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American Presidential Rhetoric: Comparative Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump's and Joe Biden's Inaugural Addresses

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Contents

Introduction	3
1. State of the Matter	5
2. Theoretical framework	9
2.1. Inaugural address speech: a speech genre	9
2.2. Critical Discourse Analysis	10
2.2.1. Fairclough’s model.....	10
2.2.2. Van Dijk’s model	11
2.3. Parts of the analysis:	13
2.3.1. Macroconditions	13
2.3.2. Structure of the speech	13
2.3.3. Intent of the discourse	14
2.3.4. Communication elements according to Jakobson	14
2.3.5. Language functions	15
2.3.6. Style of the discourse.....	16
2.3.7. Lexical study	16
2.3.8. Non-verbal communication	17
3. Objectives and research questions	18
3.1. Hypothesis	19
4. Methodology	22
5. Analysis and discussion	23
5.1. Donald Trump’s inaugural address speech	23
5.1.1. Macroconditions	23
5.1.2. Structure of the speech	24
5.1.3. Intent of the discourse	25
5.1.4. Communication elements according to Jakobson	26
5.1.5. Language functions	26
5.1.6. Style of the discourse.....	28
5.1.7. Lexical study	29
5.1.8. Non-verbal communication	30
5.2. Joe Biden’s inaugural address speech	31
5.2.1. Macroconditions	31
5.2.2. Structure of the speech	32
5.2.3. Intent of the discourse	34
5.2.4. Communication elements according to Jakobson	34
5.2.5. Language functions	35
5.2.6. Style of the discourse.....	37
5.2.7. Lexical study	39
5.2.8. Non-verbal communication	40
5.3. Comparative analysis of both inaugural speeches	42
6. Conclusions	45
7. Bibliography	46

Introduction

The global relevance of the US Presidential campaign, race and elections cannot be contested, as their turnout can be decisive for many states. It is definitely impressive to appreciate how diametrically opposed candidates are able to reach power with completely different approaches and ideologies. From Europe, particularly Spain, we perceive American elections with a clear bias due to our ideological and political position, but I consider it essential to step back and look at the situation with a different perspective, to ask myself the question “why did this specific candidate win?”. I realized it is not mere coincidence or a flaw in the society, but more of its reflection. The victories of Donald Trump and Joe Biden both clearly reflect this idea, as they both reached power at key points in history in which they were the candidate that represented the best the societal needs. In 2016, citizens felt silenced and abandoned; in 2020, citizens felt desperate and divided.

I decided to carry out this study due to the fact that I was highly impressed by the completely opposite candidates that have won in consecutive elections and how Donald Trump’s rhetoric was broadcasted and talked about around the world for months while Joe Biden kept such a low profile during his political campaign that by the time he rose to power, many could not even paint a picture of what he looked like, let alone have any knowledge on his rhetoric or communicational strategies. That was the reasoning behind choosing this topic for my bachelor’s thesis as a way to analyze the different contexts that have led to the choosing of different leaders and the way in which these leaders choose to portray their interests and promises.

Objectives

The main objective of this bachelor’s thesis will be to analyze the inaugural address speeches of both United States Presidents, the 44th US President Donald Trump and the 45th US President, Joe Biden. The study will focus on the most relevant linguistic and non-linguistic features of their inaugural address speeches. The research objective will be to highlight their main priorities in their first speech as President, taking into consideration the macroconditions at the moment the inaugural addresses were delivered, that is to say, the social, historical and political situation of the nation.

Thus, the analysis will focus on similitudes and differences of both inaugural addresses of them in terms of political communication, ideology, intent, their discursive style and rhetoric.

Hence, the bachelor's thesis will concentrate on how both Presidents portrayed their interests, since they both managed to get to the American public after the Presidential electoral campaign which had a global reach and essentially affected international politics to a core level. It will be divided in the following way:

Firstly, chapter 1 will tackle the state of the question, understood as the background of the topic regarding the US, Donald Trump and Joe Biden as candidates.

Secondly, chapter 2 will aboard the theoretical framework in which the methodology the study will follow is explained according to the authors, theories and articles it is based on, apart from the reasoning behind each part of the analysis.

Thirdly, chapters 3 and 4 will focus on the objectives and research objectives, the hypothesis regarding both speeches and the way in which I will carry out the analysis in terms of reading the transcripts and viewing the speech at the time of its delivery.

In the following chapter, number 5, the main analysis and discussion takes place for both speeches, and all parts of the analysis are applied to the different aspects of the speeches analyzed. In this same chapter, a comparison will be carried out to highlight the most salient similitudes and differences between both speeches and their implications.

In the last chapter, the study will be wrapped with a brief conclusion.

1. State of the Matter

Starting from Ancient Greece up until today, rhetoric has been a key aspect of public discourse and communication, especially in the last centuries' Presidential elections. This raises the question: does complex or simple rhetoric wins elections? The truth is this question cannot be answered with a mere "yes" or "no" due to the complexity of the rhetorical cannons, the influence of the socio-historical processes and macroconditions present at the time of speech delivery and the different elements and layers that compose a political discourse. We are continuously influenced by rhetoric as a society and as a consequence, it influences our culture and politics. The way in which politicians choose to present their priorities, wishes, feelings, challenges and aspirations, can completely divert the result of political elections from one candidate to another in just a breeze. Today, rhetoric is approach in a multidisciplinary manner due to its complexity in fields of study such as law and politics, as well as in natural sciences, social sciences, journalism, religion and mass media.

Specifically, political communication plays a key role in the field of electoral campaigns and Presidential races. This is due to the fact that politicians need to change the audience's mindset or behavior in a relatively short period of time. In this period of time, aspiring Presidents must be able to move the audience into their sphere of influence, changing their attitudes and being able to build the strongest following possible through the use of political communication. (Alonso, 2021). Despite all election campaigns having the same objective, it is nevertheless essential to understand a Presidential election campaign and its means of working in the United States specifically, since the system is completely different from the system in Spain.

In the United States, the electoral process starts with primary elections and caucuses, which are "local gatherings of voters who vote at the end of the meeting for a particular candidate" (USA Gov., 2021). These are the two main ways in which states and political parties can choose a candidate for presidency. After being selected, nominating conventions take place, in which the candidate's political party chooses a nominee to unite behind. During political party conventions, each presidential nominee announces a vice presidential running mate (USA Gov., 2021). The candidates then campaign across the country in order to attract voters by explaining their views and prospects for the future, they may participate in debates and meetings. The key is to attract those indecisive voters, since most voters will have already formulated their own opinion on the candidates due to the publicity given by mass media platforms prior and during the campaign. Rhetoric is an

essential asset at this stage of the campaign, as it can completely change the course of the campaign. (Roe-Crines, 2020)

All throughout history we have seen the importance of rhetoric, and thus the impact of those speeches which were delivered with such class that they are still remembered to this day, as for example, speeches held by Martin Luther King Jr. or former US President Barack Obama. Martin Luther King Jr made his memorable “I Have a Dream” speech by using the appropriate rhetorical figures and achieved the power to inspire millions to fight for freedom, justice and fairness, and his speech will go down in history for generations to come. He spoke up for what he believed was necessary in the US in the mid-1960s, an openly racist, unjust society, and reached a worldwide audience through the use of symbolical figures, developing an emotional but logical appeal.

For many authors, Mr. Obama’s discourse style is considered the legacy of Mr. King Jr., as many saw the reflection of the latter’s dream in the former President’s rhetoric. For others, the differences in the socio-historical background in which Obama was operating compared to King’s, makes any significant comparison between both men misleading and unfair. (Shelby, 2018) Barack Obama was, nevertheless, capable of finding a *sublime* style, finding the perfect balance between logos, pathos and ethos and engaging the people in the problem-solving dynamic. According to authors such as Hilde Van Belle, Obama was a “living example of the rhetor.” (Belle, 2014) He presented his speeches with sharp and intelligent declarations while always keeping a persuasive, classic style. As the first African American President, a broad variety of authors considers his strategy as a mixture of an appeal to the traditional virtues of honesty and bravery, and his personal experiences starting from his Kenyan descent, his childhood in Hawaii and his job as a community worker in Chicago. The first rule in political discourse is authenticity, it is key for the speaker’s intent to be transparent and to be aware of the world in which the listeners live. (Fallows, 2021) However, the world was shaken to its core when Trump, considered the most unapologetic, polemic and politically incorrect public figure suddenly rose to power in the most powerful nation in the world. It shook the grounds of rhetoric, reducing the sacred art of persuasion to a discourse based on fear-mongering, simplicity and American exceptionalism to a dangerous extent. (Mercieca, 2020)

After being exposed to the intricate mechanisms of communication used by Barack Obama, the eruption of Donald Trump in political rhetoric discourse was, to put it simply, shocking. At the beginning of Donald Trump’s campaign, he was perceived as a joke, both at a national and at an international level, most of the audience assumed Hilary Clinton would end up as the clear winner, the plot twist shocked the entire world in November

2020 when Donald Trump was proclaimed winner of the 2020 Presidential Election.

It was due to this that many scholars jumped in the bandwagon of studying Donald Trump's rhetorical style, shaping field guides explaining why and how he has managed to rise to power by the use of his rather dangerous rhetoric. (Mercieca, 2020) It is essential to bear in mind the macroconditions present in this specific socio-historical period of time, in order to understand its consequences on Donald Trump's Presidential campaign and election. It is key to understand the great importance and influence mass media platforms bear in political communication nowadays, having a direct impact on society and culture from the beginning of the political campaign. Authors such as Lecturer Habeed M. Areef Al-Saeedi (2017) have written studies regarding the function of repetition in his inaugural address as a way of persuasion, among his different strategies.

Due to the mediatic and reality show origins of Mr. Trump, he has been able to engage in political campaign using techniques that would be more fitting in the show business rather than in the Presidential race. In his campaign, as Aira (2010) puts it, the communication aspect was lacking and weak, however, it was more similar to the art of manipulation or show business. Donald Trump is fully aware of the techniques needed to stand out in show business, and he puts it to practice through in a way authors such as the Miquel Pellicer or Jason Stanley define as "authoritarian propaganda", which, as defined by Pellicer it is a "way of communication in which the leader invents a narrative which explains why problems of entire groups of people have a simple origin and an even simpler solution." (Pellicer Alapont, 2017. p.77)

Donald Trump's rhetorical style is so particularly aggressive and different to everything we have ever known as a Western society, a broad variety of authors have categorized him as using a rhetoric without precedents by which he focuses on transmitting a message of propaganda, fake information through misogynistic, racist, classist, ableist attitudes, actively trying to stand the farthest away possible from being politically correct. (Stanley, 2016) However, he is not the main character to blame, since political communication is not an element separate from society, but rather society is built through an intertwining of all types of communication, and thus, society is represented through communication. This is to say, the political communication we are exposed to nowadays and the fact that Donald Trump rose so quickly to power are not the exception, but rather the representation of our society. (Aira, 2010)

After four years of Trump's polemic-ridden administration, Joseph Biden Jr; the man who represented Delaware for 36 years in the US Senate before becoming Barack Obama's Vice President for eight consecutive years, announced his candidacy for

President of the United States. Biden's candidacy, as the White House describes it, was "built from the beginning around 3 pillars: the battle for the soul of our nation, the need to rebuild our middle class — the backbone of our country, and a call for unity, to act as One America." (The White House, 2021) His message was especially prominent in the midst of a global pandemic, an economic crisis, racial injustice and climate change. Joseph "Joe" Biden came as a breath of fresh air for the US voters whom, for four years, had been subjected to the bitter breach created in US society. He managed to be realistic, acknowledging the hardships and challenges ahead, while calling repeatedly for unity, expressing hope, embracing the theme of becoming together, which has been at the heart of all great American rhetoric. (Fallows, 2021)

This context shifted during the Joe Biden Presidential campaign, since Biden voters have been open about their feelings towards the former President. Consequently, Donald Trump has not changed his rhetorical strategy based on shock value and confrontation. (Roe-Crines, 2020) He is hardcore loved by his followers and deeply hated by his opponents, with very little middle ground. On the other hand, Biden does have a chance at the more moderate population, including anti-Trump Republicans, whose minds could be changed through the appropriate use of rhetoric and political communication.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Inaugural address speech: a speech genre

According to Van Dijk (1997) political discourse is an “specific example of political action and interaction”. Similarly, Fairclough (1992) sees political discourse as a social action that shapes and is shaped by the world around us. Political discourse is used to convince of specific political views and ideas, or they aspire to change ideologically their attitudes or beliefs, and it is not a composition of isolated words or sentences, it is a reflection of political messages. In this category it is possible to find political speeches, more specifically, presidential inaugural addresses, which are delivered in a more formal speech style.

Moreover, it is essential to view the American Presidential Inaugural Addresses as a separate category of political discourse due to their relevance, since according to Liu (2012:2407) the American Presidential Inaugural Addresses “are commonly recognized as the representative of English political speaking”. George Washington delivered the first inaugural address, in which he invoked God’s guidance. Inaugural speeches set the tone for the incoming administration, they can have a more persuasive intention or reflect urgent needs such as Abraham Lincoln urging the southern states to reconcile and avoid war in 1861. In their inaugural address they give the opportunity to the nation and the world to get an insight on their vision. (The White House, 2021) It is due to this that authors like Kaufer (2004:221) state that presidential inaugural address is "one of the most carefully crafted textual genres in politics".

Despite the fact that the presidential inaugural address is not required by the American Constitution, it has become a tradition since George Washington delivered the first one in 1789, as a way for the newly elected President to sign the beginning to a new administration in the inauguration ceremony. (Al-Saeedi, 2017) This inauguration ceremony, is a rite of transition of power from one party to another or from one administration to another. These speeches are designed to unify the audience by listening to the authority they have chosen as a leader for the upcoming four years, they are delivered in a ceremonial manner thus, forming part of the category of epideictic speeches. Inaugural address speeches are crafted to look and reflect at past fall downs and victories and contemplate future challenges ahead while praising shared values and principles in the American nation. An elegant, literary language is often employed to embellish the message and heighten the intended effect. The people present in the speech are essential for the rite of presidential transition, as their presence ratifies the president’s formal ascent to power,

his acknowledgment of the oath and the principles presented as the guide to the new administration. (Campbell and Jamieson, 1985:397).

2.2. Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), according to Hilary Janks is defined as a “form of critical theory of language which sees the use of language as a form of social practice” (Janks, 1997; p. 329). The use of language as a social practice implies that one must at all times consider language in relation to the historical context in which it is exercised, as well as all questions pertaining to the power relations involved in discourse. These power relations position the discourse in specific ways, and in Critical Discourse Analysis it is crucial to study whose interests it favors, and whose interests it negates. Furthermore, CDA seeks to understand the consequences of the positioning of the discourse in question. (Janks, 1997) Different CDA theorists include Fairclough, Van Dijk and Jakobson.

2.2.1. Fairclough’s model

Norman Fairclough considers Critical Discourse Analysis a greatly important part of critical social analysis, helping in the comprehension of the discourse and the relations between the discourse and other social elements such as power relations, ideologies, social identities, institutions, etc. For Fairclough, CDA can be understood as a critic in both normative and descriptive terms. On one hand, it would be a normative critic when it goes further than just the mere description of the social realities, carrying out an evaluation bearing in mind the degree of the relations between certain values considered essential in just or decent societies. (Fairclough, 1995) For example, the human wellbeing standards, as they can be material as well as political and cultural. On the other hand, a descriptive critic classifies as such when it strives to explain the existing realities through the effects they have on structures, mechanisms or forces that the analyst presents and whose realities they wish to prove. An example of this would be social inequalities and their differences in access to basic goods could be explained as a consequence of the mechanisms and forces associated with “capitalism”. (Routledge, 2012) Nevertheless, what renders CDA different from other forms of social analysis is definitely the focus given to the idea of social realities as limitations created by us, the human being, as the historical explanation to why and how these limitations have been created. It also places great importance in the possibilities of these limitations being transformed in a way in which they improve the general wellbeing and reduce suffering. (Fairclough, 1995) Fairclough is based on the Marxist vision by which the world being changed depends on our capacity of being able to

explain why it is has become what it has become. This can be better explained as a methodology carried out in four steps: 1) focusing on one specific social problem and its semiotic aspects, 2) identifying the obstacles that need to be overcome in order to solve the social problem, 3) considering if the social problem is “necessary” for society, and 4) identifying solutions to overcome said obstacles. These stages are further divided in steps to follow with the objective to guide the analysis in the most complete way.

Fairclough’s model for CDA consists of three interrelated processes of analysis which are tied to three interrelated dimensions of discourse, since each dimension requires a different kind of analysis. The three dimensions include: firstly, the object of analysis, which includes all verbal and/or visual texts, which is analyzed in a descriptive manner. Secondly, the processes by which the object is produced and received, which include writing, speaking, designing by human objects. These processes are analyzed through a processing analysis, which is essentially, its interpretation. Thirdly, the socio-historical conditions that govern these processes. In order to understand the socio-historical conditions that have led to the discourse in question, one must be able to find an explanation through the social analysis of the current conditions. Fairclough’s approach enables the analysis to be focused on the layout and the signifiers that compose the discourse, while at the same time requiring the understanding of the historical conditions present. It understands the discourse as an intertwining of the social processes, production and reception. According to Fairclough, different patterns with interesting results that must be described, interpreted and explained. (Janks, 1997)

2.2.2. Van Dijk’s model

However, according to Van Dijk, political discourse analysis shall be done from a critical perspective bearing in mind the rhetoric and linguistic elements which make it up. He also poses great importance on the actors present in the communication process, such as citizens, politicians and institutions which compose the national political processes and exert influence of some sort onto the communication processes. The unique composition of each socio-historical process has an impact on every individual political discourse; thus, the national, social, economic, cultural situation must not be looked over. Van Dijk also points out the undeniable importance of understanding context in order to carry out a proper analysis of the political discourse.

Van Dijk allows us to view CDA through an analytic lens, in a way in which CDA focuses on how domination, abuse of social power and inequalities are carried out and sometimes fought against by texts and discourse in the political and social context. A central concept in CDA is the notion of power, more specifically, the social power of

certain institutions or groups. Van Dijk defines this power in terms of control. In this sense, the degree of “power” of the chosen groups would be defined by their capacity to control in accordance to their interests, the actions of other groups and the minds of the audience. This takes as a given a “basic” power which englobes access to scarce social resources such as money, knowledge, fame, status, information and certain ways of public discourse and communication. (Van Dijk, 1999)

This last approach to discourse is perhaps the aspect that troubles the author the most, since he considers dominant groups to be in control of the context, therefore they have the power of defining the situations and the way they are perceived by society. He refers to this phenomenon as “control of the mind”. This influence has as a consequence a domination from the powerful groups, as he establishes they have the capacity to indirectly control their minds and actions through discourse. Van Dijk also examines the way in which said control is projected as a tool to benefit the powerful and dominant groups, and it has as a consequence social inequality; and thus, this relation should be the focus of CDA. His model focuses on the exploitation of power, precisising a “functional” approximation, going further than the limits of sentences, action and interaction. He attempts to explain the use of language and discourse in more ample terms: societal, cultural, political and historical processes and structures.

In this bachelor’s thesis, I will carry out an in-depth analysis of the general aspects of Donald Trump’s and Joe Biden’s inaugural speeches according to the theories and tools provided by the subject studied in our Double Degree, categorized as Strategic Communication Skills: Discourse Analysis, as well as published academic articles by authors such as Nadia Abdul Ghani (2021) and Amer Ali (2020) which touch upon the basis of Critical Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump and Joe Biden’s inaugural speeches regarding lexical and rhetorical choices and their implications in each corresponding time frame and context. The analysis in this thesis consists of using the same theories to study both inaugural speeches in order to grasp the broader concepts which characterize them, and with said tools, critically comparing both United States Presidents’ rhetoric and use of linguistics, the power dynamics in them as well as the socio-historical context in which both discourses have been created.

It is undeniable to define political discourse as a communicative tool, however, as authors such as Fairclough have defined it, it is essential to understand that discourse as a social construct derives from the social processes, and it is crucial to identify the elements which make up such an intricate mean of communication. There is a broad variety of approaches to analyze political discourse, one can choose the critical, the linguistic, the

social or the cognitive approach, among others. Due to the complexity and innumerable levels and layers present in discourse, this study will not attempt to carry out a complete analysis, but a descriptive and explanatory approaches that make it easier to understand discourse within a wider framework.

In this bachelor's thesis, the following methodology will be applied in order to analyze both discourses under the same conditions. The analysis will focus on the following aspects: (1) macroconditions; (2) structure of the speech; (3) intent of the discourse; (4) communication elements according to Jakobson; (5) language functions; (6) style of the discourse and lastly, (7) lexical study and (8) non-verbal communication.

2.3. *Parts of the analysis:*

2.3.1. Macroconditions

Since a broad variety of authors considers context to be extrinsic in discourse, the objective of this section will be to briefly analyze the macroconditions present within the political context in which the discourse was created. This will include the national, cultural, social and economic situation of the United States at the moment of the inaugural address speech by both Presidents.

2.3.2. Structure of the speech

Due to the multidisciplinary nature of Discourse Analysis, a great variety of mechanisms and theories are available to study the structure of discourse. According to different authors, different theories should be applied and therefore, there are different ways to differentiate the parts that compose a discourse. Authors such as Tincheva (2012) approaches political speeches and the text structure in their manipulative potential, which is in line with authors like Hoffman and Ford and their theory of rhetoric developed in 2010, in which they analyze the structure of the discourse as the *dispositio*. The *dispositio* of a discourse is considered a key component of rhetoric, since it is essentially the way in which the speaker has chosen to arrange the arguments exposed with the objective to create a certain impact. Meanwhile many choose to analyze the structure of discourse in a technical way, this study will combine the technical aspect of the structure from an objective perspective, as well as the analysis of elements that compose the *dispositio*. Being the discourses part of the classical rhetoric category of *genus deliberativum*, which include

those political speeches intended to be reproduced in front of an audience with the objective to get a specific response from said audience.

The study will extract the Aristotelic *dispositio* theory in order to analyze the text from a rhetoric theoretical framework. Following Aristotle's definition of rhetoric and its main components, the canon of rhetoric is born, in which five elements compose a discourse in the process of it being delivered: *exordium*, *narratio*, *argumentatio*, including *confirmatio* and *refutatio*, and lastly, *peroratio*. Firstly, the *exordium* is the introduction by which the author intends to catch the public's attention. Secondly, *narratio*, is the exposure of the main topic and the positioning of the speaker regarding the topic. Thirdly, *argumentatio*, the speaker exposes those arguments which support and confirm his hypothesis, denominated *confirmatio*; or can expose evidence against the opposite position, which would be categorized as *refutatio*. Lastly, *peroratio* includes the conclusion in which the speaker insists in order to persuade and emotionally touch its audience.

2.3.3. Intent of the discourse

In this section, the main objective is simple: to identify which is the intent of the discourse in terms of the message he desires to transmit to the audience. In this case, it is essential to focus on the more unconventional aspects of the discourse and try to read between the lines to find the ways in which the speaker tries to reach his audience. Some discourses have as a main intent to frighten the population in order to gain support for specific purposes, such as the restrictions imposed during the state of emergency; other speakers try to appear as heroes through their discourse for saving the population from dangers or wars, such as the fight against COVID-19, while others simply try to gain sympathy from vulnerable populations.

2.3.4. Communication elements according to Jakobson

Roman Jakobson, a well-known Russian-born linguist, elaborated his theory on information in 1960. He developed a theory which aimed to decipher the act of communication within a wider context of what he categorized as "communication elements", which were essentially, the factors that must be present for an act of communication to occur. These include: (1) context, (2) addresser (sender), (3) addressee (receiver), (4) contact, (5) common code and (6) message. (Jakobson, 1960)

In his theory, each factor is the “focal point of a relation, or function, that operates between the message and the factor” (Hébert, 2011), and each function are the following six: referential (i.e. “the Earth is round”); emotive (i.e. “Ew!”); conative (i.e. “Come here.”); phatic (i.e. “Hello?”); metalingual (i.e. “What do you mean by that?”) and lastly, poetic (i.e. “Her hair was gold”). When we analyze acts of communication, we must categorize them within the function they exert, while also mentioning the hierarchical relation among them or any other relation that could exist between them. (Hébert, 2011)

2.3.5. Language functions

As it was mentioned in the previous section **2.3.4. Communication elements according to Jakobson’s speech**, it is essential to understand the functions that are present and the ones that are absent, as well as their intent or objective when used in a political discourse. In order to classify different elements as the functions they serve, it is crucial to understand each function’s objectives in a discourse, according to Jakobson’s theory.

In the first place, the *referential* function is the one which gives us objective information about reality. In the second place, the *emotive* function is the one through which the speaker communicates their feelings, emotions and wishes, giving the audience a look into their subjective and individual perception of reality. In the third place, the *conative* function, which is also called *appellative* function, and is considered heavily important in politics since this function “uses language to influence the receptor in several ways, let it be to inflict emotion or to convince them, or to get a specific reaction from them” (Chandler and Munday, 2011. P. 65). In the fourth place, the *phatic* function as the one in charge of the regulation of the interaction from beginning to end of the discourse between, since its objective is to establish a relationship with the communication channel and audience. In the fifth place, the *metalinguistic* function, is the one by which one uses language as a tool to further explain language, this function might be absent from the discourses studied since it is not widely used in political communication or rhetoric. In the last place, the *poetic* function, as its name indicates, is the one used when one attempts to embellish language through the use of stylistic resources, such as cultural allusions or poetic style. (Hébert, 2011)

2.3.6. Style of the discourse

The style of the discourse can be understood from an interdisciplinary perspective, however, in this bachelor's thesis, the style will be analyzed through the *elocutio* canons started by Aristotle. Elocutio is the third out of the five canons of classical rhetoric which began in the Renaissance period. Authors like Hoffman and Ford (2010) further developed the theory and established the modern standards which are essential in the study of rhetoric. The style of the discourse can be divided in several categories, firstly, taking into consideration the register of the discourse. In this section I will define whether the register is *humile*: low or colloquial, though which the speaker intends to teach something to his audience; *medium*: the register is general or slightly high, the intent is to delight the public and lastly, *sublime*: the highest register in rhetorical discourse, with the intention of emotionally moving the audience. In this section I will also define the different rhetorical figures used in the speech: comparisons, metaphors, repetitions, anaphora or antithesis, among others. I will provide examples for each rhetorical figure I am able to distinguish in the duration of the speech.

2.3.7. Lexical study

According to Fairclough, any text can be analyzed on semantic, syntactic, morphological, and cohesion levels. (Ghani and Hussain, 2021) Words allow to shed light on the topic and the ideological direction of the text. The transcription of both inaugural addresses were analyzed using Sketch Engine, a leading corpus tool, widely used in lexicography, in order to identify the most frequent words and therefore carrying out a more specific lexical analysis of the use of words and their relation to the socio-historical context. Words such as nation, United States, American, Americans, America and the people are included regardless of the context at the time of the speech. However, in both 2017 and 2021, the conditions in which both Presidents have become Presidents vastly differ. Words such as globalization, economy, jobs, pandemic, unity, restore... are dependent on the context while at the same time reflect it.

2.3.8. Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication must not be taken out of the analysis due to the importance of *pronuntiatio*, another one of the canons of rhetoric. *Pronuntiatio* includes the paralanguage and body language as both ways to strategically support the message one is trying to get across. (Rodríguez, 2018) Despite the fact that it is not considered an essential element by many, according to renowned researchers such as Albert Mehrabian (1971) 65% of our message is transmitted through non-verbal communication (Mehrabian, 1971). Despite the fact that the percentage of its importance has been heavily contested, the vast impact of non-verbal communication cannot be denied. On one hand, elements such as the intensity, the volume of one's voice, the speed of the discourse, the strategic stops, cadence or intonation are examples of paralanguage. On the other hand, body language which includes facial expressions, gestures or posture, serves as a way to communicate a message without words.

3. Objectives and research questions

The main objective of this study is, essentially, to carry out a comparative analysis between the inaugural address speeches delivered by Donald Trump in 2017 and Joe Biden in 2021 after being elected as Presidents of the United States of America. Through the development of this study, the goal will be to select the most significant elements that make up the rhetoric of both US Presidents, to be able to find their similarities among a sea of differences and to analyze the reasoning behind each style selected for the discourse delivery. With the help of several discourse analysis tools, this study intends to pinpoint each President's communicational strategy, how they managed to express and present their priorities, wishes and feelings in front of an audience of millions of US citizens.

Starting with the macroconditions at the time of the discourse, followed by an analysis of the main message of the discourse, the structure, the overall intent of said discourse, as well as the elements, rhetorical functions and key words employed. In such an important discourse, no detail is spared, and every very move is highly controlled and designed with a specific objective. The selection of the main topic and message of the speech, the strategic use of words or phrases, the way they address their audience once they have been officially elected, and other aspects such as their paralinguistic and body language.

Due to Donald Trump's mediatic and polemic discourse, I have started this analysis in hopes of finding the reasoning behind his communicational strategy, as well as hopefully, coming to terms with his rhetorical style and learning from him. On the other hand, Joe Biden managed to keep a lower profile when embarking into the elections, so my knowledge of his rhetoric style is starting at a blank slate. However, I would like to make some predictions before I start my analysis since I consider the information I consume to be biased against Donald Trump, so perhaps it is possible to confirm that his inaugural address speech was not as radical as it was made out to be, or perhaps he is just as aggressive in his rhetoric as mass media platforms portray him. At the end of the study, I expect to be aware of the differences surrounding both US Presidents and the way in which they portray their message, as well as their similarities, the aspects they might have in common or the aspects in which they stray on the completely opposite side of the spectrum.

3.1. Hypothesis

Donald Trump was already a celebrity before he postulated for the Presidential race, he was a millionaire businessman who participated in reality shows, thus he never had to present himself in a respectable way in front of the public eye. Mr. Trump is aware of the strategies necessary to become noticeable, and he has been known to present his speeches without any consideration in terms of offending specific communities, making racist, ableist and sexist remarks without any real consequences. It is due to these circumstances that I am assuming he will try to get to his audience by using the same techniques he used to grab attention during his campaign: “Make America Great Again”, by trying to infuse a strong sense of American pride on his audience, a call to protect the country from the external threat of immigration and globalization.

My assumptions prior to watching the address speech are that he will be aggressive in his words, bordering racist and his stamp, being the least politically correct he can be. In 2016, when his address speech took place, US culture became much more aware of the unapparent racist, sexist and ableist remarks we might make on a day-to-day basis, which is called the “woke” culture. This essentially meant a change in the ways public figures and politicians were held accountable for their way of expressing themselves, both in public and social media. Donald Trump and his voters strive to be as far as possible from this movement, since they have been publicly known for shaming the “woke” culture and intentionally trying to be politically incorrect. Since his predecessor, Barack Obama, was well-known and respected for his political correctness by voters from the Democratic Party as well as by politicians in the international arena, my predictions are that Donald Trump is actively trying to strive the farthest away possible from that image. He is attempting to appear as a relatable President, without paying attention to the “snowflakes” that might be offended from his words. The term “snowflake” or “*libertard*”, the mix between liberal and retard, has been used in order to insult voters of the Democratic Party who have more liberal views, since they are deemed as more sensitive by Republican voters.

Representing the Republican Party, he will present his measures, such as the building of the separation wall between Mexico and the US, probably through the use of phrases that he used during the Presidential campaign, such as: “Build that wall! Build that wall!” inspiring the crowd to cheer and repeat after him. Despite the Republican Party having more “moderate” measures, Mr. Trump will present the ones which he is aware will have more impact in the mass media platforms, such as the immigration and protectionist measures.

There are a couple topics that are stapled in Donald Trump's speeches, and he has openly stated them as his priorities, so it is predictable and safe to assume his address speech will be centered around "Make America Great Again". This means that the speech will, most likely, include the topics of protectionism against China, the Nuclear Deal with Iran, the building of the wall in order to avoid immigration from Mexico, climate change as a hoax and Islamic terrorism inside US territory. Regarding economy, I am assuming he will present the measures that are positioned the farthest from any type of left-wing, since he is a hard-core capitalist and millionaire, such as the lowering of taxes for the rich.

From the linguistic point of view, I am assuming his discourse will be less poetic, even not poetic at all, he will appeal to the population and call to action, paying no attention to the actual rhetoric or linguistic functions that can embellish his language. He will be more direct, perhaps aggressive, inspiring others to be just as proud to be American as he is, supporting his views on the threat that it means to be surrounded by immigration and to be immersed in a globalization process. He will actively try to activate negative feelings, even hate in others, probably pointing out immigrants in US territory as a scapegoat to all problems present in US society. Mr. Trump will make the distinction between "us": the Americans, the victims, the good ones, the country of freedom and dreams; and "them": the bad ones, the ones trying to steal our jobs, to win over our land to subject our women and to take over our economy, the ones trying to take away the freedom that we fought for so hardly, the ones trying to destroy the American culture that took so much strength and the one that we built together. He will appeal to emotions without using too much factual evidence, he will surely try to inflict fear towards the external threat and call to protect the precious American nation.

In terms of his non-verbal communication, I am predicting a lot of hand gestures, unpredictable, even comical use of his body language, spontaneous and perhaps even improvised gestures and movements, rises in the tone of his voice. I predict him to speak in a tone closer to yelling than to a serious address speech. The former US President, as mentioned before, is fully aware of the actions one must carry out to call the media's attention, and he will not doubt when it comes to grabbing international attention. However, international media platforms and the general public regard Trump as a "joke", so I do not expect the impact of this speech to change anyone's perception of him.

As a counter position and having little to no knowledge of Joe Biden's rhetoric style due to his low profile kept during the Presidential race and campaign, I can only assume he will use in his advantage exactly the opposite strategies from Donald Trump.

Joe Biden has become President during possibly, the most uncertain, tense and problematic times of the post-war times, he has succeeded an extremely polemic President and has been elected President in the middle of a global pandemic, with the world plummeting into a crippling economic crisis and the overall morale is sunk deeply. My expectation from Joe Biden is for him to take a reassuring approach, emphasizing change and going forward advancing together as a nation towards a better future. The current political, cultural, social, economic and health situation is critical, the Covid-19 pandemic has only exacerbated already existing problems in the US, so Joe Biden must come up with a way to attract the nation's attention, to calm down the hate provoked and inflicted by Mr. Trump, to unite the population towards a common goal: to overcome the current situation.

I am deeming it as likely for Biden to present more liberal, progressist measures towards social equality, possibly mentioning cultural movements that have been key in the year 2020 such as Black Lives Matter, supporting the African American plea for equality at all levels, as well as other minorities affected. As a preconception, one can only assume Mr. Biden will debunk in his speech at least some measures introduced by Mr. Trump, such as the building of the wall, the interventionist US Foreign Policy or the Paris Accord on Climate Change. He will predictably, due to the current health situation, mention the tremendous problem with the US healthcare system and its inherent discriminatory policies, he will strive to favor programs which improve social wellbeing, eliminate certain extremely discriminatory immigration restrictions, as well as promoting environmental protection. Overall, I am forecasting the main topic to be the improvement of social conditions and the Covid-19 pandemic.

From a linguistic point of view, I am assuming he will use a variety of appellative and poetic functions, striving to deliver a speech as different as possible from his predecessor. His discretion, elegance and lack of polemics are probably determinant factors in strategic communicational terms that have caught the eye of the US population who were embarrassed by their former President's public behavior and communicational skills. I am assuming there will be plenty of emotive function, as well as more embellished use of the language, trying to appeal to the citizens' common sense and striving to inspire hope for the future. My assumption is that the speech will be sharp, smart and intelligent, perhaps poetic and making cultural allusions with the use of linguistic and rhetoric tools, poetic figures, with a high-level registry and an active attempt to be elegant in his words while keeping the audience interested and giving an emotional touch to his speech.

In terms of his non-verbal communication, I am expecting the opposite from Mr. Trump, meditated, calculated and studied body language to transmit his message properly.

4. Methodology

In this chapter I will proceed to explain the strategies and means which will be used in order to develop the study. In the first place, I will carry out a first view of the speech with the objective of getting a general picture of the speech. In this first listening, I will write down the aspects that have caught my attention, as well as drawing a visual scheme of the structure of the discourse, rhetorical figures or linguistic functions that have stood out from the speech, as well as the main topic in the speech. As a first impression test, my expectation is to write down the non-verbal communication, body language and paralinguistic elements that might have caught my eye or impressed me in some way.

In the second place, I will carefully read the transcripts of the speeches with the goal in mind to differentiate the variety of language functions present in each speech and annotate examples of said functions, as well as the quantity or frequency of each language function in different parts of the speech or during the course of its entire duration. Due to the fact that the mere listening to the speech might make go unnoticed certain aspects, I consider the reading of the transcripts as essential to be able to acquire a good vision of the speech. During this reading I am expecting to be able to identify the intent of the discourse, the message he is attempting to send, as well as the communication elements according to Jakobson's theory.

In the third place, I will follow up with the annotation and study of the characteristics of rhetoric provided by the Aristotle view, regarding the *elocutio* and *dispositio* of the speech. I will pay more detailed attention towards the key words, the repetitive aspects of the discourse and I will dig into the strategic significance of the use of the chosen language functions, also towards the non-verbal communication, visual contact, hand gestures, body position and posture and other elements that I might have missed in the first round of listening and viewing.

5. Analysis and discussion

5.1. Donald Trump's inaugural address speech

5.1.1. Macroconditions

According to Fairclough's approach to CDA, the socio-historical process should not be separated from the discourse, since they are intertwined phenomena that cannot exist without the other. Due to this, I will briefly overview the political, social, cultural national situation at the time of the inaugural address speech by Donald John Trump.

Bearing in mind the socio-historical conditions prior to Donald Trump's discourse is essential in order to fully comprehend the intricacies involved in Trump's electoral campaign and election. On November 8th 2016, the elections took place after a very controversial political campaign in which both Secretary Clinton and Donald Trump were perceived unfavorably by the public. Remarks made by both candidates set the base for a very confrontational campaign in which Mrs. Clinton classified Trump's supporters as xenophobic, sexist, Islamophobic and homophobic. In December 2016, confidential information was made public regarding the Russian meddling in the American elections in order to undermine Clinton's candidacy. Another very determining factor was the media coverage given to Donald Trump at a national and international level, the scope of public which he was able to reach gave him a clear advantage as opposed to his opponent.

The national and global trends at the time of his election were favorable for him: economic insecurity fed by globalization leading to a sense of loss of national identity and control for a significant segment of the US population, international terrorism on the rise leading to a sense of physical insecurity, a shift from a bi-polar world to a multi-polar world in which everyone and no one rules at the same time, challenging our past conception of what the world was. A great polarization in political terms was rising in the world, giving special attention to far-right movements due to the physical insecurity aspect regarding immigration and their perceived danger.

On January 20th 2017, Mr. Trump swore his presidency and delivered his inaugural address speech. Trump's undeniable strong personality defied all challenges and accusations of sexual assault, ableism, racism and sexism, none of it mattered at the polls. The political and societal situation was difficult, rural white uneducated populations felt overlooked by the establishment and with Trump, they felt as if their voices and complaints were being heard. The influence of mass media and social media saw an unprecedented

growth spurt and fake news became impossible to filter in pages like Facebook. (CNN, 2016) Social media is deemed to be one of the main responsible actors of Trump's victory.

White men and women, especially Midwesterners, had voiced their feelings of resentment towards outsiders, feminists, immigration, and Democrats, and Trump did a objectively good job in terms of "listening" to their concerns, referring to them as "forgotten men and women of America". Trump was also heavily praised for his lack of political correctness in a time in which the "woke" movement was starting to gain momentum, and millions of Americans did not feel represented by it in any way, shape or form. Many US citizens felt as if the system was corrupt, and someone as straightforward as Donald Trump would be the solution to dissolve the establishment. All of this has an undeniable impact on the way in which he delivers his inaugural address speech.

5.1.2. Structure of the speech

Exordium: Donald Trump commences his speech by thanking "the people of the world", followed by the acknowledgement of the "great national effort to rebuild our country", he recognizes the hardships and challenges ahead, but states that "together we will determine the course of America and the world". Not only does he determine the impact he will have as a President in the United States of America, but he emphasizes the impact that each US Government has on the rest of the world and foreign policy decisions, proving he is aware of the great importance this has on the entire world. Mr. Trump then continues to thank President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama for their "gracious aid throughout the transition" from one government to another. Despite his distasteful comments during the Presidential campaign about President Obama, he shows gratitude to him and his wife. The speaker then continues to point out the great significance of the transfer of power from one President to another, since the occasion is not a mere transfer from one party to another, but a transfer of power from Washington DC "and giving it back to you, the people".

Narratio: Mr. Trump then proceeds to talk about the American establishment, pointing out the fact that the elite has enriched but "people have borne the cost" and accusing the establishment of protecting itself, "but not the citizens of our country". He then states: "that all changes starting right here and right now", since the power is returning to the people. Trump mentions the deep poverty present in families, the thousands of factories closed, the high cost of American education, he mentions "the crime, and the gangs, and the drugs" and their devastating effect. Despite all of the problems present, "it stops right here and

stops right now”. After what seemed like a pessimistic view is then switched into an optimistic call for unity and fraternity of the American people, he points out the historical importance of the power transfer and he swears loyalty to his people. He swears loyalty to protect them from globalization, since it has been devastating for both the American economy and the American workers.

Argumentatio: He repeatedly emphasizes that all problems mentioned previously are now in the past, and looks towards a future in which American interests will always be put first, letting everyone know. Having said this, he breaks down the main structure of his nationalist and protectionist program, exposing his measures regarding borders, economy and jobs.

“We will bring back our wealth, and we will bring back our dreams. We will build new roads and highways and bridges and airports and tunnels, and railways, all across our wonderful nation. We will get our people off of welfare and back to work, rebuilding our country with American hands and American labor. We will follow two simple rules: buy American, and hire American.”

These are the affirmations he makes, in the future tense, to promise his fellow citizens that he will protect them, making Americans the priority always, promising that they will be the ones to rebuild the nation. Nevertheless, regarding foreign policy he promises to strengthen the existing alliances and create new ones with the common objective to eradicate “radical Islamic terrorism from the face of the Earth”. To achieve this, he highlights the need to rely on the core values of American society such as loyalty, patriotism and solidarity with the objective of prospering and rebuilding the nation, especially as they are protected by God.

Peroratio: As a way to finish his speech, he references the multicultural aspect of the American nation, pointing out that no matter birthplace or color of your skin, everyone is part of the same nation and should feel proud of it. He concludes by repeating that together, they will rebuild it stronger and more prosperous than ever, reiterating his position as the one voicing the people’s concerns.

5.1.3. Intent of the discourse

The central message of the speech intends to transmit a sense of urgency to reconstruct the nation and evoking the patriotic sentiment of the US citizens. Based on the sentences “today is the day the people became the rulers of this nation again”, one could gather the intent of the whole discourse.

It gives a harsh critic against the politics of *establishment* and claims the need to eliminate the elite who became richer and collected the benefits of this unjust way of doing politics. Nevertheless, Donald Trump states that this is the end of the establishment and it is now the citizens' turn to have the power back and govern the nation, recover and rebuild it from a perspective in which the priority is the US and its citizens. He attempts to evoke a patriotic feeling through nationalistic pride, appealing to their feelings and resentment towards past governments, reviving their emotions and voicing their concerns.

He intends to give the audience the feeling that this is what they need and want, and this is what is necessary for their nation, and how he as a President will rebuild everything that others destroyed: the American identity, American jobs, American potential and pride, American security and protection, among others. In the process, he makes several references to God and Christianity.

5.1.4. Communication elements according to Jakobson

In this specific act of communication, as in the majority of political discourses, the sender is, obviously: Donald J. Trump, who, at the same time is the channel through which the message is delivered to his audience, the receiver. His audience is divided in three groups: firstly, the former US Presidents and the Chief of Justice, secondly, "fellow Americans" referring to the national audience, and thirdly, he sends a message to the rest of the world: "people of the world". Through this strategic division, the sender states and classifies clearly who his target groups are as the receivers of the message. Said message is transmitted orally; bearing in mind the fact that this discourse will, most likely, be reproduced in written form, as well as broadcasted on television and radio platforms. As the code, or to say, the language the sender chooses to deliver the speech is American English. By referring to the rest of the world but only delivering the speech in American English with no subtitles or interpreters whatsoever, it could imply the notion that a) Everyone should speak English and b) English is the international language. By doing this, Donald Trump reinforces the importance of English at a global level, and implicitly doing so, he implies the importance of the US at a global level.

5.1.5. Language functions

In Donald Trump's inaugural address speech, there is no single language function that stands out above the rest, but more of a combination of the conative, expressive and poetic

functions, as they appear with, more or less, the same frequency. The discourse acquires a very emotional tint, which is a quite common aspect of nationalist or populist political speeches. The final objective of the speech is to provoke an emotional reaction on the audience, and he achieves it by appealing to the audience's feelings and emotions, and he makes use of the different linguistic functions without any, seemingly, meditated pattern.

The **conative function** is certainly the most salient one in the speech. Through this function he intends to provoke an answer or reaction from the audience with the objective in mind being to change or reorient their opinion about specific issues. It is especially remarkable to point the abundance of pronouns included in the speech: "we", "our" or "you". In reiterated occasions he mentions "the people", "America" and "Americans", and not the United States of America or "US", but America alone. Through this, he captivates the audience's attention and convinces them of how they are an important element, even the most important element of the entire speech. He attempts to transmit the feeling that the victory is not Democrat or Republican, but for every single one of the US citizens. This is repeated throughout the entire speech, as we can appreciate in sentences such as: "We the citizens of America are now joined in a great national effort to rebuild our country and restore its promise for all of our people" and "This is your day. This is your celebration, and this, the United States of America, is your country". He makes reference to how now they are being listened and their concerns are being voiced. Trump indirectly recurs to give commands such as: "We will follow two simple rules: buy American, and hire American" and, the most notable and remarkable one "America first". Another command is "Do not allow anyone to tell you that it cannot be done", repeatedly giving back the power to people. The sum of these examples constitutes a clear proof of the clear influential intent of the discourse

The clear element throughout the entire speech is the **emotional** one, since it is a very emotional speech for everyone to feel included and identified, as well as calling to action to participate in the movement that Trump leads. In the sentence: "Americans want great schools for their children, safe neighborhoods for their families, and good jobs for themselves. These are just and reasonable demands of righteous people and a righteous public" he appeals to their wishes and needs in an emotive manner. "Forgotten men and women of our country will be forgotten no longer" through a slightly poetic function in which he alters strategically the order of the word "forgotten" to make the audience feel included by him, the tone of injustice and discontent is persistent throughout the entire discourse. "I will fight for you with every breath in my body, and I will never, ever let you down". He gives a war-like sentence in an oath to protect Americans, their identities, their

borders, their jobs and their families. He does not provide with specific solutions but more of general sentences that he is aware will resonate with the audience's wishes: "We will reinforce old alliances and form new ones, and you unite the civilized world against radical Islamic terrorism, which we will eradicate completely from the face of the Earth" is an example of this.

Finally comes the **poetic function**, which stands out in the discourse despite not being a particularly poetic speech. Despite the fact that Donald Trump does not attain a sophisticated level of rhetoric or stylistic functions of language, it is a carefully meditated speech which has been created with esthetic objectives. The rhetoric of this speech will be further evaluated in the section **(6) Style of the discourse**.

5.1.6. Style of the discourse

The amount of work invested in the elaboration of the speech can be appreciated, since the result has been structured and previously meditated, it is an inaugural address speech and a certain level of formality is expected from the speaker. Donald Trump is not trying to impress the public with the use of an elevated register of speech, since it is directed towards a more ample audience. His intent is not to delight, but more of a comprehensive speech in which everyone understands it and can feel identified with it. The register employed in the discourse is a mixture between the *humile* register in terms of ways of expression, there are no exuberant linguistic resources or rhetoric that could be potentially hard to understand for the general public; and the *sublime* register which intends to emotionally move the audience through the message he gives. At the same time, we can only assume the double intention of the speaker: on one hand, to transmit information that can be gathered quickly and easily understood; and on the other hand, to provoke an emotional reaction and revive specific feelings.

Due to his mediatic past, Donald Trump possesses a high degree of control of his political discourse and the necessary elements to stand out to the audience. One can appreciate the rhetorical figures used in the speech: parallelisms, repetition, antithesis, anaphora, comparisons, metaphors and personification.

Parallelisms include: "We will face challenges. We will confront hardships"; "Their victories have not been your victories. Their triumphs have not been your triumphs" "Their pain is our pain. Their dreams are our dreams". Repetition is highly recurrent throughout the speech, "America only and America first", as well as the repetitions of "we will", Americans and America. Antithesis can be appreciated in "So to all Americans, in

every city near and far, small and large”, as contrary adjectives are posed in the same sentence to appeal to all citizens through the use of contrast.

Certainly, the most used rhetorical figure is the anaphora. There are plenty of examples which include: “It belongs to you. It belongs to everyone gathered here today”; “We share one heart, one home, and one glorious destiny”; “We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth, and we will bring back our dreams.”. Comparations, which are different from metaphors, have “rusted out factories, scattered **like** tombstones across the landscape of our nation”. Metaphors in the speech include: “The wealth of our middle class has been ripped from their homes” and “We stand at the birth of a new millennium, ready to unlock the mysteries of space, to free the Earth from the miseries of disease and to harness the energies, industries and technologies of tomorrow”. The personification of specific inanimate elements such as drugs is used to express the urgency of an issue “the drugs that have stolen too many lives” or “No challenge can match the heart and fight and spirit of America”, in which “America” is the main protagonist and treated like a living being.

One can only assume that these elements have been carefully studied and selected to create a speech that is easy to comprehend but includes elements which embellish it.

5.1.7. Lexical study

It is especially relevant to identify the most frequent words in Trump’s speech since the lexical choices reflect the socio-historical context and the present ideology in the speech. The possessive pronoun “our” is used 49 times and it is used to include everyone and help the audience feel heard. “America” and “American” are quite high on the frequency list since Donald Trump bases his speech on a nationalist and patriotic ground, the top priority will from now on be our country, since many aspects such as identity, jobs, security and economy, had been robbed from the Americans. “Country”, “people”, “nation” are also frequently used and associated with the main topic of the speech, revealing his centrist ideology and focusing on his people and his nation, not allowing any foreign state to intervene negatively in the US anymore.

It is relevant to note how the word “will” is used 40 times and can be seen in sentences such as “We will not fail. Our country will thrive and prosper again” and:

“I **will** fight for you with every breath in my body, and I **will** never, ever let you down. America **will** start winning again, winning like never before. We **will** bring back our jobs. We **will** bring back our borders. We **will** bring back our wealth, and we **will** bring back our dreams. We **will** build new roads and highways and bridges and airports and tunnels, and railways, all across our

wonderful nation. We **will** get our people off of welfare and back to work, rebuilding our country with American hands and American labor.”

In contrast, the word “must” is used only 3 times. Must is an imperative, thus the speaker uses it to request something from his listeners and express his ideas more powerfully, while at the same time creating a stimulus and a sense of confidence in his audience: “we must think big and dream even bigger.” The intent of the use of the word “will” is clear, President Trump chose his words implies a prospective for the future worded in a way in which every single person in the audience can relate to it. He tries to make his intentions clear to the Americans and in using “we will” he expresses the need for collective effort, “we will face challenges, he shows that he focuses on the Americans and not only on himself.

Impactful words such as “disease”, “Islamic”, “carnage”, “blood”, “stolen”, “robbed”, are used only once but they have surely been carefully selected to inflict specific feelings on the audience, feelings such as fear, hate and call for action. He voices the concerns many Americans had been scared to voice in fear of being called racists, xenophobes, islamophobes... Donald Trump is openly part of those categories and his hate speech instilled hate crimes and violence due to the degree of incitement and fearmongering he showed in his speeches.

5.1.8. Non-verbal communication

In terms of his *pronuntiatio*, Donald Trump manages to transmit his message in a powerful way through different strategies which were, surely, heavily meditated before the delivery of the speech. Against my prejudice, the speech is delivered in a firm but calm way, and is not perceived as aggressive as it was perhaps made out to be initially in the mass media platforms. The delivery of the speech has been carefully studied, he not only knows it by memory but he has perfected the strategic pauses intended for applause. His intonation varies throughout the speech, giving more emphasis to simple but powerful phrases such as “America first”, rises his voice to give a more powerful effect, after which he makes a pause to allow the public to react.

When we focus on his body language, Mr. Trump manages to keep a serious gesture on his face at all times, he clearly frowns throughout the course of the inaugural speech. One of his hands is at all times in the air, Donald Trump points at the sky in a recurrent manner, as well as towards the audience, if not, his hand is open, and his palm is facing the audience.

5.2. *Joe Biden's inaugural address speech*

5.2.1. Macroconditions

Joseph “Joe” Robinette Biden Jr. won the Presidential elections and was proclaimed the 46th President of the US on November 7th 2020, and delivered his inaugural address speech on January 20th 2021. The socio-economic situation in which Joe Biden got to power is, to say the least, complicated. For starters, the coronavirus pandemic. Not only did it cost the lives of 400,000 Americans, but it also completely transformed American life and politics in 2020. The handling of the crisis by former President Donald Trump was unfavorable in the polls, since the public had more confidence in the way Joe Biden would handle it. Joe Biden carried out a campaign based on discretion, empathy and justice. Meanwhile during the administration of Donald Trump, the main stories were based around the pandemic, the protests regarding the death of George Floyd and Black Lives Matter movement and the economic disruption as a consequence of the pandemic; Joe Biden was capable of keeping a low profile which gave him advantage. Biden carried out a concerted strategy to strategically limit his exposure, Trump responded with several jabs when he called him “*hidin’ Biden*” but the latter decided to maintain a discrete profile and let Trump humiliate himself. (BBC, 2020)

The political division in the US Society was a clearly for Biden’s victory, the society was and still is vastly divided between Democrats and Republicans, conservatives and liberals, and Donald Trump’s administration only deepened this breach. Joe Biden faced a greatly strained society on all levels, at the 2020 elections there was a general feeling of “anyone but Trump” (BBC, 2020). In the midst of this breach, Biden managed to stay in the center and was able to stick with a centrist strategy, in which he opposed universal government-run healthcare, free college education and a wealth tax, which allowed him to maximize his appeal towards moderate Republicans. At the same time, he was able to appeal to younger voters regarding the topic of climate change. He responded to criticisms quickly, increasing investments and working towards policies to achieve environmental justice.

After four years of chaos, division and hate speech, Joe Biden appeared with a campaign based on “decency, unity and national healing”. (TIME, 2020) He promised to govern with empathy, providing experience to “restore the soul of the nation” (TIME, 2020) Such times of urgency required someone who had the temperance, patience and experience to guide the population of the greatest global power throughout the situation.

The competition became intense between an incompetent President, former celebrity who took the virus as a joke and nearly ripped the nation apart vs. an experienced politician who vowed to heal the nation and help citizens recover at all levels from the Covid-19 pandemic. (TIME, 2020) Biden's empathy became his signature trait due to the tragedy he has personally experienced in his life, many had experienced similar situations during the pandemic and confided in him to comfort them.

At the time of the inaugural address, the US Capitol had been deadly assaulted due to the incitement of former President Donald Trump, and thus this event clearly marked the basis on which Biden would focus his speech on: democracy. Despite the fact that Donald Trump's administration boosted the economy in the short run, he deeply damaged the image of the US globally, and Biden is aware of the implications of the US elections at an international level since many states' national and foreign policies depend on the US administration and alliances. (Ghani and Hussain, 2021)

5.2.2. Structure of the speech

Exordium: Joe Biden commences his speech by acknowledging “my distinguished guests, my fellow Americans”, followed by “this is America's day, this is democracy's day”. He makes no reference to former US Presidents like Trump did but rather the makes a reference to the previously mentioned assault to the US Capitol incited by Donald Trump. “Today we celebrate not the triumph of a candidate but of a cause, a cause of democracy”. Not only does he celebrate his own victory, but he states the importance of his victory of something much larger which threatened the very basis of the US nation. After the introduction of his speech around the topic of democracy he goes on to thank his predecessors of both parties for their presence and President Carter, who was not able to attend the inauguration, but Biden saluted for his lifetime of service. He ends his introduction by mentioning the need to seek a more perfect union all together, but acknowledging the long road ahead. However, there are no apparent mentions directly to Trump.

Narratio: Mr. Biden then proceeds to mention the urgent situation the US is sunk in, there is much to heal and much to restore, he acknowledges the challenging position he is in due to the current circumstances due to the coronavirus pandemic. Among the consequences of the pandemic, he mentions the unemployment and closing of thousands of businesses, but he goes on to mention the lack of racial justice, political extremism, white supremacy, domestic terrorism as the main challenges that must be defeated. “To

overcome these challenges, to restore the soul and secure the future of America, requires so much more than words” he is showing willingness to restore the nation from its very soul and ground, and is aware of the challenges he will face to do so. Biden makes a reference to Lincoln with the sentence “my whole soul is in it today” referencing the Act of Emancipation in which the former US President urged the nation for unity in times of division, the same division Biden is facing now. Despite all the problems present, he presents unity as the solution to overcome these challenges: “With unity we can do great things, important things.”, he is calling for action for everyone to let aside their differences and change the narrative.

Argumentatio: Biden repeatedly emphasizes all the crisis the US has gone through, but gives a positive view since they have always come out victoriously because they worked through it together. He enumerates everything they can do, asking his audience to “treat each other with dignity and respect” since “for without unity there is no peace, only bitterness and fury, no progress, only exhausting outrage. No nation, only a state of chaos.” He calls for change, to end this “uncivil war” as he classifies it, referring to the harsh division between both political parties and the assault to the US Capitol. He accepts the impact the US politics have globally, as he mentions “we all understand the world is watching” and proceeds to send a message to all of those beyond the US’ borders by stating they will indeed come out stronger of this deep crisis, they will overcome their challenges, repair their alliances and lead with their example, breaking down his foreign policy prospective.

“Folks, it's a time of testing. We face an attack on our democracy, and on truth, a raging virus, a stinging inequity, systemic racism, a climate in crisis, America's role in the world.” Biden is clear in his enumeration of the challenges faced; however, he does not give specific details on his planned programmed for the future or the ways in which he is planning to face the problems ahead and solve the entrenched issues in US society. He refers to the next Chapter of the history of the United States of America as the American story, then proceeds to mention the American Anthem and a specific verse which stands out to him regarding their Children and legacy as a reference to the future.

Peroratio: As a way to finish his speech, he appeals to his “fellow Americans” and promises before “God and all of you” to always defend the US, its Constitution and democracy, giving his word to protect and unite through the values of hope, truth, justice, decency, dignity and love. Biden reiterates the American secured liberty and its example set to the world, and ends with “May God bless America and God protect our troops” as a reference to his Catholic devotion as an ending touch to his speech.

5.2.3. Intent of the discourse

Contrary to the first speaker, Joe Biden bases his speech on the larger message that we need unity in times of crisis. He intends to evoke feelings, however not hard ones. He gives a message of looking towards the future, prosperity and unitedness, he makes biblical references such as “weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” and urges his citizens to lend a hand in times of need. Biden is a devout Catholic and through Biblical quotes and references to God he shows how important his faith is to him. The topic of the speech is completely opposite to the one of his precedent President, he shows restlessness, boldness and optimism in his tone. His optimistic message can be defined by the sentence “this will not break the country but rather make it stronger”, there are several references to Lincoln and how he united the nation in times of division, as he intends to do the same. “And we can still disagree” is a key sentence in the speech since Biden shows that his goal is unity of purpose and not unity of perspective, suggesting that we should share a common goal, but we could have different opinions on how to achieve said goal.

Biden is coldly realistic of the current situation but nevertheless optimistic for the future, combining a good formula to shift the emotions evoked in the audience. Biden mentions the urgent challenges faced without forgetting the challenges present for centuries now. He gives a harsh implicit critic to the former President, Donald Trump, mentioning the fight against threats to democracy, using the word “democracy” 10 times during the speech, more than any other President in the history of the US. (CNBC, 2021) Biden also states a sentence that could reflect perfectly his view of the prospective US Foreign Policy: “not merely by the example of our power but by the power of our example” suggesting that the US shows a commitment to democracy rather than showing a display of force.

5.2.4. Communication elements according to Jakobson

In the same way as Donald Trump’s inaugural address speech was analyzed and in most of political discourses, the sender of the discourse is: Joe Biden, while at the same time being the channel through which the message is delivered orally to the audience, his receiver. The communication elements according to Jakobson are almost exactly the same as the elements in Mr. Trump’s discourse, the audience is divided as well but this time into two groups: firstly, Chief Justice Roberts and Vice-Presidents present, and secondly, “my distinguished guests, my fellow Americans”. Unlike Trump, he makes no reference to

former US Presidents or to the “people of the world”, focusing on his intent to get his message exclusively to Americans for them to resonate with it. The message is delivered through the oral channel but again, bearing in mind the fact that it will be aired on television, radio and reproduced in written form in different media platforms.

As the code in which the message is sent, the language chosen once again is American English, however, there are no apparent intentions such as with Mr. Trump’s discourse implying the importance of English as a global and international language and the US as a global power, but rather a humbler approach directed towards his fellow citizens.

5.2.5. Language functions

In terms of language functions, Joe Biden follows the same direction as his predecessor, due to the fact that there is no single language function which stands out, but his speech is more of a combination between the conative or appellative function, the emotional and the poetic ones. The discourse also acquires a very emotional tint, however, in a completely opposite direction to Donald Trump’s. Meanwhile the first attempted to evoke hard feelings of nationalism and protectionism, hate towards the foreign and fear, the latter attempts to evoke the empathetic side of the audience with the combination of said language functions. It is certainly interesting to perceive how the combination of the same functions can bear such opposingly different results. The discourse is clearly divided in a meditated pattern in which the **conative function** is repeated throughout the entire speech with certain relevance. With this function, he intends to provoke an answer or reaction from the audience, and in this case the number of pronouns is also especially remarkable: “we” is used 33 times, “our”, “you”, “we the people” are used in reiterated occasions, and in the same way in which Donald Trump used exclusively the word “America” to refer to the United States of America, Joe Biden does the same thing. With this strategy, he manages to catch the attention and give an inclusiveness sense to his speech in style with the larger message of unity and togetherness. This is repeated throughout the duration of the entire speech in sentences such as “together we will write an American story of hope, not fear” or “my fellow Americans I close the day where I began, with a sacred oath.” He manages to include everyone as a whole in relation to him and transmit a feeling of awareness of his position as a guidance to his people. In his knowingly position of power he gives commands such as “we must end this uncivil war that pits red against blue, rural versus urban, conservative versus liberal” as an urgent call

for unity and peace. Once again, the sum of these examples constitutes a clear proof of the clear influential intent of the discourse.

Another clear language element throughout the entire speech is the **emotional one**, it has been clearly meditated and created to evoke feelings of empathy and reflection in his audience, and in the same way as his predecessor did, he calls for action. However, the action Joe Biden calls for is one of unity, calm, peace, dignity and justice, and to achieve this he manages to use the underlining of his own tragedy in life as a way to appeal to people's feelings and grief. He appeals to the families who have lost their loved ones, their jobs, their businesses, he appeals to the futility and capriciousness of life as a way to evoke reflection on our own actions. Biden manages to voice the concerns and questions that hundreds of thousands of families are facing at the moment "I understand like their dad they lay in bed at night staring at the ceiling thinking: 'Can I keep my healthcare? Can I pay my mortgage?' Thinking about their families, about what comes next. I promise you, I get it." Empathy is certainly his signature trait, and he takes advantage of it to make the audience feel listened and understood, a highly important feeling when it comes to political discourse and speech. Joe Biden calls for reflection asking a question regarding the common values that we all share as Americans as a way to unite "What are the common objects we as Americans love, that define us as Americans? I think we know. Opportunity, security, liberty, dignity, respect, honor, and yes, the truth". He makes an oath to protect the American story, democracy, Constitution, dignity and future; however, he does not provide specific solutions but more like general sentences that will resonate with the audience's wishes in the same way as Trump previously did. "Fellow Americans, moms, dads, sons, daughters, friends, neighbors and co-workers. We will honor them by becoming the people and the nation we can and should be" in this sentence he combines he appellative function with the emotional one as an optimistic promise of "becoming", however he does not mention any specific policy to carry this promise out.

Finally comes the poetic function, being especially relevant in Biden's speech. The rhetorical style employed by him is poetical and certainly more sophisticated and meditated than his predecessor, but not to a much larger extent. Neither are *sublime* style discourses, but Biden's rhetoric can be identified as realistic but embellished to a higher level. In the next section, **(6) Style of the discourse**, his style will be discussed and analyzed in detail his rhetoric choices.

5.2.6. Style of the discourse

Joe Biden clearly meditated and worked on his elaboration of the discourse prior to its delivery. The discourse is well structured and achieves the level of formality expected from a political discourse of the kind, however, neither of the discourses analyzed has been formulated with the intention to impress or delight the audience. Both discourses have been written with the objective to be understood by a general public and in the same way as Donald Trump did it, the register is a combination between the *humile* register and the *sublime* one; as in terms of expression they are employed to be easily understood and to emotionally move the audience through the message. Taking into account the conditions in which both speeches were delivered we can only assume that Joe Biden's has the same double intent as his predecessor did: on one hand, to transmit information that can be gathered quickly and easily understood; and on the other hand, to provoke an emotional reaction and revive specific feelings. The information given and the feelings evoked by the latter are, however, completely opposite compared to the former.

The rhetorical resources present conform a broad variety among which we can find repetition, personification, intertextuality, anaphora and juxtaposition. Mr. Biden also employs the use of grim statistics in order to appeal to the *logos* of the audience, giving the number of those who have perished during the covid-19 pandemic but putting into perspective the fact that the virus "has taken as many lives in one year as America lost in all of World War 2".

He summed up the larger situation through an enumeration of the larger problems present in the US: "We face an attack on democracy and on truth. A raging virus. Growing inequity. The sting of systemic racism. A climate in crisis. America's role in the world. Any one of these would be enough to challenge us in profound ways." This shows he is fully aware of the population's concerns and presents it without sugarcoating it and with a plain language with the intention of getting the message straight.

Repetition is seen consistently throughout the discourse in sentences such as "much to repair, much to restore, much to heal, much to build and much to gain" giving him the potential to reaffirm his values.

Through the use of intertextuality, he weaves in another text inside his own, in this case he mentions Lincoln's Emancipation Act in which he said "my whole soul is in it" referring to the cause of national healing and unity. Biden referred to it when he said "my whole soul is in it today", kneading himself inside Lincoln's words and showing intention to devote himself to the cause for American unity and healing of a divided nation just like

Lincoln once did. “My whole soul is in it today, on this January day. My whole soul is in this. Bringing America together, uniting our people, uniting our nation.” In the same of intertextuality, he also refers to the preamble of the American Constitution and the Bible.

Anaphora is used frequently with “we can” as a repetition at the beginning of different sentences in order to expose his policies such as boosting employment, bringing racial justice and ensuring access to healthcare.

A juxtaposition between ideals and reality is present throughout the entire discourse, as Biden gives a cold vision of reality while offering a positive view for the future, referring to the past as an example of victory and survival: “Our history has been a constant struggle between the American ideal, that we are all created equal, and the harsh ugly reality that racism, nativism and fear have torn us apart.” This sentence portrays the idea that there is an existing gap between the America that exists now and the America they want to become, by doing this, he gives a sense of hope and implicitly calls to action for that to happen again.

Parallelism is present as a way to present two opposing ideas in a more impactful way: “For without unity there is no peace, only bitterness and fury, no progress, only exhausting outrage. No nation, only a state of chaos.” He repeats 2 phrases starting with the words “no” and “only” with the objective of showing that people cannot accomplish anything while the constant berating and attacking each other is still a reality.” He issues a clear call to action when he states “Let's begin to listen to one another again, hear one another, see one another. Show respect to one another. Politics doesn't have to be a raging fire destroying everything in its path. Every disagreement doesn't have to be a cause for total war and we must reject the culture in which facts themselves are manipulated and even manufactured.”, in this portion, these strong calls to action are meant to encourage the audience to evaluate their own roles and start anew.

Allusion is present when he references the March on Washington and the speech given by Martin Luther King and the Women’s Suffrage parade in 1930, showing awareness of his own place in history and acknowledgement that they stand upon the shoulders of those who fought for justice. He acknowledges the soldiers buried in Arlington cemetery and shows that he looks up to them. President Biden employs a metaphor to relate the “right to dissent, peaceably, the guardrails of our republic”, meaning it protects everyone’s freedom of expression. He keeps reiterating American values, as it seems like he really wants Americans to remember these qualities so that they are not lost.

“Because here's the thing about life. There's no accounting for what fate will deal you. Some days you need a hand. There are other days when we're called to lend a hand.”

Here Biden employs subtext of tragedy in that he knows how capricious life can be, bearing in mind the loss and tragic deaths of his first wife, daughter and son and this contributes to the rhetorical appeal of *ethos*, in which the speaker bolsters his credibility because he is speaking from experience and the audience can identify with it.

Biden asks plenty of rhetorical questions which he answers himself: “Are we going to step up?”, “Will we master this rare and difficult hour? Will we meet our obligations and pass along a new and better world to our children?”; “Which shall be our legacy, what will our children say?” there is an underlined theme present of looking to the future and asking the question to provoke reflection and wonder what must be done now in order to help future generations succeed. “And together we will write an American story of hope, not fear. Of unity not division, of light not darkness. A story of decency and dignity, love and healing, greatness and goodness. May this be the story that guides us. The story that inspires us.” Repetition and anaphora is present in this sentence which aspires to transmit hope and unity once again, in doing this he implicitly shows awareness of the forces who do not share said goal of unity.

In a nutshell, Joe Biden managed to create an effective and emotional discourse which fit perfectly with the symbolism and the socio-historical context present that day.

5.2.7. Lexical study

In terms of Biden’s lexical study and lexical choice, we can perceive several differences in the word choice between him and Donald Trump. Starting with the pronouns, the word “we” is used 92 times and the word “I” is used 33 times. Meanwhile the use of “we” shows an inclusive tendency and a sense of togetherness, the use of “I” indicates the speaker’s dominance over the audience. (Ghani and Hussain, 2021) This leads us to think it was his intention to deliver an inclusive speech, taking into consideration the fact that the word “our” is used 44 times and “us” is mentioned 27 times. Even though Joe Biden wants to give individual statements as an acknowledgment of his position in history and power, he wanted to give a sense of inclusiveness and togetherness along with the main theme of his discourse.

The verb “can” is mentioned 17 times as a way to empower people into taking action to become the best version of the nation they can become, which goes hand in hand with the repetition of the word “story” 9 times and the word “American” 10 times. Biden reiterated his efforts to look towards the future and become the best version they can become for the future generations to be proud of the nation they rebuilt and created from

chaos. “Unity” as the main topic of the discourse is mentioned 8 times, along with “together” which is mentioned 6 times as a way to evoke feelings and call to action for all to come together and leave their differences aside to fix the urgent and lasting problems of the nation. He says “fellow” and “folks” as a way to appeal to all audiences and portray a sense of inclusiveness once again.

Words like “justice”, “truth”, “peace”, “love”, “faith”, “right” and “respect” are reiterated and are also especially relevant if we bear in mind the 3D model Fairclough offers us in which discourse is seen as a social practice and reflection of the current socio-historical context at the time of the discourse. For Biden, these are relevant since he achieved his position as President in office in the middle of a global pandemic, deeply divided nation and worsening economy after a very tumultuous administration and damaged US foreign image. In his appeal for unity, he also appealed for other values such as respect and justice, as he considers them the basis of the US society and nation.

Contrary to his predecessor, there is a lack of radical statements since that was not the objective Biden had in mind, however, there is a reiterated mention of values he wants to encourage in the audience.

5.2.8. Non-verbal communication

Joe Biden appears serious and calm, looking straight ahead during the entirety of the speech. His hands are moving but in controlled motions and there are no exaggerated gestures or intonation variations. “This is a good nation, we are good people” is said in a lower, calmer tone than the rest of the speech. This message could be easily interpreted as having two sides: the first one, towards his fellow Americans who need to be encouraged and believe the good in the US, and the second, towards the international audience who has lost faith in the US as a serious power since Donald Trump’s administration and its global perception as a tumultuous joke. The speech and the gestures are clearly meditated and memorized. Biden seems to be aware of the calming effect of this body language to transmit a message in tune with the central topic of the speech.

Despite the fact that there are moments in which he raises his tone, the message transmitted is a message of encouragement and calling to action, reminding the audience of the times in which the US has been sunk in deep crisis but has risen. As a comparison with his predecessor, it is interesting to note the completely opposite approach both US Presidents have taken in both language and non-verbal communication aspects.

Joe Biden has clearly studied the delivery of his speech in terms of the pauses he had to make to leave time for reflection and applause. There is an especially symbolic moment of silence in which he remembered the lives of the hundreds of thousands who perished as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. As someone who knows grief, he is calling the audience to acknowledge their own grief.

5.3. Comparative analysis of both inaugural speeches

When we focus on each specific part analyzed, certain differences can be perceived regarding both US Presidents in the way they act as speakers. Firstly, when focusing on the communication elements, we can find how both address the American population and the international community, however, Trump emphasizes his message towards the latter due to his intentions of appealing to the “people of the world” as a way to reiterate the American superiority feeling he wants to evoke. Both Presidents are aware of the implications at a global level of the American elections’ turnout, however, Donald Trump appears to be focusing his speech on the rest of the world as a way of warning them or sending a message of “from now on, America will be our priority”; while Joe Biden seems to be sending a positive message of hope towards the international community as a way to amend Donald Trump’s damage to the US’ global image.

In terms of structure, both speeches are structured in a coherent and studied manner, however, both speeches seem to be repeating the corresponding ideas throughout the entirety of the speech, this is especially relevant in Donald Trump’s. He seems to be reiterating over and over again the ideas of protectionism, nationalism, patriotism and pride without mentioning specific policies he intends to implement during his administration as a solution to the current US problems, but more like broad promises like giving back jobs and protecting the US. On the other hand, Biden follows a more lineal structure but nevertheless follows a similar pattern to Trump of reiterating the same ideas without providing specific policies, but more like a set of values he will base his administration on.

When it comes to the intent of the speech, we can see diametrically opposed intentions between both US Presidents: the first one seems to have as an objective the provocation and evocation of strong negative feelings of alienation and separation between “them” and “us”, for example mentioning the harm the foreigners and outsiders have done to the US. He appears as if he is voicing the concerns of the preoccupied and suffering American population that has felt silenced, he wants to seem close and as a savior to those who felt abandoned during other administrations. He does this by creating a division between Americans vs. the rest., the establishment vs. the people, immigrants vs. Americans, globalization vs protecting the US. The second speaker, on the other hand, appeals to the emotional side of the audience in order to call for unity, dignity and respect especially during such trying times of crisis. Biden is aware of the situation of emergency present in the US and the rest of the world, but is especially aware of the harm that someone like Trump has inflicted on the deep breach in US politics, which is, perhaps, now deeper

than ever. It is due to this that he calls for unity, mentioning the urgent recent challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the worsening economic crisis, while addressing ongoing challenges the US has faced since its very foundation: inequality and racial injustice. While Donald Trump calls for a divisive sentiment, Joe Biden asks to lend a hand in times of need, to let differences aside and have a common view of the future without necessarily sharing the same perspective on how that objective should be achieved. He asks for love, dignity, justice, unity and respect as the values that guide them towards a better future, showing his empathy as his signature.

Regarding language functions they both fall into the same patterns: conative function and emotive function. The conative or appellative function is used in order to call the audience's attention or call for action: "we the people", "my fellow Americans", "America/Americans" are some examples present in both speeches as they are addressed towards the same population, despite the fact that they are addressed with different intentions. The emotional one is used indistinctively in both speeches to evoke a broad variety of feelings in the audience, for Trump, he insists on creating an atmosphere of division and anger, it seems as if he is calling for action for people to become even more hateful of the foreign or the unknown. He employs the emotive function to evoke negative feelings of hate, despair, and provoking anger in the audience for having been left abandoned by previous administrations, blaming the rest of the world but them, which is a quite common strategy for nationalist and populist attitudes. Through the analysis of both speeches we can perceive how Biden appears to have a completely opposed strategy in terms of the use of the emotive function. In his words we can see an intention to unite, to evoke a sentiment of togetherness and pride of being American but in a completely different approach from Donald Trump. Meanwhile Trump evokes pride in a nationalistic and protectionist way, Biden pretends to convince the audience and the rest of the world that "we are good people" and reminds them of the times in history where they have fallen but recovered because they united. Reminding them of the American values that conform their society and the challenges ahead that can be faced together in order to become the America they want to become, with humility and gratitude, dignity, respect and unity. Trump's speech comes off as negative in comparison with Biden's in terms of intention, use of language, use of emotive function and stylistic resources, and as it will be seen in the following paragraphs, especially in the lexical choices.

The *sublime* register, typical in political speech, is present in both speeches but it is important to highlight the way in which both politicians decided to craft their speeches in comprehension terms. Both speeches are accessible to everyone, and do not contain

words or expressions that could be misunderstood, they are written in elegant form but do not contain intricate literary resources, but more direct expressions that a broad majority of the audience can feel related to. For the international community who might not have English as their mother tongue, both speeches are generally easy to understand to everyone with an intermediate/advanced comprehension of the English language. The easy comprehension of the speech is due to a combination of the *sublime* and the *humile* registers. Both Presidents appear close to the audience, since both of them have as a strategy to appear as if they have listened to the audience's pleas and heard their concerns.

In their lexical choices we can perceive their ideological direction and inherent intentions quite clearly: "democracy" is repeated 10 times in Biden's speech, the highest number of times mentioned in an inaugural address speech in history. Meanwhile in Donald Trump's speech, words like "carnage", "blood", "stolen" and "ripped" stand out due to their crudeness and negativity, he mentions Islamic radicalism and immigration as the main challenges faced by the US. Meanwhile Biden tends to go for softer values, even in the midst of a health crisis, global uncertainty, racial injustice, sinking economy and divided society, as he enumerates it, Joe Biden achieves a hopeful and more positive tone towards the future compared to his predecessor, whom is much more sarcastic and negative, even fatalistic. In Biden's lexical choices we can see how his intentions show through, as he pretends to amend what Trump damaged. His expressions tend to be more empathetic: "I understand", and words such as "love", "unity", "dignity" and "justice" stand out in the speech. He reiterates calls for unity and respect, while Donald Trump appears as if he is trying to deepen the division already present in the US.

In terms of their body language, both try to come off as close to their audience, but Donald Trump is especially relevant in this aspect. His hand and face gestures are exaggerated as a strategy to evoke the feelings he intends to evoke with intensity, he uses his finger to point to the sky and his palm is facing the audience, he switches he direction of his body and he shows very little calmness or studied body language. Despite the fact that his pauses and intonation variations seem to be studied, his body language does not seem controlled or meditated. On the other hand, Joe Biden's body language is controlled, professional and shows little variation. Both of his hands are moving slightly but there are no exaggerated movements, as it would be expected from an elected US President. He stays calm and professional while being respectful and close to his audience.

6. Conclusions

Concluded the comparative discourse analysis of both inaugural address speeches, it is possible to affirm, in a nutshell, both speeches have confirmed the respective hypothesis stated in this thesis, with, nevertheless, slight variations. In the “Hypothesis” section, existing prejudices and predictions based on past performances were exposed and explained regarding what was expected of both candidates in terms of rhetoric, main theme and delivery of the speech.

In the case of Donald Trump, his image had been heavily damaged by social media, and since the “Hypothesis” section was written before ever visualizing or reading the inaugural address speech, all prejudices and predictions were based on images seen on media channels, and thus, were remarkably negative. On the other hand, Joe Biden’s predictions were accurate in his politeness, empathy and calmness after all Spanish media outlets painted a positive picture of him.

Regarding Donald Trump’s speech, we can find a surprisingly studied and meditated delivery of the speech, with strategically used rhetorical figures and language functions formulated to evoke specific feelings. Leaving aside his ideology, Trump successfully achieved his objective in an effective manner. Despite it being a nationalistic, patriotic and protectionist speech in theme, the resources employed to embellish his words were effective and carefully studied in order to express his feelings and wishes and provoke the feelings he desired to in the audience. The main topic “*America First*”, could be considered a simplistic approach to a much larger problem, but former President Trump managed to formulate his message in a way large parts of the population felt their concerns were being heard for the first time. The way in which he explained his policy approaches was general and simplified to a tea as a strategy to say what his supporters wanted to hear regarding Islamic terrorism, immigration, economy and jobs, among others.

Meanwhile, Joe Biden caught the world “by surprise” when he became President with a significant majority after a highly private campaign which proved effective. Unlike other speakers such as Obama, Biden is not perceived as a natural public person or rhetoric expert, however, his message gets across in the way he intended to. It was an effective, symbolic and studied speech, however, it did not have as many embellishments as expected. His plainness, realistic facts and encouragement words were the key in the delivery of the speech. Biden’s will probably not go down in history as a remarkable one, but for the socio-historical context and current situation at all levels, it was an effective way to call for such necessary unity and respect in US society.

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