UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF SPEECHES DELIVERED BY MALAYSIAN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ACCORDING TO ECONOMIC CLIMATE (1998-2008)

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
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A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF SPEECHES DELIVERED BY MALAYSIAN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ACCORDING TO ECONOMIC CLIMATE (1998-2008)

By

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Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF SPEECHES DELIVERED BY MALAYSIAN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ACCORDING TO ECONOMIC CLIMATE (1998-2008)

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January 2012

Chair: Assoc. Prof Abdul Mua’ti @ Zamri Ahmad, PhD

Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication

During the period of 1998-2008, Malaysia survived three major economic crisis episodes: the Asia Crisis, the dot.com crisis, and the global recession. This study was designed to discover the application of the canons of invention and organization by Malaysian CEOs during to these economic climates. A modified version of neo-Aristotelian criticism was used to analyze twenty-six CEOs’ formal business speeches selected from 1998 –2008. The four CEOs were from different publicly listed companies to ensure that the findings in terms of the relationship between discourse and economic climates were due to the relationship between economic climate and rhetoric and not the nature of the company the CEO represented.

The findings revealed that the Malaysian CEOs used different rhetorical strategies during the different economic periods. While they showed their ethos in speeches throughout each period in
similar ways, their uses of pathos, or emotional appeals, varied slightly in response to the different economic climates of the three periods. Their uses of the logical appeals and the canon of organization varied more broadly.

During the first economic period of 1998, which was a time of economic downturn, the one CEO who was studied appealed to the emotion of fear. The CEO only applied three types of logical appeals (fact, explanation, and quantification) during this time. He used the chronological and Monroe's motivated sequence arrangement patterns as well as three other types of arrangements (topical sequences, cause and effect, problem and solution) in this pessimistic economic climate.

During the second economic period of 1999-2001, the economic climate was one of recovery, and the CEOs who were studied appealed to the emotion of friendship through pathos. In addition to fact, explanation, and quantification, they also used the logical evidence of definition and serial examples. Regarding the canon of organization, the CEOs only applied topical sequences, cause and effect, problem and solution arrangements.

During the third economic period of 2002-2008, the CEOs stirred the emotions of kindness and pride when the economy was experiencing growth. They used a total of six types of logical evidences out of the fifteen that the researcher considered: fact, explanation and quantification, definition, serial example, and extended example. In this optimistic economic period, the CEOs added three organizational patterns to the ones used during the second economic period: chronological, Monroe's motivated sequence, and the comparative advantage pattern.

In summary, this analysis indicates that the CEOs altered their arrangement patterns in ways that could be linked to the economic conditions. While their uses of ethical and emotional appeals were fairly standard, with pathos having a few changes in different periods, their modification of
the types of logical evidence and arrangement patterns was moderate. The study concludes that the CEOs in Malaysia flexibly adjusted and altered the canons of invention and organization according to the rhetorical situation—in this case, the economic climate. Practically, this study can assist and guide corporate leaders to think about and advance their business rhetorical skills in practical ways, particularly in the context of the Malaysian economy.
Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

ANALISIS RETORIKAL KE ATAS UCAPAN YANG DISampaikan OLEH KETUA PEGAWAI EKSEKUTIF BERDASARKAN KEADAAN EKONOMI (1998-2008)

Oleh
KHOR MI NEE
Januari 2012

Pengerusi: Prof. Madya Abdul Mua’ti @ Zamri Ahmad, PhD

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Keputusan dari kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa Ketua Eksekutif Malaysia menggunakan strategik retorikal yang berlainan dalam jangka masa ekonomi yang berbeza. Mereka mempamerkan etos (ethos) mereka dalam jangka masa kajian tersebut. Walau bagaimanapun, pathos atau rayuan emosi yang digunakan oleh Ketua Eksekutif adalah berbeza berdasarkan kepada keadaan ekonomi. Penggunaan rayuan logik dan susunan prinsip yang agak berbeza.


Keputusan daripada analisis juga menunjukkan penggunaan pathos oleh Ketua Eksekutif berubah
dengan ketara, sementara modifikasi bukti dan corak dalam ucapan mereka adalah sederhana.
Kajian ini juga menyimpulkan bahawa penampilan Ketua Eksekutif di Malaysia agar fleksibel;
mereka mengubah suaikan prinsip (invention) dan susunan berdasarkan keadaan rhetorik, dalam
kes ini, keadaan ekonomi. Secara pratikal, kajian ini memberi garis panduan dan bantuan kepada
Ketua Korporat dimana mereka boleh memperbaiki skil rhetorikal perniagaan mereka, terutama
dalam konteks Malaysia.
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APPROVAL

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 30th January 2012 to conduct the final examination of Khor Mi Nee on her thesis entitled “A Rhetorical Analysis of Speeches Delivered by Malaysian Chief Executive Officers According to Economic Climate (1998-2008)” in accordance with the University College Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

________________
KHOR MI NEE
Date: 30 January 2012
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REFERENCES

BIODATA OF STUDENT