

# Journal

Linguistics, English



Analysis of JFK's Inaugural Address 50 years after it happened, John F. Kennedy (JFK) inaugural speech is still very popular. The 35th president of America and the youngest in history delivered the best presidential speech, which has continued to inspire millions in the world today. The speech came at a time when Americans were looking for a light in the midst of the darkness of economic crisis, wars, and segregation. Kennedy's message of hope fell in place because it was timely, well researched, and fulfilled the expectations of many Americans. This journal seeks to analyse the character of the writer, his credibility, his audience, word choice, logic, and his overall claim.

Kennedy has several points he wants to drive home in his inaugural speech. First, he seeks to pass a message of accomplishment to his fans and a new era to Americans and beyond. His speech starts with diction to show his presidential accomplishment and to pass a message to Americans that he believes in the freedom gained through his election. Secondly, his speech seeks to get support from Americans to back his presidency. He achieves this through awakening Americans pre-existing sense of pride by reminding them of their heroic independent day. Kennedy seems to have a deeper understanding of his audience most of which happened to be Americans. He knows that independent day means so much to Americans and so his reference to it and to forbearers creates some support for Kennedy through association. His reference to history also helps him achieve the aspect of credibility needed by his audience. In addition, Kennedy portrays an understanding of the audience by constructing a message designed for the media. His message is rhetoric and full of imagery, which makes it appealing

to the public in America and beyond and memorable.

Kennedy is a man of good character. After being sworn in and acknowledging the purpose of the celebrations, Kennedy goes ahead to declare the solemnity of this act. Kennedy states, “ For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forbears prescribed nearly a century and three-quarters ago” (Kennedy web). Kennedy acknowledges the supreme power above him, which is God. In addition, he does not take the entire glory of the success but recognises that his forebears had prescribed it. In addition, Kennedy uses a polite tone in trying to get support for his presidency. For instance, Kennedy says, “ Let both sides seek to invoke the wonders of science instead of its terrors. Together let us explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean depths, and encourage the arts and commerce” (Kennedy web). Kennedy uses anaphora to make emotional appeals to the entire world to join hands with him. His desire to eliminate poverty, diseases, and wars makes him trustworthy. His belief in a potential to explore the stars, conquer deserts, and improvement in arts and commerce makes logic to many Americans. During this time, Americans needed a messiah who could get them out of economic crisis, racism, and constant wars, which made Kennedy’s message logical. By use of contrasts, Kennedy achieves to appeal to the public in a less demanding manner to support him. He says, “ Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country” (Kennedy web). This appears logical and serves as an appeal to support his government.

#### Works Cited

Kennedy, John, “ Inaugural Address, 1961, web, 8 September 2012,