

**Charles University in Prague  
Faculty of Education**

# **BACHELOR THESIS**

**2018**

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The Inaugural Addresses of the Re-elected US Presidents after  
the WW2: Stylistic Analysis of Selected Features

Inaugurační projevy znovuzvolených amerických prezidentů  
po druhé světové válce: stylistická analýza vybraných jevů

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Branch of Study: English Language and Music

2018

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*Prague, December 7, 2018*

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*Alžběta Procházková*

*I would like to express my gratitude to the supervisor of my thesis PhDr. Klára Lancová, Ph.D. for her time, valuable advice and encouraging guidance in the past year. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my parents and family, who have been supporting me the whole time of my studies. I am also grateful to my partner for always standing by my side and being patient.*

**Abstract:**

This bachelor thesis deals with identification, analysis and assessment of the usage of individual style in the inaugural addresses of the re-elected American presidents after the Second World War. The thesis is anchored in the functional approach to style as described by British linguists Crystal and Davy. The analysis focuses on syntactic, morphological, lexical and semantic levels of the inaugural addresses. From each level the analysis selects several stylistically significant features, which influence the style of writing and thus create an individual style. The selected Presidents' addresses are then compared and stylistic similarities and differences are examined.

**Key words:**

Style, stylistic analysis, stylistically significant features, inaugural address, individual style, American presidents.

**Abstrakt:**

Předkládaná bakalářská práce se zabývá identifikací, analýzou a celkovým hodnocením použití stylu v inauguračních projevech znovuzvolených amerických prezidentů v období po druhé světové válce. Práce je zakotvena v teorii funkčního přístupu ke stylu, v souladu s tím, jak jej popisují britští lingvisté Crystal a Davy. Analýza je zaměřena na syntaktickou, morfologickou, lexikologickou a sémantickou úroveň inauguračních projevů přičemž z každé této úrovně vybírá několik stylisticky významných prostředků, které mají vliv na styl psaní a vytváří tak individuální styl každého pisatele. Práce pak zkoumá, do jaké míry se projevy vybraných amerických prezidentů stylisticky podobají či liší.

**Klíčová slova:**

Styl, stylistická analýza, stylisticky významné prostředky, inaugurační projev, osobitý styl, američtí prezidenti.

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## Introduction

The inaugural address of American president is currently one of the most followed and influential speeches in the world. It forms an integral part of American identity and democracy. At the same time it constitutes an interesting material to be analysed from the linguistic perspective. It is for that reason that the inaugural address has been chosen as research material for this thesis. Because of the limited scope of a bachelor thesis, it is not possible to analyse all of the fifty-eight inaugural addresses of the forty-five American presidents in the time span from 1789 to 2017. Therefore, specific restriction criteria had to be applied in order to limit the amount of material used for the analysis. These criteria are as follows:

1. Specified and compact historical era.
2. Relevance of the English language to contemporary standards.
3. Amount and accessibility of data.

Based on the above outlined criteria, the presidential inaugural addresses after the Second World War were defined as suitable material for the analysis. Yet they still proved to be a rather large sum of data to be processed in a bachelor thesis. For that reason, the subject of the thesis had to be narrowed down further. Thus only six presidents have been chosen. These are the presidents of the era after the Second World War (1949 – 2017) who moreover happened to be re-elected.

To my knowledge such research has not been carried out yet. The aim of this bachelor thesis is therefore to provide a brief, but complex insight into the style of the inaugural addresses of the re-elected presidents of the United States after the Second World War.

Therefore, the submitted thesis evolves around the following research questions:

*What are the differences and similarities of the inaugural addresses of the six re-elected American presidents after the Second World War from the stylistic perspective? And what do these differences and similarities indicate?*

The thesis has been subdivided into four main chapters. Chapters 1, 2 and 3 focus on the theoretical background. In the first chapter, the subject of the thesis – inaugural address, is contextualized and the notion of style is introduced in detail. In the second chapter, the different theoretical approaches to style are presented. Moreover, the choice of the functional

approach to stylistics in Crystal and Davy's understanding as the theoretical anchor of the thesis is substantiated. In Chapter 3, the selection of the particular linguistic features to be further analysed in the inaugural addresses is conducted and these features are described in detail.

Chapter 4 concerns with the practical analysis of the inaugural addresses based on the criteria defined in the theoretical part. The fourth chapter is followed by the Conclusion of the thesis, where the data collected in the analytical part is summarized and evaluated in order to answer the above outlined research questions.

## **1 Background and theory**

To be able to conduct a meaningful analysis and illustrate the subject of the thesis, few words concerning the background of inauguration have to be written. Thus, this chapter provides a wider contextualization of the inaugural addresses. Firstly, the presidents in question are introduced and the essentials and importance of inauguration are discussed. Secondly, the inaugural address is described, with focus on both of the content and the form. Most importantly, the notion of style is introduced in detail.

### **1.1 The presidents and the process of inauguration**

The long list of the presidents of the United States now counts forty-five names. The presidency in the United States has a great tradition starting in 1789 with George Washington. From that time the president of the United States of America has evolved into the most influential and powerful political figure in the world. The office of the president as well as inaugural addresses have become an important part of the principles of the American democracy, peaceful transition of power and consequently the American identity. Every time the president of the United States delivers his address it is not only the US itself but the entire world which is watching it with great expectations.

Each of the 45 presidents delivered one or two, or as in the exceptional case of President Franklin D. Roosevelt four, inaugural addresses. To summarise, it is fifty-eight speeches all together. Nevertheless, as has been stated and explained in the introduction, only some of the presidents have been chosen for the research. Based on the criteria outlined in the introduction, the inaugural addresses of the below listed re-elected presidents of the era after the Second World War (1949 – 2017), are analysed:

1. Dwight David Eisenhower (1949 – 1957),
2. Richard Milhous Nixon (1969 – 1974),
3. Ronald Wilson Reagan (1981 – 1989),
4. William Jefferson Clinton (1993 – 2001),
5. George Walker Bush (2001 – 2009),
6. Barack Hussein Obama (2009 – 2017).

All of these six presidents have delivered two inaugural addresses, which constitute a solid amount of data for further examination.

An important part of the inauguration ceremony is the following sentence – the oath of office of the President of the United States:

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of president of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. (So help me God.)

For every president since George Washington, these were the words, which brought the president-elect into office. This sentence is always followed by applause and the inaugural address. The tradition of inauguration is of great importance in the United States. Many presidents characterize the event as an "honored and historic ceremony" as for example President Eisenhower in his second inaugural address (1957). Others, as for example the current American President Trump, describe the inauguration as "the orderly and peaceful transfer of power" (2017). It is the symbol of continuity, "end as well as a beginning, renewal as well as a change" yet above all of freedom (Kennedy 1961).

The inauguration has undergone a gradual evolution as can be understood from the President Clinton's first inaugural address, where he writes:

When George Washington first took the oath (...), news traveled slowly across the land by horseback and across the ocean by boat. Now, the sights and sounds of this ceremony are broadcast instantaneously to billions around the world. (1993)

The popularity of the inaugural address increased immensely and nowadays, millions of people all around the world watch or listen to, analyse and comment on the speech right at the very moment of the event. Moreover, the inaugural addresses as a defining part of politics of the United States have always played a significant role on the international scale, especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the United States became the worldwide economic leader, intercontinental peacemaker and global role model in the fields of science and technology as well as with their attitude towards freedom.

## **1.2 Characteristics and style of the inaugural address**

In more than two hundred years, forty-five presidents have delivered their inaugural speeches at the steps of the Capitol or near the site. The inaugural address has been delivered in times of welfare but also hardship, as the former president Obama describes, "the words (of inaugural address) have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of

peace. Yet every so often, the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and raging storms" (2009). As President Obama implies, the circumstances of inaugurations are diverse, therefore, the speeches concern various topics. On the other hand, the speeches have a lot in common at the same time and are similar in many senses.

Let us first closely examine the differences of the speeches. As has been previously asserted, the speeches differ in their content, largely based on the historical circumstances of the period, in which the oath was taken. For example, in his first speech President Eisenhower focuses on bringing peace to the people of America after the Second World War. President Reagan talks about the peace in the world in connection to the Cold War and War in Vietnam and President Bush Jr. talks about the protection of liberty after the September 11 attacks. These specific differences concern content, however, the speeches differ in one more important sense – their style. Since every human being is unique, his or her use of language is unique as well. Linguists call this 'uniqueness of authors' or the 'individual style.'

On the other hand, the inaugural addresses have many aspects in common. For instance, they are characterized by the same genre of official speech. Also, all the inaugural addresses are identical in form, considering that every one of them had been written and intended for the public. Another common trait of the inaugural addresses is also their structure. The address usually summarizes the previous period, comments on the current state of the United States and its position in the world, yet the main focus is put on the future and the various topics to be dealt with during the four-year term. The inaugural addresses are often similar in purpose, which can be described as promoting ideas of American uniqueness, freedom and nationalism. The addresses are typically concluded by encouraging the American people to "dream big", "believe in America", "move forward" or to "make America great again."

Such similarities in genre, form, structure or purpose were noticed by Mathesius and described by him as a 'style of speech.' In his work *On the Potentiality of Linguistic Phenomena* he wrote:

By this term (style) we mean not the individualizing character of artistic literary creation but *simply the fact that specimens of actual speech possessing analogous character or analogous aims, display some common features in different speakers of the language.* (1911, 22–23, italics in original)

Therefore, it can be said, that speakers with a common character or aim of discourse will display similar features, which can be described as a style, more specifically, style of speech.

The manifestation of style of speech was important for the emergence of 'functional stylistics' and 'language culture' (Mathesius in Chloupek and Nekvapil 30).

The notion of 'language culture' means the advanced level of expressing thought, both in spoken and written discourse. Despite the fact that most of the presidents are well educated and highly conversant with the field of political speeches, in most cases the president-elects' or presidents' speeches, including the inaugural addresses, get written by a special aide or a team of people close to the president. These people are competent professionals, who are well versed in the importance of the speeches and its requirements. Even though the presidents do not write the speeches themselves, the speeches contain their thoughts and to significant extent their unique use of language as the president must approve the final version of the speech. Consequently, this thesis claims that every president's style of writing is truly his own. Due to the fact that style is considered an individual phenomenon, stylistic differences are expected to be found in the presidents' speeches.

The inaugural address, as has been previously asserted, is a speech given to mark a special event of a newly elected or re-elected president at the beginning of his mandate. Thus the language of the speeches demands specific features to meet the requirements of an important international text. Urbanová emphasizes the language culture by stating:

Sophisticated topics in scientific, legal or rhetorical style require the speaker to use cultivated, precise and abstract expressions. The speaker must choose not only specific vocabulary, often of foreign origin, but should also carefully plan the usage of features on the grammatical, phonetic and phonological level. (Urbanová 2008, 22, translation mine)

The texts of the inaugural address must be of the finest quality. Notwithstanding that the speeches are similar in some sense, it can be said, that they differ in style because each of them was written by a different author. However, 'style' is a term with numerous interpretations. Thus, in the following chapter, the different theoretical approaches to style are described and the choice of the functional approach to stylistics as a theoretical anchor of this thesis is justified.

## **2 Theoretical approaches to style**

To be able to conduct a credible stylistic analysis in Chapter 4, it is necessary to define the terms stylistics and style. The *Longman dictionary* claims that 'stylistics' is "the study of style in written or spoken language" (1757). The definition uses the words "written and spoken language" which could be seen by some linguists as incorrect, due to the fact that they do not consider the spoken language an adequate source to be analysed. However, stylistics as Crystal and Davy claim is a "developing and controversial field of study" (foreword), therefore, linguists use different definitions and various approaches. Urbanová supports this view by stating, "contemporary stylistics is considered an interdisciplinary subject of the language study. Individual linguistic disciplines (...) observe the problematic of stylistics from different points of view" (2008, 9, translation mine).

Each linguist has his or her own approach to stylistics. For this reason, some of the most significant theoretical concepts of style must be presented and the choice of the particular approach for the purpose of this thesis needs to be justified. Therefore, in the following subchapters, different concepts of style are presented. The thesis will firstly discuss Bradford's approach, which implies a dual character of stylistics – textualist and contextualist stylistics. Secondly, the functional approach to stylistics is described, as it is a popular approach shared by many linguists, both of British and Czech origin (Urbanová 2008, 12). Lastly, the approach of Crystal and Davy is discussed, as it further develops the functional approach and thus constitutes the approach which is the most optimal for the purpose of this thesis.

### **2.1 Bradford's approach to style**

The first theoretical approach to style, which will be described, is Bradford's approach. As Urbanová writes, Bradford distinguishes two types of stylistics from the sole perspective of the literary style, i.e. textualist and contextualist stylistics. Nevertheless, Urbanová argues, that such division could be applied on non-literary styles and genres likewise. Urbanová describes Bradford's two types of stylistics, by stating, that "textualist stylistics is primarily focused on the author of the text concerning the structure and composition of the text based on the lexical and structural preferences of the author" (2008, 11, translation mine). On the contrary, contextualist stylistics deals more with the meaning of the text and how the text affects the recipient (Urbanová 2008, 12). Urbanová argues, "contextualist stylistics is based

on the concept, which emphasises the qualities of the style determined by its context"(Urbanová 2008, 11–12, translation mine). This concept purports both verbal and non-verbal phenomena, such as:

1. Competence of the reader to understand and explicate the text.
2. Predominant ideology.
3. The systems of signification through which all verbal, non-verbal, literary and non-literary phenomena are affected and interpreted (ibid).

Bradford's two approaches to stylistics are worth noting, but cannot be effectively used for the intended analysis of the inaugural addresses, mainly due to the above mentioned fact that they do not consider a non-literary text as a relevant subject of analysis. To be able to analyse the style of the inaugural address adequately, it is more suitable to use the functional approach to style.

## 2.2 Functional approach to style

The functional approach, as Urbanová claims, is shared and considered by many linguists a more accurate attitude towards style. This is due to the implementation of a socio-cultural understanding of style. According to this theory, "each style fulfils a specific function in the social context" (2005, 1). Mathesius proposes the connection between linguistics, stylistics and rhetoric in his work *O potenciálnosti jevů jazykových (On the Potentiality of Linguistic Phenomena)*, where he remarks on the importance of examining the relationships between these individual fields of linguistics. Křístek states that:

Linguistics studies language by examining the speech of individuals within the whole language community, while stylistics examines how language is used in individual literary works. (...) Mathesius makes a distinction here between *stylistics* as a discipline focused on the individual style of a particular literary work and so-called *styles of speech*. These styles of speech, as Mathesius puts it, are the common features of texts/utterances produced by **various people under similar circumstances**. Referring to several earlier works of Jones, Bally, Jespersen and some other European linguists, Mathesius states that these styles of speech are manifested in pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax. (Křístek 10, bold in original)

Even though Mathesius distinguishes literary style from the style of speech, he stresses out important thoughts, which were later transformed and can be applied on any type of

discourse. This is another confirmation that stylistics is an open and vital branch of linguistics with a plethora of definitions or approaches. As an optimal approach for the analysis conducted in this thesis, the functional approach to style is explored in more detail in the following subchapter.

### 2.2.1 Crystal and Davy's approach to style

The theory of the functional approach to style has been further developed by Crystal and Davy who describe stylistics as follows:

The aim of stylistics is to analyse language habits with the main purpose of identifying, from the general mass of linguistic features common to English as used on every conceivable occasion, those features which are restricted to certain kinds of social context; to explain, where possible, why such features have been used, as opposed to other alternatives; and to classify these features into categories based upon a view of their **function in the social context**. (10, bold in original)

Similarly as Mathesius uses the term 'social aspect' (Chloupek and Nekvapil 29), Crystal and Davy stress the prominent influence of the social context of language and the linguistic features, which are confined to the specific situation. Furthermore, Crystal defines stylistics as "a branch of LINGUISTICS which studies the features SITUATIONALLY distinctive uses (VARIETIES) of LANGUAGE, and tries to establish principle capable of accounting for the particular choices made by individual and social groups in their use of language" (2008, 460, capitals in original). In the latter definition, Crystal links the linguistic features to the varieties of language. These varieties are the most prominent constituents of style as Crystal and Davy claim, "stylistics (is) studying certain aspects of language varieties" (9). They are aware of the "heterogeneous definitions of style." Thus they claim that, style is recognized as the language habits of one person, both in speech or writing, but at the same time style refers to the language habits shared by a group of people at one time (9–10).

It is believed that specific differences should be found between the writing styles of the studied presidents since Crystal and Davy write, "the whole 'gestalt' of a person's use of language is as individual as his finger prints" (foreword). Crystal and Davy suggest that each person's use of language is unique and can be distinguished from the others. Furthermore, Urbanová claims that, "the existence of varieties in language is the fundamental prerequisite for stylistic differentiation" (2008, 17, translation mine). Therefore, more thorough view has to be taken onto varieties, owing to not all linguists having the same opinion in this matter.

### 2.2.2 Varieties of English

Many linguists discuss varieties in different senses using diverse terms. Urbanová writes that "in British linguistics two types of variation in language are generally acknowledged: variations as to **the use in social situations** and variations **according to the user**" (2005, 3, bold in original). This approach is also advocated by Crystal and Davy who state that "there are noticeable, though dissimilar, differences between varieties, which are due to the sort of person who is talking or writing and the kind of social situation he is in" (3). As they assert, the medium is one of the clearest examples of varieties (written or spoken English). As an example according to the user, Crystal and Davy suggest the "regional dialects: a person speaks differently depending on where he is from" (4). They also explain that each "educated speaker of English" knows more varieties of one language and is able to instinctively switch between them depending on the situation (ibid).

The number of types of varieties, as Crystal and Davy say, cannot be definitely specified. Therefore, they suggest to study the varieties in detail, because as they claim "the aim of a linguistically orientated, *stylistic* approach is clear: the varieties of a language need to be studied in as much detail as possible, so that we can point to the formal linguistic features which characterise them, and understand the restrictions on their use" (8, italics in original). The variety of English, which one uses can be recognized from the linguistic features implemented in one's spoken or written discourse. Crystal and Davy examine the linguistic features which characterise the main varieties of English and try to guide students of linguistics through the analysis of linguistic features (9). In the following chapter and subchapter, their steps of identifying linguistic and stylistic features are described.

### 2.3 Linguistic features and stylistically significant features

As written above in the characterisation of Crystal and Davy's approach to style, the aim of stylistics is to analyse the language habits and to identify the linguistic features used (10). Crystal and Davy define the linguistic features as follows:

*Any bit of speech or writing which a person can single out from the general flow of language and discuss – a particular word, part of a word, sequence of words, or way of uttering a word. A feature, when it is restricted in its occurrence to a limited number of social contexts, we shall call a *stylistically significant* or *stylistically distinctive* feature. (11, italics in origin)*

Thus, it can be said that the stylistically significant features are basic elements of style, which are connected to a variety of English, specific situation or a specific person, thus they are utterly relevant in analysing the inaugural addresses of the American presidents. There are many aspects influencing these features, which are outlined in the subsequent subchapter.

### 2.3.1 Aspects influencing stylistically significant features

The theory of varieties and stylistically significant features works reciprocally. On the one hand each variety of English requires a specific use of stylistically significant features, on the other hand stylistically significant features determine the variety of English. Urbanová explains this notion by referring to the selection of linguistic features, which can be spontaneous and intuitive in impromptu speech or planned and intended in elaborate style (2008, 10). Moreover, Urbanová articulates that "the factors which primarily determine the quality of the stylistic features are: variability, distinction and selection" (2008, 17, translation mine). Urbanová further comments that "style can be characterized as a selection of linguistic features and therefore style represents an author's choice out of given linguistic possibilities" (2008, 18, translation mine). This choice is then influenced by more factors, for instance: the 'social aspect' outlined by Mathesius (Chloupek and Nekvapil 29), the 'varieties' suggested by Crystal and Davy earlier (3), or by the socio-linguistic factors proposed by Halliday (Halliday 1973 in Urbanová 2008, 21).

As it was argued above, initially every linguist approaches language from a different point of view, which does not implicate any contradiction, yet more theories. Therefore, Halliday introduces factors, which influence the selection of the stylistically relevant features from the socio-linguistic perspective. According to Halliday, the most influential socio-linguistic factors are:

1. **Field** of discourse, **subject-matter**.
2. Relation of the communicators or **tenor**.
3. **Mode** (Halliday 1973 in Urbanová 2008, 21, translation mine).

These three factors together "define the context of situation of a text" and essentially influence the choice of linguistic features (Halliday 2013, 22); furthermore, they help to define which phonological, grammatical and lexical features are adequate for a specific style (Urbanová 2008, 21).

Halliday's 'field of discourse' is very similar to Mathesius' 'subject matter' or 'social aspect'. Mathesius emphasises the importance of knowing the 'subject-matter', Urbanová cites

Mathesius and Vachek as they remark, "first condition, upon which the stylistic success of any commentary depends is content rather than linguistic nature. We are not able to discuss an unknown topic pointedly and clearly" (Mathesius and Vachek 108 in Urbanová 2008, 21–22, translation mine). About the subject matter Urbanová articulates:

For everyday communication, basic word-stock, uncomplicated grammatical structures and above all economic, and greatly reduced sound forms (e.g. contracted forms) are to be used. On the other hand, sophisticated topics require a careful selection of words, often of foreign origin, but also more advanced sentence structures and appropriate phonetic forms. (2008, 22, translation mine)

Moreover, the linguistic specialization of the speakers is influenced by the speaker's social role. Therefore, in specific situations, the language user is expected to use specific types of linguistic performances as part of the social norm (Urbanová 2008, 24).

The social role is directly related to tenor. According to Halliday, "the tenor refers to the type of role interaction, the set of relevant social relations, permanent and temporary, among the participants involved" (2013, 22), that is the relationship between the members of the discourse, i.e. the speaker and the hearer or the writer and the reader. Urbanová distinguishes and emphasizes the relationship of intimacy or distance between the members of the discourse and also refers to the power relations. Whether the relations are symmetrical and therefore equivalent; or asymmetrical, which implies relationship of superiority and inferiority (2008, 24). There is also a certain level of formality present between the communicators. The discourse is either formal, neutral or informal. Leech illustrates his approach to the level of formality in Table 1 shown below, and adds, "the level of formality is connected with the degree of politeness, intimacy and social conventions" (Leech et al. 146).

**Table 1:** Level of formality

<b>FORMAL</b>	<b>INFORMAL</b>
Complex sentences Polysyllabic, classical vocabulary e.g. <i>investigate, extinguish, decipher</i>	Simple sentences Monosyllabic, native vocabulary, especially phrasal verbs, e.g. <i>look into</i>
<b>POLITE</b>	<b>IMPOLITE</b>
Respectful terms of address, e.g. <i>Sir</i> Indirect requests, e.g. <i>Would you be so kind to ...</i>	Intimate terms of address, if any, e.g. <i>John love</i> Direct imperatives, e.g. <i>Give me ...</i>
<b>IMPERSONAL</b>	<b>PERSONAL</b>
Passive voice, e.g. <i>the terrorists were shot</i> Third person noun phrases, e.g. <i>the reader, customers</i>	Active voice, e.g. <i>police shot the terrorists</i> First and second person pronouns, e.g. <i>I, you</i>

Source: Leech et al. (146).

As Leech suggests, the formal style is rather created by complex sentences and longer, classical words (of Romance origin), whereas informal style is characterised by simple sentences, short and native words (of Germanic origin). The level of politeness, according to Leech, is related to intimacy of the relationship between the speakers. Respectful terms of address and indirect requests sound more polite than intimate terms of address and direct imperatives. Furthermore, Leech distinguishes impersonal and personal style. Passive voice and third person noun phrases are considered impersonal, whereas the usage of active voice and first and second person pronouns sounds more personal.

Finally, Halliday distinguishes the mode as an important influencer of style and states, that the "MODE is the function of the text in the event, including therefore both the channel taken by the language – spoken or written, extempore or prepared – and its genre, or rhetorical mode, as narrative, didactic, persuasive, 'phatic communion' and so on" (2013, 22, capitals in original). It is thus apparent that the mode influences individual style to a great extent, as written discourse in contrast with spoken discourse requires different stylistic features.

To summarise, the style of discourse and the word choice depend on many factors as illustrated in this chapter. Based on the arguments above, Crystal and Davy's functional

approach to style has been chosen as a theoretical foundation of the analysis conducted in this thesis. For an analysis departing from this theoretical background, the selection of significant stylistic features in the inaugural addresses has to be made. The method of defining significant stylistic features is described in the following chapter.

### 3 Method of stylistic analysis

Crystal and Davy state that words, parts of words or sequences of words can be considered stylistically significant features (11). This indicates that stylistically significant features operate on different levels. These levels are namely: phonetic, morphological, lexical, syntactical, semantic and pragmatic. The analytical part of this thesis contains an examination of stylistically relevant features on most of these levels. However, the selection had to be narrowed down due to the limited scope of the bachelor thesis. Thus, phonetic and phonological levels had to be dismissed as this thesis concerns itself with the written transcripts only.

Crystal and Davy propose a guideline, which will also be followed throughout this analysis. According to them the task is threefold:

1. "We must identify the entire range of linguistic features which people intuitively feel to be stylistically significant, and specify a precise way of talking about them.
2. We must outline a method of analysis, which will allow us to organise these features in such a way as to facilitate comparison of any one use of language with any other.
3. We must decide on the function of these features, by classifying them into categories based on the kind of extra-linguistic purpose they have" (12).

As has been said above, the linguistic features function on different levels. However, additionally, some of the features operate on more than one level. Crystal and Davy assert that "whenever features occur which cannot be explained by reference to one level only, then the relevance of all the levels involved must be pointed out" (20). Therefore, in this thesis the significant stylistic features were divided into groups according to their linguistic relevance as follows:

1. Semantic-syntactic level.
2. Syntactic level.
3. Morpho-syntactic level.
4. Lexical-syntactic level.
5. Lexical-semantic level.

Within these groups or 'inter-levels', as Crystal and Davy name them, the features are analysed and the results are summarized below into tables, where they can be easily read and compared. This method has been chosen in accordance with what Crystal and Davy say, i.e. "the analysis into levels is simply a device to help organize our material and focus attention

more closely on a particular aspect of language organization" (20). In the following subchapters all the stylistically significant features are classified into groups according to their linguistic relevance and described in detail. Firstly, the more complex features such as sentences are presented, followed by the shorter features such as phrases or particular words. Later in Chapter 4 this categorization is used for a practical analysis of the inaugural addresses.

### **3.1 Semantic-syntactic and syntactic level**

As has been stated above, the significant stylistic features on the sentence level are to be described first. Focus is put on the semantic-syntactic level, on which the readability of text is dealt with. The readability of the texts is analysed with the help of the Gunning Fog Index, a readability scoring formula, which helps to detect the level of English the audience needs to understand the text properly. Subsequently the syntactic features as sentence length and sentence type are examined on the syntactic level.

#### **3.1.1 Gunning Fog Index**

Firstly, the text as a whole should be analysed, as the comprehension of discourse as a whole is crucial. Whenever a language message is transmitted between a speaker and a hearer or a writer and a reader, the understanding of the latter of the pair is critical. The readability of texts shows an author's ability to consider the proficiency of the audience, simultaneously with the ability to forward the message to as many people as possible. Robert Gunning, the author of the readability scoring formula, stated that, "there are limits relating to long sentences and long words that the craftsman does not go beyond. The writer's restrictions may be conscious or unconscious, but they are there. If not, he does not win an audience" (Gunning 1964 in Colmer 2018).

For this reason, the author should adjust the level of English according to the audience so that as many members of the audience as possible can understand. This might be rather difficult in the inaugural addresses, since the audience is not a homogenous group. There are natives and non-natives, educated and uneducated, people speaking different dialects, teenagers, adults and people in the retirement age. Therefore, the president faces an uneasy task to connect the style of an official, political speech with the demands of the audience.

A reader's presumed understanding of any text can be measured by the Gunning Fog Test. The result of this test is a number called the Gunning Fog Index, which Colmer explains as an

equivalent to the "number of years of formal education the reader requires to understand the text on first reading" (2018). 'Formal education' means the American schooling system in this particular context. The level of the index commonly ranges between zero and twenty. For instance, the Fog index of a text equalling 5 indicates that a fifth-grader is able to read and understand this text. As has been already stated, the Gunning Fog Index can be categorized according to the grades of the American schooling system. However, Courtis also suggests a different categorization according to what the text is concerned with, outlined in Table 2 below and adds, "literature with a Fog index value greater than 14.0 probably would be ignored by all readers, except those with special interest, motivation or education" (7).

**Table 2:** Courtis' categorization of the Gunning Fog Index

Fog Index	Category
19.5	Technical books
17.0	Scientific literature
13.7	Newspapers
12.6	Instruction manuals
9.7	General circulation magazines
8.6	Youth magazines

Source: Courtis (1986, 7).

The formula for the Gunning Fog Test can be written down as follows:

$$0.4 \times \left\{ \left( \frac{\text{total number of words}}{\text{total number of sentences}} \right) + 100 \times \left( \frac{\text{number of complex words}}{\text{total number of words}} \right) \right\}$$

Complex words are defined as those containing three or more syllables (Colmer 2018).

It is presumed that the analytical section of the thesis shall prove that the presidential inaugural addresses have to fluctuate around grade level 10. This presumption is based on the fact that presidents must utilise a higher level of English, i.e. longer (complex) words, as the inaugural address is an official, political speech. Yet on the other hand, they ought to use language comprehensible by the majority of the audience.

### 3.1.2 Sentence length and type

Sentence length and type are important factors of written discourse and an author's style. Commonly, longer and more complex sentences predominate in the written language, whereas simple sentences occur rarely in the written discourse. Urbanová confirms this by

stating that carefully structured sentence and its length are attributes of written discourse. Sentences in the written discourse tend to be long and their boundaries are created by punctuation and connectors, which is in contrast to spoken discourse. Simple sentence does not appear as often in the written discourse, since the simple sentence lacks placement in the broader textual and contextual framework (2008, 60). Therefore, complicated sentence structures must be described. According to Dušková, complex sentence is a syntactic-semantic unit consisting of two or more individual clauses (588). The type of the sentence depends on the relations between the individual clauses. Dušková distinguishes two types of relations:

1. Coordination occurs between the two clauses of the compound sentence, where the two clauses are syntactically independent from each other.
2. Subordination occurs between clauses of the complex sentence, when one of the clauses is dependent on the main clause, i.e. syntactically dependent (593).

Besides the compound sentence and complex sentence, there is the multiple sentence, which Dušková describes as any sentence, which has three or more individual clauses (588). These terms such as: complex, compound or multiple are approached differently by linguists, since each of them describes the relations diversely. However, the analytical section of this thesis utilises Dušková's division. Despite the fact that longer and more structured sentences are typical for written discourse (Leech et al. 146 and Urbanová 2008, 60), the occurrence of simple sentences cannot be considered as wrong or informal. It is the style of the author, who might prefer shorter sentences to longer. The next chapter is devoted to smaller features, namely stylistically significant features on the morpho-syntactic level.

### **3.2 Morpho-syntactic level**

The morpho-syntactic level is based on the close connection between morphology and syntax. Crystal and Davy explain the subject matter of both, when they state that "morphology studies the internal structure of words or classes of words, and syntax, studies their external relationships" (18). This subchapter firstly focuses on the distribution of passive and active verb forms throughout the text. Secondly, contracted forms of verbs are examined, because they function as important indicators of style as far as formality and adequacy are concerned.

### 3.2.1 Passive and active forms

In English two voices of verbs are distinguished, namely the active voice and the passive voice. As Dušková writes, the main difference between the two voices lies in the syntacto-semantic relation of the member of the action stated by the verb and the action itself (253). In the active voice sentence, the subject stands, in most cases, in the role of the agent of an action. In the passive voice sentence, the main function is to imply the action without the agent (259). However, in some cases, the passive construction works as an emphaser when the agent is expressed finally as a rheme. Concerning the use of passive voice, Dušková asserts that "the passive voice is not represented in all functional styles equally. Its use is characteristic for technical or scientific language, whereas colloquial language is typical for the use of active voice" (265, translation mine). Moreover, Leech suggests that the passive voice is impersonal (Leech et al. 146) and Urbanová adds, it is more formal (2008, 25).

It can be assumed that the inaugural address, as a formal and impersonal text, ought to contain a greater number of passive voice constructions in comparison to the use of passive voice in the spoken language. This will be analysed in detail in Chapter 4. The next subchapter of this thesis is devoted to contracted forms, another type of stylistically significant features.

### 3.2.2 Contracted forms

According to Hands, contracted forms are considered less formal as he states, "contracted forms are more informal than full forms. They are therefore more common in spoken English. Full forms are usually preferred in formal written English" (37). Therefore, the use of contracted forms in the inaugural addresses is considered undesirable. However, they might appear as the speakers use them in their everyday speech. The most widely used contracted forms are created from the verb *to be*, i.e. I'm, you're, he's, she's, it's, we're, they're and in future, from *will* to *'ll* in all persons and both numbers. Contracted forms are also created from the verb *to have*, i.e. I've, you've, he's, she's, it's, we've, they've and in past, from *had* to *'d*. Apart from the contraction of verbs, the negative particle *not* is very often contracted to *n't*, e.g. hadn't, can't, mustn't. Another example of very common contraction is *let's* as a shortening of *let us*.

## 3.3 Lexical-syntactic level

After the morpho-syntactic level was introduced, closer look on lexical-syntactic level will now be presented. The primarily discussed features are lexical density and lexical variety,

since they are considered relevant sources of information about the individual's style. Lexical density and variety partly reveal the language proficiency of the author. It is due to the fact that they examine the proportion of content carrying and non-content carrying words used in the text and variability of the lexis, which indicates how innovative the author is. In the following subchapter, the terms content carrying and non-content carrying words are explained and calculation of lexical density and variety is indicated.

### **3.3.1 Lexical density and variety**

As has been mentioned above, lexical density is a relevant aspect of individual style, since certain level of lexical density is typical for written and for spoken discourse. Crawford explains lexical density as "the proportion of content carrying lexical words to non-content carrying grammatical words" (73). The distinction between grammatical and functional words may differ among the linguists. This thesis utilizes Eggins' categorization. Eggins claims that content carrying words, known also as lexical or functional words include nouns, the main part of the verbs, adverbs and adjectives. The other group, non-content carrying words are grammatical words, which have grammatical function, and their importance is therefore rather insignificant in comparison to lexical words. Eggins puts the following word classes into this category: prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs and pronouns (97).

Written and spoken discourses differ in terms of lexical density. Quirk and Greenbaum claim that written language "imposes the necessity of a far greater explicitness: the careful and precise completion of a sentence" (7). Stubbs states that, "generally speaking, written texts have a lexical density ranging from about 40-54% for fiction and 40-65% for non-fiction" (Stubbs in Crawford 73). Crawford does not mention the lexical density of spoken discourse, however, Eggins claims that, "written language has a much higher rate of lexical density than does spoken text" (97). On the other hand, Crawford adds that lexical density differs according to variety of spoken language. Therefore, lexical density of a spoken radio commentary is more similar to written fiction than to an everyday conversation (73). As inaugural address is a written text, which is then read, it is presumed for the lexical density of the texts to be higher than 40%.

Lexical density is calculated as a proportion between the number of lexical words and all the words multiplied by 100, thus the result is in percentage. The exact equation is as follows:

$$\text{Lexical density} = \left( \frac{\text{number of lexical words}}{\text{total number of words}} \right) \times 100$$

Crawford adds that lexical density does not provide any information about the range of vocabulary:

Lexical density gives us an idea of informational content, it does not necessarily tell us anything about the range of vocabulary used in a text, which can also contribute to its difficulty. (...) For that reason, it is useful to calculate lexical variations as the ratio of type (number of different words) to token (total number of words). (73)

Crawford explains the results by stating that, "a low type to token ration is an indication of a limited range of lexis, while higher ratios are associated with a wider range. High lexical variation increases the likelihood of unfamiliar lexis" (73–74). Lexical variation is measured similarly to lexical density:

$$\text{Lexical variety} = \left( \frac{\text{number of different words}}{\text{total number of words}} \right) \times 100$$

Lexical density and lexical variety of the inaugural addresses in question are calculated, compared and subsequently discussed in the analytical part. Lexical variety indicates how many different words the author uses, Urbanová even highlights the possibility of selecting from the "repertoire of existing elements of the language system" (2008, 17, translation mine). The choice of vocabulary constitutes an essential part in the author's style. Therefore, in the following section, different aspects of the author's selection of the words used are examined in detail.

### **3.4 Lexical-semantic level**

The lexical-semantic level addresses the specific choice of lexis. For instance, the lexical features are influenced by the subject matter, the mutual relationship of the members of the discourse and most importantly, the author's choice. In view of the fact that language is a live and open system, Urbanová claims that the, "language system (...) as an open system is still being changed, shaped and spread" (2008, 17, translation mine). Furthermore, Vachek describes the "centre and periphery of the language system. Central phenomena tend to endure and create the nucleus of language system. On the other hand, peripheral phenomena are not as anchored in the language system that is why they undergo changes more often than

central phenomena" (Vachek in Urbanová 2008, 17, translation mine). Words move from the centre to the periphery and vice versa over time.

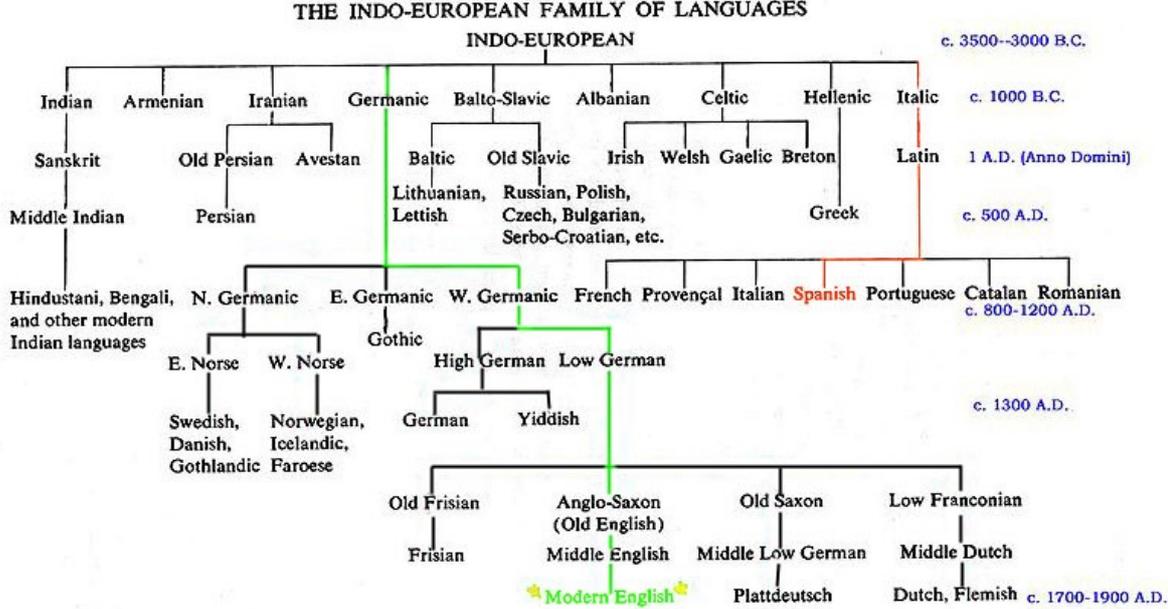
On the lexical-semantic level the focus is put namely on etymology of content carrying words, archaisms and neologisms, usage of phrasal verbs, pronouns used for addressing the audience, difference between pre-modification and post-modification and usage of phrasal verbs. The following subchapter concerns itself with the origin of words, as etymology is an important aspect of individual style.

### **3.4.1 Etymology of the lexical words**

Etymology as described by Crystal is "the study of the origins and history of the FORM and MEANING of WORDS. In so far as etymology derives its methods from LINGUISTICS (especially SEMANTICS), it may be seen as a branch of HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS" (2008, 175, capitals in original).

The origin of English lexis is crucial in the style of an individual. Words of Romance origin are considered more complex, more advanced and presumably more formal. This theory is consistent with Mathesius who states that, "English independent words tend to monosyllabism. Words taken over from Latin usually have several syllables, whereas native and domesticated foreign words are mostly monosyllabic" (1975, 34). Moreover, Crystal claims that Romance lexis, i.e. words of Latin as well as French origin were associated with "high style, scholarship, and rhetorical excellence" (2005, 288). Urbanová further adds that the occurrence of foreign (Romance) words in discourse signals more sophisticated topic (2008, 22).

**Picture 1:** The Indo-European Family of Languages



Source: Gagnon (2018).

As Picture 1 above demonstrates, English belongs to the branch of Germanic family languages. However, during the development of English, there were several periods, when Romance languages, mainly Latin and French, directly influenced English. It was mainly after the Norman Conquest in 1066, when English borrowed many French words, especially in the fields of high arts, politics and commerce. According to Crystal, "Linate words were frequently used in the fields of architecture, law, theology, education and science, for example in mathematics, biology, medicine or anatomy" (2005, 288–289).

Despite the fact that English is a Germanic language, Thomason claims that "up to 75% of its total vocabulary is French and Latin" (2013, 15). Whereas out of these 75% only a minority of words is used in everyday speech, the lexis of Germanic origin is predominant in spoken language. This distribution might be caused by 'language dynamism,' as language is an open system that undergoes a continual alteration. Vachek describes 'dynamism' of the language system, by saying:

Within the system of language there are two distinguished areas: the centre of the language system in which the mutual relations linking up the elements of the system stand out very clearly, and, on the contrary, the periphery of the system, in which the ties linking its elements to the central ones appear rather loose and sometimes may even be on the verge of vanishing altogether. (25, translation mine)

The theory of language dynamism relates to the origin of words, as the historical development of English caused some words of Germanic origin to prevail among Romance words and vice versa. In Chapter 4, lexical words are classified into 4 groups based on their origin: Romance, Germanic, mixed origin (both Germanic and Romance), and unknown origin and names. The analytical part of this thesis concerns itself with the etymological analysis of the content words only due to the fact that the majority of non-content words are of Germanic origin.

Another evidence of language dynamism can be demonstrated by considering the presence of archaisms and neologism in the text, as they move from the centre to periphery and vice versa. These features are discussed in the following subchapter.

### **3.4.2 Neologisms and archaisms**

Neologisms and archaisms play a significant role in broadening the lexical variety in discourse and characterizing an individual style, as they are not as common as the words of the central language system. Moreover, Crystal and Davy argue that "religious and legal English are the only variety which allows archaisms" (165). Crystal defines archaism as a "term used in relation to any domain of LANGUAGE structure for an old word or phrase no longer in general spoken or written use" (2008, 33, capitals in original). Therefore, it can be said that archaisms used to be in the centre of a language system, yet at present they stand on the periphery.

Similarly, Crystal describes the emergence of neologisms as they were created from the 'nonce words' or 'nonce formations'. A nonce word is defined as:

LINGUISTIC FORM which a speaker consciously invents or accidentally uses on a single occasion (...). Many factors account for their use, e.g. a speaker cannot remember a particular word, so coins an alternative approximation (...), or is constrained by circumstances to produce a new form (as in newspaper headlines)" (2008, 329, capitals in original).

When the speakers adopt the nonce formation, it becomes a neologism and is moved to the centre of the language system. The nonce formations are very often created as a reference to some political situation, as for example 'Brexit,' a nonce formation created as a blend of two words 'British exit' to describe the situation of Britain leaving the European Union. Currently, 'Brexit' is a headword in the *Online Cambridge English Dictionary* (2018). Therefore, the term is a neologism, since it is accepted by the English speakers. In Chapter 4, neologisms and archaisms from the inaugural addresses are described and their transformation from

central to peripheral is discussed. The following subchapter concerns itself with noun modification as another significant aspect of individual style.

### **3.4.3 Noun modification**

The occurrence of pre-modification and post-modification is another important stylistic feature functioning on the lexical-semantic level. As Dušková claims, noun modification, i.e. the attribute, is an optional element of a sentence, which does not belong to the basic elements of a sentence pattern. Yet from the communicative point of view it is important for the completeness of the conveyed content (484). There are two sub-categories of the attribute: the 'pre-modifier,' which precedes the noun, and the 'post-modifier,' which follows the noun.

Crystal and Davy claim that the modification of nouns varies throughout the individual varieties, as they state that "varieties to be found which, characteristically, have hardly any pre-modification or post-modification at all (*e.g.* conversation); some are typified by complex pre-modification (*e.g.* journalism and science); and others by complex post-modification (*e.g.* legal language)" (55). Based on this assertion, it can be deduced that spoken discourse usually does not use any modification in comparison to written discourse, and, moreover, that the more formal a discourse is the more post-modification occurs. The proportion of pre-modification and post-modification in individual inaugural addresses is measured and compared in Chapter 4.

The modification of noun is based on the author's preference; similarly, the author applies other features in their texts. Sometimes such features occur in order to emphasize important thought or to address the audience better. The next feature, which will be examined are phrasal verbs, as they are not generally considered a part of academic writing.

### **3.4.4 Phrasal verbs**

Phrasal verbs are significant stylistic features, since they result from the author's word choice. Furthermore, he or she can select a different lexical item, which would be a more suitable synonym for the type of discourse or genre. Generally, as Marks states, phrasal verbs are thought of as: colloquial, casual, informal and characteristic of speech rather than writing. He further claims that "in academic writing, there are typically quite long stretches of text devoid of phrasal verbs" (2018).

However, as he further explains, the reality is more complicated due to the following aspects:

1. Some phrasal verbs are marked informal (e.g. **bum around, palm off, rat on, swan around**).
2. But some phrasal verbs, conversely, are decidedly formal and/or literary (e.g. **ascribe to, cast down, complain of, consign to, impinge on, renege on**).
3. The majority of phrasal verbs are neutral, with no particular stylistic marking (e.g. "What time shall we **set off**?" is neutral in conversation, while "What time shall we **depart**?" is unusually formal).
4. Phrasal verbs are common in many types of writing – though not all – as well as in speech.
5. Phrasal verbs aren't the product of laziness or lack of education. In many cases they're simply the most common way of expressing a certain meaning." (2018, bold in original)

It is apparent that phrasal verbs do not occur as often in the written discourse. However, as Marks says, some phrasal verbs are formal and for that reason "their appearance in (...) formal text is unsurprising – or, to put it another way, it contributes towards the formality of the text." Additionally Marks asserts, "everyday phrasal verbs' occur in academic writing, yet not frequently" (ibid).

Thus, the analytical part of this thesis is devoted to the frequency and formality of the phrasal verbs. Mathesius describes the phrasal verbs as "the verb – adverb combination" (1975, 180). The adverb part is always of Germanic origin, however, the verb part can be either of Germanic or Romance origin. Marks claims that the origin of the verb has a great effect on the formality or neutrality of the phrasal verb (2018). The next chapter takes a closer look at the word choice in addressing the audience.

### **3.4.5 Addressing the audience**

Addressing the audience is related to the term tenor. Halliday defines tenor as a relation between the author and the audience (2013, 22). The relation might be intimate or distant – personal or impersonal. The members of discourse either know each other or they do not. Their social status is either equal, or one of them is superior/inferior. Therefore, the relation is either symmetrical or asymmetrical. All of these features implicate the degree of intimacy and impersonality between the speakers. The role of the members of discourse might be given, as

for instance between a general and a soldier, or a teacher and a student. The role can be also determined by preference, as some people tend to behave authoritatively and others submissively. Despite the fact that the role is often given to the members of the discourse, they might not demonstrate these roles through the linguistic features they utilise. The level of formality and politeness depends wholly on the choice of words by the members of discourse. For example, the American president holds one of the most powerful positions in the world, therefore superiority can be expected but is not desired.

To avoid superiority, the author of the text might use several features. For instance, the words of addressing the audience might be less or more intimate. The speaker might address specific persons by their forename, surname, their title, or by the title of their position. Another way of altering the asymmetrical relationship between the members of discourse is by using personal pronouns. On the one hand, Leech claims that using the first person singular *I* and second person singular or plural *you* is more personal (Leech et al. 146). On the other hand, *I* and *you* are more direct than *we*, and might create a chasm between the speaker and the audience. By using *we*, the author of the text considers himself a member of the group. Therefore, everybody is on the same level and the relationship between them is symmetrical.

The way of addressing individuals, the audience and the usage of personal pronouns is one of the key foci of research in Chapter 4.

## 4 Analysis

The penultimate part of this thesis is devoted to the practical analysis of inaugural addresses. Every subchapter of Chapter 4 corresponds to a subchapter in Chapter 3. The texts of the inaugural addresses have been downloaded from a trustworthy source with public access: The American Presidency Project. This is an Internet source, which archives important documents of the United States of America. Subsequently, the texts were checked and corrected based on the recordings of the inaugural addresses, because there were subtle differences between the recordings and the transcripts. The analysis studies the textual transcripts as they appear in Appendix 1.

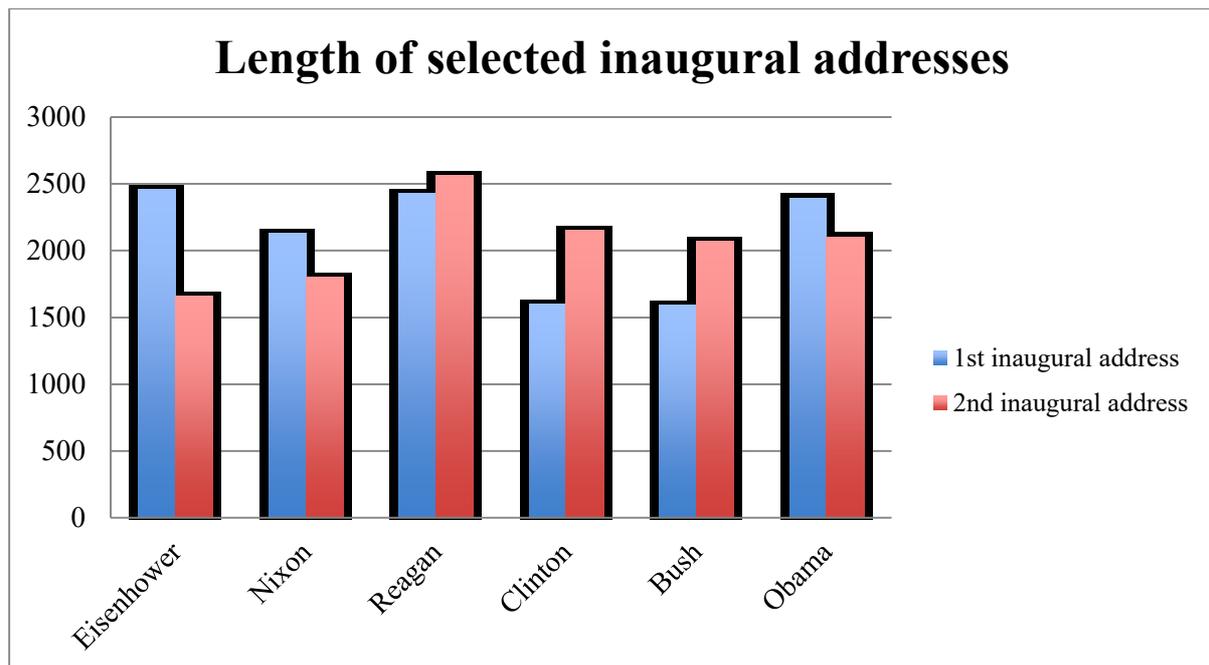
Almost all the parts of the analysis were carried out by hand. This manner was determined after discovering that usage of some of the available, free of charge, Internet software does not lead to reliable results. For example, some software does not recognize words with apostrophes, it is not able to distinguish parts of speech (prepositions vs. adverbs or phrasal verbs vs. verbs followed by preposition), or it does not count hyphenated words as single lexemes.

The first feature to be analysed is the length of the chosen inaugural addresses. The count of the words per speech is one of the features, to which the Internet offers several different numbers. Therefore a new analysis using the Microsoft Word's word counter was carried out. As can be seen below, the results are presented in a chart accompanied by a diagram in order to achieve better comprehensibility of the measured data (Table 3 and Diagram 1).

**Table 3:** Length of selected inaugural addresses

President	Length of 1 <sup>st</sup> inaugural address	Length of 2 <sup>nd</sup> inaugural address
Eisenhower	2,460	1,656
Nixon	2,128	1,803
Reagan	2,427	2,563
Clinton	1,598	2,155
Bush	1,592	2,071
Obama	2,395	2,103

**Diagram 1:** Length of selected inaugural addresses



According to the collected data, all inaugural addresses are longer than 1,500 words, which results in the inaugural address lasting usually between 15 and 25 minutes. Out of the 12 analysed speeches, the longest speech is the second inaugural address written by President Reagan with 2,563 words and the shortest is President Bush's first inaugural address with 1592 words. The difference between the longest and the shortest speech is 971 words. The average length of an inaugural address of the six re-elected presidents is 2,079 words. Presidents Eisenhower, Nixon and Obama show tendency to elongate their second speech, whereas presidents Reagan, Clinton and Bush shorten their second speech. Therefore, there is no general trend in the terms of the length of the chosen inaugural addresses.

In the following subchapters, the stylistically significant features of the five earlier named inter-levels: semantic-syntactic level, syntactic level, morpho-syntactic level, lexical-syntactic level and lexical-semantic level will be analysed and repeatedly compared to the data summarised in Table 3.

## **4.1 Semantic-syntactic and syntactic level**

### **4.1.1 Gunning Fog Index**

The theoretical part asserts that the Gunning Fog Index calculates the readability of a text, according to the following equation:

$$0.4 \times \left\{ \left( \frac{\text{total number of words}}{\text{total number of sentences}} \right) + 100 \times \left( \frac{\text{number of complex words}}{\text{total number of words}} \right) \right\}.$$

For instance, the text of the first inaugural address of the President Eisenhower provides the following data for a practical demonstration of measuring the Gunning Fog Index (for the complete text, see Appendix 1).

- Total number of words (Table 3): 2,460
- Total number of sentences (Table 6): 121
- Number of complex words (Table 20 in Appendix 2): 289
- Gunning Fog Index =  $0.4 \times \left\{ \left( \frac{2,460}{121} \right) + 100 \times \left( \frac{289}{2,460} \right) \right\}$
- Gunning Fog Index: 12.83

As Table 4 below shows, the Gunning Fog test has been drawn twice. Firstly, the texts of the inaugural addresses have been inserted into an online Gunning Fog Index counting software (Bond 2018), which provided the values in the middle column in Table 4. However, I also carried out my own calculation for comparison. Therefore, Table 4 shows two different results from two measurings. The values measured by an online programme are lower than the values measured in my own test after applying data from the other parts of the research, such as number of total words, number of sentences and complex words.

**Table 4:** Gunning Fog Index of selected inaugural addresses

President	Software	My own measuring
Eisenhower 1	11.75	12.83
Eisenhower 2	9.582	10.33
Nixon 1	10.39	11.86
Nixon 2	13.36	14.89
Reagan 1	11.93	12.59
Reagan 2	11.48	12.86
Clinton 1	11.02	11.95
Clinton 2	11.97	12.61
Bush 1	10.97	11.78
Bush 2	12.87	13.69
Obama 1	11.10	12.05
Obama 2	11.93	13.85

Source: own calculations and *Gunning Fog Index*, [gunning-fog-index.com/](http://gunning-fog-index.com/). Accessed 25 Apr. 2018.

In the following paragraphs, the values measured in my own test will be commented on, as they are considered more reliable. From the table, we can read that the most readable inaugural address should be the second speech of President Eisenhower. This speech is assumed to be readable and easily understood by anyone educated for 10 years. According to the American schooling system it is an educated high school sophomore. In contrast, the least readable inaugural address out of the twelve compared speeches is President Nixon's second speech, whose Gunning Fog Index equals almost 15. According to Courtis, texts with such a high Gunning Fog Index are too complicated for readers as he suggests that such texts are ignored by most readers (7). However, a college student in his or her third year of studies should be able to understand such a text without difficulty.

The collected data show an interesting phenomenon. Each president's two inaugural addresses significantly and predominantly differ from each other in their Gunning Fog Indexes. The difference in readability score between the first and second inaugural address averages to 1.87. Only President Reagan's speeches show very similar values (the difference of the index in his two speeches is only 0.27). Furthermore, the second inaugural address typically has a higher Gunning Fog Index than the first speech, except in the case of President Eisenhower's second speech. It seems that most of the presidents have used longer sentences and more complex words, and therefore more complicated language, in their second speeches.

In the theoretical section of Chapter 3, it was predicted for the Gunning Fog Index of the inaugural addresses to fluctuate around 10. However, it can be concluded that most of the Presidents intended to address more educated audience as the average Gunning Fog Index of the analysed texts is 12.61. According to the author of the formula, Robert Gunning, "any writing with an index higher than 12 is considered too flossy for wide public understanding" (1964). Therefore, it could be claimed that the readability of the inaugural addresses is on the border with wide public comprehension. However, the fact that some of the presidents show high values of the Gunning Fog Index does not directly reflect on the level of their language, as the Gunning Fog Test formula considers only the total number of words, the total number of sentences and the number of complex words (i.e. words containing three or more syllables). There are more aspects which have to be considered when analysing the complexity of a text. These other aspects are analysed in the following subchapters.

### 4.1.2 Sentence length and type

As has been previously asserted in the theoretical part, sentences can be divided into four groups – simple, complex, compound and multiple, according to Dušková's division (588–600). Sentences that cannot be classified as any of these four types were also discovered in the course of the analysis. They are described by the term 'incomplete sentence structures.' Mathesius describes some of these structures as 'verbless sentences' and claims:

The regular sentence pattern is the **verbal sentence**. In this respect English agrees with both Czech and other Indo-European languages. However, English, just as other Indo-European languages, also possess sentences devoid of the verb (**verbless sentences**). These sentences are not elliptical – as some scholars are inclined to think – because from the viewpoint of the content they lack nothing. Only their form is such that they contain no verb. (...) Formerly, verbless sentences received little attention. This was partly due to the fact that little notice was taken of actual colloquial speech, which displays verbless sentences fairly often, and partly due to the fact that the style of written documents, on which linguistic investigation primarily concentrated, did typically admit of such sentences. (1975, 86, bold in original)

Therefore, it can be claimed that verbless sentences are typical for colloquial speech, as they are considered informal and unsuitable for written discourse. The following Table 5 shows all examples of the 'incomplete sentence structures' from the inaugural addresses. All presidents, except for President Clinton, have used at least one incomplete sentence structure in one of their inaugural addresses.

**Table 5:** Incomplete sentence structures in selected inaugural addresses

President	Incomplete sentence structure
Eisenhower 1	Amen.
Eisenhower 2	Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice President, Mr. Chief Justice, Mr. Speaker, members of my family and friends, my countrymen, and the friends of my country wherever they may be.
Eisenhower 2	And so, too, all the world.
Nixon 1	Senator Dirksen, Mr. Chief Justice, Mr. Vice president, President Johnson, Vice president Humphrey, my fellow Americans and my fellow citizens of the world community.
Nixon 2	Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chief Justice, Senator Cook, Mrs. Eisenhower, and my fellow citizens of this great and good country we share together.
Reagan 1	Senator Hatfield, Mr. Chief Justice, Mr. President, Vice President Bush, Vice President Mondale, Senator Baker, Speaker O'Neill, Reverend Moomaw, and my fellow citizens.
Reagan 1	Directly in front of me, the monument to a monumental man, George Washington, father of our country.
Reagan 1	A man of humility who came to greatness reluctantly.
Reagan 1	Off to one side, the stately memorial to Thomas Jefferson.
Reagan 1	And then, beyond the Reflecting Pool, the dignified columns of the Lincoln Memorial.
Reagan 2	Senator Mathias, Chief Justice Burger, Vice President Bush, Speaker O'Neill, Senator Dole, reverend clergy, and members of my family and friends and my fellow citizens.
Reagan 2	Amen.
Reagan 2	If not us, who?
Reagan 2	And if not now, when?
Bush 1	Chief Justice Rehnquist, President Carter, President Bush, President Clinton, distinguished guests, and my fellow citizens.
Bush 2	Vice President Cheney, Mr. Chief Justice, President Carter, President Bush, President Clinton, Members of the United States Congress, reverend clergy, distinguished guests, fellow citizens.
Obama 2	Vice President Biden, Mr. Chief Justice, Members of the United States Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow citizens.

As can be seen from the table, most of the presidents use a verbless sentence to address the authorities and the audience as they commence their speeches. This phenomenon is a long-standing practice held for many decades, as almost all the president start their inaugural address with a similar sentence. Even though the sentences are verbless, they are not considered informal. Another incomplete sentence structure, "Amen," occurs in two inaugural

addresses. In President Eisenhower's first inaugural address and in President Reagan's second inaugural address. The term "amen" is an interjection, used to end a prayer, as an exclamation, with the meaning "may it be so" or "so it is." It is a common phrase, and therefore should not be considered informal. The next example of an incomplete sentence structure appears in President Eisenhower's second speech. The verbless sentence is a comment to the preceding sentence structure, "So is the whole continent divided. And so, too, all the world." It is apparent that these two sentences belong to each other and share the same predicate, the verb 'to be'. Therefore, in the second sentence the elision of a verb occurs, which is, according to Mathesius (1975, 86), not admissible in the written discourse.

Another example of incomplete sentence structure is President Reagan's 'stream of consciousness-like' section of his first inaugural address:

At the end of this open mall are those shrines to the giants on whose shoulders we stand. Directly in front of me, the monument to a monumental man, George Washington, father of our country. A man of humility who came to greatness reluctantly. He led America out of revolutionary victory into infant nationhood. Off to one side, the stately memorial to Thomas Jefferson. The Declaration of Independence flames with his eloquence. And then, beyond the Reflecting Pool, the dignified columns of the Lincoln Memorial. (Reagan 1981)

It is understandable what President Reagan wants to say, however the omission of the verbs is deemed informal, because omission of the verb is not acceptable in the written discourse. Moreover, in Reagan's sentences more than a verb is omitted. The structure "there is" and "he is" should be inserted into the sentences. The last example of verbless sentences are President Reagan's rhetorical questions in his second inaugural address: "If not us, who? And if not now, when?" From the grammatical perspective, these sentences lack predicates, thus they are informal. However, from the semantic perspective, they are considered more as a saying, a phrase which is frequently used to approach the audience. Therefore, the omission of the verb follows the original structure and they can seem natural and well-engaged in the speech.

President Reagan uses the greatest number of incomplete sentence structures, which can indicate informality. However, in comparison to the classical sentences (with verbs) it is only a small amount.

The following Table 6 shows information about the verbal (classical) sentences. The number of sentences per speech and the counts of specific types of sentences are listed in the table.

**Table 6:** Classification of sentences in selected inaugural addresses

President	Number of sentences	Simple	Complex	Compound	Multiple	Incomplete sentence structures
Eisenhower 1	121	52	33	10	25	1
Eisenhower 2	94	40	21	11	20	2
Nixon 1	106	36	30	8	31	1
Nixon 2	69	16	22	2	28	1
Reagan 1	129	32	36	11	45	5
Reagan 2	127	35	33	10	45	4
Clinton 1	92	35	28	5	24	-
Clinton 2	110	49	25	11	25	-
Bush 1	96	27	29	13	26	1
Bush 2	100	28	22	8	41	1
Obama 1	116	32	27	10	47	-
Obama 2	91	14	21	8	47	1

On the basis of the data, it is apparent that the speech with the highest number of sentences is Reagan's first inaugural address (it is also the third longest speech). On the other hand, the lowest number of sentences is contained in the second inaugural address of the President Nixon (the fourth shortest speech). The highest number of simple sentences appears in Eisenhower's first speech. The highest number of complex sentences is used in Reagan's first speech. The greatest number of compound sentences occurs in President Bush's first address. Whereas the highest number of multiple sentences is used by President Obama in both his speeches.

Since each of the inaugural addresses has a different number of words, a generalisation assuming that a speech with the smallest number of sentences is the shortest, would be incorrect. As Table 3 above demonstrates, President Nixon's second speech is 1,803 words long, and thus not the shortest speech. The shortest speech is the first speech delivered by President Bush. However, as the table shows, President Bush uses many more simple sentences than President Nixon. Therefore, President Nixon uses a lower amount of longer sentences than President Bush, who tends to write a higher number of shorter and simple sentences. The average length of sentences is helpful for orientation in the relation of number of sentences per speech and the number of words per sentence. Therefore, these numbers are portrayed in the following Table 7.

**Table 7:** Average and median sentence lengths of selected inaugural addresses.

President	Average sentence length/ number of words	Median Sentence Length	Number of words of the longest sentence	Total number of sentences
Eisenhower 1	19.1	17.5	53	121
Eisenhower 2	17.59	15	51	94
Nixon 1	20.4	18	65	106
Nixon 2	26.35	23	71	69
Reagan 1	19.05	17	59	129
Reagan 2	20.34	17.5	105	127
Clinton 1	17.37	15	77	92
Clinton 2	19.57	16	79	110
Bush 1	16.57	15	50	96
Bush 2	20.97	20.5	51	100
Obama 1	20.56	18	70	116
Obama 2	23.22	21	85	91

Source: own calculations and *Analyze My Writing*, [www.analyzemywriting.com/](http://www.analyzemywriting.com/). Accessed 27 June 2018.

The actual analysis of the average sentence length has been performed with the help of a free Internet software: [www.analyzemywriting.com](http://www.analyzemywriting.com). Table 7 above shows the average sentence length, the median sentence length and the longest sentence length of each inaugural address. For the comparison, the median sentence length is used, as it erases all the extreme values, therefore the result indicates more reliable data.

As the table shows, the "shortest sentences" with around 15 or 16 words per sentence occur in President Clinton's inaugural addresses. Both of his inaugural addresses have the lowest median sentence length. Additionally, Table 6 shows that President Clinton uses a great number of simple sentences in his inaugural speeches. It follows that Clinton uses less words per sentence than the other presidents since he uses more simple sentences than the other presidents. In contrast, the longest sentences are used by Presidents Nixon and Obama. In Obama's speeches, it might be connected to the number of multiple and complex sentences, which constitute the majority of the sentences used in the addresses. In case of President Nixon, the long sentences in his second inaugural address reflect his tendency to use a great number of multiple and complex sentences as well.

An interesting phenomenon is the change of the sentence length in the inaugural addresses of President Bush. In his first speech he has a tendency to use shorter sentences, whereas the second speech indicates tendency for much longer sentences, the difference amounts to 5.5 words. Similar inclination can be observed in the inaugural addresses of President Nixon, whose sentence length of the first inaugural address increases by 5 words in the second

address. In addition, the fourth column of Table 7 shows the number of words of the longest sentence in each inaugural address. Interestingly enough, the numbers differ immensely. The majority of the longest sentences amounts to 55 words. However, President Obama's longest sentence amounts to 85 words. Moreover, the longest sentence out of all sentences in all inaugural addresses is President Reagan's sentence, which contains 105 words. These lengths of sentences are extreme, however the sentence length is an important factor, as this feature is directly connected to the audience's comprehension of a text.

It can be claimed that the longer the sentence is, the harder it can be for the reader to comprehend it. This tendency is demonstrated when considering the Gunning Fog Index (see Table 4). Table 4 shows that President Nixon's second speech can be considered the hardest speech. As Table 6 and Table 7 show, President Nixon's second speech can be considered to have the greatest median sentence length as well as the smallest number of sentences. Therefore, it can be surmised that President Nixon uses a small number of very long and complex sentences, therefore the Gunning Fog Index rises and thus the readability diminishes. Similarly, we can observe the relation of the specific features in the case of Eisenhower's second inaugural address. Table 6 shows that the speech contains 40 simple sentences, while data in Table 7 show that the median sentences length is only 15 words and according to Table 4, Eisenhower's second speech scored the lowest Gunning Fog Index.

## **4.2 Morpho-syntactic level**

### **4.2.1 Passive and active voice**

Passive voice is usually used in technical or scientific texts and is considered more formal. In Table 8, we can see that in the inaugural addresses the use of active voice is predominant. However, some presidents tend to use passive forms of verbs more often than the others. The exact numbers are summarised in the table below. The analysis of the passive and active voice included finite verbs only. The highest number of passive voice constructions was used in President Reagan's first speech and President Obama's first speech. In both of these speeches, there are 27 passive structures, which constitute more than 10% of the total number of verbs. If the proportion between active and passive voice constructions is taken into account, President Bush's first inaugural address has the highest percentage of passive constructions; in particular 10.70% of all the finite verbs are in the passive voice. In contrast, President Clinton uses the lowest amount of passive voice structures both counted in items and percentage in his first inaugural address. Instead, Clinton largely uses the active voice.

The other presidents use passive constructions rather scarcely. The tendency for finite verbs to occur in active voice is indisputable as following table demonstrates.

**Table 8:** Active and passive voice of finite verbs in selected inaugural addresses.

President	Number of finite verbs	Active forms	Passive forms
Eisenhower 1	214	195 = 91.12%	19 = 8.88%
Eisenhower 2	158	146 = 92.41%	12 = 7.59%
Nixon 1	220	202 = 91.82%	18 = 8.18%
Nixon 2	162	154 = 95.06%	8 = 4.94%
Reagan 1	263	236 = 89.73%	27 = 10.27%
Reagan 2	258	239 = 92.64%	19 = 7.36%
Clinton 1	183	175 = 95.63%	8 = 4.37%
Clinton 2	195	185 = 94.87%	10 = 5.13%
Bush 1	187	167 = 89.30%	20 = 10.70%
Bush 2	212	191 = 90.09%	21 = 9.91%
Obama 1	263	236 = 89.73%	27 = 10.27%
Obama 2	234	214 = 91.45%	20 = 8.55%

In general, the passive voice is not used much throughout the inaugural addresses. This fact proves that the variety of English – official, political speech – does not require a great amount of passive structures. Moreover, as suggested by Leech, the passive voice sounds more impersonal (Leech et al. 146), which could make a wrong impression on the audience. Therefore the presidents tend to use the active voice to a greater extent. The following chapter examines the usage of the contracted forms in the inaugural addresses.

#### 4.2.2 Contracted forms

In the inaugural addresses, the most common contracted form is created from the verb *are* → ‘*re* and from the verb *have* → ‘*ve* as suggested in Table 9 below. Especially interesting is one contracted form used by president Obama, i.e. ‘*til*, as it is not a contracted form of a verb, but of the adverb *until*. Daly claims that “‘*til* is a recognized contraction of *until*, but is advised against by most guides as nonstandard or informal,” furthermore, Daly advises the English users to “use ‘*til* only judiciously (if at all)” (2018, bold in original).

As Table 9 shows, three of the six presidents, namely Eisenhower, Nixon and Clinton, completely avoid using any contracted forms in their speeches. Presidents Bush and Obama seem to not intend to use the contracted forms. However, the contracted forms still emerge, as the presidents are probably accustomed to using them on an everyday basis. The data shows

that President Reagan uses the contracted forms more frequently than all the other presidents. Following that his style of writing can be considered less formal.

**Table 9:** Contracted forms in selected inaugural addresses.

President	Contracted forms	Am	Is	Are	Has	Have	Not	Would	Will	'til
Eisenhower 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eisenhower 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nixon 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nixon 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reagan 1	19	3	1	9	-	4	2	-	-	-
Reagan 2	18	-	4	3	-	6	4	-	1	-
Clinton 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Clinton 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bush 1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bush 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Obama 1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Obama 2	4	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	1	-

Throughout the inaugural addresses, only a small number of contracted forms appear. Three of the presidents, namely Eisenhower, Nixon, and Clinton, do not use any contracted forms and two presidents, namely Bush and Obama, use only very small number, which could be considered as unintended errors. Nevertheless, the only president who uses contracted forms more extensively is President Reagan. There are 19 cases in Reagan's first inaugural address and 18 in his second address. Based on the number of contracted forms, Reagan's style can be considered less formal. On the other hand, when Reagan's speech was analysed for the occurrence of passive voice constructions, not many of them have been found (see Table 8). Therefore, it cannot be explicitly stated that Reagan's style is informal, as one of the analysed features shows the style to be formal and the other studied features display a tendency of using informal language. Therefore, the formality of the language has to be examined from a different perspective. The following chapter addresses syntactically significant features functioning on the lexical-syntactical level.

### 4.3 Lexical-syntactical level

#### 4.3.1 Lexical density

According to Stubbs, the lexical density of written texts is typically higher than 40% (Stubbs in Crawford 73), whereas lexical density of spoken discourse is often lower than 40%.

However, there are no regulations, which would determine the specific lexical density of conversation or written discourse. To illustrate how lexical density is analysed, a practical example of identification of grammatical and functional words is shown below in Table 10. The analysis examines the following sentence: "My fellow Americans, you, too, must play your part in our renewal" (Clinton 1993). The example has been selected from one of the inaugural addresses.

**Table 10:** Identification of grammatical and functional words – practical example

Word	Word class	Content carrying/ non-content carrying word
my	personal pronoun	non-content carrying = grammatical word
fellow	adjective	content carrying = lexical word
Americans	noun	content carrying = lexical word
you	personal pronoun	non-content carrying = grammatical word
too	adverb	content carrying = lexical word
must	auxiliary verb	non-content carrying = grammatical word
play	lexical verb	content carrying = lexical word
your	personal pronoun	non-content carrying = grammatical word
part	noun	content carrying = lexical word
in	preposition	non-content carrying = grammatical word
our	personal pronoun	non-content carrying = grammatical word
renewal	noun	content carrying = lexical word

Lexical density of this sentence is calculated as follows:

- Number of lexical words: 6
- Total number of words: 12
- Lexical density =  $\left(\frac{6}{12}\right) \times 100$

Lexical density of this sentence is 50%, which means that if all the non-content carrying words were crossed out, i.e. "~~My~~ fellow Americans, ~~you~~, too, ~~must~~ play ~~your~~ part ~~in~~ ~~our~~ renewal," we would still have a notion about the context, which is essential for our comprehension.

It can be deduced from Table 11 below that all inaugural addresses support Stubbs' assumption that written discourse's lexical density is higher than 40%. The table also shows that all of the considered presidents show very similar values of lexical density which

fluctuate around 50%. Accordingly, all analysed texts have a highly similar proportion of grammatical and lexical words. Hence the language of the discourse, i.e. the addresses, is well-planned, prepared and structured in order to convey a clear message. One peculiarity could be mentioned when considering both speeches of President Eisenhower, Nixon, Clinton and Obama, all of which show nearly the same values of lexical density. The difference between the values of lexical densities in these presidents' two speeches amounts to 0.5% (from 0.17 to 0.92%), that is only a subtle difference. On the other hand, the lexical density of President Bush's and Reagan's two speeches differs more. In case of President Bush, it is a difference amounting to 1.47% between the first and the second speech. The lexical density in Reagan's second speech varies even more, by 2.32% from the first inaugural address. Both Reagan in his second inaugural address and Bush in his first inaugural address use more content carrying words, thus the lexical density of these speeches is higher than in their other speeches. Overall, the lowest lexical density has been measured in the second inaugural address of President Nixon, which means that he uses the greatest amount of grammatical words, such as prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs and pronouns. On the contrary, the highest amount of lexical words, these are nouns, the main part of the verbs, adverbs and adjectives, have been counted in President Bush's first inaugural address.

**Table 11:** Lexical density in selected inaugural addresses.

President	Total number of words	Lexical words	Lexical density
Eisenhower 1	2,460	1,206	49.02%
Eisenhower 2	1,656	823	49.70%
Nixon 1	2,128	1,044	49.06%
Nixon 2	1,803	868	48.14%
Reagan 1	2,427	1,191	49.07%
Reagan 2	2,563	1,317	51.39%
Clinton 1	1,598	819	51.25%
Clinton 2	2,155	1,117	51.83%
Bush 1	1,592	839	52.70%
Bush 2	2,071	1,061	51.23%
Obama 1	2,396	1,208	50.42%
Obama 2	2,103	1,064	50.59%

Lexical density of the inaugural addresses can be regarded as a very stable feature. Moreover, four of the six presidents are unusually consistent in the proportion of content carrying and non-content carrying words in the inaugural addresses. Overall, the levels of lexical density, which fluctuate around 50% in all of the analysed inaugural addresses, reflect a well-prepared written discourse.

### 4.3.2 Lexical variety

As has been previously mentioned, information about the range of lexis can be obtained using the lexical variety test. When the individual words repeat often, the variety is low and the author's vocabulary might seem limited and rather conventional. On the other hand, when the author alters the lexis throughout the speech and thus variability of the used words increases, the author is considered more proficient. To illustrate how lexical variety is analysed two practical examples are shown below. Firstly, lexical variety of the same sentence as in the previous chapter is analysed, secondly the whole first inaugural address of President Clinton is examined in the test. The analysed example is as follows: "My fellow Americans, you, too, must play your part in our renewal" (Clinton 1993).

- Total number of words: 12
- Number of different words: 12
- Lexical variety =  $\left(\frac{12}{12}\right) \times 100$

The lexical variety of the presented sentence is 100%, because no word is repeated. As we can see, a sentence is a too small a sample to be analysed. Therefore, for better demonstration, a practical example of analysis of the whole text of President Clinton's first inaugural address is presented below:

- Total number of words (Table 3): 1,598
- Number of different words/tokens (Table 20 in Appendix 2): 600
- Lexical variety =  $\left(\frac{600}{1,598}\right) \times 100$

The lexical variety of the first inaugural address of President Clinton is 37.55%. In Table 12 below the results of the analyses of the lexical variety of other inaugural addresses are summarised. It is apparent that the level of lexical variety is more or less stable in speeches of all presidents, with the exception of Presidents Clinton and Nixon, whose lexical varieties notably decrease in their second speeches. In the case of President Clinton it is by 4.14%. President Nixon's second inaugural address lexical variety is by 5.59% lower than in his first speech. The tendency of the presidents to use less variable lexis in the second speech is a peculiar feature. All the presidents, except for President Eisenhower, display this tendency. Overall, the highest lexical variety occurs in President Clinton's first inaugural address, which amounts to 37.55%. In contrast, the lowest lexical variety of 28.40% appears in President Nixon's second inaugural address and amounts to 9.15%, which is less than Clinton's first speech. Therefore, the evidence suggests that President Clinton is the most innovative author with regards to the variety of lexis in his first inaugural address.

**Table 12:** Lexical variety in selected inaugural addresses.

President	Different tokens	Total number	Lexical variety
Eisenhower 1	866	2,460	35.20%
Eisenhower 2	594	1,656	35.86%
Nixon 1	722	2,128	33.99%
Nixon 2	512	1,803	28.40%
Reagan 1	848	2,427	34.94%
Reagan 2	876	2,563	34.17%
Clinton 1	600	1,598	37.55%
Clinton 2	720	2,155	33.41%
Bush 1	589	1,592	37.00%
Bush 2	725	2,071	35.00%
Obama 1	892	2,395	37.24%
Obama 2	782	2,103	37.18%

Source: own calculations and *Analyze My Writing*, [www.analyzemypwriting.com/](http://www.analyzemypwriting.com/). Accessed 27 June 2018.

To summarise, the lexical density of all the inaugural addresses is very similar. On the other hand, the value of lexical variety differs throughout the speeches to a greater extent. The difference between the speeches with the highest lexical variety and the lowest lexical variety is over 9% and limitation of lexis in President Nixon's second inaugural address is revealed. Further interesting phenomena observed are the most frequently used lexemes in the inaugural addresses. The following Table 13 demonstrates the 10 most frequently used words in both inaugural addresses of the six presidents. The same lexemes are indicated by the same colour in the table below. Lexemes, which appear only once in the table are shown in white colour. The words are ordered from the most frequent to the least frequent (out of the ten most popular words).

**Table 13:** The most frequently used lexemes.

Pres.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Eis.1	free	world	faith	peace	freedom	strength	people	nations	know	life
Eis.2	world	nations	freedom	people	seek	peace	justice	help	peoples	earth
Nix.1	peace	world	people	let	know	make	earth	voices	man	need
Nix.2	let	peace	world	new	America	responsibility	government	great	home	abroad
Reag.1	government	believe	people	Americans	world	time	freedom	nation	let	now
Reag.2	people	world	government	freedom	time	now	new	history	human	God
Clin.1	world	America	people	today	Americans	new	let	change	time	work
Clin.2	new	century	nation	time	land	America	people	promise	world	government
Bush 1	citizens	country	story	nation	America	President	common	new	freedom	promise
Bush 2	freedom	liberty	America	nation	country	world	Americans	history	time	free
Oba.1	nation	new	America	today	people	let	now	time	work	common
Oba.2	people	time	together	make	citizens	nation	American	equal	journey	freedom

As we can see, the colours repeat. In the total of the 120 lexemes, only 49 different words are used. Therefore, it can be asserted that the majority of the most frequent lexemes appear very often in all the inaugural addresses. The most repeated lexemes in most of the selected inaugural addresses are nouns, specifically: people, world, nation/s, freedom, time, America, American/s, peace and government. The most frequent verbs are: let, know and make. The most frequent adjectives used across the speeches are: new and free. Lastly, the most popular adverbs are: now and today. Thus the majority of the most frequent lexemes are semantically connected to some values that the United States of America keep as a nation and the goal of American people to create something new today. The ten most common words of the inaugural addresses are usually repeated about 20 to 50 times in each speech. The following chapters analyses the etymology of all lexemes.

## 4.4 Lexical-semantic level

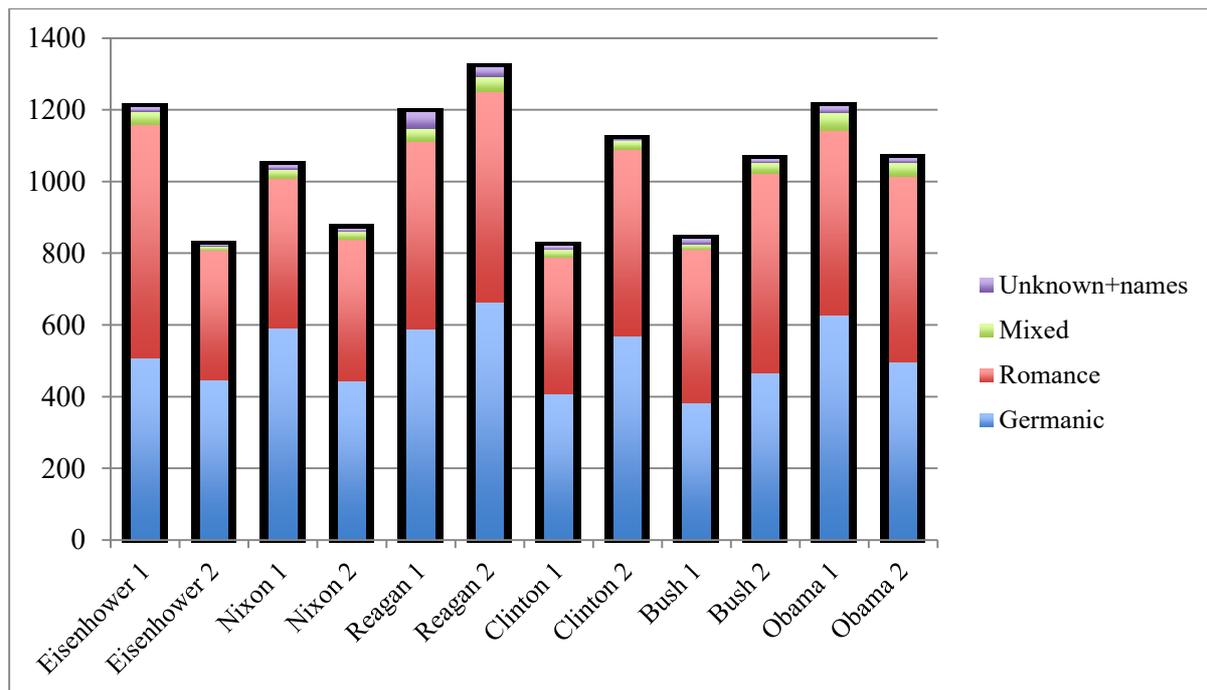
### 4.4.1 Etymology of the lexical words

The etymology of lexical words is very important as it shows the preference and word choice of the author. As the majority of English words used both in spoken and written language are of Germanic origin, it is remarkable to observe that the results of the analysis mentioned below show that Germanic and Romance lexical words are used to a similar extent in all inaugural addresses (see Table 14 and Diagram 2). As has been previously mentioned, the majority of words used in everyday speech consist of words of Germanic origin. Therefore, it can be assumed that high numbers of Romance words denote "high style, scholarship, and rhetorical excellence" (Crystal 2005, 288). In some cases of the inaugural addresses, the usage of Romance lexical words prevails over the usage of Germanic lexis. Table 14 demonstrates that this is the case of President Eisenhower's first speech, both President Bush's speeches and President Obama's second speech. On the other hand, President Eisenhower's second speech and President Obama's first speech show the opposite results. This change might occur due to the topics they refer to in their addresses. Nevertheless, the style of these two presidents (Eisenhower and Obama) cannot be generalised about, for instance by their inclination towards Romance words.

**Table 14:** Etymology of lexical words in selected inaugural addresses.

President	Germanic	Romance	Mixed	Unknown origin	Names
Eisenhower 1	509	649	38	-	10
Eisenhower 2	447	361	13	-	2
Nixon 1	590	419	26	-	9
Nixon 2	445	395	21	1	6
Reagan 1	588	524	35	3	41
Reagan 2	665	586	41	-	25
Clinton 1	409	379	22	1	8
Clinton 2	568	523	23	2	1
Bush 1	384	426	16	-	13
Bush 2	467	557	29	-	8
Obama 1	628	514	49	5	12
Obama 2	498	516	39	3	8

**Diagram 2:** Etymology of lexical words in selected inaugural addresses



Overall, the Romance and Germanic origin of the lexical words is balanced in the inaugural addresses, which demonstrates that the inaugural address is a well-prepared piece of written discourse. A peculiarity can be mentioned as the last two columns in Table 14 show information about the lexemes of unknown origin and names. Most of the considered presidents use only few proper names in their inaugural addresses, for example in the beginning of the speech, to address the respectable representatives. However as Table 14 shows, President Reagan uses proper nouns and names much more frequently throughout his inaugural addresses, because he speaks about many of his ancestors and people, who helped to create the United States of America. The uncertainty of the specific origin of proper names is connected to the development of the United States. The origin of the location's names and people's names is often very difficult to specify as the names might come from various sources and the actual name has changed several times.

For a better understanding of the etymological analysis, a practical example is shown below using a sentence from President Nixon's second inaugural address (for the complete text, see Appendix 1). In this example, only the lexical words are analysed, because grammatical words are not equally important, and in addition, most of the grammatical words are of Germanic origin. The analysis utilises the *Online Etymology Dictionary* created by Douglas Harper for the etymological analysis.

"Let us continue to bring down the walls of hostility which have divided the world for too long, and to build in their place bridges of understanding--so that despite profound differences between systems of government, the people of the world can be friends" (Nixon 1973).

The first step of the analysis is to erase all grammatical words. The second step analyses and marks every lexical word by a specific colour. Words of Germanic origin are marked using the colour red and words of Romance origin are marked blue. If a lexeme consisting of more words (e.g. phrasal verb) is found, green colour is applied and further analysis is expected.

- bring down: a phrasal verb, both parts of which are Germanic, therefore it counts as 2 words of Germanic origin
- Total number of lexical words: 22
- Words of Germanic origin: 13
- Words of Romance origin: 9
- Proportion between lexical words of Germanic and Romance origin in tokens: 13 : 9; in percentage it is 59.1% : 48.9%.

The following analysis examines other linguistic features i.e. the usage of neologisms and archaisms in the presidential inaugural addresses.

#### 4.4.2 Neologisms and archaisms

Archaisms and neologisms are not the sole constituents of style. However, they affect the variety of used lexis. Not many neologisms and archaisms were found throughout the inaugural addresses, yet few significant ones appear. For instance, in President Eisenhower's first speech, terms *Thou* and *Thy* appear. They are archaic words for *you* and *your*. Furthermore, Dušková adds, "in current language, *thou* is an archaism, which has survived for example in poetic and religious language" (102, translation mine). This is precisely the case also with Eisenhower's speech. Eisenhower uses 'Thou' and 'Thy' in a prayer to address God. Such usage is understandable and should not be seen as extraordinary.

**Table 15:** Neologisms and archaisms in selected inaugural addresses.

President	Archaism	Neologism
Eisenhower	Thou, Thy	
Nixon		
Reagan		
Clinton		African-American
Bush		Medicaid
Obama		Medicare, Medicaid, gay

The third column of Table 15 shows neologisms found throughout the twelve inaugural addresses. These terms might not be considered as neologisms today, however, at the time of the actual public address they would be regarded as neologisms, or they were new in comparison to the previous presidents' era.

In President Clinton's second address (1997) the term 'African-American' appears. Harper, the author of the *Online Etymology Dictionary* claims:

There are isolated instances from the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, but the modern use is a re-invention first attested in 1969 (in reference to the *African-American Teachers Association*), which became the preferred term in some circles for "U.S. black by the late 1980s. (2018)

Therefore, when it was used by President Clinton in 1997, the term was neutral. However, the term was not likely to be used before 1969. For example, President Nixon, in his first inaugural address, uses the term 'black' instead of 'African-American' when he said, "We have begun to make its promise real for black as well as for white" (1969). Nowadays, this statement could be considered as inappropriate and even offensive by some. On the other hand, *Cambridge English Dictionary* says, that "although African-American is the word preferred by many, black is also widely used and is not offensive. As a noun, African-American is now more commonly used, but when describing historical events, black may be used" (2018). Therefore, both President Nixon, who uses the term 'black' and President Clinton, who prefers the term 'African-American', are politically correct.

As Table 15 demonstrates, the other analysed terms are 'Medicare' used by Presidents Bush (2001) and Obama (2013) and 'Medicaid' used by President Obama (2013). According to Harper, both terms emerged in the second half of 1960s (2018). Therefore, they were not considered new. However, the terms could not have been used by President Eisenhower or his

predecessors. The last analysed term is 'gay' used by President Obama in his second inaugural address in the sentence, "Our journey is not complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law" (2013). This term could be seen as ambiguous, because of its development. According to Harper, it was not until 1971, when this term changed word class and gained the additional meaning of 'homosexual' (2018). Until then the term was used mainly as an adjective meaning "joyful, happy; pleasant, agreeably charming" (ibid). The term with the former meaning is currently not used as often and its usage is seen as archaic. Also, 'gay' with the meaning of 'homosexual' would probably not be used by the presidents before 1971. The term functions both as an archaism and as a neologism.

Let us now proceed to the analysis of the noun modification in the inaugural addresses.

#### 4.4.3 Noun modification

Pre-modification and post-modification are important stylistic features, which characterize everyone's use of language. As has been suggested by Crystal and Davy, conversation is typical for very low number of pre-modification or post-modification, whereas written discourse requires both of these modifications (55). According to Dušková, post-modification, which is typical for legal terminology, is more formal as it comes from French (289).

To illustrate the principle of the noun-modification analysis, a practical example of a few sentences from President Bush's first inaugural address is presented below.

"Through much of the last century, America's faith in freedom and democracy was a rock in a raging sea. Now it is a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations. Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our country" (2001).

Firstly, the modified nouns have to be identified and marked. Therefore, the nouns are underlined for their indication. Secondly, the pre-modifiers are indicated by blue colour and the post-modifiers by red colour. As the example shows, there are 7 modified nouns in total. Four of the nouns are pre-modified and five of them are post-modified. Therefore, pre-modification and post-modification of a noun can occur at the same time. Pre-modification in the example consists of adjectives (last, raging, democratic) and a noun's genitive (America's). Post-modification consists of adverbials (adv. of time, adv. of space) and a relative clause.

Table 16 shows the results of the analysis of noun modification. Generally, the amount of noun modification is very high, which proves that the inaugural address is an example of formal written discourse. The table also includes the proportion of pre-modification and post-modification. All considered presidents, except for Presidents Reagan and Clinton use post-modification slightly more often than pre-modification - approximately by 13%. Therefore the style of Presidents Eisenhower, Nixon, Bush and Obama can be considered as slightly more formal from the noun-modification perspective. When the number of modifications is compared to the total number of words (see Table 3), President Eisenhower uses the highest number of modifications in his first inaugural address. In contrast, the lowest number of modifications is used by President Clinton in his first inaugural address.

**Table 16:** Noun modification in selected inaugural addresses.

President	Number of noun modifications	Pre-modification	Post-modification
Eisenhower 1	363	156	207
Eisenhower 2	227	92	135
Nixon 1	250	100	150
Nixon 2	236	94	142
Reagan 1	288	149	139
Reagan 2	322	165	157
Clinton 1	178	90	88
Clinton 2	313	175	138
Bush 1	188	89	99
Bush 2	295	128	167
Obama 1	272	129	143
Obama 2	243	109	137

#### 4.4.4 Phrasal verbs

Generally, phrasal verbs are considered informal. However, Marks states that not all phrasal verbs are informal. On the other hand, some phrasal verbs "contribute towards the formality of the text" (2018). The number of phrasal verbs used in the inaugural addresses is not very high in contrast with the classic one-word verbs. The following Table 17 shows the total numbers of all phrasal verbs, and also Germanic and mixed phrasal verbs. The highest number of phrasal verbs has been used in the first inaugural address of President Obama, followed by both speeches of President Reagan. The table also shows that Presidents Reagan and Clinton prefer to use phrasal verbs of Germanic origin. Therefore, the use of phrasal verbs in Reagan's and Clinton's inaugural addresses might seem slightly less formal than the more balanced usage of both Germanic and mixed origin phrasal verbs in other presidents'

inaugural addresses. The lowest number of phrasal verbs, i.e. only one phrasal verb, occurs in President Eisenhower's second inaugural address.

**Table 17:** Phrasal verbs in selected inaugural addresses.

President	Phrasal verbs	Germanic phrasal verbs	Mixed phrasal verbs
Eisenhower 1	5	1	4
Eisenhower 2	1	1	-
Nixon 1	9	5	4
Nixon 2	5	2	3
Reagan 1	17	15	2
Reagan 2	16	11	5
Clinton 1	10	9	1
Clinton 2	11	8	3
Bush 1	8	6	2
Bush 2	12	6	6
Obama 1	21	12	9
Obama 2	7	3	4

Overall, the presidents use only a very limited amount of phrasal verbs in their inaugural addresses. When the presidents use phrasal verbs they, in most cases, keep a balance between phrasal verbs of Germanic origin and phrasal verbs of mixed (both Romance and Germanic) origin.

#### 4.4.5 Addressing the audience

As has been stated in Chapter 1, the President of the United States of America is one of the most powerful political figures in the world. Hence, his way of addressing the public represents an interesting phenomenon. Therefore, the way the President addresses people in the inaugural addresses became focus of the analysis.

The Presidents frequently address the people of America with pronouns such as 'you' and 'your' as in "I ask that you bow your heads" (Eisenhower 1957). The use of these direct pronouns indicates that the president is on the one hand somehow close to the audience, but superior at the same time. He could for instance also use the pronouns: 'we', 'us' and 'our' as in: "It is because *we*, all of *us*, hold to these principles that the political changes accomplished this day do not imply turbulence, upheaval or disorder" (ibid). In this case, identification of the president with the people of America and an attempt at symmetry is demonstrated.

Table 18 below shows that all the considered presidents utilise the pronoun 'we' more widely than the pronouns 'you' and 'I'. Therefore, in most cases, the presidents in the speeches place

themselves on the same level as the audience. However, some of the presidents, albeit more rarely, also use the first person singular pronoun *I*, and second person plural *you*. These numbers of occurrence are listed in the following Table 18. The highest occurrence of the pronoun *I* occurs in President Nixon's first inaugural address. The pronoun *you*, both in singular and plural number, is most frequently put in use in President Reagan's first inaugural address. An interesting phenomenon is the usage of the structure *you and I* in two cases by President Reagan and in one case by President Obama. 'You and I' means 'we', but it seems to be more direct and when Reagan says "you and I, as individuals" (1981), the president addresses each American as an individual. Such structure is often used as an invitation to take action.

**Table 18:** Occurrence of pronouns in selected inaugural addresses.

President	I	You (sg.)	Your (sg.)	You (pl.)	We	You and I
Eisenhower 1	4	-	-	3	66	-
Eisenhower 2	1	-	-	3	50	-
Nixon 1	21	-	-	2	66	-
Nixon 2	12	-	-	1	47	-
Reagan 1	18	3	3	8	49	1
Reagan 2	13	1	-	5	62	-
Clinton 1	7	-	-	7	52	-
Clinton 2	2	-	-	-	42	-
Bush 1	11	-	-	5	46	-
Bush 2	8	-	-	7	37	-
Obama 1	3	-	-	5	62	-
Obama 2	4	-	-	7	68	2

Apart from the pronouns, the presidents use various phrases to address the audience. The level of intimacy then differs between the speeches. Table 19 below shows various phrases the presidents use in their speeches to address the audience. It is the connotation of the words and also the use of adjectives and pronouns, which creates various levels of intimacy between the presidents and their audience. When the presidents use personal pronoun 'my', it seems much more intimate than without (*my fellow citizens* vs. *fellow citizens*). The only adjective used to address the hearers is 'fellow'. According to the *Cambridge Online Dictionary*, fellow is: "used to refer to someone who has the same job or interests as you, or is in the same situation as you" (2018). Therefore, it is someone on the same level. Final representation of address, is the application of the word which the president uses to name the audience:

- citizens – seems very neutral
- Americans – addresses only Americans

- friends – seems very positive, intimate
- countrymen – addresses only the people from the country/America, sounds rather archaic, and might appear slightly offensive as it does not include the women (countrywomen)

These phrases are not used plentifully in the inaugural addresses, as can be seen in Table 19. However, each of these word constructions reflects the relationship between the president and his audience. As the table shows, the most frequently used address is 'my fellow citizens.'

**Table 19:** Addressing audience in selected inaugural addresses.

President	My fellow citizens	My fellow Americans	Fellow citizens	My friends	My citizens	My countrymen
Eisenhower 1	1	-	-	-	1	-
Eisenhower 2	-	-	-	-	-	1
Nixon 1	1	1	-	-	-	-
Nixon 2	1	-	-	-	-	-
Reagan 1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Reagan 2	2	-	-	2	-	-
Clinton 1	1	4	-	-	-	-
Clinton 2	2	2	1	-	-	-
Bush 1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Bush 2	-	-	1	-	-	-
Obama 1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Obama 2	2	-	1	-	-	-

Generally, all of the six presidents predominantly use the pronoun 'we,' which implies equality with the audience. When addressing the audience, the most favourite phrase is the phrase 'my fellow citizens,' which is used at least once by each of the presidents. The most frequent phrase shows an uneven level of intimacy in the relationship between the president and the audience. On the one hand, the personal pronoun 'my' is used, which indicates a close relationship between the two parties. Moreover, the adjective 'fellow' indicates equal level. However, the last item 'citizens' implies neutrality and in comparison with 'friends,' the term 'citizens' seems very formal. In conclusion, the phrase 'my fellow citizens' is balanced and establishes a neutral relationship between the president and the audience.

## Conclusion

The analysis of the inaugural addresses of some American presidents from the linguistic perspective has been chosen as a subject of this thesis because of its relevance and also because such research had not yet been done. Knowledge gained during my studies was broadened by the theoretical section and subsequently applied in the analytical section.

Chapter 1 of this thesis was devoted to the description of the cultural background of the presidential inauguration in the United States of America. Some of the most important aspects of the inaugural address were presented and discussed. Chapter 2 focused on the notion of *style*, a term that was essential for this thesis. Since style has more definitions, this particular chapter concerned itself with introducing different approaches to style and advocating the approach chosen for this thesis. Utilising predominantly the approach of linguists Crystal and Davy was then justified. However, it would also be possible to apply different approach on this matter, evolving different results and proving different findings. According to Crystal and Davy, "the stylistician must proceed by making use of what information is available, adding to it where he can, and being aware of the fact that he is probably leaving out a great deal that is of potential relevance" (Crystal and Davy 1969, 41). It must be underlined that this field is very complex and the chosen approach to analysis constitutes only one of the possible views on the subject in question. Therefore, it is possible to study the texts in more details and prove different findings.

The following Chapter 3 focused on describing the inter-levels of language and the description of the stylistically significant features throughout the texts of the inaugural addresses. Each of these linguistic features was analysed in the sub-chapters of Chapter 4 that corresponded to the sub-chapters of Chapter 3.

The analysis above was conducted in order to provide a credible answer on the following research questions:

*What are the differences and similarities of the inaugural addresses of the six re-elected American presidents after the Second World War from the stylistic perspective? And what do these differences and similarities indicate?*

Overall, in almost all the aspects, all the presidents meet the requirements of written discourse and the use of higher style, with minor but important variations. There were differences found on the syntactic level, particularly in the number, types and length of used sentences. Some presidents, namely President Clinton and President Eisenhower prefer to use a high number of

short simple sentences, whereas others, for instance President Nixon or President Obama use quite a few long complex sentence structures.

On the semantic-syntactic level, the difference in readability was not as apparent in most cases. All the presidents use language readable by high school graduates. The Gunning Fog Index of such language fluctuates around level 12. Only three of the twelve inaugural addresses – Nixon's, Bush's and Obama's second addresses – show higher Gunning Fog Indexes, around level 14, which suggests that the speeches require greater proficiency of English.

On the morpho-syntactic level, many similarities in usage of the passive voice have been observed. Generally, the passive voice is not extremely popular among the presidents, which is demonstrated by a very low number of the passive constructions in the inaugural addresses. On the other hand, extraordinary difference was identified in the usage of the contracted forms. Most of the presidents, except President Reagan, avoid using contracted forms in the official address. Whereas, President Reagan uses contracted forms richly in both of his inaugural addresses.

On the lexical-syntactic level some interesting phenomena have been detected. The lexical density of all inaugural texts was very similar, with the fluctuation around 50%. Most of the presidents have shown consistent lexical density in both of their addresses, with the exceptions of Presidents Reagan and Bush, whose lexical density of the inaugural addresses changed rapidly. On the lexical-syntactic level, lexical variety was also examined with the result that it fluctuates around 35% in all speeches, except in the case of President Nixon's second inaugural address, whose lexical variety was much lower (28.40%).

The analysis on the lexical-semantic level showed also some interesting results, as several peculiar lexical features were observed. The etymological test revealed that lexical words of both Germanic and Romance origin were used in very similar proportions throughout the inaugural addresses. Neologism and archaisms were generally used rather scarcely in the addresses. In noun modification, there are great differences between the presidents. All presidents, except for Presidents Reagan and Clinton, prefer to use post-modification over pre-modification. The evidence shows that the presidents differ in their use of phrasal verbs. For example, President Eisenhower barely uses them, but others, for instance Presidents Reagan and Obama apply them abundantly in their texts. All the presidents share a similar manner of addressing the audience, by predominantly using the pronoun 'we', which implies an equivalent relation with the audience. To address the audience, the presidents use the structure 'my fellow citizens' most frequently.

To summarise, more similarities than differences have been found throughout the inaugural addresses. The style of speech of all the presidents seems to be very similar according to the selected stylistically significant features. However, by examining different stylistic features, a different conclusion could be drawn. This constitutes an impulse for further research of this field.

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## Appendices