

## **Trump's Inaugural Addresses in comparison**

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Since Donald Trump revealed his ambition to run for president back in the latter stages of 2015 by starting an “unprecedented campaign”, his rhetoric and language use has “provoked extensive commentary on striking features of his language use” (Eitelmann and Schneider 2020: 1). While extensive research has been done that focusses on his linguistic style and idiosyncrasies in presidential debates or his tweets, very little research has been done that focusses on the style, grammatical variation and linguistic idiosyncrasies of his inaugural addresses. With regard to the recent USpresidential

election in which Trump emerged victorious, this study focusses on his very recent inaugural address from January 20th 2025 by comparing its linguistic style and patterns to his first inaugural address from 2017 as it seeks to provide an insight into the style, grammatical variation and linguistic patterns to explore how Trump's linguistic style has evolved between his two inaugural addresses and what can be inferred about changes in his political strategy.

Therefore, the following research questions will guide this project :

- What types of linguistic devices are used in the inaugural addresses of Donald Trump?
- Have Trump's linguistic idiosyncrasies changed from 2017(2016) in comparison to his 2025 Inaugural Address? If so, how?
- What are the conclusions we can draw from that comparison?

To achieve this, this study draws upon the transcripts of Trump's two inaugural addresses from 2017 and 2025, using the AntConc program together with its Keyword tool as well as KWIC (Key Word in Context) to parallel the two speeches. Since the Keyword tool requires a sufficiently large reference corpus to produce results, insights will also be gained by comparing each inaugural address to a larger corpus of Trump speeches delivered in 2016. Through these methods, we aim to investigate conclusive

and insightful passages in order to explore the context of prominent occurrences. Therefore, this study utilizes a mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyze the two speeches. A first main topic will be the analysis of the use of negation through not only analyzing what forms of negation he uses, but also how it changes over the two speeches, as well as analyzing the aim of implying negations in his political speech. The second part inductively investigates both speeches by, first, comparing them to the larger reference corpus to highlight changes viewed against a common denominator. The hints provided by this quantitative approach will then be more closely analysed in the qualitative part.

Eitelmann, Matthias and Ulrike Schneider (2020) "From Fake News to Tremendous Success. Introduction". In: Ulrike Schneider & Eitelmann, Matthias (eds.) *Linguistic Inquiries into Donald Trump's language*, 1-16. London/New York: Bloomsbury.