



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

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

**KHOR MI NEE**

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

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EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ACCORDING TO ECONOMIC CLIMATE (1998-2008)**

**By**

**KHOR MI NEE**

**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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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia  
in Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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

By

**KHOR MI NEE**

**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

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Dalam jangka masa 1998-2008, Malaysia telah melalui tiga episod krisis yang utama: Krisis Asia; Krisis Dot. Kom dan kemelesetan global. Kajian ini direka dengan tujuan untuk mengkaji prinsip (invention) dan susunan yang digunakan oleh Ketua Eksekutif di Malaysia berdasarkan keadaan-keadaan ekonomi. Dalam kajian ini, sebanyak 26 ucapan secara rasmi yang disampaikan oleh tiga orang Ketua Eksekutif dari 1998-2008 telah dipilih sebagai data dalam kajian ini. Data ini dianalisis dengan kaedah Neo Aristotle Kritika (Neo Aristoterian Criticism) yang telah diubahsuai atau dimodifikasikan. Empat orang Ketua Eksekutif yang dipilih dari Papan Bursa Kuala Lumpur dimana mereka datang dari organisasi yang berlainan. Ini adalah untuk memastikan hubungan antara wacana (discourse) dan keadaan ekonomi adalah disebabkan kaitan antara keadaan ekonomi dan retorik, bukannya disebabkan oleh sifat organisasi yang diwakili oleh Ketua Eksekutif tersebut.

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.

Dalam jangka masa ekonomi pertama, pada tahun 1998 dimana Malaysia mengalami kemerosotan ekonomi, beliau menggunakan rayuan takut. Beliau hanya menggunakan tiga jenis bukti logik (kenyataan, keterangan dan kuantifikasi) dalam jangka masa ini. Dari segi susunan prinsip, beliau menggunakan aturan kronologikal, Motivasi Monroe (Monroe's motivated), topikal, sebab dan akibat, masalah dan penyelesaian dalam keadaan pesimis.

Emosi kesahabatan telah di timbul oleh Ketua Ekskutif yang dikaji semasa ekonomi dalam proses pemulihan. 1999-2001, iaitu jangka masa ekomoni kedua, mereka juga menggunakan bukti logik definasi dan contoh bersiri selain daripada tiga jenis yang digunakan dalam jangka masa ekonomi pertama. Bagi prinsip susunan, mereka menggunakan urutan topikal, sebab dan akibat, masalah dan penyelesaian.

Emosi baik (kindness) dan bangga wujud semasa Malaysia mengalami pertumbuhan ekonomi. Ketua Ekskutif menggunakan enam jenis bukti logik, definasi, contoh bersiri, contoh terperinci, kenyataan, keterangan dan kuantifikasi. Ketua Eksekutif menambahkan tiga jenis susunan dalam jangka masa ini selain daripada tiga jenis yang digunakan dalam jangka masa ekonomi kedua: urutan kronologikal, motivasi Monroe (Monroe's motivated), dan kelebihan berbanding (Comparative Advantage).



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 suai prinsip ( invention) dan susunan berdasarkan keadaan retorik, dalam kes ini, keadaan ekonomi. Secara pratikal, kajian ini memberi garis panduan dan bantuan kepada Ketua Korporat dimana mereka boleh memperbaiki skil retorikal perniagaan mereka, terutama dalam konteks Malaysia.



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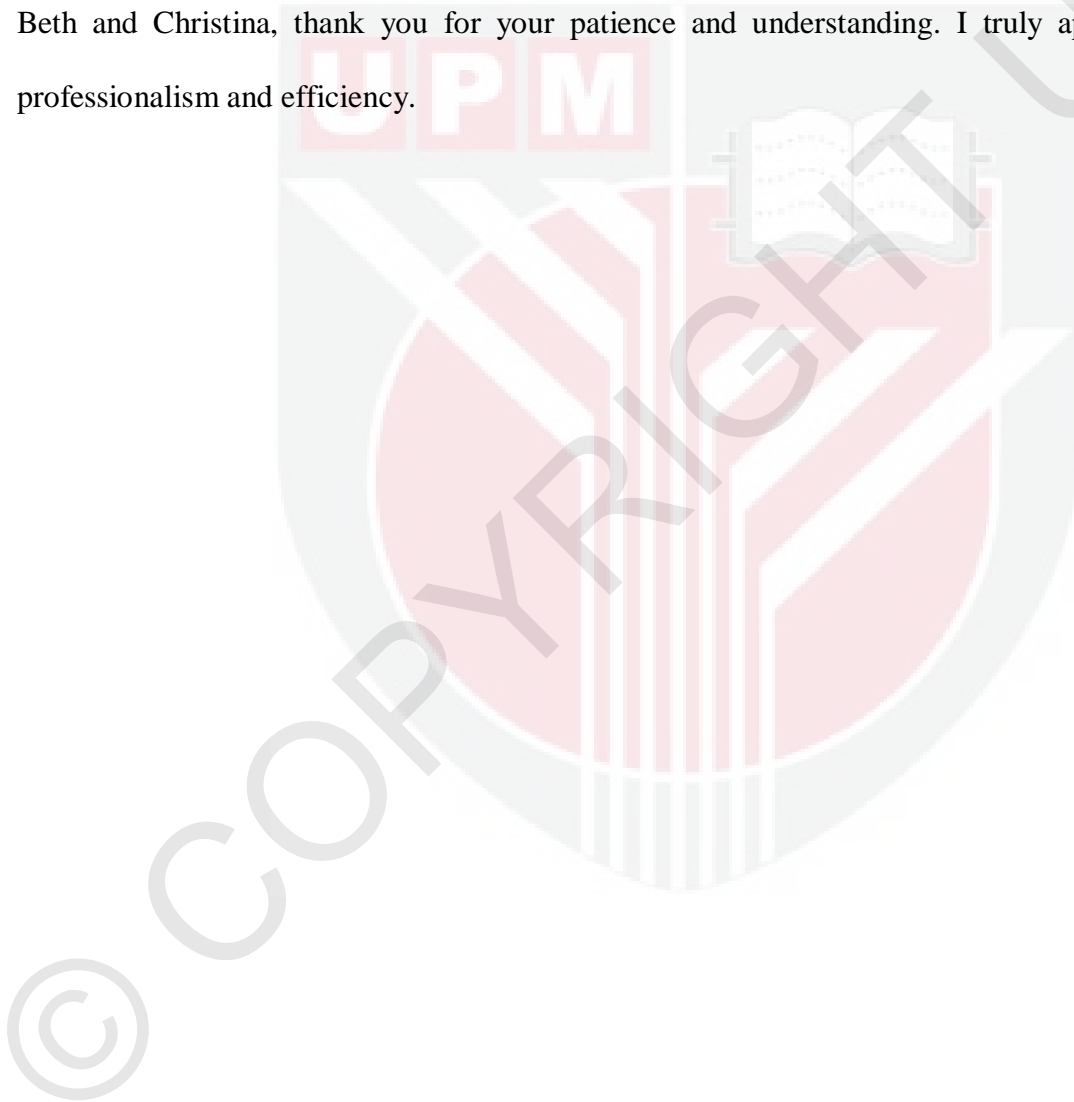
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## APPROVAL

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on **30<sup>th</sup> 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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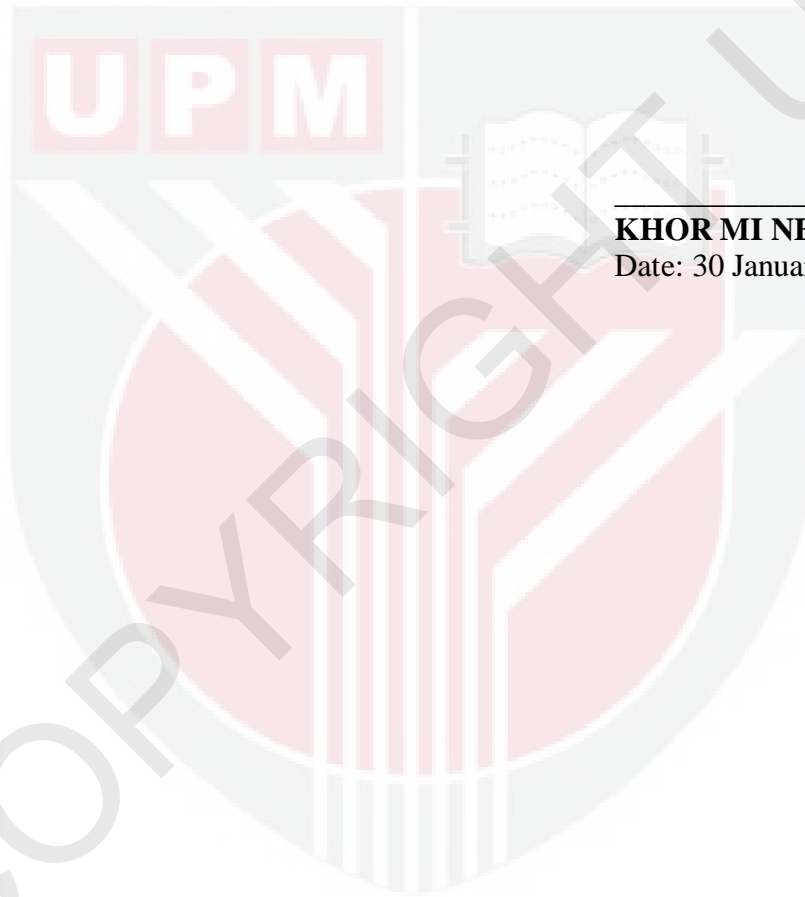
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## DECLARATION

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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