Queen's Christmas Speeches 1952-2007: Discourse Analysis

Diploma thesis

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Declaration

I hereby declare that I have worked on my thesis independently and that I have used only the sources listed in the bibliography.

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I. Introduction

1.1 General opening

Every year on December 25 at 1500 GMT the Queen Elisabeth II. delivers her Christmas speech from Buckingham Palace’s Music Hall. It is an opportunity for the monarch to sum up and comment on the events of the past year and to offer the season’s greetings to her subjects (“The tradition,”). This tradition was started by the Queen’s grandfather George V. in 1932 and continues ever since. Whether honoured or parodied the Christmas speech “has become as traditional a part of the British Christmas as roast turkey and Christmas pudding” (“The tradition,”). Millions of people across the United Kingdom watch the Queen’s speech on television. The message is further broadcast by televisions, radio stations and the Internet to countries all over the world.

Although much interest is given to the speech and its content every year, the analysis of the text itself is less common. One may find phonetic analyses of Queen’s speeches, for example, a change in an accent and therefore formality (“Talking Posh,”) or studies of Queen’s rhetoric but a text analysis seems to be very exceptional.

The discourse analysis of Queen’s speeches is indeed very challenging. Elisabeth II. as one of the longest ruling monarchs - already 57 years - represents and defends the ideals of the monarchy throughout her rule. She praises traditional values and continues in the tradition set up by her grandfather – to express solidarity with her people in good as well as bad times. The Christmas speeches are one of the examples of preserving this tradition. It was therefore interesting for me to investigate into how Christmas speeches originated, what are their typical features and whether they have changed somehow throughout the years.
1.2 The topic of the thesis

This diploma thesis will deal with the discourse analysis of Queen’s Christmas speeches. First, linguistic devices typical for each level of discourse are going to be described. While doing the discourse analysis, it will be attempted to trace any diachronic changes that may have appeared within the corpus. These will be presented at the end of the practical part.

1.3 Hypotheses

The length and style of the speeches may be shaped by changing environment in which they are presented. Mass media have overcome a great change since 1952. The first Christmas speech was broadcast by radio, nowadays, links to You Tube can be found even at the official website of the British Monarchy and last year Her Majesty's speech was made available as a podcast for the first time. All this may have influenced the content and style of Christmas speeches. People are no longer willing to listen to lengthy narration, unfortunately, they prefer instant information. This may result in shortening the speeches and in simpler style.

It is further supposed that the initial enthusiasm about the monarchy may have ceased over the years with the growing scepticism about monarchic system. This was especially shaken after Tony Blair becoming a Prime minister. This tendency may be signified by a change in addressing the monarchy or a turn to more traditional topics. Moreover, the topics may be changing as well, new issues entering the speeches. After all, when the Queen Elisabeth II. accessed the throne, Winston Churchill was the Prime Minister and the rock-and-roll was not even born.
Finally, Her Majesty’s expressiveness may be changing with her age - as an experienced monarch, she may be more tentative in expressing her emotions.

1.4 The corpus

For the purpose of our research the transcripts of Queen’s Christmas speeches from the official website of the British monarchy were used. The discourse analysis covers all Christmas speeches from 1952 until 2007, except 1969 when not a speech but a written message in press was released instead. This means that the analysis covers 54 speeches of the total of 37,545 words. The text is attached as an appendix on a CD.

1.5 Methods

First, the text will be analysed at different levels that include graphical, lexical, grammatical and stylistic level, the text structure i.e. the discourse level and the pragmatic level. Doing this, we will try to trace any diachronic changes that appear in the text and describe them at the end. The comparative method will be applied when looking for the diachronic changes.
I. Theoretical part

2. Analyzing discourse

2.1 Discourse

The topic of this thesis is the analysis of discourse and it would be therefore useful to explain the meaning of the concept ‘discourse’. According to Brown and Yule discourse can be defined as “a dynamic process in which language was used as an instrument of communication in a context by a speaker / writer to express meaning and achieve intentions” (Brown and Yule 1989:26). The same description can be found in Cook who defines discourse as a language that “has been used to communicate something and is felt to be coherent” as opposed to language that has been “abstracted in order to teach a language or literacy, or to study how the rules of language work” (Cook 1983:6). Discourse is then any stretch of language that has been used to communicate something and shows coherence. It can be a formal speech, a scientific article, a dialogue between two people or a note written on a scrap of paper. Cook further points out that a discourse does not necessarily have to be grammatically perfect, e.g. informal conversation, what is important is its communicative value.
2.2 Discourse analysis

In the field of language teaching the importance of discourse analysis is indisputable. It is not only necessary for the students to be familiar with pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary of a foreign language but to know how to adjust their knowledge to a particular context in order to communicate their message clearly (Cook 1989:1). The findings of discourse analysis help to uncover the natural patterns of communication and when applied they help the users to achieve successful communication.

Discourse analysis as explained in Cook “examines how stretches of language, considered in their full textual, social and psychological context, become meaningful and unified for their users” (Cook 1989: 1). To him, discourse analysis is “the search for what gives the language in use coherence” (Cook 1989: 6). This view corresponds with Brown and Yule’s definition of discourse analysis as the “analysis of language in use” (Brown 1983: 1). It can be seen from these two definitions that discourse analysis will go beyond formal linguistic description of sentential syntax and semantics; it will study language in a broader context making use of different fields of the study of language. Brown and Yule primarily focus on the importance of pragmatics when analyzing a discourse: “‘Doing discourse analysis’ certainly involves ‘doing syntax and semantics’ but it primarily consists of ‘doing pragmatics’” (Brown and Yule 1983: 26). In the following chapter, the theoretical basis from which this discourse analysis draws inspiration is going to be described.
2.3 The methods of discourse analysis

Discourse analysis has gained a significant place in the study of language over the last decades and it is expanding rapidly (Cook 1989: 2). There are several ways how to analyse a discourse. Brown and Yule focus on the discourse level and pragmatics of the text. Within these areas they describe the role of context in interpretation, discourse topic, thematisation and ‘staging’, information structure, cohesion and coherence. It is not necessary to describe these phenomena in detail here as they will be described at particular levels of analysis below. For the sake of convenience Crystal and Davy divide discourse analysis into several levels. These consist of phonetic/graphetic level, phonological/graphological, grammatical, lexical and semantic levels. They justify this division by explaining that distinguished variations need to be discussed in their own terms (Crystal 1989: 14). They further notice that more levels may be needed or a level within an already mentioned level may be established if the text requires doing so (e.g. considering lexis within the vocabulary level). Similarly, not all the levels may be needed (e.g. in this thesis the phonological level will be omitted as the material used for analysis is in a written form).

Crystal and Davy suggest to start with an independent analysis at each level using the techniques developed in linguistics for them. They state that if a cross-reference between levels is needed it is performed and in the end a synthesis of information is attempted in a conclusion (Crystal 1989: 14).

Inspired by both Brown and Yule and Crystal and Davy this thesis will analyse discourse at the graphical, phonetic, vocabulary, grammatical, stylistic and the discourse level and the level of pragmatics.
2.4 The Levels of Discourse Analysis

2.4.1 Graphical level

As stated in Urbanová the graphical aspect of a written discourse can be equalled to the sound images in a spoken discourse (Urbanová 2002: 32; translation mine). Graphics is what is first encountered when approaching a text. The visual effect of graphical devices certainly contributes to the perception of the text and creates expectations about it. Graphical level consists of the use of graphics, any photos or pictures that accompany the text, the use of colours, font, or size for highlighting the text. “The layout and graphical highlighting are important tools that help express specific meanings and their nuances in a written text” (Urbanová 2002: 32; translation mine). Crystal formulates it in this way “the choices of type-size or colour in text are essentially non-linguistic, but they too may have clear linguistic implications … relating to the semantic structure of the utterance … or even to its grammatical structure” (1969: 17). Therefore it can be seen that the graphical level has an impact on the meaning of the text.

Of course, different sorts of written discourse will have different demands on the use of particular graphical devices and there are genres where graphical level has its established form as in newspapers or letters and is therefore more significant. On the other hand, in case of notes or messages the organisation of the text may be quite haphazard.

When speaking about text organisation it has to be mentioned that the layout of the text is significant as well. A text may be divided into paragraphs, chapters or even form a shape as in case of modernist poetry. This contributes to the way the text is processed and to its overall comprehension. A text can further contain margin notes, guide questions, or glossary of terms that refer back to it and thus influence the way it is read.
However, a speech is primarily written to be read aloud and therefore a typographic arrangement is secondary here. After all, it is usually only the speaker who comes in contact with the written form.

2.4.2 Phonetic level

Phonetics “studies the characteristics and potential utility of human vocal noise” (Crystal 1969: 16). Crystal states that the same applies for sounds as for written and printed shapes discussed in the previous chapter: “isolated sounds and shapes may have a definite aesthetic appeal, may be interpreted as aspects of reality (as in onomatopoeia) or conveying a meaning residing wholly in the intrinsic properties of the spoken or written physical event (e.g. sound symbolism)” (1969:16-7). At this level the use of rhyming, playing with language, alliteration, the employment of poetic devices or sound emphasis are the examples of devices that can contribute to the stylistic effect of a text.

It will be interesting at this point to mention Crystal’s observation of how a voice quality may be used to relate an utterance to a specific situation e.g. the tone of voice associated with a sermon, spoken legal language or television advertisement (1969:17). It can be said that a certain kind of diction is also associated with Queen’s speech and a native speaker may recognize a Christmas speech thanks to its diction even if the words of the speech were changed. However, this also leads to many parodies made by comedians each year on the behalf of Christmas speech.
2.4.3 Lexical level

At this level the type of lexis used throughout Queen’s speeches will be examined. Following Crystal’s methodology this represents ‘a choice of specific lexical items in a text and their distribution in relation to one another, and their meaning’ (1969:19). This includes the use and distribution of formal and informal vocabulary, the use of foreign words and specialized terminology by a speaker.

The formal discourse is characterised by the use of polysyllabic, classical vocabulary i.e. the words of Latin, Greek or Roman origin as opposed to spoken discourse where simple, monosyllabic words of German origin are more frequent. Queen’s Christmas speeches contain both words of Anglo-Saxon and classical origin. It will be interesting to look at what vocabulary prevails in Christmas speeches and why it is so.

2.4.4 Grammatical level

From the grammatical point of view “the main aim is to analyse the internal structure of the units called sentences in a language, and the way these function in sequences” (Crystal 1969:18). Analysing internal structure of sentences will require looking at the level of clauses, nouns, verbs etc. The thesis will try to define typical syntactical devices used, types and length of sentences, prevailing verb tenses and word forms. The traditional division of grammar is into morphology and syntax. The analysis will be focused especially on syntax i.e. the study of external relationships of words or classes of words (Crystal 1969:18). Syntax has a relevance with the next level of analysis which is stylistic level.
2.4.5 Stylistic level

According to Crystal, stylistics studies “certain aspects of language variation” (1969:9) which, in other words, means the analysis of “language habits with the main purpose of identifying, from the general mass of linguistic features common to English as used on every conceivable occasion, those features which are restricted to certain kinds of social context” (Crystal, 1969:10). These features can include any stylistic or literary devices, the choice of formal vs. informal, polite vs. familiar language or the choice of a specific language variation. When a feature is restricted in its occurrence to a limited number of social contexts, it can be called a *stylistically distinctive* feature (Crystal 1969:11). The analysis will focus on explanation of why certain features have been used, how they are distributed within Christmas speeches and whether they may be claimed to be stylistically distinctive.
2.4.6 Discourse level

Because a discourse level is primarily concerned with the structure of analysed discourse, its cohesion and coherence, it would be vital to describe these concepts in a greater detail.

2.4.6.1 Cohesion

In their work *Cohesion in English* Halliday and Hasan give an account of what distinguishes a text i.e. any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that forms a unified whole, from a disconnected sequence of sentences (1976:1). They call this property of ‘being a text’ ‘texture’ (Halliday and Hasan 1976:2) and they claim that it is based on cohesive relations that exist between two items – the referring item and the item that it refers to (Halliday, 1976: 3). The example that follows illustrates the mentioned relation:

\[(1) \quad \text{Wash and core six cooking apples. Put them into a fireproof dish.}\]

(Halliday, 1976:3)

In these two sentences *them* refers back (anaphoric reference) to *six cooking apples* which gives cohesion i.e. connectivity to the presented sentences. The occurrence of a pair of cohesively related items is called ‘a tie’. What is important to state is that both referring item and referred item have to be present in order to create a cohesive link (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 3). In other words “cohesion occurs when interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it’” (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 4)
Halliday and Hasan further state that “cohesive relations have nothing to do with sentence boundaries” (1976: 8). The location of the referring item and the item it refers to is not determined by the grammatical structure (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 8) and cohesion may spread over several paragraphs. Thus cohesion may be defined as semantic relation and text should be regarded as a semantic unit. “A text does not consist of sentences; it is realized by, or encoded in, sentences” (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 2).

Cohesion may be divided into two broader categories: grammatical cohesion where cohesion is realised through grammar and lexical cohesion where cohesion is realised through vocabulary. Within grammatical cohesion different kinds of cohesive ties can be found, namely, reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction. These will not be explained in a greater detail here as they will be analysed in the practical part.

2.4.7 Pragmatics

As already mentioned at the beginning, a discourse analysis necessarily involves ‘doing pragmatics’ (Brown 1983: 26). This chapter will try to explain what ‘doing pragmatics’ means, or, in other words, what involves employing a pragmatic approach to the analysis of language.

First, it is important to realise that what an analyst is investigating here is the use of language in context by a speaker or writer. This means that a discourse analyst will be interested in the relationship between the speaker and the utterance, on a particular occasion of use and not with the potential relationship of one sentence to another (Brown 1983: 27). The relationship between the speaker and the utterance will be defined by the pragmatic terms of reference, presupposition, implicature and inference.
Second, according to Yule, a pragmatic approach to the study of discourse is more specialized as it focuses specifically on aspects of what is unsaid or unwritten (yet communicated) (Yule 1996:84) The pragmatics of discourse goes “beyond the primarily social concerns of interaction and conversation analysis … behind the forms and structures present in the text” and pays “much more attention to psychological concepts such as background knowledge, beliefs and expectations” (Yule 1996: 84).

2.4.7.1 Coherence

One of the examples of pragmatic concepts is coherence. It illustrates how the speaker or writer has already something on his/her mind when approaching a text. Coherence helps us to perceive the text as comprehensible. Cook defines coherence as “the quality of being meaningful and unified” (Cook, 1989: 4).

Coherence can also be seen as ‘normal’ experience of a language user. For example, most Brits will not have difficulties understanding both terms Plant Sale and Garage Sale but non-British speakers may have problems interpreting them (Yule, 1996: 84). From this illustration it can be seen that different users will have different ‘experience of language’. Of course, most language users will try to create utterances that are comprehensible for their listeners if they want their message to be understood. These comprehensible utterances are what is meant by ‘coherence’. “Efforts to make words uttered meaningful within the situational and cultural context of the exchange are efforts to establish pragmatic coherence” (Kramsch, 1998: 28).

It means from what was said above that a language user should obey two principles in order to create a meaningful texts – the text should be cohesive and coherent. Cohesion i.e. well, formed links between clauses and sentences surely contributes to better and smoother
understanding of a text but what gives a text unity and meaningfulness is its coherence. “Semantic cohesion relates word to word, pragmatic coherence relates speaker to speaker within the larger cultural context of communication” (Kramsch, 1998: 28).

2.4.7.2 The context of situation

The importance of context when analysing a discourse was first described by the British anthropologist of Polish origin Bronislaw Malinowski. Malinowski, when describing the fishing and agricultural practices of the native inhabitants of the Trobriad islands, had also studied the language of these tribes because this was the key to understanding their practices. However, he realised that in order to understand what was happening, it was not enough to know the words that name the activities but also why and to whom something was said (Kramsch, 1998: 26). This means that the communication was taking place within a specific context of situation. Today, most linguists agree that the analysis of discourse means the analysis of the context of situation as well. Kramsch describes this as ‘supplementing the semantic meanings of verbal signs by the pragmatic meanings of verbal actions in context’ (Kramsch, 1998: 26).
3. The language of speeches

Crystal in his *Encyclopaedia of the English Language* introduces a concept of mixed medium. This is based on an implication that there is no strict line that would separate some discourses into written or spoken. There are discourses that are typically written or spoken, but, especially with the implementation of media into everyday life, there is a growing tendency for mixed media. Speeches are an example of such a mixed medium as they are written to be read aloud. This means that both written and spoken aspects influence the language used throughout speeches. Because of this ‘dichotomy’ it would be vital to look at the features typical for written as well as spoken discourse and see which of them are applicable for the language of formal speeches. The characteristics introduced will be later defended in the practical part.

3.1 General distinction between spoken and written language

Vachek sees a fundamental difference between spoken and written language in readiness and immediateness of spoken communication on one side and preservability and surveyability of a written discourse on the other (Vachek in Urbanová, 2002: 10; translation mine). Spoken communication is seen as dynamic whereas written communication is static. Even if higher social status is sometimes assigned to written language, both types of communication have their advantages and their use can be equally justified according to the purpose of their user (Urbanová, 2002: 10; translation mine).
3.2 Spoken language

The most ‘noticeable’ features of spoken language are sound and paralinguistic features on which the speaker often relies on. Sound effects involve not only suprasegmental features (stress, rhythm and intonation) but also broader phenomena as timbre, the intensity of voice, a pitch, pauses and tempo (Urbanová, 2002: 10-11; translation mine).

Another feature of spoken language is its emotiveness. The speaker can express his/her emotions (often unintentionally) by the intensity of voice, intonation, pitch range as well as timbre. An experienced speaker may of course use these features deliberately for an emphasis.

Paralinguistic features of language known as body language involve gesticulation, mimics, laughter, cry and other nonverbal expressions of a speaker. These features are considered to be complementary (Urbanová, 2002: 11; translation mine).

A feature that is pervasive is incompleteness which is realised by frequent ellipsis often leading to elision. This feature is, however, eliminated in formal speeches.

3.3 Written language

The way of expression in a written language is more matter-of-fact, objective and also more abstract that in a spoken language (Urbanová 2002: 31; translation mine). Because the writer has time to choose linguistic devices in advance and has freedom to modify the text, vocabulary and structures used show greater consistence than those of a spoken discourse. Sentences are compact which means that the meaning is expressed in a more ‘economical way’ – this feature is called by Vachek ‘complex condensation’ (Vachek in Urbanová 2002: 31; translation mine). Condensation is a result of frequent presence of infinitives, gerunds and present and past participles (Urbanová 2002: 31; translation mine).
The text of Christmas speeches, because it is written in advance and is only then presented orally, shows some features of written language. Below are the features of written language that are considered to be relevant for speeches:

a) Writing promotes the development of careful organisation and compact expression, with often intricate sentence structure.

b) Participants cannot rely on context to make their meaning clear, nor is there any immediate feedback. Most writing therefore avoids the use of deictic expressions, which are likely to be ambiguous.

c) Multiple instances of subordination in the same sentence, elaborately balanced syntactic patterns, and long sentences are characteristic of writing.

d) Errors and other perceived inadequacies in writing can be eliminated in later drafts without the reader ever knowing they were there. Interruptions, if they have occurred while writing, are also invisible in the final product.

(Crystal, 1995: 291)
4. Rhetoric

The success of a public speech depends to a great extent on the presenter’s knowledge of the art of public speaking - rhetoric. Rhetoric, with its roots in ancient Greece, is still a powerful tool used in a spoken performance and presenters from various walks of life rely on its techniques when putting their message across. As this thesis deals with the field of public speaking, it would be interesting to describe rhetoric and some of the techniques it employs.

4.1 A speech as a complex system

When thinking about a public speech, it is important to notice that a speech does not consist only of spoken word but it is also realised by other semiotic systems such as mimics, body language or sound. “A speech is a complex form that is created from the interplay of several semiotic systems” (Mistrik 1987: 35; translation mine). Semiotic system is any system of signs used for communication e.g. alphabet, notes in music or light in a theatre (Mistrik 1987: 34-35; translation mine).

The central frame of each speech is built by a language in a spoken form; however, several other semiotic systems have to be present in order for the speech to be suggestive and effective. To these systems belong kinetic semiotic systems (mimics and body language), the appearance of the speaker (closely observed in case of Queen Elisabeth II.) as well as the setting (Mistrik 1987: 35; translation mine). All these systems have a great impact on how the listeners perceive the speaker’s performance.
4.2 The features of ceremonial speeches

Ceremonial speeches are prone to poetic language. It is probably because the special occasions to which they are prepared ask for poetry and metaphors. For example, Christmas speeches often use the comparison of the birth of a new life to starting of a new period or the good deeds of Jesus are mentioned in order to inspire mankind. Ceremonial speeches are often filled with appropriate verses, citations, or even bear a form of a poem (Mistrik 1987: 180; translation mine). These speeches should be warm-hearted and stylistically soft (Mistrik 1987: 180; translation mine).

As for other semiotic systems employed, the dress of the speaker should be festive and it is interesting to notice that the mimics and body language, compared to agitated speech, should not be distinct. More decent, nearly unnoticed kinetics is preferred. “Gesture and mimics are disturbing and are in clash with the poetry of the text” (Mistrik 1987: 180; translation mine).

The speaker should be disciplined and very economical – the length of a ceremonial speech is counted in minutes – the speech lasts from 5 to 20 minutes (Mistrik 1987: 180; translation mine). It is a common practice, yet reproached by some e.g. in case of Queen’s speech at the opening of the parliament, that a ceremonial speech is often read out.

4.3 The composition of ceremonial speeches

The composition of ceremonial speeches is simpler compared to other types of public speeches. The main reason is the fact that the speech should be as comprehensible for the listeners as possible. Therefore it can be observed also in Christmas speeches that each paragraph deals with a single theme. Even if the sentences are long, the boundaries within the phrases are clearly marked by the use of conjunctions and linking expressions.
Comprehension is further made easier by the use of regular rhythm and steady intonation when presenting the speech (Mistrík 1987: 181; translation mine).

4.4 Linguistic devices used in speeches

Linguistic devices change according to the type of speech they are used in – some authors choose only the basic linguistic devices, especially in notional speeches, whereas some will apply really classical rhetorical figures (in case of a ceremonial speech or a speech produced with the intention to be suggestive e.g. popular lecture) (Mistrík 1987: 38; translation mine). The presence of linguistic devices has no connection with the use of paralinguistic features such as body language. For example, the ceremonial speeches, to which Queen’s Christmas speeches belong, tend to be rich in the use of rhetoric figures but lack excessive use of paralinguistic features. On the other hand, genres as popular lectures employ only basic language devices but make use of a great deal of paralinguistic features (Mistrík 1987: 39; translation mine). Because one part of this thesis also deals with the analysis of linguistic devices, some of them are going to be described below.
4.5 General linguistic devices

4.5.1 Expressive vs. notional expressions

Mistrik stresses the importance of distinguishing between expressive and notional expressions when creating a rhetorical text (Mistrík 1987: 40). He sees expressive expressions as being personal, as opposed to notional expressions that are impersonal and factual. Expressive expressions contain more than one (denotative) meaning, for example, they express the speaker’s personal feelings: notional – to dismiss / expressive – to sack (Mistrík 1987: 40; translation mine). It is important to bear this distinction in mind when creating a speech, as expressive terms are usually not appropriate for a speech. Expressions such as pejoratives, vulgarisms but also diminutives or hypocoristics and familiar expressions are also felt as being stylistically marked (Mistrík 1987: 41; translation mine).

Not only expressions but also phrases can be divided into expressive and notional; expressive phrases being those with changed word-order. Changed word-order is mainly used to stress something within a phrase. Opposed to expressive terms, expressive phrases may be employed in creating a speech, however the author should be aware of them being marked (Mistrík 1987: 41; translation mine). In the following chapter phrases that are expressive i.e. marked are to be described.
4.5.2 Marked phrases

How does a phrase become marked? To explain this question it should be first explained what an unmarked phrase is. In English, the prominent peak of stress in a sentence typically occurs on a predicate, because this is where usually the most important (usually new) information occurs. This common rhythm is what is called ‘end focus’. Sentences that contain new, stressed information at the end are grammatically unmarked because this is the most typical situation of in English language.

However, it is possible to move the stressed unit within a sentence, which will result in breaking the end focus and thus creating a grammatically marked sentence. The language user may do this deliberately in order to make the unit prominent. There are more ways how to move a stressed unit from the back to the front of a sentence.

4.5.2.1 The It-Cleft

The *it- construction* (it + a form of a verb to be) puts the stress on the word following the construction. This is known as a cleft sentence (the term cleft comes from the verb *cleave*, which means to divide or split) (Kolln 1996: 29).

(2) *Barbara wrecked her motorcycle yesterday.*

(3) *It was yesterday that she wrecked the motorcycle.*
4.5.2.2 The What-Cleft

This kind of cleft sentence uses a *what*-clause in subject position (Kolln 1996: 30). The form of a verb ‘to be’ separates the original sentence in two parts:

(4) *Barbara wrecked her motorcycle.*

(5) *What Barbara wrecked was her motorcycle.*

The what-cleft can also shift the original verb phrase into subject position and hence shift the original subject in line for end focus (Kolln 1996: 31):

(6) *A branch lying across the road caused the accident.*

(7) *What caused the accident was the branch lying across the road.*

This way the subject may be shifted using the it-cleft as well.

4.5.2.3 The There-Transformation

The addition of *there* at the onset of the sentence, known as *expletive*, delays the subject, thereby putting it in line for stress (Kolln 1996: 31):

(8) *There’s a stranger standing on the porch.*

These constructions have been described in greater detail because they are often used in speeches as a way of putting stress on the desired words. A speech is written down and planned in advance and the distribution of stress is not changed on the spot, as it is in case of spontaneous spoken exchange. These constructions help writers to express the importance of certain words.
4.5.2.4 Power words

Some words are powerful enough to interrupt the usual rhythm pattern of the sentence, without using commas or sentence shifts (Kolln 1996: 35). ‘Power words’ are another useful tool employed when trying to stress certain words. These words are usually long and polysyllabic and they focus the attention on the word they precede either because of their length or meaning. Very often they carry a strong emotion or have a superlative or absolute quality. These words are usually adjectives or adverbs and they can be further intensified by another modifier.

(9) The senator spoke about the problems of the homeless.

(10) The senator spoke eloquently about the problems of the homeless.

(Kolln 1996: 35)

4.5.3 Abstract vs. concrete language devices

The main concern of a speaker creating a speech should be understanding on the side of a listener. In order to achieve this, it is important to choose appropriate vocabulary and terminology. “The wider and more heterogeneous the audience, the more abstract the speech should be” (Mistrík, 1987: 39; translation mine). This means that the author would not succeed with a speech full of terminology if his/her audience is not familiar with the terms used. When looking at Queen’s speeches that are aimed at masses, it can be observed that her majesty chooses vocabulary that is understood by common people to come closer to her listeners.
4.6 Poetic devices

As already mentioned, poetic devices occur frequently in ceremonial speeches. It would be too exhausting to describe all poetic devices that may be present in speeches and therefore only the most usual are described below and a more detailed approach will be presented in the practical part.

4.6.1 Imagery

Imagery means the use of “images” or sense-pictures in a literary work. “This includes not only reference to sights, but to sounds, touches, tastes, smells, and movements. Images are the words that evoke in the reader the strong feeling of the described sensory experience” (“On-Book,”). However, images do not serve only to prompt the reader to imagine sensory experiences themselves, it is used for “comparisons, either explicit or implied, between the recognisable sense object and another object, person, situation, emotion, or idea which the poet is seeking to describe” (“On-Book,”).

The comparative imagery is divided into similes and metaphors. Similes make an explicit comparison, whereas metaphors are implicit and the reader must figure out the meaning from the context and from the placement of the image (“On-Book,”).
4.6.2 Repetition

Repetition is a powerful stylistic device used by orators since the times of ancient Greece. It gives cohesion to sentences and ‘glues’ the ideas together. The Greeks had names for numerous types of repetition – the repetition of sounds and syllables to that of words and phrases in various locations in the sentence. The enumeration of all kinds of repetition is useless here but some of the examples will be presented in the practical part.

5. The history of Christmas speeches

5.1 The beginnings

As already mentioned Christmas speech has become a traditional feature of British Christmas. This tradition has its roots in the reign of Queen’s grandfather George V. who started it in 1932. The original idea was created by Sir John Reith, a founding father of the BBC, who wanted to use a Christmas speech given by the Sovereign to inaugurate the Empire Service (today’s BBC World service). The king, hesitant about using a relatively untried medium of radio that way, was reassured after his visit to the BBC in summer 1932 and agreed to take part (“A History,”). The first recording took place at a small office in Sandringham and it was a test of logistic skills of the technicians. Two rooms in Sandringham were temporarily converted into broadcasting studios. The signal was led by Post Office land lines to the Control Room at Broadcasting House. From there, a connection was made to BBC transmitters and to the Empire Broadcasting Station at Daventry. The signal was also transmitted to Australia, Canada, India, Kenya and South Africa via General Post Office (“A History,”).
The time chosen, which become traditional, was 3 pm – the best time to reach most of the countries in the Empire by short waves in Britain. The first Broadcast ever started at five past three and lasted two and a half minutes. Prior to this, an hour-long programme of greetings from all parts of the Empire was broadcast. The text of the first Christmas speech was written by Rudyard Kipling who is known as a supporter of British Empire. Due to its huge success, the king made a Broadcast every Christmas Day ever since until his death in 1936 (“A History,”).

5.2 The establishing of the tradition

Even if the broadcasting was not continuous after the death of George V., the thread of Christmas Broadcasts was preserved. Christmas Broadcast has gained its today’s popularity at the outbreak of war when king George VI. spoke to his people who were struck by the uncertainties future. King, dressed in the uniform of the Admiral of the fleet, made a great impression on his subjects who were disturbed by the beginning of war (“A History,”). Since this point a Christmas speech has become an annual tradition performed to show the monarch’s concern about his/her people, to express the unity of the empire and to boost the morale by showing hope for a better future.
5.3 The reign of the Queen Elisabeth II.

Queen Elisabeth II. broadcast her first message in 1952 continuing in a tradition of broadcasts from Sandringham. In her first speech Her Majesty expressed her thanks for the support she received since her accession to the throne and asked her subjects to pray for her on Coronation day that was due to take place next summer (“A History,”). This was a spectacular event attended by over two million people (Ziegler, 1986: 164).

Since then, the Queen has made a Christmas Broadcast to the Commonwealth every year of her reign except 1969, when the screening of the film ‘Royal Family’ was repeated and a written message from the Queen was issued instead (“80 key facts,”). In 1957 the speech was televised for the first time and since 1960 the radio broadcasts are pre-recorded in order to enable transmission at a convenient time in remote countries. In 1990s the BBC lost its monopoly on the speech and it is broadcast every other year by Independent Television News (“Queen makes,”)

The recording typically takes places at some of the Royal family residences - the aforementioned Sandringham, Buckingham Palace or Windsor. Over the last few decades it has become a tradition that before the message itself footage from Royal family engagements or historical footage is shown. Unlike the Queen’s speech at the state opening of the Parliament that is written by the government (“What is,”), the Christmas speech is written by the Queen herself (“Queen gives,”). The Queen chooses a theme of the speech in advance and the appropriate footage showing public engagements and sometimes private events is filmed during the year. The actual message is recorded a few days before Christmas; however this did not prevent the leak of the content of the speech in 2002 “Annus Horibilis”.
The Christmas Broadcast is a chance for the Queen to express her own views on the year’s events and her concerns about the current issues and her people. It also creates the opportunity to present the monarchy as a symbol of national stability. Last, but not least, the Christmas message serves as a chance for the monarch to boost the morale of her subjects and to express hope for a better future.
II. Practical part

6. Levels of analysis

In this part the different levels of text analysis will be described – the graphical level, the lexical level i.e. vocabulary of the speeches, the grammatical level, the stylistic level and the level of discourse. Finally, the author’s intentions and reader’s / listener’s perception - the pragmatics of speeches - is described.

After the analysis at different levels, a comparative analysis aimed at the description of changes in Christmas speeches over time will be attempted. The focus will be on changes in the choice of linguistic devices, which may affect style, or may result in different degree of emotiveness or explicitness.

7. Graphical level

The text consists of 55 transcripts of Queen’s Christmas broadcasts in the form as they are presented on the official website of the British Monarchy. Each year is dealt separately and the approximate length of one speech is 663 words. The whole body of text uses the same font and size and no features are highlighted. There are no pictures or photos and the text does not contain any margin notes or guide questions.

Each speech is organised into several short paragraphs, a new paragraph introducing a new idea. It is supposed that in a real speech paragraph distinction, commas and semicolons are there to signal a pause in speaking. However, it should be mentioned at this stage that this work will not cover phonological level of the speeches as this could be a topic of a one whole thesis. What will be analysed is the written account of Her Majesty’s speeches.
Example 1: Each paragraph dealing with a new idea (excerpt from 1952 speech)

My father, and my grandfather before him, worked all their lives to unite our peoples ever more closely, and to maintain its ideals which were so near to their hearts. I shall strive to carry on their work.

Main idea: a retrospective to the father and grandfather

Already you have given me strength to do so. For, since my accession ten months ago, your loyalty and affection have been an immense support and encouragement. I want to take this Christmas Day, my first opportunity, to thank you with all my heart.

Main idea: encouragement from the people during accession

Many grave problems and difficulties confront us all, but with a new faith in the old and splendid beliefs given us by our forefathers, and the strength to venture beyond the safeties of the past, I know we shall be worthy of our duty.

Main idea: mentioning the difficulties

Above all, we must keep alive that courageous spirit of adventure that is the finest quality of youth; and by youth I do not just mean those who are young in years; I mean too all those who are young in heart, no matter how old they may be. That spirit still flourishes in this old country and in all the younger countries of our Commonwealth.

Main idea: the courage of youth
7.1 Summary

It can be seen from the description of the graphical level that the layout is simple and it does not show any particular significance. The paragraphs are divided according to the needs of the speaker so that different ideas are dealt separately in order to facilitate reading of the text and enhance comprehension.

8. Vocabulary level

The vocabulary of a written discourse is typical for its attempt for adequate expression of meaning, whereas spoken discourse may be characterised by the ‘creation of the meaning on the spot’. The circumstances of the event, the place and time are described more precisely in a written discourse because the listener lacks situational context that is present in spoken exchange (Urbanová 2002: 36; translation mine). It has already been suggested that a speech belongs to a kind of mixed medium because although being spoken, it shows high scores in the explicitness of reference (Crystal 1995: 293). This has a direct influence on the choice of vocabulary and grammatical structures that show greater compactness and density than a natural spoken discourse (Urbanová 2002: 31; translation mine).

8.1 Chief topics

Because the vocabulary of a discourse is closely connected with its topic, firstly the chief topics are going to be discussed. Below is a table that shows the core topics of each speech.
Table 1: Topics of Her Majesty’s speeches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Main topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>accession, family circle, tolerance, helping each other, science, coronation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>voyage to New Zealand, family circle, the Commonwealth, the monarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>family circle, the Commonwealth, ordinary people and charity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>voyages, the Commonwealth, tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>family circle, encouragement, friendship, tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>TV, traditional values, better future, the Commonwealth, current issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>journeys, family circle, immigration, the contribution of working class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>expressing thanks for the congratulations to the birth of a son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>the Commonwealth, journeys, disasters, goodwill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>helping each other, goodwill, journeys, fight against prejudice, the youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>voyages, Commonwealth, Telstar, lonely people, helping each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>effort to built a better future, Free the World from Hunger campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>the Commonwealth, overpopulation, hunger, draught, youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>family circle, volunteers, goodwill, helping each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>fellowship, women in society, building a better world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>visits, Sir Francis Chichester, the Commonwealth Games, democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>helping each other, understanding between nations, the working people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>no speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>visits, the Commonwealth, caring about the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>family circle, children, the Christmas message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>the Northern Ireland, working class, volunteers, European Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>the Commonwealth, friendship, family, the disadvantaged, spiritual values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>disasters, cost of living rising, the Northern Ireland, democracy, goodwill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>violence, inflation, unemployment, helping each other, courage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>reconciliation, visit to the USA, Northern Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>the Northern Ireland, Silver Jubilee Appeal, helping each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>future, courage, children, charity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>The Year of a Child, Cambodia, volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>unselfish service, hope, belief in ourselves and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>The Year of Disabled People, emergency workers, Northern Ireland, unemployment, immigration, helping each other, Christian faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>the sea, the Falkland crisis, the Commonwealth Games, tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>space-shuttle, communication, India, rich and poor, technologies, tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>the anniversary of D-Day, the youth, Commonwealth, honesty and trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>disasters, emergency workers, the Investitures, the Queen’s awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>family circle, neglected children, loving each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>growing older, Northern Ireland, Mr Gordon Wilson, tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>parliamentary democracy, learning from the past, Christmas story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Save the Children fund, pollution, protecting the world, helping each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>war in the Middle East, the servicemen, refugees, terrorism, resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>democracy in Europe, elements of free society, giving an example, volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Windsor Castle, Sandringham, the Armed Services, support from people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>a global village, good and bad news, charity, Christian ideals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>D-Day anniversary, a visit to Russia, peace, hope for peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>VE Day, Northern Ireland, ordinary people, South Africa, peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>events of the year, past, Mandela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>the death of Diana, Golden Wedding, restoration of Windsor, visits, unity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It can be observed from this table that there are certain topics that reoccur in Christmas speeches. These are the topics of a family circle as a safe island in a troubled world, the ideas of tolerance and democracy and the idea of helping your neighbour. These topics are closely connected with the Christmas time.

The Queen also often mentions the Christian concepts of goodwill among people, altruistic help and good deeds. Christmas is a time when believers commemorate the birth of Jesus and thus allusions to his birth with the connection of the start of new life and hope for a better future are frequent. People are also reminded of the importance of helping each other not only throughout Christmas but throughout the whole year.

The topic of family gathering is present in most speeches and this is usually connected with the thought on those who have not been lucky enough to reunite with their families at Christmas – those fighting in distant countries, immigrants, refugees or lonely people.

To the more pragmatic topics belongs the enumeration of the royal commitments or celebration of the anniversaries. The Queen also comments on current home and international issues. In this way the speeches can be also seen as a memory of things that happened in the world and monarchy, of course, in a generalised way.

The history of the monarchy and Commonwealth is being mentioned throughout the speeches, with the description of changes i.e. new countries entering the Commonwealth or Britain joining the European Community.
8.2 The most frequent words

It would be interesting to look at the lexical words that are most frequently present throughout the speeches. Below are three tables – the first shows the ten most frequently used nouns, the second shows the ten most frequently used adjectives and in the third the most frequent adjectives are presented. It can be observed that the ‘top twenty’ nouns correlate with the core topics mentioned above.

Table 2: ‘Top twenty’ (The table shows the most frequent lexical nouns. ‘Occurrences’ signifies the overall number of occurrences of the word within the whole corpus).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Christmas</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>people</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>world</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>year</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Commonwealth</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>family</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>time</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>country</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>day</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>hope</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>life</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>children</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>message</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>future</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>peace</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>nation</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>men</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>courage</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>faith</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>service</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: The most frequent verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Occurences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>make</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>know</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>work</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>live</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>give</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>see</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>look</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>believe</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: The most frequent adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Occurences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>new</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>great</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>happy</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>last</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>different</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>important</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>special</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>difficult</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>long</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.3 Formal vs. informal vocabulary

Typical vocabulary used in formal language consists of polysyllabic, classical expressions i.e. expressions of Greek, Latin or French origin. When looking at the text closely a classical vocabulary both of Latin and French origin may be found very frequently.

Example 2: Polysyllabic vocabulary – Latin origin:

voyage, significant, endow, disaster, fatigue, spectacular, illuminate, remember, united, ultimate, celebrate, accessible, recognise, separate, exceptional, acute, ultimate, indifferent, recognise, imagine, amicable, prosperous, enormous, accumulated, affection

Example 3: Polysyllabic vocabulary – French origin:

embrace, envelop, develop, abandon, encourage
The examples of the words of French or Latin origin are frequently present in the noun heads as pre-modifiers. It may be therefore suggested that they are very often employed as ‘power words’ that were described in the theoretical part. Moreover, several polysyllabic expressions keep reoccurring within the speeches.

Example 4: The occurrence of polysyllabic expressions (the number in brackets expresses the total occurrence within the corpus)

`anniversary (15), celebration (21), community (42), compassion (14), concern (10), contribution (14), courage (44), different (35), difficult (35), disaster (17), discovery (11), effort (18), encourage (25), enjoy (18), especially (17), example (36), experience (23), familiar (15), festival (24), fortune (24), generation (29), ignore (10), important (44), impress (10), individual (26), inspire (33), international (13), joy (16), member (34),`

However, the Queen also employs monosyllabic words of Anglo-Saxon origin. This tendency may result from the intention to avoid too formal language and to make the speech easily comprehensible for a broader audience. The representatives of monosyllabic expressions can be found especially among verbs (see Table 3).

8.4 Specialised terminology

The Queen avoids the use of specialised terminology in her speeches; this again contributes to the general comprehensibility of the speech. Some expressions may be more difficult for a non-native speaker as the knowledge of them requires higher level of cultural awareness; however it can be said that a common listener with a general knowledge of the current issues would not have problems understanding the text.
8.5 Summary

All in all the vocabulary of Her Majesty’s speeches may be described as aimed at people. Even if the longer and polysyllabic words are quite frequent, these are combined with the words of Anglo-Saxon origin of everyday use which enables lucidity. The speeches are easy to follow and Her Majesty, who sometimes watches the speech herself in order to check comprehension, may be assured that the message of Christmas speeches does ‘comes across’.

9. Grammatical level

In this section the focus will be given solely on the level of syntax, as the morphological level does not show stylistically marked differences. The grammatical structure of Christmas speeches shows more features of written language than of a spoken one, however, the conclusions should not be made before a close analysis of the corpus.

9.1 Types and length of sentences

To the most striking characteristics certainly belongs the length of sentences. These are often very long, one sentence spreading over the whole paragraph i.e. over three to four lines.

(12) The Year of the Child has emphasised the value of this work, but we must not forget that every generation has to face the problems of childhood and the stresses of growing up, and, in due course, the responsibilities of parents and adults. (1979)
(13) This year I am speaking to you from the Household Cavalry Barracks in Windsor because I want to draw attention to the many Servicemen and women who are stationed far from home this Christmas. (2003)

As can be seen from the previous examples, the sentences are usually complex or compound. These kinds of sentences are well utilized in expressing the relationships between the subject matters (time, place and cause) or for a more detailed description of an object in dependent clauses.

The sentences are longer but, opposite to spoken language, their boundaries, the beginning and the end are clearly marked making use of linking expressions whose main function is to bind and divide an utterance (Urbanová 2002: 35; translation mine). These linking expressions make the speech more comprehensible for the listener and help the listener to orientate in the text better (Urbanová 2002: 35; translation mine). The extract below shows how linking expressions are employed in order to make the comprehension easier.

(14) Though this was strange for us, we felt at home there, for we were among people who are my own people and whose affectionate greeting I shall remember all my life long. They surrounded us with kindness and friendship, as did all my people throughout the mighty sweep of our world-encircling journey.

Nevertheless, to all of us there is nothing quite like the family gathering in familiar surroundings, centred on the children whose Festival this truly is, in the traditional atmosphere of love and happiness that springs from the enjoyment of simple well-tried things.

When it is night and wind and rain beat upon the window, the family is most conscious of the warmth and peacefulness that surround the pleasant fireside.

So, our Commonwealth hearth becomes more precious than ever before by the contrast between its homely security and the storm which sometimes seems to be brewing outside, in the darkness of uncertainty and doubt that envelops the whole world. (1954)
Because of the prevailing presence of complex and compound sentences, the simple sentence, when it occurs, is often given prominence.

(15)  *I think we all have very good reasons for feeling proud of their achievements - both in war, and as they help to build a lasting peace in trouble spots across the globe.*

None of this can be achieved without paying a price. (2003)

### 9.2 The conjunction ‘and’

It is very interesting to observe how the conjunction ‘and’ is distributed within the Christmas speeches. It can be said that it serves not only for the connection of two words or clauses but very often it is used for the enumeration different phrases or clauses in a linear and thus easily understandable way.

(16)  *To me this was a thanksgiving for all the good things for which our Commonwealth stands - the comradeship and co-operation it inspires and the friendship and tolerance it encourages.* (1977)

(17)  *They have learnt to take responsibility and to exercise judgement and restraint in situations of acute stress and danger. They have brought great credit to themselves and to our country as a whole.* (2003)
9.3 The dependent clauses

The table below presents the distribution of the most frequent coordinators and subordinators within the corpus. The defining clauses prevail, probably because the Queen focuses on the description of people and places rather than the relations within ideas as it is typical for scientific discourse.

Table 5: The most frequent coordinators and subordinators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>that</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>for</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>but</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>which</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>who</td>
<td>196</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>or</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>those</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>what</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>if</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.4 Sentence structure

Sentence structure varies in Queen’s speeches and so does the word order. All kinds of clause types can be found in the speeches except of the very simple ones such as SV clause. Some sentences follow the normal word-order of subject preceding the predicate, however, there are numerous examples of fronting, cleft or existential sentences. This is due to the genre itself - it is crucial for the speaker to stress the important ideas, otherwise the speech would be too monotonous and the message would not be mediated sufficiently.
Fronting

(18) Every day there are reports of violence, lawlessness, and the disregard for human life. (1972)

The It-cleft

(19) It is by acting in this spirit that every man, woman and child can help and 'make a difference'. (1974)

The existential sentence

(20) There is no doubt that the process of rebuilding these communities is far from over and there will be fresh calls on our commitment to help in the future. (2004)

9.5 Verb tenses

The feature that further supports the assumption that the Christmas speeches are not that formal as may be expected is a low number of non-finite verbs, which is not so typical for formal discourse. This can be explained by the effort to make the speeches more intelligible, direct and personal.

It can be said that Her Majesty makes use of all tenses, from past perfect to future, the choice depending on the period she is speaking about. When contemplating the past, the past tense is the most common, with the occasional use of past continuous or past perfect.

(21) Last October I opened the new Canadian Parliament, and as you know this was the first time that any Sovereign had done so in Ottawa. (1957)
Very often the Queen uses the present simple and perfect tense, this being so because she reflects on the year past and comments on a current situation. The use of simple tenses, again, contributes to the lucidity of the speech.

(22) *I am particularly grateful to the many kind people all over the world who have sent me their good wishes at this time.* (1959)

The passive is employed as well, it can be said that it substitutes the lower frequency of non-finite verb forms and thus contributes to the formality.

When speaking about the prospects for the future the Queen uses future simple tense. For royal commitments planned for future the formal form of shall is reserved.

(23) *My husband and I are greatly looking forward to re-visiting New Zealand and Australia in the New Year. We shall meet many old friends and make new ones and we shall be very interested to see some of the many new developments which have taken place since I was last there nine years ago.* (1962)

Table 6: The frequency of ‘grammatical verbs’

<table>
<thead>
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<th>ID</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>2</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>333</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>67</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>should</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9.6 Person

Person most frequently used in Christmas speeches is inclusive ‘we’ and the first person singular. Sometimes the Queen uses exclusive ‘we’ to speak about herself and her husband or about the members of her family. The Queen also frequently uses a third person singular when mentioning someone from past or present. Inclusive ‘we’ creates the feeling of solidarity and closeness.

Table 7: The frequency of subject and object pronouns and possessive adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
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<th>Occurrences</th>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>its</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
9.7 Locutionary subjectivity

Because of the fact that Her Majesty speaks in first person, the phenomenon of locutionary subjectivity can be observed quite frequently in Christmas speeches.

The locutionary subjectivity is very frequent in English because a British speaker considers it necessary to signal the relativity of his or her statement that is based solely on his or her experience (Urbanová, 2002:42; translation mine). The expressions of epistemic modality like I think, I feel, I hope, I suppose, I believe etc. are used in spoken discourse to evoke the feeling of togetherness and sharing and they indirectly invite the addressee to confirm these subjective views (Urbanová, 2002:42; translation mine). In case of Christmas speeches this feature is a clever way of creating interaction between the speaker and the listener. Even if the listeners do not have the opportunity to answer directly, they are given the space to create their own opinion and thus interaction is established.

It is be worth to compare Christmas speeches with the Queen’s speech at this point. Crystal suggests that ‘the Queen’s speech’ is “a case where the expectation of response is as near to a theoretical zero point as it is possible to get” (Crystal 1995: 294). Even if there is no direct response in Christmas speeches at least the choice of grammatical structures creates the feeling of interaction.

(24) I know there are millions of kindly people throughout the world who are saddened with me for all those who suffer from these outrages. (1972)

(25) I hope that this is something that all of us, young or old, can reflect on at this special time of year. (2006)

(26) I believe in our qualities and in our strength, I believe that together we can set an example to the world which will encourage upright people everywhere. (1957)
9.8 The Principle of Politeness

Another feature present in Queen’s Christmas speech is the Principle of Politeness. The speech, formal as it is, uses more tentative structures in expressing the ideas and opinions.

(27) We all ought to know by now that a civilised and peaceful existence is only possible when people make the effort to understand each other. (2007)

(28) It is worth bearing in mind that all of our faith communities encourage the bridging of that divide. (2006)

(29) Many grave problems and difficulties confront us all, but with a new faith in the old and splendid beliefs given us by our forefathers, and the strength to venture beyond the safeties of the past, I know we shall be worthy of our duty. (1952)

9.9 Summary

The previous section has considered the syntactical relations in Christmas speeches. When compared with the general description of formal speeches, it was observed that the Queen's Christmas speeches are simpler in structure and more animated than, for example, the Queen’s speech at the Opening of the Parliament. This only underlines the Crystal and Davy’s objections to the generalisation of the notion of ‘register’ and the need for a large-scale empirical analysis of each discourse (Crystal and Davy 1969: 61).
10. Stylistic level

Another lexical feature of a written discourse is the richness of language and graphical devices that is used to attract and persuade the reader or listener (Urbanová 2002: 36; translation mine). This is especially significant in the language of advertising but the effort to attract the listener can also be found in the language of speeches. In the case of a public speech language the choice of vocabulary plays an undisputable role in making the speech appealing to the listener. The writer or speaker has to catch the listener’s attention and maintain it. For this purpose the writer may make use of a variety of tricks such as exclamations, fronting, poetic devices etc. What will be of primary interest at this level of analysis is the choice of lexical items that contribute to the attractiveness and overall message of the speech.

10.1 Literary devices

In the theoretical part it has been stated that Christmas speeches can be regarded as ceremonial, because they are given to a special occasion. This special occasion - Christmas - creates the opportunity to apply several literary devices without the speech sounding too pompous. Below are the examples of the most frequent figures of speech. Because some of the definitions were presented in the theoretical part, it is redundant to repeat them below and thus only figures that were not introduced before contain definitions.
10.1.2 Imagery

10.1.2.1 Metaphor

(30) Being united - that is, feeling a unity of purpose - is the glue that bonds together the members of a family, a country, a Commonwealth. (1997)

(31) They are lucky to have the freedom to travel and learn about foreign cultures at an age when the appetite for learning is keen. (1998)

(32) All the great works of charity and all humanitarian legislation have always been inspired by a flame of compassion which has burnt brightly in the hearts of men and women. (1966)

10.1.2.2 Simile

(33) Surely it is because the family festival is like a firm landmark in the stormy seas of modern life. (1962)

(34) Many ideas are being questioned today, but these great truths will continue to shine out as the light of hope in the darkness of intolerance and inhumanity. (1968)

10.1.2.3 Personification

“A poet is personifying an object or idea when he or she writes about it as though it were a human” (“On-Book,”). This can be done by ascribing a quality such as will, feelings or intelligence to an object.
Out of the old Empire sprang the Commonwealth family of nations that we know today, and that, too, has grown and changed over the years. (1997)

The meeting also showed that unity and diversity can go hand in hand. (1997)

The world needs that kindness now more than ever - the kindness and consideration for others that disarms malice and allows us to get on with one another with respect and affection. (1997)

10.1.2.4 Parallelism

Parallelism is present where the form of one sentence or clause repeats the form of another. This device is often used in speeches, prayers, poetry and advertisements. It has a powerful emotional effect and it is also used as aide-mémoire (Cook 1989: 15).

If only we can live up to the example of the child who was born at Christmas with a love that came to embrace the whole world. If only we can let him recapture for us that time when we faced the future with childhood's unbounded faith. (1996)

It goes also to the quiet people who fight prejudice by example, who stick to standards and ideals in face of persecution; who make real sacrifices in order to help and serve their neighbours. (1961)

10.1.2.5 Parenthesis

Parenthesis is an explanatory or qualifying word, clause, or sentence inserted into a passage with which it doesn't necessarily have any grammatical connection, and from which it is usually marked off by round or square brackets, dashes, or commas (“On-Book,”). The Christmas speeches contain a significant number of parentheses. These are used to introduce extra ideas and are a welcomed alternative to dependent clauses.
(41) As he spoke from his study at Sandringham, the 'wireless' - as we used to call it - made it possible for millions of people throughout the world to hear the voice of the Sovereign for the first time. (1978).

10.1.2.6 Citations

Her majesty frequently makes use of citations, probably most common being citations from Bible and Christian hymns. To the cited poets belong John Donne, Alfred Tennyson, Siegfried Sassoon but once Her Majesty also cited a poem that was sent to her from one of her subjects.

(42) The poet John Donne said: "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." (1982)

(43) 'Peace on earth, goodwill towards men'. (1983)

(44) "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven". (1984)

(45) "Oh hush the noise, ye men of strife, and hear the angels sing."(1961) - a carol

10.1.2.7 Allusion

Allusions are frequent, especially the allusions to Bible and Christ’s life. Because Her Majesty is Christian, the Christian faith is often expressed in the language of speeches.
(46) Some may be far from home, and others lonely or sick, yet Christmas always remains as the great family festival.

A festival which we owe to that family long ago which spent this time in extreme adversity and discomfort. (1965)

(47) The wise men of old followed a star: modern man has built one. (1962)

10.1.2.8 Appeal

Her Majesty often appeals on people’s actions. Here she makes use of inclusive ‘we’ that sounds less direct.

(48) Let us keep faith with the ideal we know to be right and be ambitious for the good of all men. (1962)

10.1.2.9 Rhetorical question

Rhetorical question is a question posed by a speaker that does not require an answer. Its purpose is the hearer’s reflection on what the answer may be.

(49) How is it, people wonder, that we are forever seeking new worlds to conquer before we have properly put our own house in order. (1962)

(50) What is it all for, they ask, if you can bounce a telephone conversation or a television picture through the skies and across the world, yet still find lonely people living in the same street? (1962)
10.1.3 Sense of humour

Queen Elisabeth is known for her wit and sense of humour. Even in Christmas speeches an examples of humour may be found.

(51) So, between us, we are going to many parts of the world. We have no plans for space travel - at the moment. (1958)

(52) Four generations of my family have enjoyed the quiet and solitude of this library. It is still a haven of peace even if my grandchildren do their best over Christmas to make it rather more lively! (1993)

(53) I am reminded of a lady of about my age who was asked by an earnest, little granddaughter the other day "Granny, can you remember the Stone Age?" (2006)

10.2 Summary

The Christmas speeches contain various examples of poetic devices. This can be explained by the genre of ceremonial speeches that often employs figures of speech and unusual stylistics in order to catch the listener’s attention. Also the special occasion to which the speeches are promoted – Christmas and the end of year - call for more poetic, exceptional performance.
11. Discourse level

Discourse level describes the way the text is structured. The function of different paragraphs has already been suggested in the graphical level, what will be of main interest at this level is the means of how the ideas are woven together to create a cohesive text.

11.1 Reference

Referential items are items that refer back or forward to something else for their interpretation. Because reference is closely connected with the context of situation, it often occurs in conversation. However, reference may be also found in more formal discourse, especially for the purpose of binding the text together and following the quantity maxim. The Christmas speeches also make use of reference. There are three kinds of reference – personal, where the cohesive link is performed by reference to a person, demonstrative – the reference by means of location and comparative reference that is an indirect reference by means of identity or similarity (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 37).

In Christmas speeches the most frequent is the personal reference. In the example present, his refers back to my beloved father. The second sentence contains cataphoric reference.

(54) Each Christmas, at this time, my beloved father broadcast a message to his people in all parts of the world. Today I am doing this to you, who are now my people. (1952)
Demonstrative reference

(55) We talk of ourselves as a "family of nations", and perhaps our relations with one another are not so very different from those which exist between members of any family. (1956)

Comparative reference

(56) Look at the younger ones - they are the future and just as we were helped to understand and to appreciate the values of a civilised community, it is now our responsibility to help them to do the same. (1977)

11.2 Substitution

“The distinction between substitution and reference is that substitution is a relation in the wording rather that in the meaning” (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 88). What happens is that a certain expression is substituted by another, more general and usually quite a vague one (Urbanová 2002: 62; translation mine). Again substitution is more often present in a spoken discourse as a means of establishing a social contact (Urbanová 2002: 62; translation mine). However, the examples of substitution have also been found in Christmas speeches. Below is an example where a prop-word one substitutes the word person. In the second example same substitutes the whole phrase.

(55) Yet my husband's absence at this time has made me even more aware than I was before of my own good fortune in being one of a united family. (1956)

(56) He lived by what he believed and gave us the strength to try to do the same. (1981)
11.3 Ellipsis

Ellipsis is an incomplete sentence structure that often occurs in spoken language. Sometimes it also occurs in written language as a means of making the text more lively and current (Urbanová 2002: 62; translation mine). It is also present in order to follow the quantity maxim. The omitted structure is always retrievable from the context and thus comprehension is enabled. Ellipsis is very rare in Queen’s speeches as here the focus is on creating the most understandable text. Moreover, the structures are being rephrased to facilitate the memorability of the utterance. The sentence below demonstrates how her majesty avoids substitution and rephrases the idea instead.

(57) Last month I flew back from Delhi to London in a matter of hours. It took King George V three months to make the round trip. (1983)

The sentence wit an example of ellipsis.

(58) They can remember the First World War. Prince Philip and I can recall only the Second. (1998)

11.4 Conjunctions

Conjunctions are the most frequent cohesive devices present in the text (Urbanová 2002: 63; translation mine). Coordinate conjunctions are characteristic for spoken discourse, whereas subordinate conjunctions are more frequent in a written one. Speech as a mixed medium contains both of them. There is a rule that the more formal the text the more formal the conjunctions used in it (Urbanová 2002: 64; translation mine). Following this suggestion, it can be said that the Queen’s speeches are not strictly formal. The most frequent conjunctions are and, but and or and these also prevail in Christmas speeches (see Table 5).
11.5 Lexical cohesion

Lexical cohesion is based on the repetition of lexical items and their sense relations. These can be the relations of synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy etc. Although present, lexical cohesion is not that frequent in Christmas speeches, probably because the paragraphs usually deal with only one topic and are relatively short. The overuse of lexical cohesion would result in repetition and therefore reference is preferred. Below is an interesting example of lexical cohesion based on the sense of hyponymy as well as antonymy.

(59) When we look at the landscape of our life on this earth there is in the minds of all of us a tendency to admire the peaks, and to ignore the foothills and the fertile plain from which they spring. (1954)

11.6 Summary

The Christmas speeches show appropriate level of cohesion. The text is unified in order to enable the listener to follow the logical implications easily. For this purpose both the ‘connectors’ introduced at grammatical level and cohesive devices are used. Her Majesty is aware of the benefit of cohesive device and employs them well throughout the speeches.
12. Pragmatics: Author’s Intention and Reader’s Perception

In the theoretical part it was suggested that the context and knowledge about it has an indisputable effect on the reader’s or hearer’s perception of what is being said. In this chapter, the focus will be on the description of the context in which the Christmas speeches take place as well as on the level of knowledge (personal or cultural) the hearer must have when approaching the speech. Further, different language functions and their representation in Christmas speeches will be discussed.

12.1 The context

For the purpose of the description of context, an approach for deriving the features of the text from the features of the situation by Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens will be applied. They choose three headings of field, mode and tenor in order to define context. They claim that “the more specifically we can characterize the context of situation, the more specifically we can predict the properties of a text in that situation (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 22)”

12.1.1 Field

“Field is the total event in which the text is functioning, together with the purposive activity of the speaker or writer (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 22)”. In case of Queen’s Christmas speeches the field can be described as ‘an annual summary of the year’s events, with the aim to reflect on these events, to mediate the contact between the monarch and the subjects as well as to present the monarchy and its ideals in positive light.’
12.1.2 Mode

Mode is described as being the function of the text in the event. It includes both the channel taken by the language and its genre or rhetorical mode (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 22). Following this definition, Queen’s speech may be characterised as ‘a spoken monologue, of a genre of a ceremonial public speech’.

12.1.3 Tenor

The tenor refers “to the type of role interaction, the set of relevant social relations, permanent or temporary, among the participants involved (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 22).” The role of the Queen as a formal head of the monarchy approaching her subjects requires one of the most formal presentations. This is, however partly ‘softened’ by the special occasion of the festival of Christmas and the end of year.

12.2 The level of formality

The level of formality depends on the relationship of the participants, their social statuses and roles i.e. tenor. The relationship of the participants will affect the way of communication – whether it would be friendly or whether the participants will keep distance. The intention of the speaker is also important – the choice of vocabulary and grammatical structures at standoffish approach will be different from the situation when intimacy and closeness is expressed (Urbanová 2002: 39; translation mine).

The situation that occurs during the Christmas speech is that of a monarch speaking to his/her subjects. Because it is a speech that takes place every year to a special occasion, it is
expected that the tone will be formal and official. However, the formality when compared, for example, with the rigid formality of Queen’s speech at the opening of the parliament, is tempered by the effort of the monarch to come closer to her subjects and share together the Christmas atmosphere and events that happened throughout the year.

**12.3 Matter-of-factness vs. expressiveness**

Matter-of-factness reflects the effort of the speaker to produce objective statement. It is especially significant for the scientific prose style that is based on rigorous scientific investigation and verification (Urbanová 2002: 48; translation mine). On the other hand, expressiveness is based on the presence of subjective views of the speaker and the level of expressiveness points to the involvement of the speaker in a conversation, bias, point of view etc. (Urbanová 2002: 50; translation mine). As already mentioned, Her Majesty avoids undue expressiveness because of the genre of the speech itself. However, the markers of subjectivity, described at the graphical level are employed quite frequently and the examples of expressive language can be found as well.

(60) *We hear much of ‘public life’ - the hurly-burly of Parliament, the media, big business, city life.* (1998)

(61) *Only seven years had passed since the end of the most destructive wars in the history of mankind. Then, quite suddenly, everything began to change, and the changes have happened with bewildering speed. In 1989 the Berlin Wall came down. Since then the rest of the world has watched, fascinated, as oppressive regimes have crumbled under popular pressure.* (1990)

(62) *This tiny satellite has become the invisible focus of a million eyes. Telstar, and her sister satellites as they arise, can now show the world to the world just as it is in its daily life.*
What a wonderfully exciting prospect and perhaps it will make us stop and think about what sort of picture we are presenting to each other. (1952)

To the features worth noticing belong the frequent use of the first person and the absence of face saving acts on the side of Her Majesty. These features create the impression of directness, persuasiveness and credibility.

12.4 Referential vs. affective function

Holmes claims that the relation between referential and affective function is that of inverse proportion. The more pragmatic the text, the less expressive it is and vice versa (Holmes in Urbanová 2002: 51; translation mine).

It is interesting to look at Christmas speeches from this point of view. It can be said that Christmas speeches express both referential and expressive function. The Christmas speeches consist of objective information, but they are not so matter-of-fact that they would completely displace expressiveness. Oppositely, the evaluation and thus expressiveness is a part of mentioning the successes and tragedies of the year past.

(63) Wars, threats of wars and civil disturbance inevitably cause thousands of innocent people to become refugees and to have their lives ruined or disrupted. It is difficult for us, safe at home, to contemplate the scale of the suffering for homeless and hungry people caused by the ever-widening consequences of the crisis in the Gulf.

The invasion of Kuwait was an example on an international scale of an evil which has beset us at different levels in recent years - attempts by ruthless people to impose their will on the peaceable majority. (1990)
I never cease to admire the stoical courage of those in Northern Ireland, for example, who go about their business in defiance of the terrorist. The reaction of those who have lost loved ones at violent hands is often an inspiration to the rest of us. (1990)

12.5 The Author’s Intention

When creating a speech the author has some intent of what the speech should express on mind. What is the purpose of a Christmas speech?

The original intent of the first Christmas speech was to promote a new broadcasting corporation. For this purpose, the speech by a leading monarch, namely George V., was chosen. This was because the King represented a respectable and trustworthy authority.

Times have changed since the reign of George the V., however the Christmas message has remained as the opportunity for the monarch to keep in contact with his/her citizens and to speak to millions of people around the world. The basic intention of Christmas speech can be seen in this social contact of the monarch with the people. It is the opportunity to remind the crown as a formal head of the state. It is also the opportunity to show the monarch as a person ‘from flesh and bones’ who speaks from the privacy of her own home.

By making a Christmas speech the monarch shows that he/she is not indifferent to his/her subjects - the wishes of goodwill and happiness for the future shows the concern about the people.

Christmas speech further creates the opportunity to present the monarch as a stable pillar of the monarchical system. The principles of the monarchy are defended and its ideals are presented. For example the idea of Commonwealth is being mentioned very frequently.
12.6 The Hearer’s Perception

Although it has been said that no background knowledge is needed in order to understand Christmas speeches, a non-native speaker may face some difficulties. These would mostly lie in culturally specific expressions that sometimes appear in Christmas speeches. All of these expressions come from British culture. Below are few examples that contain culturally specific information and require the knowledge of British life and institutions for full understanding.

(65) Such names as Drake, Anson, Frobisher, Cook, Vancouver and Phillip are familiar to people in widely different parts of the Commonwealth - while in Britain we owe our independence to the seamen who fought the Armada nearly 400 years ago and to Nelson and his band of brothers who destroyed Napoleon's dreams of invasion (1982)

(66) Or another volunteer, who has devoted a large part of her life to others in the service of the WRVS. (1985)

(67) Naturally I see more such people in Britain, but as I often hold Investitures in other Commonwealth countries, I know that there are people making the same sort of good news all over the world. (1985)

(68) Every year a Christmas party is held for the children of the people living in the Mews of Buckingham Palace. (1986)

(69) Those who suffered the horrors of warfare, in whatever guise, will not have been prey to this temptation. For them, war was not a "Boys' Own" tale of comradeship and good cheer, but one of hard slog, danger, suffering and exhaustion.

Those songs we sang during the VE Day commemorations did much to brighten the days of war, and they certainly cheered us last May. But, as any veteran will tell you, there was a lot more to the war years than dreaming of the White Cliffs of Dover. (1995)
12.7 Language functions

In order to realise the intent and purpose of Christmas speeches more thoroughly it will be helpful to look at what language functions appear in Christmas speeches.

According to the classification of language functions by Cook (inspired by both Jakobson’s and Hymes’ accounts), nearly all language function can be identified in Christmas speeches.

12.7.1 The emotive function

The emotive function communicates the inner states and emotions of the addressee (Cook1989: 26). Although Her Majesty avoids expressing her feelings directly in Christmas speeches, which is only natural in given situation, some of the examples of emotive language have been found.

(70) *I know just how much I rely on my own faith to guide me through the good times and the bad. Each day is a new beginning, I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right, to take the long view, to give of my best in all that the day brings, and to put my trust in God.* (2002)

12.7.2 The directive function

The directive function expresses an attempt to affect the behaviour of the addressee (Cook1989: 26). This function is frequently employed within Christmas speeches as Her Majesty addresses the morale and actions of her subjects. These directives are not in a form of exclamation, they are less emphatic but effective.
May you be proud to remember - as I am myself - how much depends on you and that even when your life seems most monotonous, what you do is always of real value and importance to your fellow men. (1954)

12.7.3 The phatic function

The phatic function is used for establishing the contact between the participants. It aims at opening the channel or checking that it is working, either for social reasons or practical ones (Cook1989: 26). Season’s greetings either at the opening of the speech or at its end may be regarded as representatives of the phatic function.

12.7.4 The poetic function

In case of the poetic function the particular form chosen is the essence of the message (Cook1989: 26). As already suggested at the stylistic level Her Majesty employs a significant amount of poetic devices in her speeches and thus the function of language used is often poetic.

Telstar, and her sister satellites as they arise, can now show the world to the world just as it is in its daily life. (1962)

It used to be said that "no news is good news" but today you might well think that "good news is no news". (1985)
12.7.5 The referential function

Referential function that employs carrying information belongs together with poetic function to the basic functions employed in speeches. The language that employs referential function focuses on carrying information (Cook 1989: 26).

12.7.6 The metalinguistic function

The metalinguistic function means focusing attention upon the code itself and it clarifies or renegotiates it (Cook 1989: 26). This function is characteristic for the language of science, however one example has been found also in the language of Christmas speeches:

(74) A merry Christmas and a happy New Year.
There is something wonderful in the way these old familiar warm-hearted words of the traditional Christmas message never seem to grow stale. (1962)

12.7.7 The contextual function

The contextual function creates a particular kind of communication (Cook 1989: 26). This function is present in one of the speeches that somehow steps aside from the others, it is the speech that contains excerpts from other historical speeches.

(74) When it first fell to me to carry on the tradition that my grandfather and father had developed, I reaffirmed what I knew had been their deeply held beliefs in the future, beliefs which I myself share. This is what I said on Christmas Day 1952. (1978)
12.8 Summary

From the description of the context of Christmas speeches and its language functions it can be concluded that Christmas speeches are created with the listener on mind. The speeches are written in a clear and accessible style. Moreover, they employ different language functions which results in the complexity and richness of the message.

13. Diachronic changes

13.1 The length of sentences

It has been detected that length of sentences shows measurable differences. In practical part, it has been described that the sentences of Christmas speeches tend to be complex and long. However, over the first two decades there is a tendency of the shortening of the sentences. This phenomenon may be ascribed to the fact that the speeches were under development and it took some time until the appropriate length of a speech was found. The table below shows the growing number of sentences within speeches in the first two decades. It may be further observed that this trend stopped at the end of seventies and since then the speeches has shown only insignificant change in the number of sentences per speech.
13.2 Topics

Topics of Christmas speeches have undergone changes as well. Similarly, it may be said that Her Majesty was looking for her style. The speeches from the beginning of her reign are more concerned with the travel commitments of a royal couple and frequently the importance of Commonwealth is remembered as Her Majesty describes her journeys around different countries of the Commonwealth. The choice of other topics is predominantly based on the current happening in the world. To the stable topics belong altruistic love and Christian belief as well as the descriptions of life of royal family. Later Her Majesty chooses a central theme on which she focuses in her speech. Thus speeches with central topics such as
Child, Reconciliation, and Generation gap are created. It may be concluded, that this trend continues in Christmas speeches until now.

The support of monarchy and the ideal of Commonwealth does not cease with time passing, after all to present the monarchy and its principles in positive light is one of the purposes of Christmas speeches. What also remains stable is the defence of democratic principles and tolerance.

It is interesting to observe how new topics are entering the speeches. These are usually topics that had not been known before and entered the speeches in times when they occurred in the world. Thus, for example, the topics of immigration, malnutrition and overpopulation did not appear in Christmas speeches until 1958 and later. Some topics reflect the period, for example, the inflation and unemployment in the seventies; and some describe a birth of new phenomena like space travel or terrorism.

### 13.3 Expressiveness and emotiveness

As the level of expressiveness is toned down in Christmas speeches it is difficult to discern any significant changes, however, some changes may be detected. It seems that the very first speeches contain more personal involvement – Her Majesty asking her subjects for support during Coronation or the descriptions of royal voyages. The latter speeches do not go into such a detailed description of personal life and engagements. Although the life of the royal family e.g. the birth of a grandchild or a relative’s birthday is mentioned, this is presented only as additional information. The exception is the 1992 speech Her Majesty lost both her mother and sister in the same year. This speech may be considered to be very personal and emotional. The slight shift in topics as the Queen - mother becomes the Queen – grandmother is also worth noticing.
13.4 Summary

It has been observed that some of the hypotheses concerning diachronic changes were confirmed. The emotiveness and expressiveness differs from speech to speech, however it is not possible for these phenomena to be measured. Thus it can only be stated that the use of emotive language was more significant in one speech and less in another. To measurable phenomena belong the length of sentences, the frequency of polysyllabic words or dependent sentences. However these did not show any significant change over time and thus were not included in this section. The Christmas speeches generally seem to be homogeneous; it can be said that Her Majesty keeps a very balanced standard of her speeches.
III. Conclusion

The discourse analysis of Christmas speeches of Queen Elisabeth II. has shown to be very stimulating. The corpus displays various linguistic phenomena, part of which has been described in this work. The discourse, that was supposed to be very formal, turned out to be creative and poetical. Moreover, Her Majesty endeavours to make her speeches accessible and engaging for her listeners.

The graphical structure showed small distinctiveness, however at lexical and grammatical level many distinctive features were observed. The vocabulary of Christmas speeches is formal yet understandable without any background knowledge. This is thanks to the prevalingly linear construction of sentences. The focus is given on the overall understanding of the message.

Grammatical structures display features of a written language. The sentences are complex and long but, again, they are well structured using linking expressions and conjunctions. The mediation of the message is further supported by the use of linguistic devices as cleft sentences or fronting.

Stylistic level shows richness in expression and it can be concluded that over years Her Majesty founds her own style. The hypotheses set in the introduction were partly proved. Christmas speeches undergo a change in style – with the years passing Her Majesty confirms her way of expression which is concentrated around the leading topic with additional remarks on the current issues.

Even if some speeches show greater amount of expressiveness and emotiveness, no trend has been defined here. The distribution of vocabulary of French vs. Anglo-Saxon origin, the level of formality and the grammatical structures used also do not show any significant difference.
Overall, the Christmas speeches show a complexity of expression – they combine pragmatic issues, morale as well as the expression of solidarity with people. To the features that can be most stressed belongs Her Majesty’s tenacity with which she keeps presenting the values in which she believes – the system based on democracy and tolerance, the behaviour based on loving your neighbour and unselfish help and the constant hope for goodness in people and better future.
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V. List of Appendices

Appendix 1 - a CD with the transcripts of Christmas speeches