

## **A RHETORICAL CRITICISM OF SPEECHES DELIVERED BY DR ZETI AKHTAR AZIZ ON THE ISSUES OF ISLAMIC BANKING AND FINANCE LOCALLY**

Khor Mi Nee<sup>1</sup>, Abdul Mua'ti @ Zamri Bin Ahmad<sup>2</sup>, Mastura Mahamed<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Faculty of Arts, Communication and Education, Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur*  
<sup>2</sup>*Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, University Putra Malaysia*

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### **ABSTRACT**

Malaysian International Islamic Financial Centre was set up by Malaysian government to transform Malaysia into a vibrant International Islamic Financial hub. Malaysian Central Bank plays an important role in this transformation. One of the efforts is through the formal speeches delivered by the Central Governor, where it could be used to create and direct the necessary actions. Their speeches within and outside the company are important in motivating others and gaining support for their plan (Hartog, 1997). This study was designed to discover the application of the canon of logos by Malaysian Central Bank Governor, Dr. Zeti Akhtar Aziz. A modified version of neo Aristotelian criticism was used to analyse three formal speeches delivered locally with the focus of Islamic Finance products and services, from 2002 to 2006. This analysis indicated that Dr. Zeti only applied four types of proofs in her speeches; example of quantification, explanations, fact and serial examples. It could be due to the audiences, who were mostly local where they were exposed to the extensive exposure and education program on the Islamic banking done by local commercial banks. Practically, this study could assist and guide corporate leaders, especially those from banking industry to advance their business rhetorical skills in a more practical way.

### **Keywords:**

*Rhetoric, Islamic banking, speeches, CEO, neo-Aristotelian criticism, business.*

### **INTRODUCTION: THE HISTORY AND OVERVIEWS OF MALAYSIA AS AN INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC FINANCIAL HUB**

In 1963, with the establishment of Tabung Haji, it served as a milestone to start the journey of Islamic Finance. The birth of the first Islamic bank in Malaysia in 1983, Bank Islam Malaysia was followed by the commencement of first Takaful Operator, Syarikat Takaful Malaysia in 1985. Security Commissions (SC) and Central bank Malaysia (BNM) set up two Syari'ah Advisory Councils to provide regulatory guidance on the development of Islamic Financial market, instruments and the institutions. In year 2000, these two bodies have drawn out and outlined the strategic direction, particularly for the sector of Malaysian Islamic Finance. Malaysian International Islamic Financial Center was set up by Malaysian government in the late of 2006 to capture the potential Islamic financial market globally and the other objective is to transform Malaysia into a vibrant International Islamic Financial hub. ([www.pwc.com/en\\_my/my/assets/.../islamic-finance-hub.pdf](http://www.pwc.com/en_my/my/assets/.../islamic-finance-hub.pdf)).

## **THE IMPORTANCE AND INFLUENCE OF THE SPEECHES OF CEO'S**

The position of Governor in Central Bank Malaysia is equivalent to the private entities' Chief Executive Officers (CEOs). The Malaysian Government places the trust on him or her to ensure the smooth operations of the central bank. In this research, the focus is on the current Governor of Bank Negara Malaysia, Dr. Zeti Akhtar Aziz.

The ability to speak and to convey the message well is an increasingly important professional art to be mastered by the CEOs. Leaders of organizations need this ability too, because leadership expresses itself primarily through speeches. The CEOs use speeches to get action, to direct that action, and to monitor and report on that action. Good speeches reflect sound thinking and forward looking. CEOs recognized it as necessary to the intelligent conduct of their business, as well as to their personal advancement in the business world (Allyn, 1948).

CEOs play an important part in creating and dispensing organization's values and visions to organization members and the external environment. Their speeches within and outside the company are important to motivate others and gain support for their vision (Hartog, 1997).

A group of public address scholars recently elected the Top 100 speeches in the 20th century, but limited the range to "political speeches" and found no speaking note by any members of the business community (Lucas & Medhursts, 1999).

The lack has not gone unnoticed (Curti, 1944), but two generations later, not a single collection of business speeches, criticism or analysis has been created to fill the void (Medhurst, 1989). Given the importance placed on communicating visions for organizations, it is both surprising and disturbing that communication scholars have devoted so little attention to major speeches of organizational or corporate leaders. But still the speeches of only one business figure, Chrysler CEO Lee Iacocca, have been studied in detail (Seeger, 1986).

The objective of the study is to identify the logos applied by Dr. Zeti Akhtar Aziz on the Issues of Islamic banking and Finance in her speeches delivered in Malaysia.

As she presumes the role of the most influential personnel in the Central Bank of Malaysia, her presence is crucial to spearhead efforts in educating and promoting Islamic Banking in Malaysia. What types of proofs were preferred in her speeches?

The following constraints are justified for the application of modified version of the method:

- 1) The past speeches obtained from Public Relations or Public Affairs departments indicated that there is no access to the scene of speeches delivery. It makes the analysis of occasion and audience impossible.
- 2) There are five classical canons in the original version of neo-Aristotelian method. But in this study, only one canon is applied, logos. The style is more applicable to language and thus is not the focus of this research.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The speeches used in this research were analysed by applying the method of Neo-Aristotelian criticism, which involves the five canons: invention, organization, style, memory and delivery.

In the first formal method of rhetorical criticism, Neo-Aristotelian Criticism, the critic has to investigate three major components of the context; the rhetor, occasion and the audiences.

In the study conducted by Peterson (1969) on the speech delivered by Hardie, it was found that he was able to draw larger crowds whenever he speaks. With his intimate knowledge

of the privations of poor and his own background of poverty and hardship, he was able to understand and sympathize for the poor working group.

The speakers may have good reputation and gain fame in the eyes of the audiences, but it does not guarantee they are able to win the heart of the audiences. The study by Thomas (1959) indicated that Benjamin Franklin Butler's ethical appeal stems from sources both within and without the speech; he applies emotional proof sporadically. However, both ethical and emotional appeals are not sufficient to convince the audiences since the evidences presented by him are insufficient and irrelevant at times, the arguments are weak and the deliveries of speeches are uninspired.

A speaker is able to persuade and attract a larger audience despite the fact that he despises and abuses people. Hitler successfully persuaded the audiences through his public address by developing a powerful combination of pathos and ethos. He was able to wipe out facts and mistakes he had made. The other contributing factor was extensive use of logic, based on lies or misinformation (Casmir, 1966).

A question intrigues our attention: what are the basics for a rise of a speaker? There are three items that contribute to the rise of the speaker; logos, ethos and pathos in the study conducted on the selected speeches of Churchill (Miller, 1942). He suggested that a speaker is able to persuade the audiences with testimony, statistics and reasoning with the application of humour sparingly to loosen the tension among audiences. Merely with proof is just insufficient. It is suggested to mingle with vary emotional appeals with different sitting and circumstances. The ethical appeal, ethos, could be employed by the speaker through lifetime's development. It could not be achieved in short span of time.

CEOs play an important part in creating and dispersing organization values and visions to the organization members and external environment. Their speeches within and outside of the company are important to motivate others to gain support for their vision (Hartog, 1997).

Matthew (1986) applied the management roles proposed by Mintzberg to analyse the CEO of Chrysler, Anthony Lido (Lee) Iacocca's rhetoric during the crisis of the organization. The findings of the study indicated that the CEO is perceived as single handedly saving the troubled company, the Chrysler. The CEO, Iacocca, followed the Mintzberg's propositions about symbolic management through his most visible actions. Thirdly, he communicated frequently with an internal group that does not have direct access to the CEO. He put in the effort to generate support for his company by communicating with external group.

Myers and Kessler (1980) conducted a study on the speeches delivered by the leader of the largest corporation in America. An analysis of the content of these speeches revealed that the leaders perceived six major problems as occurring in American business and industry. In order to deal with these problems, they proposed three general corporate strategies; increased social responsibility on the part of business, influencing government policy, and economic education for the public.

According to Kallendorf & Kallendorf (1985), when they were searching for the clarity as a guiding principle for business prose, the artful use of figures of speech gives what could be a prosaic document considerable persuasive force and helps it to establish a company image. The sample of the business communication includes companies' internal and external documents, such as letters, speeches, business plan and annual report. The figures of speech, in short, enable a writer/rhetor to arrange, shape and present ideas in a way that projects the image of a thoughtful and analytical person whose ideas deserve to be taken seriously. They provide the tools for communicating the intelligence, goodwill, and upright character that Aristotle said must be projected.

During the recovery of economic from 2002 to 2008, the CEOs in Malaysia applied fact, explanation, quantification, definition, serial example and extended example in their speeches (Khor, 2011).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The neo-Aristotelian or traditional method will be employed in this study. This method is the first formal method of rhetorical criticism and according to Herbert A. Wichelns, 1952, he began to distinguish the literary criticism from rhetorical criticism, asserting that rhetorical criticism is “not concerned with permanence, nor yet with beauty”, as is literary criticism. Instead, it “is concerned with effect. It regards a speech as a communication to a specific audience, and holds its business to be the analysis and appreciation of the orator’s method of imparting his ideas to his hearers” (Wichelns, 1980).

The application of classical canons of rhetoric began with five canons; they were invention, organization, style, memory and delivery. These five canons became the unit of analysis, and the approach was named as neo-Aristotelianism.

The development of neo-Aristotelian method of criticism was meant for speeches analysis; the selected or the chosen speeches for neo-Aristotelian method of criticism are particularly great artifact (Foss, 2007).

## **SELECTION OF ARTIFACT**

This method of criticism was developed to analyze speeches. Dr. Zeti’s selected Islamic Banking and Finance texts of speeches delivered locally are chosen as artifacts.

## **SELECTION OF THE SPEAKER**

Dr. Zeti has been with Central bank of Malaysia since 1985. By 1995 she was appointed to be an Assistant Governor. She has been exposed to reserve management, foreign and money market operations, economic and exchange control. During the height of Asian financial crisis, she was appointed as Acting Governor on the 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1998 and led Bank Negara Malaysia term to successfully implement the selective exchange controls to restore stability and promote the economic recovery in Malaysia ([www.pidm.gov.my](http://www.pidm.gov.my)).

Foss (2007) identified that speakers generally have contributed greatly to the public. As a leader of central bank, her contribution is not just limited particularly to Bank Negara Malaysia. She and her team played significant role during the economic crisis in 1998.

## **SELECTION OF SPEECHES**

The total of three speeches will be analysed. The speeches are a compilation from Bank Negara Malaysia in March, 2006. One of the criteria of the selection is all speeches have been delivered to the audiences, and do not possess the nature of private and confidential. The other criterion is the selected speeches must possess the elements of Islamic Finance. In order to have depth and breadth in the logos used in the speeches, the selected speeches must vary and be essentially different.

Table 1: Speeches Selected and Analyzed

No.	Title of the speech
1.	Sustaining Islamic Banking and Finance Growth Through Effective Dissemination of Information
2.	Towards creating an Islamic Financial System as an Integral Part of the International Financial System-Strategies and Challenges Industry
3.	Islamic Finance : Building the Competitive Advantage

### **APPLICATION OF THE LOGOS IN THIS STUDY**

In this study, *logos* will be focused.

### **LOGOS**

It deals with the logical or rational elements of the rhetoric and with the effect of these elements on the audience. The evidence presented to further enforce or support the point is evaluated in terms of the beliefs of the audience and the context of the rhetoric (Foss, 2007).

There are eight types of evidence compiled by Ahmad (2007) which is based on Malaysian context. The other 8 public speaking books form the other 7 types of evidences. The selections of the books are on random basis with the minimum requirement of at least five editions. It implies that the books receive overwhelming responses and the books are constantly upgraded and improved. The total of 15 types of evidences will be listed and discussed.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The discussions of the results of this analysis are divided according to the four proofs applied by the rhetor.

### **DELIVERY OF SPEECHES**

The speeches delivered by Dr. Zeti locally; three speeches are studied and analysed, and they are coded as L1, L2 and L3.

### **LOGOS**

Logos basically deals with logical components of the rhetoric with the effect of these components on the audiences.

### ***QUANTIFICATION***

Quantification is any measurement or set measurements that explains or describes a subject. It can be in the form of aggregate, average, ratio, percentage or any other form of quantitative information.

Dr. Zeti applies quantification when she talks about the total of the amount generated and the percentage of the captured market share through the Islamic banking: “Currently, Islamic banking has successfully generated RMXX billion in asset, garnering XX% market share” (L2).

### ***EXPLANATION***

An explanation is a statement or group of statements that addresses how or why something occurs.

Dr. Zeti applies explanation on the reasons of Malaysia moving into the globalization financial system where the funds could be sourced or raised directly from international banking institutions or through bonds and equity issue.

Dr. Zeti provides the example of explanation when she talks about the needs of standard Accounting and Auditing organization for Islamic Financial institutions. “While the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic financial Institution has made a significant contribution in formulating and issuing accounting and auditing standards for Islamic financial institutions ...” (L1).

### ***FACTS***

According to Jaffe (2004), facts are data that can be verified by observation. Dr. Zeti applies fact in one of her speeches. She uses the example of fact when she discusses the needs of extensive education of the consumer and business community: “Malaysia has implemented a ten-year structured consumer education program to increase the level of consumer awareness on the unique characteristic of Islamic financial products and the product choices offered by Islamic financial service provider...”(L3).

### ***SERIAL OF EXAMPLE***

Dr. Zeti employs an example of serial of example in her speeches when she discusses the rationale behind one of the websites set up by Central bank Malaysia, which serves the needs of information of these groups of profession: “...it thus aims to effectively meet the information needs of bankers, financiers, statisticians, economist, researcher and prospective investors as well...” (L2). By merely mentioning how the website is constructed is never enough and the audiences are looking for the profession groups that benefited from the website. It is not just a normal and ordinary website. The information posted on the website does not only feed the information briefly to the general public, but it serves the need of these groups of occupation.

Based on the analysis, Dr. Zeti applies four types of evidences in these three speeches where she delivered locally; quantification, explanation, fact and serial example.

## CONCLUSION

Dr. Zeti uses fewer proofs in her speeches when she delivers her speeches locally. This is due to the fact that most of the audiences are Malaysians. They are quite familiar with Islamic Financial products or services offered, and it could also be due to the extensive exposure and education program on the Islamic banking done by local commercial banks. Dr. Zeti does not need to present varieties of proof to convince the audiences in this context.

The study conducted by Khor (2011) has discovered that the speeches delivered by the CEOs from 2002-2008, in addition to definition and extended example, apply the same logical evidences like Dr. Zeti. The addition of the logical proofs could be due to the quantity of the speeches, where 22 speeches were analyzed. The similarity of the logical proofs in the speeches implied that where the industry of CEOs come from is not significant. The key factor is that they are here to use logical appeal to convince their respective audiences.

The limitations of this study are open up to directions or doors for future research. Firstly, the canon of delivery as described by the Greek orator, Demosthenes to be the most important art of rhetoric. All the speeches could be well prepared and written, but they will fall on the deaf ears because of the unskilled delivery (Edward & Robert, 1998). In this study, the canon of delivery is absent due to no access to the recording of Dr. Zeti's speech presentations. The analysis of written speeches is not sufficient and the canon of delivery is suggested to be included in the speeches analysis in the future research, with the advance of technology.

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