

The Rhetoric and Language of Mohammad Najib Abdul Razak: A Political Analysis

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.910000651>

Received: 26 October 2025; Accepted: 04 November 2025; Published: 20 November 2025

ABSTRACT

This paper offers an in-depth political analysis of the rhetoric and the speech of Mohammad Najib Abdul Razak, the 6th and Prime Minister of Malaysia, between 2010 and 2015. Utilizing a qualitative cross-sectional exploratory design within a theory developed by Halliday and Hasan, this study analyzes the political narratives of Najib as performative texts. The focus of this analysis is to determine the political words and rhetorical strategies Najib used in the ethnically diverse and politically complicated Malaysia. The analysis points to a major, bipolar concentration in Najib's rhetoric. It consisted in the 'modern' projection of the audience and the 'diverse', 'multilingual' communicator and the simultaneous, counter 'Malay dominance/backlash' discourse. His political discourse annexes massive audiences. This study also focuses on Najib's boundaries on 'we' as 'kita', which is 'inclusive' analogy in disengagements, disproportionate and contradictory arguments on ethno-national justifiable simplification of argumentative strategies. It reflects the ideology which is covered by political discourse in Malaysia and the dominance in the geopolitics of the region. Finally, this text analyzes how Najib's rhetoric how state translation and the media as Surrogates of Najib's rhetorical and institutional control. In the end, the author suggests that Najib's rhetoric was highly crafted political technology that, instead of solving, kept a lid on the basic tensions of the Malaysian society. His eventual political demise, then, is to be taken as marking not the defeat of this rhetorical model, but rather the most profound fracture of the fragile balance that model was intended to preserve. This dissertation offers a new perspective on the intersection of political linguistics and Malaysian Studies by demonstrating how, in a critical period of the country's history, language was deployed as a key instrument of power.

Keywords: Political Rhetoric, Malaysian Politics, Ethno-political Communication, Strategic Multilingualism, Malay Hegemony.

INTRODUCTION

Politics is a struggle for power in order to put certain political, economic and social ideas into practice. Political leaders use language to convey their messages, shape public opinion, and mobilize support for their agendas. Rhetoric, speeches, and propaganda are all examples of how language is used in politics to influence and persuade. Understanding political rhetoric is vital to understanding how power is acquired, justified, and sustained within modern states. Spoken and written political communication as an instrument for identity and social conflict management, electoral mobilization, and primary means for communication as used within multi-ethnic and multicultural societies to which Malaysia serves as a salient illustration within this particular body of literature. Malaysia serves as a salient illustration within this body of literature. This paper focuses on the fusion of political science, discourse analysis, and linguistic studies to systematically investigate the political speech of Mohammad Najib Abdul Razak as the sixth premier of Malaysia between 2009 and 2018, a time of immense political change and unrest in the country.

The importance of this inquiry has several elements. In the field of political communication and the less documented phenomenon of the Malay language, the scholarly construct termed the Language Planning Model (LPM) comes to dominate language planning issues in Malaysia. In sharp contrast to LPM, this new model has become the focus of heightened academic interest and analyses, including the rational reconstruction of the

intricate rhetoric, strategies, and language of Najib in the last decade, with particular emphasis on the party manifesto speeches delivered during the last two general elections which were heavily contested. This work of academic inquiry strongly contends that post-1999 prime minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi attempted to promote and “national unity” with deliberately inclusive and conscious Malay political vocabulary and phrases. In contrast, his deputy and successor, Najib, has very much taken a different and much more radical approach to his brand of Malay electoral hegemony which goes much further and deeper than anything Badawi did.

In the past few decades, Malaysian politics have changed significantly in the both the policies and the methods of communication used (Lean LIM, 2021). Prime Minister Razak Hussein's educational policies, while instrumental in the nation's goal to accomplish progress, raises the critical concern of whether policies were actually for the uplifting of the country or purely for political narcissism. The utterances and public speeches of Mohammad Najib Abdul Razak (2009-2018) are yet to be comprehensively analyzed from the political lens of interdisciplinary politics covering linguistics, discourse, and polity. Thus, it is in this regard that the complete assessment of Najib's term from the point of view of rhetoric and language is likely to shed new light, not just on the rhetoric and language of Najib, but also enhance the understanding of the usage of language in Malaysian politics, in turn, addressing the wider theoretical issues of political discourse in a fractured society.

Political Malaysia has language and other characteristics that reflect its complex and pluralistic society of Malays, Indonesians, Chinese, and Indians. Politics in Malaysia is dominated by three intersections: race, religion and party affiliation. They were, however, within the realm of “uncontested” issues during the Barisan Nasional (BN) era of 1963 - 2018, which is why the same race-based narratives were repeated not under the same party name and logo in each of the general elections. These circumstances changed dramatically during the 2018 - present era of Pakatan Harapan (PH; stylized as HARAPAN) that has emerged in the context of developmental politics. Each of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd BN periods, as well as the PH period, is characterized by a specific set of rhetorical approaches to the fundamental issues of the country. These issues include education policy, good governance, national unity, and economic policy. Each of these periods is dominated by specific rhetorical approaches to fundamental issues, like education policy, good governance, national unity, and economic policy.

Of particular interest to me is Najib's background and political ancestry which makes him worthy of scholarly analysis and critique. Najib's father, especially being the second Prime Minister of the country, as well as the very first indigenous MAHA President, Dato Haji Abdul Razak bin Dato Hussein, was of extreme stature. Moreover, being born in the year 1953 in Kuala Lipis, Pahang, gives him the edge of old age wisdom. This is alongside the fact that our country is currently structured as a multi-ethnic society dominated by the Malays. This makes him a focal point for examining political language for our age. His father being such a great individual certainly paved the way for him. Receiving education from the finest institutions such as St John's Institution in Kuala Lumpur and then pursuing his economics degree from Nottingham University also helped to build his pinnacle. Moreover, his post university career helped him suspend the distinctions between the western and eastern traditions of political and rhetorical practice. This was made possible as a result of servitude to the United Malays National Organization, alongside the fact that he was a member of Parliament since the year 1976. My interest in Najib stems from the sheer volume of concerns that he raises. This is especially so in regards to the way he uses rhetoric to soften his points as well. This goes hand in hand with what is referred to as the “democratic senile” condition placed on him as a speaker (Abadi, 2021).

This analysis approaches Malaysia's background as a multicultural state with fascinatingly complicated policies from the lens of its deep plurality. Still, the ethnic plurality has not always worked as an advantage for the Malaysian society, due to the constant tendency to conflict and to unevenly developed patterns of conflict many communities still maintain (Lean LIM, 2021). This paper discusses the concept of language levels to “read” Najib's language with the more advanced and delicate profiling. It does not suggest, of course, that this approach covers the entire spectrum of Najib's political language, but rather, it narrows its focus toward the linguistic-style framework of his political communication. This investigation applies the Empirical Concept Analysis (ECA) framework as the primary systematic approach for coding and interpreting his rhetorical moves.

Politicians are often aware of the value of using rhetorical devices in evoking applause to elicit agreement from their audience. As such, applause can be interpreted as a highly noticeable expression of group identity or solidarity with the speaker and the party the speaker represents. Therefore, the importance of rhetorical analysis when studying political leadership should not be ignored. As heads of governments, political leaders, in particular, need to possess advanced language skills, especially with regard to speech making, in order to be politically effective. As evidenced by the case of Ajith Kumara, a retained advertising copywriter, words will be the tools a communicator will use to advance the development of a nation. From this premise, it is obvious that political leaders will need to possess advanced communication skills. It is a known fact that effective communication on the part of a speaker is to the benefit of the speaker, the audience and the larger society (Hyland-Wood et al., 2021). Therefore, an improvement in communication skills is likely to enhance the performance of a speaker at any forum. This is especially true in Mohammed Najib Abdul Razak's rhetorical speeches as the Prime Minister of Malaysia. Hence, the scope of the current study includes a contextual analysis of language and rhetorical systems that are classifiable and analyzable in the context of political speeches.

The sixth Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mohammad Najib Abdul Razak, epitomized controversy amid numerous speculative and unfounded allegations associated with numerous political scandals. Nevertheless, his tenacity and experience in the political battlefield allowed him to withstand the barrage of controversies, retaining his influence and power for a considerable time.

Ironically, for all the developments and policies he pursued, he faced an abrupt loss to his erstwhile benefactor, Mahathir Mohamad, in the 2018 general elections, an outcome that changed the history of the country and warrants an investigation into his rhetorical skills and how they extended his life as well as the manner in which he eventually perished (Abadi, 2021). This is the reason why this paper will try to understand the rhetoric he used when he started in the 21st century, first as the Deputy Prime Minister starting in 2004, and later as the 6th Prime Minister of Malaysia, which he assumed in 2009 and the conditions of the world that centered around media fragmentation and the introduction of the internet which changed political rhetoric.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Analyzing political speeches requires the constituent facets of multiple disciplines, especially within the context of the socio-political environment within Malaysia. The case study of Prime Minister Mohammad Najib Abdul Razak provides the needed setting for this inquiry. The analysis proceeds within scholarly frameworks constructed from a number of interrelated pillars, starting with political linguistics and the discourse analytic frameworks. Under this scholarship, political speeches, categorized as 'planned discourse,' are treated as performed texts, the 'grammatical' configurations of which are interrogated in order to expose ideologies and persuasive techniques that underpin the texts (Simanjuntak et al., 2023). These texts are approached within the subfield of pragmatic linguistics and the discourse analysis of the texts focuses on the speech acts and principles of politeness.

However, comprehending the language of leaders is no easy task. This is because policies are often veiled within the discourse presented. Success or failure begins with the attitudes and responsibilities of political leaders managing the governance entrusted to them, prioritising the welfare and comfort of the people they lead. Researchers highlight Najib's verbal delivery as incorporating deliberate speech acts of direction, rhetorical questioning, and hedging, which enabled him of sidestepping rather controversial matters while keeping the illusion of civility and non-aggressive interaction (Hariyanto, 2023; Alhamidi et al., 2021). The use of intentional vagueness, especially the repeated use of the pronoun "we", served to create and sustain political fog and communicative mediocrity (Hariyanto, 2023). It suggests that Najib developed a more chilling version of political discourse that remained courteous, yet uncomfortable. Such descriptions figuratively carded as 'politeness theory' has been highlighted by Susanto (2018) while analysing the manner in which Racism and other bigoted expressions can be linguistically sanitized through a discipline of decency.

As previously exemplified, linguistic issues cannot be separated from the issues of language policies and identity within the nation of Malaysia. The post-independence nation-building project was arguably anchored in the institutionalization of Bahasa Malaysia as the nation's lingua franca. This was accomplished, arguably,

through the clinching of the National Language Act of 1967, which sought to construct a national identity from a fragmented society (Pillai et al., 2021). The government's active promotion of the language through various initiatives serves to reinforce Malaysia's dominant symbol of identity as a Malay nation, and to a lesser extent, its sovereignty (Martono et al., 2022; Bakar et al., 2021). However, this promotion of official monolingualism does seem very much at odds with the reality of rampant multilingualism. It is this paradox that makes Najib's posturing rather interesting. From a purely nationalistic linguistic perspective, he was known for exercising what is termed as strategic multilingualism, that is, using the vernacular in his announcements to create a sense of relevance, balance and direct engagement with the broad electorate (Lai Fong, 2022; Waikar et al., 2021). This is an indication of political sophistication aimed at building a public image that is favourable to international patrons as well as local patrons drawn from the non-Malay sectors, albeit other strands of his discourse seemed to be addressing a different focus.

Of all the features that characterize communication in the Malaysian polity, of central interest, and most articulated, is the discourse on and of race and ethnicity. Tambiah (2023) asserts that in Malaysia race is socially real, constructed and yet a 'sacred domain,' an axis upon which political loyalties and power are organized and negotiated. The essence of Malay supremacy and the responsibility to defend *ketuanan Melayu* (Malay dominance) is a surreptitious and deeply historical current in a policy constellation that includes the New Economic Policy (NEP). It is, then, important to place the rhetoric of Najib in this context. Some scholars, like Abadi (2021) argue that Najib, unlike his predecessor, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who advocated a more inclusive "national unity" approach, went along with a strategy of Malay electoral dominance. He shared the rhetoric of his boss, former Prime minister Mahathir Mohamad, who, more politically opportunistic, linked the future of the party UMNO to the Malays and the country, thus, projecting a militant, defensive, and communalist posture towards the interests of other ethnic communities. (Sharbawi & Mabud, 2021). The phenomenon of ethnic political communication in this instance, and the manner in which it is performed, which is, most of the time, with linguistic politeness, is still a reinforcement of the boundaries of race and a construction of a narrative of entitlement and ethnic vulnerability protected by a particular electoral base. The media and institutional frameworks in developing and sharing this rhetoric remain to be studied critically. While the media passes portray information and formulate models, their role is not limited to being passive recorders. Politicians' images can be framed positively as heros and negatively as villains (Tiung Lee & Safar Hasim, 2009; Chavez, 2023). Therefore covering the role of the media is double-edged, as media can either be a instrument of development, or as the text states, a "weapon that bites back its master." in the context comparatively of the themes of the text (Birhane et al 2022) concerning in the relations of race, and particularly as sensationalism can mount prope.it. One of the uniquely pertinent issues in Najib's case is how the institutional process of translation is done. His speeches being translated and official done by the state sponsored the Institute of Language and Publication lectures adds a layer of mediation and possibly manipulation to the argument.

The concern arising from the discrepancies between the original Malay speech, the Official Malay Text, the English Translations, and the Malay Translations culminates in the question of political reframing, which, in turn, makes the translation a site of political tensionboard, hence impeding any of form of linear analysis of the Prime Minister's words directly (Ashik, 2022). Among the plethora of works on Malaysian politics, language policies, and media studies, the literature in which analysis of the rhetorics of Najib Razak which combines the various facets of a geopolitical discourse, framing strategies, ethnonational politics in Malaysia, and mediacentrism, is highly contexted and synthesized lacking. It is for this reason that this research aims to fill a gap in the literature and systematically analyze how these attributes converge to create the unique and influential political rhetoric of Malaysia's sixth Prime Minister.

METHODOLOGY

This case study attempts to hear from the perspective of the speaker as well as the audience to evaluate the kind of Najib's contouring statement's language forms proposed by him, and uttered by him, par excellence. He stays producer and transmitter of the statement. He disengages from and attends to the specific audiences, plural. The case study follows Halliday and Hasan's Thematic case approach and attempts to analyze and assess block speech text as a discourse text. The selection and subsequent mapping of the language form, the defensive language form leading to Najib's vocational rationales, were exhaustively rationalized. The case

study's focus was strategically placed on the critical assessment of the lexicogrammatical resources in the sampled reports. To conduct this cross-sectional exploratory case study, seven reports were exhaustively documented and analyzed. The reports are the utterances of Najib from 2010 to 2015. The intention was to outline the changes in the reports preceding and the reports following the analyzed critical event in relation to the death of the scrutinized political figure, expressing his sentiments towards the politician. These clearly defined boundary years were analyzed in such a way as to enable the evaluation of the parameterized linguistic changes within the given years, 2010 to 2015.

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

The extensive study on Datuk Seri Najib Razak's expressions of emotions during the period of 2010 to 2015 shows that his language was custom crafted to face the social and political currents of Malaysia at the time. This study goes beyond surface-level assumptions to show that language was used to achieve political ends. These insights are woven together to show how Najib's language was used to tactfully create and disseminate ideology through the construction of media and public relations networks. The focal point of this analysis is the use of personal pronouns especially the dominating and the first person plural "we" and the inclusive "kita" in Malay. This is beyond the use of language in the speech act that was crafted to tell distinct stories of his political base 'we' who Malay and Muslim.

This oblique citation made it possible for a hypothetical rhetorical trick to be performed that rendered the situation to be paradoxically exclusive while it cloaked a self-serving enterprise that cast Najib as the undisputed leader and primary moral figure of the group Hariyanto, 2023. Focused on a particular pronominal strategy associated temporal framing that employed a mixed coding of time. Najib often used the culturally salient, non-standard adverbs "nanti" (later), "dulu" (before), and "harini" (today), which, along with the felt and lived form, were part of the distant and spaced formal institutional chronological geography of the political office which he held (Lauscher et al. 2022; Lean LIM 2021). The evaluative combination of inclusive pronouns and a delayed time frame on the counter argument amplified his position of the counter narrative as the principal target of criticism, which he perceived as the locus of a dominant, authoritative, and culturally grounded position. In addition, the observation reveals an abiding framework of policy-driven strategic multilingualism, a dualism which came to be a signature aspect of his political discourse.

Through public speeches especially given overseas, in a performative manner, Najib would have translated some of his speeches in local vernaculars. This bolstered the perception of the country as modern and sophisticated and committing to moderation in governance as the public face of pluralism (Lai Fong, 2022; Waikar et al, 2021). This public-facing polyglossia, however, was always at odds with a fundamentalist, and usually more crude, parallel discourse in Bahasa Malaysia. This was sharply illustrated in his 2012 speech in which the fervent restatement of the government's resolve to safeguard the Malay language as a holy trust bequeathed by the Malay Rulers was a most vivid articulation, and an unambiguous appeal to ethno-nationalist and linguistic vulgarity (Sharbawi & Mabud, 2021). This is the kind of linguistic schizophrenia which this analysis seeks to unpack. Najib was bifurcated in his rhetoric, and in branding exercises offering the English and some other tongues, was willing to surrender the Bahasa Malaysia to the domination of Malay and Bumiputera interests, which rest to the root of his party's enduring ideology.

Examining micro-level linguistic techniques, the use of pragmatic methods to render ideological material as part of the common-sense assumption was astonishing. Politeness strategies and presuppositions as ideological camouflage worked best in Najib's discourse. By associating contentious and contentious claims to claims to claims the the the the him associating embedded claims and set politeness claims to rapport singular direct negotiation open to him. This is proven in the use of his technique him approach to aide discourse. Rather than racist statements, him rhetoric would "subversively" bent racial use in sentences is respectful complex and strategy. Thus Taiwan's Malay ascendancy was diffused as a political issue to something that was natural and the unspoken foundation of the social contract of the nation. This is the method this contract enabled the phonetics and the primitivism of his ethno-political target her culture the the set needed to the framework of state to speak to pipes. His message was clear to his him, and critique without not him were to him were cultural themselves.

This case study should also analyze the media and institutional machinery in the prism of Dom Najib's original rhetoric. As the media, especially the press, has been described as forging political history, indices of the study suggest that bias from media houses and the framing of his speeches had the power to either enhance or diminish his political value (Tiung Lee & Safar Hasim, 2009; Chavez, 2023). Even more so, the institutionalized process of translation emerged as an important political mediation site. Najib's speeches, crafted in the form of oral delivery and voice corpus, also had the potential to be distorted. The filters of the Government-linked 'Institute of Language and Publication' 's' institutional processing and translation systems has the potential to distort and politically mediate in ways that serve power. The gaps between the original Malay delivery, the official Malay transcript, as well as the English translations point to the process of strategic reframing, where finer details in the meaning of the message being addressed to the different audiences Ashik 2022. This emphasizes that Najib's political speeches were reframed to maximize the political gains on the tertiary expectations. The expectations' gaps as his audiences were tailored from different 'spectrum's of the world'. He did not act as rudimentary entity but as an adaptive uniquely shaped construct made to be dispersed through the numerous channels.

In sum, the conclusion reveals the image of the communicator as one who practiced the art of political language and power by employing grammatical vagueness, multilingual advocacy, pragmatic evasion, and controlled access to the media to maintain a base of supporters in one of the most intricate political contexts in tropical Asia.

DISCUSSION

A theory of rhetoric is used to investigate political speech from the perspective of discourse analysis since it analyzes language beyond the sentence and the analysis of discourse is typically concerned with the study of language in the text and conversation. The Current analysis shows the complex workings of how Mohammad Najib Abdul Razak's rhetoric served as a focal point of political discourse. This diagnosis confirms the preliminary claim that the language employed by Najib was fundamentally dichotomous. It was crafted in such a manner that it appeared to modern and inclusionary multinationalism to a plurality of audiences both global and domestic and underpin fundamental Malay electoral domination to sustain political support. This analysis integrates these findings to support the claim that the skill of Najib Abdul Razak or Najib Razak in rhetoric was not in a singular and pervasive message but rather in how he managed to harness the unresolved contradictions of Malaysian society for purposes which was of sophisticated manipulation of language.

The use of pronominal vagueness through the inclusive 'we' is the most common strategy and served directly to create a unified political identity while also avoiding precise accountability. This complies with the more general communication theory of politics which associates vague language use with consensus formation and avoidance of direct disagreement (Hariyanto, 2023). In Najib's situation, the ceaseless use of kita 'we' exemplified skilful political reframing. It enabled him to disguise policies that more often than not benefited the Malay population as policies that served the nation and, therefore, silenced dissenting voices from the non-Malay communities as voices that opposed the common good. This approach collapsed the distinctions between political party, ethnicity, and nation, so that his leadership was presented as if it was also leadership of 'the people' while considerably circumscribing the definition of 'the people'.

Moreover, the calculated multilingualism strategy offers unique insight toward the negotiation of pluralism in Malaysian politics. The findings suggest that for Najib, the use of different languages was both functional and an exercise in identity politics. His speeches in English and other vernacular languages reinforced the image of a global moderate leader, which aligns with Waikar et al. (2021) findings regarding his positioning on the world stage. However, this public image was in sharp contrast with the reaffirmations of the supremacy of the Malay language that was presented in the public space in Bahasa Malaysia. This strategy resonates with the ethno-nationalist underpinnings of his party, the UMNO, as analyzed by Sharbawi and Mabud (2021). This double vision illustrates a key argument of this paper: Najib's rhetoric was, to a large extent, Janus-faced. He was able to maintain a coalition of urban, cosmopolitan elites and rural, ethnocentric nationalists owing to the compartmentalization of his messages, a strategy which worked for some time but was ultimately unsustainable.

From a micro-linguistic perspective, the choice of politeness strategies and the use of presuppositions indicate the extent of the underpinning ideological work that went unspoken. The analysis shows that by embedding controversial ethno-nationalist thoughts within a framework of politeness, Najib was able to pursue a partisan objective while preserving a thin layer of ostensible statesman-like elegance (Susanto, 2018; Alhamidi et al., 2021). This tactic fortified his rhetoric against condemnation, as any backlash to the unspoken message could easily be characterized as an attack against the cultural or Malay rights themselves. This is certainly new evidence on his political survival; it was not the absence of racial discourse, but the subversive and sophisticated manner in which it was concealed that characterized his tenure. His predecessor, Abdullah Badawi, was more direct in his “national unity” rhetoric; thus, Najib's more sophisticated, and possibly more effective, form of majoritarian politics has distanced himself from his predecessor.

To reiterate my points, it is important that the role of media and translation is considered as part of the ‘rhetorical arsenal’ rather than passive forms of dissemination. The media’s ability to shape and control an individual’s public persona (Tiung Lee and Safar Hasim, 2009), alongside the state-sponsored translation initiatives which, at the very least, altered the nuances of the original (Ashik, 2022), meant that Najib’s ‘voice’ did not escape as an unmediated stream. Primary institutional mediation facilitated additional polishing of the messages for an even more disaggregated corpus of targets. This only reinforced the principal finding of a bifurcated rhetorical strategy.

In the light of the above, the discourse and rhetoric of Najib Razak as explained above demonstrate an advanced form of political engineering that seeks to deal with the challenges of a plural society by targeting disparate audiences with different messages and counterbalancing the public persona to all of them. The collapse of the political image he held may not indicate the breakdown of this rhetorical model, but the collapse of the porous balance which it sought to maintain.

CONCLUSION

Politically, language is identification, sovereignty, and rights. Najib’s language and communication analyzed in this paper was both an instrument of his political communication as well as its fundamental core. He exercised a strategic duality in his discourse, projecting a modern, inclusive multinationalism image and reinforcing Malay electoral hegemony to his political base. This study hinged on his speeches between 2010 and 2015 and identified several rhetorical devices he used to polish his political communication.

In this chapter, I focus on how pronominal politics, especially the vague use of the inclusive “we,” formed a diffused political identity. This seamless transition let him present ethnically particular policies as national policies and marginalize dissenting voices, blurring the boundaries between party politics, ethnicity, and nationality. His strategic and well-studied use of the term “we” in particular and ethnicity policies in general enabled him to sharpen the contrast between party politics and nationality. In addition, his controlled multilingualism contributed to his identity politics on a major scale, as he performed both global moderated leader and Malay supremacy defender under a single public, visibly different identity.

Here, we see that Najib has used politeness strategies and presupposition tactics to structure macro-discursive units that are apparently contextually presuppositioned to contain ideological content on the ethno-nationalist debate. Najib employs the ethnopolitical divisions discourse at the macro level on the basis of politeness to pursue a divisive marriage and divorces discourse politics while preserving the statesmanly veneer of politeness, providing added protection for the exhaustion of the critique. This improvement in the use of exclusive politics in inclusive speaking frames is a sharp turn from the approach of his predecessor. It is important to explain disconnects within the pluralistic frameworks of political spheres.

The institutionally mediated combination of the message with translation and framing by the state-controlled media added to the complexity of the rhetorical situation, producing a designed, cross media system with multiple simultaneous pathways that could be configured for various message recipient groups. This study adds to the literature on political discourse in plurality, illustrating that rhetoric in due course could be used to dominate, not to resolve, cardinal differences in the fabric of a society. Najib, we believe, had not politically perished, for the rhetorical construct had failed. This adds to the discourse on the use of language, power and

political discourse in divided societies with his rhetoric designed to fail which was, all the same, to rest the structure that was meant to balance.

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