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Rhetorical Battle at the Un: Trump *Versus* Prabowo

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the Rhetorical Battle at the UN between Trump and Prabowo Subianto. This study uses Aristotle's Rhetorical Theory, with the assumptions: Ethos, Pathos and Logos. The research method is Qualitative research, with an Interpretive paradigm, by viewing social reality as a construction rich in meaning and interpretation referring to the style, narrative, and logic built by the two figures. Research and observations were conducted before and after the 80th UN General Assembly in 2025. The results of the study show that Trump as an American leader, in terms of Ethos is considered to have many shortcomings, due to various cases before becoming Head of State for the second time in 2025. Meanwhile, Prabowo Subianto is supposed to have several violations related to his position, but there are no personal violations. From the Pathos side, namely expertise on stage, both Heads of State are considered skilled, both in terms of affirming ideas, and their respective delivery methods. The speeches made by both heads of state are considered representative with good capabilities. In terms of Logos, or the thoughts expressed, both heads of state displayed well-organized main points, each with its own concerns. Trump highlighted his prowess as a "superpower" leader, world peace, and climate change;. At the same time, Prabowo Subianto emphasized independence, freedom, equal rights, protection of children in war-torn countries, and the role of the UN in creating a peaceful world for all citizens.

Keywords: Political Communication, Rhetorical Battle, Donald Trump, Prabowo Subianto, Aristotle.

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations General Assembly, or UN Conference, held annually, is a meeting place for countries around the world to discuss various global issues, including world peace and security; developing international relations, helping countries work together to resolve problems, and harmonizing the actions of nations. The UN plays a vital role in creating and maintaining peace between nations and encouraging international collaboration to achieve common goals. Indonesia itself has made a significant impact on the world through the UN General Assembly, led by President Soekarno, in 1960 (Dewi, 2023).

The United Nations (UN) was officially established on October 24, 1945, with the primary objective of maintaining international peace and security and promoting friendly relations among nations worldwide. Focusing not only on political and security aspects, the

UN also plays a role in fostering collaboration in the economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian fields, thereby creating global balance and prosperity. The session typically takes place every September, close to the organization's anniversary (October), at UN headquarters in New York, United States.

At this annual session, each head of state or government is allowed to deliver a speech to the world. The speech contains their country's views, proposals, and official positions on global and regional issues. In addition to general speeches, there are also high-level meetings and committee discussions on specific topics.

Every year, the UN holds a General Assembly every September. In 2025, the UN General Assembly took place on 22-30 September 2025, at the UN Headquarters, New York, United States, and was attended by 193 Heads of State. However, not all heads of state had the opportunity to address the UN General Assembly. In 2025, 12 Heads of State were given the chance to address the 2025 UN General Assembly, and Indonesia was one of them. The heads of state who were allowed to address were: [1] Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (President of Brazil); [2] Donald Trump (President of the United States); [3] Prabowo Subianto (President of the Republic of Indonesia); [4] Recep Tayyip Erdogan (President of Turkey); [5] Dina Boluarte (President of Peru); [6] Abdullah II (King of Jordan); [7] Lee Jae Myung (President of South Korea); [8] Amim bin Hamad Al Thani (Emir of Qatar); [9] Jennifer Simons-Geerlings (President of Suriname); [10] Gitanas Nausėda (President of Lithuania); [11] Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa (President of Portugal); [12] Yamandú Orsi (President of Uruguay).

Every Head of State given the opportunity to appear at the UN General Assembly will perform to their full potential within the allotted time. Both the order and the maximum duration are set at a maximum of 15 minutes, although in some cases, the Head of State's speech may be longer. Therefore, every Head of State allowed to appear will undoubtedly deliver the best possible performance, both in terms of speech material and rhetorical style. This will leave an impression of what they want to convey, both to the delegates in attendance and to the global community following through various platforms.

Conceptual Basis

UN General Assembly

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is the annual meeting of the United Nations. The UN General Assembly (UNGA) is the leading annual forum of the United Nations, bringing together all member states. The UN General Assembly has been held since its founding in 1965, and this year marks its 80th meeting. This year's UN General Assembly carries the theme: "Better together: 80 years and more for peace, development, and human rights," reflecting on the trajectory of global policy over the past eight years since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs). This theme calls on the international community to strengthen solidarity in efforts to achieve peace, development, and the protection of human rights.

At the 2025 UN General Assembly, various global issues were discussed, ranging from peace and international security, sustainable development, climate change, and human rights. International peace and security: Focus on conflict resolution and human rights protection. Kompas.com reported that four key issues were discussed:

[1] Sustainable development: focuses on evaluating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and new commitments from member countries.

[2] Climate change: focuses on discussing national action plans related to climate change and the environmental crisis.

[3] Artificial intelligence (AI) technology: focuses on discussions about the regulation and governance of AI.

[4] Global health: focusing on mental health and prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) as part of the SDG targets.

[5] UN Reform (UN80 Initiative): An agenda for reforming the UN system, including how the organization can be more effective, efficient and relevant, particularly in the context of funding challenges, mandate burdens and geopolitical complexities.

As part of the General Assembly agenda, President Prabowo delivered a speech on Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at 8:00 PM WIB. Historically, several Indonesian presidents have delivered speeches at the UN General Assembly. According to the Cabinet Secretariat, the following Indonesian presidents have addressed the UN General Assembly:

a) Sukarno

The first president of the Republic of Indonesia, Soekarno, appeared at the UN General Assembly on September 30, 1960 with a speech entitled "To Build the World Anew".

On that occasion, Bung Karno emphasized his anti-imperialist and anti-colonial stance, called for international solidarity, and introduced Pancasila as an alternative world ideology. This monumental speech was recognized by UNESCO as a Memory of the World in 2023.

b) Suharto

President Suharto delivered two speeches at the United Nations forum, at the 47th General Assembly on September 24, 1992, and in October 1995. In 1992, he delivered the "Jakarta Message," the result of the 10th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) held in Jakarta, representing the 108 member states of the NAM. His second speech in 1995 coincided with the 50th anniversary of the founding of the UN.

c) Megawati Sukarnoputri

Two Indonesian Presidents, namely President BJ Habibie, did not have the opportunity to address the UN because his term of office was short. At the same time, President Abdurrahman Wahid attended the forum in 2000 but did not deliver a speech.

The baton continued with Megawati Soekarnoputri who spoke at the UN General Assembly in 2001 and 2003. In her speech, Megawati emphasized the importance of fundamental reform within the UN to make it more effective and provide tangible benefits for humanity.

d) Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY)

SBY has been quite active at the UN, attending a total of six times during his 10-year presidency. His first address was at the 62nd General Assembly in 2007, highlighting Indonesia's contribution to world peace and the role of international diplomacy.

e) Joko Widodo (Jokowi)

Jokowi did not attend in person to give a speech at the UN during the early period of his administration (2014–2019), and instead sent Vice President Jusuf Kalla (2019).

Jokowi only delivered virtual speeches in 2020 and 2021, amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, from 2022 to 2024, Indonesia was represented by Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi.

The Influence of the Head of State in the UN General Assembly

Currently, 193 countries in the world have become members of the United Nations, meaning that 193 Heads of State are allowed to speak at the UN General Assembly, which is held every October at the UN Headquarters in New York. Every year, every Head of State will attend. Through a pre-arranged schedule, every Head of State who has been given the opportunity will provide his best speech, to influence his fellow heads of state in the world, and will provide his views, which could change the world order in the future, as the First President of the Republic of Indonesia, Soekarno, did in 1960 (Dewi, 2023).

Aristotle's Theory of Rhetoric

Rhetoric is defined as the art of constructing arguments and speechmaking. In its development, rhetoric encompasses the process of adapting ideas to people through various messages (Morisan, 2013: 44).

What is meant by rhetoric as a process is that there is a certain systematic way to see a public communication that can be said to be rhetoric or about theory, not rhetoric. Aristotle's discussion is usually inseparable from its context which is very typical of Aristotle's theory, namely the forms of rhetorical theory and Artistic Proof of rhetoric.

The evidence in question relates to ethos (ethics or credibility), pathos (emotion), and logos (logic). Ethos refers to the character, intelligence, and perceived good intentions of a speaker during a speech. Pathos relates to the emotions evoked in the audience. Pathos is emotional evidence.

Aristotle's rhetorical theory is closely related to public communication such as speeches and orations. Aristotle systematically stated that speech must consider the type of speech, its rules, the audience, and the issues addressed in the speech. Aristotle divided speeches into three categories that reflect the different rules under which the speech occurs, the intended purpose (telos) of the speech, and the various roles played by the audience. The three types of speeches Aristotle refers to are deliberative, epideictic, and forensic (Herrick, 2017). According to Aristotle, these three have specific differences. Deliberative (legislative) speeches are concerned with profit and loss, forensic (or judicial) speeches are concerned with justice and injustice, and epideictic speeches are concerned with what is considered virtuous and what is bad (Leith, 2011). Deliberative speeches are concerned with how to influence the audience about a future course of action in a political forum. In general, deliberative speech aims to express arguments about the benefits or harms of an action to be taken (Enos, 2013). Forensic speech focuses on accusatory or defensive arguments, while epideictic speech contains praise or criticism (Hesk, 2009).

Rhetorical theory is closely related to Aristotle's Artistic Proofs, namely character (ethos), emotion (pathos), and argument (logos) (Habinek, 2017). The concept of Artistic Proofs must be adequately understood and correctly because it is the core of Aristotle's rhetorical theory. Herrick (2017) describes the three Artistic Proofs in detail and well, explaining that Aristotle uses logos to refer to the evidence available in the words, arguments, or logic of a speech. Logos is the study of making inferences or reasoning, a study closely related to formal logic. However, logos when associated with rhetoric is more concerned with how to reason correctly about public issues compared to dialectical logic. Logos is the study of arguments used in practical decision-making, while Aristotle discusses pathos about "how" to evoke different emotions when giving a speech. Pathos is more precisely a discussion of the psychology of emotions intended to understand human emotional responses to the purpose of the speech being delivered. Pathos also discusses the emotional state of the audience to suit the nature and seriousness of specific issues being debated in the public sphere through speech. Finally, ethos focuses more on discussing how orators or people giving speeches should show phronesis (intelligence, common sense), arete (virtue), and eunoia (good intentions), when pathos is the psychology of emotions. Ethos is the sociology of character (Herrick, 2017). Artistic Proofs in short analyzes speeches, orations and other public communications from the perspective of presenting the speaker's character (ethos) as a trustworthy person based on what he says in his speech, the emergence of emotions (pathos) in the audience, the use of arguments (logos) that try to show something according to the purpose of the speech, as well as paying attention to three main factors in the situation when giving a speech, namely: the speaker (speech/oration deliverer), the subject (content of the speech), and the audience or audience (Kennedy, 2009). Departing from the core of Aristotle's thoughts on his rhetorical theory, namely artistic proofs, this study attempts to identify, analyze, and evaluate selected journals

that discuss rhetorical theory and the concept of Artistic Proofs through the Systematic Literature Review method.

Rhetorical Assumptions

- a) Effective speakers must consider their audience. This assumption emphasizes the importance of the speaker-audience relationship. Speakers should not structure or deliver their speeches without considering their audience, but rather should be audience-centered. In this sense, the audience is regarded as a large group of people with motivations, decisions, and choices, rather than a large, homogeneous group of similar individuals. This assumption underscores the definition of communication as a transactional process. For a speech to be effective, an audience analysis must be conducted, which is the process of evaluating an audience and its background and structuring the speech in such a way that the listeners respond as the speaker expects.
- b) Effective speakers use multiple forms of evidence in their presentations. This assumption relates to what speakers do in preparing and delivering their speeches. The forms of evidence referred to here refer to the methods of persuasion: ethos, pathos, and logos. Ethos is the perceived character, intelligence, and good intentions of a speaker. Logos is logical evidence, or the use of arguments and evidence in a speech. Pathos is emotional evidence, or the emotions evoked in audience members.

Three-Level Argument (Syllogism and Enthymeme)

Logos is one of three proofs that, according to Aristotle, create a more effective message. Adhering to these logical proofs is called a syllogism. However, the popular term enthymeme later emerged.

A syllogism (Bitzer, 1995; Kim and Kunningham, 2003) is a group of propositions that are related to each other and conclude from major and minor premises. A syllogism is actually a deductive argument which is a group of statements (premises) that lead to another group of statements (conclusion).

An enthymeme (Lloyd Bitzer, 1959) is a syllogism based on probability, signs, and examples, and functions as a rhetorical persuasion. Probabilities are statements that are generally true but still require additional proof. Signs are statements that explain the reason for a fact. Examples are statements that are either factual or created by the speaker. Enthymemes in this case allow the audience to deduce conclusions from premises or from their own experiences. James McBurney (1994) reminds us that enthymemes are the basis of all persuasive discourse. Therefore, enthymemes are also related to ethos and pathos. Larry Anhart (1981), believes in the interconnection between enthymemes and forms of evidence when he concludes that the persuasive power of enthymemes lies in their ability to be logical, ethical and pathetic: “enthymemes can be used not only to establish a conclusion as a possible truth but also to change the emotions of the listeners or to build their confidence in the character of the speaker”.

Syllogisms and enthymemes are structurally similar. However, syllogisms deal with certainty, while enthymemes deal with possibility.

Canon of Rhetoric

Canons are guidelines or principles that must be followed by the speaker so that the persuasive speech can be effective, namely:

- a) Invention, defined as the construction or arrangement of an argument relevant to the purpose of a speech. In this case, it is necessary to integrate thinking with the arguments in the speech. Therefore, using logic and evidence in a speech can make a speech more substantial and more persuasive. Something that aids invention is the topic. The topic is a

reference to the argument used by the speaker. Speakers also rely on civic space, or metaphors, which state that the speaker has "locations" where there are opportunities to persuade others.

- b) Arrangement, related to the speaker's ability to organize their speech. Speeches generally should follow a three-part approach: introduction, body, and conclusion. The introduction is part of the speech's organizational strategy, capturing the audience's attention, demonstrating the topic's relationship to the audience, and providing a brief discussion of the speaker's purpose. The body is part of the speech's organizational strategy, encompassing arguments, examples, and essential details to convey a thought. The conclusion, or epilogue, is part of the speech's organizational strategy, aimed at summarizing the speaker's key points and arousing the audience's emotions.
- c) Style, is the canon of rhetoric that covers the use of language to convey ideas in a speech. In using language, glosses (old words in speeches) should be avoided, but rather the use of metaphors (figures of speech that help to make something unclear easier to understand). The use of style ensures that a speech is memorable and that the speaker's ideas are clarified.
- d) Delivery, a rhetorical canon that refers to the nonverbal presentation of a speaker's ideas. Delivery typically includes behaviors such as eye contact, vocal cues, spelling, clarity of pronunciation, dialect, gestures, and physical appearance. Effective delivery supports the speaker's words and helps reduce tension.
- e) Memory is a rhetorical canon that refers to a speaker's efforts to store information for a speech. With memory, a speaker can know what to say and when to say it, reducing the speaker's tension and allowing the speaker to respond to the unexpected.

Types of Rhetoric

- a) Forensic rhetoric, which refers to situations where the speaker encourages a sense of guilt or innocence in the audience. Forensic speeches, also known as judicial speeches, are usually found within a legal context. Forensic rhetoric focuses on the past.
- b) Epideictic rhetoric is a type of rhetoric related to discourse involving praise or accusation. Epideictic speeches are often called ceremonial speeches. This type of speech is delivered to the public to praise, honor, blaming, and shaming. This type of speech focuses on current social issues.
- c) Deliberative rhetoric is a type of rhetoric that determines what actions the audience should or should not take. This type of speech is often called a political speech. Deliberative speeches are oriented toward the future (Richard, 2008).

The development of rhetoric during the Middle Ages lasted for a thousand years (400-1400). In Europe, during this long period, the legacy of Greek civilization was neglected. European encounters with Islam, which preserved and developed Greek treasures during the Crusades, gave rise to the Renaissance. One Renaissance thinker who revived interest in rhetoric was Peter Ramus. He divided rhetoric into two parts. *Inventio* and *disposition* were included as parts of logic. Rhetoric, on the other hand, concerned itself solely with *elocutio* and *pronuntiatio*.

The Renaissance ushered in modern rhetoric. The bridge between the Renaissance and modern rhetoric was built by Roger Bacon (1214–1219). He not only introduced the experimental method but also emphasized the importance of understanding psychological processes in the study of rhetoric. He stated that "the duty of rhetoric is to use reason and imagination to move the will better." Reason, imagination, and the will are psychological faculties that would later become the primary subjects of modern rhetoricians. The first school of rhetoric in the modern era, emphasizing psychological processes, is known as the epistemological school. Epistemology examines the "theory of knowledge"—the origins, nature, methods, and limits of human knowledge. Epistemological thinkers sought to examine

classical rhetoric in light of developments in cognitive psychology (that is, the study of mental processes).

The second school of modern rhetoric is known as the *belles lettres* (French: beautiful writing) movement. Belletrist rhetoric placed great emphasis on the beauty of language, the aesthetic aspects of a message, sometimes to the detriment of its informative aspects. Hugh Blair (1718–1800) wrote *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*. Here he explained the relationship between rhetoric, literature, and criticism. He introduced the faculty of taste, the ability to derive pleasure from encountering anything beautiful. Because you have the faculty of taste, you enjoy listening to beautiful music, or considering a beautiful speech. Taste, Blair argued, reaches its perfection when sensual pleasure is combined with reason—when reason can explain the sources of pleasure. The first (epistemological) and second (*belles lettres*) movements focused primarily on speech preparation—on the formulation of the message and the use of language. The third movement, called *the elocutionist movement*, emphasized the technique of speech delivery. James Brugh, explained emotion and how to express it.

Over time, the elocutionist movement was criticized for its excessive focus on and devotion to technique. Rhetoric was no longer a science based solely on "brainstorming" or the result of rational contemplation. Rhetoric, like other disciplines, was formulated from the results of empirical research.

In the twentieth century, rhetoric took its mandate from the development of modern science, especially behavioral sciences such as psychology and sociology. The term rhetoric began to be replaced by *speech*, *speech communication*, or *oral communication*, or *public speaking*. One of the modern rhetoric figures, Charles Henry Woolbert, viewed "Speech Communication" as a behavioral science. For him, the process of composing a speech is the primary basis of persuasion. In preparing a speech, according to Woolbert, the following things must be considered: [1] the purpose of the speech; [2] the audience and the situation; [3] propositions that are appropriate to the audience and situation; [4] choose sentences that are logically connected. (Rakhmat, 2009)

METHOD

The method used is qualitative, with an interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm explains that knowledge cannot be separated from social context and human subjectivity. Social facts are not neutral, but rather the result of human agreements, interpretations, and constructions in everyday life (Samatan, 2018). The research uses literature searches: books, journals, online media and YouTube broadcasts, with the following steps:

First, this study searched the online databases of Taylor & Francis Academic and Jstor Sage, using keywords: rhetoric, Aristotle, speech, ethos, pathos, logos. The total number of journals found from these online databases was 478 indexed journals. *Second*, this study continued by searching Google Scholar using keywords: rhetoric, Aristotle, ethos, pathos, logos, Prabowo, Trump, UN General Assembly 2025, getting 1 item. Third, searching Google using keywords: rhetoric, Aristotle, Ethos, Pathos, Logos, Prabowo, Trump, UN General Assembly 2025, found 386 items, so the total search results were 865 items.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

UN General Assembly 2025

The UN General Assembly, held annually since its founding in 1945, in 2025, the UN has met 80 times. The UN General Assembly aims to Maintain world peace and security; Develop friendly relations among nations based on the principles of equality, the right to self-determination, and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries; Develop international cooperation in solving economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian problems; Resolve disputes by peaceful means and prevent the outbreak of war; Promote and respect

human rights and fundamental freedoms or independence without distinction of color, skin, sex, language, and religion.

Thus, the UN General Assembly is considered very important, because it is the center of activities of nations in achieving harmonious cooperation to achieve the goals of the UN.

Rhetorical Battle on the Public Stage

Rhetoric is the art of speaking aimed at influencing an audience through compelling and persuasive messages. In public speaking, rhetoric is a crucial tool for speakers to capture their audience's attention and deliver their message with greater impact. Rhetoric helps speakers organize their words, use style, and adjust intonation and facial expressions to make their message more easily understood and accepted. Without effective rhetoric, speakers will struggle to build rapport with their audience and their messages will lack strong appeal.

There are three main components in Public Speaking (Aristotle in Rubinelli, 2018; Garver, 2018) Main Components of Rhetoric in Public Speaking, namely:

[1] Ethos: The credibility or character of the speaker, which includes honesty, knowledge, and professional attitude.

[2] Pathos: The ability to touch the audience's emotions. The use of real stories or relevant analogies can help generate empathy.

[3] Logos: Conveying a message with strong logic and structured arguments. Logos is needed to provide logical reasons and convince the audience.

Rhetorical theory centers on the idea of rhetoric, which Aristotle called the available tools of persuasion. This means that a speaker interested in persuading an audience must consider three rhetorical tools: logic (logos), emotion (pathos), and ethics/credibility (ethos). The audience is key to effective persuasion, and rhetorical syllogisms, which require the audience to discover the missing pieces of a speech for themselves, are used in persuasion. Therefore, it can be concluded that rhetorical theory is a theory that guides constructing an effective persuasive presentation or speech using the available tools of persuasion.

The Head of State's speech at the UN General Assembly is something commonplace. Still, it has strategic value, especially for Indonesia, after being absent for 10 years, at the 80th UN General Assembly, the President of Indonesia was present in person without a representative, and explained what the Head of State's concerns were, of course, as a representation of the hopes of his people.

Host Donald Trump received his second opportunity to speak after Brazil, and Prabowo Subianto was third out of 12 heads of state speaking at the 80th UN General Assembly. While Trump's 59 minutes, far exceeded the 15 minutes allotted to each head of state, Prabowo Subianto's speech lasted 19 minutes, exceeding the allotted time by four minutes.

Donald Trump

Donald Trump, born June 14, 1946, is a businessman, reality show host, and politician. He served as the 45th President of the United States from 2017 to 2021 and was re-elected as the 47th President in 2025. Trump is the only American president to have been impeached twice. After he attempted to pressure Ukraine in 2019 to investigate Biden, he was impeached in December by the House of Representatives for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress; the Senate acquitted Trump in February 2020. The House impeached Trump a second time in January 2021, on charges of inciting insurrection, and the Senate acquitted him the following month. In December 2022, a House committee recommended criminal charges against Trump for obstruction of an official proceeding, conspiracy to defraud the United States, and inciting or aiding insurrection. Academics and historians consider Trump one of the worst presidents in American history.

In May 2024, a New York judge convicted Trump of 34 felony counts of falsifying business records related to the hush-money payment to Stormy Daniels. Trump thus became the first sitting U.S. president to be sentenced to prison for a crime. Trump faces 54 other felony counts in three other indictments: a federal prosecution in Florida related to the mishandling of classified documents; a federal prosecution in Washington, D.C., on charges of conspiracy and obstruction of justice for attempting to overturn the 2020 presidential election; and a state prosecution in Georgia on charges of racketeering and other crimes committed in an attempt to overturn the state's 2020 election results. In civil matters also facing New York State Courts, Trump was found liable for financial fraud in 2024, and in 2023 for the sexual assault of E. Jean Carroll (Robinson, 2020; Blummell and Huemmer, 2019). Trump considered this unjustified and appealed both decisions. Since leaving office, Trump has remained involved in the Republican Party. In November 2022, he announced his candidacy as the Republican candidate in the 2024 presidential election.

Donald Trump is known worldwide, besides being the President of the United States with a second term on January 20, 2025 (CNN Indonesia, 2025), Trump is also known for his various controversial policies. Internationally, Trump has been widely criticized, especially for his policies regarding Gaza, and also his policies that are considered "racist" because they prohibit Muslims from becoming immigrants to America. His policies towards Gaza, especially his desire to evacuate Gaza, have made the world community angry with his policies that are considered very pro-Israel which is regarded as the occupier of the Palestinian Nation.

In terms of Pathos, the ability to touch the audience's emotions, Trump's speeches always seem fiery, influencing the audience including pressuring colleagues and countries considered under the control of the United States. In 2025, Forbes released the strongest countries in the world, and with five main parameters: leadership, economic influence, political power, strong international alliances, and military power. The ranking methodology was developed by BAV Group, a unit of the global marketing firm WPP, in collaboration with researchers led by Professor David Reibstein of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, all in partnership with US News & World Report. Forbes placed the United States still in first place, then China in second place (Forbes, in IKNnews, 2025). This, which also makes all policies taken by the United States, in this case the incumbent President, greatly influence the world. This is because, which until now is the strongest country in the world, has a significant impact on the countries under its control, both directly and indirectly.

In terms of logos, or the delivery of messages with strong logic and structured arguments, Donald Trump's performance was considered quite coherent when delivering speeches, especially on various policies concerning the world, to his colleagues in NATO, tariff policies for multiple countries, policies toward his allies, especially Israel, which is a common enemy of the world, yet still received defense from Trump. The logic also displayed was Trump's policy toward immigrants, mainly from Muslim countries. This is evident when policies toward Muslim countries are considered "racist." Despite much criticism, Trump persisted with his policies, only reducing them to selective isolationism (Taufik and Pratiwi, 2021) toward Muslim migrants, which was considered Trump's Islamophobia.

Various "cases" mentioned previously, it is appropriate if the international world, especially the Islamic world, does not give a positive response to Donald Trump (visimuslim.org. 2025). This means, from the Ethos side, Trump is seen negatively by some of the world community, even though as a true Liberalist, he has had a positive impact by increasing their wealth. based on a report published by Oxfam on January 20, 2025 (in visimuslim.org. 2025), it revealed that billionaires increased their wealth by \$2 trillion in 2024-equivalent to \$5.7 billion per day, further widening the gap between rich and poor countries, caused by the hoarding of wealth carried out by Trump and his colleagues.

Prabowo Subianto

Prabowo Subianto, born on October 17, 1951, is a politician, businessman, and retired Indonesian National Army officer who has served as President of Indonesia since October 20, 2024 for the 2024-2029 period. Prabowo Subianto, was initially known as Soeharto's son-in-law, who married Titi Heriati Heriadi, who was President Soeharto's 3rd daughter. His career in the military also skyrocketed, and is considered related to his position as President Soeharto's son-in-law. Prabowo Subianto is a former Commander General (Danjen) of Kopassus (Special Forces Command), when he held the rank of 2 Star or Major General from 1995-1998.

The reforms in 1998 became a turning point for Prabowo Subianto, when Soeharto as the Second President resigned on May 21, 1998 (Kompas, 2023). As Commander of Kopassus, Prabowo Subianto was honorably discharged based on the Decree of the Officer Honorary Council Number: KEP/03/VIII/1998/DKP issued on August 21, 1998. He was found guilty and proven to have committed several irregularities and errors. One of them, Prabowo was said to have kidnapped several pro-democracy activists in 1998.

Prabowo assigned the Mawar Task Force, or Team Mawar, to kidnap pro-democracy activists. The order was issued through Infantry Colonel Chairawan, Commander of Group 4, and Infantry Major Bambang Kristiono. The two men carried out the task after Prabowo stated that Team Mawar was formed on the orders of his superiors.

Furthermore, the DKP also revealed that Prabowo exceeded his authority by carrying out national stability control operations. These operations were carried out repeatedly in Aceh, Irian Jaya (now Papua), and as part of the presidential security operation in Vancouver, Canada, by the Special Forces Command (Kopassus). Prabowo was also found guilty of frequently traveling abroad without permission from the Army Chief of Staff or the ABRI Commander.

From a series of "cases", Prabowo finally "fled" to Jordan in September 1998 to avoid the strong slander in the country (GoRiau.com, 2014), since that incident, for some time, Prabowo never returned to Indonesia. After "disappearing" for almost a decade, in 2008 Prabowo Subianto Together with Hashim Joyohadikusumo, Fadi Zon and others, Prabowo founded the Gerindra Party on February 6, 2008 (Tempo.co., 2025). Prabowo has been the General Chairman of the Gerindra Party since 2014, since Suhardi--the previous General Chairman of the Gerindra Party--passed away.

After running for President and Vice President 3 times since 2009, he ran for Vice President accompanying Megawati Soekarnoputri, and lost to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono-Boediono. In 2014, he ran for President with Hatta Rajasa as his Vice Presidential candidate, and lost to Joko Widodo-JK. Prabowo again ran for President in 2019, paired with Sandiaga Uno, but again lost to Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin. The nomination for President of the Republic of Indonesia was carried out in 2024, when Prabowo as a Presidential Candidate of the Republic of Indonesia paired with Gibran Rakabuming Raka as Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia. This time, Prabowo Subianto-Gibran finally won the Presidential and Vice Presidential Election defeating Anies Baswedan-Muhaimin Iskandar and Ganjar Pranowo-Mahfud MD (Kompas.com, 2024). Currently, Prabowo is entering his first year of leadership as President of the Republic of Indonesia, after being inaugurated on October 20, 2024 (Ministry of State Secretariat, 2024).

From an ethos perspective, Prabowo Subianto has demonstrated that his career has been plagued by several major "cases," leading to his honorable discharge and his eventual "fleeing" to Jordan for nearly a decade. Prabowo returned to Indonesia and established the Gerindra Party. This has led some to believe Prabowo is responsible for the shooting of Trisakti students, Elang Mulia Lesmana, Hafidin Royan, Hery Hartanto, and Hendriawan Sie, on May 12, 1998 (Tribun Cirebon, 2023).

The Pathos side, or the ability to touch the audience's emotions, Prabowo's speech is considered by some as a figure who can arouse the feelings of the audience (Dama, et al., 2025).

It can make the audience who listen excited, sad, happy based on what is conveyed during the speech.

In terms of Logos or word expression, Prabowo Subianto was once dubbed the "Asian Tiger," a symbol of firm, authoritative, and respected leadership in the region (Odiyaiwuu.com. 2025). However, many are not yet fully convinced of the leadership of this Asian Tiger during his one year of leadership. A year into Prabowo's leadership, until now the Indonesian people are still waiting, not only Prabowo as the "Asian Tiger," but also Indonesia as a respected country in the Asian region. Because, the previous Indonesian leader, Soekarno was known as the "Lion of the Podium" who had succeeded in awakening the souls and bodies of the people to independence, unity and sovereignty. Meanwhile, Soeharto presented himself as the "Javanese Tiger," and had succeeded in boosting Indonesia's economic growth to the point of being recognized internationally as the "Asian Tiger" (Jakartasatu.com. 2025). Currently, there are a handful of people and media who are starting to "question" Prabowo's existence as the "Asian Tiger," or has he turned into the "Asian Cat"?

Discussion

Analysis Based on Aristotle's Rhetorical Theory, a study was conducted on the speeches delivered by Donald Trump and Prabowo Subianto, at the 80th UN General Assembly, on September 23-27 and 29, 2025, held at the UN Headquarters in New York. Based on the data found, Prabowo Subianto became the President who spoke in third place, after Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, based on the tradition of the UN General Assembly, where Brazil always opens the Speech at the UN General Assembly. At the same time, other countries are reluctant to speak in first place (detiknews., 2025). Next is the President of the United States, Donald Trump as the host, and Prabowo is in third place. Based on the tradition of the order of speeches of the Head of State, this is considered a "leap" in Indonesia's position, which was previously in the first place. If we look at history, the opportunity for the Indonesian leader to speak this early is a special moment. Soekarno once delivered a speech in 46th place, Soeharto in 61st place, Megawati in 17th place, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was recorded as having delivered three speeches in 20th, 21st, and 16th place, and President Joko Widodo delivered two online speeches, both in 16th place (detiknews., 2025).

Analysis based on Ethos. The data presented previously shows that the two Heads of State discussed, namely Donald Trump and Prabowo, have various "negative records" in terms of Ethos. That is, both Donald Trump and Prabowo Subianto have dark records in their respective careers and policies. Trump is considered always to make controversial policies, especially for Muslims, his policies in Gaza, and also his policies on restrictions on Muslim immigration are considered "racist" by many groups, especially by the global Muslim community. Meanwhile, Prabowo Subianto's ethos, when serving as President, is currently still considered "neutral" and there is nothing too striking, either from a negative or positive side. The record of his career path involving power and position in 1998 during the Indonesian Reformation, has a "dark" record, because Prabowo is accused of exceeding his position at that time, especially related to the death of Trisakti students in the May 1998 incident.

From a pathos perspective, both Donald Trump and Prabowo have demonstrated their class as world leaders. Trump, with his pride as a superpower, explained his role in ending seven world wars without the presence of the UN; immigrants who are considered to destroy countries; global climate change that should be a concern for all countries of the world, as well as the current wars that are occurring in various parts of the world, including Ukraine and Gaza-Palestine. Meanwhile, Prabowo is concerned with world peace, especially regarding the independence of the state of Palestine, stopping the invasion of Gaza that has violated the ideals of world peace, namely a world that is safe, peaceful, just and free for all citizens.

From a logos perspective, both Trump and Prabowo have demonstrated their qualities as heads of state with global capabilities and understanding. Suppose Trump is more focused on his country and its capabilities as a Superpower president. In that case, Prabowo appears more egalitarian with his presentation on the importance of world peace, independence and freedom for all nations of the world, creating a more peaceful world for children in war zones. He conveyed Indonesia's position in contributing to world peace and hopes for the UN to continue for the sake of world security as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly has become a meeting place for all heads of state worldwide, especially those who are UN members, currently numbering 193, and two observer states: Palestine and the Vatican. Trump and Prabowo's speeches were a crucial part of the 2025 UN General Assembly, where both heads of state shared their views on the world, peace, and climate change. The rhetoric presented by both heads of state received widespread attention, as both heads of state presented the best perspectives. While Trump remained focused on his country's success as a superpower, partly on world peace and other issues, Prabowo consistently championed world peace, particularly regarding Palestine, echoing the concerns of Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, and Libya, achieving security, independence, and peace, as well as peaceful coexistence among the various nations and ethnicities of the world.

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