
**PRESUPPOSITION AND LEGITIMATION STRATEGIES IN THE BRAND
IMAGE OF AQUA ADVERTISEMENTS IN YOUTUBE****Piyadi**Institut Prima Bangsa
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Abstract:

This study examined how presupposition and legitimation strategies construct AQUA's brand image in digital advertisements on YouTube. Using Yule's (1996) presupposition theory and Van Leeuwen's (2008) legitimation framework, 31 advertisements from the SehatAQUA channel January 2024 until April 2025 were analyzed through a qualitative descriptive approach. The findings reveal five types of presupposition existential, factive, lexical, structural, and counterfactual with structural presupposition as the most dominant, often appearing in rhetorical questions and grammatical constructions. In terms of legitimation, all four categories authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis were identified, with moral evaluation being the most frequent. The study shows that presupposition naturalizes claims as accepted truths, while legitimation justifies them through moral, rational, and cultural grounds. Together, these strategies strengthen AQUA's credibility and reinforce its image as a trustworthy and socially responsible brand.

Keywords: presupposition, legitimation, Aqua, digital advertising**INTRODUCTION**

In discourse studies, presupposition and legitimation are crucial linguistic strategies that contribute to the construction of meaning and ideology in communication. Presupposition allows certain information to be taken for granted by assuming it as shared knowledge, while

legitimation provides justification that makes discourse appear morally or socially acceptable (Van Leeuwen, 2008; Yule, 1996). These strategies play a significant role not only in everyday communication but also in persuasive texts such as advertisements, where implicit meanings influence how audiences interpret brand messages. Recent studies emphasize that advertising language often embeds ideological assumptions that shape consumer perception and reinforce power relations between producers and audiences (Liu & Fang, 2023; Rahimi & Kaur, 2024). Hence, examining presupposition and legitimation in advertising is essential to understanding how linguistic elements contribute to brand persuasion.

In the digital era, YouTube has become a dominant platform for advertising, enabling companies to communicate interactively with audiences. The combination of visual, auditory, and linguistic modes enhances persuasive effects, making digital advertisements a rich site for discourse analysis. According to Alamsyah (2021), YouTube's growing user base significantly increases brand awareness and purchasing behavior through repetitive exposure and emotional engagement. However, despite its growing importance, the linguistic mechanisms that underpin such persuasion particularly how presupposition and legitimation interact in digital advertisements remain underexplored.

Presupposition helps advertisers build familiarity and trust by presenting information as already known or accepted, while legitimation reinforces such claims through moral, rational, or cultural justification. As argued by Efendioğlu and Durmaz (2022), successful digital advertisements embed values and trust that increase perceived brand authenticity and consumer attachment. This indicates that presupposition and legitimation are not isolated strategies but work together to naturalize meaning and legitimize corporate narratives.

While numerous studies have analyzed presupposition in various advertising contexts such as television (Khotimah et al., 2024) and e-commerce (Mawardi et al., 2023) few have integrated it with legitimation theory, especially within the bottled water industry, where environmental and moral discourses are central to branding. This study addresses that gap by examining how presupposition and legitimation strategies shape brand image in digital advertisements.

AQUA, as Indonesia's leading bottled water brand, was selected as the research object because of its consistent presence and strong communication strategies in digital media. Rather than focusing on its historical achievements, this study considers AQUA as a representative case for understanding how language in advertising constructs credibility and trust in a socially responsible brand. AQUA's advertisements often embed implicit assumptions about purity, health, and social values making them a rich source for linguistic analysis.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze how presupposition and legitimation strategies function in constructing AQUA's brand image through its YouTube advertisements. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Identify the types of presupposition found in AQUA's 2024–2025 digital advertisements.
2. Examine how presupposition and legitimation interact to shape brand meaning and credibility.

Based on these aims, the research addresses the following questions:

1. What types of presupposition are found in AQUA's YouTube advertisements?

How do presupposition and legitimation strategies contribute to constructing AQUA's brand image?.

METHODOLOGY

This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach because the focus was to examine implicit meanings contained in AQUA advertisements and to interpret how presupposition and legitimation strategies construct the brand's image. According to Sugiyono (2017), qualitative research is designed to explore phenomena in depth by focusing on meaning, interpretation, and contextual understanding rather than on numerical measurement. The descriptive nature of this study allowed for detailed explanation of linguistic features in advertisements, showing how these features shape consumer perception indirectly.

The data of this study were taken from 31 advertisements uploaded on the official SehatAQUA YouTube channel between January 2024 until April 2025. This channel was selected because it is the primary digital platform used by AQUA to promote its products and to interact with audiences through various thematic campaigns. The advertisements chosen for analysis were those that contained clear verbal elements, either spoken by actors or presented as written text, which could be examined linguistically using presupposition and legitimation theories.

The data collection technique applied in this research was content analysis. First, the researcher identified and selected advertisements that were relevant to the study's objectives. Second, the verbal language from the advertisements was transcribed into written text, including narration, dialogues, and slogans. Third, the transcripts were carefully examined to identify linguistic markers that indicate presupposition triggers such as definite noun phrases, factive verbs, or rhetorical questions, as well as markers of legitimation strategies such as appeals to authority, moral values, rational reasoning, or storytelling.

The data analysis was carried out through three stages. The first stage was data organization, in which presupposition types were classified based on Yule's (1996) framework existential, factive, lexical, structural, non-factive, and counterfactual and legitimation strategies were categorized following Van Leeuwen's (2008) typology authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis. The second stage was data interpretation, in which each identified presupposition and legitimation strategy was analyzed to explain its role in reinforcing the brand image of AQUA. The third stage was drawing conclusions, in which the researcher summarized the dominant types and explained how presupposition and legitimation interact in shaping AQUA's brand credibility in the digital advertising context.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

The analysis of 31 AQUA advertisements on the SehatAQUA YouTube channel (January 2024 until April 2025) identified five types of presupposition existential, factive, lexical,

structural, and counterfactual and four types of legitimation strategies based on Van Leeuwen's (2008) typology: authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis.

NO	PRESUPPOSITION	LEGITIMATION	FREQUENCY
1.	Existential	Authorization	-
		Moral Evaluation	2
		Rationalization	1
		Mythopoesis	1
2.	Factive	Authorization	1
		Moral Evaluation	2
		Rationalization	4
		Mythopoesis	-
3.	Lexical	Authorization	-
		Moral Evaluation	2
		Rationalization	1
		Mythopoesis	-
4.	Structural	Authorization	-
		Moral Evaluation	6
		Rationalization	5
		Mythopoesis	1
5.	Counterfactual	Authorization	-
		Moral Evaluation	3
		Rationalization	-
		Mythopoesis	2
TOTAL			31

To illustrate the analysis more concretely, here are several representative examples from the data:

1. *Di saat penting kita perlu yang terbaik, AQUA 100% murni pilihan Timnas Indonesia.*

The phrase *kita perlu yang terbaik* presupposes the truth that in every crucial moment, the best option is necessary. According to Yule (1996), this is categorized as a factive presupposition because it assumes the truth of the proposition without requiring further evidence. The reference to “Timnas Indonesia” functions as authorization (Van Leeuwen, 2008), since the endorsement from the national football team legitimizes AQUA through an authoritative source recognized by society.

2. *Nama saya Yanti saya bekerja sudah 27 tahun di pabrik Aqua yang didirikan Pak Tirta kami betah soalnya Aqua selalu kasih 100% buat kami Aqua juga jaga sumber airnya*

supaya 100% murni seperti Aqua kami berdedikasi 100% untuk Indonesia Aqua 100% Murni 100% Indonesia

The phrase presupposes the existence of Yanti, the factory, and Tirto as founder, which aligns with Yule's (1996) concept of existential presupposition, triggered by definite noun phrases. This legitimizes AQUA's history through rationalization because the long service years imply reliability, experience, and consistency values that rationally justify trust in the brand.

3. *Aktor 1 : Adik minum air apa itu*
Aktor 2 : tolong Ibu tolong, tolong bantuin ade.
Aktor 2 : Ibu tadi mimpi kamu itu minum air lain,
Narator : jernih sih tapi jernih belum tentu bersih. ini buktinya
Aktor 1: Untung kita pilih Aqua 100% aman 100% murni

The contrastive structure *jernih belum tentu bersih* triggers a structural presupposition since the sentence form itself presupposes the possibility that water can be clear but unsafe, a presupposition embedded in the grammar. This is legitimized through moral evaluation because it appeals to ethical responsibility choosing clean and safe water is morally right, positioning AQUA as the healthier choice.

4. *Kalau tidak ada AQUA, momen kebersamaan ini tidak akan lengkap.*

This is an example of a counterfactual presupposition, since the conditional clause suggests an unreal situation in which the absence of AQUA would ruin the togetherness. The legitimation strategy applied is mythopoesis, where a story or imagined scenario illustrates how AQUA plays a vital role in creating harmony and unity in family or social moments.

5. *AQUA menjaga sumber airnya supaya tetap 100% murni seperti AQUA.*

The use of the verb *menjaga* ("to protect") indicates a lexical presupposition, since it implies that AQUA has always been protecting its water sources. This reinforces the assumption that environmental care is a continuous action by the company. The statement is legitimized by moral evaluation, because protecting nature is framed as a moral duty that the company consistently fulfills.

These examples demonstrate how presupposition and legitimation strategies operate in synergy. Presuppositions make the claims of the advertisements appear natural, unquestionable, and already accepted as truth, while legitimation strategies provide moral, cultural, and rational grounds that justify why AQUA is the correct choice for consumers. Structural presuppositions and moral evaluation were the most dominant, which indicates that AQUA's advertising discourse relies on assumed cultural knowledge and shared moral values to build consumer trust and to strengthen its position as a socially responsible brand.

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CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine how presupposition and legitimation strategies construct AQUA's brand image in its digital advertisements on YouTube. Referring to the research questions (1) what types of presupposition are found in AQUA's advertisements, and (2) how presupposition and legitimation interact to shape the brand image this study has successfully provided comprehensive answers to both. The findings revealed five types of presupposition based on Yule's (1996) classification, namely existential, factive, lexical, structural, and counterfactual. Among these, structural presupposition appeared as the most dominant, frequently triggered through rhetorical questions, conditional sentences, and contrastive clauses. This dominance indicates that AQUA intentionally embeds implicit assumptions into its discourse structure to make claims appear natural and widely accepted by audiences. Regarding legitimation, all four strategies proposed by Van Leeuwen (2008) authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis were identified, with moral evaluation emerging as the most frequent. This suggests that AQUA's advertising discourse legitimizes its brand primarily through moral and ethical reasoning, associating purity, environmental care, and family togetherness with socially desirable values. Therefore, the research objectives to identify the types of presupposition and to analyze how presupposition and legitimation contribute to the construction of AQUA's brand image have been fully achieved.

Theoretically, these findings contribute to the field of discourse and advertising linguistics by demonstrating how presupposition and legitimation work together to build persuasive meaning that extends beyond literal communication. The integration of Yule's (1996) and Van Leeuwen's (2008) frameworks reveals that implicit assumptions (presuppositions) and justifications (legitimations) operate as complementary discursive mechanisms in shaping brand credibility. Moreover, the frequent use of moral legitimation reflects the cultural dimension of Indonesian advertising, where moral responsibility, family values, and environmental awareness align with national ideologies such as Pancasila and the collective spirit of gotong royong. Thus, this study not only enriches linguistic theory but also highlights the intersection of language, culture, and ideology in digital advertising discourse.

In practical terms, the results imply that advertisers can enhance brand trust and authenticity by embedding culturally resonant moral narratives within their linguistic strategies. AQUA's success in integrating presupposed truths with moral legitimation demonstrates how advertising can influence perception without overt persuasion. For academics and practitioners alike, these insights offer a valuable framework for designing ethical and culturally responsive brand communication.

For future research, it is recommended to broaden the analytical scope by incorporating multimodal discourse analysis, combining both verbal and visual dimensions such as imagery, color schemes, gestures, and sound to explore how these elements interact with linguistic meaning in shaping consumer interpretation. Comparative studies between local and global brands or across cultural contexts could also provide a deeper understanding of how presupposition and legitimation differ according to audience expectations and cultural ideologies. Furthermore, future studies could investigate audience reception, examining how viewers interpret, accept, or resist the presupposed and legitimized meanings embedded in digital advertisements. Such approaches would not only enrich the understanding of persuasive discourse but also expand the theoretical application of pragmatics and critical discourse analysis in digital media contexts.

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