

## Testing texture in presidential inaugural address: Variation across culture

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**Abstract:** This study adopts the Hallidayan Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), specifically the textual metafunction, to explore cohesion in Ghanaian and American Presidential Inaugural Addresses (PIAs). The SFL theory is aided by the corpus-assisted approach to text analysis. In all, sixteen PIAs given by different presidents from the American and Ghanaian contexts constitute the corpus for the study. The findings revealed that both Ghanaian and American presidents make use of all the four grammatical cohesive devices as texture creation agents in their inaugural speeches. However, these cohesive agents were deployed at different frequencies. Unlike their Ghanaian counterparts, the American presidents chose grammatical cohesive devices that were comparatively more diverse. The findings have implications for the SFL theory and other research works on texture in political discourse in general and PIAs in particular.

**Keywords:** Texture, cohesion, inaugural address, Systemic Functional Linguistics, political discourse.

### 1. Introduction

Of late, political discourse has been widely explored within the linguistics and applied linguistics literature. One sub-genre in particular has received comprehensive attention, viz. the Presidential Inaugural Address (PIA). PIAs are usually made on the occasion of official inauguration of an elected candidate and in the course of delivering these speeches, the elected candidate reaffirms his or her aim to serve the electorate by fulfilling all the campaign promises made prior to the election. Sameer (2017) sees the PIA as one of the most important types of political discourse because it plays an integral role in the political life of an elected president. The PIA therefore offers a platform for the elected president to convince the populace, boost their morale, motivate the confidence of the masses, and seek their support (Sameer 2017).

Since politics is considered “a struggle for power in order to put certain political, economic and social ideas into practice” (Horvath 2009: 45), politicians use language strategically to convey their beliefs, ideologies and visions in their political speeches, and the PIA is no exception. In delivering those speeches, politicians use different linguistic strategies and techniques, one of these being the creation of texture.

“A text has texture, and this is what distinguishes it from something that is not a text. It derives this texture from the fact that it functions as a unity with respect to its environment” (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 2). That is, texture occurs when either spoken or written text is organized into a more meaningful and connective form “instead of spilling out formlessly in every possible direction” (Halliday 1994: 311). Martin (2001) links texture to text organization and cohesion, which reflects the fact that cohesion is integral to the creation of texture in texts. That is, “the presence of the cohesive textual devices in a linguistic stretch which consists of more than one sentence contributes to the whole unity of this text and grants it texture” (Al-Hindawi and Abu-Krooz 2017: 6).

Martin (2001) further associates texture with an aspect of the study of coherence, which takes into account the context of situation of a text, and this brings out the connection between *cohesion*, *texture* and *coherence*. In other words, the effective and appropriate use of cohesive devices creates semantic ties which give a text texture and thus build the coherence of a text. In this paper, we conduct a comparative study of the types, similarities and differences in texture creation strategies in PIAs of

selected American and Ghanaian presidents, specifically the use of grammatical cohesive devices.

The broader research aim of this study is to explore the extent to which the use of cohesive devices as texture creation agents might be influenced by culture. To be specific, the study investigates how language manifests itself in different socio-cultural contexts like America and Ghana. The type of cultural difference relevant here is the dichotomy between native and non-native speakers of English. This study is situated at the intersection between sociolinguistics and text linguistics.

## 2. Theoretical framework

The study uses the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory as the analytical lens to explore instances of grammatical cohesion in the PIAs. This theory provides the pluri-semantic model for analysing texts and it foregrounds the view that a text can be analysed from three main perspectives: ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning and textual meaning. As posited by Halliday (1992), Matthiessen (2007a), Paiva and Lima (2011), Symons (2015), Mwinlaaru (2017), Amoakohene (2020), Amoakohene and Afful (2021) and Amoakohene et al. (2022), the textual metafunction stresses the ability of language to be used as a tool to achieve cohesiveness, coherence and text organisation. This study therefore focuses on the textual metafunction in general and the aspect of cohesiveness in particular to account for instances of cohesion in the PIAs.

The rationale for adopting SFL as the theoretical framework for this study stems from SFL's emphasis on purpose and choice as keys to understanding the organization and function of language. Thus, the core purpose of language is to "make meanings which are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged" (Eggs 1994: 2). This is why SFL was found appropriate as the theoretical framework of this investigation, given the study's focus on socio-cultural differences in language use.

As already mentioned, the specific role of cohesion is to create texture in texts, by connecting sentential units into a unified whole and ensuring the flow of information within a text. More specifically, cohesion is defined as "a semantic relation between an element in the text and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation of it" (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 8). Halliday and Hasan (1976) account for two main types of cohesive devices: grammatical and lexical ones, with the former subdivided into reference, ellipsis, substitution and conjunction.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) define reference as a grammatical cohesive device that can only be interpreted by making reference either to some other parts of a text, or to the world experienced by the sender and the receiver of a particular text. Reference can be either "exophora or exophoric reference (situational reference which is not cohesive) and endophora, or endophoric reference (textual reference)" (Ningsih 2019: 18). The latter is either anaphoric (reference to a previously mentioned item) or cataphoric (reference 'forwards' in the text). Reference can feature in the form of personal reference, demonstrative reference and comparative reference.

Conjunction is a second grammatical cohesive device. Renkema (1992) sees this cohesive device as the semantic relation between adjacent sentential units or clauses. These types of relation may be *additive* (e.g. likewise, also, moreover, furthermore, etc.); *adversative* (e.g. on the other hand, however, conversely, but, yet, etc.); *causal* (e.g. so, then, consequently, as a result, therefore, etc.); and *temporal* (e.g. next, then, after that, etc.). Halliday and Hasan (1976) argue that additive relations differ from coordination proper although they accept that additive relations were derived from the traditional grammarian's perspectives of joining sentences together to form a unified unit. The underlying meaning of adversative conjunctions is to project an occurrence that is contrary to an expected outcome (Halliday and Hasan 1976). Causal conjunction, on the other hand, is found between two sentential units by way of a semantic relation of causality (Listiyanto 2013), while temporal conjunction occurs in the sequence of time (Halliday and Hasan 1976).

Substitution refers to the replacement of an item by another while ellipsis occurs when there is

an omission of an item in a text. Thus, an item is replaced in both substitution and ellipsis. However, in substitution, an item is omitted and replaced by another element whilst in ellipsis an item is omitted and replaced by nothing (Gueliane 2016). Lexical cohesion, on the other hand, is “a property of text, achieved through lexical semantic relations between words in text” (Ghasemi et al. 2014: 462). Lexical cohesive devices fall under two main categories: collocation and lexical reiteration. Halliday and Hasan (1976) argue that lexical reiteration manifests itself as repetition; superordination; hyponymy and synonymy or near-synonymy. Collocation is the relation between lexical items that tend to co-occur within a given field, such as *fry* and *pan* or *mouse* and *trap* (Enyi and Orji 2019).

### 3. Empirical studies on presidential inaugural addresses

PIAs have received considerable attention by scholars within linguistics and applied linguistics literature. Some of these scholars have conducted pragmatic studies of PIAs (e.g., Osisanwo, 2017; Aremu 2017), politeness and presupposition in PIAs (e.g., Balogun and Murana 2018), metafunction of language in PIAs (Sammer and Dilaimy 2020; Chefor 2019; Nur 2015), and critical discourse analysis of PIAs (Nigatu and Admassu 2023; AlAfnan 2021; Wahyuningsih 2018; Nnamdi-Eruchalu 2017; Sharndama 2016; Koussohon and Dossoumou 2015).

With regard to studies that have focused on texture in PIAs through the use of cohesive devices, it is worth mentioning Malah (2021), who did a cross cultural study of lexical cohesion in the inaugural speeches of President Obama and President Buhari. By making use of the cohesive frameworks of Hoey (1991), Martin (1992) and Eggins (2004), Malah (2021) observed that Obama used more categories and more frequencies of lexical cohesion in his inaugural speech than Buhari did. However, repetition appears in the two speeches as the most dominant source of lexical cohesion. Also, the most reiterated cohesive devices across the two speeches were personal pronouns. The findings further reveal that while Obama mostly used the inclusive “we”, Buhari relied mostly on the exclusive “I”. The preponderance of repetition in the inaugural speeches of Buhari and Obama, as uncovered in Malah’s (2021) study, confirms a finding in Enyi and Chitulu’s (2015) study, which shows repetition to be one of the most utilized cohesive devices in PIAs. Unlike Malah’s (2021) study, which confirms only repetition as the dominant cohesive device in the two inaugural speeches he analyzed, Enyi and Chitulu (2015) identified repetition and other cohesive devices like synonyms, near-synonyms, superordinates and hyponyms as cohesive devices that were frequently deployed in the inaugural speech of President Goodluck Jonathan.

Within the same thematic area, Omisakin et al. (2023) explored cohesive features as a rhetorical instrument in the 1999 inaugural speech of former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo. Specifically, the study focused mainly on how cohesive devices like reference, substitution, ellipsis, collocation, conjunction, repetition, synonyms, antonyms and hyponyms were deployed as rhetorical instruments in the speech that was analyzed. The findings revealed that President Obasanjo uses a variety of cohesive devices as rhetorical instruments. This style of communication by President Obasanjo is similar to that of President Obama, as shown in Malah’s (2021) study, but contradicts the choices and frequencies of cohesive devices used by Buhari in the same study by Malah (2021). That is, although Buhari is not a native speaker of English like Obama, the former shares some commonality with Obama as far as the usage of cohesive devices in their respective inaugural speeches is concerned.

This finding implies that culture, to a very large extent, has no significant influence on the way a person uses either a native or a second language. The findings of Omisakin et al.’s (2023) study further reveal that the appropriate use of cohesive devices in political speeches does not only create texture but performs other communicative purposes: (1) serving as a means through which politicians communicate political senses and (2) mobilize electorate support. This multifunctional purpose of cohesive devices in inaugural speeches is confirmed by Ngo (2019), i.e. that, apart from creating texture in texts, cohesive devices are also used to express power and authority and as a means through

which politicians express emphasis, appreciation of the electorate and appeal to them.

Though the literature reveals an array of research on PIAs, especially on how texture, through cohesion, is created in this unique sub-genre, there is still a research gap as regards how the cultural background of politicians affects the way they make use of grammatical cohesive devices as means of creating texture in their presidential inaugural speeches. Malah's (2021) study, to some extent, fills this gap by exploring lexical cohesion in the inaugural speeches of President Obama, who is an American and a native speaker of English, and that of President Buhari, who is an African and a non-native speaker of English.

However, the novelty of this present investigation lies in its focus on grammatical cohesion in the inaugural speeches of selected Ghanaian and American presidents. Another difference between Malah's (2021) work and the present investigation is the theoretical framework used by these two studies. While Malah's (2021) study was based on the cohesive frameworks of Hoey (1991), Martin (1992) and Eggins (2004), this current study relies solely on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) cohesive framework as its analytical lens.

## 4. Methods

### 4.1. Research design

This study is mainly a qualitative one, albeit with a few instances where quantitative data are used for the interpretation of its findings. The rationale for a mainly qualitative research design is in line with Vanderstoep and Johnston's (2009: 183) claim that "the qualitative research approach is more descriptive than predictive". It is a design that is apt for exploring and "describing phenomena that are covert to the researcher" (Ahwireng 2017: 42).

### 4.2. Source of data

The dataset for the study includes eight PIAs given by selected Ghanaian presidents and another eight PIAs of selected American presidents. Specifically, the eight PIAs from the Ghanaian context include two inaugural speeches each by President Jerry John Rawlings (1981-2001), President John Agyekum Kufuor (2001-2009) and President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo (2017-2024) as well as one inaugural speech each by President John Evans Atta Mills (2009-2012) and President John Dramani Mahama (2012-2016). The American sub-corpora also consist of one inaugural speech by President Donald Trump (2017-2021) and President Joseph Biden (2021-2024) and two inaugural speeches by President Bill Clinton (1993-2001), President George W. Bush (2001-2009) and President Barack Obama (2009-2017). The details of the sources of these speeches have been provided in the Appendix.

### 4.3. Procedure of analysis

This study used Halliday and Hasan's (1976) cohesive theory as the framework to account for instances of grammatical cohesion in the inaugural speeches. As a practical tool, AntConc Software was used to explore instances of cohesion in the data. Prior to the analysis, all the transcripts were converted to plain text so as to make it possible for us to use the AntConc software to analyze instances of grammatical cohesive devices like reference and conjunctions. In other words, frequencies of grammatical structures projected by Halliday and Hasan (1976) as potential grammatical cohesive devices were accounted for through the word list tool on the AntConc Software. We further made use of this software to manually trace instances of these devices in the data and check whether they performed cohesive functions or not. Items without any cohesive function were omitted from consideration. Other cohesive agents like ellipsis and substitution, on the other hand, were analyzed manually.

In order to control for variation in length between the individual texts, we made use of frequencies that were normalised to a common base. Specifically, we used Biber et. al (1998)'s principles of normalization, whereby the raw score of each grammatical cohesive device was divided

by the total number of words in that specific text and multiplied by 1000.

## 5. Analysis and discussion

### 5.1. Types of grammatical cohesive devices in the two sub-corpora

The findings show that the inaugural addresses of the presidents from the two different cultural backgrounds all used all four types of grammatical cohesion. Frequencies are set out in Table 1a and 1b.

Table 1a: Normalised frequencies of grammatical cohesive devices in the Ghanaian corpus

Cohesive devices	Sub-types	Nana Addo	J.J. Rawlings	Prof. Mills	John Mahama	John Kufuor	Total normalised frequency (n/1000)
Reference	Comparative	00	00	00	01	01	02
	Demonstrative	04	05	01	04	04	18
	Personal	18	12	08	12	18	68
<b>Sub-total</b>							<b>88</b>
Conjunctions	Additive	05	02	03	02	06	18
	Adversative	01	01	00	01	01	04
	Causal	00	01	00	00	01	02
	Temporal	00	01	00	01	00	02
<b>Sub-total</b>							<b>26</b>
Ellipsis	Nominal	02	00	00	01	01	04
	Clausal	00	00	01	00	01	02
	Verbal	01	00	01	00	00	02
<b>Sub-total</b>							<b>08</b>
Substitution	Nominal	02	00	00	00	00	02
	Clausal	00	00	02	00	00	02
	Verbal	00	01	00	02	00	03
<b>Sub-total</b>							<b>07</b>
<b>Grand total</b>		<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>129</b>

Table 1b: Normalised frequencies of grammatical cohesive devices in the American corpus

<b>Cohesive Devices</b>	<b>Sub-types</b>	<b>Biden</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Clinton</b>	<b>Obama</b>	<b>Trump</b>	<b>Total normalised frequency (n/1000)</b>
Reference	Comparative	04	04	02	04	02	16
	Demonstrative	24	23	16	22	13	98
	Personal	40	32	25	31	24	152
<b>Sub-total</b>							<b>266</b>
Conjunctions	Additive	14	16	10	15	12	67
	Adversative	03	05	03	03	03	17
	Causal	01	02	01	02	01	07
	Temporal	02	01	00	00	01	04
<b>Sub-total</b>							<b>95</b>
Ellipsis	Nominal	00	00	00	00	00	00
	Clausal	00	00	00	00	00	00
	Verbal	00	00	00	01	01	02
<b>Sub-total</b>							<b>02</b>
Substitution	Nominal	00	00	00	00	01	01
	Clausal	00	00	01	01	00	02
	Verbal	00	01	00	00	00	01
<b>Sub-total</b>							<b>04</b>
<b>Grand total</b>		88	84	58	79	58	<b>367</b>

As evident in Table 1a, the normalized frequency of grammatical cohesive devices in the Ghanaian corpus is 129. Reference, turned out to be the most dominant cohesive device in the Ghanaian corpus, followed by conjunctions, ellipsis and substitution.

Table 1b displays frequencies in the American presidents' inaugural addresses. The least represented grammatical cohesive device in the American corpus is ellipsis, whilst references featured as the most dominant texture-creation agent. Instances of conjunction in the American corpora turned out to be the second most dominant agent of texture, whilst substitution was third.

Although all the grammatical cohesive devices identified by Halliday and Hasan (1976) featured as agents of texture in the American corpus, the findings reveal that clausal ellipsis and nominal ellipsis were absent. Apart from these, reference sub-types (personal, comparative,

demonstrative) conjunction sub-types (additive, adversative, causal, temporal) and substitution sub-types (nominal, verbal, clausal) all featured as texture creation agents in the American corpus. In total, the normalized frequency was 367 instances of semantic ties.

Instances of reference in the two sub-corpora

1. I have, at the outset, to thank sincerely our departing President, His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, for **his** service to our nation. **He** stepped into the breach of national leadership at a delicate moment in the country's history, with the death in office, for the first time, of a sitting president, the late Prof. John Evans Atta Mills. (President Akufo Addo)
2. From our revolution, the Civil War, to the Great Depression to the civil rights movement, our people have always mustered the determination to construct from **these** crises the pillars of our history. Thomas Jefferson believed that to preserve the very foundations of our nation, we would need dramatic change from time to time. Well, my fellow citizens, this is our time. Let us embrace **it**. (President Bill Clinton)
3. I must also acknowledge the contributions made by our compatriots who live outside the country. Currently you contribute a third of the capital inflow into the country. Many of you do **more than** just send money home, many of you have kept up keen interest in the affairs at home, and some of you have even been part of the struggle of the past twenty years. (President J.A. Kufuor)
4. We all enjoy the **same** glorious freedoms, and we all salute the **same**, great American flag. And whether a child is born in the urban sprawl of Detroit or the windswept plains of Nebraska, they look up at the at the **same** night sky, they fill their heart with the **same** dreams and they are infused with the breath of life by the **same** almighty creator. (President Donald Trump)

The use of reference items as agents of creating cohesion in the two sub-corpora is demonstrated in examples 1, 2, 3 and 4. Reference items like *his*, *he*, *these*, *it*, *more than* and *same* are used as means of creating semantic ties in the inaugural addresses. For example, the personal pronoun *he* in example 1 creates tie between sentences 1 and 2, by making an endophoric referential meaning to the referent, John Dramani Mahama. A reference like *his* as demonstrated in example 1 is a personal reference that shows possession. The cohesive agent *these* in example 2 represents instances of demonstrative reference. This reference type, anaphorically refers to entities or referents within the co-text. For instance, the demonstrative reference *these* in example 2 links up with entities (*revolution*, *civil war*, *the great depression*, *civil rights movement*) in the immediately preceding text to create a semantic tie.

Also, cohesive devices like *more than* and *same* as indicated in examples 3 and 4 represent some instances of comparative reference in the two sub-corpora. In example 3, for instance, the writer strategically uses *more than* to compare the frequency of some contributions of Ghanaians in the diaspora to the development of the country Ghana. In this regard, President J.A. Kufuor makes use of this cohesive agent to refer to more contributions that Ghanaians in the diaspora make to the development of the country apart from sending money to relatives at home. The item *same* also serves as a cohesive agent in Example 4, by projecting similarities between the American populace in terms of the freedom they enjoy as citizens and the national flag they share as a nation. The comparative reference *same* in line two of Example 4 has also been cohesively used to bring out the similarities

between all American children in terms of objects of nature they are blessed with, dreams that they have and the creator that they all submit to.

Instances of conjunctives in the two sub-corpora

5. That way, we can concentrate our energies on the big battle of bringing prosperity to our nation. It is not beyond our capabilities. **And** we have all the ingredients here, a fertile and beautiful land endowed with goodness and richness and blessed with a dynamic and entrepreneurial people. **And** as we strive to realise our potential, I must acknowledge the help and encouragement that our foreign friends have extended to us. I acknowledge their role in the electoral process and the deepening of our democracy. **And** I am grateful for the many messages of congratulations and the universal praise that we have received for the conduct of the elections and the transition. (President J.A. Kufuor)
6. To renew America, we must be bold. We must do what no generation has had to do before. We must invest more in our own people, in their jobs, in their future, and at the same time cut our massive debt. **And** we must do so in a world in which we must compete for every opportunity. (President Bill Clinton)
7. I have just taken the sacred oath each of these patriots took — an oath first sworn by George Washington. **But** the American story depends not on any one of us, not on some of us, but on all of us. (President Joe Biden)
8. Our politics will not focus on power and privilege. **On the contrary**, we will not forget the concerns of the Ghanaian people who want to see an improvement in their living conditions. (President Attah Mills)
9. Millions of our citizens have enthusiastically seized the opportunity to participate practically in the progress of this nation. Thousands of men and women from all walks of life **now** exercise their civic responsibilities as District Assembly men and women, accountable to their electoral areas for the functioning, governance and development of their districts. (President J.J. Rawlings)
10. Some see leadership as high drama, and the sound of trumpets calling, and sometimes it is that. But I see history as a book with many pages, and each day we fill a page with acts of hopefulness and meaning. The new breeze blows, a page turns, the story unfolds. And so **today** a chapter begins, a small and stately story of unity, diversity, and generosity--shared, and written, together. (APIA, President George W. Bush)
11. Mr Speaker, the current term of office of district assemblies would be due to expire in March, this year. However, the constitution does not permit the holding of local government elections within six months of parliamentary election. **Consequently**, the PNDC yesterday promulgated a law extending the life of the district assemblies until such time that elections are arranged in consultation with the Electoral Commission. (President J.J. Rawlings)



Conjunctives as texture creation agents in the two sets of inaugural speeches are exemplified in examples 5-11. Specifically, additives are exemplified in examples 5 and 6, adversatives in examples 7 and 8, temporals in examples 9 and 10, and causal conjunctives in example 11. The conjunctive *and* as evident in examples 6 and 7 semantically connotes addition by connecting two different propositions. It thus binds two separate propositions together in the form of addition as seen in lines 2, 4 and 6 in example 5 and line 3 in example 6.

Adversative conjunctives primarily link two contradicting propositions together. For example, President Joe Biden uses this agent of cohesion to connect an oath he took and the expectations he had as far as the development of America is concerned. Thus, President Biden asserts that he had taken an oath to lead the American people like his predecessor. Therefore, the responsibility of developing America was expected to be resting solely on his shoulders.

Contrary to the expectation, President Biden does not consider the development of America as his sole responsibility, but rather he sees it as the responsibility of all American citizens. In referring to these issues, President Biden in line 2 of example 7 strategically uses the adversative conjunction *but* to connect the two different expectations that he projected in his speech. In example 8, President Rawlings also connects two opposing views by the use of the adversative conjunctive *on the contrary*. Thus, he connects two opposing views; namely the idea that his presidential administration will focus mainly on the concerns of the Ghanaian populace versus the idea of focusing solely on obtaining power and privileges for himself and those in authority.

The temporal conjunctions *now* in example 9 and *today* in example 10 have also been used as texture creation tools to link specific statements to the current time in which those statements were made. President Rawlings, through the use of the temporal conjunctive *now*, links the enthusiasm that people show in contributing their quota to the development of Ghana to the good work of his administration as the president of Ghana. Similar to that of President Rawlings, President Bush also uses the connective agent *today* to connect the positive turnover in the lives of all Americans to the current time that he was giving his inaugural address as the president of the United States of America. The causal conjunctive *consequently* in example 11 also establishes the cause for the PNDC administration to promulgate a law that extends the life of the district assemblies.

#### Instances of ellipsis

12. The Ghanaian people have summoned the change we celebrate today. They have raised their voices in an unmistakable chorus. They have cast their votes without equivocation and (--) have forced the change. Now, we must do the work the season demands. (President Akufo Addo)
13. Our judiciary must inspire confidence in the citizens, so we can all see the courts as the ultimate arbiters when disputes arise, as they would (----). (President Akufo Addo)
14. Whilst we set about creating the enabling atmosphere, we shall give all the help and encouragement we can (----) to our entrepreneurs so that business flourishes. (President Donald Trump)
15. It will be my duty as President to heal wounds and (----) to unite our dear nation. I intend to pursue relentlessly all avenues for entrenching peace and unity in all parts of the country as I am enjoined by the Constitution to do. (President Atta Mills)
16. I salute your efforts and your hard work and I extend a warm invitation to you to come home and (---) to let us rebuild our country. (President J.A. Kufuor).

Instances of ellipsis as cohesive agents in the inaugural speeches are exemplified in examples 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16, where words or phrases are omitted but their meanings can be deduced from the given context (Varhanek 2007). Example 12 specifically indicates an instance of nominal ellipsis whereby nominal items have been omitted in a textual environment in which they could have been repeated. For example, in example 12, the nominal element *they* is ellipped just after the coordinator *and* in line three. Examples of verbal ellipsis occur in 13 and 14. In example 13, the verb *arise* could have been reintroduced just after the modal auxiliary verb *would* but the speaker ellipped it, whilst *give* could have also appeared just after *can* in example 14.

Examples 15 and 16 showcase instances of clausal ellipsis in the data set. In example 15, there is an elision of a whole clausal element – *It will be my duty as President* – just after the coordinator *and*. Also, the clausal unit – *I extend a warm invitation* – could have been repeated just after *and* in example 16. Despite all these omissions (whether nominal, verbal or clausal), their meanings can be retrieved from the previous discourse or within the textual environment in which they occurred.

#### Instances of substitution

17. We do not seek to impose our way of life on anyone, but rather to let it shine as an example. We will shine for everyone to follow. 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. (President Donald Trump).
18. I have no doubt that the talents, energies, sense of enterprise and innovation of the Ghanaian can be harnessed to make Ghana the place where dreams come true. It took us a while, but the consensus on multi-party constitutional rule has been established, and, for the third time, we have had a peaceful transfer of power from a governing **party** to an opposition **one**. (President Akufo Addo)
19. Fellow citizens, over the past 11 years we have all worked very hard in an attempt to put in place the kind of foundation that can best guarantee the stability, growth and development of our nation. All that has happened during the last decade cannot **be divorced** from today's new constitutional order. To **do so** would mean distorting our history and pushing aside those vital lessons which would indeed enrich this phase of our experience. (President J.J. Rawlings)
20. We must invest more in our own people, in their jobs, in their future, and at the same time cut our massive debt. And we must **do so** in a world in which we must compete for every opportunity. (President Bill Clinton)
21. Ours will be a consensus-driven agenda, and in building that consensus, we will recognize the contribution of our compatriots in other political parties. I have always said that I will be President for all Ghanaians whether **they voted for me** or **not**, and without consideration for which part of the country they come from. (President Attah Mills)
22. The old solution, the old way, was to think that public money alone could end these problems. But we have learned that is **not so**. (President George W. Bush)

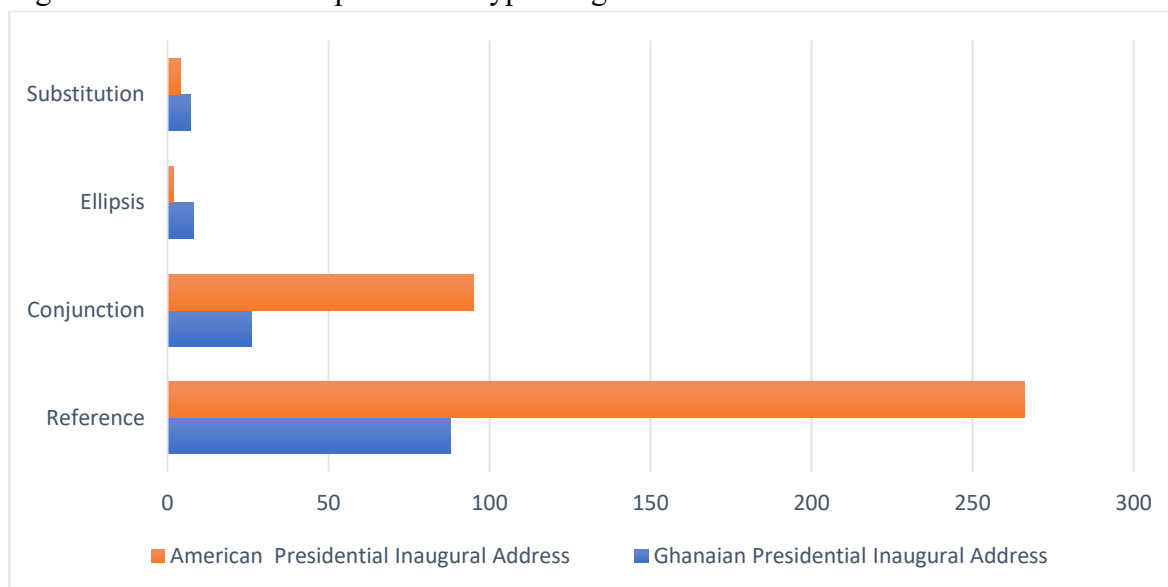
Examples 17 and 18 are specific instances of nominal substitution, a situation where a nominal element has been replaced with another grammatical unit. Thus, the grammatical item *ones* in example 17 replaces the nominal element *alliance*, whilst *party* in example 18 is replaced with *one*. The grammatical unit *do so* replaces the verbal element *be divorced* and the predicate *must invest*

*more in our own people, in their jobs, in their future, and at the same time cut our massive debt* in examples 19 and 20, respectively. Examples 21 and 22 are instances of clausal substitution in the data. That is, a substitute is used to replace an entire clause. For instance, in example 21, the grammatical item *not* replaces the negative form of the clause *they voted for me*, whilst *not so* replaces the entire clause that has been underlined in example 22.

### 5.2. Differences and similarities in the use of grammatical cohesive devices in the two sub-corpora

This sub-section of the study identifies the differences and similarities in the use of grammatical cohesive devices within the inaugural speeches given by the Ghanaian and American presidents.

Figure 1: Normalised frequencies of types of grammatical cohesive devices in the two sub-corpora.



From Figure 1, it can be deduced that the two sets of data all make use of reference, conjunctions, ellipsis and substitution as a means of creating texture. Similarly, reference and conjunction appeared as the first two most frequently used grammatical cohesive devices in both the Ghanaian and American presidential inaugural addresses. The American presidential inaugural addresses featured more grammatical cohesive devices (367 instances per thousand) than that of the Ghanaian presidential inaugural addresses (129 instances per thousand). Aside from these, reference items and conjunctions were more frequently utilized in the American subcorpus than in the Ghanaian one, whereas substitution and ellipsis were more frequent in the Ghanaian corpus. Despite the high usage of grammatical cohesive devices in the American inaugural addresses, clausal and nominal ellipsis were not represented. In comparison, the Ghanaian corpus, which used relatively fewer grammatical cohesive devices, features instances of both clausal ellipsis and nominal ellipsis.

Another interesting finding is the limited scope of grammatical cohesive items used by the Ghanaian presidents. Their American counterparts, on the other hand, showed diversity in their choice of cohesive devices in general as well as diversity in their choice of grammatical cohesive devices to achieve similar cohesive effects. This finding contradicts that of Omisakin et al. (2023), who observed no difference between the categories and frequencies of cohesive agents deployed by President Obama (a native speaker of English) and President Obasanjo (a non-native speaker of English) in their respective inaugural speeches. However, this finding of the present study confirms Malah's (2021) study which found that President Obama, who is a native speaker of English, uses more categories of cohesive devices, and with higher frequencies, than his nonnative English-speaking counterpart, President Buhari.

For example, the semantic realization of addition in the Ghanaian corpora was skewed towards the two cohesive devices *and* and *also*, whilst the American corpora featured these two additives and others like *nor*, *or*, *in the same way*, *furthermore*, *again*, *to add up* and *moreso*. Also, words like *but*, *on the contrary*, *nevertheless* and *even though* were the means through which adversative conjunctives were created in the Ghanaian corpus, whilst its manifestation in the American corpus was through a list of different words like *but*, *only*, *rather*, *yet*, *in fact*, *however*, *though*, *in either case*, *nevertheless* and *despite*.

This difference between the American and Ghanaian PIAs confirms Stern's (1983: 154) claim that "native speakers have (a) a subconscious knowledge of rules, (b) an intuitive grasp of meanings, (c) the ability to communicate within social settings, (d) a range of language skills, and (e) creativity of language use". Therefore, since the American presidents are native speakers of English, they have subconscious knowledge in using different vocabulary to establish similar cohesive ties in texts. This is different from the Ghanaian presidents who, as non-native speakers of English, lack the subconscious knowledge of the rules, intuitive grasp of meanings in English and the skills required to show as high a level of proficiency as their American counterparts.

It was only under temporal conjunction that the Ghanaian presidential inaugural speeches made use of more varied grammatical items (*at this point*, *at the same time*, *in the meantime*, *now*, *when*, *currently* and *today*) than their American counterparts, who also achieved this same type of semantic tie by the use of words like *here*, *there* and *now*. The analysis further confirmed that the grammatical item *and* was the most predominantly used conjunction to show addition in both sets of data whilst *but* similarly appeared as the most used conjunction to show contrast in each of the two subcorpora.

## 6. Conclusion and recommendations

The findings revealed that both the Ghanaian and American presidents make use of the four types of grammatical cohesive devices proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976). However, two sub-types of ellipsis in the form of clausal ellipsis and nominal ellipsis were utilised in only the Ghanaian presidential inaugural address, but not in the inaugural speeches of their American counterparts. Overall, the findings confirmed that more grammatical cohesive devices are used as texture creation agents in the American presidential inaugural addresses than in the Ghanaian ones. As native speakers of English, the American presidents show diversity in their choice of cohesive devices in general as well as in the selection of grammatical items to create a similar cohesive effect. The Ghanaian presidents, on the other hand, who are situated in a L2 context, manifested less diversity in their choice of grammatical cohesive devices in general and in the selection of grammatical items to achieve a similar cohesive effect.

However, there were certain similarities between the two corpora. Thus, both reference and conjunction, respectively, appeared as the two most frequent types of cohesive device in both subcorpora. Also, the semantic concept of addition in each of the two sets of inaugural speeches highly manifested through the use of *and*, whilst contrast in each of the corpus was predominantly created through the use of the conjunction *but*.

It is recommended that further studies should be conducted on how lexical cohesive devices feature in the inaugural speeches of presidents from the Ghanaian and American settings. Apart from this, it will be worthwhile for an exploratory study to be conducted on how texture is created in the inaugural speeches of presidents from two L2 contexts.

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## Appendix

### 1a. President Akufo Addo:

Inaugural address of His Excellency, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, on the occasion of his swearing in as President of the Republic, and Commander-In-Chief of the Ghana Armed Forces, 7 January 2017.

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