms. The deviations, however, result in consequences; among which is the difficulty of interpreting the headline story by resigning to the syntactic or semantic properties. Pragmatics, in this case, will be of a focal role to help in interpreting the news as it is after the intention of the editor. Accordingly, Leech (1983, p. 5) comes to assure this role stating that meaning is "derived not from the formal properties of words and constructions, but from the way in which utterances are used and how they relate to the context in which they are uttered".

One of the most effective pragmatic mechanism that solve the puzzle of interpreting meaning is presupposition (Al- Hinawi & Al- Ebadi, 2017, p. 115). It helps in achieving the goal of the news in addition to its relationship with brevity and diversity of the news language due to the impossibility of complete explicitness of language. The background knowledge that presupposition refers to or that the editor assumes to exist in the reader's mind plays a vital role in interpreting as well as formulating the meaning of the news.

Recently, a number of studies have been tackled with news studying its discourse, syntactic, semantic as well as pragmatic aspect. A number of these studies that tackle the pragmatics of news investigate such concepts as speech acts, allusions as well as fuzziness; however, as far as the researchers know, presupposition as a pragmatic concept does not gain its share in these studies. This, in fact, urges the researchers to conduct this study to analyze the presupposition triggers embedded in news headlines.

Generally speaking, news headlines has special structure that makes (it distinguished and hence this causes difficulty in explaining their syntactic and semantic properties, therefore pragmatics might be the best guide to interpret the headlines. As far as presupposition is concerned, it is said that presupposition play a vital role in news pragmatics as it refers to the shared knowledge which should be available to facilitate the interpretation of the news. Based on these facts the following questions need to be addressed:

1. With regard to the distinguished structure of headlines, are presupposition triggers workable in news headlines?
2. Which type of presupposition triggers is the most widely used in the Fox News Headlines?
3. Which type of presupposition triggers is the most widely used in the BBC News Headlines?
4. What are the existential sub- types that are widely used in news headlines?

Based on the research questions, the study hypothesizes that:

1. Presupposition triggers are workable in news headlines.
2. Lexical triggers are the most widely used triggers in news headlines Fox news.
3. Lexical triggers are the most widely used triggers in news headlines BBC news.
4. Adjectives is the most widely used existential sub-type.

Adopting and elaborating Khaleel's (2010) model, the current study aims to analyze presupposition triggers existed in news headlines. It aims to analyze how presupposition helps in interpreting news.

It digs deep in investigating presupposition types as well as subtypes that are used in news headlines as a means to facilitate and accelerate understanding the news. The study is designed to show the degree and percentage of each of these types and sub- types. It also intends to show how presupposition is used in headlines as a means of attraction to reads the news by reclining on the shared knowledge.

The Headline

It is the core part in the structure of the news that summarizes what the whole story is about. Moreover, it is that line that is located at the top of the news and written in bold to attract the reader's attention (Van Dijk, 1988, p. 53). Cotter (2010, p. 26) advocates that headlines are characterized as being short, maximally informative and of a font size that refers to its importance. In the same vein, Crystal and Davy (1969, p. 174) further their explanation by referring to the reader's reaction towards headlines:

Headlines have to contain a clear, succinct and if possible intriguing message, to kindle a spark of interest in the potential reader, who, an average, is a person whose eyes moves swiftly down a page and stops when something catches his attention.

From the above discussion, it seems that there is an agreement concerning the feature of attractiveness in headlines. In this respect, Mirbella &Ariana (2010, p. 187) propose that "the author shows his application of the reader's capability to understand and notice linguistic features by using different linguistic methods to enhance the effect of the headline". Thus, it can be said that the editor depends mainly on pragmatics by using all the possible linguistic features (whether ordinary straight forward structures or deviations) to arouse the reader's curiosity.

The importance of the headlines, can be traced to the four main functions they achieve. These can be summarized as follows:

(a) An informative function in terms of summarizing or abstracting the news report,

(b) An interpersonal function in relation to attracting readers'/listeners' attention,

(c) A news value function concerning initiating and maximizing the newsworthiness of events, and

(d) A framing function with respect to providing a lens on, a stance toward, or an angle on the rest of the news report (Bednarek and Caple 2012: 100-1, cited in Al- Hindawi and Al-Aadili, 2019, p. 154- 55).

Along with these features, they (ibid) refer to the linguistic strategies used by headlines' editors that can serve to accomplish the above functions. These are:

(a) Strong, intense, emotional/ evaluative words,

(b) Rhetorical devices and foregrounding techniques such as punning, allusion, metaphor, idioms, pseudo-direct quotes,

(c) Omission of functional/ grammatical words (e.g. determiners, auxiliaries, etc.)

These linguistic features are all used as means in news headlines to make it as sparkle as possible for the reader.

Presupposition

For Yule (1996, p. 25) presupposition is what the speaker assumes to be the case prior to make an utterance. In line with this, Lawal (2003, p. 153) proposes that presupposition is "the explicit assumption about the real world which speakers make and on which the meaning of an utterance largely depends". Peccei (2000:19) states that presuppositions are "the speakers' shared background information", and inferences about what is assumed to be true in the utterance rather than directly asserted to be true". He refers to presuppositions as conditions that are important for performing felicitous speech acts. Hence, the presupposition in (1–b), which is assumed to be mutually accepted by discourse participants, makes the sentence (1-a) felicitous, otherwise, it will be infelicitous (Karttunen, 1974; Stalnaker, 1974; Heim, 1982, 1983).

(1) a. John stopped going to the movies.

   b. John used to go to the movies.

Presupposition highlights the importance of the shared knowledge on which the interpretation of the utterance meaning is dependent. Both participant whether speaker or addressee relying on this knowledge.

As for Renkema (1993, p. 154) presupposition is "special type of implicit information". Implicitness, in this sense is what pragmatics is after. Thus, Stalnaker emphasizes the important of realizing the difference between semantic presupposition and pragmatic presupposition. In his view, pragmatic presupposition escorts semantic presupposition and not vice versa. Therefore, "if a definite description semantically presupposes the existence of a suitable referent, then it follows that speakers using definite will pragmatically presuppose the existence of such referents" (Web Source 1). Accordingly, it can be said that pragmatic presupposition is attached to any utterance and that the speaker is usually expecting its existence to help in interpreting the utterance meaning. In fact, semantic presupposition is based on logical relation whereas pragmatic presupposition is based on the appropriateness of use. In other words, pragmatic presupposition is context- dependent. Levinson (1983, p. 177) describes the role of pragmatic presupposition explains the relation between the speaker and the appropriateness of the utterance in a context.

METHODOLOGY AND DISCUSSION

Data Collection

The data have been collected selectively from online headlines of two famous channels: Fox News Channel which is an American conservative cable television news channel and BBC News Channel which is a British free-to-air television news channel. The study is devoted to headlines tackling

coronavirus, hence 37 news headlines have been chosen from BBC channel and 29 headlines have been chosen from fox news. The selection was based on selecting headlines that include presupposition triggers discussed in the theoretical part.

Data Analysis and Discussion

In utterances, there are different words, phrases or constructions that mark the existence of presuppositions (Reah, 2002; Karttunen cited in Levinson, 1983; Saeed, 1997; Stalnaker, 1974). These are "presupposition-generating linguistic items" (Levinson, 1983, p. 179). With the existence of these triggers, presupposition correlates the linguistic structure to extralinguistic context to generate inferences. These triggers are categorized differently by different linguist. Yule (1996), for example, categorizes them into six types, namely existential, structural, factive, lexical, non-factive, and counter-factual. Reah (2002, p. 106) mentions three, which are: certain words, such as change of state verbs, the definite article "the" and the possessive pronouns "his/ her", and Wh-questions. To this list Richardson (2007, p. 64) cited in (Al- Hindawi and Al- Aadili, 2019) adds another trigger category namely; "nominal presupposition" where the "noun or adjectives are used to qualify or modify noun phrases". On the other hand, Karttunen (as cited in Levinson, 1983, p. 181) has collected thirty-one kinds of such triggers. Karttunen's categorization is somehow more comprehensive and explanatory for this reason, Khaleel (2010, p. 528- 29) built his model based on Karttunen's model. He categorizes Karttunen's thirteen kinds of triggers into three categories namely; existential, structural and lexical. Within this categorization there is a sub- categorization that devote certain grammatical categories into one of these three types of triggers, therefore he assigned the possessive constructions to the existential triggers, seven types of verbs to the lexical presupposition, and six types of grammatical constructions to the structural triggers. In fact, this model is a comprehensive and explanatory one but this study aims to broaden this model by adding some sub- categories to Khaleel's (2010) model.
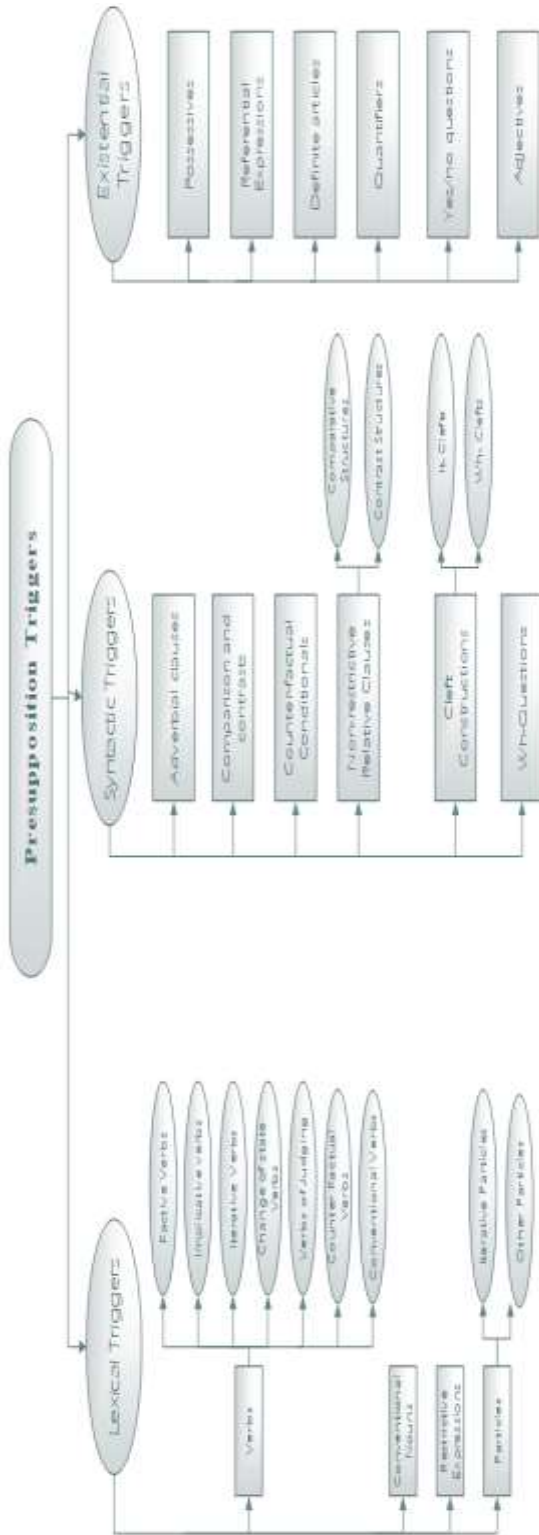
Figure (1) The Developed Model

Based on the abovementioned model, the data can be analyzed as in the following:

i)   Lexical Triggers

Certain verbs as well as other lexical items trigger presupposition if they are found in utterances:

a) Factive verbs

These verbs are called so because they presuppose the truth of their complement clause. Many verbs like *realize; know*; *learn; remember; appreciate; saw; forced to; agree; make sense; amuse; bear in mind; regret* are factive verbs and their existence in the utterances urge the addressee to presuppose the truth of the proposition expressed through the clause (Crystal, 1997, p. 147). For example;

> (Item 16 Fox News) *Tucker: Now we see that COVID lockdowns aren't the only solution*   (See appendix 2)

> *>> COVID lockdowns are solutions.*

The verb in the above sentence is a factive one. The sentence clearly states that lockdowns are solutions but it is not enough there must be other solutions due to the seriousness of the disease.

b) Implicative verbs

Implicative verbs are some verbs that take infinitival complement. This type of verbs give rise to presuppositions involving their complement. Example of such verbs are: *mange to; plan to; fail to; forget to; happened to; and avoided to.* For example;

> (Item 19Fox News) *Murdochs Failed To Rein In Fox News 'Hoax' Narrative Amid Coronavirus.* (See appendix 2)

> *>> Murdochs did not rein 'Hoax' narrative amid coronavirus.*

The above piece of news is a reaction against media deliberate ignorance of the danger of coronavirus. It tells that the media did not manage to veil the truth of the severity of the virus.

c) Iterative Verbs

According to Crystal (1997, p. 247) iterative refers to "an event which takes place repeatedly". Verbs of this type include: *repeat; restore; reestablish; replay; repeal; come back* etc.

> (Item 23 BBC News) *Coronavirus warning: swift return to normality is "wholly unrealistic" - BBC News* (See appendix 5)

> *>>Normality was realistic.*

This piece of news is claimed by UK government's chief medical adviser who is declaring that it is hard to recover the normal life for the time being because of the virus.

d) Change- of – state verbs

Wright (2002, p. 339) defines these verbs as a special class of verbs that "involve a change in the internal composition of an entity undergoing a particular event". He further classifies them into two types: *externally caused change* of state verbs, including verbs like: *break; cool;* and *freeze; bake; boil; crack; dry; lengthen; melt; open; shatter; straighten; widen;* and *internally caused change of state verbs* including verbs like*: bloom; blossom; corrode; decay; erode; ferment; germinate; molt; rot; rust; sprout; stagnate; and wilt.* For example;

(Item 20 BBC News) *Putin: Russia passed the peak of coronavirus infection.* (See appendix 5)

>> Russia reached the peak.

This is a rather comforting announcement of President Vladimir Putin. He is declaring that Russia nationwide lockdown was being eased from 12 May. This is an attempt to urge business to come back again and to stop unemployment.

e) Verbs of judging

Such a category of verbs refers to verbs that "describe the person's judgmental attitude towards another person (or institute) on a certain presumably factual ground" (Web Source 3). This category includes: accuse; criticize; praise; etc. For example;

(Item 13 Fox News) *Pete Hegseth praises 'revolt of the gym owners, revolt of the salon owners' against lockdown orders.* (See appendix 2)

>> Pete Hegseth thinks that 'revolt of the gym owners is good.

Pete Hegseth, who is a Fox channel contributor, extolled the revolt done by gym and salon owners against the lockdown orders which, in his opinion, have endangered the livelihoods of millions of people.

f) Counterfactual verbs

Crystal (1997, p. 147) writes that a counterfactual verb presupposes that the proposition in their complement clause is not only untrue but also contrary to what is true. Verb like 'pretend' is an example of this type. For example; "*Max is pretending that he was sick",* which presupposes that "*Max realized that he was sick".*

The data, however, does not include this type of verb.

g) Conventional Verbs

With reference to Palmer's (1981: 170) and Levinson (1983, p. 206), Khaleel (2010: 532) explains that the presupposition of an utterance represents part of its conventional meaning. For example;

(Item 17 Fox News) *Ingraham: Experts don't like to admit they're wrong.* (See appendix 2)

>>*Experts are wrong.*

Laura Ingraham, a conservative television host, reacts against coronavirus experts' advices. She thinks that their advices are unreasonable because all their advices are proven to be not exactly right, yet they do not retreat. She assigns this to their unwillingness to admit their being wrong which might lessen their credibility.

h) Conventional nouns

Khaleel (ibid) adds that conventionality is not restricted only to verbs but it also involves other lexical items; i.e., nouns. For example; "*He is a bachelor.* Which presupposes *"He is unmarried".* In fact, the collected data have not recorded such an item.

i) Restrictive expressions

Some expression like *only; just; another*; etc. restrict what follows them (Liang & Liu, 2016, p. 69). For example; *"She only slapped him".* Which give rise to "*She did nothing else".* There is no record to such expressions in the data.

j) Particles

Particles are function words associated with another word or phrase to impart meaning (Wikipedia). There are two sub- classes of particles trigger presuppositions. These are:

1. Iterative particles

Words like *again; too; anymore; another time*; *in return; back* etc. trigger presuppositions with their occurrence in utterances. They presuppose that the verb in the utterances is either repeated or not depending on the whether the utterances are negated or not.

(Item 29 BBC News) *Loved ones can meet again outdoors - Boris Johnson | Covid-19 Government Briefing.* (See appendix 5)

>> *Loved ones used to meet outdoors before.*

In a briefing led by Prime Minister Johnson, he refers to the ease of the lockdowns. He justifies that this decision is taken as a result of the decreasing in the numbers of the infected people. Hence, he proposes that people can meet each other now.

2. Other particles

Certain particles like *not only; not just;* etc. give rise to presuppositions that the agent of the sentence is not restricted to proposition occurs in the complement of 'not only' but it extends (Liang & Liu, 2016, p. 71). Other particle like still; even; etc. also trigger presuppositions. For example;

(Item 8 BBC News) *Are you still confused about lockdown?* (See appendix 4)

>>*You are confused about lockdown.*

In this item, the reporter explains the rules to be followed after Johnson's declaration of the ease of the lockdown. It is an attempt to resolve people confusion about how this ease looks like.

ii)   Syntactic Triggers

Beside the lexical items discussed above, certain structures are assumed to conventionally presuppose the truth of that part of the structure. The following are the main structural triggers:

a) Adverbial clauses

Levinson (1983, p. 183) names them temporal clauses. These are adverbials that refer to time such as clauses that start with: *after*; *during; whenever; when; as;* etc. The existence of such clauses in an utterance can be either initially or finally and in both cases their existence trigger presuppositions. For example;

(Item 28 Fox News) Patrick *Ewing released from hospital after being treated for coronavirus.* (See appendix 3)

>>*Patrick Ewing had coronavirus.*

The above item is a declaration that the basketball coach Patrick Ewing is now out of the hospital in which he was treated for coronavirus which in turn indicate that he was with the virus.

b) Comparison and contrasts
1. Comparative structures

Levinson (1983, p.183) points out that the occurrence of these constructions signals the existence of presupposition. Such constructions include either (as + adjective + as) construction or (adjective + er+ than) construction. For example;

(Item 30 BBC News) *Face masks may offer more protection than previously thought.* (See appendix 6)

>> *Face masks offer protection.*

This item is reported after capturing a photo for sneezing and coughing people. The photo shows the distances at which secretions out of cough and sneeze can reach. This fact along with coronavirus danger pushed scientists to declare that masks can offer more protection than expected.

2. Contrast structures

In addition to these structures, contrast structures also presuppose the truth of their complements. Contrast structures include: i*n contrast*; *by contrast; in comparison, on the contrary; even though; in spite of etc.* Each one of these constructions is followed by certain structural element. For example;

(Item 1 Fox News) *Mike Huckabee: Governors can't explain why big box stores are open, but small businesses must stay closed.* (See appendix 1)

>> *Small businesses are closed.*

The reporter of this piece of news is reacting against closing the small businesses while keeping on the big box stores open. It is supposed that the lockdowns should be applied to all. The reporter is accusing the government of certain bias.

c) **Counter factual conditionals**

Yule (1996, p. 29) points out that such structures which is related to if- clause indicates that what is after 'if' is contrary to what is true. For example;

(Item 13 BBC News) *We'll starve to death if this continues.* (See appendix 5)

>> *This continues.*

International Labour Organization asserts that if this pandemic continues, many people will starve because of the loss of jobs.

d) **Non-restrictive relative clauses**

Although there are two kinds of relative clauses: restrictive and non-restrictive but only the non-restrictive one triggers presupposition (Levinson 1983, p.183-4). For example;

(Item 3 Fox News) *Pence press secretary Katie Miller, who had coronavirus, says she's back at work after 3 negative tests.* (See appendix 1)

>> *Pence press secretary Katie Miller had coronavirus.*

This item shows that the pence press secretary gets recovered from the virus and hence gets back to work.

e) **Cleft- constrictions**

These constructions are used to highlight a particular aspect of an utterance and consider what is in the complement clause as shared knowledge. These are of two types:

1. **It- clefts**

According to Bara (2005, p. 2) *"it* -clefts consist of the pronoun *it*, a form of the verb *to be*, the focused element, and a relative-like dependent clause introduced by *that*, *who/which* or zero. For example*; "It was a book that Mary bought" presupposes "Mary bought something*". Such sentence has no record in the collected data.

2. **Wh- clefts**

Also called pseudo- cleft. Wh-clefts consist of a clause introduced by a *wh* -word, a form of the verb *to be*, and the focused element (Bara 2005, p. 2). For example; "*What Mary bought was a book", which presupposes "Mary bought something."*

f) Wh- questions

Duží & Číhalová (2015) defines presupposition of questions in terms of two conditions:

- Usability; the truth of a presupposition is a necessary condition for an interrogative act to be successful.

- Inference from possible answers; presupposition of a question is entailed by each possible answer to the question.

    (Item 29 BBC News) *why Trump is encouraging the coronavirus lockdown protests.* (See appendix 6)

    >>Trump is encouraging the coronavirus lockdown protests.

Chris Cillizza, American political commentator, comments on the current situation where people are protesting against the lockdowns which is something he is against. He criticizes Trump, who is responsible for people's safety, for encouraging the protest in his tweets and speeches.

iii) Existential Triggers

Some elements in the sentences mark the existence of presuppositions. Such presuppositions indicate the existence of the referred entity. These can be found in:

a) Possessives

Khaleel (2010, p. 529) limits existential presupposition to the possessive expressions and definite phrases. He adopts Yule's example (1996: 20) to explain how possessives invoke presupposition. For example;

    (Item 36 BBC News) *More health myths to ignore.* (See appendix 6)

    >>There are health myths.

Chris Morris, BBC journalist, discusses the spreading myths that deals with coronavirus treatments and cautions such as lemon juice, mosquito bites and blood donation. He asserts that these are myths which wrongly spread. So the presupposition is the existence of the myths.

b) Referential Expressions

Boer & Lycan (1976, p. 47) state that "the existence of referents for the appropriate terms appears to be a necessary condition for a declarative sentence to have a truth value". Naming entities presupposes their existence. Referential expressions refer to noun phrases or pronouns for example;

(Item 37 BBC News) *The impact on the Travel and Tourism industry.* (See appendix 6)

>> *The travel and Tourism exist.*

The reporter is referring to the impact of coronavirus lockdowns on the travel and industry in England. Of course there are travel and tourism but they have been affected to a large extent by the spreading of the virus.

c) Definite Articles

Definite articles indicate the existence of a unique entity whereas indefinite articles suggest that there is at least one entity. For example;

(Item 33 BBC News) *The fears of India's tea workers in lockdown.* (See appendix 6)

>> *Fear exists.*

This headline is about Indian workers who work in tea gardens. The report is about their fears of the lockdowns if it continues because they have no alternative way of living. So, fear exists.

d) Quantifiers

Gazdar (1979, p. 127) list quantifiers among the triggers of presupposition. Words such as *all; each; every; etc.* signalize presupposition. For example;

(Item 32 BBC News) *Donald Trump "to suspend all immigration" during pandemic.* (See appendix 6)

>> *Immigration exists.*

After the spread of coronavirus, Trump announces that he will suspend immigrations because of its non- recommended consequences. This indicates that there was immigration before his announcement.

e) Adjectives

Some adjectives do invoke presupposition that refer to the existence of what follow them. Adjectives like *new*; *old* and *ordinal numbers* for example are of this type. For example;

(Item 34 BBC News) *Coronavirus frontline: doctors fear second wave of infections.* (See appendix 6)

>> *There exists a first wave.*

This headline discloses the fear of doctors of a second peak of the pandemic because of the ease in the lockdown rules. The reference in this headline is to the first wave before the lockdown highlights their fear.

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f) Yes/ no question

According to Cowan (2008, p. 61) yes/no question is the construction that is formed by placing the auxiliary *'be'* or a *'model'* before the subject of the utterance. He adds that such a question requires an answer which is either *'yes'* and hence mark the existence of the entity or *'no'* and thus negating the existence of the entity. For example;

No	Type of trigger	Fox News headlines	BBC News headlines
		Frequency	Frequency
1	Existential	3	10
2	Lexical	18	19
3	Structural	8	8
	Total	29	37

Figure (2) The percentage of presupposition triggers in Fox News headlines

(Item 18 Fox News) *Tucker: Are coronavirus lockdowns working?* (See appendix 2)

>>There are coronavirus lockdowns.

As a host on Fox Channel, Tucker Carlson is criticizing the American lockdowns stating that the government issue the order but with no reasonable evidence that this lockdown will lessen the spread of the virus. Therefore, he is saying lockdowns exist but they have to be removed or at least justified by reasonable evidences.

The Results

After analyzing and calculating the types of triggers used in the collected data, the results show that lexical presupposition triggers are the most widely used type of triggers. This can be traced to the nature of the headlines where deviations of the structures and omission of articles are achieved. Thus, on the one hand, the deviation of the structure lessens the possibility of reclining to the structural triggers and on the other hand, the omission of the articles lessens the possibility of having more existential triggers. See table (1) below; however, it should be noted that the percentages are introduced by the figure below rather that in the tables below.

Table (1) Frequency of presupposition triggers in Fox news headlines and BBC News headlines
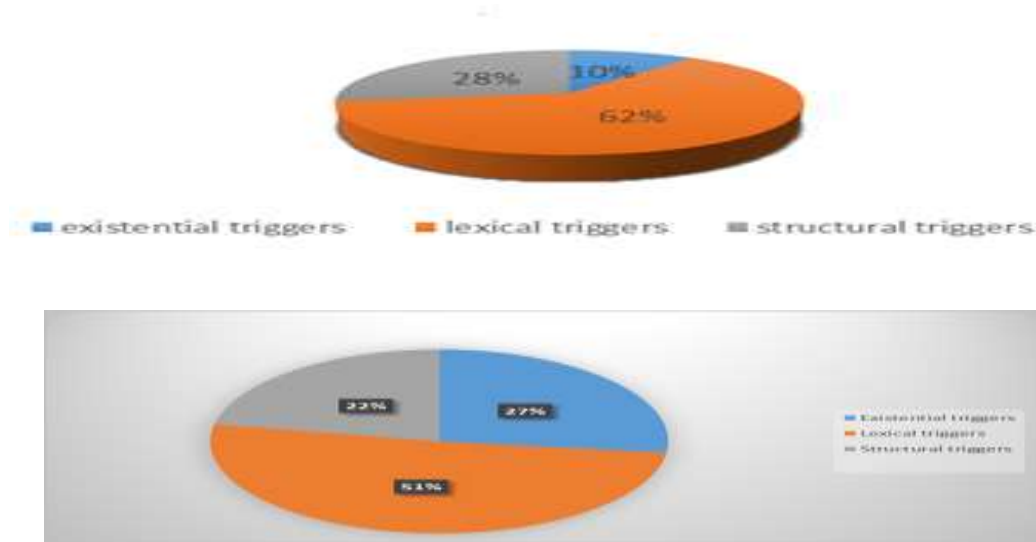

Figure (3) The percentage of presupposition triggers in BBC News headlines

As for lexical triggers, they are referred to by certain lexical items, i.e., verbs, nouns or particles, so they constitute the main elements on which the headlines are based. As such, it can be said that lexical triggers are used more flexibly in headlines than other types of triggers. Lexical triggers record (18) by 62.06% of the Fox news headlines and (19) by 51.35% of BBC news headlines. This means that it exceeds half of the data and hence proves the above mentioned hypothesis. Iterative verbs record the highest frequency in the data. Its frequency is (7) with 35% as percentage in Fox News and (8) with 42.11% in BBC. This, in fact, can be attributed to news stories itself, for the stories collected in this study deal with coronavirus and its impact on the world in general. Therefore, many of the collected news tell about retuning of normal life and the reopening of schools and border and issues like these. Verbs of change gain its share in the collected headlines, its frequency of appearance amount to (5) with a percentage of 25% in Fox news and (2) with a percentage of 26.31% in BBC news. Such verb is used to refer to the kind of change happened for many aspects in life because of the deadly coronavirus.

What comes next is verb of judging whose frequency is (2) with 10% as a percentage in Fox news and (2) with 10.53% as a percentage in BBC news. The same reason stated earlier can be said here, that is the story of coronavirus and its effect on people. Accordingly, verb of accusing and others of praising are found which are used by some to praise those confined with the rules of lockdowns or to accuse others for not giving reason for such lockdowns. Other lexical verbs are also used. See table (2) below.

It should be noted that the percentages are introduced by the figures below rather that in the tables below.

Table (2) The Frequency of Lexical triggers in Fox and BBC channels headlines

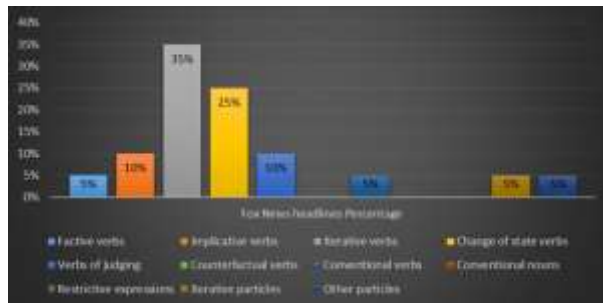| No	Types of Lexical Triggers	Fox News headlines	BBC News headlines
		Frequency	Frequency
1	Factive verbs	1	
2	Implicative verbs	2	
3	Iterative verbs	7	8
4	Change of state verbs	5	5
5	Verbs of judging	2	2
6	Counterfactual verbs		
7	Conventional verbs	1	
8	Conventional nouns		
9	Restrictive expressions		
10	Particles Iterative particles	1	1
	Other particles	1	3
Total		**20**	**19**

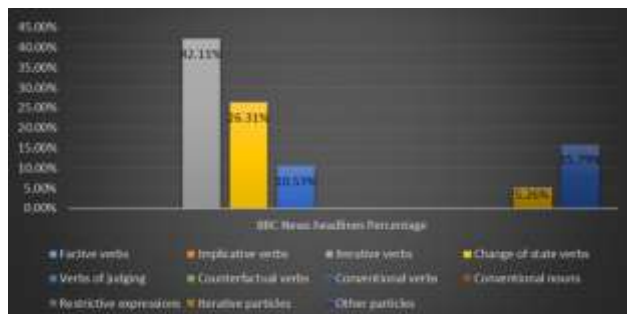**Figure (4) The percentage of lexical triggers in Fox News headlines**

Figure (5) The percentage of lexical triggers in BBC News headlines

Other types of verbs, namely factive, implicative and counterfactual verbs record no number in BBC news, but they appear in Fox news with few frequencies. Factive verb comes with (1) occurrence and 5% percentage and implicative verb comes with (2) occurrences and 10% as a percentage. Counterfactual verb, on the other side appears (1) times with 5% percentage.

Besides the lexical verbs, particles also have a share in this study, for iterative particles single out with (1) frequency and 5% as a percentage in Fox news and also (1) frequency and 5.26% as a percentage in BBC news. Other particles constitute 5% with (1) frequency in Fox news, but they constitute 15.79% with (3) frequencies in BBC news.

Structural triggers, on the other hand, come second in Fox news headlines with (8) as a frequency and 27.59% as a percentage. Whereas in BBC news headlines, they come third with (8) as frequency and 21.62% as a percentage. Wh- question is at the top of this type of triggers. There are (4) occurrences of wh- question with 57.13% as a percentage in Fox news and (4) occurrences with 50% as a percentage in BBC news. Three sub- types of structural triggers come with the same frequency and percentage in Fox new, these are: adverbials, nonrestrictive clause and comparative and construction. Each comes with (1) as a frequency and 14.29% as a percentage. In contrast, BBC does not record in these forms except for the comparative and contrast constructions where they appear (3) times in the collected headlines with 37.5% as a percentage. Besides, there is (1) frequency for counterfactual conditional with12.5% as a percentage in BBC news but it has no record in Fox news. The percentage are not tabulated but shown in the figures below:

Table (3) The frequency of structural triggers in Fox and BBC News headlines

No	Types existential Triggers	Fox News Channel	BBC News Channel
		Frequency	Frequency
1	Possessives		1
2	Referential expressions		1
3	(in)definite articles		1
4	Quantifiers		2
5	Yes/ questions	1	
6	Adjectives	1	5
Total		2	10

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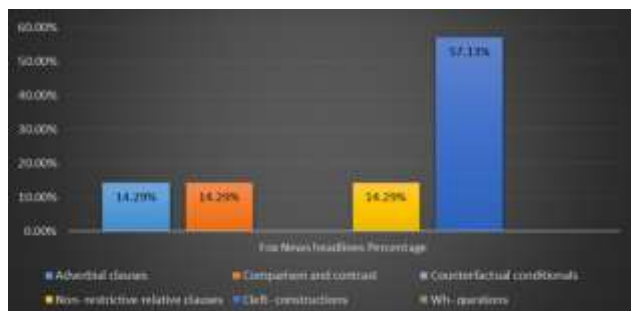

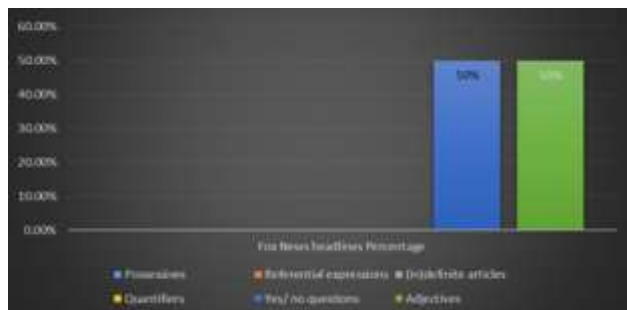**Figure (6) The percentage of structural triggers in Fox News headline**

Figure (7) The percentage of structural triggers in BBC News headlines

Existential triggers do not record high frequency in Fox news. Only two types appear, namely; yes/no question and the adjectives where each of which appear (1) times with 50% as frequency. In contrast, BBC news gets frequencies in existential triggers, the highest of which is the adjective which comes with (5) frequencies and 50% as a percentage. Then comes the quantifiers which single out (2) and 20% as a percentage. And finally, BBC records (1) frequency with 10% as a percentage for each of the three other sub- types of existential triggers which are possessives, indefinite articles and referential expressions. The percentage are also represented in the figures below:

Table (4) The Frequency of existential triggers in Fox and BBC News headlines

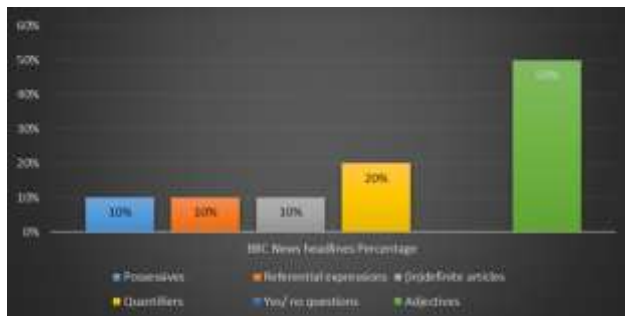| No	Types of existential Triggers	Fox News Channel Frequency	BBC News Channel Frequency
1	Adverbial clauses	1	
2	Comparison and contrast	1	3
3	Counterfactual conditionals		1
4	Non- restrictive relative clauses	1	
5	Cleft-constructions		
6	Wh-questions	4	4
	Total	**7**	**8**

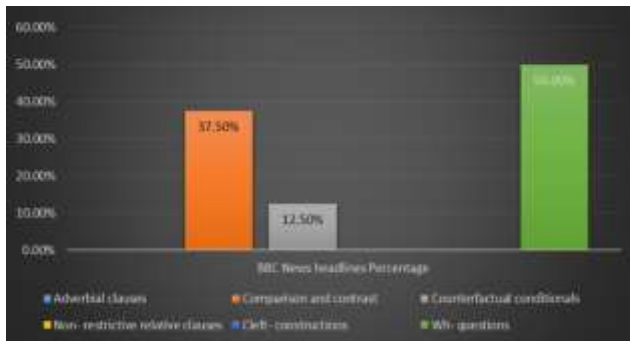**Figure (8) The percentage of existential triggers in Fox News headlines**

Figure (9) The percentage of existential triggers in BBC News headlines

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the analysis, a number of conclusions can be introduced:

1. All types of presupposition triggers are used but with different frequencies and percentages, a concluded remark that verifies the first hypothesis in this study.

2. The analysis also reveals that news headlines rely heavily on lexical presupposition triggers in both Fox and BBC News headlines. Their occurrences repeated (18) times with a ratio of 62.06% in Fox News headlines and (19) times with a ratio of 51.35% in BBC News headlines. The ratios show that the usage of this type of presupposition exceeds half of the data. This, in fact, verifies the both the second and third hypotheses successively.

3. The repeated use of lexical verbs in general and iterative verb in particular is very clear from the frequencies and the ratio they record. The reason for this is the nature of the covered topics of the headlines where the lockdowns are imposed as a precaution procedure to stop spreading coronavirus.

4. Structural and existential triggers get their shares in the data. Structural triggers come second in Fox headlines but it is the existential triggers which come second in BBC headlines. These results can be attributed to the special nature of the structure of news headlines where deviations of the structures and omission of functional words is permitted.

5. Among the structural triggers, wh- question gets the highest frequency in both Fox and BBC news headlines. Its frequency is (4) times in both Fox and BBC news headlines with 57.13% and 50% respectively.

6. Although existential triggers have not been exploited too much in Fox news headlines where it records (2) occurrences (of yes/ no questions and adjective types), they get a good share in BBC News headlines where their ratio constitutes 27.03% of the whole data and their frequency is (10) times. Adjective, among the existential triggers, ranked first for its times of occurrences is (5) which constitute (50%).

7. In Fox news headlines most of the sub- types of lexical as well as the structural triggers have shown occurrences whereas in BBC news headlines, the use is restricted to certain sub- types namely; (iterative verbs, change of state verbs, verbs of judging, iterative particles and other articles) that are lexical and (comparison constructions, counterfactual conditionals and wh- questions) that are structural triggers. In contrast, Fox news headlines do not rely on using too much existential triggers. Only two sub- types of these triggers are

used, namely; (yes/ no questions and Adjectives) but in BBC news headlines all the sub-types have been exploited except for one, namely; yes/ no questions.

8. Adjective as a sub-type of existential triggers gets the highest frequencies in BBC news headlines, a result that verifies the fourth hypothesis.

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Appendix (1) Fox News headlines analysis

No.	Headline	Presupposition	Trigger	Form of trigger	Type of trigger
1	Mike Huckabee: Governors can't explain why big box stores are open, but small businesses must stay closed.	Big stores are open and small businesses are closed.	But	contrastive construction	Structural
2	Most states, nursing homes fail to meet White House coronavirus recommendations.	Most states, nursing homes did not succeed to meet White House coronavirus recommendations	Fail to	implicative verb	Lexical
3	Pence press secretary Katie Miller, who had coronavirus, says she's back at work after 3 negative tests	Pence press secretary Katie Miller had coronavirus.	who had coronavirus,	non-restrictive clause	Structural
4	World Health Organization continues to lavish China with praise for handling of coronavirus crisis.	WHO did not lavish China with praise for handling of coronavirus crisis before.	Continue	change of state verb	Lexical
5	As coronavirus pandemic continues, Novavax starts clinical trial of potential vaccine in Australia.	Novavx had no trial of potential vaccine in Australia.	starts	change of state verb	Lexical
6	Georgia teen becomes youngest in the state to die from coronavirus.	There were people who considered youngest before Georgia teen's death.	becomes	change of state verb	Lexical
7	HHS Secretary Azar defends Trump's call for governors to reopen churches as long as 'appropriate precautions' are made.	Churches used to be open.	reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
8	Las Vegas to reopen casinos -- with restrictions.	Casinos used to be open.	reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
9	Virginia Gov. Northam criticized after not wearing mask or social distancing on beach.	Not wearing mask or social distancing on beach is bad.	criticized	verb of judging	Lexical
10	Small business owners reopen with new safety measures ahead of Memorial Day.	Small business owners used to be open.	reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
11	Joe Piscopo says it's time for America to fully reopen: 'You can't take the rights of the people away'.	America's institutions and shops used to be open	reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
12	Coronavirus will not be the last global pandemic.	Coronavirus is a pandemic.	Last	adjective	Structural

Appendix (2) Fox News headlines analysis

No.	Headline	Presupposition	Trigger	Form of trigger	Type of trigger
13	Pete Hegseth praises 'revolt of the gym owners, revolt of the salon owners' against lockdown orders	Pete Hegseth thinks that 'revolt of the gym owners is good.	praises	Verb of judging	Lexical
14	Rep. Jim Jordan on why House Republicans are holding up FISA bill.	House Republicans are holding up FISA bill.	Why	Wh – question	Structural
15	Gutfeld: Where were the media warnings back when coronavirus pandemic started?	Coronavirus pandemic started.	Where	Wh – question	Structural
16	Tucker: Now we see that COVID lockdowns aren't the only solution.	COVID lockdowns are solutions.	see	factive verb	Lexical
17	Ingraham: Experts don't like to admit they're wrong.	They are wrong.	Do not like to admit	conventional verb	Lexical
18	Tucker: Are coronavirus lockdowns working?	There are coronavirus lockdowns.	Are ….?	yes/no question	Existential
19	Murdochs failed to rein In Fox News 'Hoax' Narrative Amid Coronavirus: NYT | All In | MSNBC.	Murdochs did not rein 'Hoax' narrative amid coronavirus.	Fail to	implicative verb	Lexical
20	Another case of coronavirus confirmed at White House.	There was a previous case.	Another	iterative particle	Existential
21	Why are some fully-recovered COVID-19 patients getting it again?	Some fully-recovered COVID-19 patients getting it again	Why	Wh-question	Structural
22	Why Trump is encouraging the coronavirus lockdown protests.	Trump is encouraging the coronavirus lockdown protests	Why	Wh-question	Structural
23	Spain to reopen country to international tourists in July as coronavirus outbreak winds down, PM says.	The country used to be open.	Reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
24	Boris Johnson defends UK adviser accused of violating quarantine while showing coronavirus symptoms.	violating quarantine is bad.	Accused	verb of judging	Lexical

Appendix (3) Fox News headlines analysis

No.	Headline	Presupposition	Trigger	Form of trigger	Type of trigger
25	Greece reopens restaurants, resumes island ferry service, following coronavirus closures.	Restaurants used to be open, island service used to work before coronavirus	Reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
26	Steve Hilton: There won't be a coronavirus recovery unless we reopen schools now.	Schools used to be open.	Reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
27	Mike Pence touts 'real progress' as coronavirus deaths continue to fall across country.	Coronavirus deaths falls across country.	Continue	change of state verb	Lexical
28	Patrick Ewing released from hospital after being treated for coronavirus.	Patrick Ewing has been treated for coronavirus.	after	adverbial	Structural
29	Coronavirus is just 'tip of iceberg,' Chinese researcher cautions.	Coronavirus exists.	Just	other particle	Existential

Appendix (4) BBC News Headlines analysis

No.	Headline	Presupposition	Trigger	Form of trigger	Type of trigger
1	Rugby returns in Australia despite Covid-19 fears.	Rugby was once in Australia.	Return	iterative verb	Lexical
2	Coronavirus: Could there be a second wave?	There is a first wave.	Second	Adjective	Existential
3	Can we make our cities wild again?	It was wild once	Again	iterative particle	Lexical
4	One thing that makes job loss in US so painful	Job loss in US is so painful.	Make	change of state verb	Lexical
5	When will shops reopen?	Shops was opened	Reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
6	Why the R number is important to fight coronavirus?	R number is important to fight coronavirus	Why	Wh- question	Structural
7	Coronavirus: What does a 'Covid-secure' office look like?	'Covid-secure' look like something.	What	Wh- question	Structural
8	Are you still confused about lockdown?	You are confused about lockdown	Still	other particle	Lexical
9	How Denmark reopened its primary schools	Denmark primary schools was opened once	Reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
10	Covid-19: What's happening with schools?	Something is happening with schools.	What	Wh- question	Structural
11	Coronavirus: PM encourages some people to return to work.	People were going to work before.	Return	iterative verb	Lexical
12	Coronavirus lockdown: different routes back to normal life.	Life was normal before.	Back	iterative particles	Lexical
13	We'll starve to death if this continues'.	This didn't happen before.	If- clause	counterfactual conditional	Structural
14	Coronavirus warning: lockdown could be lifted then reimposed due to second wave.	Lockdown imposed before.	Reimposed	iterative verb	Lexical
15	Coronavirus: more than 12,500 care home residents have died, new figures reveal.	12,500 care home residents have died.	More than	comparative construction	Structural

16	Boris Johnson accused of "treating public with contempt" after backing Dominic Cummings.	People believe that "treating public with contempt is bad	Accused	verb of judging	Lexical

Appendix (5) BBC News Headlines analysis

No.	Headline	Presupposition	Trigger	Form of trigger	Type of trigger
17	The Queen praises "love and care" in current crisis as she honours VE Day.	The queen believes that "love and care" is good.	Praise	verb of judging	Lexical
18	Coronavirus: European countries mull reopening borders.	Borders were open before.	Reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
19	Coronavirus: Germany reopens shops as lockdown is relaxed.	Shops were open before.	Reopen	iterative verb	Lexical
20	Putin: Russia passed the peak of coronavirus infection.	Russia reached the peak.	Passed	change of state verb	Lexical
21	Coronavirus vaccine: first human trial in Europe begins at Oxford.	There were no human trial in Europe.	Begin	change of state verb	Lexical
22	Coronavirus: safety at work rules create new challenges for companies.	There were old challenges.	New	Adjective	Existential
23	Coronavirus warning: swift return to normality is "wholly unrealistic".	Normality was realistic.	Return	Iterative verb	Lexical
24	Coronavirus: schools to remain closed for foreseeable future.	Schools are closed	To remain	change of state verb	Lexical
25	Coronavirus warning: economic damage worse than Great Depression.	Economic damage is a great depression.	Worse than	comparative construction	Structural t
26	Coronavirus: new figures reveal sharp rise in weekly deaths.	There were old figures.	New	Adjective	Existential
27	Coronavirus: What happens in an intensive care unit?	Something happens in an	What	wh –question	Structural

		intensive care unit.			
28	Coronavirus: Scotland begins to ease out of lockdown - Covid-19: Top stories this morning,	Scotland used to lockdown.	Begin	change of state verb	Lexical
29	Loved ones can meet again outdoors - Boris Johnson | Covid-19 Government Briefing.	Loved ones used to meet outdoors before.	Again	iterative particle	Lexical

Appendix (6) BBC News Headlines analysis

No.	Headline	Presupposition	Trigger	Form of trigger	Type of trigger
30	Face masks may offer more protection than previously thought.	Face masks offer protection.	More than	comparative construction	Structural
31	Coronavirus: Italy to close all schools as deaths rise.	Open schools exist	All	Quantifiers	Existential
32	Coronavirus: Donald Trump "to suspend all immigration" during pandemic.	Immigration exists	All	Quantifiers	Existential
33	Coronavirus: The fears of India's tea workers in lockdown.	Fear exists.	The fear	definite article	Existential
34	Coronavirus frontline: doctors fear second wave of infections	There exist a first wave.	Second	Adjective	Existential
35	Coronavirus: New coronavirus clusters have been reported in China.	There were old coronavirus clusters.	New	Adjective	Lexical
36	Coronavirus: More health myths to ignore.	There are heath myths.	Health myths	Possessive	Existential
37	Coronavirus: the impact on the Travel and Tourism industry.	There is impact on the travel and tourism industry.	The impact	Referential expression	Existential