



Ideological rhetoric: a critical discourse analysis of Prabowo's first inauguration speech

¹Puji Hariati^{ID}, ^{2*}Purwarno^{ID}

¹Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Pembinaan Masyarakat Indonesia (UPMI), INDONESIA

¹Jln. Sisingamangaraja, Amplas, Balai Desa, Medan, Sumatera Utara

²Faculty of Literature, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara, INDONESIA

²Jln. Sisingamangaraja, Teladan Barat, Medan, Sumatera Utara

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: October 25, 2024

Revised: January 7, 2025

Accepted: February 9, 2025

Keywords:

Critical Discourse Analysis

Ideological Rhetoric

Rhetorical Devices

Rhetorical Strategies

Sovereignty

Conflict of interest:

None

Funding information:

Self-Finance

Correspondence:

Purwarno

purwarno@sastra.uisu.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study examines the rhetorical strategies, ideological rhetoric, and political ideology of nation-building presented by Prabowo Subianto in his inauguration speech as the newly elected president of Indonesia on October 20, 2024. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, the analysis is grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to reveal the underlying rhetorical devices and ideological themes conveyed in his speech. The study is structured through two interlinked dimensions: rhetorical strategies and ideological rhetoric, utilizing Aristotle's rhetorical concepts of ethos, pathos, and logos to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the speech. The analysis addresses key themes such as sovereignty, the relationship between the state and its citizens, justice, equality, the vision of a "Great Indonesia," the plight of *wong cilik* (the ordinary people), and the cultural principle of *gotong royong* (cooperation). These themes are pivotal to Prabowo's articulation of Indonesia's identity and vision for the nation's future. Findings reveal that Prabowo employs a balanced array of rhetorical strategies, ethos, and pathos, accounting for approximately 30% of the speech, focusing on his credibility and emotional connection with the audience. Logos, comprising 40% of the rhetoric, underscores logical and structured arguments, enhancing his appeal to rational thought. The ideological rhetoric, meanwhile, emphasizes national sovereignty, justice, and unity, reflecting Prabowo's deep-seated vision for an independent and resilient Indonesia. His ideology resonates with themes of independence and self-reliance, advocating a stance against foreign influence, and drawing from Indonesia's historical struggles for independence. This study sheds light on how Prabowo's rhetorical strategies and ideological expressions serve to frame political discourse and contribute to the formation

of national identity, underscoring the role of presidential rhetoric in shaping the public's perception of leadership and vision for Indonesia.



© Puji Hariati, Purwarno

This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) international license.

How to cite (APA Style):

Hariati, P., & Purwarno. (2025). Ideological Rhetoric: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Prabowo's First Inauguration Speech. *JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature)*, 10(1), 136–156. <https://doi.org/10.33369/joall.v10i1.37663>

INTRODUCTION

On October 20, 2024, Prabowo Subianto delivered his first inaugural speech as the President of Indonesia. Inaugural addresses serve as significant rituals, marking the transition of political power from one administration to the next. Prabowo's speech highlighted his commitment to sincere leadership for all citizens, including those who did not vote for him, distinguishing itself from Joko Widodo's 2014 inaugural speech, which focused on the reach of government services to every corner of the nation (Widianingsih, 2021; Firdaus et al., 2022). Inaugural speeches have long been an integral part of the Indonesian presidency (Razuni, 2023), where ideological rhetoric is crucial in persuading and influencing audiences by promoting specific beliefs, values, or worldviews (Husnussalam & Yana, 2024).

Rhetoric in political speeches is designed to inspire, persuade, and shift the audience's perspectives. Analyzing political speech structures through rhetorical approaches allows us to understand the speech's context, argument, and overall impact (Martin, 2015). Rhetoric has historically been used as a persuasive communication strategy in various socio-political contexts, such as education, public affairs, law, and civil disputes (Ilie, 2006). It serves as a tool to strengthen arguments (Herrick, 2021; Szczesny, 2017). Aristotle defines rhetoric as the ability to recognize the available means of persuasion, with ethos, pathos, and logos being the primary rhetorical proofs (Isai et al., 2020).

In political discourse, rhetoric becomes a medium for expressing and spreading ideologies. Alnasse (2022) asserts that rhetoric is a powerful tool that speakers use to influence their audience. Political rhetoric often shapes ideological assumptions and power dynamics. To better understand the ideological rhetoric in Prabowo's inauguration speech, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is essential. CDA allows language analysis within its social and political context (Shakoury, 2018), revealing the relationship between language, politics, and social ideology (Fairclough & Graham, 2002; Zhou, 2024).

CDA also examines how language conveys and exercises power. As Wodak (2001) argues, language is not inherently powerful but becomes

powerful through its practical use. Ideology and power are interlinked, as Fairclough (2003) points out, with ideologies reflecting aspects of the world that either maintain or challenge social relations of power and domination. Thompson (2007) adds that ideology is "meaning in the service of power," with speakers using language to shape public opinion and influence social change.

Based on these theoretical foundations, this study aims to analyze Prabowo's inaugural speech, focusing on his rhetorical strategies, ideological rhetoric, and political ideology of nation-building. Through Critical Discourse Analysis, the study seeks to illustrate how language in Prabowo's speech influences public opinion and drives social transformation.

Rhetorical

Rhetoric is the study of persuasive communication, encompassing the exploration of all available means of persuasion in any given context (Charteris-Black, 2018). In this sense, a communicator can employ various rhetorical devices to effectively convey their message, potentially altering the audience's thoughts or feelings. This study focuses primarily on political rhetoric, which is defined as a form of persuasion that utilises language, signs, and symbols within political, social, cultural, and economic contexts (Ladia, 2022). Speeches delivered by political figures, such as presidents, demonstrate a deliberate effort to gain public acceptance (Ladia, 2022). To communicate successfully with their audience, politicians often employ appropriate and effective rhetorical devices that can transform abstract concepts into ideas easily understood by listeners (Gelilang et al., 2021).

Speakers frequently employ rhetorical questions to assert or elaborate on specific points in their speeches. These questions are powerful tools for capturing the audience's attention and framing the speech's claims (Ahluwalia & Burnkrant, 2004; Shakour, 2014). To enhance persuasiveness, speakers can apply rhetorical strategies based on Aristotle's framework, which includes ethos, pathos, and logos:

1. **Ethos** refers to the character or authority of the speaker and is essential for establishing trust and credibility with the audience. Ethos appeals to the speaker's integrity and reliability, influencing how the audience perceives the arguments presented.
2. **Pathos**, or emotional appeal, evokes empathy from the audience, enabling them to feel what the speaker intends. By engaging the audience's emotions, pathos contributes significantly to the message's persuasiveness and encourages the audience to take action.
3. **Logos** pertains to the use of logic and reasoning in constructing arguments. It is critical to persuade the audience to accept the speaker's claims. Logos can take two forms: **enthymeme**, a narrative argument where one of the

premises is implied or not explicitly stated, and **examples**, which provide concrete illustrations to support the argument.

Ideology

The term "ideology" carries significant political connotations, defined as a system of ideas. Calzada-Perez (2003) emphasises that ideology is closely linked to power relations and domination concepts. It legitimises the interests of a ruling group or class, often through distortion or dissimulation (Betti, 2021). Ideology can be understood as the science of ideas and their origins, acknowledging that ideas emerge not randomly from the mind or consciousness but from material forces that shape public thought. Steger (2007) suggests that ideology can serve progressive political purposes, as understanding the sources of ideas may facilitate efforts toward human advancement.

According to Fairclough (2013), ideology manifests in language in various ways at multiple levels, indicating that we need not choose between different "locations" of ideology, as all have partial validity yet are not entirely satisfactory. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) highlight that ideology and manipulation are central focuses of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in critiquing discourse. Renaldo (2021) adds that ideology functions as a system with its logic, rigorously representing ideas, concepts, or even myths and possessing both existence and historical significance within a given society.

Ideology reflects beliefs that individuals hold, and varying ideologies can shape perspectives. Critical engagement with differing ideologies enhances understanding among individuals. In a broader societal context, if individuals are free from external influences, they can express their ideas without pressure, embodying the essence of democracy. When seeking to persuade others to support a democratic system, it is unnecessary to endorse democracy itself rhetorically.

Political Discourse Analysis (PDA)

Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) is a key tool for understanding how language shapes, reinforces, or challenges political ideologies. It transcends simple communication by constructing social realities and framing national identity, power structures, and policy directions. Fairclough (2013) notes that political discourse reflects and shapes power relations, emphasizing that political speeches, debates, and other forms of discourse are essential for legitimising authority and promoting specific ideologies. Wodak (2015) similarly argues that political discourse serves as a vital mechanism for establishing and sustaining power, particularly in contexts of nation-building.

In the Indonesian political context, speeches delivered by national leaders significantly shape public understanding of identity and national

unity. Political discourse mediates policy and acts as a crucial instrument for projecting a vision for the future. This vision often connects to broader national narratives framed through historical references and cultural values (Chilton, 2004). Analyzing such discourse enables researchers to explore how leaders like Prabowo Subianto utilize language to navigate and influence the socio-political landscape of Indonesia.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a significant approach within PDA that focuses on the relationship between language, power, and ideology. Developed primarily by scholars such as Fairclough (2001) and Wodak and Meyer (2016), CDA investigates how discourse contributes to the construction of social hierarchies and dominance. It is particularly relevant for analyzing political speeches, where the manipulation of language can legitimize political authority and shape public opinion.

Fairclough's model of CDA operates at three levels: textual analysis, discursive practice, and sociocultural practice. This approach allows for a detailed examination of the linguistic features of a speech (e.g., word choices, metaphors, rhetorical devices), the production and consumption of the discourse, and the broader sociopolitical context in which the discourse is situated (Fairclough, 2013). In analyzing Prabowo's inaugural speech, CDA provides a robust framework for identifying how his language reflects underlying power dynamics, nationalist rhetoric, and political ideologies.

METHOD

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative research design to gain a comprehensive understanding of the rhetorical and ideological components of Prabowo Subianto's inauguration speech as President of Indonesia. Delivered on October 20, 2024, at Gedung Nusantara, Kompleks Parliament, in Jakarta, the speech serves as the primary data source for this research. The speech, which is available on YouTube (<https://youtube.be/3YMlecD1nQ0?si=Gh31kc6Z6MEUPXGd>), is analysed to uncover the embedded rhetorical and ideological elements that contribute to nation-building discourse.

Instruments and Procedures

The instrument for this study is the text of Prabowo Subianto's speech, examined through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Specifically, CDA explores two interrelated dimensions: (1) rhetorical strategies and (2) ideological rhetoric. The rhetorical strategies are assessed using Aristotle's classical concepts of ethos, pathos, and logos to identify how credibility,

emotional appeal, and logical argumentation are applied. Simultaneously, the ideological rhetoric is analysed to extract key themes such as sovereignty, the relationship between the nation and its people, justice and equality, the vision of a "Great Indonesia," the situation of *wong cilik* (the common people), and *gotong royong* (mutual assistance). These themes serve as focal points to reveal the ideological stance underlying Prabowo's vision for Indonesia.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis proceeds through a multi-step process using CDA as the guiding approach. First, the speech is transcribed and segmented into thematic units representing rhetorical and ideological components. Each segment is analyzed to determine the presence and function of ethos, pathos, and logos, identifying how these strategies enhance the speech's persuasive impact. The ideological rhetoric is then examined, with each theme coded and categorized according to its relevance to national identity and sovereignty. This integrative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of how Prabowo's rhetorical techniques convey ideological messages, contributing to a broader understanding of political discourse and nation-building in Indonesia. Through this methodological approach, the study aims to elucidate how such discourse shapes public perception and reinforces national identity.

FINDINGS

Rhetorical Strategies in Prabowo's Inauguration Speech

Three distinct rhetorical strategies—ethos, pathos, and logos—were identified based on the data analysis. These strategies can be described as follows:

Tabel 1
Rhetorical Strategies

No	Rhetorical Strategies		
1	Ethos	Pathos	Logos
2	30%	30%	40%

Based on Table 1, it is evident that 30% of Prabowo's speech comprised ethos and pathos. His ethos is conveyed through his arguments, while his pathos is expressed through emotive language. Additionally, 40% of the speech was characterised by logos, demonstrated through statistical data, cause-and-effect reasoning, clarifications, case studies, and other supporting evidence. To illustrate this more clearly, the findings can be summarized as follows:

Ethos

Ethos is a rhetorical appeal that highlights the speaker's credibility, character, and trustworthiness. In Prabowo's inauguration speech, he effectively demonstrated his ethos to gain credibility with the audience. A speaker establishes credibility by presenting reliable information and well-structured arguments, allowing listeners to trust and believe in their message. This trust is essential for building both personal and professional relationships. In Prabowo's political career, credibility is crucial in fostering a positive reputation, leading to increased opportunities and partnerships. Therefore, it is vital for him to influence his audience through speeches that address important issues, such as Sustainable Economic Development. Throughout his speech, he emphasized the necessity for inclusive and sustainable economic development, advocating for investment in strategic sectors. For example:

Data 1: *Kita harus melakukan hilirisasi kepada semua komoditas yang kita miliki. Nilai tambah dari semua komoditas itu harus menambah kekuatan ekonomi kita sehingga rakyat kita bisa mencapai tingkat hidup yang Sejahtera* (We have to downstream all the commodities we have. The added value of all these commodities must increase our economic strength so that our people can achieve a prosperous level of life).

Based on the previous utterance, it is evident that Prabowo sought to establish his credibility through a well-structured argument designed to persuade the audience. He presented a clear claim that "the added value of all these commodities must increase our economic strength," effectively linking the prosperity of the people to the effective management of national resources. This assertion enhances his credibility, as he positions commodities as vital capital for achieving prosperity.

Furthermore, Prabowo's emphasis on downstream commodities underscores his commitment to a future characterized by social justice, economic equality, and environmental sustainability. By articulating a vision that connects economic strength to the well-being of the populace, he not only reinforces his ethos but also demonstrates his awareness of the broader implications of economic policies. This strategic framing encourages the audience to trust his leadership and vision for a prosperous future.

Pathos

Pathos is demonstrated through various techniques that evoke emotions in the audience. In Prabowo's speech, his emotionally charged language effectively illustrates this appeal. He elicits strong feelings with statements such as:

Data 2: *"Apakah kita sadar bahwa kemiskinan di Indonesia masih terlalu besar? Apakah kita sadar bahwa rakyat kita dan anak-anak kita banyak yang kurang gizi? Banyak rakyat yang tidak dapat pekerjaan yang baik? Banyak sekolah-sekolah kita yang tidak terurus? Saudara-saudara, kita harus berani melihat ini semua dan kita harus berani menyelesaikan masalah ini semua."*
("Are we aware that poverty in Indonesia is still too great? Are we aware that many of our people and our children are malnourished? Many people don't get good jobs? Many of our schools are neglected? Brothers and sisters, we must have the courage to see all this, and we must have the courage to solve all these problems.")

Prabowo's appeal to pathos is evident as he evokes emotions surrounding poverty, malnutrition, unemployment, and the neglect of schools. He prompts the audience to reflect on their feelings and beliefs about these pressing issues by employing rhetorical questions. This technique not only stirs a sense of urgency but also encourages the audience to confront uncomfortable realities.

Moreover, these rhetorical questions serve to align Prabowo with his political ideology, positioning him as a leader who empathizes with the struggles of his constituents. By framing himself as part of the collective family of the nation, he inspires a call to action, urging the audience to unite in addressing Indonesia's challenges and striving for a prosperous future.

Logos

Logos is demonstrated through various techniques that emphasise logic and reasoning in communication. In Prabowo's speech, he effectively employs data and statistics to convey logical arguments, establishing a factual basis for his claims. For instance:

Data 3: *"Kita merasa bangga bahwa kita disebut ekonomi ke-16 terbesar di dunia."*
("We feel proud that we are called the 16th largest economy in the world.")

Prabowo's use of numerical data enhances the credibility of his speech, making it more persuasive and compelling for the audience. By presenting this factual evidence, he appeals to the audience's rationality and reinforces the validity of his arguments. Furthermore, through the incorporation of such data, he contextualizes his points within historical events and social movements, illustrating how these factors have shaped Indonesia's development over time.

This logical framework supports his claims and aligns with his ideological vision of achieving a just and effective society. By grounding his assertions in statistics, Prabowo invites the audience to engage with his perspective on national progress and encourages them to consider the implications of these figures in their own lives and the future of the country.

Ideological Rhetoric in Prabowo's Inauguration Speech

Prabowo's speeches are grounded in a lexicon that reflects his nationalist and populist political ideologies, emphasising themes of sovereignty, justice, and national unity.

1) Sovereignty

Sovereignty pertains to the supreme authority of a state to govern itself and make decisions without external interference. Prabowo addresses this concept in the following statement:

Data 4: *"Kita menempatkan kedaulatan rakyat setinggi-tingginya dalam dasar negara kita."*
("We place the people's sovereignty as high as possible in the foundation of our country.")

In this utterance, Prabowo emphasizes that sovereignty symbolizes freedom from external political control and economic independence. His consistent invocation of this term underscores his commitment to protecting Indonesia from foreign exploitation, particularly regarding its natural resources. By framing globalisation as a potential threat, he situates Indonesia's challenges within a narrative of exploitation by external powers, positioning himself as a staunch defender of national resources and self-sufficiency. This rhetoric reflects a broader ideological commitment to national self-reliance, appealing to the audience's sense of patriotism and collective identity. Through this emphasis on sovereignty, Prabowo aims to galvanize support for policies that prioritize the welfare of the Indonesian people and assert the nation's autonomy on the global stage.

1) Justice and Equality

Justice refers to the fair treatment of individuals, ensuring that everyone receives their due rights in legal, social, and economic contexts. Meanwhile, equality signifies the state of being treated the same, having equal rights and opportunities regardless of characteristics such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, or religion. Prabowo's speech reflects these themes in the following statement:

Data 5: *"Rakyat harus bebas dari ketakutan, bebas dari kemiskinan, bebas dari kelaparan, bebas dari kebodohan, bebas dari penindasan, bebas dari"*

penderitaan."

("People must be free from fear, free from poverty, free from hunger, free from ignorance, free from oppression, free from suffering.")

In this context, justice and equality highlight Prabowo's strong commitment to social justice, particularly concerning economic disparities. His rhetoric frequently addresses issues such as land rights, fair wages, and wealth distribution, tapping into the frustrations of the lower and middle classes. By emphasizing the necessity for redistribution and reform, Prabowo positions himself as an advocate for the *rakyat kecil* (ordinary people), framing his political agenda as one that seeks to dismantle elitist structures in favor of the majority. His carefully crafted language resonates with economically marginalized audiences, suggesting a vision of governance that prioritizes the interests of ordinary citizens over those of the elite. This approach not only enhances his credibility among the populace but also reinforces his identity as a champion of social equity and justice.

2) Nation and the People

The term "nation" refers to a large group of people who share common characteristics such as language, culture, ethnicity, history, or a collective sense of identity. Prabowo frequently emphasizes the concepts of "nation" and "the people" in his speeches, as demonstrated in the following statement:

Data 6: *"Kami akan menjalankan kepemimpinan pemerintah Republik Indonesia, kepemimpinan negara dan bangsa Indonesia dengan tulus, dengan mengutamakan kepentingan seluruh rakyat Indonesia, termasuk mereka yang tidak memilih kami."*

("We will carry out the leadership of the government of the Republic of Indonesia, the leadership of the Indonesian state and nation sincerely, by prioritizing the interests of all Indonesian people, including those who did not vote for us.")

In this excerpt, Prabowo's repeated references to *bangsa* (nation) and *rakyat* (the people) underscore his populist inclinations. These terms emphasize a governance model centred on the people, portraying them not only as beneficiaries of his policies but also as active participants in shaping Indonesia's future. By employing colloquial and inclusive language, Prabowo establishes an emotional connection with his audience, positioning himself as a leader who genuinely understands and advocates for the everyday citizen. His word choices are intentional, reinforcing his broader ideological objectives of promoting justice, sovereignty, and national unity. This strategic framing not only seeks to resonate with the audience's sentiments but also

enhances his image as a leader committed to the welfare of all Indonesians, regardless of their political affiliations.

3) Great Indonesia

Great Indonesia often refers to the vision of a unified and prosperous nation that emphasizes national pride, cultural diversity, and economic development. Prabowo uttered Great Indonesia by describing :

Data 7: *Hanya kalau kita bisa wujudkan keadaan di mana rakyat sungguh merasa dan menikmati kemerdekaan, baru kita boleh sungguh-sungguh puas dan bangga dengan prestasi Indonesia Merdeka* (Only if we can create a situation where the people truly feel and enjoy independence, can we be truly satisfied and proud of the achievements of independent Indonesia)

Prabowo's rhetoric frequently draws on nationalist sentiments, with phrases like *Indonesia Raya* (Great Indonesia) and *bangsa* signalling a deep focus on national pride and independence. His use of terms such as *berdikari* (self-reliant) and *perjuangan* (struggle) evokes anti-colonial sentiments and aligns with his populist agenda, portraying him as a protector of Indonesia's dignity. These terms underscore his stance against foreign control and emphasize a vision of governance that places the nation's sovereignty and independence at the forefront.

4) Wong Cilik (Little People)

Wong cilik is a term in Javanese that literally means "little people." This term refers to ordinary people or commoners, often referring to people who do not have power or high social status. In a broader context, *Wong Cilik* describes the struggles and daily lives of people who are usually invisible in decision-making or in the public eye. The term is often used to highlight issues of social injustice and the need to fight for the rights and well-being of small communities. Prabowo uttered about *wong cilik* can be described as:

Data 8 : *Dan kita harus paham dan ingat selalu pengorbanan yang paling besar adalah pengorbanan dari rakyat kita yang paling miskin, wong cilik yang berjuang, yang memberi makan kepada pejuang-pejuang.* (And we must understand and always remember that the greatest sacrifice is the sacrifice of our poorest people, the little people who fight, who feed the fighters.)

In acknowledging President Joko Widodo's leadership, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, Prabowo highlights his commitment to

unity and continuity. His praise for Jokowi's refusal to impose a strict lockdown, a decision he frames as prioritizing the needs of the "*wong cilik*", underscores his concern for the working class, including small business owners and daily wage earners. This choice of words reflects Prabowo's ideological focus on pragmatic governance, where economic survival and the well-being of ordinary people take precedence over rigid policies. This framing allows Prabowo to connect his ideology to real-world examples, presenting his leadership as practical and people-centered.

5) Gotong Royong (Mutual Cooperation)

Gotong royong is an Indonesian's motto to raise the spirit of mutual cooperation and communal work. It embodies the idea of people coming together to help one another, often in the context of community activities or projects. Prabowo uttered about gotong royong can be described as :

Data 9 : *Mari kita belajar semua kekurangan kita, akui dan kita perbaiki. Hentikan dendam, hilangkan kebencian, bangun kerukunan, bangun gotong royong* (Let's learn all our shortcomings, admit them and improve them. Stop revenge, eliminate hatred, build harmony, build mutual cooperation).

In his closing remarks, Prabowo reaffirms his nationalist ideology, envisioning an Indonesia that is strong, independent, sovereign, just, and prosperous. This vision encapsulates his broader political agenda: a self-reliant nation free from foreign interference, embodying national dignity and pride. His repeated emphasis on *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) underscores his belief in the power of communal values, which are deeply rooted in Indonesian culture. This focus reinforces his nationalist agenda, suggesting that Indonesia's future success will derive from internal solidarity rather than external alliances.

From the ideological rhetoric presented in Prabowo's inauguration speech, it can be concluded that his political ideology effectively persuades the audience by centering on themes of nationalism, sovereignty, and social justice. His use of inclusive and emotionally resonant language solidifies his populist image, framing his leadership as closely connected to the needs and aspirations of the people. Through this strategic rhetoric, Prabowo positions himself as a champion of the nation, appealing to the collective identity and values of Indonesian citizens.

Prabowo's Ideology as Nation-Building

Prabowo's speech serves as a powerful tool for shaping national identity and public sentiment, with profound implications for nation-building

in Indonesia. His rhetoric extends beyond the realm of political messaging; it actively cultivates a vision of what it means to be Indonesian, emphasizing themes of sovereignty, unity, and justice. This strategic use of language resonates deeply with the audience, fostering a collective consciousness that is vital for a cohesive national identity.

At the core of Prabowo's rhetoric is the emphasis on *kedaulatan* (sovereignty), which underscores a national identity characterized by independence, self-reliance, and resilience against foreign influences.

Data 10 : Rakyat harus bebas dari ketakutan, bebas dari kemiskinan, bebas dari kelaparan, bebas dari kebodohan, bebas dari penindasan, bebas dari penderitaan (People must be free from fear, free from poverty, free from hunger, free from ignorance, free from oppression, free from suffering).

By framing Indonesia's economic and political challenges as threats to national sovereignty, he invokes a sense of urgency and responsibility among his audience. This portrayal not only aligns with economic and political policies but also taps into Indonesia's cultural narrative of self-determination and pride. In doing so, Prabowo positions himself as a guardian of this sovereignty, appealing to citizens' desire for a strong, autonomous nation that can navigate global complexities without compromising its integrity.

Moreover, Prabowo's focus on *Persatuan* (unity) and *Keadilan* (justice) fosters a national identity rooted in principles of equality and collective well-being.

Data 11: Semua kekayaan kita harus sebesar-besarnya untuk kepentingan dan kemakmuran rakyat kita (All our wealth must be as large as possible for the benefit and prosperity of our people.)

By centering his discourse on the *rakyat* (the people), he advocates for a government that serves all Indonesians, promoting a vision of a just society where resources are equitably distributed. This rhetoric of inclusion resonates powerfully with the public's frustrations over socio-economic disparities, positioning Prabowo as a leader who champions the underprivileged and seeks to rectify systemic injustices. His emphasis on social equity not only aligns with the aspirations of many Indonesians but also cultivates a sense of shared purpose and collective identity among diverse demographics.

Prabowo's frequent **historical references** further reinforce a national identity deeply rooted in the struggle for independence and sovereignty.

Data 12: Rakyat harus bebas dari ketakutan, bebas dari kemiskinan, bebas dari kelaparan, bebas dari kebodohan, bebas dari penindasan, bebas dari penderitaan (People must be free from fear, free from poverty, free

from hunger, free from ignorance, free from oppression, free from suffering).

By connecting modern political and economic issues to the historical context of Indonesia's anti-colonial fight, he creates a narrative that frames being Indonesian as an ongoing battle for dignity and autonomy. This strategic invocation of history not only enhances the legitimacy of his political vision but also instils a sense of continuity, suggesting that today's challenges are merely extensions of past struggles. As he emphasizes the sacrifices of Indonesia's founding figures, he positions his leadership as a natural evolution of their legacy, appealing to national pride and responsibility among the populace.

Prabowo's speeches are rich with implications for nation-building, as they instill a forward-looking national identity grounded in historical pride and ambitious aspirations.

Data 13: *Semua kekayaan kita harus sebesar-besarnya untuk kepentingan dan kemakmuran rakyat kita* (All our wealth must be as large as possible for the benefit and prosperity of our people).

By consistently framing Indonesia as a nation with untapped potential that must rise above current challenges, he cultivates a sense of urgency among his audience. His rhetoric encourages a collective mindset that views the future as a shared responsibility, motivating Indonesians to see themselves as active participants in the nation-building process. Phrases like "kita siap" (we are ready) and "mari kita bangun" (let's build) emphasize his call for action and unity, reinforcing a national narrative focused on resilience and independence.

In his vision for a "**Golden Indonesia**" (*Indonesia Emas*), Prabowo emphasizes hard work, perseverance, and national pride.

Data 14 : *Marilah kita kerja keras dan berjuang tanpa menyerah* (Let us work hard and fight without giving up).

He articulates a narrative that positions Indonesia at a crossroads, where the choices made today will determine the future trajectory of the nation. This framing encourages public engagement and collective responsibility, as he portrays himself as a leader capable of guiding Indonesia toward its rightful place as a regional and global power.

Additionally, Prabowo's call for reconciliation—embodied in his exhortation to "hentikan dendam, hilangkan kebencian" (stop the hatred and grudges)—highlights his commitment to healing divisions within the

country. By advocating for unity, he fosters a sense of shared purpose and continuity, aligning his leadership with the ideals of Indonesia's founding fathers, particularly **Bung Karno** (Soekarno). His invocation of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) reinforces the importance of collective effort in nation-building, positioning these values as integral to Indonesia's identity.

Finally, Prabowo's inclusive language—illustrated by his diverse religious salutations—reflects his commitment to a pluralistic Indonesia, recognizing the rich tapestry of cultural and religious identities that define the nation. This inclusivity enhances his vision of a united Indonesia, where diversity is celebrated rather than a source of division.

Data 15: *Marilah menganggap rekan-rekan kita walaupun berbeda suku partai agama golongan kita adalah sama-sama anak Indonesia* (Let's consider that our colleagues, even though we have different ethnic groups, religious groups, are both Indonesian children).

Through this multifaceted rhetorical approach, Prabowo not only shapes public sentiment but also actively contributes to nation-building by fostering a cohesive national identity that is resilient in the face of challenges. His speeches encapsulate a vision of Indonesia that is self-reliant, unified, and committed to justice, encouraging citizens to embrace their role as both protectors and beneficiaries of the nation's sovereignty and prosperity.

DISCUSSION

In the discussion of Prabowo's inauguration speech, the results reveal how his deliberate use of ethos, pathos, and logos, combined with specific ideological themes, constructs a powerful narrative aimed at resonating with his audience's values, emotions, and rational judgments. This analysis provides insights into the rhetorical strategies that underscore his appeal as a leader focused on national unity, social justice, and economic independence. These findings contribute to understanding how political figures use rhetoric to shape public perception, generate support, and promote ideological stances within a national context.

Rhetorical Strategies and Their Implications

The distribution of rhetorical strategies in Prabowo's speech, with 30% ethos, 30% pathos, and 40% logos, reveals a strategic emphasis on logical reasoning while ensuring emotional resonance and credibility. This distribution suggests that Prabowo's primary aim is to appeal to rationality, evidenced by his frequent use of data and factual statements. Logos becomes a critical component, anchoring his claims within a framework of national progress, such as his pride in Indonesia's position as the 16th largest economy.

This statistic serves as a logical foundation to advocate for policies that reinforce economic resilience, illustrating how logos can substantiate a leader's vision and instill confidence in a pragmatic approach to governance. This heavy reliance on logos is theoretically significant, as it aligns with the need for a data-driven political discourse in an era increasingly influenced by accountability and transparency in leadership.

Prabowo's use of ethos, demonstrated through his alignment with credible arguments about sustainable development, highlights his intent to position himself as a trustworthy leader. His focus on adding value to national resources to improve citizens' lives fosters a sense of integrity and reliability, crucial for any political figure. Ethos is indispensable for political leaders, as it nurtures a trust-based relationship with the audience, facilitating long-term support. Prabowo's approach of enhancing ethos by addressing economic sustainability theoretically confirms that credibility is a foundational aspect of political rhetoric, particularly when discussing development strategies that impact public welfare.

Ideological Rhetoric and Its Broader Implications

Prabowo's ideological rhetoric reflects his populist stance, highlighting sovereignty, justice, nationhood, the "little people" (*wong cilik*), and mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) as core values. His emphasis on sovereignty is an appeal to independence from foreign influence, asserting that Indonesia's resources must benefit its people without external interference. This notion of sovereignty is pivotal, as it emphasizes the larger issue of national autonomy, which resonates deeply in post-colonial societies. His rhetoric encourages a sense of collective identity and patriotism, reinforcing the social and political importance of self-reliance in an interconnected global economy.

The themes of justice and equality are equally crucial, resonating with economic and social equity, which aligns with his political identity as a representative of the marginalised. By focusing on justice, Prabowo addresses underlying issues of socio-economic disparity, a fundamental element in political discourse that appeals to the ideals of fairness and social solidarity. This focus theoretically disconfirms political models that prioritize elite interests over those of ordinary citizens, proposing instead an approach where governance is rooted in equal opportunity and inclusivity. Prabowo's depiction of "Great Indonesia" as a prosperous and unified nation exemplifies how leaders use nationalistic rhetoric to foster pride and a collective vision, emphasizing unity and cultural heritage as integral to national growth.

Practical Significance of Rhetorical Techniques

Prabowo's emphasis on *wong cilik* (the little people) and *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) illustrates a pragmatic approach to politics by

prioritising the needs of marginalised citizens. His rhetoric on *wong cilik*, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasises his understanding of the challenges faced by the lower-income population, positioning him as empathetic and responsive to their needs. This representation of empathy can deepen public support by appealing to voters' sentiments, especially those who seek leaders who prioritize everyday concerns. In practical terms, this focus on *wong cilik* and *gotong royong* emphasises a community-based approach to policy-making, suggesting that sustainable development should not be limited to economic metrics but should also consider social cohesion and inclusivity as integral components of national growth.

Broader Theoretical and Political Contexts

Overall, these findings underline the essential role of ethos, pathos, and logos in political rhetoric, as they enable leaders to convey credibility, connect emotionally, and present logical arguments respectively. Prabowo's rhetorical strategies confirm that successful political rhetoric must balance emotional appeals with credibility and rational arguments to resonate across diverse social groups. His ideological language connects with larger political concepts, such as the role of national sovereignty in economic independence, justice in social equality, and unity as the foundation of a nation. In a globalised context, Prabowo's rhetoric suggests a model for developing countries to adopt an internally focused approach to progress that reduces dependency on external influence.

In conclusion, Prabowo's rhetorical strategies and ideological framing in his inauguration speech exemplify how political leaders can shape public discourse. His approach emphasises national pride, social equity, and practical governance, providing a case study for how political rhetoric can foster collective identity while addressing contemporary social issues. The theoretical and practical implications of these findings indicate that political discourse must align closely with national values, cultural norms, and the socio-political climate to inspire trust, unity, and active participation among citizens.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the ideological rhetoric in Prabowo's inauguration speech highlights his political strategy to resonate with the Indonesian populace and garner their support as the newly elected president. Prabowo effectively employed a blend of rhetorical strategies, with 30% dedicated to ethos and pathos, while 40% focused on logos. This balance indicates his intention to appeal not only to the emotions and credibility of the audience but also to their logical reasoning. The ideological rhetoric prominently featured sovereignty, justice, and national unity themes. These themes reflect his vision

for Indonesia and serve as the foundation for his proposed policies. Central to Prabowo's political ideology is sovereignty, which emphasises independence, self-reliance, and resilience against foreign influence. He intertwines this with a call for unity and justice, invoking historical references and the aspiration for a "Golden Indonesia" that emphasizes the significance of mutual cooperation among citizens. These rhetorical elements collectively illustrate how Prabowo's speech aims to cultivate a sense of collective identity and shared purpose among the Indonesian people, encouraging them to rally around his vision for the nation's future. In conclusion, Prabowo's inauguration speech not only reflects his political agenda but also serves as a powerful tool for mobilizing public sentiment towards his administration's goals.

REFERENCES

- Ahluwalia, R., & Burnkrant, R. (2004). Answering questions about questions: A persuasion knowledge perspective for understanding the effects of rhetorical questions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(1), 26–42.
- Alnasse, A. (2022). Rhetorical strategies and ideologies in Saudi Tedx Talks. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*. <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt>
- Betti, M. J. (2021). *Ideology*. Department of English, College of Education for Humanities, University of Thi-Qar.
- Calzada-Perez, M. (2003). *Apropos of ideology: Translation studies on ideology – Ideologies in translation studies*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
- Charteris-Black, J. (2018). *Analysing political speeches*. Springer Nature Limited.
- Chilton, P. (2004). *Analysing political discourse: Theory and practice*. New York: Routledge.
- Herrick, J. A. (2021). *The history and theory of rhetoric: An introduction* (7th ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Husnussalam, H., & Yana. (2024). Rhetoric and ideology: A critical discourse analysis of Anis Baswedan's lecturing speech at 2023 St. Lee Lecture – Can democracy deliver? Reflections on the Indonesian case. *Project*, 7(1), 124–134.
- Ilie, C. (2006). Rhetoric, classical. In *Encyclopedia of language & linguistics* (pp. 573–579). Elsevier Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-044854-2/04305-4>
- Isai, K. I. A., Lin, T. M., Ching, H. S., Selvajothi, R., & Maruthai, E. (2020). Using rhetorical approach of ethos, pathos and logos by Malaysian engineering students in persuasive email writings. *MJSSH*, 5(4), 19–33. <https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v5i4.386>
- Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and power* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. Psychology Press.
- Fairclough, N. (2013). Critical discourse analysis and critical policy studies. *Critical Policy Studies*, 7(2), 177–197.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19460171.2013.798239>
- Fairclough, I., & Fairclough, N. (2012). *Political discourse analysis: A method for advanced students*. New York: Routledge. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/9072634/Fairclough_I._and_Fairclough_N._2012._Political_Discourse_Analysis_-_Review
- Fairclough, N., & Graham, P. (2002). Marx as a critical discourse analyst: The genesis of a critical method and its relevance to the critique of global capital. *Sociolinguistic Studies*, 3(1), 185–229.
<https://doi.org/10.1558/sols.v3i1.185>
- Firdaus, S. F., Indrayani, L. M., & Soemantri, S. (2020). Analysis of Jokowi's commissive speech acts in 2014 and 2019 inaugural address: A pragmatic study. *Teknosastik*, 18(2), 2656–6842.
- Gelilang, W., Tenito, P., & Varona, B. (2021). A discourse analysis on President Duterte's speech acts in relation to the novel coronavirus. *Introduction to Anthropological Linguistics*.
<https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.18571.21281/1>
- Ladia, C. (2022). Contextualizing Duterte's rhetoric: The rhetorical situation of President Rodrigo Duterte's public addresses on the Philippines' federal shift. *Humanities Diliman: A Philippine Journal of Humanities*, 19(1), 30–57.
<https://journals.upd.edu.ph/index.php/humanitiesdiliman/article/view/8787>
- Martin, J. (2015). *Politics and rhetoric: A critical introduction*. New York: Routledge.
- Razuni, G. (2023). Bung Karno's political thought according to Pancasila: A study of Bung Karno's speech on June 1, 1945, and the President Soekarno/Bung Karno's Pancasila course throughout 1958–1959. *Jurnal Wacana Politik*, 8(2), 223–234.
<https://doi.org/10.24198/jwp.v8i2.50119>
- Renaldo, Z. A. (2021). Presupposition and ideology: A critical discourse analysis of Joe Biden's inaugural speech. *Project (Professional Journal of English Education)*, 4(3).
- Shakour, A. (2014). The use of rhetorical devices in the writings of Arab high school students. *Citeseer*, 2(6), 403–414.
<https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijll.20140206.20>
- Shakoury, K. (2018). Critical discourse analysis of Iranian presidents' addresses to the United Nations General Assembly (Unpublished

- master's thesis). The College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.
- Steger, M. (2007). *The rise of the global imaginary: Political ideologies from the French revolution to the global war on terror*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Suchan, J. (2014). Toward an understanding of Arabic persuasion: A Western perspective. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 51(3), 279–303. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2329488414525401>
- Szczesny, S. (2017). Stylistic features of Barack Obama's State of the Union addresses. (Unpublished master's thesis). Leiden University, Nederland.
- Thompson, J. B. (2007). *Ideology and modern culture: Critical social theory in the era of mass communication*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Widianingsih, A. W. S. (2021). The ideology of President Joko Widodo through his inaugural speech. *JEPAL: Journal of English Pedagogy and Applied Linguistics*, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5040927>
- Wodak, R. (2001). What CDA is about: A summary of its history, important concepts and its developments. In *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (pp. 1–13). London: Sage.
- Zhou, X. (2024). Critical discourse analysis of an inaugural speech based on Halliday's systemic functional grammar. *Journal of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 37(3).

THE AUTHOR



Purwarno is a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Literature, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara (UISU), Medan. He earned his Bachelor's Degree in English Literature from the Faculty of Literature, UISU, Medan, in 1996, and his Master's Degree in English Literature from Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), New Delhi, India, in 2003. Since 1999, he has taught various subjects in English literature, including English Short Story, Literary Studies, English Poetry, English Drama, English Novel, History of English Literature, and Literary Criticism. He has published numerous scholarly works in literature, linguistics, and language teaching, both in accredited national and reputable international journals.



Puji Hariati has completed her Bachelor's Degree (2012) at FKIP, Muhammadiyah University of North Sumatra, her Master's Degree (2016) at the Applied Linguistics of English Study Program, Medan State University and her Doctoral (2022) at the Applied Linguistics of English Study Program, Medan State University. Her dissertation discusses the study of ecolinguistics in naming objects in tourism. She is currently a permanent lecturer at the Yayasan Universitas Pembinaan Masyarakat Indonesia at FKIP Program. The author has also received a Beginner Lecturer Research from the Ministry of Research and Technology in 2020. As an active lecturer, the author has participated in several international conferences and also active in Community Service and Research indexed by Sinta and Internationally.