CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF PRESUPPOSITION

4.0 PRELIMINARIES

The present chapter deals with application of the theoretical framework developed in Chapter II for the purpose of analyzing conversation in absurd drama. The basic concern here is to analyze conversation in selected absurd plays in the light of pragmatic framework of presupposition. The plays selected for the present study are Harold Pinter’s three of the widely read and performed plays, namely, *The Birthday Party*, *The Caretaker* and *The Homecoming*. As stated earlier in Chapter I, these are Pinter’s path breaking plays which established him as a dramatist of world repute.

4.1 ANALYTICAL MODEL

The following analytical model has been devised for the analysis of presupposition in the selected plays:

4.1.1 Selection of Conversational Passages

For the purpose of analysis, conversational passages are selected from the above mentioned plays in order to apply the concept of presupposition. As it is not feasible as well as practicable to analyze each and every utterance in a play, the conversational passages are selected on the basis of various facts. The selection depends on the fulfillment of the following five criteria:

Presupposition Potential

While selecting the passages for analysis, it has been taken into consideration that the utterances in that passage contain comparatively more number of presupposition triggers. As pointed out earlier, presuppositions are carried by specific linguistic structures; therefore, analysis would be more comprehensive with a passage having maximum presupposition triggers. Moreover, the types of presupposition also depend upon the triggers which raise them. For instance, presuppositions carried by a linguistic structure such as a cleft sentence are termed as structural presupposition and presuppositions triggered by lexical items such as quantifiers are called lexical presuppositions. Therefore, passages loaded with such linguistic items have been preferred for analysis.
Character Coverage

The process of selection of the conversational passages gives due significance to cover the dialogues of major as well as minor characters, so as to make the analysis of a play all inclusive. Though the minor characters are not given more space by the dramatist, it has been noticed that they play significant roles in varieties of speech events in a play. For instance, Joey in *The Homecoming* and Lulu in *The Birthday Party* are minor characters, however, their roles facilitate the flow of action towards climax. Therefore, while selecting passage for analysis, these characters have not been neglected.

Turns

As turns are fundamental organizations of conversation, the analysis of conversation in drama gives due significance to turns taken by the characters. The selection of conversational passages in the present research activity also depends on the nature of turns. The care has been taken to select passage containing long, medium and short turns.

Variety of Themes

The drama is a sequence of incidents and events. It constitutes a major plot and more than one sub-plots. The plays selected for the present study also contain a variety of sub-themes. For instance, the major theme in *The Birthday Party* is Stanley’s fate; however, there is a sub-theme which depicts the seduction of Lulu by Goldberg. Though such events seem to be less significant, they help to arrive at the nature as well as intention of the characters involved. Therefore, the present research activity attempts to cover various sub-plots, while selecting passages for analysis.

Location Coverage

The plays selected for analysis follow the unity of place, as the place of action doesn’t change in all the three plays. In other words, the action in *The Birthday Party*, for instance, begins in Meg’s boarding house and the play ends in the same house. Therefore, the present research activity attempts to locate the beginning, the middle and the end of the action in selected plays. Proper care has been taken to select passages depicting the beginning, the climax and the end of the action in the play, in order to give a sense of completeness and authenticity to the analysis.
4.1.2 Analytical Structure

In order to give orderliness to the analysis of conversation, an analytical structure has been devised. The following analytical structure is based on the theoretical framework developed in Chapter II.

Introduction

The analysis begins with an introductory comment on the passage selected for the purpose. It introduces the passage in two or three sentences.

Contextual Environment

In pragmatic analysis of conversation, context plays a significant role. Semantic theory analyzes conversation without taking into consideration the context in which the conversation takes place. However, pragmatics gives due importance to the context of an utterance. Pragmatic analysis believes that an utterance gets its meaning out of the context in which it is uttered. Therefore, the present research activity focuses on the contextual environment of the passage, that is, it gives importance to the circumstances and the events which give rise to the particular speech event selected for the analysis.

Passage

The actual passages selected for analysis have been extracted from the selected plays as they appear in the original source. The page numbers of the selected conversational passages refer to the editions of the plays cited in bibliography. In order to avoid unnecessary recurrence of the titles of the plays, they are abbreviated as BP for The Birthday Party, CT for The Caretaker and HC for The Homecoming.

Presupposition Analysis

The analysis of presupposition in the selected passage takes into consideration the role of presupposition as well as various related concepts reviewed in Chapter II, in bringing out the essence of information shared by the characters involved in conversation. The actual analysis beings with pointing out the triggers giving rise to presupposition. Once a trigger has been pointed out in an utterance, it facilitates the recognition of a type of presupposition. For instance, the following utterance, ‘The day after they chucked him out of the Salvation Army’ contains a temporal clause beginning with ‘after.’ The temporal clause functions as a trigger and gives rise to a structural presupposition. After identification of a presupposition trigger and a type of presupposition, the analysis
focuses on the information that is shared by the interlocutors. Such information is treated as a common ground which the hearer understands without mentioned directly. In the above instance, the presupposition carries the information that the person had been in the Salvation Army. Though the speaker doesn’t mention it deliberately, the hearer comes to know the fact as a shared knowledge. Thus, analysis of presupposition goes beyond the limits of the structural properties, in order to explore the transcendental meaning and suggested values communicated by the characters. One of the striking features of the analysis of presupposition in a literary work is that it offers the same model as it is employed in the day-to-day communicative activities.

Concluding Remarks

The concluding remarks are an essence of the overall analysis of presupposition in the passage selected from a play. It comments on the significance of the information shared by the characters and the overall effect of that information on the theme of the play. It also tries to point out intention of the interlocutors behind using common ground, and thus, to probe the nature of the characters in the play.

4.1.3 Analysis Procedure

The advances made by various linguists and philosophers have established that presupposition provides us with the possibility to look at utterances in conversation in terms of the context, in which they are made. In other words, the utterances might contain intentions, attitudes and expectations of the interlocutors, the relations they share as well as certain unspoken rules. Therefore, the analytical model also takes into consideration the literary work as speech acts that occur in speech situation that presuppose certain knowledge shared by the interlocutors. The analysis gives proper significance to the relation with as well as impact of various concepts such as conversational implicature, entailment, on presupposition analysis. The analysis refers to various presupposition triggers, properties of presupposition, observations and theories of different linguists and philosophers and projection problem.

The selected conversational passages are preceded by a brief introduction and contextual environment that gives information regarding the events and incidents which give rise to the selected speech situation. The contextual environment is followed by actual passage followed by presupposition analysis based on the theoretical framework. The presupposition analysis takes into consideration the types of presupposition triggers in the
utterances. Such triggers are pointed out and analyzed which give rise to various types of presupposition. Every utterance pregnant with presupposition triggers is analyzed separately and then it is analyzed in relation to other utterances of the same character as well as the utterances of the other characters engaged in the conversational activity. Moreover, the analysis gives proper attention to various aspects such as interpretation of message, speaker’s intentionality, effects of presupposition on characters and theme of the selected play, properties of presupposition, presupposition triggers and projection problem.

However, it has been observed that so far no full-blown pragmatic model for analyzing literary discourse has been built up. Therefore, it should be taken into consideration that every model has its own merits and demerits and the same fact is applicable to presupposition. In spite of that, presuppositional approach to literature, as it will be crystal clear in the present chapter, provides an authentic method for discourse analysis. It offers scope for discovering purposes behind utterances and holds a great deal of illustrative power and possibilities. Besides, the present model constrains itself to the analysis verbal communication among the characters. It does away with the non verbal features of communication such as pauses, silences, punctuation and body languages as it is based on the information that is shared by the characters prior to their utterances. As the present activity is a discourse analysis with reference to presupposition, the analysis focuses mainly on presupposition and the related concepts. It takes the themes of the selected plays as a means which facilitates the activity to be more fruitful.

4.2 THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

4.2.1 Conversation One

The following conversation takes place between Meg and Petey at the opening of the play. They go on talking about the things which are not very important. Meg asks questions and Petey answers them meekly.

**Contextual Environment**

Petey arrives in the living room and sits reading paper, while Meg is in the kitchen preparing breakfast. She serves him breakfast and asks to read something good in the newspaper for her as he did the day before. When Petey tells her that he is still reading the paper, she requests him to read out as he finds some good news. Suddenly, she changes the topic of conversation and asks about his work and then inquires about
weather. After a pause, she asks him about Stanley. However, both of them are not sure where Stanley is. Meg thinks that Stanley might be still asleep upstairs.

**Conversation**

MEG: Have you been working hard this morning?
PETEY: No. Just stacked a few of the old chairs. Cleaned up a bit.
MEG: Is it nice out?
PETEY: Very nice.

_Pause._

MEG: Is Stanley up yet?
PETEY: I don’t know. Is he?
MEG: I don’t know. I have not seen him down yet.
PETEY: Well then he cannot be up.
MEG: Have not you seen him down?
PETEY: I have only just come in.
MEG: He must be still asleep.

(BP, 10)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Petey expresses his unwillingness to read out some news for her; therefore, she changes the topic of conversation and asks about his work. In her utterance ‘Have you been working hard this morning?’ the adverbial of manner ‘hard’ functions as a trigger and raises a lexical presupposition that Petey was working in the morning. This presupposition survives even if the interrogative structure is negated, for instance, ‘Haven’t you been working hard this morning?’ It manifests one of the significant properties of presupposition, that is, survival under negation. However, Petey replies that he wasn’t working hard, but he simply arranged some old chairs. Here the definite description ‘the old chairs’ in the utterance ‘Just stacked a few of the old chairs’ carries an existential presupposition that there are certain number of old chairs that Petey arranged properly. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘cleaned up’ in the utterance ‘Cleaned up a bit’ raises a lexical presupposition that the chairs were dirty. Meg changes the topic and asks about the weather. Her question ‘Is it nice out?’ carries a structural presupposition that the weather is either good or bad. Petey assures her that the weather is very nice. After a short pause, she asks Petey about Stanley. Her question ‘Is Stanley up yet?’ has a couple of Presuppositions. The proper noun ‘Stanley’ carries an existential presupposition about existence of an individual called Stanley, as pointed out by Frege (1952) in his famous example ‘Kepler died in misery’. Moreover, the interrogative
structure as a whole gives rise to a structural presupposition that Stanley is either upstairs or not. Soames (1982) identifies such presuppositions as sentential presuppositions. The interactive ‘yet’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley was upstairs before some time. However, Petey is unaware whether Stanley is upstairs or not and so is Meg. Again the interactive ‘yet’ in ‘I have not seen him down yet’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley has not come down since a particular point of time until now. As a result, Petey comes to a conclusion that, as both of them have not seen him since morning, he can’t be upstairs. But Meg is not convinced and asks him ‘Haven’t you seen him down?’ triggering a structural presupposition that Petey might have seen Stanley. Petey tries to tell her that he has just arrived; therefore he could not notice Stanley’s presence there. The change of state verb ‘come’ in Petey’s utterance ‘I’ve only just come in’ raises a lexical presupposition that Petey was not present there before sometime. Meg tries to close the topic with a representative speech act ‘He must be still asleep’. Here, ‘aspectual still’ carries a lexical presupposition that Stanley was asleep some time before and up to now. Thus, she concludes the Stanley issue.

**Concluding Remarks**

In the above conversational passage, Meg and Petey share a great amount of information regarding Petey’s work and Stanley’s presence. Though Meg seems to know the answers to her questions previously, she goes on asking only for the sake of conversation. It throws light on lack of attachment in their relation as husband and wife.

**4.2.2 Conversation Two**

This conversational passage continues the exchange of Meg’s impatient questions and Petey’s cooperative answers. She is delighted to know that people are eager to visit her boarding house.

**Contextual Environment**

Petey reads out news about someone having a baby and Meg feels sorry, for the baby was a girl. Petey tries to convince her that a girl or boy does not make any difference but in vain. Therefore, to avoid further arguments Petey informs her that he has finished his breakfast. She serves him fried bread which was very nice. Petey suddenly reminds of the two men whom he met on the beach last night and who wanted to stay in Meg’s boarding house. As Petey was not sure about the vacancies, they would come there to confirm their
stay. She is happy to realize that her boarding house is one of the famous boarding houses.

**Conversation**

MEG: How many men?
PETEY: Two.
MEG: What did you say?
PETEY: Well, I said I didn’t know. So they said they’d come round to find out.
MEG: Are they coming?
PETEY: Well, they said they would.
MEG: Had they heard about us, Petey?
PETEY: They must have done.
MEG: Yes, they must have done. They must have heard this was a very good boarding house. It is. This house is on the list.

**(BP, 12)**

**Presupposition Analysis**

When Petey informs Meg that some persons were asking him about her boarding house on the beach last night, she wants to know the number of persons. Her question, ‘How many men?’ triggers a structural presupposition that there are some men who wanted to visit the boarding house. Moreover, the same question entails that there are certain number of human beings and they are males. Petey reveals that there were two men. As these men asked Petey about accommodation, Meg is eager to know ‘What did you say?’ This interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition that Petey should have said something to these men about the boarding house and availability of the rooms. However, Petey could not tell them anything as he was unaware of the situation in the boarding house. The verb ‘said’ in the utterance ‘So they said they’d come round to find out’ functions as plug and cancels the presupposition that these men would come round to find out. As it is pointed out by Levinson (1983), the verb ‘said’ cancels the presupposition when used with subjects other than first person. Moreover, the question asked by Meg ‘Are they coming?’ consists of a couple of presuppositions. The interrogative structure as a whole triggers a structural presupposition that these men are either coming or not. The change of sate verb ‘coming’ triggers a lexical presupposition that these men are not present there at the time of conversation. However, Petey is not sure whether they will come or not. The presupposition ‘They would come’ is cancelled once more by the plug ‘said’ in Petey’s reply ‘Well, they said they would’. One more interrogative structure ‘Had they heard about us, Petey?’ asked by Meg carries certain
amount of presupposed information. It triggers a structural presupposition that these two men might have heard about the reputation of the boarding house. Petey also shares the same opinion. Meg is very proud that her boarding house is one of the famous places which people are eager to visit. The factive verb ‘heard’ in the utterance ‘They must have heard this was a very good boarding house’ triggers a factive presupposition that the boarding house is very good. The verb ‘heard’ is an instance of hole, which is a linguistic item, as Karttunen (1973) states, that preserves presupposition of component sentences in complex structure. Meg, thus, includes her house in the list of famous boarding houses.

Concluding Remarks

Meg’s presuppositions in the above passage reflect her enthusiasm and pleasure at the thought of having customers. However, Petey’s presuppositions reveal that he is not as happy as Meg at the moment. He is not even sure about the arrival of the possible customers as his presuppositions are cancelled by the plug ‘said’. Meg is proud of her boarding house and it reflects in her use of a hole ‘heard’ which strongly preserves her presupposition.

4.2.3 Conversation Three

This piece of conversation takes place after Stanley arrives downstairs. Meg notices that he is late for breakfast, therefore, teases him on one hand and shows motherly affection on the other.

Contextual Environment

Meg assures Petey that she can accommodate the visitors as she has a very good room ready with an armchair. Petey then tells her about a new show coming to the city. However, Meg only likes Stanley playing the piano. At this, she reminds that Stanley is still sleeping upstairs. Therefore, she wakes him up and calls for breakfast. When Stanley says that he could not sleep throughout the night, she does not believe and forces him to have breakfast.

Conversation

MEG. So he’s come down at last, has he? He’s come down at last for his breakfast. But he doesn’t deserve any, does he, Petey? (STANLEY stares at the cornflakes). Did you sleep well?
STANLEY. I did not sleep at all.
MEG. You did not sleep at all? Did you hear that, Petey? Too tired to eat your breakfast, I suppose? Now you eat up those cornflakes like a good boy. Go on. (BP, 14)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Meg enters with a bowl of cornflakes and puts it on the table. Meg’s utterance ‘So he’s come down at last, has he?’ carries certain amount of information that is presupposed. The change of state verb ‘come’ with the place adverb ‘down’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley was not there before some time. The question ‘has he?’ triggers a structural presupposition, that Meg is not sure whether Stanley has come down or not. She seems to confirm Stanley’s presence there. She believes that Stanley might have come down to have breakfast. In fact, she wants to suggest Stanley that he has come very late. The phrase ‘his breakfast’ in the utterance ‘He’s come down at last for his breakfast’ carries an existential presupposition that Stanley usually gets breakfast in the morning and on this day also, it is ready for him. However, Meg is not willing to serve him today for certain reasons. The verb of judging, ‘deserve’ in her utterance ‘But he does not deserve any’ triggers a lexical presupposition that, if somebody comes late, he is not liable to get breakfast. Therefore, Stanley will not get any breakfast as he came very late. However, she serves breakfast to Stanley and thus, the presupposition that the late-comers will not be provided any breakfast is cancelled. Changing the topic, Meg asks Stanley about his comfort at night. Her question ‘Did you sleep well?’ consists of a manner adverb ‘well’ that triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley slept. However, this presupposition is cancelled by Stanley who declares that he did not sleep at all. Thus, presupposition in the above utterance successfully undergoes the property of defeasibility. As it is pointed out by Levinson (1983), presuppositions evaporate in circumstances where contrary assumptions are made. Meg could not believe Stanley and asks Petey ‘Did you hear that Petey?’ This interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition that either Petey heard what Stanley had said or he did not. Meg is sure that Stanley is lying. Her utterance ‘Too tired to eat your breakfast’ is comparative construction that triggers a structural presupposition that Stanley is very tired due to sleeplessness, therefore may not eat breakfast. However, the ironic tone of the utterance itself cancels the presupposition that Stanley is tired. She urges Stanley to eat his breakfast. Her utterance ‘Now you eat up those cornflakes like a good boy’ contains a word ‘like’ which is used to compare Stanley with a good boy, which triggers a structural presupposition that good boys eat cornflakes.
Here Meg assumes that Stanley is a good boy and therefore he should eat those cornflakes.

**Concluding Remarks**

In this passage, Meg’s presuppositions carry out a crucial task of expressing her feelings of affection as well as motherly care towards Stanley. Though she teases him as he has come late, she has got breakfast ready for him. It focuses on her peculiar relation with Stanley which is beyond the customer-lodger relation.

**4.2.4 Conversation Four**

In this passage, Stanley tries to disturb Meg by calling her a bad wife. He gives her a couple of reasons to prove that she neglects her husband. But Meg is haughty enough to reject Stanley’s claim and boasts to be the best wife ever.

**Contextual Environment**

Meg serves cornflakes to Stanley and asks him, as she asked Petey, about the taste of cornflakes. However, to her disappointment, Stanley does not share Petey’s opinion and declares that the cornflakes are horrible. Consequently, Meg denies him the breakfast of which he was dreaming throughout the night. Therefore, Stanley threatens her that he would go to some other hotel for breakfast; as a result, she gives him fried bread. Petey leaves without taking tea and Stanley accuses Meg for being a bad wife who does not care for her husband. But Meg claims to be the best wife and further assures that Petey knows she is a good wife. She even warns Stanley to mind his own business and not to interfere in their relation.

**Conversation**

STANLEY: Ta – ta

PETEY exits left.

Tch, tch, tch, tch.

MEG (defensively): What do you mean?

STANLEY: You are a bad wife.

MEG: I am not. Who said I am?

STANLEY: Not to make your husband a cup of tea. Terrible

MEG: He knows I am not a bad wife.

STANLEY: Giving him sour milk instead.

MEG: It wasn’t sour.

STANLEY: Disgraceful
MEG: You mind your own business, anyway (STANLEY eats.) You won’t find many better wives than me, I can tell you. …

(BP, 16)

Presupposition Analysis

Stanley notices that Petey leaves the house without tea, therefore, he utters an expressive speech act ‘Tch, tch, tch, tch’ which expresses sympathy. Meg, as if she has not done anything wrong, asks him the reason behind his expression. Her question ‘What do you mean?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Stanley meant something by the sympathetic expression. Stanley here seems to suggest that it is not a sign of good wife to send her husband off without giving him a cup of tea. Therefore, he concludes with a representative speech act ‘You are a bad wife’. However, she strongly denies being one and asks him ‘Who said I am?’ triggering a structural presupposition that someone other than Stanley might have called Meg a bad wife. Meg is not agree and informs Stanley that Petey does not think so. In her utterance ‘He knows I am not a bad wife’ the factive verb ‘knows’ raises a factive presupposition about its complement that Meg is not a bad wife. Here the verb ‘know’ functions as a hole which follows cumulative hypothesis, as stated by Van Der Snadt (1988), and carries the presupposition of its complement in the complex sentence. She declares herself not to be bad one. However, Stanley is hard to believe. He has more reasons to prove her a bad wife. He denounces her for giving sour milk to Petey. The adverb ‘instead’ in his utterance ‘Giving him sour milk instead’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Meg was expected to serve fresh milk to Petey. Meg becomes irritated and tries to convey that the milk was not sour. She further warns Stanley to mind his own business. He goes on to claim herself to be the best wife. Her utterance ‘You won’t find many better wives than me’ is a comparative construction that triggers a structural presupposition that Meg is a better wife.

Concluding Remarks

The above analysis reveals that Meg is not ready to accept her negligence towards Petey. Though she claims that Petey knows she is a good wife, this presupposition seems not to be true as Petey never says so. Moreover, her boastful statement about being the best wife ever also is contrary to her behavior. She seems to care more for Stanley than Petey, her husband.
4.2.5 Conversation five

In this passage, Stanley reacts strangely to the news that Meg is expecting some visitors. He becomes restless and wants to know more about them. He seems to be haunted by certain unknown fear.

**Contextual Environment**

Meg informs Stanley that she is to the market in order to buy certain things for the two expected visitors. However, Stanley does not believe her as he says that the only visitor of this boarding house is Stanley himself. He is of the opinion that nobody would like to visit the house. When Meg tells him about Petey’s meeting with the gentlemen, Stanley gets disturbed and tries to get the details of the expected visitors. He is eager to know their names and intention behind their proposed visit to the boarding house. However, Meg is firm on her opinion that her boarding house is famous; therefore, people want to stay there.

**Conversation**

STANLEY (*grinding his cigarette*): When was this? When did he see them?
MEG: Last night
STANLEY: Who are they?
MEG: I don’t know.
STANLEY: Didn’t he tell you their names?
MEG: No.
STANLEY (*pacing the room*): Here? They wanted to come here?
MEG: Yes, they did. (*She takes the curlers out of her hair.*)
STANLEY: Why?
MEG: This house is on the list.

(BP, 20)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Stanley seems quite disturbed when he asks Meg ‘When was this? When did he see them?’ Here, the first interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition about a particular point of time of the meeting between Petey and expected visitors. The second interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that refers to the exact time of Petey’s meeting with them. He becomes so conscious that he goes on asking question about them. When Meg tells him that Petey met them last night, he asks ‘Who are they?’ The interrogative structure here triggers a structural presupposition about their identity. However, Meg is unaware of their identity. The next question asked by Stanley ‘Didn’t he
tell you their names?’ carries a couple of presuppositions. Stanley asserts that they might have told their names to Petey. In this utterance, yes/no question as a whole triggers a structural presupposition that Petey either have told her the names of the visitors or have not. The definite description ‘their names’ triggers an existential presupposition that they have certain names. But Petey did not tell her their names. Stanley is still incredible as he could not accept that the visitors are coming. Therefore, he once again asks her ‘They wanted to come here?’ In this utterance the change of state verb ‘come’ triggers a lexical presupposition that presently they are not there. Stanley gives stress on ‘here’ in this utterance, which is called as implicit cleft with stressed constituent that triggers a structural presupposition that he wants to confirm whether the visitors are coming to Meg’s boarding house or going somewhere else. When Meg replies that they will come there only and nowhere else, he asks ‘Why?’ The question ‘Why?’ triggers a structural presupposition that there might be certain reasons behind their choice of this boarding house. Though Meg thinks that they want to visit the boarding house because this house is on the list, the actual reason is different and both of them are unknown about it, at this point of time.

**Concluding Remarks**

The passage depicts Stanley’s restlessness at the feeling of insecurity due to possible displacement. He is afraid that the expected visitors might be searching for him and might create problems for him. Therefore, he wishes that they should not come to this boarding house.

**4.2.6 Conversation Six**

In this piece of conversation, Meg tries to calm down Stanley by reminding him that he could play piano very well. She requests him to play it again and assures him that he need not leave the house for anything.

**Contextual Environment**

Stanley has a doubt that if the visitors wanted to come, they should have arrived last night. Therefore, he takes it as a false alarm and asks for tea. But Meg has taken the tea away thinking that Stanley did not want it. Both of them start to argue on the tea issue. However, when Stanley becomes aggressive, she becomes nervous and changes the topic to ask about the breakfast and piano. She asks him whether he is going to play piano again as she likes to watch Stanley playing piano. However, Stanley is not interested and
asks her to mind her business. But Meg is irresistible and asks him to play the piano on
the pier, instead of going away for a job.

Conversation

MEG (in a small voice): Didn’t you enjoy your breakfast, Stan? (She approaches the
     table.) Stan? When are you goings to play the piano again? (STANLEY grunts.)
Like you used to? (STANLEY grunts.) I used to like watching you play the piano.
     When are you going to play it again?
STANLEY: I can not, can I?
MEG: Why not?
STANLEY: I have not got a piano, have I?
MEG: No, I meant like when you were working. That piano.
STANLEY: Go and do your shopping.
MEG: But you would not have to go away if you got a job, would you? You could play
     the piano on the pier.

(21-22)

Presupposition Analysis

As Stanley becomes aggressive, Meg switches to breakfast and piano to divert his
attention. Her question ‘Didn’t you enjoy your breakfast, Stan?’ gives rise to a structural
presupposition that Stanley might have enjoyed the breakfast or might not. The phrase
‘your breakfast’ triggers an existential presupposition that there was some breakfast for
Stanley and Meg assumes that he has eaten up. This presupposition reflects one of its
prominent properties, that is, detachability. Here, the presupposition is detachable as it is
triggered by an interrogative structure. As Stanley does not reply, she asks him about his
playing the piano. Her utterance ‘When are you going to play the piano again?’ raises
several presuppositions. The interrogative structure as a whole triggers a structural
presupposition that Stanley is going to play the piano. The interactive ‘again’ in the
utterance triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley had played piano before. Moreover
the definite noun phrase ‘the piano’ triggers an existential presupposition that there
existed a particular piano that Stanley used to play. Stanley, in reply, could produce only
grunts and Meg goes on speaking. Her utterance ‘Like you used to?’ has an implicative
verb ‘used to’ that carries a lexical presupposition that Stanley no more plays the piano
now. The same implicative verb in the utterance ‘I used to like watching you play the
piano’ triggers a lexical presupposition that these days she could not watch Stanley
playing the piano. Stanley is not sure whether he can play the piano. Thus, the
presupposition raised by ‘again’ seems to be cancelled by this question asked by Stanley.
This phenomenon, as Levinson (1983), is called as suspension of presupposition. His question ‘I can not, can I?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Stanley either can play the piano or cannot. Meg assures him that he can. Stanley’s question ‘I have not got a piano, have I?’ triggers a structural presupposition that he has either got a piano or not. Meg reminds him of a certain piano. Her utterance ‘I meant like when you were working’, has a temporal clause beginning with ‘when’ that triggers a structural presupposition that Stanley used to work. At the time he used to work, he also used to play piano. The definite description ‘That Piano’ raises an existential presupposition that there was a particular piano that he used to play. However, Stanley is not interested in piano as he avoids the topic by asking her to go and do shopping. At this, Meg assures him that he could not have to go away for a job. Her utterance ‘But you would not have to go away if you got a job, would you?’ is a directive speech act which contains a counterfactual conditional that triggers a counterfactual presupposition that Stanley has not got any job. As Karttunen and Peters (1979) state, the counterfactual conditionals presuppose the falsity of their antecedent clauses. The question ‘Would you?’ triggers a structural presupposition that he would have or would not have to go away for a job. The definite noun phrase ‘The pier’ in the next utterance ‘You could play the piano on the pier’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists certain pier where Stanley could play the piano.

**Concluding Remarks**

Realizing that Stanley has been disturbed due to the expected newcomers, Meg tries to deflect his attention by reminding of his favorite habit. She praises him as a good pianist thinking that it might please him and he might forget the visitors. However, Stanley is doubtful whether he could play piano. Meg realizes his mystified state of mind and urges him not to go away from her.

**4.2.7 Conversation Seven**

Here, Stanley talks about his second concert which was a planned failure. This concert spoiled his career as a pianist. He thinks that some unknown people are responsible for it but Meg wants him to forget about it and to stay with her.

**Contextual Environment**

Meg expresses her wish that Stanley should play piano as she likes it. Stanley reveals that he has got an offer to play piano in a world tour. As a part of the tour, he is supposed to
play piano in various places in the world. When Meg asks Stanley whether he has played piano in these places, he remembers the two concerts he had given. The first concert was a great success; however, the second one was spoiled. Stanley does not exactly know the persons responsible for the failure but he is sure that he can find them out. Meg persuades him not to go away in search of them. She wants Stanley to stay there with her.

**Conversation**

STANLEY: … My next concert. Somewhere else it was. In winter. I went down there to play. Then, when I got there, the hall was closed, the place was shuttered up, not even a caretaker. They’d locked it up. (*Takes off his glasses and wipes them on his pajama jacket.*) A fast one. They pulled a fast one I’d like to know who was responsible for that (*Bitterly.*) All right, Jack, I can take a tip. …

MEG: Don’t you go away again, Stan. You stay here. You will be better off. You stay with your old Meg.

(*BP, 23*)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Stanley narrates that his next concert was deliberately spoiled. His utterance ‘My next concert’ carries a couple of presuppositions. Interactive ‘next’ triggers a lexical presupposition that he gave a concert before. The definite noun phrase as a whole triggers an existential presupposition that he gave a concert on his own in winter. The change of state verb ‘went’ in the utterance ‘I went there to play’ carries a lexical presupposition that Stanley was not present there previously. The next utterance ‘Then, when I got there, the hall was closed, the place was shuttered up, not even a caretaker’ carries several presuppositions. The temporal clause beginning with ‘when’ carries a structural presupposition that Stanley went there. The definite noun phrases ‘the hall’ and ‘the place’ trigger an existential presupposition that there exists a particular hall where the concert was arranged. However, the hall was closed and not a single person, even a caretaker, was there. The change of state verb ‘locked’ in the utterance ‘They’d locked it up’ raises a lexical presupposition that the hall had been open. It was a conspiracy planned against him and he didn’t know the conspirators. The factive verb ‘know’ in the utterance ‘I’d like to know who was responsible for that’ triggers a factive presupposition that there was someone responsible for the conspiracy. The proper noun ‘Jack’ in the utterance ‘All right, Jack, I can take a tip’ triggers an existential presupposition that presupposes existence of a certain individual named Jack. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘take’ carries a lexical presupposition that Stanley doesn’t have any tip right now.
Stanley tries to get some clue about those conspirators, who wanted him to crawl on bended knees. Meg thinks that Stanley might go away from her in search of them, therefore she urges him not to go. The interactive ‘again’ in Meg’s utterance ‘Don’t you go away again Stan’ has a lexical presupposition that Stanley had been away before. Therefore, she pleads him not to go this time. Such presuppositions are termed as speaker presupposition by Soames.

Concluding Remarks

Stanley expresses his disappointment at the spoiled concert. He firmly believes that someone deliberately spoiled it; therefore he wants to take revenge. But Meg wants him to stay there. She tries to convince him that he can earn money even if stays there. She appeals him emotionally so that he should not go away again.

4.2.8 Conversation Eight

In this conversational exchange, Stanley tries to outwit Lulu by striking out all his comments. In order to wipe out Lulu’s prejudices about him, he seems to tell a white lie about his morning walk.

Contextual Environment

Lulu enters with a parcel which she hands over to Meg. Though Stanley tries to listen what they talk to each other standing at the door, he could not get it clearly. Lulu warns Stanley not to touch the parcel though he does not have such an intention. She asks him to open the door to let the fresh air come inside. Stanley claims that the room is not stuffy as he has cleaned the place in the morning. Both of them agree that it is going to rain. When Lulu comments ironically that it doesn’t matter to Stanley whether it rains or not, Stanley informs her that he had gone out to the sea in the morning and came back before breakfast.

Conversation

LULU: Why don’t you open the door? It’s all stuffy in here.

_She opens the back door._

STANLEY (rising): Stuffy? I disinfected the place this morning.

LULU (at the door): Oh, that’s better.

STANLEY: I think it’s going to rain to-day. What do you think?

LULU: I hope so. You could do with it.

STANLEY: Me! I was in the sea at half past six.

LULU: Were you?
Presupposition Analysis

Lulu notices that the room is stuffy and needs fresh air. Her utterance ‘Why don’t you open the door?’ is a directive speech act used as a request to open the door. It carries a couple of presuppositions. The change of state verb ‘open’ triggers a lexical presupposition that the door is closed. The definite noun phrase ‘the door’ triggers a lexical presupposition that there is a particular door which is closed. Therefore, Lulu opens it. However, Stanley does not agree that the room is stuffy as he claims to have disinfected it in the morning. In his utterance ‘I disinfected the place in this morning’ the change of state verb ‘disinfected’ triggers a lexical presupposition that the place was infected. Lulu appreciates him as he disinfected it. Stanley expresses his opinion about the possibility of rain. In his utterance ‘I think it is going to rain to-day’ the change of state verb ‘is going to’ triggers a lexical presupposition that it is not raining right now. Stanley might have seen the clouds in the sky, therefore he expresses the possibility. He asks Lulu ‘What do you think?’ about the rain. Here, the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that Lulu has certain opinion about the possibility of rain. She might agree or disagree with Stanley’s opinion. In fact, Lulu also thinks that it may rain. However, she assumes that, as Stanley never goes out of the house, for him it doesn’t matter whether it rains or not. To prove that he often goes outside, Stanley informs her that he has been to the sea early in the morning. His utterance ‘I was in the sea at half past six’ is an instance of representative speech act which Stanley uses to state the fact. The utterance contains a definite noun phrase ‘the sea’ that triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a particular sea where Stanley had been in the morning. As Lulu seems incredible, Stanley says ‘I went right out to the headland and back before breakfast’. In this utterance, the change of state verb ‘went’ and the interactive ‘back’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley was in the house and then the left towards the sea. The definite noun phrase ‘the headland’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a particular region called headland. Moreover, the interactive ‘before’ triggers a lexical presupposition that the breakfast was served after Stanley came back from the sea. Stanley is surprised to see that Lulu is not ready to believe him.
Concluding Remarks

In this passage, Stanley seems to project himself as a man who loves cleanliness. Though he claims to be at the sea early in the morning, his claim doesn’t seem to stand as it lacks sincerity. By providing details, he wants to make Lulu to believe that he had been to the sea in the morning. It seems that he has a great attraction for the outside world but never leaves the house.

4.2.9 Conversation Nine

Following is a piece of conversation that takes place between Goldberg and McCann as they arrive in front of the boarding house. Goldberg is confident that they have reached the right destination but McCann seems doubtful about it. Therefore, Goldberg tells him of Uncle Barney’s teaching.

Contextual Environment

Stanley leaves the house through the kitchen door as he notices Goldberg and McCann entering through the back door. McCann seems nervous and Goldberg tries to calm him down. He tells McCann that they are on a holiday and asks him to be relaxed. Goldberg advises him to breathe in and out so as to feel comfortable. Then he speaks of his experiences with Uncle Barney and his personality. However, McCann is not interested and wants to be sure whether they have reached the right house, as he did not see any number on the gate of that house. Goldberg is sure and once again urges McCann not to be nervous. He complains that wherever McCann goes, he behaves as if he is attending a funeral.

Conversation

MCCANN: How do we know this is the right house?
GOLDBERG: What makes you think it’s the wrong house?
MCCANN: I didn’t see a number on the gate.
GOLDBERG: I wasn’t looking for number.
MCCANN: No?
GOLDBERG (settling in the armchair): You know one thing Uncle Barney taught me? Uncle Barney taught me that the word of a gentleman is enough. That’s why, when I had to go away on business, I never carried any money. One of my sons used to come with me. …

(BP, 28)
Presupposition Analysis

McCann wants to make sure whether they have reached the right address. His utterance ‘How do we know this is the right house?’ carries a structural presupposition, triggered by the question as a whole, that there must be certain clue to identify the right house. If they don’t have the clue, they may get in the wrong house. Moreover, the definite noun phrase ‘the right house’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a particular house which they want to visit. McCann is of the opinion that the house which they have reached in, may not be the one expected by them. In reply, Goldberg asks him a counter question ‘What makes you think it’s the wrong house?’ that triggers a structural presupposition that McCann might have some reasons to think so, and the reason is that there isn’t any number on the gate. However, Goldberg is sure about the house as he says that a number is not important to identify the house. He might have got a different clue about it. Goldberg sits in the armchair and reminds something that Uncle Barney taught him. His utterance ‘You know one thing Uncle Barney taught me?’ carries several presuppositions. The interrogative structure as a whole triggers a structural presupposition that McCann might not know Uncle Barney’s advice. The proper noun ‘Uncle Barney’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists an individual called Uncle Barney and that he is Goldberg’s uncle. Such presuppositions fulfill one of the properties, that is, backgrounding as McCann will presupposes that Goldberg has an uncle. Moreover, the factive verb ‘know’ triggers a factive presupposition that Uncle Barney taught something to Goldberg. The factive verb ‘taught’ in ‘Uncle Barney taught me that the word of a gentleman is enough’ triggers a factive presupposition that the word of a gentleman is enough and one can believe it. Therefore, he never took money while going on business tours. The temporal clause beginning with ‘when’ in the utterance ‘That’s why, when I had to go away on business I never carried any money’ carries a structural presupposition that Goldberg had to go away on business tours. The phrase ‘my sons’ in the utterance ‘One of my sons used to come with me’ triggers an existential presupposition that Goldberg has sons. Moreover, the implicative verb ‘used to’ carries a lexical presupposition that his sons no more come with him these days.

Concluding Remarks

The presupposed information by both the characters throws light on their peculiar nature. McCann doesn’t seem to be certain about what he is supposed to do, however Goldberg is
full of confidence and firm on his convictions. He has got the plan crystal clear in his mind and acts accordingly.

4.2.10 Conversation Ten

In this conversational passage, McCann is eager to know what exactly they are supposed to do in this boarding house. But Goldberg avoids explaining him the nature of their job and gives vague information.

Contextual Environment

Goldberg is annoyed to see that McCann has so many doubts about their present job. His complaint that McCann no more trusts him as he used to, McCann tries to assure that he trusts him as usual. He further tries to convince Goldberg to tell him what the nature of this job is, and says that it will make him feel comfortable. However, Goldberg goes on praising him for his ability and speaks about his confidence in McCann and avoids explaining the nature of the job. Finally, he speaks about the job in obscure language telling that this job is different from their previous work, and it will be carried out without much annoyance to both of them. As a result, McCann gets assured about the nature of the job and thanks Goldberg.

Conversation

MCCANN: Hey Nat, just one thing. …
GOLDBERG: What now?
MCCANN: This job - no, listen - this job, is it going to be like anything we've ever done before?
GOLDBERG: Tch, tch, tch.
MCCANN: No, just tell me that, just that, and I won’t ask any more. …
GOLDBERG: The main issue is a singular issue and quite distinct from your previous work. Certain elements, however, might well approximate in points of procedure to some of your other activities. All is dependent on the attitude of our subject. At all events, McCann, I can assure you that the assignment will be carried out and mission accomplished with no excessive aggravation to you or myself. Satisfied?
MCCANN: Sure. Thank you, Nat.

(BP, 29-30)

Presupposition Analysis

McCann is eager to know whether this job is like anything they have done previously. In his utterance, ‘Hey Nat, just one thing …’ there is a proper noun ‘Nat’ that triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a certain individual called Nat, that is,
Goldberg. He has several doubts but apart from others, he wants to know ‘just’ one thing. Goldberg gets irritated and asks ‘What now?’ Here, the interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition that there is something that McCann wants to ask Goldberg. In reply, McCann’s question ‘This job - no, listen - this job, is it going to be like anything we’ve ever done before?’ carries several presuppositions. The definite description ‘this job’ triggers an existential presupposition that there is a particular job which they are supposed to do. The interrogative structure as a whole triggers a structural presupposition that this job is either like their previous jobs or entirely different. The interactive ‘before’ triggers a lexical presupposition that they have done certain jobs in the past. Though Goldberg seems reluctant to tell him anything, McCann urges him if he gets only that much information, he would not ask anything else. His utterance ‘No, just tell me that, just that, and I won’t ask any more’ contains an interactive ‘any more’ that triggers a lexical presupposition that there are other issues also which need to be clarified. But he thinks it important to know about the job, at present moment. Goldberg replies ‘The main issue is a singular issue and quite distinct from your previous work.’ In this utterance, the definite noun phrase ‘the main issue’ triggers an existential presupposition that besides other issues, there is one particular issue that is significant. The definite description ‘your previous work’ carries an existential presupposition that McCann used to do certain work previously. Goldberg suggests him that the present job is different than his previous work. However, he admits that there are some similarities also with ‘your other activities.’ Here the interactive ‘other’ triggers a lexical presupposition that McCann carries out some additional activities besides his work. In his utterance ‘All is dependent on the attitude of our subject,’ the quantifier ‘all’ triggers a lexical presupposition that there is something dependent on their attitude. As pointed out by Van Der Sandt (1988) as well as Verschueren (1999), presuppositions triggered by quantifiers such as ‘all’ survive even if the main proposition is negated. Thus negation of the above utterance ‘All is not dependent on the attitude of our subject’ doesn’t affect the presupposition that there is something dependent on their attitude. Moreover, the definite descriptions ‘the attitude’ and ‘our subject’ raise existential presuppositions that they have certain attitude and they have a subject, respectively. In addition, the quantifier ‘all’ in the utterance ‘At all events,’ carries a lexical presupposition that there will be some events. Once again, Goldberg assures him that the mission will be completed without any problem to them. His question ‘Satisfied?’ triggers a structural presupposition that McCann is either
satisfied with his explanation or not. In fact, Goldberg tries to prevent him indirectly from asking further question.

**Concluding Remarks**

McCann becomes impatient due to Goldberg’s neutral approach. He feels that this job seems to be different but Goldberg doesn’t want to reveal it to him. Finally, Goldberg explains in such an obscure and strange manner that McCann can’t help to be satisfied.

**4.2.11 Conversation Eleven**

This piece of conversation takes place at Goldberg’s suggestion that they will arrange a party on Stanley’s birthday. Meg is happy to know that both of them are willing to help her.

**Contextual Environment**

When Meg enters, Goldberg introduces himself and McCann, reminding her of their meeting with Petey last night. They ask her whether she can accommodate them and also ask about other guests. When Meg tells them that she has only one guest called Stanley Webber, who used to be a pianist, they try to know more about him. As Meg reveals that it is Stanley’s birthday, Goldberg suggests her to arrange a surprise party for him. Meg regrets that there is no one whom she can invite for a party. However, Goldberg says that he and McCann, who is expert in arranging party, will accompany her.

**Conversation**

GOLDBERG: You like the Idea?  
MEG: Oh, I’m so glad you came today  
GOLDBERG: If we hadn’t come today, we’d have come tomorrow. Still, I’m glad we came today. Just in time for his birthday.  
MEG: I wanted to have a party. But you must have people for a party.  
GOLDBERG: And now you’ve got McCann and me. McCann’s the life and soul of any party.  
MCCANN: What?  
GOLDBERG: What do you think of that, McCann? There’s a gentleman living here. He’s got a birthday today, and he’s forgotten all about it. So we’re going to remind him. We’re going to give him a party.

(BP, 32-33)
Presupposition Analysis

Goldberg suggests Meg to give Stanley a party on his birthday. His utterance ‘You like the idea?’ carries a couple of presuppositions. The interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition that Meg either liked or did not like the idea. The definite noun phrase ‘the idea’ triggers an existential presupposition that Goldberg has suggested some idea to Meg. The idea is that they will have a party. Meg replies with an expressive speech act ‘Oh, I’m so glad that you came today’ which contains the factive verb ‘glad’ that triggers a factive presupposition that Goldberg and McCann came today. Moreover, the counterfactual conditional clause beginning with ‘if’ in Goldberg’s utterance ‘If we hadn’t come today, we’d have come tomorrow’ triggers a counterfactual presupposition that they came today. He is happy that they came today, instead of coming tomorrow, because they reached ‘Just in time for his birthday.’ Here, the definite description ‘his birthday’ triggers an existential presupposition that it is his, i.e. Stanley’s birthday. Meg also wishes to give a party, however, her utterance ‘But you must have people for a party’ is a contrastive construction that triggers a structural presupposition that there is no one who can arrange and enjoy party. She thinks that if she arranges a party, there should be some persons to participate. Goldberg has a solution to it. He declares that McCann is the life and soul of any party, therefore both of them will participate and accompany her. McCann is surprised as Goldberg asks him ‘What do you think, of that, McCann?’ The interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition that McCann might have got some ideas about a party. Goldberg tells McCann that Stanley has got his birthday and ‘He’s forgotten all about it’. In the utterance, the implicative verb ‘forgotten’ triggers a lexical presupposition that he should have remembered it. One more implicative verb ‘remind’ in the utterance ‘So were going to remind him’ carries a lexical presupposition that Stanley has forgotten his birthday. Therefore, they will have a surprise party on the occasion.

Concluding Remarks

Goldberg tries to impress Meg by helping her to fulfill her utter wish to have a birthday party. He knows that if he wants to win her confidence, he will have to do something which she would appreciate. Therefore, he grabs this opportunity and offers his assistance in arranging a party.
4.2.12 Conversation Twelve

In this passage, Stanley tries to create his image as a businessman who travels from place to place but wants to settle down at home. He emphasizes that he has lived a quiet and uncontroversial life.

Contextual Environment

Stanley enters while McCann is sitting at the table tearing a sheet of newspaper in five equal strips. As they exchange greetings, Stanley realizes that there is someone outside the backdoor. He is stopped by McCann as he is about to go outside. McCann informs him that they are having a party tonight on his birthday. However, Stanley is not interested in a party and wishes to celebrate alone. Stanley thinks that he has met McCann somewhere before but McCann doesn’t think so. When McCann informs him that he is on a holiday and wants to stay there for a few days, Stanley tells him that he will find the home very stimulating. However, he will have to leave it due to his business. Then he goes on speaking about his quiet past and regrets that now the things have been changed.

Conversation

STANLEY: Me? No. But you will. (He sits at the table.) I like it here, but I’ll be moving soon. Back home. I’ll stay there too, this time. No place like home. (He laughs.) I wouldn’t have left, but business calls. Business called, and I had to leave for a bit. You know how it is.

MCCANN (sitting at the table, left): You in business?
STANLEY: No. I think I’ll give it up. I’ve got a small private income, you see. I think I’ll give it up. Don’t like being away from home. I used to live very quietly - played records, that’s about all. Everything delivered to the door. Then I started a little private business, in a small way, and it compelled me to come down here - kept me longer than I expected. You never get used to living is someone else’s house. Don’t you agree?

(BP, 40)

Presupposition Analysis

Stanley likes the place but he has to leave it as he wants to go to his home. His utterance ‘Back home’ contains an interactive ‘Back’ that triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley was at the home before he came to Meg’s house. He wishes to stay at home because he likes his home. The contrast in the utterance ‘I wouldn’t have left, but business calls’ gives rise to a structural presupposition that Stanley had to leave unwillingly. Because of business matters, he had to leave his home and stayed in the
boarding house. McCann is surprised to know that Stanley has a business. But Stanley wishes to give up the business as he has got a small private income. One more reason behind giving up the business is that he doesn’t like to stay away from home. The implicative verb ‘used to’ in his utterance ‘I used to live very quietly’ triggers a lexical presupposition that these days he could not live quietly. He was living a peaceful life but then everything got changed. His utterance ‘Then I started a little private business, in a small way, and it compelled me to come down here - kept me longer than I expected’ carries several presuppositions. The change of state verb ‘started’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley did not have any business previously and then he started one. The obligation in ‘it compelled’ carries a structural presupposition that he was not willing to come in the boarding house. The change of state verb ‘come’ raises a lexical presupposition that he was not there in the boarding house before as he came there due to business. The comparative construction ‘kept me longer than I expected’ carries a structural presupposition that he has been staying there for a long time, which was not expected by him. He tells McCann that it is not very comfortable to live in someone else’s house and asks ‘Don’t you agree?’ Here the interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition that McCann is either agreed or disagreed.

**Concluding Remarks**

In this conversational exchange, Stanley is trying to convince McCann that he is staying unwillingly in this boarding house. While talking about his quiet and prosperous past, he seems to cancel his own presuppositions. Though he informs McCann that he is on a business tour, he doesn’t seem to carry out any business as such.

4.2.13 Conversation Thirteen

In the following conversational exchange, Goldberg and McCann ask questions to Stanley without giving him enough time to reply. The questions also are equally strange and unexpected.

**Contextual Environment**

Stanley warns Goldberg to leave the house by asking him to find accommodation somewhere else. He declares himself as the manager of the house. However, Goldberg doesn’t believe him and congratulates him on his birthday. When McCann enters with drinks, Stanley asks him to get out as drinking is illegal in a boarding house. He warns them against making any harm to the people in the house. However, they ask Stanley to
sit down. Stanley denies it saying that they should sit first. Finally, all of them sit down and then begins the interrogation.

**Conversation**

GOLDBERG: Why are you wasting everybody’s time Webber? Why are you getting in everybody’s way?
STANLEY: Me? What are you -
GOLDBERG: I’m telling you, Webber. You’re a washout. Why are you driving that old lady off her conk?
MCCANN: He likes to do it!
GOLDBERG: Why do you behave so badly, Webber? Why do you force that old man out to play chess?
STANLEY: Me?
GOLDBERG: Why do you treat that young lady like a leper? She’s not the leper, Webber!
STANLEY: What the –
GOLDBERG: What did you wear last week, Webber? Where do you keep your suits?
MCCANN: Why did you leave the organization?
GOLDBERG: What would your old mum say, Webber?
MCCANN: Why did you betray us?

**(BP, 47-48)**

**Presupposition Analysis**

Goldberg asks one question after another without sparing enough time for Stanley to think over the questions. The question ‘Why are you wasting everybody’s time, Webber?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Stanley is wasting everybody’s time. Another question ‘Why are you getting in everybody’s way?’ carries a structural presupposition that Stanley is getting in everybody’s way. Stanley gets confused as he could not understand what Goldberg meant. Goldberg again asks him ‘Why are you getting on everybody’s wick?’ Here also, the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that Stanley is getting on everybody’s wick. In fact, Goldberg wants to suggest Stanley that he might have done such a thing in his past which might have created problems for others. Therefore, they are after him. The question ‘Why are you driving that old lady off her conk?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Stanley is driving Meg off her conk. Moreover, the definite description ‘that old lady’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists an old lady whom Stanley is driving off her conk. At this, McCann Comments that Stanley likes to behave like this with Meg. Therefore, Goldberg asks him ‘Why do you behave so badly, Webber?’ triggering a structural presupposition
that Stanley behaves badly. The question ‘Why do you force that old man out to play chess?’ carries a structural presupposition that Stanley forces Petey out to play chess. Moreover, it also presupposes that Petey has gone out to play chess. However, Stanley is shocked to hear that he forced Petey. Goldberg asks Stanley ‘Why do you treat that young lady like a leper?’ This utterance carries a couple of presuppositions. The question as a whole carries a structural presupposition that Stanley treats that young lady as a leper. Goldberg wants to suggest Stanley that he should not try to avoid Lulu as she is a normal human being. The definite description ‘that young lady’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a young lady whom Stanley treats like a leper, though she is not. The next question ‘What did you wear last week, Webber?’ carries a structural presupposition that Stanley wore a certain dress last week. The question ‘Where do you keep your suits?’ carries a couple of presupposition. The definite description ‘your suits’ triggers an existential presupposition that Stanley has suits, and the question carries a structural presupposition that he keeps his suits somewhere. Moreover, the question ‘Why did you leave the organization?’ also carries several presuppositions. The question triggers a structural presupposition that Stanley left the organization. The change of state verb ‘leave’ carries a lexical presupposition that Stanley had been in the organization and the definite noun phrase ‘the organization’ triggers an existential presupposition that presupposes existence of a particular organization with which Stanley was engaged. Then without waiting for answer, Goldberg asks him ‘What would your old mum say, Webber?’ Here the definite description ‘your old mum’ carries an existential presupposition that Stanley has a mother who is old, and the question as a whole triggers structural presupposition that his mother would say something about Stanley’s behavior. Then McCann asks him ‘Why did you betray us?’ Here, the question triggers a structural presupposition that Stanley betrayed them.

**Concluding Remarks**

While asking questions to Stanley, Goldberg and McCann presuppose a great amount of information. But they don’t let him answer these questions. His short and incomplete responses seem to express his denial of whatever they ask. Thus, it can be said that they ask these questions only to bewilder Stanley not for getting answers. Therefore, sincerity of these questions can be challenged and same is true about the presuppositions raised by them.
4.2.14 Conversation Fourteen

This piece of conversation depicts Meg who has become impatient for the party. She is dressed for the occasion and wishes that others should praise her appearance.

Contextual Environment

Goldberg and McCann go on asking absurd questions to Stanley, which he could not answer and becomes blank. Finally, Stanley kicks Goldberg in the stomach. As a result, McCann seizes a chair to hit Stanley with. Stanley also takes a chair to cover his head in order to avoid injury. At this stage, Meg enters well dressed and with a drum. She is eager to know whether the dress is becoming and Goldberg is full of flattery. Both of them wish that Stanley should play a little tune with the drum.

Conversation

MEG: I brought the drum down. I’m dressed for the party.
GOLDBERG: Wonderful.
MEG: You like my dress?
GOLDBERG: Wonderful. Out of this world.
MEG: I know. My father gave it to me. (Placing drum on table.) Doesn’t it make a beautiful noise?
GOLDBERG: It’s a fine piece of work. Maybe Stan’ll play us a little tune afterwards.
MEG: Oh yes. Will you Stan?
STANLEY: Could I have my glasses?
GOLDBERG: Ah yes. …

(BP, 53)

Presupposition Analysis

Meg is wearing her favorite dress and carries sticks and drum. Her utterance ‘I brought the drum down’ is a representative speech act which carries a couple of presuppositions. The change of state verb ‘brought’ triggers a lexical presupposition that the drum was somewhere else as it was not there; therefore she brought it with her. The definite noun phrase ‘the drum’ carries a lexical presupposition that there exists a particular drum which Meg brought downstairs. She further informs them that she is ready for the party wearing her favorite dress. In her utterance ‘I’m dressed for the party’ the definite description ‘the party’ raises an existential presupposition that they are going to have a birthday party for Stanley and therefore she has become ready. Goldberg is happy to know that she is ready. She wants to know whether the dress looks good on her. Therefore she asks Goldberg ‘You like my dress?’ Here, the definite description ‘my
dress’ triggers an existential presupposition that the dress belongs to Meg. Goldberg praises her dress saying that it is wonderful and it looks as if it is heavenly. Meg agrees that it is wonderful and remembers that it was gifted to her. The utterance ‘My father gave it to me’ contains a definite description ‘My father’ that carries an existential presupposition that there exists Meg’s father who gave her this dress. Then Meg puts the drum on table and asks ‘Doesn’t it make a beautiful noise?’ Here, the interrogative structure as a whole triggers a structural presupposition that the drum either makes a beautiful noise or not. She wants to know Goldberg’s opinion regarding the drum. He declares it as a fine piece of works and wishes that Stanley may play a tune on the drum. Meg also expresses the same wish and asks him ‘Will you, Stan?’ Her question raises a structural presupposition that Stanley will either play a tune or won’t. However Stanley is indifferent and seems unwilling. Instead of replying Meg’s question, he asks ‘Could I have my glasses?’ it is an instance of a directive speech act as it is a request in form of interrogative structure. Here, the definite description ‘my glasses’ triggers an existential presupposition that Stanley has glasses which someone has taken.

**Concluding Remarks**

Goldberg seems to realize that his job will be a bit easy if he keeps Meg happy. Therefore, he goes on flattering her with an exaggerated praise of her age-old dress. He even exaggerates while talking about the drum and wishes that Stanley may play a tune.

**4.2.15 Conversation Fifteen**

This conversation takes place between Lulu and Goldberg after his elegant speech. Lulu seems impressed due to the way Goldberg gave a speech. Lulu wants to know more about his skill.

**Contextual Environment**

Goldberg, McCann and Meg pour drinks into glasses and Goldberg announces that Meg should offer a toast to Stanley. As Meg becomes confused about what to say, Goldberg suggests her to look at Stanley and say whatever she honestly feels. Meg gives an emotional speech and Lulu enters the room at this time. Goldberg asks Stanley to give her a drink. Then Goldberg gives a speech commenting on Meg’s emotions towards Stanley and then he speaks about himself in an elegant manner. Therefore, Lulu praises him to be a good speaker. Goldberg informs her how and when he learnt to speak like this.
Conversation

LULU: You’re a marvelous speaker, Nat, you know that? Where did you learn to speak like that?
GOLDBERG: You liked it, eh?
LULU: Oh yes!
GOLDBERG: Well, my first chance to stand up and give a lecture was at the Ethical Hall, Bayswater. A wonderful opportunity. I’ll never forget it. They were all there that night. Charlotte Street was empty. Of course, that’s a good while ago.
LULU: What did you speak about?
GOLDBERG: The Necessary and the Possible. It went like a bomb. Since then I always speak at weddings.

(BP, 57)

Presupposition Analysis

After listening to Goldberg’s speech, Lulu asks him ‘You’re a marvelous speaker, Nat, you know that?’ It is a declarative speech act which carries a structural presupposition triggered by interrogative structure that Goldberg either knows or does not know that he is a marvelous speaker. Lulu is curious to know more about Goldberg as a speaker; therefore, she asks him ‘Where did you learn to speak like that?’ This utterance carries a couple of presuppositions. The interrogative structure as a whole triggers a structural presupposition that Goldberg learnt somewhere to speak like that. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘did learn’ (learnt) triggers a lexical presupposition that Goldberg tried to learn. In other words, Goldberg was not able to speak like that before and then he learnt it. Goldberg asks her whether she liked his speech by saying ‘You liked it, eh?’ Here, the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that Lulu either liked or did not like Goldberg’s speech. When Lulu agrees that she liked it, Goldberg tells her how he learnt it. He says ‘My first chance to stand up and give a lecture was at the Ethical Hall, Bayswater.’ This utterance has a couple of presuppositions. The definite description ‘My first chance’ triggers an existential presupposition that he got an opportunity to speak. Moreover, one more definite description ‘the Ethical Hall, Bayswater’ raises an existential presupposition that there exists a particular hall where Goldberg got his first opportunity to give public speech. He thinks this opportunity as wonderful one and says ‘I’ll never forget it’. Here, the implicative verb ‘forget’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Goldberg remembers this opportunity very well. His utterance ‘They were all there that night’ contains two presupposition triggers. The quantifier ‘all’ triggers a lexical presupposition that there were a lot of people present in the hall as he gave a speech. The
definite description ‘that night’ triggers an existential presupposition that refers to a particular night when he gave a speech. In his utterance ‘Charlotte Street was empty’ the proper noun ‘Charlotte Street’ triggers an existential presupposition that refers to the existence of a particular street that was deserted on the night of Goldberg’s speech. Lulu asks him ‘What did you speak about?’ Here, the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that Goldberg might have spoken about a particular topic. Goldberg replies that he delivered a lecture about ‘The Necessity and the Possible.’ Here both the definite noun phrases trigger existential presuppositions that there exist such abstract ideas called Necessary and Possible which Goldberg talked about. He tells her that his speech was very much appreciated. His utterance ‘Since then I always speak at wedding’ is a temporal clause that carries a structural presupposition that he always speaks at weddings. In other words, he did not speak at wedding before he delivered that lecture in the Ethical Hall.

**Concluding Remarks**

Lulu realizes that Goldberg might have learnt somewhere to speak fluently; therefore, she wants to know the secret of his elegant speech. Goldberg informs her about the first opportunity he got and feels proud while talking about it. It seems as if he boasts about his skill. He refers to abstract ideas so as to suggest that he used to talk about philosophical topics also. However, there is a contradiction when he says that he speaks at wedding.

**4.2.16 Conversation Sixteen**

Meg is surprised to know that Petey doesn’t have any objection about Stanley’s sleeping late in the morning. She expresses her anxiety to know that McCann was in Stanley’s room in the morning. She also notices change in Stanley’s routine.

**Contextual Environment**

After all of them enjoyed drinks on Stanley’s birthday, they begin with a game of blind man’s buff. When it comes Stanley’s turn to be blind, he siezes Meg and tries to strangle her. Goldberg and McCann rush to rescue Meg and there is a blackout. McCann drops his torch somewhere in the darkness which all of them try to find out. Suddenly, Lulu screams out and fells unconscious. McCann gets the torch and they find Stanley bent upon spread-eagled Lulu lying on the table. Therefore they take him up stairs. The next morning, Act Three begins in the same way as Act One, Meg asking ‘Is that you?’ and
Petey reading newspaper. Meg comes to know that Stanley has not come down yet. She is about to go and wake Stanley up, but Petey stops her asking her to let him sleep. Meg is surprised to realize that when she went to Stanley’s room with tea, it was McCann who opened the door. She wonders they might know each other previously as Stanley has a lot of friends.

**Conversation**

MEG: But you say he stays in bed too much.
PETEY: Let him sleep … this morning. Leave him.
MEG: I've been up once, with his cup of tea. But Mr. McCann opened the door. He said they were talking. He said he’d made him one. He must have been up early. I don’t know what they were talking about. I was surprised. Because Stanley’s usually fast asleep when I wake him. But he wasn’t this morning. I heard him talking. (Pause.) Do you think they know each other? I think they are old friends. Stanley had a lot of friends. I know he did. (Pause.) I didn’t give him his tea. He'd already had one. I came down again and went on with my work. Then, after a bit, they came down to breakfast. Stanley must have gone to sleep again.

(BP, 68-69)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Meg wants an explanation from Petey as she says ‘But you say he stays in bed too much.’ The utterance contains verb ‘say’ that functions as a plug to cancel a factive presupposition that Stanley remains in bed for a long time. Moreover, the contrast carries a structural presupposition that Petey should not favor Stanley’s sleeping too much as he usually complains about it. However, Petey says ‘Let him sleep … this morning’. Here the definite description ‘this morning’ carries an existential presupposition that refers to this particular morning when Stanley is asleep and Petey wants no one to wake him up. He wants to suggest Meg, though she wakes him up every morning, she should not today. In Meg’s utterance ‘I’ve been up once, with his cup of tea’ the definite description ‘his cup of tea’ triggers an existential presupposition that Stanley usually takes a cup of tea in the morning. However, to Meg’s surprise, there was McCann in Stanley’s room. Her utterance ‘But Mr. McCann opened the door’ contains a change of state verb ‘opened’ that triggers a lexical presupposition that the door was closed. Moreover, the definite description ‘the door’ carries an existential presupposition that McCann opened the door of Stanley’s room. The contrastive structure of the utterance carries a structural presupposition that it was Stanley, not McCann, who was expected to open the door. The utterances ‘He said they were talking’ and ‘He said he’d made him one’ contain the verb
‘said’ that functions as plug and cancels lexical presuppositions that McCann and Stanley were talking and McCann had made a cup of tea for Stanley. Therefore, Meg thinks that Stanley must have got up earlier. In Meg’s utterance ‘I don’t know what they were talking about’ the factive verb ‘know’ carries a factive presupposition that they were talking about something. Meg is surprised to know that Stanley has got so early, as she says ‘Because Stanley’s usually fast asleep when I wake him up.’ Here, the temporal clause beginning with ‘when’ triggers a structural presupposition that Meg usually wakes Stanley up. Further, as Meg says ‘I heard him talking,’ the factive verb ‘heard’ carries a factive presupposition that Stanley was talking. As McCann and Stanley were talking, she gets a doubt and asks Petey ‘Do you think they know each other?’ Here, the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that they either know each other or not. In her utterance ‘I think they’re old friends’ there is a verb ‘think’ that functions as a dyer to cancel a lexical presupposition that they are old friends. In Meg’s utterance ‘Stanley had a lot of friends’ quantifier ‘a lot of’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley had friends. The same information is shared in the utterance ‘I know he did’, where the factive verb ‘know’ carries a factive presupposition. Stanley already had a cup of tea; therefore Meg did not give him one. She says ‘I came down again and went on with my work.’ In this utterance, there are several presuppositions. The change of state verb ‘came down’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Meg was upstairs. The interactive ‘again’ carries one more lexical presupposition that she had been down before also. Further, the change of state verb ‘went on’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Meg was working before she went upstairs. Moreover, the definite description ‘my work’ carries an existential presupposition that there is certain work that is supposed to be done by Meg. After some time, as Meg observes, ‘They came down to breakfast.’ Here the change of state verb ‘came down’ triggers a lexical presupposition that they were upstairs. But Stanley did not come down and Meg thinks ‘Stanley must have gone to sleep again’. The interactive ‘again’ carries a lexical presupposition that Stanley had been sleeping before.

**Concluding Remarks**

The amount of information presupposed by Meg while talking about Stanley and McCann reveals her angst towards Stanley. While talking about McCann, she uses plug which suggests that she is not sure about whatever she assumes to be true. Though she thinks that Stanley and McCann must know each other, it doesn’t mean that they are friends.
4.2.17 Conversation Seventeen

This conversation takes place between Petey and Goldberg. Though Petey is anxious about Stanley’s condition, Goldberg avoids telling him anything authentic about him. In fact, he is not sure about it, therefore, he makes vague statements.

**Contextual Environment**

Petey avoids speaking about Stanley and to divert Meg’s attention, he asks her to go for shopping. Meg notices a big car parked outside and Petey tells her that the car belongs to Goldberg. She is afraid that there might be a wheelbarrow in the car. However she feels relaxed when Petey informs her that Goldberg doesn’t have any wheelbarrow. As she is about to leave, Goldberg enters and she wishes to take a ride in his car. Meg realizes his ignorance and decides to go by walking. After she exits, Petey asks Goldberg about Stanley’s present condition. However, Goldberg avoids the topic saying that he is not an expert to comment on Stanley’s condition. He is of the opinion that Stanley has got nervous breakdown.

**Conversation**

PETEY: How is he this morning?
GOLDBERG: Who?
PETEY: Stanley. Is he any better?
GOLDBERG (*a little uncertainly*): Oh … a little better, I think, a little better. Of course, I’m not really qualified to say, Mr. Boles. I mean, I haven’t got the … the qualifications. The best thing would be if someone with the proper … mnn … qualifications … was to have a look at him. Someone with a few letters after his name. It makes all the difference.
PETEY: Yes.
GOLDBERG: Anyway, Dermot’s with him at the moment. He’s … keeping him company. …
PETEY: It’s a terrible thing.
GOLDBERG (*sighs*): Yes. The birthday celebration was too much for him.
PETEY: What came over him?

*(BP, 71)*

**Presupposition Analysis**

Petey is anxious about Stanley’s condition; therefore, he asks Goldberg ‘How is he this morning?’ Here, the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that Stanley
is in a particular condition. Goldberg’s counter question ‘Who?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Petey is asking about someone which Goldberg could not understand. Therefore, Petey makes it clear that he is asking about Stanley. His question ‘Is he any better?’ carries a structural presupposition that Stanley may be either better or worse than his previous condition. Goldberg seems uncertain while saying that Stanley is a little better. He declares himself as not qualified to say anything about Stanley’s condition. In his utterance ‘I mean, I haven’t got the … qualifications’ the verb ‘mean’ functions as a plug and preserves the factive presupposition that Goldberg has not got the qualifications. Moreover, the definite description ‘the qualifications’ triggers an existential presupposition that there are contain qualifications which make anybody able to treat such a person like Stanley. Goldberg is of the opinion that if someone with proper training is there to treat such patients, it makes all the difference. He thinks that Stanley now needs to be in the care of such an expert. His utterance ‘The best thing would be if someone with the proper … mnn … qualification … was to have a look at him’ contains a counterfactual conditional clause beginning with ‘if’ that triggers a counterfactual presupposition that there is no one with proper qualification to take care of Stanley. Therefore, Dermot is there to give him company. The proper noun ‘Dermot’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists an individual called Dermot who is taking care of Stanley. Goldberg thinks that the birthday celebration is responsible for Stanley’s situation. The definite description ‘the birthday celebration’ in the utterance ‘The birthday celebration was too much for him’ carries an existential presupposition that they have celebrated the birthday. Moreover, the manner adverbial ‘too much’ triggers a lexical presupposition that they had arranged the birthday celebration for Stanley. However, Petey is eager to know what the nature of Stanley’s present condition is. His question ‘What came over him?’ triggers a structural presupposition that something has happened with Stanley. Therefore, Goldberg retorts that he suffers from ‘Nervous Breakdown’. The phrase ‘Nervous Breakdown’ triggers an existential presupposition that there is a particular state of mind called Nervous Breakdown which Stanley has got.

Concluding Remarks

Goldberg tries to focus on the fact that Stanley needs to be taken to an expert for special treatment. While presupposing, by the way of a counterfactual conditional, that there is no one who can take care of Stanley, Goldberg wants to convince Petey indirectly that he must be taken away.
4.2.18 Conversation Eighteen

Goldberg is trying to seduce Lulu by convincing her that she should enjoy her youthful days. However, Lulu claims to be a girl of good character and blames Goldberg for intruding her room.

Contextual Environment

Petey thinks to consult a doctor if Stanley remains in the same condition by lunchtime. However, Goldberg informs him that he has made all arrangements; therefore, Petey should not worry about Stanley. McCann comes down and speaks hesitantly that he won’t go upstairs again. He seems to be disappointed due to Stanley’s condition. When Petey wants to know if they are going to take Stanley to a doctor, he is told that they will take him to Monty and then Petey was indirectly forced to go to beach. After Petey exits, Goldberg gets irritated by questions asked by McCann and McCann denies that he will not go upstairs. Goldberg seems to be lost and discouraged as he speaks about his past. At this stage, Lulu enters and Goldberg asks her to play a game of pontoon which she denies firmly. Therefore, Goldberg tries to persuade her saying that a girl like her should play games. Lulu claims that she is different type of girl who thinks of her father as well as her boyfriend.

Conversation

GOLDBERG: A girl like you, at your age, at your time of health, and you don’t take to games?
LULU: You’re very smart.
GOLDBERG: Anyway, who says you don’t take to them?
LULU: Do you think I’m like all the other girls?
GOLDBERG: Are all the other girls like that, too?
LULU: I don’t know about any other girls.
GOLDBERG: Nor me. I’ve never touched another woman.
LULU (distressed): What would my father say, if he knew? And what would Eddie say?
GOLDBERG: Eddie?
LULU: He was my first love, Eddie was. And whatever happened, it was pure. With him! He didn’t come into my room at night with a briefcase!

(BP, 79)

Presupposition Analysis

Contrast in Goldberg’s utterance ‘A girl like you, at your age, at your time of health and you don’t take to games?’ carries a structural presupposition that young and healthy girls
like Lulu should play games. Lulu recognizes the shrewdness of Goldberg and calls him smart. Goldberg replies that as she likes company of smart persons, she is not different from others. Lulu’s question ‘Do you think I’m like all the other girls?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Goldberg either thinks Lulu to be like all the other girls or he doesn’t think so. Moreover, quantifier ‘all’ carries a lexical presupposition that there are the other girls and the definite description ‘the other girls’ triggers an existential presupposition that there are certain other girls with whom Lulu compares herself. Goldberg replies with a counter question ‘Are all the other girls like that, too?’ Here, a linguistic item ‘too’ compares Lulu with other girls and carries a lexical presupposition that she is not different type of girl. Goldberg here tries to suggest that Lulu is a girl who is like any other girls. However, Lulu declares that she doesn’t know about any other girl. Goldberg has the same experience as he says ‘I’ve never touched another woman.’ Here the interactive ‘another’ in the phrase ‘another woman’ carries a lexical presupposition that Goldberg has touched a particular woman, that is, Lulu and no one else. Lulu is worried as she is afraid of the consequences if her near and dear ones would come to know that she is seduced by Goldberg. Her utterance ‘What would my father say, if he knew?’ carries several presuppositions. The interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition that her father would blame her when he will come to know the fact. The definite noun phrase ‘my father’ carries an existential presupposition that Lulu has a father and the counterfactual conditional clause beginning with ‘if’ triggers a structural presupposition that Lulu’s father doesn’t know whatever happened with Lulu. Moreover, her next utterance ‘And what would Eddie say?’ has a couple of presuppositions. The question as a whole carries a structural presupposition that Eddie also would say something. The proper noun ‘Eddie’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a person called Eddie. When Goldberg asks about Eddie, Lulu answers ‘He was my first love’. Here, the definite description ‘my first love’ triggers an existential presupposition that Lulu was in love with Eddie. Moreover, it also presupposes that, besides Eddie, she is in love with some other person. She claims that, her love with Eddie was pure as she tells him ‘He didn’t come into my room at night with a briefcase!’ The definite description ‘my room’ triggers an existential presupposition that Lulu has a room in which Eddie never came at night, however, as Lulu wants to suggest, Goldberg came to her room at night.
Concluding Remarks

Lulu is clever enough to understand Goldberg’s intention and avoids falling prey to his schemes. She tries to prove herself as a different type of girl but Goldberg doesn’t believe her. By referring to father and lover, she wants to suggest that she has such relations and she cares for them. Thus, the conversation projects Goldberg as a shrewd person and Lulu as equally clever.

4.2.19 Conversation Nineteen

In this conversational passage, Goldberg and McCann have decided to take Stanley to Monty for special treatment. However Petey tries to prevent them.

Contextual Environment

Goldberg and McCann try to force Lulu to confess everything; therefore Lulu leaves the room. Then Stanley, well-dressed and clean-shaven, arrives with McCann. Goldberg asks him whether he feels better, but Stanley is unable to speak and stares blankly at the floor. They try to coax him with various promises but Stanley doesn’t show any reaction. Finally, he attempts to speak but could only emit inarticulate sounds. As they were forcing him to join them, Petey enters and interferes saying that they should not take Stanley away, because he and Meg can take care of him. But Goldberg is of the opinion that Stanley needs a special treatment, which he would not get in the boarding house.

Conversation

GOLDBERG: Still the same old Stan. Come with us. Come on, boy.
MCCANN: Come along with us.
PETEY: Where are you taking him?
    *They turn. Silence.*
GOLDBERG: We’re taking him to Monty.
PETEY: He can stay here.
GOLDBERG: Don’t be silly.
PETEY: We can look after him here.
GOLDBERG: Why do you want to look after him?
PETEY: He’s my guest.
GOLDBERG: He needs a special treatment.

(BP, 85)
Presupposition Analysis

Goldberg comes to Stanley and says ‘Still the same old Stan’. Here, aspectual ‘still’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley was the same before some time up to now. The directive speech act ‘Come with us’ contains a change of state verb ‘come’ that raises a lexical presupposition that Stanley is not with them at the moment. As both of them force him to join them, Petey asks ‘Where are you taking him?’ This interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that they are taking Stanley somewhere. Goldberg replies ‘We’re taking him to Monty’. In this utterance, the proper noun ‘Monty’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a person called Monty. Petey tries to stop them from taking him away saying that he can stay with him in the boarding house. However, to leave Stanley there with Petey is a foolish thing according to Goldberg. Petey tries to convince him again that he and Meg can look after Stanley. Therefore, Goldberg asks ‘Why do you want to look after him?’ triggering a structural presupposition that there are certain reasons behind Petey’s statement that he can take care of Stanley. Petey’s utterance ‘He is my guest’ is a representative speech act which contains definite description ‘my guest’. It carries an existential presupposition that Petey treats Stanley as a guest. Therefore, it is his responsibility to take care of him. However, Goldberg is not convinced and declares that Stanley should go with them as he needs special treatment, which he may not get here.

Concluding Remarks

Petey’s humble attempts fall short to prevent Goldberg and McCann from taking Stanley away. Though he urges that he can take care of his guest, they take Stanley away saying that he will not get special treatment in the house. Therefore, they want to take him to an expert.

4.2.20 Conversation Twenty

Meg becomes upset due to Goldberg and McCann’s departure and wants to know from Petey about Stanley. Petey could not gather courage to tell her that they took him away with them.

Contextual Environment

Petey tries to prevent Goldberg and McCann from taking Stanley with them but he could not succeed as they threaten him indirectly by inviting him to join them. Finally, they took Stanley away with them. Petey remains helpless, sits in the chair and begins to read
newspaper. After some time, Meg comes back from shopping and asks about Goldberg and McCann. When Petey tells her that they have left, she is disappointed. Then she asks him about Stanley and Petey conceals the fact by saying that Stanley is still asleep.

**Conversation**

MEG (*coming downstage*): The car’s gone.

PETEY: Yes.

MEG: Have they gone?

PETEY: Yes.

MEG: Won’t they be in for lunch?

PETEY: No

MEG: Oh, what a shame. (*She puts her bag on the table.*) It’s hot out. (*She hangs her coat on a hook.*) What are you doing?

PETEY: Reading.

MEG: Is it good?

PETEY: All right.

*She sits by the table.*

MEG: Where’s Stan?

Pause.

Is Stan down yet, Petey?

PETEY: No … he’s. …

MEG: Is he still in bed?

PETEY: Yes, he’s … still asleep.

*(BP, 86)*

**Presupposition Analysis**

Meg mentions with a representative speech act that ‘The car’s gone’. In this utterance, the definite description ‘The car’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a car that belongs to Goldberg. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘gone’ carries a lexical presupposition that the car was there before some time. Therefore Meg asks Petey ‘Have they gone?’ Here, the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that Goldberg and McCann have either gone or not. Once again, the change of state verb ‘gone’ triggers a lexical presupposition that they were present there before a while. When Petey answers affirmatively, she further asks him ‘Won’t they be in for lunch?’ triggering a structural presupposition that they will either come back for lunch or they will not. She becomes upset to know that they won’t come back for lunch. She then asks Petey ‘What are you doing?’ Here, the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that Petey is doing something. When Petey tells her that he is reading, she further asks ‘Is it good?’ It triggers a structural presupposition that whatever Petey is reading can be either
good or bad. Petey avoids exact answer by saying that it is all right. Then she changes the topic and asks about Stanley. Her question ‘Where’s Stan?’ carries a structural presupposition that Stanley is somewhere else, as he is not present there. As Petey does not reply, she asks him ‘Is Stan down yet, Petey?’ Here, the interactive ‘yet’ carries a lexical presupposition that Stanley was not present downstage before some time and the interrogative structure as a whole triggers a structural presupposition that Stanley is either downstage or upstairs. Therefore, Meg guesses that he might be asleep and asks ‘Is he still in bed?’ Here, the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that Stanley is either in bed or not. The aspectual ‘still’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Stanley was in bed before some time. Further, aspectual ‘still’ in Petey’s utterance ‘Yes, he’s … still asleep’ carries the same presupposition. However, this presupposition is cancelled as Goldberg and McCann have taken him away.

**Concluding Remarks**

Petey gives curt replies to Meg’s questions about the visitors and Stanley. She had taken it for granted that Goldberg and McCann would take lunch in the house. Then, she presupposes a great amount of information about Stanley when she inquires about him. Her presuppositions regarding Stanley’s whereabouts are cancelled as they are based on her guess and even Petey doesn’t provide authentic information to her. Though he informs her that Stanley is asleep, the fact is something contradictory to this. Thus the presuppositions raised by aspectual still are cancelled.

**4.3  THE CARETAKER**

**4.3.1 Conversation one**

This conversation takes place when Davies narrates his experiences. He is distressed due to his insult at the restaurant. He is of the belief that he is not supposed to do inferior jobs.

**Contextual Environment**

The play opens with Aston bringing Davies into his home and Davies complaining about the treatment he got outside. Davies seems to be filled with inferiority complex while he complains about Greeks, Poles as well as Blacks who treated him badly. He calls those people as toe-rags and feels that they are mannerless. However, to overcome the feeling of inferiority, he considers himself as a polished person. He claims to be clean and up to date. For the same reason, he even left his wife who used to keep unwashed
undergarments in a saucepan. He claims having enjoyed some of the best dinners. He realizes that he is an old man and reminisces in the golden years of youth. However, as a result of a few attacks he had, he doesn’t feel so well these days. Then he narrates the incident happened with him. He thinks that he should not be asked to do inferior jobs such as taking out the bucket of rubbish as he was engaged only to clean up the place. He thinks that he has nothings to do with a bucket of rubbish.

Conversation

DAVIES: All them toe-rags, mate, got the manners of pigs. I might have been on the road a few years but you can take it from me I’m clean. I keep myself up. That’s why I left my wife. Fortnight after I married her, no, not so much as that, no more than a week, I took the lid off a saucepan, you know what was in it? A pile of her underclothing, unwashed. The pan for vegetables, it was. The vegetable pan. That’s when I left her and I haven’t seen her since.

DAVIES turns, shambles across the room, comes face to face with a statue of Buddha standing on the gas stove, looks at it and turns.

I’ve eaten my dinner off the best of plates. But I’m not young anymore. I remember the days I was as handy as any of them. They didn’t take any liberties with me. But I haven’t been so well lately. I’ve had a few attacks.

Pause.

(Coming closer.) Did you see what happened with that one?

ASTON: I only got the end of it.

DAVIES: Comes up to me, parks a bucket of rubbish at me, tells me to take it out the back. It’s not my job to take out the bucket! They got a boy there for taking out the bucket. My job’s cleaning the floor, clearing up the tables, doing a bit of washing-up, nothing to do with taking out buckets!

(CT, 9)

Presupposition Analysis

Davies, while complaining about the outsiders, says ‘All them toe-rags, mate, got the manners of pigs’. In this utterance, quantifier ‘all’ carries a lexical presupposition that there were toe-rags who behaved rudely. Moreover, the same utterance entails that there were some toe-rags. As he claims to be a person who likes cleanliness, he expresses hatred about dirt and dirty persons by uttering a representative speech act ‘That’s why I left my wife.’ The definite noun phrase ‘my wife’ raises an existential presupposition giving information about the existence of Davies’ wife. The utterance further shares the information that Davies has left his wife. He left his wife, as he says ‘Fortnight after I married her, no, not so much as that, no more than a week’ presupposing that he married her before fortnight or not more than a week, and then he left her. Here, the temporal
clause beginning with ‘after’ has given rise to structural presupposition. The comparative construction ‘no more than a week’ triggers a structural presupposition that he left his wife within a week. He took this decision because he found her unwashed underclothing in a saucepan. His utterance ‘The pan for vegetables, it was. The vegetable pan’ presupposes existence of a vegetable pan giving rise to existential presupposition triggered by definite noun phrase. Further, the temporal clause ‘when I left her’ shares the same structural presupposition that Davies left his wife. Moreover, while reminiscing, he says that ‘But I’m not young anymore.’ In this utterance, the interactive ‘anymore’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Davies is an old man. He further says that ‘I remember the days I was as handy as any of them.’ Here the factive verb ‘remember’ triggers a factive presupposition about its complement and the comparison ‘as...as’ carries a structural presupposition that Davies was young and energetic like any other young man. Moreover, the definite noun phrase ‘the days’ carries an existential presupposition that refers to the days when Davies was young. However, now he has become weak as a result of a few attacks. The question ‘Did you see what happened with that one?’ triggers a structural presupposition that something might have happened and he asserts that Aston might know that. However, Aston could not witness the incident as he arrived somewhat late and hence, he could catch only the end of it. Davies narrates how a particular person came to him and asked him to throw out a bucket full of rubbish. Davies felt insulted and said ‘It’s not my job to take out the bucket’. Here, the phrase ‘my job’ triggers an existential presupposition that Davies is supposed to do a particular job there and he asserts that he was engaged to do other jobs like cleaning. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘to take out’ triggers a lexical presupposition that the bucket was inside the café. He asserts that his job is cleaning the floor, tables and a bit of washing-up. In the utterance ‘My job’s cleaning the floor, clearing up the tables …’ the definite noun phrases ‘the floor’ and ‘the tables’ carry existential presuppositions that there is a floor in the café which Davies was supposed to clean and there are some tables in that café, respectively. Though taking out a bucket of rubbish is a cleaning job, he claims he should not be told to do such inferior jobs.

Concluding Remarks

The information presupposed by Davies projects him as an eccentric type of person. He presupposes that he left his wife for trivial reason. He wants to suggest Aston that he cannot bear filthiness. He even presupposes his youthful days and regrets that now he has
become old. Due to his age and health, he has got inferiority complex. He thinks that they ask him to do such work which is none of his concern. He feels insulted to do inferior jobs such as taking out the bucket of rubbish. Thus, the passage throws light on Davies’ character as a person who finds excuses to avoid his responsibilities.

4.3.2 Conversation Two

In this conversational exchange, Davies talks proudly about his native place where was taught the manners and etiquettes. He is annoyed due to rudeness of the Scotch person and thanks Aston for his rescue.

Contextual Environment

Davies is still narrating the bucket incident, while Aston is indifferent. He finally accepts that taking out the rubbish is his job, however, he resents that the person had no rights to give him orders as Davies and that person were of the same status. Being a Scotch, as Davies thinks, that person was not superior to him, he therefore should not issue orders. Aston seems uninterested in the details and busies himself in mending a plug. However, Davies goes on speaking. He gives elaborate information about the way someone should talk to elders and the respect they deserve as well as his so called right ideas. When guvnor accuses him of making commotion, he denies it saying that he has got more rights than anybody else. He realizes that Aston has saved him from an injury. He assures himself of taking revenge of the Scotch who behaved roughly with him.

Conversation

DAVIES: … You got an eye of him, did you?
ASTON: Yes.
DAVIES: I told him what to do with his bucket. Didn’t I? You heard. Look here, I said, I’m an old man, I said, where I was brought up we had some idea how to talk to old people with the proper respect, we was brought up with the right ideas, if I had a few years off me I’d … I’d break you in half. That was after the guvnor give me the bullet. Making too much commotion, he says. Commotion, me! Look here, I said to him, I got my rights. I told him that. I might have been on the road but nobody’s got more rights than I have. Let’s have a bit of fair play, I said. Anyway, he give me the bullet. (He sits in the chair). That’s the sort of place.

Pause.

If you hadn’t come out and stopped that Scotch git I’d be inside the hospital now. I’d have cracked my head on that pavement if I’d have landed.

(CT, 10)
Presupposition Analysis

Davies doesn’t like that someone gives him orders. Therefore, he says ‘I told him what to do with his bucket’. In this utterance, the verb ‘told’ functions as plug and preserves the factive presupposition that something must be done with the bucket. Moreover, the utterance ‘I said, I’m an old man’ has one more plug ‘said’ that carries a factive presupposition that Davies is an old man. As stated by Van Der Sandt (1988), plugs are the lexical items that preserve presuppositions of the component sentence if the sentence has first person subject. Thus, presupposition in this complex sentence remains unchanged. Davies further claims to be well-cultured and aware of the way one should behave with elderly persons. His utterance ‘where I was brought up’ triggers existential presupposition about a place where Davies was brought up with the right ideas. The counterfactual conditional clause ‘if I had a few years off me I’d … I’d break you in half’ triggers a counterfactual presupposition that he does not have a few years off him. Therefore, he could not teach a lesson to that Scotch git. Further, the temporal clause beginning with ‘after’ in his utterance ‘That was after the guvnor give me the bullet’, triggers a structural presupposition that the guvnor gave Davies the bullet. In other words, Davies threatened the man, who asked him to take out the bucket of rubbish, before the guvnor gave him bullet. Davies denies the accusation that he makes too much noise and speaks about his rights. In his utterance, ‘I got my rights’ the definite noun phrase ‘my rights’ carries an existential presupposition that he has got some rights. Further, in the utterance ‘Nobody’s got more rights than I have’ comparative construction triggers structural presupposition that Davies has got more rights. In the utterance ‘If you hadn’t come out and stopped that Scotch git I’d be inside the hospital now’ the counterfactual conditional clause beginning with ‘if’ triggers a counterfactual presupposition that Aston had come out to save him. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘come’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Aston was not present there previously but arrived after some time. Further, the change of state verb ‘stopped’ carries a lexical presupposition about certain action in progress. It presupposes that the scotch git was beating Davies. Moreover, the definite noun phrase ‘the hospital’ presupposes existence of certain hospital, where Davies would have been admitted. His utterance ‘I’d have cracked my head on that pavement if I’d have landed’ has a couple of presuppositions. The definite description ‘that pavement’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a particular pavement. The counterfactual conditional clause beginning with ‘if’ triggers a
counterfactual presupposition that Davies did not land on that pavement, thus, he was in safe hands.

**Concluding Remarks**

Davies presupposes various things in this passage and talks confidently as well as proudly. The counterfactual conditional depicts his helplessness at the thought that he is an old man. He is aware of the rights which he has got as a human being. Moreover, he expresses his gratefulness towards Aston for saving him from that Scotch git. Though he talks aggressively, he is aware of his physical weakness.

**4.3.3 Conversation Three**

In this extract, Davies is all grateful to Aston for his timely rescue. Then, he observes the neighboring houses and makes unnecessary comments.

**Contextual Environment**

After a while, Davies informs that he has left all his belongings which contain a lot of important things, there at his workplace. Aston promises him to bring his bag from there and permits him to take rest in his room. Davies then unnecessarily inquires whether Aston has got more rooms and about the people living in other houses. He even regards himself lucky as Davies came to help him when that Scotch person was beating him. He goes on asking about people in the neighborhood, as he saw the curtains of those houses pulled down. Therefore, he guesses that there might be some persons inside.

**Conversation**

DAVIES: I was lucky you come into that caff. I might have been done by that Scotch git. I been left for dead more than once.

   Pause.

   I noticed that there was someone was living in the house next door.

ASTON: What?

DAVIES: (gesturing). I noticed …

ASTON: Yes. There’s people living all along the road.

DAVIES: Yes, I noticed the curtains pulled down there next door as we came along.

   (CT, 12)

**Presupposition Analysis**

The change of state verb ‘come’ in Davies’ utterance ‘I was lucky you come into that caff’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Aston was not there before. Moreover, the definite description ‘that caff’ triggers an existential presupposition that refers to a
particular café where the incident took place. Davies sincerely accepts the fact that he would have been dead if Aston hadn’t saved him. After a short pause, Davies asks about the neighbors saying ‘I noticed that there was someone was living in the house next door.’ In this utterance, the factive verb ‘noticed’ triggers factive presupposition. It presupposes the information carried by its complement that there are some people living in the neighboring house. The definite noun phrase ‘the house next door’ triggers an existential presupposition about the existence of a house in the neighborhood. The counter questions ‘What?’ presupposes that Davies asked something which Aston could not get properly. Therefore, Davies repeats that he wants to know whether there is someone living in the house. In his reply, Aston ironically points out that ‘There’s people living all along the road’. In this utterance, the definite noun phrase ‘the road’ presupposes existence of a road, by the way of existential presupposition, along which various houses are situated. Aston here wants to suggest Davies that, as people are living in the houses all along the road, the house in the neighborhood should not be an exception. Davies’ utterance ‘I noticed the curtains pulled down there next door as we came along’ has a couple of presuppositions. The factive verb ‘noticed’ presupposes its complement that the curtains were pulled down. Thus it gives rise to factive presupposition. The definite noun phrase, ‘the curtains’ triggers an existential presupposition that the house has curtains which were pulled down. Davies here wants to suggest that as the curtains were pulled down, there must be someone inside. Moreover, the temporal clause ‘as we came along’ triggers a structural presupposition that they came along the neighboring house.

**Concluding Remarks**

The analysis reveals the inquisitive nature of Davies, who is interested in knowing various things which are none of his concern. Though the information presupposed by him is not very significant at that particular occasion, it focuses on the surrounding of Aston’s house. Davies seems to be curious about the neighbors.

**4.3.4 Conversation Four**

In this conversational passage, Davies talks about his friend’s suggestion to visit a monastery for shoes and how he was treated by the monk.

**Contextual Environment**

Aston informs Davies that a family of Indians lives there in the neighboring house. Davies is keen to know whether Blacks live there but Aston replies negatively, rather
uncertainly. Davies asks about an extra pair of shoes, as he doesn’t have one with him. Then he goes on speaking about a friend whom he met at Shepherd’s Bush. This friend of Davies was well off and used to give him the best soap each time he visited him. But he feels sad that the friend is no more now. His friend even guided him to the monastery where he would possibly get a pair of shoes, which is the most important thing in his life. However, when he went to the monastery, he was treated badly by the monk.

**Conversation**

DAVIES: He’s gone now. Went. He was the one who put me on to this monastery. Just the other side of Luton. He’d heard they give away shoes.

ASTON: You’ve got to have a good pair of shoes.

DAVIES: Shoes? Its life and death to me. I had to go all the way to Luton in these.

ASTON: What happened when you got there, then?

*Pause.*

DAVIES: I used to know a bootmaker is Acton. He was a good mate to me.

*Pause.*

You know what that bastard monk said to me?

*Pause.*

How many more Blacks you got around here then?

(CT, 13-14)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Davies speaks of his friend who used to help him a lot. His utterance ‘He’s gone now’ contains a change of state verb ‘gone’ which presupposes that the friend was there at Lupton but now he is not there as he is dead. The non-restrictive relative clause ‘who put me on to this monastery’ in the utterance ‘He was the one who put me on to this monastery’ triggers a structural presupposition that the dead friend put Davies on to the monastery. The definite description ‘this monastery’ presupposes existence of a particular monastery situated at the other side of Luton. The verb ‘heard’ in the utterance ‘He’d heard they give away shoes’ functions as a dyer to preserve the presupposition that they give shoes to the needful at monastery. Aston agrees about the usefulness of shoes and offers him a pair of shoes. Shoes are ‘life and death’ i.e. the most significant things in life for Davies, and he went to Luton having the same. Aston’s utterance ‘What happened when you got there, then?’ carries various presuppositions. The interrogative structure as a whole triggers a structural presupposition that something had happened when Davies went there. The temporal clause ‘When you got there’ carries another structural presupposition that Davies went there to Luton. The change of state verb ‘got’, here
meaning ‘went’, triggers lexical presupposition that Davies was not there before sometime. In reply to Aston’s query, Davies says ‘I used to know a bookmaker is Acton’. The implicative verb ‘used to’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Davies does not know any bookmaker in Acton at present. The proper noun ‘Acton’ presupposes existence of a particular place, giving rise to existential presupposition. After a short pause, Davies bursts out ‘You know what that bastard monk said to me’. Here, the factive verb ‘know’ triggers factive presupposition that the monk said something to Davies. The definite noun phrase ‘that bastard monk’ presupposes existence of a monk whom Davies calls bastard. Then Davies takes a slight pause and changes the topic by asking, ‘How many more Blacks you got around here then?’ The interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition that there are certain numbers of Blacks in the neighboring houses.

**Concluding Remarks**

In this extract, Davies seems to regret that after death of his friend, there is no one who could help him. He seems to create sympathy for him in the mind of Aston. To suggest that he cannot get any shoes, he presupposes that now he is not familiar with any boot maker. He talks about a monk and then switches to Blacks, which depicts his baffled state of mind as well as sense of insecurity.

**4.3.5 Conversation Five**

In the following exchange, Davies talks about the papers which are crucial to prove his identity. Therefore, he wishes to go to Sidcup in order to collect them from the person with whom he has entrusted them.

**Contextual Environment**

Davies is of the opinion that the shoes offered by Aston are not suitable for him. However, suddenly he agrees that the shoes are not bad. When asked where he wants to go, he gives vague answers. He declares that he is waiting for weather to improve. Aston, being a kind man, offers him shelter till the weather improves and Davies accepts the proposal happily as he didn’t have any other place to stay. Aston even offers him some money and begins to poke a plug. Davies resents that he could not go to Sidcup in these shoes. When asked by Aston, he says that he has got some papers there, which will prove his identity.
Conversation

DAVIES (*with great feeling*): If only the weather would break! Then I’d be able to get down to Sidcup!
ASTON: Sidcup?
DAVIES: The weather’s so blasted bloody awful, how can I get down to Sidcup in these shoes?
ASTON: Why do you want to get down to Sidcup?
DAVIES: I got my papers there! …
ASTON: What are they doing at Sidcup?
DAVIES: A man I know has got them. I left them with him. You see? They prove who I am! I can’t move without them papers. They tell you who I am. You see! I’m stuck without them.

(CT, 19-20)

Presupposition Analysis

Davies’ utterance ‘If only the weather would break! Then I’d be able to get down to Sidcup!’ contains a prepositional adverb ‘only’ in ‘if…then’ clause that triggers a lexical presupposition that Davies expects the weather to improve. However, Levinson (1983) states that presuppositions raised by such adverbs are cancellable under negation. The change of state verb ‘break’ triggers a lexical presupposition that the weather is not good. Davies wishes it to break as he is eager to go to Sidcup. The word ‘Sidcup’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a place called Sidcup. The question in his utterance ‘The weather’s so blasted bloody awful, how can I get down to Sidcup in these shoes?’ presupposes that he cannot go to Sidcup in these shoes. When Davies speaks about his plan, Aston asks ‘Why do you want to get down to Sidcup?’ Here, the interrogative structure triggers structural presupposition that there might be some reasons for Davies’ visit to Sidcup. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘get down’ raises a lexical presupposition that Davies is not at Sidcup presently as he plans to go there. Davies’ reply ‘I got my papers there!’ contains a definite noun phrase ‘my paper’ that triggers an existential presupposition that there are certain papers at Sidcup that belong to Davies. As he says that those papers belong to him, Aston asks curiously ‘What are they doing at Sidcup?’ the question carries a structural presupposition that there might be some purpose behind Davies’ leaving the papers at Sidcup. However, Davies reveals that he has left the papers with a person who is familiar to him. The non-restrictive relative clause ‘I know’ in his utterance ‘A man I know has got them’ triggers a structural presupposition that Davies knows a man at Sidcup. The change of state verb ‘left’ in his utterance ‘I left them
with him’ carries a lexical presupposition that the papers were with Davies before he left them with that man. The papers are significant proofs that may prove Davies’ real identity. In his utterance ‘They prove who I am!’ the factive verb ‘prove’ and another factive verb ‘tell’ in the utterance ‘They tell you who I am’ trigger the same factive presupposition that Davies has got certain identity as an individual. He cannot even go anywhere without those papers.

Concluding Remarks

The passage reveals Davies as a kind of hypocrite. Though he regrets that he could not go to Sidcup due to bad weather, he doesn’t seem to be sincere. Then he complains about his shoes in order to gather more reasons to postpone his proposed visit to Sidcup.

4.3.6 Conversation Six

In this passage, Aston narrates an incident about his meeting with a woman in a café. He informs Davies about his conversation with that woman and how he rejected her proposal.

Contextual Environment

Aston permits Davies to sleep in one of the two beds. In the morning, Davies gets up all of a sudden to notice that Aston is staring at him. Aston accuses him of dreaming as well as making noises while sleeping. However, Davies refuses it strongly claiming that he has never made groans. He adds that nobody has ever told him that he jabbres. Aston raises the possibility that Davies groans because of sleeping in a bed, but Davies denies it saying that he is familiar with beds and expresses a doubt that the Blacks in the neighborhood may be making noises. Aston closes the matter and decides to go out. When Aston tells Davies that he need not go out only because he is going, Davies is surprised. Then Aston narrates how he met a woman in a café and how they engaged in conversation.

Conversation

ASTON: … You know, I was sitting in a café the other day. I happened to be sitting at the same table as this woman. Well, we started to … we started to pick up a bit of a conversation. I don’t know … about her holiday, it was, where she’d been. She’d been down to the south coast. I can’t remember where though. Any way, we were just sitting there, having this bit of a conversation … then suddenly she put her hand over to mine … and she said, how would you like me to have a look at your body?

DAVIES: Get out of it.

Pause.
ASTON: Yes. To come out with it just like that, in the middle of this conversation. Struck me as a bit odd.

Presupposition Analysis

Aston’s utterance ‘You know, I was sitting in a café the other day’ has two presuppositions. One is triggered by factive verb ‘know’ and the other is carried by definite description ‘the other day’. The verb ‘know’ triggers a factive presupposition that Aston was sitting in a café, whereas the phrase ‘the other day’ carries an existential presupposition that Aston was sitting in café on a particular day. Implicative verb ‘happened to’ in the utterance ‘I happened to be sitting at the same table as this woman’ triggers a lexical presupposition that they sat on the same table coincidently as it was not Aston’s intention to sit with a woman. Moreover, the definite noun phrase ‘the same table’ carries an existential presupposition that there existed a table in that café. Implicative verb ‘started’ in the utterance ‘Well, we started to … we started to pick up a bit of a conversation’ carries a lexical presupposition that they remained silent for some time and then they started to talk. Further, the utterance ‘I don’t know … about her holiday, it was, where she’d been’ carries a couple of presuppositions. The factive verb ‘know’ triggers a factive presupposition that there is something about the woman’s holiday. The definite noun phrase ‘her holiday’ carries an existential presupposition that the woman had been on her holiday. The structure, ‘where she’d been’ triggers a structural presupposition that she had been somewhere for her holidays. The definite noun phrase ‘the south coast’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a place called south coast. They were talking to each other and as Aston says ‘then suddenly she put her hand over to mine’. In this utterance, adverbial of manner ‘suddenly’ triggers a presupposition that she put her hand on Aston’s. The question ‘how would you like me to have a look at your body?’ is a directive speech act which triggers a structural presupposition that the woman expected certain reaction from Aston as she will look at his body. The lady might have assumed that he would like it.

Concluding Remarks

While talking about a woman and her proposal, Aston presupposes that he didn’t talk to that woman deliberately. He wants to focus on the fact that they got engaged in conversation coincidently. He seems to suggest that as a woman used to propose him, he
is a normal human being. Moreover, he was balanced enough to reject such an odd proposal. With this incident, he presupposes that he used to spend a normal life.

### 4.3.7 Conversation Seven

Here, Mick compares Davies to one of his relatives and goes on talking about him. Then suddenly, he asks Davies whether it is comfortable for him to stay there in his house.

#### Contextual Environment

Aston goes on asking about Davies’ real name and his nationality as well as his birthplace. Davies gives vague answers and tries to avoid the topic. Then he asks for some money for a cup of tea, and thanks Aston when he reminds Davies that he has given him a few bob last night. After some time, Aston goes out and Mick enters, while Davies is having a look at various things scattered in the room. When Davies tries to open a case, Mick seizes his hand and forces it up to his back. Davies gets frightened and screams out. He informs Mick that he slept there last right and his name is Jenkins. Mick finds his face familiar which reminds him of his uncle’s brother. He finds Davies’ appearance very close to his uncle’s brother who was in Salvation Army and was a Gold Medal winner football player. Mick and his mother used to call him Sid. After dwelling in the memories of his uncle’s brother, Mick turns to the previous topic of their conversation and asks Davies whether he did sleep well and whether he liked his room.

#### Conversation

**MICK**: Jen … kins.

_A drip sound in the bucket, DAVIES look up._

You remind me of my uncle’s brother. He was always on the move, that man. Never without his passport. … Had a marvelous stop-watch. Picked it up in Hong Kong. The day after they chucked him out of the Salvation Army. Used to go in number four for Beckenham Reserves. That was before he got his Gold Medal. Had a funny habit of carrying his fiddle on his back.

_Pause._

I hope you slept well last night.

**DAVIES**: Listen! I don’t know who you are!

**MICK**: What bed you sleep in? …

_Pause._

How do you like my room?

(CT, 31)
Presupposition Analysis

In Mick’s utterance ‘You remind me of my uncle’s brother’ the phrase ‘my uncle’s brother’ triggers an existential presupposition that Mick had an uncle and that uncle had a brother. Moreover, the implicative verb ‘remind’ carries a lexical presupposition that Mick had almost forgotten his uncle’s brother. The phrase ‘his passport’ in the utterance ‘Never without his passport’ triggers an existential presupposition that he had a passport which he used to keep with him all the time. In the utterance ‘The day after they chucked him out of the Salvation Army’ the definite noun phrase ‘the day’ carries an existential presupposition that refers to a particular day on which the uncle’s brother brought a stopwatch. The temporal clause beginning with ‘after’ triggers a structural presupposition that the uncle’s brother was expelled from the Salvation Army. Moreover, the implicative verb ‘chucked out’ gives rise to lexical presupposition that he was serving in the Salvation Army. The definite noun phrase ‘the Salvation Army’ presupposes an existence of a troop called Salvation Army, giving rise to an existential presupposition. The implicative verb ‘used to’ in ‘Used to go in number four for Beckenham Reserves’ carries lexical presupposition that now he no more plays for Beckenham Reserves. The proper noun ‘Beckenham Reserves’ triggers an existential presupposition that there existed a football team called Beckenham Reserves. In his utterance ‘That was before he got his Gold Medal’ the temporal clause beginning with ‘before’ triggers a structural presupposition that the uncle’s brother had won a Gold Medal. In the next utterance ‘Had a funny habit of carrying his fiddle on his back’, the definite description ‘his fiddle’ triggers an existential presupposition that he had a fiddle of his own which he used to carry on his back. After a short pause, Mick abruptly changes the topic of conversation asking Davies whether he was comfortable last night. The verb ‘hope’ in his utterance ‘I hope you slept well last night’ carries a lexical presupposition that Davies slept last night. The adverbial of manner ‘well’ carries the same presupposition. Here, the verb ‘hope’ functions as a dyer and preserves the presupposition about Mick’s belief that Davies slept last night. Instead of answering Mick’s question, Davies wants to know Mick’s identity. However Mick’s question ‘What bed you sleep in?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Davies slept in one of the beds there. His next question ‘How do you like my room?’ carries a couple of presuppositions. The definite noun phrase ‘my room’ triggers an existential presupposition that the room belongs to Mick and the question as a whole
carries a structural presupposition that there must be certain facts in favor of the room so that anyone must like it. Therefore, Mick asks Davies to what extent he liked the room.

Concluding Remarks

As Mick points out Davies’ closeness to his uncle’s brother, he seems to create a sense of trust in Davies mind so that he would feel comfortable. He presupposes Davies’ presence there since last night but Davies is not ready to talk to a stranger, that is, Mick. By presupposing that it is his room in which Davies was sleeping, Mick wants to suggest him that he is the owner of the house.

4.3.8 Conversation Eight

Mick argues with Davies in this passage as Davies makes insulting comments about his mother. He warns Davies to have due respect for his old mother.

Contextual Environment

Davies strikes out Mick’s claim saying that the room belongs to Aston. Mick then compares Davies with a person he met somewhere else. Davies reveals that he was brought there by the person who lives in the room, i.e. Aston. However, Mick accuses him as a liar and once again claims that he is the owner of this room. The bed in which Davies had slept belongs to Mick’s mother. Davies ironically comments that the mother wasn’t sleeping there last night as the bed was occupied by him. As a result, Mick gets irritated and warns Davies to have some respect for his mother. Davies claims to be full of respect for his mother but Mick is hard to believe.

Conversation

MICK: That’s my mother’s bed.
DAVIES: Well she wasn’t in it last night!
MICK (moving to him): Now don’t get perky, son, don’t get perky. Keep your hands off my old mum.
DAVIES: I ain’t … I haven’t. …
MICK: Don’t get out of your depth, friend, don’t start taking liberties with my old mother, let’s have a bit of respect.
DAVIES: I got respect, you won’t find anyone with more respect.
MICK: Well, stop telling me all these fibs.

(CT, 35)
Presupposition Analysis

In this piece of conversation, the utterance ‘That’s my mother’s bed’ carries a couple of presuppositions. The phrase ‘my mother’s bed’ carries an existential presupposition that Mick has a mother. Moreover, it also presupposes that there exists an entity called bed and that bed belongs to Mick’s mother. Davies seems to interpret it wrongly to say that Mick’s mother was not there in the bed last night. In fact, he wants to suggest Mick that he slept in that bed because it wasn’t occupied by anyone. But Mick gets angry and warns his not to speak like this about him mother. He threatens him using a commisive speech act ‘Now don’t get perky, son, don’t get perky’. Here, the verb ‘get’ denotes a change of state and carries a lexical presupposition that Davies is about to be perky to insult Mick’s mother. Mick’s utterance ‘Don’t get out of your depth, friend’ has a change of state verb ‘to get out’ that triggers a lexical presupposition that Davies has got a particular depth, may be a particular limit which, as Mick thinks, he should not cross. In other words, Mick warns him to behave wisely and not to take liberties while talking about his mother. Another change of state verb ‘start’ in the utterance ‘Don’t start taking liberties with my old mother’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Davies is about to take liberties, i.e. speak disrespectfully about Mick’s mother. The utterance ‘Let’s have a bit of respect’ is a directive speech act which seems to presuppose Mick’s belief that Davies does not have any respect for his mother. However, Davies claims to be full of respect for Mick’s mother. The comparative construction ‘You won’t find anyone with more respect’ triggers a structural presupposition that Davies has got a lot of respect for others. As usual, Mick doesn’t believe him. The change of state verb ‘stop’ in the utterance ‘Well, stop telling me all these fibs’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Davies is telling lies. Moreover, the quantifier ‘all’ triggers the same lexical presupposition.

Concluding Remarks

In the above passage, presupposing that the bed in which Davies slept belongs to his mother, Mick wants to suggest that he shouldn’t have slept in that bed. However, both of them interpret each other wrongly. Consequently, Mick warns Davies about whatever he speaks about his mother. Though Davies presupposes that he has got a lot of respect for others, Mick doesn’t believe him presupposing that Davies is a liar.
4.3.9 Conversation Nine

This piece of conversation takes place when Aston brings a bag for Davies. He initially accepts it, then observes it closely and concludes that it is not his bag.

Contextual Environment

Aston arrives with a bag which he gives to Davies. However, Mick intervenes them saying that the bag is familiar to him as he has seen it somewhere. But Davies seems firm that it is his bag and Aston urges Mick to give the bag to Davies. However, Mick accuses Davies calling him a thief as he entered his house when nobody was inside. Mick and Aston pass the bag to each other and Davies tries to grab it. This passing game lasts for quite a long time and finally Mick gives the bag to Davies. Davies opens up the bag and surprisingly declares that the bag does not belong to him. He guesses that someone might have taken his bag and replaced it with another one. However, Aston explains that his bag wasn’t there in the café; therefore he bought this bag from somewhere else. In the meantime, Aston speaks about his plans to have a workshop where he could do a bit of woodwork. He also speaks about the partition he wishes to put in one of the rooms along the landing.

Conversation

DAVIES: Eh, look here, I been thinking. This ain’t my bag.
ASTON: Oh. No.
DAVIES: No, this ain’t my bag. My bag, it was another kind of bag altogether, you see. I know what they’ve done. What they done, they kept my bag, and they given you another one altogether.
ASTON: No … what happened was, someone had gone off with your bag.
DAVIES (rising): That’s what I said!
ASTON: Anyway, I picked that bag up somewhere else. …

Presupposition Analysis

In the utterance ‘This ain’t my bag’ the phrase ‘my bag’ carries an existential presupposition that Davies has a bag but the bag brought by Aston does not belong to him. His bag was different from this one. In the utterance ‘You know what they have done’ the factive verb ‘know’ triggers a factive presupposition that they have done something to Davies’ bag. Davies guesses what they might have done. The pseudo-cleft construction ‘What they done, they kept my bag, and they given you another one
altogether’ triggers a structural presupposition that they kept Davies’ bag with them and handed over another bag to Aston. However Aston clarifies that ‘No … what happened was, someone had gone off with your bag’. This utterance carries a couple of presuppositions. The pseudo-cleft construction beginning with ‘what’ triggers a structural presupposition that someone had stolen Davies’ bag. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘gone’ triggers a lexical presupposition that there was someone who might have gone off with Davies’ Bag. Davies also is of the same opinion as he says ‘That’s what I said!’ Here, the verb ‘said’ functions as a plug and preserves the presupposition that someone might have stolen his bag. Therefore Aston got another bag for Davies. The definite description ‘that bag’ in ‘I picked up that bag somewhere else’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a bag that Aston picked up, which does not belong to Davies.

**Concluding Remarks**

Davies presupposes the fact that he had a bag but it is not the one brought by Aston. Therefore, Aston informs him that he has brought another bag for Davies. The pseudo-cleft sentences used by both of them make them agree to presuppose that Davies’ bag has been stolen.

**4.3.10 Conversation Ten**

This conversation takes place when Aston offers Davies the job of caretaker. He explains his plan but Davies has certain doubts about it.

**Contextual Environment**

Aston asks Davies whether he would like to be a caretaker of the house. Aston explains him all the work Davies will have to do as caretaker. However, Davies hasn’t done such a job before, therefore, he is not sure about it. Then Davies asks whether it would need certain implements like a broom and brushes in order to keep the place clean. Aston tells him that he will fix a bell for the visitors if they wish to call the caretaker. But Davies is afraid that there could be anyone, even that Scotch git, to ring the bell and it might create difficulties for him.

**Conversation**

ASTON: You see, what we could do, we could … I could fit a bell at the bottom, outside the front door, with “Caretaker” on it. And you could answer any queries.

DAVIES: Oh, I don’t know about that.
ASTON: Why not?
DAVIES: Well, I mean, you don’t know who might come up them front steps, do you? I got to be a bit careful.
ASTON: Why, someone after you?
DAVIES: After me? Well, I could have that Scotch git coming looking after me, couldn’t I? All I’d do, I’d hear the bell, I’d go down there, open the door, who might be there, any Harry might be there. I could be buggered as easy as that, man.

(CT, 43-44)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Aston’s utterance ‘What we could do, we could … I could fit a bell at the bottom, outside the front door, with “Caretaker” on it’ is a pseudo-cleft construction that triggers a structural presupposition that Aston could fit a bell outside the front door. Moreover, the definite description ‘the front door’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a front door where Aston could fit a bell. However, Davies seems reluctant as he doesn’t know anything about that. The factive verb ‘know’ in his utterance ‘you don’t know who might come up them front steps, do you?’ triggers a factive presupposition that someone might come up the front steps. Moreover, the definite description ‘them front steps’ carries an existential presupposition that there are steps at the front. When Aston notices that Davies is afraid of something, he asks him ‘Why, someone after you?’ This utterance carries a couple of presuppositions. The interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that there is certain reason behind Davies’ being a bit careful and the same question further triggers a structural presupposition that either there is someone or no one after Davies. He replies ‘Well, I could have that Scotch git coming looking after me.’ In this utterance, the definite description ‘that Scotch git’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists an individual whom Davies calls as Scotch git, who is looking after Davies. He imagines ‘I’d hear the bell, I’d go down there, open the door, who might be there, any Harry might be there.’ The definite description ‘the bell’ in the utterance triggers an existential presupposition that presupposes existence of a bell which Aston would fit at the front door. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘go’ carries a lexical presupposition that Davies would be upstairs when someone rings the bell and one more change of state verb ‘open’ triggers a lexical presupposition that the door would be closed and Davies would have to open it. The utterance ‘who might be there’ triggers a structural presupposition that there might be someone in the door. The comparative construction ‘I could be buggered as easy as that, man’ triggers a structural presupposition that Davies could be annoyed easily by the unexpected visitors.
Concluding Remarks

While explaining his plan to Davies, Aston presupposes various things such as fitting a bell and the queries of the visitors which Davies will have to reply. But Davies is afraid that there will be someone looking for him. Therefore, he is reluctant to be caretaker. Moreover, Davies’ presuppositions are cancellable as they are based on his guess and it is not certain that his guess will come true.

4.3.11 Conversation Eleven

In this conversational exchange, Davies expresses his inability to give any references to Mick at the moment because he has left his documents with someone at Sidcup.

Contextual Background

Mick asks Davies an advice as he is worried about his brother, Aston. He informs Davies that Aston doesn’t like any work. When Davies calls Aston as a funny person, Mick asks him for clarification. Then he cuts the argument in between and to Davies’ surprise, offers him the job of caretaker. Davies happily accepts the proposal but Mick asks him about his references in order to satisfy his solicitor. Davies has got plenty of references but he doesn’t have any with him at the moment. Therefore, he plans to go to Sidcup to bring those papers.

Conversation

MICK: Can you give me any references?
DAVIES: Eh?
MICK: Just to satisfy my solicitor.
DAVIES: I got plenty of references. All I got to do is to go down to Sidcup tomorrow. I got all the references I want down there.
MICK: Where’s that?
DAVIES: Sidcup. He ain’t only got my references down there, he’s got all my papers down there.

(CT, 51)

Presupposition Analysis

Mick offers the job to Davies and asks him ‘Can you give me any references?’ This interrogative structure is a directive speech act in form of question and triggers a structural presupposition that Davies either can give some references to Mick or he cannot. Mick needs references as he says ‘Just to satisfy my solicitor.’ The definite description ‘my solicitor’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a solicitor
who works for Mick. He wants to suggest Davies that he is asking references only for the sake of legal process, otherwise, he doesn’t need them. In Davies’ reply ‘I got plenty of references’ the quantifier ‘plenty’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Davis has got references which he has left at Sidcup. Therefore he needs to go down to Sidcup to bring them. The quantifier ‘all’ in the utterance ‘I got all the references I want down there’ carries a lexical presupposition that he has got the references down there at Sidcup. Moreover, the definite description ‘the references’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exist certain references which Davies has got at Sidcup. The relative clause ‘(that) I want’ in the same utterance carries a structural presupposition that Davies wants all those references. The definite description ‘my references’ in the utterance ‘He ain’t only got my references down there, he’s got all my papers down there’ carries an existential presupposition that the references belong to Davies. Moreover, the quantifier ‘all’ carries a lexical presupposition that there are some papers also at Sidcup and the definite description ‘my papers’ triggers an existential presupposition that those papers also belong to Davies

**Concluding Remarks**

Mick presupposes that his legal adviser might ask about references of the employee while making a legal contract. But Davies’ presuppositions about the papers and references seem to be cancellable as Davies’ sincerity is in question. Though he talks about his proposed visit to Sidcup, he doesn’t seem very eager about it. It is always in search of reasons to postpone his visit to Sidcup.

**4.3.12 Conversation Twelve**

In this passage, Aston narrates his experiences at the café along the road. He reveals that he was having hallucinations at that time due to which he used to talk too much.

**Contextual Environment**

Aston reminds Davies of his proposed visit to Sidcup that is postponed due to bad weather. He complains about the draught blowing on his head throughout the night and fears that he might catch cold. As he doesn’t care about Aston’s suggestion to avoid the draught, Aston is about to leave. Davies again complains that, without shoes, he could not go out to have a cup of tea. Therefore, Aston tells him about a café nearby, where he used to go. He narrates his experiences in that coffee shop and hallucinations he used to suffer from.
Conversation

ASTON: There’s a café just along the road.
DAVIES: There may be, mate.
ASTON: I used to go there quite a bit. Oh, years ago now. But I stopped. I used to like that place. Spent quite a bit of time in there. That was before I went away. Just before. I think that … place had a lot to do with it. They were all … a good bit older than me. But they always used to listen. I thought … they understood what I said. I mean I used to talk to them. I talked two much. That was my mistake. The same is the factory. Standing there, or in the breaks, I used to … talk about things. And these men, they used to listen, whenever I … had anything to say. It was all right. The trouble was, I used to have kind of hallucinations.

(Presupposition Analysis

Aston’s utterance ‘I used to go there quite a bit’ contains an implicative verb ‘used to’ that triggers a lexical presupposition that though Aston visited the café quite often, he does not go there now. The change of state verb ‘stopped’ in the utterance ‘But I stopped’ triggers the same presupposition. Moreover, implicative verb ‘used to’ in the utterance ‘I used to like that place’ carries a lexical presupposition that Aston does not like that place anymore. He used to spend a lot of time in the café. His utterance ‘That was before I went away’ has a temporal clause beginning with ‘before’ that triggers structural presupposition that Aston went away somewhere. He thinks that the café and people therein the café were responsible for his going away. The people in the café were, as Aston states, ‘a good bit older than me.’ In this utterance, the comparative construction triggers a structural presupposition that Aston was quite young at that time. He further mentions that they ‘used to listen’ and he ‘used to talk to them.’ Here, the implicative verb ‘used to’ in both these utterances triggers a lexical presupposition that neither he talks to them nor they listen to him now. Aston wants to suggest that there was a time when those people in the café used to pay proper attention as he used to speak. However, he thinks that ‘That was my mistake’. The noun phrase ‘my mistake’ triggers an existential presupposition that Aston made a mistake by talking too much. Afterwards he realized that the fact was different. The definite nouns phrase ‘the factory’ in the utterance ‘The same in the factory’ triggers an existential presupposition that there was a factory where Aston used to speak in the same way as he did in the café. He got a wrong impression that whenever he talked about something; those people were listening to him.
His utterance ‘I used to have kind of hallucinations’ triggers a lexical presupposition, raised by the implicative verb ‘used to’, that now he doesn’t suffer from hallucinations.

**Concluding Remarks**

The information presupposed by Aston in this passage throws light on his past which has affected his present life to a great extent. When he realized that his talking too much was a mistake, he started to remain silent. Due to hallucinations, he stopped visiting the café. This realization also proves that now Aston is leading normal life.

**4.3.13 Conversation Thirteen**

Here, Davies is making complaints about Aston’s strange behavior. He narrates how Aston smiles at him eccentrically while he is in the bed and wishes that Mick should talk to him.

**Contextual Environment**

Davies complains that Aston didn’t give him a clock though he needs it desperately. He further complains that Aston wakes him up in the middle of the night; therefore he could not get sound sleep. He tells Mick that Aston goes anywhere without informing him that he is going somewhere. He returns very late at night and keeps smiling mysteriously at Davies in the morning. However, he cannot realize that Davies is watching him through the blanket. Davies gets confused due to his mysterious smile and requests Mick to talk to Aston about.

**Conversation**

DAVIES *(standing, moving)*: He goes out, I don’t know where he goes to, where’s he go, he never tells me. We used to have a bit of chat, not any more. I never see him, he goes out, he comes in late, next thing I know he’s shoving me about in the middle of the night.  
*Pause.*

Listen! I wake up in the morning … I wake up in the morning and he’s smiling at me! He’s standing there, looking at me, smiling. I can see him, you see, I can see him through the blanket. … … What the hell’s he smiling at? What he don’t know is that I’m watching him through that blanket. He don’t know that! He don’t know I can see him, he thinks I’m asleep, but I got my eye on him all the time through the blanket, see? …  
*Pause.*

Where do you live now, then?

MICK. Me? Oh, I’ve got a little place. Not bad. Everything laid on. You must come up and have a drink some time. …
DAVIES. No, you see, you’re the bloke who wants to talk to him. I mean, you’re his brother.

(CT, 63-64)

Presupposition Analysis

Davies complains ‘He goes out, I don’t know where he goes to.’ In this utterance the factive verb ‘know’ in this utterance carries a factive presupposition that Aston goes somewhere, however, he never tells Davies about that. The implicative verb ‘used to’ in the utterance ‘We used to have a bit of chat’ triggers a lexical presupposition that they no more talk to each other now. Moreover, the factive verb ‘know’ in the utterance ‘next thing I know he’s shoving me about in the middle of the night’ carries a factive presupposition that Aston keeps shoving Davies at midnight. In the utterance ‘I wake up in the morning …’ the change of state verb ‘wake up’ triggers a lexical presupposition that he has been sleeping. When he gets up, he notices Aston standing and smiling at him for no reason at all. The definite description ‘the blanket’ in the utterance ‘I can see him through the blanket’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a blanket through which Davies watches Aston smiling at him. Davies could not understand Aston’s intention behind smiling at him as he says ‘What the hell’s he smiling at?’ This interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition that Aston is smiling at something. The next utterance ‘What he don’t know is that I’m watching him through that blanket’ is a pseudo-cleft construction which triggers a structural presupposition that Aston doesn’t know that Davies is watching him through the blanket. Moreover, the factive verb ‘know’ carries a factive presupposition that Davies is watching through the blanket. The verb ‘thinks’ in the utterance ‘he thinks I’m asleep’ functions as dyer and cancels the presupposition that Davies is sleeping. Then, suddenly changing the topic, Davies asks him ‘Where do you live now, then?’ This interrogative structure triggers a structural presupposition that Mick lives somewhere. Mick replies that he has got a house somewhere else and invites him to have a drink. However, Davies asks him to talk to Aston saying ‘you’re the bloke who wants to talk to him.’ In this utterance, the relative clause beginning with ‘who’ carries a structural presupposition that Mick should talk to Aston as Mick is his brother.

Concluding Remarks

In this passage, Davies shrewdly complains about Aston’s abnormal behavior so that Mock should take some action against him. He wants Mick to remind that Aston is a
psychic patient as he used to suffer from hallucinations. He wants to convince Mick that Astor is not completely recovered from hallucinations; therefore, he should not keep him in the house. Thus, he tries to secure his place in Mick’s house by pointing out Astor’s abnormalities.

4.3.14 Conversation Fourteen

This is a piece of conversation between Astor and Davies after Astor tells him about the treatment he got in an asylum. As Davies comes to know these facts, he starts to dominate Astor.

Contextual Environment

Astor narrates the whole story of his experiences in a hospital where he had undergone electric shock treatment. As a result, he got cured but became mentally as well as physically weak and slow at work. He tries to create a distorted picture of Astor in the mind of Mick by speaking contemptuously about his behavior. At night, Astor wakes Davies up and accuses him of making noises while sleeping. He complains that he couldn’t sleep well due to the noise. Therefore, Davies gets irritated and asks whether Astor wants him to stop breathing so that he would not make any noises. He condemns Astor that he is really a lunatic because a wise person will not wake anyone up in the middle of the night. He even accuses Astor of giving him bad dreams and poking all the time.

Conversation

ASTON: You’re making noises.

DAVIES: What do you expect me to do, stop breathing?

ASTON: I’ll get a bit of air.

DAVIES: What do you expect me to do? I tell you, mate, I’m not surprised they took you in. Waking an old man up in the middle of the night, you must be off your nut! Giving me bad dreams, who’s responsible, then, for me having bad dreams? If you wouldn’t keep mucking me about I wouldn’t make no noises! How do you expect me to sleep peaceful when you keep poking me all the time?

(CT, 66)

Presupposition Analysis

Davies can’t help making noises as he asks ‘What do you expect me to do, stop breathing?’ Here the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that Astor expects certain action from Davies and that action may be that Davies should stop
breathing. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘stop’ gives rise to a lexical presupposition that Davies was breathing. Actually, Davies here wants to suggest that if he tried to stop making noises, he will have to stop breathing, as he cannot avoid making noises. In order to avoid further argument, Aston prefers to leave the room to get fresh air outside. However, Davies keeps on talking to him. His utterance ‘I tell you, mate, I’m not surprised they took you in’ has a few presuppositions. The plug ‘tell’ preserves the factive presupposition that Davies is not surprised as he came to know that Aston had been admitted in an asylum. Moreover, the factive verb ‘surprise’ triggers a factive presupposition about its complement that they took Aston in an asylum. In addition, he accuses Aston in the utterance ‘Giving me bad dreams, who’s responsible, then, for me having bad dreams’. It asserts that Davies had bad dreams and the question ‘Who’s responsible …?’ triggers a structural presupposition that someone, most probably Aston, is responsible for Davies getting bad dreams. The conditional structure ‘If you wouldn’t keep mucking me about I wouldn’t make no noises’ triggers a counterfactual presupposition that Aston kept mucking about Davies due to which he gets bad dreams. Davies declares that Aston should not expect him sleeping peacefully until he stops creating disturbances throughout the night. The clause beginning with ‘When’ in the utterance, ‘How do you expect me to sleep peaceful when you keep poking me all the time?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Aston keeps poking him all the time. Therefore, Davies could not get sound sleep. Moreover, the interrogative structure as a whole carries a structural presupposition that Aston could not anticipate Davies to sleep peacefully.

**Concluding Remarks**

Davies expresses his inability to stop making noises as he will have to stop breathing for that. He wants to suggest that he is not making noises deliberately. He presupposes that he gets bad dreams and believes that it is Aston who is responsible for them. He keeps him troubling throughout the night; therefore, he makes noises as result of sleeplessness. Thus, he tries to outwit Aston by calling him the root of their discomfort.

**4.3.15 Conversation Fifteen**

In this conversational extract, Davies avoids to tell Aston’s reaction about Mick’s offer. He becomes successful in convincing Mick that he can ask Aston to leave the house.
**Contextual Background**

When Davies says that he had never been inside a nuthouse, Aston makes a threatening move towards him. As a result, Davies gets violent and tries to attack Aston with a knife. Therefore, Aston asks him to leave the house. Davies leaves but comes back with Mick and complains about Aston’s behavior with him. He tries to flatter Mick saying that, unlike his brother, he is a sensible person. He avoids telling Aston’s opinion about Davies as a caretaker and suggests him to expel Aston out of the house as the house belongs to Mick.

**Conversation**

MICK: What did he say then, when you told him I’d offered you the job as caretaker?
DAVIES: He … he said … he said … something about … he lived here.
MICK: Yes, he’s got a point, en he?
DAVIES: A point! This is your house, en’t? You let him live here!
MICK: I could tell him to go, I suppose.
DAVIES: That’s what I’m saying.
MICK: Yes. I could tell him to go. I mean, I’m the landlord. On the other hand, he’s the sitting tenant. Giving him notice, you see, what it is, it’s a technical matter, that’s what it is. It depends how you regard this room. I mean it depends whether you regard this room as furnished or unfurnished. See what I mean?
DAVIES: No, I don’t.
MICK: All this furniture, you see, in here, it’s all his, except the beds, of course.

(CT, 70-71)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Mick’s utterance ‘What did he say then, when you told him I’d offered you the job as caretaker?’ carries several presuppositions. The interrogative structure as a whole triggers a structural presupposition that Aston said something. Moreover, the temporal clause beginning with ‘when’ carries a structural presupposition that Davies told Aston about Mick’s offer. The plug ‘told’ in the utterance preserves a factive presupposition that Mick had offered Davies the job as caretaker. The definite description ‘the job’ triggers an existential presupposition that there is a particular job which Mick had offered to Davies. In Davies’ reply ‘he said … something about … he lived here’ the plug ‘said’ seems sustain the factive presupposition that Aston lived there in the house, which Mick also accepts as a fact. However, the reply given by Davies lacks truth value as Aston’s reaction was something else. Therefore, the presupposition triggered by ‘said’ seems to be cancelled. Davies’ utterance ‘This is your house, en’t?’ triggers a structural
presupposition that the house either belongs to Mick or doesn’t belongs to him. The utterance ‘You let him live here!’ is a permission which triggers a structural presupposition that Aston wants to stay there in the house. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘go’ in the utterance ‘I could tell him to go’ carries a lexical presupposition that Aston lives there in the house. The definite description ‘the landlord’ in the utterance ‘I mean, I’m the landlord’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a landlord, that is, Mick who is the owner of the house. Moreover, the plug ‘mean’ preserves the factive presupposition that Mick is the landlord. The definite description ‘the sitting tenant’ in the utterance ‘he’s the sitting tenant’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a sitting tenant, that is, Aston. The filter ‘or’ in the utterance ‘I mean it depends whether you regard this room as furnished or unfurnished’ preserves the structural presupposition that the room is either furnished or unfurnished. The question ‘See what I mean?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Mick means something by saying whether the room is furnished or unfurnished. Moreover, the quantifier ‘all’ in the utterance ‘All this furniture, you see, in here, it’s all his, except the beds’ carries a lexical presupposition that there is furniture in the house which belongs to Aston. The definite description ‘the beds’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exist some beds which do not belong to Aston.

**Concluding Remarks**

Davies avoids telling Mick about Aston’s reaction that he is not a proper person to be a caretaker. He thinks that Mick might cancel his offer due to Aston’s doubt about his capability. He realizes if he wants to stay in this house, Aston should be expelled out. Therefore, he reminds Mick that the house belongs to him and not to Aston.

**4.3.16 Conversation Sixteen**

In this piece of conversation, Mick seems to recognize Davies’ wicked intentions. He calls Davies as the cause of all the troubles in the house.

**Contextual Environment**

Davies becomes more aggressive and reminds Aston of the treatment he had undergone in a hospital. As Aston makes a slight move towards him, Davies threatens him with a knife. When Aston advises him to find shelter somewhere else as he cannot bear him now, Davies informs that Mick has offered him the job of a caretaker and it is Aston who should leave the house. However, Aston is not in a state to listen anything and collects
Davies’ belonging and expels him out of the house. The next morning, Davies enters with Mick and goes on complaining about the treatment he received from Aston. Mick seems to become aware of Davies’ selfish motives when he suggests him to send Aston to nut house again. He becomes furious when Davies calls Aston as ‘nutty’, and condemns him for causing all the troubles in the house. Moreover, he accuses him of being a liar and being ambiguous while speaking.

**Conversation**

MICK: What did you call my brother? …
   Did you call my brother nutty? …

DAVIES: But he says so himself!

MICK walks slowly round DAVIES’ figure, regarding him once. He circles him, once.

MICK: What a strange man you are. Aren’t you? You’re really strange. Ever since you come into this house there’s been nothing but trouble. Honest. I can take nothing you say at face value. Every word you speak is open to any number of different interpretations. Most of what you say is lies. You’re violent, you’re erratic, you’re just completely unpredictable.

*(CT, 73)*

**Presupposition Analysis**

Mick gets angry and asks an explanation ‘What did you call my brother?’ which triggers a structural presupposition that Davies called something to Aston. His second question ‘Did you call my brother nutty?’ carries a structural presupposition that Davies called Aston either a nutty or something else. Levinson (1983) calls such presuppositions as ‘vacuous presuppositions’. However, Davies argues that Aston calls so himself. Mick is surprised to meet such a strange man as Davies. Mick even thinks that Davies is the cause of all the treble in the house. His utterance ‘Ever since you come into this house there’s been nothing but trouble’ has a couple of presuppositions. The temporal clause beginning with ‘ever since’ triggers a structural presupposition that Davies came there in the house before a period of time. In other words, there wasn’t any trouble in the house before Davies’ arrival. The change of state verb ‘come’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Davies was not present there before. Mick is of the opinion that, to understand what Davies speaks is not an easy task. Whatever he speaks can be interpreted in various ways. Moreover, Mick accuses him of being a liar by saying that ‘Most of what you say is lies’. Here, the pseudo-cleft construction carries a structural presupposition that Davies speaks
lies a lot. Moreover, Mick accuses him of being a violent, erratic and unpredictable kind of person.

**Concluding Remarks**

As Mick realizes that Davies is abusing Aston, he gets an idea about his intention to send Aston to the asylum. He gets irritated to see that Davies calls Aston as nutty. Therefore, he rebukes him for causing trouble in the house. He realizes that Davies is the core of all troubles as he presupposes that trouble started after his arrival in the house. He believes that Davies is the most unpredictable person.

**4.3.17 Conversation Seventeen**

In this extract, Davies tries to convince Aston that he didn’t return intentionally. He tries to open conversation with Aston, he doesn’t entertain him.

**Contextual Environment**

Mick condemns Davies for pretending to be an interior decorator and points out that he never went to Sidcup to get the references. Finally, Mick gives him half a dollar for his caretaking. He thinks that Aston will decorate the house according to his own ideas and Davies realizes that now he will have to leave the house. As Aston returns, Davies feels ashamed and tells him that he came back only to get his pipe. Then he tries to open a conversation with Aston but Aston neglects him.

**Conversation**

DAVIES: I just come back for my pipe.
ASTON: Oh, yes.
DAVIES: I got out and … half way down I … I suddenly … found out … you see … that I hadn’t got my pipe. So I come back to get it. …

*Pause. He moves to ASTON.*
That ain’t the same plug, is it, you been …?

*Pause.*
Still can’t get anywhere with it, eh?

*Pause.*
Well, if you … preserve, in my opinion, you’ll probably …

*Pause.*
Listen. …

*Pause.*
You didn’t mean that, did you, about me stinking, did you?

(CT, 75)
Presupposition Analysis

Davies tries to explain about his presence in the house by saying ‘I just come back for my pipe.’ The interactive ‘come back’ in the utterance triggers a lexical presupposition that Davies had been there before. Moreover, the definite description ‘my pipe’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a pipe that belongs to Davies. The factive verb ‘found out’ in the utterance ‘I suddenly … found out … you see … that I hadn’t got my pipe’ triggers a factive presupposition that Davies hadn’t got his pipe. As Aston doesn’t pay attention, he moves closer to him and says ‘That ain’t the same plug.’ The definite description ‘the same plug’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a particular plug which Davies is speaking about. Noticing that Aston is not responding, he further tries to make Aston speak something as he asks ‘Still can’t get anywhere with it, eh?’ In this utterance, aspectual ‘still’ carries a lexical presupposition that Aston could not go anywhere without the plug before some time up to now. Moreover, the definite description ‘my opinion’ in Davies’ utterance ‘Well, if you … preserve, in my opinion, you’ll probably …’ triggers an existential presupposition that Davies has a certain opinion which he wants to share with Aston. He becomes restless due to Aston’s negligence and urges him to listen whatever he wants to say. The question ‘You didn’t mean that, did you, about me stinking, did you?’ carries a structural presupposition that Aston either means or doesn’t mean that Davies is stinking.

Concluding Remarks

Though Davies claims to have come back for his pipe, this is not a genuine reason. He tries to hide his embarrassment as he came back even after he was expelled by Aston. In fact, he has come back to Mick in order to try his luck. He becomes more restless at Aston’s negligence. He realizes that Aston’s negligence conveys his firm decision that now he won’t give him shelter in the house. Thus, finally Davies is left with no alternative to leave the house.
4.4 THE HOMECOMING

4.4.1 Conversation One

This passage depicts the opening scene of the play. Max is asking Lenny about scissors but Lenny neglects him as he wants to read a newspaper quietly.

Contextual Environment

The play opens with Lenny sitting on sofa with a newspaper and pencil in his hand. He is busy making certain marks on the back page of the newspaper. At this time, Max comes in from the kitchen and begins to search something. Then he comes downstage and looks around the room and asks Lenny about the scissors which he is searching for. But Lenny ignores him and does not reply. When Max says that he wants to cut the paper, Lenny objects it saying that he is reading the paper. Max clarifies that he is talking about last Sunday’s paper. However, Lenny abuses him and asks him to shut up.

Conversation

MAX: What have you done with the scissors?

Pause.

I said I’m looking for the scissors. What have you done with them?

Pause.

Did you hear me? I want to cut something out of the paper.

LENNY: I’m reading the paper.

MAX: Not that paper. I haven’t even read that paper. I’m talking about last Sunday’s paper. I was just having a look at it in the kitchen.

Pause.

Do you hear what I’m saying? I’m talking to you! Where’s the scissors?

LENNY: Why don’t you shut up, you daft prat?

(HC, 7)

Presupposition Analysis

Max thinks that Lenny might know where the scissors are; therefore, he asks ‘What have you done with the scissors?’ This utterance carries a couple of presuppositions. The definite description ‘the scissors’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exist scissors in the house and the interrogative structure as a whole carries a structural presupposition that Lenny might have done something with the scissors. As Lenny does not reply, Max utters ‘I said I’m looking for the scissors.’ Here the verbs ‘said’ functions as plug to preserve the factive presupposition that Max is looking for the scissors. He gets irritated at Lenny’s ignorance and asks him ‘Did you hear me?’ This interrogative
structure carries a structural presupposition that Lenny either heard or did not hear what Max has said. He needs the scissors as he says ‘I want to cut something out of the paper.’ In this utterance, the definite description ‘the paper’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a paper which Max wants to cut. Lenny thinks that Max wants to cut the paper which he is reading. Therefore, Max makes it clear by saying ‘I haven’t even read that paper.’ Here, the definite description ‘that paper’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists one more paper apart from the one Lenny is reading. Moreover, his utterance ‘I’m talking about last Sunday’s paper’ contains the definite description ‘last Sunday’s paper’ that triggers an existential presupposition that Max has a paper that dates back to last Sunday. He has come across something important in the paper that he wants to cut out. In his utterance ‘I was just having a look at it in the kitchen’ the definite description ‘the kitchen’ triggers an existential presupposition that there is a kitchen in the house, where Max was reading the paper. Lenny seems uninterested and doesn’t pay attention to Max; therefore he reminds Lenny that he is talking to him. He says ‘Do you hear what I’m saying?’ In this interrogative structure, factive verb ‘hear’ triggers a factive presupposition that Max is saying something and he wants to know whether Lenny heard it or not. Max is sure that Lenny knows the scissors and asks ‘Where’s the scissors?’ The interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that the scissors are kept somewhere and Max assumes that Lenny knows the whereabouts. Instead of giving a relevant reply, Lenny becomes aggressive and abuses Max by calling him a fool. He warns Max and asks him to be quiet.

Concluding Remarks
This piece of conversation between father and son focuses on the lack of understanding between them. Though Max is sure that Lenny knows the whereabouts of the scissors, Lenny doesn’t co-operate him. He seems to busy reading paper that he could not bear Max’s chatter. Max tries to invite Lenny’s attention by asking him repeatedly about the scissors and his proposed work. However, Lenny doesn’t show any respect for his father.

4.4.2 Conversation Two
This piece of conversation takes place between Max and Lenny when they talk about race. Lenny is not interested in knowing about Max’s experiences, therefore switches to the topic of food.
**Contextual Environment**

Lenny asks Max about the race in order to divert his attention. However, when Lenny argues with him about a possible winner, Max begins to talk elaborately about his experiences with horses at race course. He claims that he knows about horses more than anyone else. He speaks about the days he spent on the race course and his instinctive understanding of animals. He regrets that he should have been a trainer and tells Lenny how he rejected such offers due to family obligations. He even claims that he knows the smell of a good horse, as he used to identify possible winner by the smell.

**Conversation**

MAX:  …  The times I’ve watched those animals thundering past the post. What an experience. Mind you, I didn’t lose, I made a few bob out of it, and you know why? Because I always had the smell of a good horse. I could smell him. And not only the colts but the fillies. Because the fillies are more highly strung than the colts, they’re more reliable, did you know that? No, what do you know? Nothing.

LENNY: Dad, do you mind if I change the subject?

Pause.

Why don’t you buy a dog? You’re a dog cook. Honest. You think you’re cooking for a lot of dogs.

MAX: If you don’t like it get out.

(HC, 10-11)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Max’s utterance ‘The times I’ve watched those animals thundering past the post’ carries several presuppositions. The definite description ‘The times’ triggers an existential presupposition that refers to a particular span of time in Max’s life. Moreover, the temporal clause ‘(when) I’ve watched those animals thundering past the post’ carries a structural presupposition that Max has watched the animals thundering past the post. The definite description ‘those animals’ triggers an existential presupposition that there existed animals, that is, horses whom Max used to watch. Further, the definite description ‘the post’ triggers an existential presupposition that there existed a post, which the horses used to cross. He feels excited as he recollects his experiences. He even claims to have earned money on the course. His question ‘you know why?’ carries a structural presupposition that there are certain reasons behind not losing money. The definite
description ‘the smell’ in the utterance ‘Because I always had the smell of a good horse’ carries an existential presupposition that a horse has a particular smell that helps to identify the good horse. Max had this talent to smell a good horse. In his utterance ‘And not only the colts but the fillies’ there are two definite descriptions ‘the colts’ and ‘the fillies’ carrying existential presuppositions that there existed clots and fillies whom Max used to smell. Moreover, the utterance ‘Because the fillies are more highly strung than the colts, they are more unreliable, did you know that?’ carries a couple of presuppositions. The comparative construction in this utterance triggers a structural presupposition that the colts are strung and unreliable. The question ‘did you know that?’ carries a structural presupposition that Lenny either knows or does not know anything about the colts and the fillies. Max is sure that Lenny is ignorant about horses. Therefore, he is of the opinion that Lenny should not challenge his prediction about a winning horse. Lenny seems weird after listening to all the details about horses and asks Max ‘Dad, do you mind if I change the subject.’ Here, the change of state verb ‘change’ carries a lexical presupposition that presently they are talking on a subject. Moreover, the definite description ‘the subject’ triggers an existential presupposition that there is a particular topic, about which they are talking. To change the topic, Lenny’s utterance ‘The dinner we had before, what was the name of it?’ contains the relative clause ‘we had before’ that triggers a structural presupposition that they have had their dinner before some time. Moreover, the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that there might be certain name for that dinner. Further, the question ‘What do you call it?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Max might be calling the dinner with certain name. Lenny wants to suggest that the dinner prepared by Max was not worth eating by a human being. The verb ‘think’ in the utterance ‘You think you’re cooking for a lot of dogs’ functions as a dyer to cancel the presupposition that Max is cooking for a lot of dogs. At this, Max loses his temper and asks Lenny to get out if he doesn’t like the food prepared by him.

**Concluding Remarks**

Max presupposes various things about his knowledge of horses in order to convince Lenny that he should not challenge him. However, Lenny gets fed up due to Max’s prattle about horses. Therefore, he tries to annoy Max by calling him a bad cook so that he should stop disturbing him. In fact, Lenny’s purpose behind abusing Max is to overcome his own sense of inferiority. He wants to suggest Max that, though Max knows more
about horses, he lacks excellence in the field of cooking. Thus, Lenny underestimates Max as a cook in order to feel triumphant.

4.4.3 Conversation Three

In this extract, Max wonders that Sam is unmarried in spite of being such a successful chauffeur. He even suspects that Sam might have affairs with his lady customers.

Contextual Environment

As Lenny criticizes the food prepared by Max, he takes a stick to hit Lenny. At this stage arrives Uncle Sam, all tired of driving. He took a customer to the London airport. The customer was so pleased that he offered Sam a box of cigar. Sam then tells Max and Lenny that he is the best chauffeur in the city. He justifies it with various arguments as well as his years of experience as a taxi driver and a private chauffeur.

Conversation

MAX: It’s funny you never got married, isn’t it? A man with all your gifts.

Pause.

Isn’t it? A man like you?

SAM: There’s still time.

MAX: Is there?

Pause.

SAM: You’d be surprised.

MAX: What you been doing, banging away at your lady customers, have you?

SAM: Not me.

MAX: In the back of the Snipe? Been having a few crafty reefs in a layby, have you?

(PA, 14)

Presupposition Analysis

Max wonders that such a famous person like Sam is unmarried. His utterance ‘It’s funny you never got married, isn’t it?’ carries a couple of presuppositions. The relative clause ‘you never got married’ triggers a structural presupposition that Sam never got married. Moreover, the question ‘isn’t it?’ carries a structural presupposition that Sam being unmarried is either funny or not. The quantifier ‘all’ as well as the definite description ‘your gifts’ in the utterance ‘A man with all your gifts’ carry an existential presupposition that Sam has got some gifts. However, Sam thinks that it is not over as he can get married any time. Aspectual ‘still’ in his utterance ‘There’s still time’ triggers a lexical presupposition that there was a time when he could have got married and he wants to suggests that he can get married at present also. Max is doubtful whether it is a proper
time for Sam to get married. Therefore, Sam says that Max would be surprised one day to see him married. Max thinks that he might have affairs with lady customers, therefore he asks, ‘What you been doing, banging away at your lady customers, have you?’ This utterance has a couple of presuppositions. The interrogative structure as a whole triggers a structural presupposition that Sam does something with lady customers. Moreover, the definite description ‘your lady customers’ carries an existential presupposition that some of the customers of Sam are ladies. Though Sam denies having any kind of relationship with lady customers, Max asks him ‘In the back of the Snipe?’ Here, the definite descriptions ‘the back’ and ‘the Snipe’ trigger existential presuppositions. The first one refers to a rear portion of the car and the later one presupposes existence of a car called Snipe which belongs to Sam. He confesses that he has never done such things in the car.

Concluding Remarks
Though Max feels that Sam should have got married, he doesn’t exhibit any regret or sympathy. When Sam talks about surprise, Max presupposes that he must have secret affair with somebody. He imagines Sam having love-plays in his car but Sam strongly denies it. Though Max reminds him that he is a bachelor, he never shows genuine feelings for him.

4.4.4 Conversation Four
Here, Max is disturbed and wants to be alone but Sam doesn’t leave him as he wants to talk to him about Jessie.

Contextual Environment
Max insists upon Sam’s marriage and asks him to bring his bride in the family so that she could keep all of them happy. However, Sam expresses his unwillingness to bring her in the home and further clarifies that he doesn’t have one right now. Joey enters and asks for some food, at which Max gets irritated again. When Sam expresses sympathy towards Joey, Max asks him to learn how to cook. Lenny tries to intervene but he gets one more warning from Max. As a result, Lenny and Joey go upstairs. Sam remains there as he wants to tell Max something about Jessie.

Conversation
MAX: Sam … Why don’t you go, too, eh? Why don’t you just go upstairs? Leave me quiet. Leave me alone.
SAM: I want to make something clear about Jessie, Max. I want to. I do. When I took her out in the cab, round the town, I was taking care of her for you. I was looking after her for you, when you were busy, wasn’t I? I was showing her the West End.

Pause.

You wouldn’t have trusted any of your other brothers. You wouldn’t have trusted Mac, would you? But you trusted me. I want to remind you.

(HC, 18)

Presupposition Analysis

Max notices that Sam has not left; therefore, he asks ‘Why don’t you just go upstairs?’ Here the change of state verb ‘go’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Sam is present downstage. The interrogative structure as a whole carries a structural presupposition that there is certain reason for Sam’s staying there. Max orders him to go as he wants to be alone. But Sam has something to say as he utters ‘I want to make something clear about Jessie.’ Here, the change of state verb ‘to make … clear’ carries a lexical presupposition that there is something about Jessie which needs to be clarified. Sam has not left for the same reason, and he is firm that today he will clarify it. The temporal clause beginning with ‘when’ in the utterance ‘When I took her out in the cab, around the town …’ triggers a structural presupposition that Sam took Jessie out in the cab. Moreover, the definite description ‘the cab’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a cab in which Sam took Jessie for a ride. The definite description ‘the town’ triggers an existential presupposition that refers to a town around which Sam took Jessie in a cab. The temporal clause beginning with ‘when’ in the utterance ‘I was looking after her for you, when you were busy, wasn’t I?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Max was busy. In the utterance ‘I was showing her the West End,’ the definite description ‘the West End’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a place called West End. After a slight pause, Sam says ‘You wouldn’t have trusted any of your other brothers.’ Here, the definite description ‘your other brothers’ carries an existential presupposition that Max has brothers. The proper noun ‘Mac’ in the utterance ‘You wouldn’t have trusted Mac’ triggers an existential presupposition that there was an individual called Mac. Sam feels proud that Max trusted him only. His utterance ‘I want to remind you’ contains an implicative verb ‘remind’ that triggers a lexical presupposition that Max has forgotten that he used to trust Sam more than any of his brothers and even Mac.
**Concluding Remarks**

In this passage, Sam presupposes certain facts about Jessie. By reminding Max that he used to take care of his wife in his absence, Sam wants to focus on the fact that it is he whom Max used to trust more than others. Thus, he wants to create an atmosphere of trust about himself in order to convince him that he is different than others. In other words, he suggests Max to behave properly with him.

**4.4.5 Conversation Five**

This is a piece of conversation that takes place between Teddy and Ruth when they arrive in the house at midnight. He is very excited to see that his room and all the family members are there in the house.

**Contextual Environment**

At night, Teddy and Ruth, well dressed, arrive at the threshold of the room, carrying two suitcases. Teddy tries the old key and to his surprise, it works. They enter the room and notice that the members of the family are asleep. They relax themselves as they are tired of the journey. When Teddy says that he will go up to see whether his room is there, Ruth suggests him to wake them up and inform them of their arrival. However, Teddy thinks that they should not be disturbed so late at night.

**Conversation**

RUTH. Shouldn’t you wake someone up? Tell them you’re here?
TEDDY. Not at this time of night. It’s too late.

*Pause.*
Shall I go up?

*He goes into the hall, looks up the stairs, comes back.*
Why don’t you sit down?

*Pause.*
I’ll just go up … have a look. …

*He goes up the stairs, stealthily.*
RUTH stands, then slowly walks across the room.
TEDDY returns.
It’s still there. My room. Empty. The bed’s there. What are you doing.

*She looks at him.*
Blankets, no sheets. I’ll find some sheets. I could hear snores. Really. They’re all still here, I think. They’re all snoring up there. Are you cold?

(HC, 20-21)
Presupposition Analysis

Ruth’s utterance ‘Shouldn’t you wake someone up?’ is a directive speech act which contains a change of state verb ‘wake’ that triggers a lexical presupposition that they are asleep. However, Teddy is of the opinion that he should not disturb them. His utterance ‘Shall I go up?’ contains a change of state verb ‘go’ that triggers a lexical presupposition that Teddy is there downstairs and wishes to go up. Then he asks Ruth ‘Why don’t you sit down?’ Here, the change of state verb ‘sit’ carries a lexical presupposition that Ruth is standing. Teddy goes upstairs and comes back to tell Ruth ‘It’s still there. My room.’ In this utterance, the definite description ‘my room’ carries an existential presupposition that Teddy has a room. Aspectual ‘still’ in the utterance triggers a lexical presupposition that the room was there in the past and it is there at present also. The definite description ‘The bed’ in the utterance ‘The bed’s there’ carries an existential presupposition that there exist a particular bed that belongs to Teddy. His question ‘What are you doing?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Ruth is doing something. He notices that there are blankets only; therefore he looks for some sheets. As he hears snores, he says ‘They’re all still here, I think’. In this utterance, aspectual ‘still’ carries a lexical presupposition that they were there previously and up to now they are in the house. Then he asks Ruth ‘Are you cold?’ Here the interrogative structure carries a structural presupposition that Ruth is either feeling cold or isn’t.

Concluding Remarks

Though Ruth presupposes that Teddy should go up and inform them that he is back, Teddy has a contrary opinion. He is excited to see his room after so many years. He is happy to realize that all of his family members are still living in the house.

4.4.6 Conversation Six

This piece of conversation is a casual interaction between the two brothers. Both of them talk to each other in a formal way, though they are meeting after a long gap.

Contextual Environment

Teddy suggests Ruth to go to bed as she might be tired. Then he thinks that both of them should go to bed as they will have to wake up early in the morning to meet the family members. However, Ruth wants to go out in order to have some air. Therefore, she goes for a stroll. As Teddy is about to go upstairs, he meets Lenny. They greet each other and talk on some trivial topics. Then Teddy inquires about Max and tells Lenny that he has
come to stay for a few days. Lenny suggests him to sleep in his old room and asks whether he needs something.

**Conversation**

LENNY: Nothing you want?
TEDDY: Mmmm?
LENNY: Nothing you might want, for the night? Glass of water, anything like that?
TEDDY: Any sheets anywhere?
LENNY: In the sideboard in your room.
TEDDY: Oh, good.
LENNY: Friends of mine occasionally stay there, you know, in your room, when they’re passing through this part of the world.

(HC, 26-27)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Lenny’s question ‘Nothing you want?’ carries a structural presupposition that Teddy either wants something or does not want anything. However, Teddy could not tell him exactly whether he wants something. Therefore Lenny repeats the question ‘Nothing you might want for the night?’ The definite description ‘the night’ triggers an existential presupposition that it is the time of night. As Teddy has just arrived, Lenny thinks that he might need a glass of water at least. However, Teddy asks for sheets as he could not find them out. Lenny tells him that the sheets are ‘In the sideboard in your room.’ In this utterance, the definite description ‘the sideboard’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a sideboard in which the sheets are kept. Moreover, the definite description ‘your room’ triggers an existential presupposition that the room belongs to Teddy. Lenny further informs him that he knows that the sheets are there in the sideboard as he says ‘Friends of mine occasionally stay there, you know, in your room, when they are passing through this part of the world.’ This utterance carries a couple of presuppositions. The definite description ‘Friends of mine’ triggers an existential presupposition that Lenny has friends who occasionally stay in Teddy’s room. Moreover, the temporal clause beginning with ‘when’ carries a structural presupposition that Lenny’s friends often pass through this part of the world.

**Concluding Remarks**

In this interaction, both of them don’t show any evidence of intimacy in their relationship. Lenny seems to ask him if he needs anything only as a part of formality. Further, he wants to suggest Teddy that his room is in use so that he could sleep there.
4.4.7 Conversation Seven

In this conversational extract, Lenny goes on talking about himself, Ruth, Teddy and about Max. He expresses his happiness at Teddy’s arrival.

Contextual Environment

Teddy promises Lenny to meet at breakfast and goes upstairs to sleep. Lenny sits smoking a cigarette when Ruth enters the front door. Both of them exchange greetings. Then Lenny introduces himself and asks her name. Ruth informs him that she is Teddy’s wife. Lenny asks her some advice about ticking of a clock and then offers her a glass of water. He asks the same question to Ruth which he had asked to Teddy, that is, whether she needs something. However, when Ruth says she doesn’t need anything, he becomes happy because there is nothing to give her in the house.

Conversation

LENNY: … Isn’t it funny? I’ve got my pyjamas on and you’re fully dressed.  
He goes to the sideboard and pours another glass of water.  
Mind if I have one? Yes, it’s funny seeing my old brother again after all these years. It’s just the sort of tonic my Dad needs, you know. He’ll be chuffed on his bollocks in the morning, when he sees his eldest son. I was surprised myself when I saw Teddy, you know. Old Ted. I thought he was in America.  

RUTH: We’re on a visit to Europe.  

(HC, 29)

Presupposition Analysis

Lenny notices that Ruth is well-dressed while he has got only pyjamas; therefore, he says, ‘Isn’t it funny?’ Here, the question carries a structural presupposition that it is either funny or not. Moreover, the definite description ‘my pyjamas’ in the utterance ‘I’ve got my pyjamas on and you’re fully dressed’ triggers an existential presupposition that Lenny has pyjamas. While taking a glass of water for himself, he says ‘Yes, it’s funny seeing my old brother again after all these years.’ In this utterance, there is a great amount of information that is presupposed. The factive verb ‘funny’ triggers a factive presupposition that Lenny is meeting his brother after so many years. The definite description ‘my old brother’ carries an existential presupposition that Lenny has an old brother, that is, Teddy. Moreover, interactive ‘again’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Lenny has seen his brother before that is, he is not meeting his brother for the first time. In addition, interactive ‘after’ carries a lexical presupposition that Lenny had seen his brother before
several years. Further, quantifier ‘all’ triggers a lexical presupposition that it is after years that Lenny met Teddy. Lenny thinks that Max will be delighted to see Teddy and Ruth. He says ‘It’s just the sort of tonic my Dad needs.’ In this utterance, cleft sentence carries a structural presupposition that Lenny’s Dad needs the sort of tonic. Moreover, the definite description ‘the sort of tonic’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a certain sort of tonic that Dad needs. In other words, Teddy’s visit may work as a tonic for Max. Further, one more definite description ‘my Dad’ carries an existential presupposition that Lenny has a Dad. Lenny is sure that Max will be happy ‘when he sees his eldest son’. In this utterance, the definite description ‘his eldest son’ carries an existential presupposition that Max has an eldest son, that is, Teddy. The temporal clause beginning with ‘when’ in the utterance ‘I was surprised myself when I saw Teddy’ carries a structural presupposition that he saw Teddy. Further, the verb ‘thought’ in the utterance ‘I thought he was in America’ functions as dyer to preserve a factive presupposition that Teddy was in America. Moreover, the proper noun ‘America’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a country called America. But now they are on a trip, as Ruth informs, ‘We’re on a visit to Europe’. Here also, proper noun ‘Europe’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a continent called Europe in which they are on a tour.

**Concluding Remarks**

Lenny here tries to show Ruth that he is really pleased to meet Teddy after so many years. However, he didn’t express the same happiness when he Met Teddy before some time. Thus, it can be said that Lenny is trying to create a soft corner for himself in Ruth’s mind. He even believes that Teddy’s visit might work as a tonic to the old man, who will be overjoyed to meet his eldest son.

**4.4.8 Conversation Eight**

This conversation takes place as Max gets disturbed due to Lenny’s shouting at Ruth. Max wants to know whom Lenny was talking to, but Lenny wants to avoid telling him about Teddy and Ruth’s presence in the house.

**Contextual Environment**

Lenny wishes to hold Ruth’s hand just to feel her touch. When Ruth asks him the reason behind this, he narrates an irrelevant anecdote about a diseased lady who tried to take liberties with him. Therefore, he beat up that lady half-dead. Then he wishes to be as
sensitive as Teddy and when Ruth asks him whether he is not sensitive, he narrates one more equally irrelevant anecdote. He tells her how one old lady approached him and requested him to help her to move an iron mangle. He noticed that the mangle was too heavy to move and the lady was standing still, instead of giving him a helping hand. Therefore, he gave a short arm-jab in that lady’s stomach. Then Lenny says that Ruth has drunk enough water, therefore she should give him her glass.

Conversation

MAX: … He was talking to someone. Who could he have been talking to? They’re all asleep. He was having a conversation with someone. He won’t tell me who it was. He pretends he was thinking aloud. What are you doing, hiding someone here?
LENNY: I was sleepwalking. Get out of it. Leave me alone, will you?
MAX: I want an explanation, you understand? I asked you who you got hiding here?
Pause.
LENNY: I’ll tell you what, Dad, since you’re in the mood for a bit of a … chat, I’ll ask you a question. It’s a question I’ve been meaning to ask you for some time. That night … you know … the night you got me … that night with Mum, what was it like? Eh? When I was just a glint in your eye. What was it like? What was the background to it? I mean, I want to know the real facts about my background. I mean, for instance, is it the fact that you had me in mind all the time, or is it the fact that I was the last thing you had in mind?

(HC, 35-36)

Presupposition Analysis

Max gets up due to Lenny’s shouting and thinks ‘Who could he have been talking to?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Lenny was talking to someone. His utterance ‘They’re all asleep’ contains quantifier ‘all’ that carries a lexical presupposition that there are people but as they are sleeping, they could not speak to Lenny. Max is sure that Lenny was having a conversation with someone but doesn’t know exactly who it was. In his utterance ‘He pretends he was thinking aloud’ there is a non-factive verb ‘pretend’ that triggers a non-factive presupposition that he was thinking aloud. As Yule (1996) points out, in contrast with the presuppositions assumed to be true, non-factive presuppositions are assumed not to be true. Thus, Max believes that Lenny wasn’t thinking aloud. He has a doubt that Lenny is hiding someone in the house. His utterance ‘What are you doing, hiding someone here?’ has an implicative verb ‘hide’ that carries a lexical presupposition that there is someone. Lenny once again lies that he was sleepwalking and asks Max to leave him alone. However, Max wants the things to be cleared, therefore he does not
leave. As a result, Lenny begins to ask him some questions so as to avoid the topic of their conversation. The temporal clause beginning with ‘since’ in Lenny’s utterance ‘I’ll tell you what, Dad, since you’re in the mood for a bit of a … chat’ carries a structural presupposition that Max is in the mood for a chat. Moreover, the definite description ‘the mood’ triggers an existential presupposition that Max is in a mood that encourages chatting. Therefore, Lenny wishes to ask him a question for the sake of chatting. He asks ‘It’s a question I’ve been meaning to ask you for some time.’ In this utterance, the cleft construction carries a structural presupposition that Lenny had been meaning to ask this question to Max since a long time. Moreover, definite description ‘the night’ triggers an existential presupposition that refers to a particular night when Max and his wife had sexual intercourse. The question ‘What was it like?’ carries a structural presupposition that it was like something that night. The temporal clause ‘When I was just a glint in your eye’ triggers a structural presupposition that Lenny was a glint in Max’s eye. The next question asked by Lenny ‘What was the background to it?’ carries a structural presupposition that there was a particular background to his birth. Lenny’s utterance ‘I want to know the real facts about my background’ carries several presuppositions. The factive verb ‘know’ triggers a factive presupposition that there are some real facts about Lenny’s background. The definite description ‘the real facts’ carries an existential presupposition that there are certain real facts and one more definite description ‘my background’ triggers an existential presupposition that Lenny has a background about which he wants to know. The alternative question ‘Is it a fact that you had me in mind all the time, or is it a fact that I was the last thing you had in mind?’ carries a structural presupposition that Max either had Lenny in mind or Lenny was the last thing in his mind. Definite description ‘the last thing’ triggers an existential presupposition that there was a last thing and quantifier ‘last’ carries a lexical presupposition that there were other things also.

**Concluding Remarks**

Max here presupposes a fact that Lenny was talking to someone. With a non-factive presupposition, he realizes that Lenny is telling lies as he wasn’t thinking aloud nor he was sleepwalking. Max further presupposes that there must be someone whom Lenny is trying to hide in the house. Though Lenny doesn’t want to disclose the presence of Teddy and Ruth, Max wants an explanation about his shouting. In order to divert Max’s attention, Lenny asks him about the real facts about his birth. He deliberately asks such
questions to Max which a son couldn’t talk about. As a result, Max gets irritated and
forgets Lenny’s shouting. Thus, Lenny’s intention turns out to be successful.

4.4.9 Conversation Nine

This conversation between the two brothers depicts Max expressing his abhorrence
towards Sam. Max reminds the promise which he had given to his father on death bed
that he will take care of his brothers.

Contextual Environment

The next morning, Max comes in and expresses his hatred towards the room. He likes the
kitchen but he cannot stay there quietly because Sam always washes up the plates there.
Joey suggests him to bring his tea in the room but Max doesn’t want to bring the tea there
as he hates the room. Then he informs Joey that he can join him as he is going to see a
football game. But Joey denies it as he wants to practice boxing. Max goes to the kitchen
and asks Sam whether he wants to prove something with this washing up.

Conversation

MAX: What point you trying to prove?
SAM: No point.
MAX: Oh yes, you are. You resent making my breakfast, that’s what it is, isn’t it? That’s
why you bang round the kitchen like that, scraping the frying-pan, scraping all the
leavings into the kin, scraping all the plates, scraping all the tea out of the teapot
… that’s why you do that, every single stinking morning. I know. Listen, Sam. I
want to say something to you. From my heart.

He moves closer.

I want you to get rid of these feelings of resentment you’ve got towards me. I
could understand them. Honestly, have I ever given you cause? Never, when Dad
died he said to me, Max, look after your brothers. That’s exactly what he said to
me.

(HC, 39)

Presupposition Analysis

Max gets irritated and asks Sam ‘What point you trying to prove?’ This question carries a
structural presupposition that Sam is trying to prove certain point. However, this
presupposition is cancelled due to the additional premises added by Sam, that is, ‘No
point.’ But Max is sure that Sam tries to prove something. He says ‘You resent making
my breakfast, that’s what it is, isn’t it?’ In this utterance, factive verb ‘resent’ triggers a
factive presupposition that Sam prepares breakfast. Moreover, the definite description
‘my breakfast’ carries an existential presupposition that the breakfast made by Sam is meant for Max. The question ‘isn’t it?’ triggers a structural presupposition that Sam either resents or doesn’t resent making breakfast for Max. The definite descriptions ‘the kitchen, the frying pan, the bin and the tea pot’ trigger existential presuppositions that there exist a kitchen, a frying pan, a bin and a tea-pot. In addition, quantifier ‘all’ in the utterance ‘scraping all the leavings into the kin, scraping all the plates, scraping all the tea out of the teapot’ carries lexical presuppositions that Sam is scraping the leavings the plates and the tea. This happens every morning, therefore, Max wants to speak something to Sam from his heart. The factive verb ‘to get rid of’ in the utterance ‘I want you to get rid of these feelings of resentment you’ve got towards me’ triggers a factive presupposition that Sam has got feelings of resentment towards Max. Moreover, the relative clause ‘(which) you’ve got towards me’ carries the same presupposition. The verb ‘wish’ in the utterance ‘I wish I could understand them’ triggers a non-factive presupposition that Max could not understand Sam’s feelings of resentment. He feels that he is not responsible for Sam’s feelings. His utterance ‘When Dad died he said to me, Max, look after your brothers’ carries a couple of presuppositions. The temporal clause ‘When Dad died’ triggers a structural presupposition that their father is dead and the definite description ‘your brothers’ in the same utterance carries an existential presupposition that besides Sam, Max has other brothers.

Concluding Remarks

Max presupposes various things while talking to Sam. Annoyed due to the clamor in the kitchen, he rebukes Sam that he is deliberately scraping everything in the kitchen. He thinks that Sam has got feelings of bitterness towards him and asks him to give up this approach. He focuses on his promise given to their bed-ridden father but his behavior with Sam seems contradictory to the promise.

4.4.10 Conversation Ten

In this extract, Max reprimands Teddy as he thinks that Teddy has brought a prostitute in the house. Though Teddy tries to convince him that Ruth is his wife, Max is hard to believe.

Contextual Environment

Teddy and Ruth come downstage and greet Max. He is shocked to see Teddy and asks Sam and Joey whether they were aware of Teddy’s presence in the house. He becomes
furious to know that Teddy told nobody about his arrival. Teddy tries to calm him down, but in vain. Max thinks that Teddy has brought a whore in the house and starts to abuse Ruth. Though Teddy tells him that Ruth is his wife, he goes on abusing Ruth. He loses his temper and condemns Teddy for bringing such a whore from America.

**Conversation**

TEDDY: Stop it! What are you talking about?
MAX: I haven’t seen the bitch for six years, he comes home without a word, he brings a filthy scrubber off the street, he shacks up in my house!
TEDDY: She is my wife! We’re married!

*Pause.*

MAX: I’ve never had a whore under this roof before. Ever since your mother died. My word of honor. *(To JOEY)* Have you ever had a whore here? Has Lenny ever had a whore here? They come back from America, they bring the slopbucket with them. They bring the bedpan with them.

(HC, 42)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Teddy gets inflamed and bursts out ‘Stop it! What are you talking about?’ In this utterance, the change of state verb ‘stop’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Max is talking nonsense. Moreover, the question carries a structural presupposition that Max is talking about something. However, Max is untouched and goes on scolding him. The change of state verb ‘comes’ in the utterance ‘he comes home without a word’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Teddy was not in the home before as he had left the house six years ago. In Max’s utterance ‘he shacks up in my house’ the definite description ‘my house’ carries an existential presupposition that the house belongs to Max. Therefore, he resents that Teddy brought a whore in his house. However, Teddy says that Ruth is not a whore but ‘She is my wife!’ Here, the definite description ‘my wife’ triggers an existential presupposition that Teddy has got a wife, that is, Ruth. Yet Max seems unconvinced and says ‘I’ve never had a whore under this roof before’. In this utterance, the interactive ‘before’ triggers a lexical presupposition that now they have a whore in the house. Further, the utterance ‘Ever since your mother died’ carries a structural presupposition that Teddy’s mother is dead. Then Max turns to Joey and asks him ‘Have you ever had a whore here? Has Lenny ever had a whore here?’ Both these questions presuppose that Joey and Lenny either had a whore in the house or they had not. Max continues scolding him as he says ‘They come back from America, They bring the
slopbucket with them. They bring the bedpan with them.’ The interactive ‘come back’ in
the utterance triggers a lexical presupposition that Teddy was staying in the house before
he went to America. Moreover, the definite descriptions ‘the slopbucket’ and ‘the bedpan’
carry existential presuppositions that there exists a slopbucket and a bedpan in the house.
In fact, Max uses these terms for Ruth. He again turns to Teddy and says ‘Take that
disease away from me.’ Here, the change of state verb ‘take’ triggers a lexical
presupposition that Ruth is there in the house standing besides Max. He orders both
Teddy and Ruth to leave the house.

Concluding Remarks

Max presupposes that Teddy has returned after six years. Though Teddy informs him of
their lawful relation, he goes on abusing Ruth as he presupposes that Teddy has brought a
whore. While talking about the presence of a prostitute in the house, he calls his own wife
as a whore. He gets irritated at the thought that neither Lenny nor Joey ever brought a
whore but it is Teddy who brought her in the house.

4.4.11 Conversation Eleven

In the following piece of conversation, Max and Ruth praise each other. Max is happy
that his family has gathered after a long time. He remembers his dead wife and wishes
that she should have been there to see the whole family together.

Contextual Environment

After initial violent reactions, Max turns to Ruth and asks her whether she has children.
When he comes to know that Teddy and Ruth has got three sons, he becomes happy and
offers Teddy a cuddle and kiss. Max is delighted to see that Teddy still loves him. In the
afternoon, Ruth serves coffee to all of them and praises the lunch prepared by Max. Max
also gives her compliments for being a number one cook as she prepared a lovely cup of
coffee. He tells Ruth that his wife taught her sons the way of life.

Conversation

RUTH: That was a very good lunch.
MAX: I'm glad you liked it. (To the others:) Did you hear that? (To RUTH:) Well, I put
my heart and soul into it, I can tell you. (He sips.) And this is a lovely cup of
coffee.
RUTH: I'm glad. …

Pause.
MAX: Well, it’s a long time since the whole family was together, eh? If only your mother was alive. Eh, what do you say, Sam? What would Jessie say if she was alive? Sitting here with her three sons. … The only shame is her grandchildren aren’t here. … (To RUTH.) Mind you, she taught those boys everything they know. She taught them all the morality they know.

(HC, 45-46)

**Presupposition Analysis**

Max feels proud after getting praised by Ruth for the food and says ‘I’m glad you liked it.’ Here, factive verb ‘glad’ triggers a factive presupposition that Ruth liked the lunch. Max tries to make others, especially Lenny, aware of the fact that she liked it because they never praise him for cooking. He turns to Ruth and tells her that the lunch is always good because he prepares it with devotion, putting his heart and soul into it. The verb ‘tell’ in the utterance ‘I can tell you’ functions as plug and preserves a factive presupposition that Max puts his heart and soul into the lunch. Then it is his turn to praise Ruth for a nice cup of coffee. He seems happy to realize that they are all together. His utterance ‘Well, it’s a long time since the whole family was together’ carries a couple of presuppositions. The temporal clause beginning with ‘since’ triggers a structural presupposition that the whole family was together before a long time. Moreover, the definite description ‘the whole family’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a family of Max. However, Max regrets ‘If only your mother was alive.’ Here, conditional clause triggers a counterfactual presupposition that their mother is dead. Then he turns to Sam and asks him ‘What do you say, Sam?’ triggering a structural presupposition that Sam has something to say about Jessie. He further asks him ‘What would Jessie say if she was alive?’ This question triggers a structural presupposition that Jessie would have said something about their family gathering. Moreover, the counterfactual conditional clause beginning with ‘if’ carries a counterfactual presupposition that Jessie is not alive. In the utterance ‘Sitting here with her three sons,’ the definite description ‘her three sons’ carries an existential presupposition that Jessie has sons. Moreover, the same utterance has entailments such as ‘She has sons’, ‘she has two sons’ and ‘she has children.’ In the same way, the definite description ‘her grandchildren’ in the utterance ‘The only shame is her grandchildren aren’t there’ triggers an existential presupposition that she has got grandchildren also. He further tells Ruth how Jessie was the best mother. He says ‘She taught those boys everything they know.’ In this utterance, the change of state verb ‘taught’ triggers a lexical presupposition that
the boys didn’t know everything. In addition, the relative clause ‘they know’ carries a structural presupposition that now the boys know everything because of their mother’s teaching. In the utterance ‘She taught them all the morality they know,’ quantifier ‘all’ triggers a lexical presupposition that the mother taught them the morality. Moreover, the same relative clause ‘they know’ carries a structural presupposition that the boys know all the morality.

**Concluding Remarks**

Max is happy to get appreciated for his cooking. He wants his family members to realize that he is a good cook. As a result of unexpected praise, Max feels proud and boasts about his skill. He is pleased due to the family gathering but regrets Jessie’s death. He imagines that she would have been equally delighted to see her grown up sons. He presupposes that his boys know all the moral values and proudly informs Ruth that their mother taught them all these things.

**4.4.12 Conversation Twelve**

Teddy asks Ruth that they should cut their tour short and return to America as the children might be missing them. However, Ruth accuses him that he doesn’t love his family; therefore, he wants to go back. Teddy claims that he likes all of them.

**Contextual Environment**

Max claims that he would have arranged a grand ceremony on the occasion of Teddy’s marriage. He feels proud that his son is a Doctor of Philosophy. He is surprised to realize that Teddy has three sons and he also has three. Then Lenny asks a question about some abstract philosophical ideas which Teddy avoids to answer. However, Ruth answers the question quite confidently andboldly. All of them, including Teddy, are stunned due to the way Ruth tries to answer Lenny’s philosophical question. They remain silent till Ruth talks about her birth and her migration to America. After Max and Joey leave; Teddy goes to Ruth and sits close to her holding her hand. He expresses his wish that they should go back to America.

**Conversation**

TEDDY: I think we’ll go back. Mmmn?
   *Pause.*
   Shall we go home?
RUTH: Why?
TEDDY: Well, we were only here for a few days, weren’t we? We might as well … cut it short, I think.
RUTH: Why? Don’t you like it here?
TEDDY: Of course I do. But I’d like to go back and see the boys now.
               Pause.
RUTH: Don’t you like your family?
TEDDY: Which family?
RUTH: Your family here.
TEDDY: Of course I like them. What are you talking about?
               Pause.
RUTH: You don’t like them as much as you thought you did?
TEDDY: Of course I do. …

(HC, 54)

Presupposition Analysis

Teddy wants to know Ruth’s wish; therefore, asks her ‘Shall we go home?’ carries a structural presupposition that they shall either go to home or not. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘go’ triggers a lexical presupposition that they are not at their home. Instead of answering Teddy’s question, Ruth asks him ‘Why?’ This question triggers a structural presupposition that there are certain reasons behind Teddy’s wish to go back home. She wants to know these reasons. Therefore, Teddy reminds her that they had decided to stay only for a few days and now he thinks to cut it short. Ruth again asks ‘Why? Don’t you like it here?’ carrying a structural presupposition that Teddy either likes to stay there or doesn’t. He assures her that he likes to stay but, as he says ‘I’d like to go back and see the boys.’ In this utterance, the interactive ‘go back’ triggers a lexical presupposition that he was there before. Moreover, the definite description ‘the boys’ carries an existential presupposition that there are boys whom Teddy is egger to meet. In fact, Teddy wants to go back in order to meet his sons. However, Ruth doesn’t show any eagerness to meet them. Instead, she asks Teddy ‘Don’t you like your family?’ This utterance carries a couple of presuppositions. The definite description ‘your family’ triggers an existential presupposition that Teddy has a family. The question as a whole carries a structural presupposition that Teddy either likes his family or doesn’t like. Teddy gets confused and asks ‘Which family?’ This question triggers a structural presupposition that Ruth is asking about a particular family. The question also presupposes that Teddy has two families, the first family includes his father, uncle and brothers and the second one includes his wife and sons. Therefore, he could not understand which of these two families Ruth is asking about. Ruth clarifies that she wants to know whether he loves his
family which includes his father, uncle and brothers. Teddy replies that he likes all of them and in confusion asks her ‘What are you talking about?’ Here, the question triggers a structural presupposition that Ruth is talking about something that Teddy wants to be clarified. Therefore, she blatantly says ‘You don’t like them as much as you thought you did?’ In this utterance, the comparison ‘as … as’ carries a structural presupposition that Teddy thought that he likes his family very much. This fact is denied by Ruth, though Teddy is sure that he likes them.

**Concluding Remarks**

Teddy is taken aback due to Ruth’s boldness while answering Lenny. He feels insecure because of Ruth’s behavior. He presupposes that they should go back to their children so that Ruth will come back at least for them. But she concludes that Teddy doesn’t love his family, therefore, he wants to go back. However, it is Ruth who seems not to love her sons. Otherwise, she should have been ready to go back to meet them as soon as possible. But she tries Teddy to blackmail emotionally by accusing him that he pretends to love his family. In fact, she has made her mind to stay with Max and family.

**4.4.13 Conversation Thirteen**

In this passage, Max arrives and notices that Teddy has packed his luggage. He realizes that Teddy is leaving, therefore, asks him to come again and let them know next time whether he is married. He even points out that though Ruth is lower in status, he accepts her.

**Contextual Environment**

Teddy notices that Ruth is reluctant to go back; therefore he tries to persuade her by reminding her of their sons. He also thanks her for she usually helps him to prepare his lectures. He requests her to take rest while he packs the bags. As Teddy goes upstairs, Lenny enters and begins a conversation with Ruth. She tells Lenny that she was a model for the body before she went to America.

**Conversation**

MAX: You going, Teddy? Already?

*Pause.*

Well, when you coming over again, eh? Look, next time you come over, don’t forget to let us know beforehand whether you’re married or not. I’ll always be glad to meet the wife. Honest. I’m telling you.
JOEY lies heavily on RUTH.
They are almost still.
LENNY caresses her hair.

Listen, you think, I don’t know why you didn’t tell me you were married? I know why. You were ashamed. You thought I’d be annoyed because you married a woman beneath you. You should have known me better. I’m a broadminded man.

(HC, 59)

Presupposition Analysis

Max asks Teddy ‘When you coming over again, eh?’ This question carries a structural presupposition that Teddy will come back and Max wants to know the time of his next visit. Moreover, the interactive ‘again’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Teddy had been there before. The interactive ‘next’ in the utterance ‘Look, next time you come over, don’t forget to let us know beforehand whether you’re married or not’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Teddy is there presently. Moreover, the implicative verb ‘forget’ carries a lexical presupposition that Teddy is supposed to remember to tell them whether he is married or not. In addition, the interactive ‘beforehand’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Teddy should tell them whether he is married before he comes again. The definite description ‘the wife’ in the utterance ‘I’ll always be glad to meet the wife’ carries an existential presupposition that refers to a woman with whom Teddy might get married in future. However, this presupposition cannot be sustained because it is not certain whether Teddy will get married or not. Max changes the topic and says ‘You think I don’t know why you didn’t tell me you were married?’ This utterance carries a couple of presuppositions. The factive verb ‘know’ triggers a factive presupposition that Teddy didn’t tell Max that he was married. The factive verb ‘tell’ carries a factive presupposition that Teddy is married. Moreover, the question carries a structural presupposition that there were certain reasons, therefore, Teddy didn’t tell Max about his marriage. Max thinks that Teddy was ashamed because he thought that Max would be annoyed to know that his wife is lower in status. The factive verb ‘be annoyed that’ triggers a factive presupposition that Teddy married a woman lower in social status than him.

Concluding Remarks

Max advises Teddy indirectly to get married once again and inform them whether he married while coming next time. He presupposes that Teddy didn’t tell him about his marriage with Ruth because she belongs to lower class society. However, he assures
Teddy that he is happy with his marriage. He makes it clear that he doesn’t believe in such trivial matters as he is a liberal man.

4.4.14 Conversation Fourteen

In this piece of conversation, Lenny notices that the cheese-roll which he had put in the sideboard is not there. He becomes restless and wants to know who has taken it.

Contextual Environment

Ruth does not object the liberties taken by Lenny and Joey but becomes dominating. The tone of her speaking becomes authoritative as she asks for something to eat and drink. Ruth asks Teddy whether someone in the family has read his critical works. Teddy denies it saying that his works are beyond their intellectual capability. Sam says that Teddy is his most favorite of the boys and requests him to stay there for some more weeks. On the other hand, Lenny enters the room and asks Teddy to hurry up otherwise he would miss his seminar. When he comes to know that Teddy has eaten up his cheese-roll, he becomes furious and asks him to apologize. However, Teddy seems reluctant to apologize.

Conversation

LENNY: Still here, Ted? You’ll be late for your first seminar.

He goes to the sideboard, opens it, peer in it, to the right and the left, stands.

Where’s my cheese-roll.

Pause.

Someone’s taken my cheese roll. I left it there. (To SAM.) You been thieving?

TEDDY: I took your cheese-roll, Lenny.

Silence. …

LENNY: You took my cheese-roll?

TEDDY: Yes.

LENNY: I made that roll myself. I cut it and put the butter on it. I sliced a piece of cheese and put it in between. I put it on a plate and I put it in the sideboard. I did all that before I went out. Now I come back and you’ve eaten it.

TEDDY: Well, what are you going to do about it?

LENNY: I’m waiting for you to apologize.

TEDDY: But I took it deliberately, Lenny.

(Presupposition Analysis)

Teddy’s utterance ‘Still here, Ted?’ contains an aspectual ‘Still’ that triggers a lexical presupposition that Teddy was there before some time up to now. The definite description ‘your first seminar’ in the utterance ‘You’ll be late for your first seminar’ carries an
existential presupposition that Teddy has to attend seminar and he will be late for it if he does not leave immediately for America. After reminding Teddy of his seminar, Lenny goes to the sideboard and searches something in it. As he could not find what he was searching for, he asks ‘Where’s my cheese-roll?’ This utterance carries a couple of presuppositions. The definite description ‘my cheese-roll’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a cheese-roll that belongs to Lenny and the question as a whole carries a structural presupposition that the cheese-roll has been put somewhere. After a pause, Lenny claims ‘Someone’s taken my cheese-roll. I left it there.’ In these utterances, the change of state verbs ‘taken’ as well as ‘left’ carry a lexical presupposition that the cheese-roll was there in the sideboard. He has a doubt that Sam might have taken it, therefore, accuses him saying ‘You been thieving?’ This question triggers a structural presupposition that Sam has either been thieving or hasn’t. However, Teddy reveals that it is not Sam who has taken the cheese-roll. Sam goes out and Lenny asks Teddy whether he has really taken his cheese-roll. When Teddy accepts that he has taken the roll, Lenny gets disappointed. He says ‘I made that roll myself.’ In this utterance, the definite description ‘that roll’ triggers an existential presupposition that refers to a particular cheese-roll prepared by Lenny. He goes on narrating how he prepared that roll and put it in the sideboard. He says ‘I did all that before I went out.’ In this utterance, quantifier ‘all’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Lenny did something that is, prepared a cheese-roll. Moreover, the temporal clause beginning with ‘before’ triggers a structural presupposition that Lenny went out after he made the roll. The interactive ‘come back’ in the utterance ‘Now I come back and you’ve eaten it’ carries a lexical presupposition that Lenny was present there before some time. Teddy becomes restless and asks ‘What are you going to do about it?’ carrying a structural presupposition triggered by question that Lenny is going to take some action against it. Lenny wants Teddy to say sorry as he replies ‘I’m waiting for you to apologize’. In this utterance, the verb of judging ‘apologize’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Teddy has made on offensive act by taking Lenny’s cheese-roll, therefore, he should say sorry. However, Teddy declares ‘But I took it deliberately, Lenny.’ In this utterance, there is an extra stress on the word ‘deliberately.’ Such utterances are called implicit cleft with stressed constituent. Here, it triggers a structural presupposition that Teddy did not take the roll accidently or otherwise. Therefore, he does not feel it necessary to apologize.
Concluding Remarks

By presupposing that fact that Teddy has to attend seminars there in America, Lenny wants to suggest him that he should now. Then arises a cheese-roll issue and Lenny accuses Sam for thieving. At this, Teddy confesses that it is not Sam but he, who has taken the roll. Lenny narrates how he prepared that cheese-roll and regrets that he could not eat that roll. Teddy takes it for granted that Lenny will certainly do something about it. Lenny presupposes that Teddy’s act is worth apologizing, however Teddy doesn’t think so. He tries to convince Lenny that he would have expressed apology if he had taken the cheese-roll by mistake.

4.4.15 Conversation Fifteen

This conversation takes place when Joey comes downstage after spending two hours with Ruth. They discuss that Ruth is a tease as she didn’t satisfy Joey’s appetite.

Contextual Environment

While taking about the cheese-roll, Lenny gives a long speech while Teddy remains a patient listener. When Lenny comes to know that Joey didn’t go the whole hog, he declares Ruth to be a tease. However, Teddy express a doubt about Joey’s potentiality to have sexual intercourse, therefore, Lenny narrates an incident in order to prove that Joey is potent. Joey also claims to have the whole hog plenty of times. When Max enters, Lenny tells him that Ruth is a tease. Max expresses his sympathy towards Joey as he got such a treatment from Ruth. He asks Teddy whether she behaves in the same way with him, which Teddy denies.

Conversation

MAX: Where’s the whore? Still in bed? She’ll make us all animals.
LENNY: The girl’s a tease.
MAX: What?
LENNY: She’s had Joey on a string.
MAX: What do you mean?
TEDDY: He had her up there for two hours and he didn’t go the whole hog.

Pause.

MAX: My Joey? She did that to my boy?

Pause.

To my youngest son? Tch, tch, tch, tch. How you feeling son? Are you all right?
JOEY: Sure I’m all right.
MAX (To TEDDY): Does she do that to you, too?

(HC, 68-69)

Presupposition Analysis

Max enters with Sam and asks ‘Where’s the whore?’ The definite description ‘the whore’ in this question carries an existential presupposition that there exists a whore, that is, Ruth. Moreover, the question on a whole triggers a structural presupposition that Ruth is somewhere there in the house. The aspectual ‘still’ in his next question ‘Still in bed?’ triggers a lexical presupposition that Ruth had been in bed and Max thinks that she might be in bed up to now. Moreover, the question as a whole carries a structural presupposition that she is either in bed or not. The change of state verb ‘make’ in the utterance ‘She’ll make us all animals’ triggers a lexical presupposition that they are not animals at present. Instead of telling where Ruth is, Lenny informs Max ‘The girl’s a tease.’ Here, the definite description ‘the girl’ carries an existential presupposition that there exists a particular girl, in fact Ruth, who is a tease. He further informs him about her behavior with Joey. Max could not understand and asks ‘What do you mean?’ Here, the question carries a structural presupposition that Lenny wants to mean something by telling Max that Ruth was having Joey on a string. Teddy tries to clarify saying ‘He had her up there for two hours and he didn’t go the whole hog.’ Contrast in this utterance triggers a structural presupposition that Joey should have had the whole hog as he was up with her for two hours. Max feels pity for Joey as he is the youngest of his sons. Therefore, he asks Joey ‘How you feeling?’ Here the question carries a structural presupposition that Joey might have got certain feelings due to this incident. Moreover, the next question ‘Are you all right?’ carries a structural presupposition that Joey is either all right or not. Joey assures Max that he is perfectly all right. Then Max turns to Teddy and asks him ‘Does she do that to you, too?’ In this utterance, the linguistic item ‘too’ carries a lexical presupposition that she has done that to a person other than Teddy. Moreover, the question triggers a structural presupposition that she either teases Teddy or she doesn’t. However, Teddy denies it firmly.

Concluding Remarks

Max here presupposes the fact that Ruth is a prostitute. However, Lenny informs him about Joey’s experience with her. Max gets puzzled at first but Lenny explains him that Joey should have gone the whole hog within two hours, but she didn’t allow him.
Therefore, he concludes that she is a tease. Max feels sorry for Joey and presupposes that he might be disappointed. By presupposing the fact that she didn’t satisfy Joey, Max feels that she might be doing this with teddy.

4.4.16 Conversation Sixteen

This is a piece of conversation that takes place when they decide to keep Ruth. Lenny suggests a solution to their financial problem so that they will not have to tolerate any extra expense.

**Contextual Environment**

Max thinks it to be a good idea to have a woman in the house; therefore, he proposes that they should keep Ruth. Teddy and Sam try to oppose the proposal but they could not become successful. Max realizes that if they keep her, they will have to pay her pocket money. Moreover, Joey becomes ready to give her clothes and they plan to collect money through willing contribution. However, Lenny suggests that they won’t have to bear any expenses if they put her on the game at Greek Street. She can earn money herself by staying at Greek Street four hours a night. Lenny proposes to put her in one of his flats there. Max seems relaxed to see all his problems getting solved. But Joey is not ready to share Ruth with others. To calm down Joey, Lenny informs him that his clients are highly distinguished.

**Conversation**

MAX: … Where you going to put her in Greek Street?
LENNY: It doesn’t have to be right in Greek Street, Dad. I’ve got a number of flats all around that area.
MAX: You have? Well, what about me? Why don’t you give me one?
LENNY: You’re sexless.
JOEY: Eh, wait a minute, what’s all this?
MAX: I know what Lenny’s saying. Lenny’s saying she can pay her own way. What do you think, Teddy? That’ll solve all our problems.
JOEY: Eh, wait a minute. I don’t want to share her.
MAX: What did you say?
JOEY: I don’t want to share her with a lot of yobs!
MAX: Yobs! You arrogant git! What arrogance. (To LENNY.) Will you be supplying her with yobs?
LENNY: I’ve got a very distinguished clientele, Joey. They’re more distinguished than you’ll ever be.

(HC, 72-73)
Presupposition Analysis

Max is curious to know exactly where Lenny is going to keep her; therefore, he asks ‘Where you going to put her in Greek street?’ This question carries a structural presupposition that Lenny is going to put her somewhere in Greek Street. Moreover, the proper noun ‘Greek Street’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a particular area called Greek Street. Lenny replies that he doesn’t mean exactly in Greek Street. He says ‘I’ve got a number of flats all around that area.’ The quantifier ‘a number of’ carries a lexical presupposition that Lenny has got some flats in that area. Moreover, definite description ‘that area’ triggers an existential presupposition that there exists a particular area where Lenny has got a number of flats, in one of which Lenny will put Ruth. Max is shocked to hear that Lenny has several flats. Therefore, he asks ‘Why don’t you give me one?’ triggering a structural presupposition that there are certain reasons so that Lenny did not give Max a flat. Lenny replies that he did not give him a flat because Max is sexless. Joey could not understand what they are talking about; therefore Max says ‘I know what Lenny’s saying.’ In this utterance, the factive verb ‘know’ triggers a factive presupposition that Lenny is saying something, that is, Ruth can earn money herself. He asks ‘What do you think, Teddy?’ triggering a structural presupposition that Teddy might have something to say about it. Moreover, the quantifier ‘all’ in the utterance ‘That’ll solve all our problems,’ carries a lexical presupposition that they have certain problems. Moreover, the definite description ‘our problems’ in the utterance triggers the same existential presupposition. However, one more problem arises when Joey says that he doesn’t want to share Ruth with rude, aggressive people. Max accuses Joey of being arrogant and asks Lenny ‘Will you be supplying her with yobs?’ This question triggers a structural presupposition that Lenny will either be supplying her with yobs or not. Lenny replies that he has got very sophisticated customers. The comparison in his utterance ‘They are more distinguished than you’ll ever be’ carries a structural presupposition that her clients will be distinguished.

Concluding Remarks

Max accepts Lenny’s proposal happily that they will put Ruth in profession. He is shocked to hear that Lenny has several flats at Greek Street. However, he is pleased to realize that their main anxiety, that is, expenditure due to Ruth, has been solved by Lenny’s plan. But Joey presupposes that Ruth’s customers will be such yobs with whom
he would not like to share her. At this, Lenny clarifies that his clients are people belonging to upper class society.

4.4.17 Conversation Seventeen

In this passage, Ruth talks about her terms and conditions of employment. She wants all these things to be written and signed in the presence of witnesses. She also insists that all the conditions should be clarified to their mutual satisfaction.

Contextual Environment

All of them finalize to put Ruth on the game. Lenny asks Teddy to work as Ruth’s representative in America and, in return, he will get a little amount out of her earnings. After Ruth comes downstairs, they talk to her about their plan and she readily accepts it. However, she has her own conditions which they are supposed to fulfill. She wants a flat with a dressing room, rest-room and a bedroom as well as a personal maid.

Conversation

RUTH: I’d need an awful lot. Otherwise I wouldn’t be content.
LENNY: You’d have everything.
RUTH: I would naturally want to draw up an inventory of everything I would need, which would require your signature in the presence of witness.
LENNY: Naturally.
RUTH: All aspects of the agreement and conditions of employment would have to be clarified to our mutual satisfaction before we finalized the contract.
LENNY: Of course.

(HC, 77)

Presupposition Analysis

Ruth places her terms and conditions in front of them, saying ‘I’d need an awful lot. Otherwise I wouldn’t be content’. The contrast in these utterances carries a structural presupposition that if they want her to be content, it is obligatory for them to fulfill all her demands. Lenny assures her that they would provide her everything. However, she wants to draw a list of all her conditions and needs which will be mutually signed. She says ‘I would naturally want to draw up an inventory of everything I would need, which would require your signature in the presence of witness.’ In this utterance the relative clause ‘I would need’ carries a structural presupposition that she would need everything mentioned in the list. Moreover, the definite description ‘your signature’ triggers an existential presupposition that Lenny has to sign the inventory. The definite phrase ‘the presence of
witness’ carries a lexical presupposition that there will be some people present in front of whom both of them will sign the inventory. When Lenny accepts this, she further says ‘All aspects of the agreement and conditions of employment would have to be clarified to our mutual satisfaction before we finalized the contract.’ This utterance carries several presuppositions. The quantifier ‘all’ triggers a lexical presupposition that there are certain aspects of the agreement. The definite description ‘the agreement’ in the utterance carries an existential presupposition that there will be an agreement. Moreover, the change of state verb ‘clarified; gives rise to a lexical presupposition that there are certain conditions of employment which are vague, therefore it needs clarification. The temporal clause beginning with ‘before’ triggers a structural presupposition that they would finalize the contract only after they get all the aspects of the agreement and conditions of employment clarified to their mutual satisfaction. In addition, the definite description ‘the contract’ carries an existential presupposition that there is a contract which they are going to finalize. As Lenny accepts Ruth’s conditions without objection, she becomes ready to stay with them.

Concluding Remarks

Ruth presupposes that she won’t stay with them if they fall short to keep her satisfied. As all of them are eager to keep her at any cost, Lenny doesn’t have any option to accept her conditions. However, she doesn’t believe only in spoken agreement but wants to make a legal contract. She presupposes that Lenny will sign this contract in front of witnesses. She even presupposes that they will finalize the contract but only after following a legal process. Lenny agrees with her and it is obvious that she will stay with them in the house.

4.5 CONCLUSION

Thus, the present chapter fulfills the aim of analyzing Harold Pinter’s selected plays in the light of presupposition. After this attempt, it has become obvious that presupposition is a significant pragmatic concept, with which the authentic analysis of conversation in literature is possible. The selected conversational passages are analyzed taking in to consideration their contextual environment, various triggers and types of presupposition as well as related concepts in pragmatics. The essence of analysis of each selected passage has been drawn separately as concluding remarks. The next chapter deals with application of conversational implicature to the selected plays.