

**A stylistic analysis of political speeches.**

**A case study of Joe Biden's inaugural speech**

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**Date received: 19 /5 / 2024**

**Acceptance date: 10/ 7/ 2024**

**Abstract:**

The article makes an effort to analyze Vice President Joe Biden's inaugural address from multiple angles, including its style, general impression, philological issues, and public significance. Inauguration speeches are used as an example of political discourse because they have all the characteristics of good speeches: they are expressive, succinct, persuasive, and contain figurative language. Discourse in politics is defined, along with its quirks. This study is an examination of Joe Biden's persuasive rhetorical strategies as they appeared in his inaugural address. Consecutives, directives, commissives, and acknowledgments are the four main types of communicative illocutionary acts, with examples being declarations, requests, promises, and apologies. Joe Biden's inaugural address is classified, and the characteristics of each classification are discussed. Speech acts that fall under the category of "constative" include: announcing., answering, attributing., claiming., categorizing., agreeing., confirming., denying., disagreeing., .disclosing, .disputing, identifying., informing, asserting., predicting., ranking, reporting, and stating. The President's ability to sway his audience was largely. attributable. to the speech's stylistic quirks, which receive the bulk of the analysis. The essay investigates the content, language, structure, and oratory techniques utilized by the American president. The speech's core themes—unity and democracy—are defined, as are the president's plans for achieving them. The qualities that enabled him rise to the highest office in the land are no longer serving him. All inferences are based on the text's style, which is examined in detail, and are corroborated by direct excerpts from the speech.

**Keywords:** Stylistic analysis , political discourse, inauguration speech, peculiarities, political speech , vocabulary , characteristic..

## تحليل أسلوبى للخطابات السياسية. دراسة حالة لخطاب تنصيب جو بايدن

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تاريخ استلام البحث : ٢٠٢٤ / ٥ / ١٩

تاريخ قبول البحث : ٢٠٢٤ / ٧ / ١٠

### الملخص:

المقالة تهدف الى تحليل خطاب الاستقبال الرسمي لنائب الرئيس جو بايدن من مداخلات متعددة، بما في ذلك أسلوبه، والانطباع العام، والقضايا اللغوية، والأهمية العامة. يُستخدم خطاب الاستقبال كمثال على الخطاب السياسي لأنه يتمتع بجميع صفات الخطاب الجيد: فهو تعبيرى، موجز، مقنع، ويحتوي على لغة مجازية. هذه الدراسة هي فحص الاستراتيجيات في القناعة لجو بايدن كما ظهرت في خطابه الاستقبالي. الأفعال اللغوية الإقناعية الأربعة، وهي المتتاليات، والتوجيهات، والتعهدات، والاعترافات، هي الأنواع الرئيسية الأربعة لأفعال اللفظية القائلة، مع أمثلة مثل الإعلانات، والطلبات، والوعود، والاعتذارات. يتم تصنيف خطاب الاستقبال لجو بايدن، ويتم مناقشة خصائص كل تصنيف. الأفعال اللفظية التي تندرج تحت فئة "التصريحات" تشمل: الإعلان، والرد، والإسناد، والادعاء، والتصنيف، والموافقة، والتأكيد، والإنكار، والاختلاف، والكشف، والنزاع، والتعريف، والإبلاغ، والتأكيد، والتنبؤ، والتصنيف، والإبلاغ، والتصريح. القدرة على إقناع الجمهور كانت في الغالب ترجع إلى عيوب الأسلوب في الخطاب، التي تتلقى أكبر قدر من التحليل. يحقق المقال في المحتوى، واللغة، والهيكل، وتقنيات الخطاب التي استخدمها الرئيس الأمريكي. تُعرف الموضوعات الرئيسية للخطاب - الوحدة والديمقراطية - بالإضافة إلى خطط الرئيس لتحقيقها. الصفات التي مكنته من الصعود إلى أعلى منصب في البلاد لم تعد تخدمه. تستند جميع الاستنتاجات إلى أسلوب النص، الذي يتم فحصه بتفصيل، وتتم تأييدها بمقتطفات مباشرة من الخطاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية : تحليل أسلوبى، الخطابات السياسية، دراسة، جو بايدن

## Introduction

Language serves, in part, as a means of maintaining order in society. Gorys (2010) argues that language has the power to shape the actions of individuals, communities, and societies at large. The skill with which Joe Biden used language is one measure of the success of his speech. This linguistic approach places limits on the method in which ideas, concepts, arguments, and reasoning can be expressed.

On November 20, 1942, Joseph Robinette Biden entered the world. From 1973 to 2009, he was the senior Senator from Delaware and then the 47th Vice President of the United States (Wikipedia, 2022b).

When a new American president takes office, his or her inaugural address is often viewed as the country's four-year development strategy and action plan. Joe Biden's speech as the 46th president of the United States is no different. The skilled speechwriters he hired to help him prepare for his address to the nation and the international community did their best to encapsulate his ideas on the most serious challenges facing the United States and the world. All presidents, without exception, campaign on promises to strengthen the country and improve the lives of its citizens. Joe Biden appeared more tense than previous vice presidents because of the corona virus, which wiped out thousands of jobs and killed thousands of people throughout the world. Because of this, Americans expected their new president to provide a strategy to improve the economy, safeguard residents from the corona virus, unite the country, and protect democracy.

This article takes a close look at Joe Biden's inauguration address and how it may be understood as a piece of political and social discourse for all Americans. We shall describe the speech as an example of political. and social discourse since it is expressive., brief, persuasive., repetitive of some words and sections of the sentence, and figurative.

## Background of the Study

To communicate in a language to an audience that is present in person is the essence of public discourse. In politics, political speech is a form of public discourse that is crucially significant. Miller (1991: 390) argues that politicians use speeches to the public as a means of persuasion and negotiation. Because politics has a communicative, discursive, and linguistic component (Chilton, 2004: 4). Language is

the means by which these effects of authority, legitimacy, consensus, etc. are generated.

Since the media and the performance of politicians have taken on greater significance in modern politics, scholars have taken a greater interest in analyzing political speeches (Suzuki & kageura, 2008: 1). This paper therefore provides a stylistic analysis of Vice President Joe Biden's public addresses.

In reality, politicians employ strategic manipulation and message framing to increase their chances of being elected (Bobin, 1988). It is the process of drawing attention to key points with the goal of influencing listeners' perspectives (Charteris-Black, 2011).

There can be no in-depth examination of the president's inaugural address without first establishing the category to which it belongs. Messages used in political discourse are intended to persuade and change listeners' perspectives (Vesnic-Alujevic, 2011). Vesnic-Alujevic argues that there are four interconnected factors that contribute to an effective persuasive presentation: the presenter, the target audience, the content, and the delivery method. Too far, no studies have examined any of these four persuasive factors in relation to Joe Biden.

### **The Aims of the Study**

This study attempts to answer the following aims;

1. To define stylistic strategies that allowed Joe Biden to be elected president and take the oath of office while obscuring some aspects of his personality.;
2. To describe stylistic strategies employed by the president to paint a picture of the American public as it is understood by the speaker;
3. To underline the language used to convey the president's principal points and his plans for putting them into action;
4. To analyze Vice President Joe Biden's inauguration address (the means of transmission) from the standpoint. of the speech's stylistic eccentricities.

## Literature Review

### Stylistic Analysis Approach

The field of stylistics is in poor health. Its heyday, like that of structuralism, is now a distant memory, and it is in decline. Perhaps more worrying is the fact that just a small percentage of first-year university students enthusiastically report plans to conduct study in the field of stylistics. According to this analysis, the field of stylistics had reached its final stages of decline, and its demise seemed imminent by the turn of the twentieth century. And it appeared like nobody cared that it had died.

In the first years of the twenty-first century, stylistics have flourished. It is studied and taught all around the world in university language, literature, and linguistics departments. Books, journals, conferences, symposia, and professional organizations all reflect the field's high academic prominence and distinctive writing style. As evidenced by the emergence of sub-disciplines where stylistic methodologies are supplemented and facilitated by theories of discourse, culture, and society (Simpson, 2004: 2), contemporary stylistics is far from dying out.

Stylistics is the study of language, or more precisely the study of how language is used creatively. Therefore, the study of stylistics broadens our conceptualization of language, and the acquisition of a linguistic vocabulary is seen as a significant asset for delving into (literary) texts. An inherently enlightening strategy for analytic inquiry offers itself when we have access to the whole range of language models. This method of research has considerable introspective potential since it frequently unearths texts in which the laws of language are stretched, distended, or strained to breaking point. Because modern stylistic analysis puts a premium on language use, only those with a passion for the study of language should attempt to study stylistics (Simpson, 2004:3)

Stylistics is closely related to practical criticism since both look at the text closely and evaluate the text's key linguistic forms for the goal of interpretation. Even in reader reaction theory, often known as reception theory, stylistic considerations are important. Indeed, stylistics has a major impact on virtually all critical perspectives. Stylistics is either "the science of literary style" or "the art of forming good style in writing," depending on the dictionary in question. According to Leech and Short (1981:13), the term "style linguistics" means:

To clarify, "stylistics," as the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation, has its own unique characteristics, which I will argue distinguish it from literary criticism and linguistics. However, stylistics involves both fields because of its morphological focus: the style. component. relating it to the former. and the 'istics.' component. to the latter..

In addition to providing modern criticism with linguistic insights and tools, stylistics also offers an objective method of examination. Language-oriented theories aim to develop an objective technique for studying and interpreting literature by shifting the focus from the author's intentions to the literature entity itself (Kumar, 1987:40). "the analysis of distinctive expression in language and the description of its purpose and effect," as defined by Verdonk (2002:4). While Bradford (1997:1) concedes that style can be a tricky concept to pin down, he does acknowledge that "any contribution to the vast, multifaceted discipline of literary studies will involve an engagement with style." "the linguistic study of style" is how Leech and Short (1981:13) characterize it. Widdowson (1975:4) offers the following definition of style:

Stylistics' objectivity, linguistic insights, and usable language help us better understand and appreciate literature. Since stylistics is now an integral part of modern criticism, it is impossible for any serious student to disregard it. Because of this, literary critics do not usually treat stylistic analysis as independent from a broader philosophy of literature. The author's goal is to create fictitious circumstances in order to evaluate them morally, and the style serves as both a tool to this end and a fine textural component. Like the colors and shapes in a picture, the linguistic and literary patterns blend together (Carter & Stockwell, 2008: 44).

Stylistics is the study of language in literature and how it is used. It's not entirely accurate to call these distinct forms of speech "style," given the term "style" was originally used to describe religious and legal jargon. We now refer to each of these classifications as registers. Meanwhile, style and stylistics have come to be used in the fairly limited, narrow context of literary studies in linguistics. Literature frequently use atypical language. Often, oddly, some characteristics have been brought to the forefront.

Aitchison (1999:141) employs a metaphor to explain how a literary language comes into being. A writer is like a knitter who is always looking for new patterns to create. They steer clear of cliched pairings like "black despair" and "blue sky" in favor of

more novel permutations that are bound to catch the attention of their audiences. They make an effort to write unique sentences that will shock their audience, as in "A Grief Afterward" (Aitchison, 1999:141) by Dylan Thomas..

Style, according to Wales (1989:435), cannot be defined because it is intangible. The problem stems from the fact that it's hard to explain to readers. Stylistic features (which are part of language) may be influenced by this. In addition, the following are summaries of the most often occurring aspects of the term style that she has listed:

1-In the same way that everyone has their own unique way of doing things—whether it's playing a game or thinking of a solution to a problem—everyone also has their own unique way of communicating, or "style. " Style can be good or bad, depending on the person using it.

2- Wales (1989:435) noted that people had different ways of performing the same task, writing about the same topic, and even discussing the same artwork. What she calls "style shifting" is her recognition of the fact that one's aesthetic preferences can vary depending on context and on the level of formality. In addition, fiction, poetry, and every other literary subgenre have their own distinct voices. Wales (ibid) remarked that styles shift with time, using the differences between the modern and metaphysical poetry styles as an example.

3- Wales (1989:435) observed that individuals' methods of carrying out a task, writing about a topic, or discussing an artwork were all distinct from one another. Her concept of "style shifting" refers to the reality that one's esthetic tastes may change depending on the setting and the degree of formality. Not only that, but there are many different voices in fiction, poetry, and all other forms of literature. Wales (ibid) made the observation that aesthetic preferences change with time, citing the divergence between modern and metaphysical poetry as an example.

According to Carter and Stockwell (2008: 44), authors can choose from a wide range of voices, including racy, formal, and colloquial options. They went on to say that Style is a deliberate selection of particular linguistic structures over others. Of all, just because you can pick and choose your own style doesn't mean you always do. To say anything would take an extremely long time if every phonological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic decision had to be made intentionally. For the reader, the



end outcome is largely the same whether the author's idea of the best way to state something is intuitive or conscious.

Stylistics is a branch of linguistics that helps readers make sense of language. Use it like a screwdriver to disassemble the entire text into bite-sized pieces. It's a great resource for deciphering the meaning of a work of literature. Reading a text via the lens of linguistics can help readers construct an accurate analysis, encourage them to investigate into the text's linguistic content, and provide a new viewpoint, as stated by Carter and Stockwell (2008: 39).

## Methodology

The study adopts Jeffry's (2010) model of critical stylistic analysis to analyze the data qualitatively.

## Findings and Discussions

Speech acts as the medium of communication. Communication is the expression of an attitude, and the style of the utterance reveals something about the speaker's worldview. A speech act is effective as a means of communication if the intended listener recognizes the speaker's intended attitude. A person's goal in making themselves understood goes beyond merely conveying information; rather, it is to have an effect on the listener. A complete taxonomy of illocutionary acts is developed by Kent Bach and Michael Harnish, who classify them according to the underlying attitude conveyed. Consecutives, instructions, commissives, and acknowledgments are the four main types of communicative illocutionary acts (statements, requests, promises, and apologies). Each category is described by Kent Bach and Michael Harnish:

- Constatives: affirm, allege, announce, answer, attribute, claim, categorize, agree, confirm, conjecture, deny, disagree, disclose, dispute, identify, inform, insist, predict, rank, report, state, stipulate;
- Advise, admonish, ask, plead, dismiss, excuse, forbid, instruct, order, permit, request, require, propose, urge, and warn are all examples of directives.
- Commissives like "agree," "guarantee," "invite," "offer," "promise".



– Apologies, condolences, congratulations, greetings, thanks, and acceptances (of thanks) are all examples of acknowledgments.

The inauguration address given by Vice President Joe Biden is an example of a constative speech act because it affirms, announces, answers, attributes, claims, classes, agrees, disagrees, discloses, disputes, identifies, insists, predicts, ranks, reports, and states.

The language's composition, including the number of sense components and the micro topics of these components, must be given after the language type has been determined. "This is America's day," Vice President Joe Biden declared to begin his inaugural address. Democracy must now be implemented. The day that changed the course of history and ushered in a brighter future. "A story of rebirth and resolve." The mean of Biden's speech is a declaration of his commitment to support the advance of democracy and an expression of thanks to his predecessors from both parties. He then stresses the need of completing the peaceful transition of power and emphasizes that we have much to accomplish after addressing the violence that was intended to shake the very foundation of this Capitol.

After saying, "My whole soul is in this: bringing America together," he made an effort to do just that. Bringing our people together and bringing our country together," Biden declares as the guiding principle of his public service to paraphrase, "As president, I will serve all Americans. I will battle just as hard for my opponents as I will for my supporters. Joe Biden presents himself in these speeches as the speaker who believes in his people, who recognizes the difficulty with those who did not support him, and who is willing to reconcile the country. His resolve, eagerness to serve his people, optimistic outlook, and achievement orientation are all on display in his trust in his own abilities and assurance that he will achieve his goals. Along with his constancy, political savvy, genuine desire to better the lives of Americans, readiness to fight for democracy, and national unity, these traits were important in his election as president and ascent to power.

Joe Biden thinks that there have been few times in American history that have been more difficult or hard than the present. A once-in-a-century virus is quietly spreading across the country. Its annual death toll is equal to that of all American casualties during World War II. There have been a loss of millions of jobs. Hundreds of thousands of establishments shut their doors. The hope of equal justice will no longer

be put on hold. The planet itself is sending out a distress signal. A plea that is both heartfelt. and unequivocal. in its desperation.. And now. we are seeing a rise in political extremism, racial supremacy, and domestic. terrorism., all of which we must address.. and ultimately. Overcome more than words are needed to solve these issues , restore. America's soul and secure its future.. It necessitates the one. thing hardest to come by in a democratic Society.

Joe Biden, a devout Christian, often makes reference to a statement made centuries ago by St. Augustine: "a people was a multitude defined. by the common. objects. of their love.." He claims that everyone cherishes equal access to opportunity., security, freedom., respect., honor., and the truth.

President Biden made reference to the Bible in his speech, recognizing that a large percentage of Americans have religious beliefs and place their faith in God. We are, he says, "one nation, under God, indivisible..." Weeping may last throughout the night, but joy will be there in the morning, as the Bible teaches. He asks that his people observe a moment of silence in prayer for the departed, their loved ones, and the nation. Amen.

God bless the United States of America and our troops. As he wraps up his remarks, Vice President Joe Biden adds. It's very appreciated. Joe Biden, speaking to "my fellow Americans," describes the United States as "a great nation and a good people." To emphasize that he is a part of the American people, he employs the pronoun "we" eighty-two times, whereas the pronoun "I" appears only twenty-five times. It's evidence that the president cares more about the American people than he does about himself.

Nine and ten times, respectively, the words "unity" and "democracy" appear, representing the speech's overarching goals and the president's plans for achieving them. During a time of crisis and hardship, Joe Biden thinks that the country must pull together. And as Americans, we must rise to the occasion. If we follow that plan, I can assure you that we will succeed. When Americans work together, they almost never end up failing.

The president has described the current condition of affairs as "a time of testing." Democracy and the truth are under attack. Virus epidemic. Widening income gap. Harmful effects of institutional racism. A deteriorating environment. The standing of

America abroad. But the reality is that we have to deal with them all at once, which places an enormous burden on our country. Joe Biden makes the address more emotive and credible by breaking it up with short nominative words, rather than longer ones, to highlight the challenges facing America today. Stylistically, it makes sense because it affects how readers interpret the present political climate in the country. Since the human voice is so important in audible communication, the president often speaks in short, sharp bursts to convey the gravity of the current situation.

According to the rules of stylistic analysis, v. We must now determine whether Joe Biden's inaugural speech features parallel or chainable connections between phrases. A superficial reading reveals the similar nature of the sentence connections. There are no reason-consequence unities demonstrated in the text through the use of connecting words such as that is why, as a result, so, therefore, etc. Since the inaugural address was written to be heard rather than read, the sentences are linked using the speaker's reasoning and the audience's feelings.

Being an example of a political discourse, the inauguration speech contains social and political vocabulary (*democracy, unity, the peaceful transfer of power, political extremism, domestic terrorism, historic moment of crisis and challenge, violence, conservative v liberal, peace, progress and security*), gradations (...more than two centuries, over the centuries, 108 years ago, yesterday, today, tomorrow), using verbs which mean a repeating action (*rebuild, renewal, resolve, retreat, restore*), other devices of emotional influence...

Several speakers urged their audiences to "let us start afresh" and used phrases like "we, my friends, we come together as one nation, we are a good people, my fellow Americans" to rally support. Let us hear each other out. Take a listen. Look at each other. His use of the invocatory method, "Show respect to one another," which makes any aural speech incredibly emotive and inspires listeners to trust every word, is an example of the persuasive power of his words.

Analyzing the emotional impact of Joe Biden's inaugural address via the lens of the stylistic devices he employs, such as epithets and metaphors. Epithets like "fatal virus," "safe schools," "harsh, awful reality," "a frantic cry," "eternal peace," "a painful lesson," and "cascading problems," among others, reveal the president's attitude toward his people and the situation in the country. The analogies used, such

as "if we're willing. to stand in the other person's shoes." and. "...this winter of peril. and possibilities." and "A cry. for survival comes. from the planet itself.," contribute to the speech's clarity., charm, and profundity.. Oral speech. relies mostly. on the human. voice to convey its message. through a sequence of brief, choppy. phrases spoken in a conversational. tone....

## Conclusion

Joe. Biden's. inaugural address is an. excellent. example. of political discourse, and a close examination of its style reveals a wide range of rhetorical strategies deployed to win over the audience. These strategies include the use of short, abrupt phrases; repetition.; appeal and call.; gradations.; epithets; and metaphors. The inauguration address is a type of political discourse., which. is distinguished by its expressiveness, brevity, persuasiveness, repetition of specific words and sections of the sentence, and figurativity. Political speech includes persuasive messages with the intent of changing listeners' opinions and perspectives. Political discourse is also characterized by its use of first-person pronouns, the second-person pronoun you, contractions, and slang.

The stylistic choices made by Joe Biden.—such as his use. of the words "my fellow. Americans " and " my whole soul is in this: bringing. America together."—give readers insight into the qualities that helped him win the presidency and ascend to the nation's highest office.. Bringing our people. together. And bringing the country together. In his call to action, he urges the public, "Let us add our own work and prayers to the unfolding story of our nation." The speech defends Joe Biden's strong religious convictions by referencing God, St. Augustine, and the Bible.

Vice President Biden included a biblical reference in his address because he knows that many Americans hold religious beliefs and place their faith in God. His commitment to nonviolently resolving difficulties and upholding the democratic principles established by the nation's founders was made clear in the political portions of his address. The vocabulary, structure, and stylistic elements in Joe Biden's inaugural address convinced his people that, working together, they would succeed in establishing democracy and national unity. Everything the president thinks, plans, and values is in there.

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