Institutional construction of gamblers' identities: a critical discourse study

Chung Hang Leung
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Institutional Construction of Gamblers’ Identities: A Critical Discourse Study

LEUNG Chung Hang

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Principal Supervisor: Dr. KONG Chak Chung, Kenneth

Hong Kong Baptist University

July 2014
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis represents my own work which has been done after registration for the degree of PhD at Hong Kong Baptist University, and has not been previously included in a thesis or dissertation submitted to this or any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualifications.

Signature: ___________________
Date: July 2014
ABSTRACT

This research is aimed at unraveling the institutional representations of gamblers’ identities in the postmodern era. Although gambling has been widely researched in many fields such as psychology, sociology and cultural studies (e.g., Cosgrave, 2006; Kingma, 2010; McMillen, 1996; Petry, 2005), there has been a lack of scholarly inquiry vis-à-vis this topic among language researchers including discourse analysts. With the recent inauguration of two casino-based holiday resorts, Singapore provides a suitable platform for carrying out gambling-related academic research.

Adopting the approach of critical discourse analysis (CDA), this study focuses on how gamblers’ identities are constructed through discourse as an artifact by social institutions. To this end, the present research capitalizes on the Bakhtinian (1981) notion of “dialogism” and makes use of multiple data sets in which different institutional “voices” are embedded. The data consist of newspaper forum letters, gamblers’ monologues released by a state gambling regulatory agency, and materials on problem/pathological gambling published by medical professionals.

As a “public sphere” (Habermas, 1989) where a variety of “voices” about gamblers and gambling are accommodated, the newspaper forum letters serve as an opening scene for data analysis. From the 47 letters collected, three main groups of writers—(i) the non-affiliated contributors; (ii) the governing parties; (iii) the mental health-care professionals—have been identified. Adhering to the framework of Fairclough (2003), the analysis centers around the linguistic triggers for three social research issues: (i) legitimation; (ii) hegemony (aka “equivalence and difference”); (iii) “appearance versus reality.” It has been found that the non-affiliated contributors make heavy use of legitimation strategies. By contrast, legitimation strategies are much less prevalent among the governing parties. As for the mental health-care professionals, legitimation strategies are frequently found in their letters as a medium to foreground their in-group knowledge or expertise.

To further investigate the government’s “voice,” a nationwide campaign initiated by the Singapore National Council on Problem Gambling has been used for analysis. Four gamblers’ speeches presented in this campaign have been examined on the basis of process types (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), appraisal resources (Martin & White, 2005) and code choice. The findings show that the juxtaposed identities between the social gamblers and the recovering problem gamblers are symbolically mobilized by the state to create the stigmatized quality of “problematic gamblers” for the purpose of public governance.

The interrogation of the medical “voice” has been performed along the direction of knowledge “recontextualization” (Kong, 2009; Linell, 2009). The data analysis involves texts from three sources: (i) a clinical handbook; (ii) a complimentary leaflet of a mental health-care unit; (iii) a self-help book from a popular profit-making series. The sociocognitive approach to discourse developed by van Dijk (1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) has
been chosen as the principal analytic framework for this data set. The findings indicate that the text producers are continuously fiddling the boundaries between different types of knowledge (e.g., technical knowledge and “general-sociocultural” knowledge) with the goal of not only “popularizing” the medical paradigm, but also “colonizing” the “lifeworld” (Habermas, 1987).

The significance of the research is primarily three-fold. First, bearing the undertone of deconstruction (Derrida, 1978), the current discourse-oriented inquiry about gamblers’ identities is an exemplar of how text and its ideological-cum-social implications are critically untangled and re-questioned. Second, the research offers concrete linguistic evidence on the essential complementary ontological presence of institutional power holders and the “docile bodies” (Foucault, 1977) for societal functioning and the maintenance of social stability. Third, a procedure for studying gamblers’ identities (or other institutional discursive constructs) is devised. With CDA as the overarching constituent, analytical concepts from a range of scholars are incorporated into the study (e.g., Fairclough, 2003; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Hyland, 2005; Jeffries, 2010a, 2010b; Kong, 2009; Martin & White, 2005; van Dijk, 2008a; van Leeuwen, 2008).
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my greatest gratitude to my principal supervisor Dr. Kenneth Kong for his supervision. From the conceptualization stage of the present research, he has been generously sharing his ideas, insights and criticisms with me. The numerous hours of discussions which we had are always intellectually stimulating and meaningful. Since my undergraduate years at Baptist University, his guidance and advice have profoundly shaped my path to become a professional researcher in discourse analysis. I am deeply indebted to him. Credit goes to my kind co-supervisor Dr. Hiroko Itakura too for her thought-provoking feedback which has helped me to design my research in a more sophisticated way. The two external examiners (Prof. Winnie Cheng and Prof. Martin Warren) and the internal examiners (Prof. Stuart Christie and Dr. Phoenix Lam) have also provided me with valuable comments which further strengthen the final presentation of this thesis. What’s more, I have learned from the illuminating remarks made by Prof. Douglas Robinson (Dean of the Arts Faculty) during the oral defense. With his remarks, I have given serious thought to some issues related to my thesis.

Besides, I want to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to every member of the English Department for all types of high-quality educational, administrative and social support that I have been receiving. In particular, I am grateful to Prof. Hans Ladegaard and Dr. Suying Yang for their suggestions during my open seminar in June 2012. Also, let me give thanks to Dr. Jessica Yeung, Dr. Magdalen Ki, Prof. Susan Fiksdal and Prof. Terry Yip for the casual yet meaningful conversations. My fondness for the Department can be traced back to the early 2000s when I was first admitted to the undergraduate program. Undeniably, the English Department has become an important part of my life and will remain so forever.

People outside the academic domain play a significant role in my PhD studies as well. My parents’ selflessness to their children has been a powerful source of motivation for me. Kate, my best friend, has been lending a supportive ear despite my occasional grumpiness. The HKBU School of Chinese Medicine
Building will surely bring me positive memories owing to the quiet library and the beneficial consultations with Chinese Medicine Practitioner Ms. Chung-wah Cheng. Furthermore, my two yoga teachers Chingmy and Rekha Dey have shown me how to alleviate body pain especially in times of stress and physical weakness.

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Part I Introduction to the Research

Chapter 1 Lead-in

1.1 Background information

1.1.1 Definition of gambling

Nowadays, there are many venues where wagers can be made. Salient examples include casinos, lottery outlets, racetracks and even the Internet. The word gambling therefore should not be unfamiliar to most people. As defined in The Oxford English Dictionary, gambling is the action of the verb gamble which means “to play games of chance for money, esp. for unduly high stakes” (Simpson & Weiner, 1989, p. 342). This short definition, like many others offered in dictionaries, may not be conducive to a scholarly discussion of gambling.

In order to study gambling in detail, a more sophisticated definition is necessary. As a scholar in sociology, Reith (1999) stated that gambling is a ritual where “chance is deliberately courted as a mechanism which governs a redistribution of wealth among players as well as a commercial interest or ‘house’” (p. 1). Reith’s (1999) definition captures concisely the essence of gambling in society and will be adopted throughout the present study. However, using Reith’s (1999) idea alone may not be critical enough. To enrich the working definition of gambling within this study, two aspects have to be added. First, gambling involves what the sociologist Giddens (1991, p. 132) called “cultivated risk-taking.” In other words, it has to be a voluntary act which is not caused by human coercion or natural force. Second, during the current postmodern era that propagates consumption and the provision of services, gambling is increasingly

---

1 The phrase “commercial interest” shows that commercialized gambling is the focus of the present study. Commercialized gambling is foregrounded here because one form of commercialized gambling is casino operation, which is the major cause of the public debates surrounding the gambling issue in Singapore.
accepted as a legitimate recreational pursuit (Kingma,² 2010, p. 6; Reith, 2007, p. 39). For instance, two casino-based holiday resorts have recently been launched in Singapore³ as a strategy to stimulate tourism (Lee, 2005). Such legitimation of gambling parallels the growing use of the term gaming among business enterprises to euphemistically construct a pleasant collective image of various gambling events (Thompson, 2010, p. xvii).

1.1.2 Classification of gamblers

Broadly speaking, gamblers refer to any persons who are engaged in gambling. Nevertheless, a quick search on the World Wide Web has shown that many different labels have been used to denote people who exhibit varying degrees of participation in gambling activities. Some labels such as problem gamblers, pathological gamblers and heavy gamblers carry negative connotations whereas others like social gamblers and recreational gamblers do not. The presence of these numerous labels may cause confusion. Following Raylu and Oei (2002, p. 1010) and Thompson (2010, p. 171), this research will use the term problem gamblers in a broad sense to cover all the labels which are generally derogatory. Those that do not fall under the umbrella term of problem gamblers will be categorized as non-problem gamblers. Table 1.1 shows the common labels within each group. The two lists, which were compiled by me on the basis of my exposure to everyday public discourse, are not meant to be exhaustive as there may be other labels or expressions which people employ to refer to gamblers.

² As of June 2014, Kingma is a university lecturer at the Department of Organization Sciences of the University of Amsterdam. His specializations include globalization of the entertainment industry (University of Amsterdam, n.d.).

³ Singapore is the primary site of investigation for the present research. More information will be given in Section 3.1.
Table 1.1 Classification of gamblers

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When adopted in an inclusive manner, the term *problem gamblers* encompasses people whose gambling behavior may be frowned upon, hence the negative connotations. One special remark has to be made with respect to the label *pathological gamblers*. This label originated in the clinical setting where diagnostic criteria have been laid down to identify pathological gamblers (Reith, 2007). Such medical implications of the label are preserved in the present research. The notion of pathological gambling will be elaborated in Section 1.1.5.

1.1.3 Prevalence of gambling

Gamblers are spoilt for choice on where and how to try their luck. They may simply purchase a lottery ticket or bet on their favorite horse in the racecourse. Those who can afford the expense and desire to blend leisure into the game of chance may opt for a journey on one of the well-known cruise ships like Carnival Cruise Lines and Princess Cruises, where gambling amenities are available for a restricted period of time when the vessels reach the high seas (Cabot & Faiss, 2010, p. 34; Pennington-Gray, 2006, p. 291). Those who are prone to seasickness and prefer to stay on the land may conveniently patronize any upscale “mega-casinos” which are operated by business corporations and are now commonly promoted as attractive tourist resorts with not just gambling facilities, but also a full array of entertainment catering for the needs of various travelers.
Two prominent places in which such casino-based resorts cluster are Las Vegas and Macao. The former—or more specifically the Las Vegas Strip—is situated in the American state of Nevada, which first legalized gambling in 1869 while it was still an undeveloped region (Morse & Goss, 2007, p. 7; Schwartz, 2011, p. 27). In Asia, Macao, one of the two Special Administrative Regions (SAR) of China and a former Portuguese colony, is portrayed as the “Las Vegas of the Orient” (Thompson, 2010, p. 362). Being the only Chinese territory where casino gambling is endorsed, Macao surpassed the Las Vegas Strip and has already earned the status of the largest gambling hub in the world (O’Keeffe, 2012). It was reported that the gross gaming revenue derived in Macao in 2013 amounted to approximately US$45.2 billion (Gaming Inspection & Coordination Bureau, 2014). This figure is seven times more than that of the Las Vegas Strip (O’Keeffe, 2014).

Apart from the emergence of casino-based holiday resorts, the Internet also helps to intensify gambling. With the invention of the Internet, the late twentieth century marked the beginning of the digital age. Geographical barriers essentially dissolve in the virtual space and gamblers are no longer confined to a particular locale when placing their bets. The potential increase in gambling activities, which is facilitated by the Internet, has resulted in additional social concerns, one of which is related to how international jurisdictions monitor online gambling. As remarked by McGowan (2008), gambling on the Internet cannot be regulated in the same way as conventional land-based casino gambling has been. Due to the difficulty in verifying the identity of Internet users, children, teenagers and other members of the public may readily gain access to gambling websites and take part in any games of chance. Besides, online gambling encourages criminal activities such as money laundering, identity theft and deception (p. 37). All these have shown that gambling is a social issue globally that deserves attention not merely from the general public, but also within academia.
1.1.4 Societal perception of gambling

Gambling can be a source of entertainment and instantaneous wealth for individuals, a business opportunity for enterprises and a reservoir of tax revenues for governments, but it has not always been perceived positively in society. As Reith (1999) noted, persistent criticisms regarding gambling have carried on almost throughout history in the western world. Aristotle described all sorts of games, especially games of chance, as “sordid greed” and “meanness.” In the Middle Ages, gambling was banned due to its unproductive disposition and disruptive effects within the community. The Church began to oppose gambling from a moral stance during the Reformation, ostracizing gamblers as sinners. The Age of Enlightenment substituted the immoral nature of gambling with a focus on its essence of irrationality. When the nineteenth century arrived, the Protestant doctrines were incorporated in legislation, prohibiting gambling activities together with other vices including prostitution and alcoholism (pp. 5–6).

From the twentieth century onwards, particularly its second half, social views about gambling in general have shifted towards another direction. As opined by Kingma (1997), in the midst of the prevailing consumer culture, gambling is widely promoted as a commodity which allows people to exchange money for delightful experience. With the proliferation of the gambling industry around the world, addiction appears to be an unavoidable global repercussion. Using the term “gaming complex,” Kingma (1997) described vividly the contrast between the pleasure and the indulgence that gambling causes in the consumer society. While consumerism underscores the enchanting, the thrilling and the “happy-go-lucky” facets, the negative facet would involve “stress, debt, filth, disease and crime” (pp. 173–174).

The “social ills” associated with gambling are usually discussed vis-à-vis a surge in crime rates. It has been said that Nevada, which has the richest density of casinos within America, experiences the highest occurrence of serious crimes nationwide (Ruschmann, 2009, p. 33). Another social problem commonly attributed to gambling is child neglect, as parents indulge themselves in gambling and leave their child unattended at home or single parents employed by the casino.
have to work on the night shift and fail to provide their child with adequate supervision. Gambling invites other problems including loan-sharking, substance abuse, unemployment, household violence, family break-ups and even suicide. In places where casino gambling is regulated and government officials have the authority to grant licenses, there is also a higher proclivity towards bribery and corruption (pp. 34–36).

The above discussion on the societal perception of gambling is also applicable to Singapore—the Asian city-state on which the present study focuses. As mentioned by Chua (2003, p. 3), the Singaporean government has for a long time been proactively pursuing national economic growth so the country now displays attributes of a consumer culture on a par with advanced developed countries like America. In 2012, the Gross Domestic Product per capita of Singapore reached US$52,052 while the figure for the United States was US$51,704 (International Monetary Fund, 2013). Detailed descriptions about Singapore as the research site for this study will be offered in Section 3.1.

1.1.5 Problem/Pathological gambling

Reith (2007) offered a genealogical account of gambling as a branch of knowledge. Rather than labeling gamblers as sinful or immoral, medical practitioners started to investigate gambling problems through the dimension of epidemiology, i.e., on the basis of sickness and disease. In 1980, gambling was first introduced as an “impulse control disorder” in the third edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) published by the American Psychiatric Association. With considerable standing, the DSM is now widely adopted by psychiatrists as the standard categorization of mental disorders across clinical settings in the United States (American Psychiatric Association, 2012a). In fact, the DSM is employed internationally as well. For instance, Singaporean medical experts (Chong et al., 2012; Lee, Hariram, Chan, Alexander & Ong, 2013) have made use of the DSM criteria to conduct national population-based surveys on mental disorders.
Although excessive gambling as a syndrome underwent re-classification and refinement in the subsequent revisions of the DSM, the term *pathological gambling* has been consistently utilized under psychiatric nomenclature (Reith, 2007, p. 37). In the latest version of the DSM published in 2000, pathological gambling is characterized by “persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior” exhibited by a person who meets at least five out of the ten diagnostic criteria stipulated in the manual (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 674).

The numerous effects of institutionalizing excessive gambling from the physiological perspective have been discussed by Nicoll (2010) and Reith (2007). Reith (2007, p. 38) argued that with the medicalized construction of pathological gambling, gambling problems have been given a name that is legitimated and distinguishable from “normal” gambling. People who fall under the category of pathological gambling are subject to various forms of “social inquiry.” The course of identifying pathological gamblers then brings them to the attention of different counseling and therapeutic services, making an originally invisible population more and more noticeable (p. 49).

Holding similar viewpoints, Nicoll (2010, p. 212) extended the argument by stating that regulating gambling in society calls for the “production and continual reinforcement of a border between problem and recreational subjects.” This leads to not only the introduction of new laws, but also the stigmatization of individuals, as Nicoll (2010) questioned whether the discourses of pathological gambling might themselves be actually creating an “underclass of ‘blameworthy victims’” (p. 220).

1.1.6 *Subversion and containment*

The creation of the “underclass” as mentioned by Nicoll (2010) is a solid materialization of Greenblatt’s (1988, 2005) well-known doctrine: “subversion and containment.” In the essay entitled “Invisible Bullets,” Greenblatt (1988, 2005) illustrated his theory by referring to the first descriptions of the British colonization in America. It was said that in order to colonize the Native Americans, the colonizers forced Christianity upon them. What is more, the
intruders made use of their invented artifacts like clocks, telescopes and guns to exhibit the excellence of their religion over the seemingly “backward” belief of the aboriginal inhabitants. As a result, the faith of the colonized was “subverted,” enabling the colonizers or the power holders to subsequently “contain” it (as cited in Robson, 2008, pp. 71–72).

Muhlestein (2003) recapitulated Greenblatt’s (1988) idea by emphasizing that discourse is the crucial medium through which “subversion and containment” are attained. Muhlestein (2003, p. 90) stated that “subversive texts” construct something which poses a possible risk to a vital part of the community in which they are situated, viz., a risk to a governing institution or an established ideology. These texts, however, concurrently function as a means to regulate the subversion which they themselves are producing, and “to lock it down, to contain it” just like a prison containing an inmate. As Muhlestein (2003, p. 90) put it, the “subversive texts” generate a threat so as to dismantle it and while doing so they strengthen the institutions and/or the ideologies which are exposed to the threat. This line of thought will be illustrated in more detail in Section 2.1.2 where the Foucauldian argument concerning discourse and power is presented.

Based on Greenblatt’s (1988, 2005) idea, it can thus be argued that the discursively constructed identities of gamblers, especially in texts produced by the governing party and other institutions in society, constitute a semiotic manifestation of “subversion and containment.” How this can be done at the linguistic/discourse level will be a question of important interest to the present study.

1.1.7 Stigmatization

In Section 1.1.5 above, it is said that the “pathologization” of gamblers results in the stigmatization of certain members of society. The issue of stigma in relation to gambling has long been generating scholarly dialogues in the discipline of sociology (e.g., Castellani, 2000; Cosgrave, 2008; Oldman, 1978; Preston, 4 More information about the notion of ideology can be found in Section 2.2.1.
Bernhard, Hunter & Bybee, 1998). The concept of stigma is one that concerns comparison against a particular benchmark or norm in society. As explained by Goffman (1963), a person is said to possess a stigma if he/she displays an “undesired differentness” from what has been expected. Those who do not deviate from the specific expectations in question are usually referred to as the “normal” (pp. 14–15).

Goffman (1963, p. 14) identified three main kinds of stigma. The first one is associated with detestation of the body, i.e., the different physical defects. The second kind of stigma arises from marks of individual quality attributed to “weak will, domineering or unnatural passions, treacherous and rigid beliefs, and dishonesty.” Examples include imprisonment, substance abuse, suicidal tendencies, joblessness and homosexuality. The third category of stigma, which Goffman (1963) termed “tribal,” involves race, nation and religion. The medicalized view of gambling behavior, which associates problem gamblers with mental impairment, echoes the second type of stigma mentioned by Goffman (1963).

1.1.8 Stakeholders

Public policies such as legalization of gambling usually concern multiple parties in society. Using a case study of oil and gas development in Alaska, Scollon (2008) demonstrated how different people with diverse interests had been involved in the discussion of public matters. Similarly, when examining the impacts of gambling from the ecological perspective, Adams (2008, p. 3) analyzed the roles played by different stakeholders. He remarked that akin to the way in which certain industries like mining and deforestation mingle with the natural environment, gambling establishments have transformed the patterns of social involvement—kinship, friendship, cultural practices, judicial affairs, etc. Besides the social ecology, the political landscape is affected as well. Typically, a range of bureaucrats, advisers and experts are drawn into discussions when a particular jurisdiction decides to liberalize its gambling regulations. On the other hand, there are members of the community who resent such a decision and express their discontent through social actions like campaigns and protests (p. 11).
Furthermore, Adams (2008, pp. 132–133) argued that the popularization of gambling has led to the sharp increase in “frontier helping organizations” where gamblers receive “remedies” from health professionals.

Given the multitude of parties involved, gambling research which focuses on just one single party may lead to a reductionist view of the issue. The present research will therefore examine the discourse produced within three selected social institutions—the press, the government and the medical professionals. More information regarding the selection of these social institutions will be provided later.

As pointed out by Henning (2007), there are numerous scholarly interpretations of the term “social institutions.” The term was first used by the sociologist Herbert Spencer, who differentiated between six kinds of social institutions—viz., those about the family, religion, politics, the economy, rituals and professions (pp. 2344–2345). Generally speaking, social institutions encompass any arrangements in which there are huge numbers of people whose action is governed by roles and norms. Tangible manifestations of social institutions are “bureaucratically organized establishments” (Jary & Jary, 1991, p. 239). For the rest of the thesis, this broad reading of the term will be adopted.

1.1.9 Language, identity and constructionism

Language is particularly vital in society due to its manifold functions. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) suggested three notable “metafunctions” of language, namely “ideational,” “interpersonal” and “textual.” The “ideational metafunction” concerns the use of language as a means to convey or construe human experience; the “interpersonal metafunction” refers to the utilization of language to execute and maintain personal and social relationships; the “textual metafunction” involves the operation of language as a system through which ideas are organized and transmitted cohesively (pp. 30–31). Austin (1962, pp. 4–7), an influential British philosopher of language, noted in his work How to Do Things With Words that apart from their descriptive or “constative” nature, utterances can be “performatives” in the sense that when they are made, an action is being
performed simultaneously. The discourse analyst Gee (2011, p. 2) provided a three-gerund expression which concisely reveals the functions of language—
“saying, doing, and being.” The parts regarding saying and doing corroborate what Austin (1962) proposed; the being element, however, is the one worth greater elaboration. Gee (2011, p. 2) believed that language enables people to “be things” because through the use of language, we can take on various “socially significant identities,” such as experts, laymen, students, gangsters and the like.

As discussed previously in Section 1.1.8, the current proliferation of gambling business is a complicated matter as it concerns the interests of multiple stakeholders in society. With diverse agendas, each of these parties holds or expresses different opinions, performs different actions and even takes on different social roles. These opinions, actions and roles might coincide and overlap with one another, leading to consensus and cooperation; or they could be contradictory, resulting in negotiations and debates. Undeniably, discourse plays a crucial role throughout the entire chain of such social events. The disparate yet interweaving “voices” embedded in the gambling discourse produced by the wide array of stakeholders constitute an engaging area of investigation. This is the background against which the present study is contextualized.

With the first appearance of the word “voices” in this thesis, it is now the appropriate moment to introduce a relevant notion on which the present research capitalizes. The prominent literary critic Bakhtin (1984) coined the term “polyphony” to describe how the Russian novelist Dostoevsky created a “polyphonic novel” by making use of a multiplicity of independent voices (p. 6). There are two other Bakhtinian notions—“dialogism” and “heteroglossia”—which are closely linked to “polyphony.” In The Dialogic Imagination, Bakhtin (1981) provided a detailed account of what these terms mean by extensively drawing on the literary pieces written by great authors such as Dostoevsky. It is beyond the scope of the present research to offer an elaborate discussion of the stylistic implications behind Bakhtin’s (1981, 1984) refined use of these terms, especially for the reasons which will be given in the following paragraph. However, what can be said is that these terms all acknowledge the existence of
multiple “voices” within a literary work, even though some voices may be suppressed and others may not.

Two important questions can be raised with respect to the adoption of the Bakhtinian terms in this study. In fact, the two questions are hardly separable and they are related to each other. The first question concerns the meanings of “dialogism” and “heteroglossia,” which the previous paragraph does not specifically tackle. Secondly, given that these terms were intended by Bakhtin (1981, 1984) to discuss literary phenomena, how can they be suitably positioned within the present research which examines the multiple institutional “voices” in the discursive construction of gamblers’ identities in Singapore? To address the first question, it is imperative to highlight that the terms “dialogism” and “heteroglossia” have been borrowed and adapted from Bakhtin (1981, 1984) by a number of contemporary discourse analysts, whose interest lies in non-literary texts. Such discourse analysts include Fairclough5 (1992, 2003), Martin and White (2005) and Linell (1998b, 2009). It is possible that their use of the terms deviates from the original intent of Bakhtin. The deviation will not be discussed here, however. In this study, the broad interpretation of these terms among discourse analysts will be employed. As Bevitori (2006, p. 158) stated, “the notion of heteroglossia and dialogism, associated with the seminal work of Bakhtin (1981, 1986) and Volosinov (1973), implies the notion of texts not as homogenous entities, but as holding traces of many ‘voices.’” This loose reading of the two terms is in fact found in the language-oriented taxonomies developed by Fairclough (2003) and Martin and White (2005) to explore how various divergent voices intermingle in discourse.

Based on what is mentioned above, I will reserve the term “heteroglossia” within this study for—(a) simply capturing the multiplicity of “voices” in any discourse event and (b) specifically denoting Martin and White’s (2005) notion of

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5 Based on the notion of “dialogism,” Fairclough (1992, 2003) proposed the ideas of “intertextuality” and “interdiscursivity” which help discourse analysts to unfold certain textual features. More information on this can be found in Section 2.2.4.
“heteroglossic engagement” under their “appraisal theory.” Then, what about “dialogism”? Again, it is not the goal of the current research to invoke a lengthy analysis of what Bakhtin meant by this term, as the previous paragraph has already established. Here, within the scholarly investigation of the multiple institutional “voices,” “dialogism” is argued to operate at two levels. First, “dialogism” is used to represent the “plethora of divergent voices” that are present in Singaporean discourses on gambling and gamblers. In the social world, such “voices” can be “conglomerated” in a disorganized manner. For this reason, analytic frameworks in the field of discourse analysis, such as Fairclough’s (2003) taxonomy of “intertextuality,” may be deployed to generate a meaningful academic discussion of what has been going on in those “fragmented” voices. The use of analytic frameworks for such a purpose inevitably marks the analyst’s (or the researcher’s) participation in unifying those “voices” or at least his/her attempt to draw a connection between them. The analyst’s input would be labeled as the second level of “dialogism” within the context of the present research.

Given what has been said so far, it perhaps becomes quite tempting to equate the discourse analyst (i.e., me) with a novelist. At first glance, this line of thought seems to fit the Bakhtinian argument—Dostoevsky created his own literary works out of different “voices.” Nevertheless, a crucial distinction must be made here. The present research is a piece of academic work. As Loseke (2013, p. 66) said in her book Methodological Thinking, all studies in the realm of humanities and social sciences involve the researchers’ ascription of meanings to data because data alone do not have any “inherent meaning.” Van Dijk (2009, p. 71), another well-known discourse analyst, used the expression “twice context-bound” to describe the works conducted by discourse analysts. On the one hand, discourse analysis unfolds the situational use of language via the study of data in their own context (i.e., the context where the data were generated). On the other hand, the findings yielded are dependent on or even governed by the analysts’

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6 More information will be given in Section 2.3.3.

7 A special note of thanks is given to Prof. Douglas Robinson (Dean of the Arts Faculty, Hong Kong Baptist University), whose comments during my oral defense help me to formulate this idea.
own scholarly aims and the research questions, thereby adding another layer to the context. Furthermore, the present academic discussion of Singaporean discourses on gambling is carried out with the use of analytic categories, frameworks or models developed by fellow researchers. As a result, it is clear that this thesis is not a piece of literary writing. Instead, the findings and the discussion regarding the institutional construction of gamblers’ identities in Singapore should be considered a product of my analytical work, without which an intellectual understanding of the fragmented “voices” involved would not materialize.

After my clarification of the Bakhtinian notions used for the purpose of this study, let me move on to the topic of identities. As this research focuses on the discursive representations of gamblers’ identities, it is essential to spell out the underlying belief of what constitutes identity before any meaningful discussions can be generated. The present study will generally adhere to the postmodernist view of identity. As Hall (1996, p. 4) said, identity is “never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions.” In other words, identity is a socially constructed entity. This idea resembles the notion of constructionism in literary studies. As stated by Murfin and Ray (2009, p. 79), proponents of constructionism believe that gender and/or sexuality are “culturally constructed and determined, not biologically based.” One example cited by Murfin and Ray (2009, p. 79) is the queer theorist Halperin (1995), who stated in his book *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* that homosexuality is a “discursive, and homophobic, construction.”

As Brubaker and Cooper (2000, p. 8) specified, perceiving identity as a product of different discourses calls upon the “unstable, multiple, fluctuating, and fragmented nature of the contemporary ‘self.’” Butler (1990) took this position to the furthest possible extent in her work *Gender Trouble* through the notion of performativity. When elucidating gender identity, Butler (1990) argued that

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8 Primarily, the postmodernist view of identity can be juxtaposed with the modernist view, which takes on an essentialist understanding of identity as a homogeneous and fixed entity (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, pp. 10–12). Some scholars, especially those in the field of philosophy, may even talk about identity from the perspective of logic—e.g., “numerical identity” as mentioned in the work of Olson (1997).
gender is neither a noun nor a set of characteristics. Instead, gender is “performative” and is “always a doing.” She further elaborated, “There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results” (pp. 24–25). Albeit the radical stance to utterly refute the “pre-existing subject,” Butler’s (1990) theory of “performativity” is applicable to the present study, as it highlights that language and discourse “do” gender and not the reverse (Salih, 2002, p. 64).

It has to be emphasized that the constructionist stance considers identity to be an artifact which is not only constructed by the individual concerned, but is also constructed via multiple “voices”9 in the social, cultural, historical and political environments (Kim, 2006, p. 34). For instance, Flowerdew (2012) examined—in the form of case studies—a variety of discursive events such as government speeches, television news reports, newspaper articles and public consultation documents in order to show the evolving political identity of Hong Kong as a former British colony whose sovereignty has been returned to China since July 1997. As the scholar stated, the primary assumption underlying all the case studies is that sociopolitical identity is discursively constructed and there are multiple major forces which contribute to the construction of the political identity of Hong Kong (p. 299).

Before any further discussion, an important statement has to be put forward at this point. The present research will chiefly explore gamblers’ identities as represented via language. Although gamblers’ own individual identities can be enacted discursively in the midst of social events like gambling in casinos, this study will not deal with such an aspect of identity construction since it is intended to focus on how various non-gambling stakeholders within the confine of social institutions formulate the identities of gamblers by means of discourse. In other words, this project will only investigate the “institutionally enforced identities” (Bloor & Bloor, 2007, p. 92) of gamblers so that a more focused analysis can be obtained.

9 This echoes my previous discussion of the Bakhtinian notions.
Figure 1.1 “Multi-vocalic” institutional construction of the represented identities of gamblers

Based on the notion of constructionism reviewed above and the aforesaid exclusion of gamblers’ self-enacted identities from the current research, Figure 1.1 is produced to conceptualize the “multi-vocalic” institutional construction of the represented identities of gamblers in society. As the figure indicates, discourses\textsuperscript{10} or the embedded “voices” are the medium for the construction. Although these discourses come from different parties, they may intermingle or even conflict with one another, resulting in the institutional product of gamblers’

\textsuperscript{10} As pointed out by Fairclough (1995, p. 135), the word “discourse” when being used as a countable noun refers to a “way of signifying experience from a particular perspective.” The word “discourse” in this sense is thus reminiscent of the word “voice” mentioned above.
identities. In Fairclough’s (1992, p. 113) terminology, such mixing of texts or discourses is known as “intertextuality” or “interdiscursivity.” While “intertextuality” mainly refers to the incorporation of parts of other texts into a text, “interdiscursivity” is a broader concept and involves the embedding of one discourse type into another. “Interdiscursivity” can also mean the inclusion of one discourse into another (See Footnote 10). Sometimes discourse analysts may employ the term “hybridization” to denote “interdiscursivity” that concerns the mixing of one discourse with another (Warren, 2011, p. 104).

Figure 1.1 also highlights the concept of “self and other positioning” from van Langenhove and Harré (1999, p. 22), who proposed that in every discursive act, each participant constantly positions the other while at the same time positioning himself or herself. Such positioning is closely linked to the power relations between the participants. Likewise, it can be argued that when constructing gamblers’ identities, the various parties have to engage in both self-positioning and other-positioning. The state and the medical professionals are usually regarded as relatively more authoritative and powerful. This power factor may have an effect on how the parties position themselves and the other in the discursive construction of gamblers’ identities.

Two final remarks have to be made about Figure 1.1. First, the dotted lines within the figure demonstrate that the intermingling of the various parties, voices or discourses does not necessarily materialize at a physically interactive level. As stated by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999), discourse “internalizes” to a certain extent everything which happens at other moments of social practices, and each discourse is only one specific moment of the social while its association with other moments is a matter for investigation (p. 28). Secondly, another issue arising from the figure is the possible simultaneous projection of the different parties’ own self-identities when they are discursively constructing the identities of gamblers. This argument can hardly be contested. Adherents of psychoanalytic criticism,11 for example, tend to believe that a writer’s discursive acts are always

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11 Psychoanalytic criticism can be regarded as a critical approach to literary studies. One of the tasks undertaken by practitioners of this approach is to unfold the psychological
projecting his/her ego (Habib, 2011, p. 237). Nevertheless, while the validity of this idea is acknowledged here, it is to the advantage of the present research to have a clear focus, viz., to examine the institutionally represented identities of gamblers.

1.2 Objectives of the study

In order to unveil the nexus of the different voices or discourses pertaining to gambling in society, this research will examine multiple sets of relevant discursive data via the approach of critical discourse analysis (CDA) (see Section 2.1 for details on CDA and Section 3.2 for more information about the data sets). Notably, the convergence of discourses has given rise to one significant entity—the identities of gamblers.12 In this study, gamblers’ identities will be analyzed by using a concoction of existing analytic tools. While CDA acts as the overarching component, the analytic tools come from a wide array of scholars (e.g., Fairclough, 2003; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Hyland, 2005; Jeffries, 2010a, 2010b; Kong, 2009; Martin & White, 2005; van Dijk, 2008a; van Leeuwen, 2008). Detailed descriptions of the relevant concepts can be located in Section 2.3.

When analyzing the gamblers’ identities, the present project will pay attention to how they are linguistically constructed by: (i) the press; (ii) the government; (iii) the medical professionals.

traits of the author in texts via the methods of psychoanalysis first developed by Sigmund Freud (Klarer, 2013, p. 188).

12 Two remarks have to be made here. First, in accordance with the discussion in Section 1.1.9, the “identities of gamblers” revealed in this study can be regarded as a “dialogic” product of analytical work performed on the intermingling institutional discourses related to gambling and gamblers. Second, apart from the representations of gamblers, the convergence of institutional discourses can generate many themes, such as risk management, family values and ethics. These themes may surface during the analysis of the discourses, thereby further enriching the present scholarly discussion of gamblers’ identities.
As delineated in Section 1.1.5, medical professionals prescribe the label \textit{pathological gambling}. This can be unambiguously interpreted as one instance of “subversion and containment.” It is therefore reasonable to include their discourse or “voices” into the analysis of gamblers’ represented identities.

Besides, it is imperative to take into account the government’s “voices.” The position of the state in relation to gambling expansion is always the most ambivalent. On the one hand, it is a “promoter and beneficiary” (Cosgrave, 2006, p. 6). By legalizing gambling venues, it makes gambling opportunities more readily available to the general public and as a result its tax collection can be boosted. On the other hand, the state has to be a vigilant watchman as the growth of gambling activities has put it into “risk positions” due to the possibilities of business bankruptcy and excessive gambling which could be a threat to the stability of society (p. 13).

As mentioned by Nicoll (2010, pp. 222–223), one forceful strategy of risk management adopted by the state to combat heavy gambling is to conjure up the figure of the “recreational gambler” and compare it against that of the “problem gambler.” The juxtaposition of these two figures is then firmly maintained by the state to “anchor gambling discourses.” Nevertheless, academic writing adhering to this line of argument mostly originated in the fields of sociology and cultural studies (e.g., Collins, 2006; Kingma, 1997; Peele, 2003; Reith, 2007).\footnote{A number of researchers in sociology and cultural studies have undertaken research on gamblers. Nonetheless, their studies tend to focus on issues like public administration, consumerism and the relation between power and ideology, without paying close attention to the role of language. Such neglect of language is evident in the book volume \textit{The Sociology of Risk and Gambling Reader} edited by Cosgrave (2006).} The apparent deficiency in comparable research done within the realm of language studies has rendered the linguistic configurations of the contrasting identities between the recreational and the problem gamblers an interesting researchable item.

It is important to stress that the gamblers’ identities constructed by the professionals and the governing party are overt institutional artifacts. Despite their...
prescriptive nature, these projected images of gamblers may or may not align with those held by other members of the community who live within the confines of institutional control. To shed light on our understanding of gamblers’ identities as a broad social issue, the present scholarly inquiry will start off by investigating how gamblers’ identities are discursively represented by different social groups (namely the government representatives, the medical practitioners and the non-affiliated participants14) in one particular segment of the public sphere, i.e., the press.15 It is hoped that the across-group comparison will offer illuminating information concerning the discursive role of social institutions in the creation of gamblers’ identities as a construct.

To sum up, the present project is guided by three major research objectives which are specified below:

1. To devise a holistic framework for discourse analysis of gamblers’ represented identities as an institutional construct;
2. To examine how gamblers’ identities are discursively constructed and mediated by multiple social institutions16—the press, the state and the medical professionals;
3. To discuss the social and ideological implications of the “multi-vocalic” institutional construction of gamblers’ represented identities.

14 “Non-affiliated participants” are the contributors of the forum letters (viz., the first data set) who were not writing on behalf of any institutions. More information can be found in Section 3.2.1.3.

15 The current research does not examine the government and the medical professionals as represented in the press. The press here functions as a medium through which the opinion letters written by any members of society are selected and published. Details about these newspaper letters will be given in Section 3.2.1.

16 As stated at the end of Section 1.1.8 above, there are other possible institutional voices. The press (or more specifically the forum letters published via the press) forms a public sphere, which serves as the opening scene for the data analysis. Within the letters, the major institutional “voices/forces” identified originate from the government representatives and the medical professionals. The identification of these two major “voices” results in the collection and the analysis of the two other data sets.
1.3 Significance of the study

Given the shortage of gambling research carried out by linguists, the present study marks the initiatives of a discourse analyst to participate in the academic dialogues on problem gambling which have been conventionally dominated by researchers from other domains. Commercialized gambling\textsuperscript{17} is a burning social issue nowadays. It has encroached on the life of a large portion of the population. As the extreme example of rapid casino expansion, Macao turned legalized casino gambling into a highly lucrative industry, so much so that other nearby territories like Japan, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam contemplated the introduction of casino gambling (Zheng & Hung, 2011).\textsuperscript{18} The proximity of gambling growth to the life of many people around the world renders scholarly research on this topic highly valuable.

Also, this study will demystify the role of language in the multi-party construction of gamblers’ identities in society, particularly with reference to the social and political environment of Singapore. Amid the current consumer-oriented climate with the promotion of gambling as a legitimate form of consumption, individuals seemingly enjoy a higher degree of “consumer sovereignty” and can patronize gambling establishments of their own free will (Reith, 2007, p. 39). But what people generally are less aware of is that at the same time they are being increasingly subjugated to institutional control as the state, the medical professionals and other social institutions are trying to establish

\textsuperscript{17} As clarified at the outset (See Footnote 1), commercialized gambling is the focus of the research. However, this does not mean that non-commercialized gambling is completely excluded from the present study. First, what constitutes non-commercialized gambling can cause a lot of contention, especially when the legal interpretation is taken into consideration (See, e.g., UK Gambling Act 2005). This is surely not the issue that the current study would like to tackle. Second, a gambler who takes part in commercialized gambling may also be involved in non-commercialized gambling.

\textsuperscript{18} As stated in Section 1.1.1, two casino-based holiday resorts are operating now in Singapore. As for Thailand, casino gambling is still not legalized despite some public voices that support the move (Asia Gambling Brief, 2014). In Vietnam, casino gambling is now legalized but the government imposes strict controls on the local citizens’ entry to the casinos (Dantri International, 2014). In June 2014, Japan was beginning the legislative processes in preparation for the launch of resort casinos (Mochizuki, 2014).
specific yardsticks to isolate problem gamblers,\footnote{What it means by “problem gamblers” within the present study has already been established in Section 1.1.2. Apart from pathological gamblers, other examples of problem gamblers can be found in Table 1.1.} such as pathological ones, from the rest of the population for the sake of managing societal risk. Control of this type resembles the Foucauldian notion of “bio-power,” i.e., the increasing use of academic and governmental analysis to “organize” the population (Mills, 2003, p. 81) (see Section 2.1.2 for further discussion of Foucault’s arguments). Such power, which can be manifested through discourse, is subtle and yet is a significant contributory factor in the stigmatization of problem gamblers in society. By projecting the image of problem gamblers as social deviants, those with authority are actually affixing a discernibly unfavorable tag to a group of people who then have to be subjected to scrutiny, intervention and treatment services (Nicoll, 2010; Reith, 2007). Through exploring the discursive constitution of gamblers’ identities, the present research will enhance our knowledge of the power relations involved as well as the societal stigmatization associated with gambling.

Last but not least, this project is intended to formulate an analytic research paradigm which will lay the groundwork for future cross-disciplinary studies related to gambling. Van Leeuwen (2005, p. 8) argued that no single school of thought is able to adequately tackle any given problem, so disciplines should be regarded as “interdependent.” Since gambling is a widely examined topic in many disciplines, it is believed that this language-oriented piece of research will offer current gambling scholars from other fields interesting insights, eliciting future collaborative work across disciplines.

1.4 Outline of the thesis

After this lead-in, a review of the relevant literature will be offered in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 describes the data sets collected for the research. These first three chapters are grouped under “Part I: Introduction to the Research.”
Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present the findings, together with the discussion, vis-à-vis the three data sets—the newspaper forum letters, a government campaign and the texts by medical experts respectively. These three chapters will form Parts II to IV of this thesis.

Chapter 7, which makes up Part V of the thesis, is the conclusion of the research. The major findings of the present study will be recapitulated. As part of the concluding remarks, the analytic tools used for exploring gamblers’ identities in this study will be revisited and consolidated. Directions for further studies will also be proposed.

1.5 Chapter summary

This introductory chapter serves as a lead-in for the entire thesis. It provides general background information about the research, including the ubiquity of gambling, the societal views concerning gamblers and the concept of pathological gambling. The intimate relations between language and identity, together with the Bakhtinian ideas and the notion of constructionism, are discussed. Besides, the objectives and the significance of the present study are spelled out. The chapter ends with an outline of the thesis. The next chapter (i.e., “Literature Review”) will zoom in on the theoretical elements involved in this study.
Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter will first give an overview of critical discourse analysis—the approach that oversees the entire project. Drawn from different schools of thought, the theoretical notions which underpin the present study will then be presented. As elucidated earlier, the current research adopts multiple analytic tools to investigate the discursive construction of gamblers’ identities. A different combination of analytic tools will be designed for each of the three data sets. Thus, this chapter will introduce and review the literature in relation to the chosen analytic tools. In addition, prior research undertaken on the topic of identity construction in discourse will be outlined.

2.1 Critical discourse analysis (CDA)

Given the relatively long track record of CDA and the involvement of numerous scholars, it is unfeasible to provide a complete and voluminous account of this specific approach of language analysis. This sub-section will focus on the origin and the development of CDA, as well as its basic principles.

2.1.1 Origin and development

As Wodak and Meyer remarked (2009a, p. 1), the terms critical discourse analysis (CDA) and critical linguistics (CL) are closely related. This can be reflected by the observable fact that the CDA label is now utilized to cover the theory previously classified as CL. From a historical viewpoint, CL was initiated by a group of linguists (e.g., Fowler, Hodge, Kress & Trew, 1979; Kress & Hodge, 1979) at the University of East Anglia in England in the 1970s. In opposition to the Chomskyan doctrine which excludes the social and cultural

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20 Some writers may prefer to introduce the analytic tools used in Methodology. However, a decision was made to discuss the analytic tools in Chapter 2 (rather than Chapter 3) because the previous empirical studies reviewed are closely related to those analytic tools. To separate the two across different chapters of the thesis may cause confusion. With this arrangement, Chapter 3 will just focus on the information regarding the three data sets collected for the present research.
facets in language investigation, CL turned to subjects like the use of language in social organizations and the connections between language, power and ideology.

Bloor and Bloor (2007, p. 12) differentiated CDA from the “non-critical” approach to discourse analysis. Whereas the latter mainly identifies and describes language use so as to facilitate the construction of theories about how people take part in communication, the former embodies the tone of critique discussions through studying discourse practices that reveal or produce social problems. Such critical approach, i.e., CDA, is characterized by the researchers’ urge to raise people’s understanding of how language creates and sustains unfairness, discrimination and power exploitation. This is what Fairclough (2010, p. 7) depicted as the “normative” component that CDA must have.

Fairclough has been crowned as the pioneer of CDA due to his ground-breaking publication entitled Language and Power in 1989 (Blommaert, 2005, p. 23). The leading thinker demonstrated in his book, with various examples, how a synthesis of essential theoretical notions and analytical models could be deployed for analyzing discourse. One case study which Fairclough (1989, pp. 172–175) drew on is an excerpt from a radio interview with Margaret Thatcher. Via a mixture of authoritative modality like have to and hedges such as perhaps and maybe, the then British Prime Minister was said to exercise her power as a political leader and yet to concurrently build up rapport with the public. Such initiative of the authority to establish “simulated solidarity” with the masses is called “synthetic personalization” by Fairclough (1989, p. 195). “Synthetic personalization” is a discursive feature of not only the politicians, but also the capitalists, the bourgeoisie and the professionals, whom Fairclough (1989, p. 63) identified as members of the “dominant bloc.”

Being a prolific writer, Fairclough (1992, 1995, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2010) wrote a number of articles and scholarly books which help to strengthen the trademark of CDA. The recent works of his are useful references as they encapsulate his major ideas which were developed at various points of his career. In the book chapter “A Dialectical-Relational Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis in Social Research” of the edited volume Methods of Critical Discourse
Analysis compiled by Wodak and Meyer (2009b), Fairclough (2009) reiterated some of his insights in relation to CDA. He said that the mission of CDA is to address the “social wrongs” by attending to the relationship between different social elements, of which language is just one while power, institutions, social norms and the like constitute the rest. Because of its “dialectical-relational” nature, CDA needs to be positioned within the architecture for “transdisciplinary” inquiry. This means that when drawing upon different disciplines and theories to tackle certain research questions, CDA instigates “dialogue” between them, which will then become the basis for the theoretical and methodological enrichment of every one of them (p. 163).

With respect to the methods of analysis in CDA, Fairclough (2009, p. 166) offered a word of caution, i.e., the avoidance of seeking and fossilizing any orderly correspondence between methodologies and fields or text types. As he repeated in the extensively revised edition of his book Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language (2010, p. 7), the specific choice of methods for a specific project relies upon the “object of research” that is created for the research area/topic in question, so there should not be a fixed set of research methods for CDA.  

As with any approach used in scholarly studies, CDA is not free from criticisms. These criticisms mostly concern the methodological rigor, which can make the research findings controversial (Chilton, 2013; Forchtner, 2013). Since these criticisms are intimately linked to the selection of analytical frameworks and research data, they will be addressed in the later parts of this thesis (mainly Sections 2.4 and 3.3) when the analytical frameworks and the data are presented.

2.1.2 Basic principles and meta-theory

As noted by Paltridge (2006, p. 179), the quantity of existing literature on CDA produced by many different scholars makes it rather hard to provide a
uniform view on the principles of CDA. Citing from the work of Fairclough and Wodak (1997), Paltridge (2006, p. 179) explicated four of the principles for CDA that govern most of the research conducted in this area: (i) “social and political issues are constructed and reflected in discourse;” (ii) “power relations are negotiated and performed through discourse;” (iii) “discourse both reflects and reproduces social relations;” (iv) “ideologies are produced and reflected in the use of discourse.” These principles of CDA will be upheld throughout the present research on gambling discourse.

In fact, one of the theoretical roots of CDA is the works on discourse written by the French critical thinker Foucault. Although his works do not contain close linguistic analysis of individual texts, they have engendered great interest among discourse analysts due to their underlying thesis about discursive formation of power (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 361). As noted by van Dijk (2003a, p. 364), Foucault’s works are relevant for the “meta-theory” of CDA.

According to Foucault, knowledge is an indispensable component in the production of discourse and the system of power. With its recurrent subject matters, representations and strategies, a specific discourse brings about the rise and fortification of knowledge and thus has persistent impacts (Jager & Maier, 2009, p. 38). For Foucault, knowledge is produced wherever there are imbalanced power relations between different groups of people; under power inequality, members of the “inferior” group become the object of study. This explains why there are many books published on certain social groups such as people of color and homosexuals while their “non-inferior” counterparts are almost unanalyzed (Mills, 2003, p. 69).

To a certain extent, this line of thought is relevant to the present research on gambling discourse. Although patrons of gambling establishments help to increase its tax revenue, the state is concerned about those heavy gamblers who would pose a threat to the stability of society. Therefore, “problem” gamblers become an analyzable object for the powerful group—the government, psychiatrists and the like—who would make their best effort to define these
gamblers as social deviants and impose intervention on them in the hope of sustaining the social order amid the liberalization of gambling. This leads to the emergence and accumulation of discourse and knowledge about this group of people, such as the clinical manual from the American Psychiatric Association mentioned in Section 1.1.5.

The harmful effects of social deviants from the perspective of state management and how these deviants are brought under control by institutions have been the central theme in *Madness and Civilization*, one of Foucault’s influential works. Foucault (1965) adopted a genealogical approach to investigate the social construction of madness in Western civilization from the end of the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. What is considered madness in the present-day world was not regarded as such during the Renaissance. Instead the idea of being “mad” at that time fascinated people and the “fantastic images” it created were largely associated with secrecy, darkness and unreachable truth (p. 23). The middle of the seventeenth century witnessed the appearance of huge “houses of confinement,” where the mad were kept away from the rest of the world. Perceived as a form of unreason that necessitates incarceration, madness gradually became “a thing to look at,” like “an animal with strange mechanisms” (Foucault, 1965, p. 70). This gave rise to the “knowledge systems” about madness, constituting the field of psychiatry and leading to the birth of the asylum in the nineteenth century. Foucault (1972) created the word “episteme” to refer to the “knowledge systems” which prevail at a specific moment in society (as cited in Mills, 2003, p. 28).

What Foucault (1965) has shown is that madness is a social construct generated via discourses under specific circumstances and this social construct may be manipulated to serve specific societal and regulatory functions at a particular time, viz., the institutional agenda. By the same token, it can be argued that the stigmatized identity of problem gamblers in the postmodern era is a socially constructed category for people to fit into, the ultimate goal of which is to administer regulatory control in society. This is akin to Greenblatt’s (1988, 2005) theory of “subversion and containment” introduced in Section 1.1.6.

2.2 Theoretical notions underpinning the study

Foucault’s idea regarding discourse and power is undeniably useful for the present research. Nevertheless, in order to make the study more intellectually vibrant and to provide a solid stepping stone for the forthcoming data analysis, theoretical notions developed by other critical thinkers will be incorporated. These thinkers come from a diverse range of fields, such as sociology, literary criticism and linguistics. In this section, the theoretical notions which underpin the current research will be specified.²²

2.2.1 Public sphere, dialogism and Ideological State Apparatuses

“Gambler” seems to be a label that most people in society take for granted. Whenever this word is mentioned, a mental picture of some sort including the characteristics of gamblers and their usual behavior would be unquestionably conjured up. The government preaches about the detriments of excessive gambling; the counselors and psychiatrists take on the responsibility of identifying and eradicating gambling addiction; other members of society also talk about gambling as they might be directly or indirectly affected by it. In all these instances, discourse appears to be an indispensable medium vis-à-vis the portrayal

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²² There is a close relation between CDA and the theoretical notions that underpin the present study. As will be illustrated in the following paragraphs of this section, these theoretical notions mainly come from social theory. Like what Blommaert (2005, p. 27) said, social theory is “fundamental” to CDA and it serves as the “starting-point” of CDA research.
of gamblers. Obviously, the quantity of discourse produced is immeasurable. It can thus be a difficult and complicated task to investigate the linguistic configurations of gamblers’ identities in discourse, let alone the examination of any resultant ideological effects.

One way to approach this issue is to begin with a discursive space which is accessible to a host of social actors—a locality where multiple “voices” are explicitly accommodated so that they can be meaningfully compared. This discursive space in fact echoes the sociological notion of “public sphere.” Many present-day discussions of the concept “public sphere” are traceable to the work of Habermas (1989). In one of his major books *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas (1989) adheres to the Frankfurt School ritual and offers a critical account regarding the conception of “public sphere” along the socio-historical dimension (as cited in Finlayson, 2005, pp. 8–9).

According to Habermas (1989), the endorsement of the freedom of association and speech as well as the rise of a free press in Europe during the early eighteenth century led to the emergence of “physical spaces,” like salons, coffee houses and clubs, where people—mostly the bourgeoisie—could engage in open public dialogues as equals (as cited in Finlayson, 2005, p. 10). Habermas (1989) argues that participation in such public arenas was not mandatory and the voluntary involvement of private citizens gradually resulted in the development of a shared culture which facilitated the articulation of people’s needs and concerns. Simultaneously, a collective understanding of the “common good” built up, thereby expediting the expansion of the “public sphere.” With its spread and growing influence, the “public sphere” started to perform a political and social role by ensuring that policies and laws were in line with the “common good” (as cited in Finlayson, 2005, p. 11).

Based on Habermas’ (1989) line of thought, it can be argued that the “public sphere” is a suitable point of entry for researchers to conduct scholarly enquiries on the ideologies which prevail among a given community with respect to the discursive representation of gamblers. Hence, media discourse, or more
specifically newspaper forum letters, has been chosen as the data source to start off the intellectual interrogation. There are two main reasons behind this decision.

First, the forum letters comprise a relatively open space for opinions not only from non-affiliated newspaper readers, but also from those who are salient institutional parties such as medical practitioners and government representatives. Although the press as a social institution plays a mediating role here as the news producers could deliberately include or exclude a particular forum letter, the fact that members of the public are welcome to write in is hard to challenge. The overtly “multi-vocality” potential of this discursive space adds further weight to the underlying assumption that gamblers’ identities are the product of “dialogism” (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984). Details about these forum letters will be given in Section 3.2.1.

Second, as van Dijk (2008b, p. 57) remarked, there is a tendency among people in the current era to rely on news discourse for obtaining knowledge and forming opinions about a majority of events around the world. In this regard, news discourse is comparable to what Althusser (1984) identified as “Ideological State Apparatuses.” The term ideology has been used in various parts of this thesis every now and then, but so far any concrete attempt to offer a definition of the term has been suppressed. The reason is that ideology can be a highly controversial notion as scholars in different fields, such as political science, philosophy, sociology, cultural studies and literary criticism, have taken the initiatives to demystify this concept (Freeden, 2003). It has to be emphasized that the purpose of this thesis is not to make any definite scholarly statement about what ideology encompasses. Instead the concept of ideology is utilized as a theoretical root to aid the discourse analysis of gamblers’ identities.

Simply speaking, ideology refers to a collective set of conscious or unconscious beliefs underlying the norms, practices and behaviors of a particular social group (Murfin & Ray, 2009). Members of that social group become attuned to the beliefs which they think are right, natural and even applicable everywhere. For those that do not abide by the same ideology, the beliefs may sound irrational, absurd and fallacious. In a specific locality, there can be the co-existence of
multiple ideologies, some of which tend to be more prevalent than the others (p. 235).

In his paper entitled “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” Althusser (1984) argued that alongside the “Repressive State Apparatus” (viz., the military, the police, the prisons, etc.) which “functions by violence,” a society also consists of a certain number of “Ideological State Apparatuses” (ISAs) which mainly operate by ideology (pp. 16–19). Examples of ISAs, according to Althusser (1984), include the family ISA, the political ISA, the educational ISA (like the school), the religious ISA (such as the church), the cultural ISA (i.e., the arts and literature) and the communications ISA (including radio, television and press) (p. 17). Being part of the communications ISA, news discourse embodies significant ideological implications, which render it a highly valuable source of data for studying the discursive portrayal of gamblers’ identities in society.

2.2.2 Legitimation and hegemony

Legitimation is essentially a sociological concept; it refers to “a process through which a social system or some aspect of it comes to be accepted as appropriate and generally supported by those who participate in it” (Johnson, 2000, p. 173). It was suggested that legitimation is an important notion in examining authority and “social stratification” since it gives rise to not just societal stability, but also the marginalization or oppression of certain social groups (p. 173). Weber (1947) is a notable figure in sociology who wrote about the attempts of the ruling class to establish “legitimacy.” He proposed that “legitimacy,” once secured, would bring about people’s “obedience to commands” (p. 328).

As indicated above, people’s acceptance and support are the defining substances of legitimation. In other words, legitimation is not about directly forcing the rulers’ will on those who are being governed. Instead, a sufficient amount of “consent” from the dominated class is central to the materialization of legitimation. Gramsci (1971), an influential critical thinker in the study of contemporary culture, conceived of such consent as a form of “common sense”
which is cultivated via a range of “cultural institutions,” one of which is the press (as cited in Jones, 2006, pp. 3–5). The notion of “consent” or “common sense” was elaborated by Gramsci (1971) in his work *The Prison Notebooks*, where he claimed that “consent” resides in what is called “civil society.”

Gramsci (1971) theoretically differentiated “civil society” from “the State” (or “political society”). While the latter operates in accordance with coercive force, “civil society” underlines “consent.” Gramsci (1971) avoided the word “domination” when describing how “civil society” is organized. For him, “domination” is a term that corresponds to “the State.” On the other hand, the willing consent given by the majority of the population in “civil society” is a phenomenon of “hegemony.” Notwithstanding Gramsci’s (1971) seemingly neat delineation of the two types of society, it is worth noting that they are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they very often go hand in hand for the purpose of societal leadership (Crehan, 2002, pp. 98–104).

On the basis of what is mentioned above, it can be assumed that news discourse on the issue of gamblers constitutes one key “hegemonizing” cultural product where societal “consent” in relation to the perception and the discursive construction of gamblers’ identities is enacted, circulated and even reinforced.

2.2.3 *Différance*

The term *différance* coined by the pioneer practitioner of “deconstruction”23 Jacques Derrida is a key concept informing the present research. While inquiring into the relation between ontology24 and language,

23 Deconstruction is essentially a poststructuralist approach towards literary studies. It can broadly cover critiques which reveal the artificial quality of social categories which appear to be natural among the wider community. Many scholars of identity have utilized deconstruction as the theoretical base since it can provide a critical alternative perspective about the world which centers on difference rather than the absolute idea of identity (Lloyd, 2010, p. 195).

24 Ontology is a philosophical term and is generally understood as the study of “being” and “existence” (Lowe, 2005, p. 670).
Derrida (1976) proposed that things take on their meanings solely out of discourse; in other words the ontological status of everything including identities is merely a product of textual construction. This is well exemplified via his well-known statement: “There is nothing outside of the text” (p. 158).

According to Derrida, the term *différance* bears a mixture of two senses in relation to the French verb *différer*: (i) to be different; (ii) to defer (as cited in Abrams & Harpham, 2012). For Derrida, it is difference that makes meanings possible. To put it in another way, identities by nature do not have any core; instead they are “determined” by the presence of their difference from others. Given the potentially unlimited “others,” the process of meaning determination is never-ending—hence the verb “to defer” (p. 78). Under the Derridean lens, it can be said that a certain identity which we enforce upon ourselves and/or others is only the outcome of clouding the possible differences within that identity while amplifying the differences outside it. In fact, this line of argument is similar to the one concerning “equivalence and difference” suggested by Fairclough (2003), which will be discussed in Section 2.3.1.2.

As written earlier, Singapore is the primary site of investigation for the current project. Echoing the Derridean notion of *différance*, this study will analyze a Singaporean governmental campaign, which advocates the “gap” between social and problem gamblers. As stated in the official website of the campaign, “there’s only a fine line that separates us from the effects of problem gambling” (National Council on Problem Gambling, 2009a). The website then sketches out the warning signs which have to be looked out for. The website also includes speeches given by various individuals: social and problem gamblers as they are identified. It is thus believed that the campaign attempts to mobilize the discursively represented identities of recreational and problematic gamblers in

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As will be clarified in Section 5.6, although the speeches appear to be monologues given by individuals, they are not the gamblers’ own “voices.” This argument becomes more convincing if the context where these speeches are situated (i.e., the governmental gambling campaign) is taken into account. In Goffman’s (1981, p. 145) terminology, the gamblers in this case are regarded as “animators” while the government is the “principal” who is held responsible for the gamblers’ speeches.
juxtaposition. In this manner, the uncertainty of the two identities can be diminished and the target audience (i.e., the Singaporean citizens) will be better equipped with the skills for managing their gambling behavior.

2.2.4 Medicalized subject, intertextuality and recontextualization


Foucault is a frequently cited figure among researchers in the humanities. Some of his ideas advocated in Madness and Civilization have been discussed earlier in this thesis (see Section 2.1.2 for more information). As noted by McHoul and Grace (1993), Foucault’s works generally discuss, from a genealogical angle, how specific kinds of “subject,” such as the insane, the ill, the felon and the sexual deviant, were constructed as products of discursive and power relations. More specifically, Foucault intended to illustrate how modern scientific institutionalized knowledge brings about the process of “subject-production” or “subjection” (p. 91).

The concept of “subjectivity” was reiterated by Foucault (1977) in Discipline and Punish when he drew readers’ attention to the issue of disciplinary power within penal institutions. According to him, the eighteenth century witnessed a shift in how human populations were organized. People started to subjugate themselves to the mechanisms of social administration via the mode of numerous institutions such as prisons, factories and hospitals, instead of the pre-modern form which orbited around the kings and aristocrats (as cited in Mansfield, 2000, p. 58). Foucault (1977) proposed that human beings subjected to institutional power become “docile bodies” that are both “manipulable” and “analyzable.” He elaborated, “A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved” (p. 136).
Foucault’s fundamental thesis in *Madness and Civilization* as well as *Discipline and Punish* echoes the “pathologization” of various kinds of human behavior, including gambling, in the recent mental health literature. It also resonates with the marginalization of the “abnormal” in the social world. As he articulated, human beings are governed by “dividing practices” in the sense that the insane, the ill and the prisoners are separated from the sane, the healthy and the “good boys” respectively (1982, p. 778). By proclaiming or certifying that a specific individual is a pathological gambler, psychiatrists, who are representatives of the medical institutions, are executing such “dividing practices.”

Though Foucault stressed the significance of discourse in the creation of the “docile bodies,” he did not offer any comprehensive textual analysis (Fairclough, Mulderrig & Wodak, 2011, p. 361). To make up such deficiency, Bakhtin’s (1981, 1984) text-oriented concept of “dialogism,” which has been described in Section 1.1.9 of this thesis, is included as one of the principles on which the theoretical position of the present research is based.

In discourse analysis, Fairclough (1992) is customarily identified as the one who first discussed “dialogism.” As he remarked, “intertextuality entails an emphasis upon the heterogeneity of texts, and a mode of analysis which highlights the diverse and often contradictory elements and threads which go to make up a text” (p. 104). He differentiated what he called “manifest intertextuality” from “constitutive intertextuality” or “interdiscursivity.” While the former denotes the overt presence of other texts in the text under examination, the latter focuses on the pattern of discourse conventions instead of explicit linguistic markers (p. 104). In one of his subsequent works, Fairclough (2003, p. 51) added that intertextuality is about “recontextualization,” i.e., moving from one context to another. Fairclough (2003, p. 47) also offered new insights into the study of intertextuality by presenting a model which links various types of assertions and assumptions to different degrees of “dialogicality” of a text. He stated that a high level of “dialogicality” represents open recognition of differences whereas a low index “brackets” or contains differences.
The aforesaid notion of “recontextualization” is highly relevant to the present research vis-à-vis pathological gambling in the medical domain. As pointed out by Kong (2009, p. 115), the term is originally proposed by Bernstein (1990). Discussing pedagogic discourse, Bernstein (1996) in one of his later works articulated his observations about the production of knowledge in the last fifty years of the twentieth century. He believed that modern knowledge such as information science and engineering is created by selecting, introducing and relating to the disparate elements from the “singular” disciplines in the nineteenth century like physics and chemistry. This process is done through a “recontextualizing principle” (p. 23). Bernstein’s concept of “recontextualization” was notably taken up by Linell (1998a, 1998b, 2002, 2009), who attempted to align it more closely to language analysis. He broadly defined “recontextualization” as the “dynamic transfer-and-transformation of something from one discourse/text-in-context (the context being in reality a matrix or field of contexts) to another” (1998b, pp. 144–145). Linell (2009, p. 248) acknowledged that “recontextualization” is an inevitable constituent of every communication process. The importance of “recontextualization” in communication is also fleshed out by van Leeuwen (2008), who developed the “grammars” of “recontextualization.” Integrating the sociological concept of “social practice” into discourse analysis, van Leeuwen (2008) opined that all texts draw on and “transform” social practices. In other words, discourse can be succinctly deciphered as the “recontextualization” of social practice. One example given by van Leeuwen (2008) is the weather report being a textual product that results from “objectivating” the social practices of those working in the field of meteorology (pp. 4–5).

Based on what is mentioned above, it can be argued that the three medical texts (see Section 3.2.3 for further information) which will be investigated within the current study are the outcome of “recontextualization” in two major respects. First, they reflect, from one text to another, epistemological “recontextualization” pertaining to the psychiatric understanding of pathological gambling. Second, the social practices of medical professionals are “recontextualized” in different ways across the three texts, which can arguably be perceived as three separate social
events. It is therefore worthwhile conducting in-depth textual analysis in order to obtain a better grasp of how such “recontextualization” operates.

2.3 Analytical categories used

Table 2.1 outlines the analytical categories employed in this study. Before the selected analytical categories are described in detail, it is necessary to stress that their groupings are supposed to suit the three individual data sets. The table also shows the connection between the analytical categories and the theoretical notions explained in the previous section. As discussed by Fairclough (2009, p. 166), there are no prearranged analytical frameworks or methods for CDA research. The use of a specific analytical taxonomy for data analysis is highly dependent on the nature of the texts themselves. This is reminiscent of the “open-mindedness” practiced by contemporary specialists of rhetorical analysis. As Toye (2013, p. 76) stated, there should be no “rigid formula” for how to perform a rhetorical analysis and different texts need different treatments.

26 In his book, Toye (2013, pp. 77–78) even suggested that the two terms discourse and rhetoric are highly intertwined as they carry the same referential meaning and only differ in their popularity throughout history.
### Table 2.1 An outline of the analytical categories used (together with the underlying theoretical notions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data sets</th>
<th>Theoretical notions</th>
<th>Analytical categories/frameworks</th>
<th>Scholarly works from which the categories are derived</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Newspaper forum letters | - Public sphere (Habermas, 1989)  
- Dialogism\(^{30}\) (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984)  
- Ideological State Apparatuses (Althusser, 1984)  
- Legitimation (Weber, 1947)  
- Hegemony (Gramsci, 1971) | Meaning relations between sentences/clauses  
- Discursive construction of legitimation  
- Discursive construction of hegemony (“equivalence and difference”)  
- Jeffries (2010a, 2010b) |
| Governmental campaign | - Dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984)  
- Ideological State Apparatuses (Althusser, 1984)  
- Différance (Derrida, 1976) | - Systemic functional linguistics—Process types  
- Appraisal theory—“Attitude” and “engagement”  
- Martin and White (2005)  
- Lee (2003), Lim, Pakir and Wee (2010), Low and Deterding (2003), Tay (1989) |
| Texts by medical experts | - Dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984)  
- Ideological State Apparatuses (Althusser, 1984)  
- Medicalized subject (Foucault, 1965)  
- Intertextuality (Fairclough, 1992, 2003)  
- Recontextualization (Bernstein, 1996; Kong, 2009; Linell, 2009) | Sociocognitive approach to discourse studies\(^{31}\)  
- Agency  
- Theme status  
- Metadiscourse  
- Intertextuality  
- Fairclough (2003), Kong (2009)  
- Van Leeuwen (2008) |

\(^{29}\) More information about the three data sets can be found in Section 3.2.  
\(^{30}\) For the interpretation of the term within the context of this study, see Section 1.1.9.  
2.3.1 Meaning relations between sentences/clauses

Fairclough (2003, p. 89) distinguished six major meaning relations between sentences or clauses: (i) causal; (ii) conditional; (iii) temporal; (iv) additive; (v) elaboration; (vi) contrastive/concessive. These six meaning relations are also called “semantic relations.” They are illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1 Six main “semantic relations” between sentences/clauses (Fairclough, 2003, p. 89)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Causal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reason (John was absent because he was sick)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consequence (John was sick, so he was absent)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Purpose (Children go to school in order to receive education)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Conditional (If people flout the law, they will go to jail)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Temporal (People celebrated when the president was re-elected)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Additive (What a day! The computer crashed, and I lost my wallet)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Elaboration (The computer crashed — it stopped working suddenly and could not be turned on again)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Contrastive/concessive (Peter is poor, but he is happy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three remarks have to be made regarding Fairclough’s classification. First, it is said that the relations need not be signaled explicitly with the use of connectors. In other words, the relations are not necessarily manifested at the lexicogrammatical layer. One typical case given by Fairclough (2003, p. 89) is the semantic relation “Elaboration” where the subsequent clauses/sentences are related to the first not via any cohesive marker, but by the inherent link (i.e., “exemplification” or “rewording”) between the clauses/sentences. Second, the category of “Causal” can be further divided into “Reason,” “Consequence” and “Purpose.” Third, Fairclough (2003, pp. 90–91) specifically pointed out the difference between additive and elaborative relations as they could easily be mixed up. He said that the test of “reversibility” may be applied to differentiate between the two. For additive relations, one item is merely added to another and there is no sign of any more relationship between them. By contrast, the
successive clauses of an elaborative relationship stipulate and “fill out” the information provided in the earlier clauses so it is not possible to reverse their order within the text.

As noted by Fairclough (2003), the use of certain semantic relations, or their preponderance within a specific text, can “operationalize” three social issues which are namely “legitimation,” “hegemony” and “appearance versus reality.”

2.3.1.1 Discursive construction of legitimation

Among the six semantic relations, Fairclough (2003, p. 98) explained that legitimation can be realized through the use of connectors, such as “in order to,” “the purpose of this” and “so that,” which forge a purposive tie between clauses—one sub-category of the “causal” semantic relations described above. Fairclough (2003, p. 98) attributed the source of his idea to a preliminary version of van Leeuwen’s (2007, 2008) model vis-à-vis the discursive construction of legitimation.

As declared by van Leeuwen (2008), legitimation is an essential context-specific element in social/discourse practices as it helps to answer questions like “Why should people do this?” and “Why should people act in this way?” (p. 105). There are four main strategies through which legitimation is accomplished at the discourse level: (i) “authorization;” (ii) “moral evaluation;” (iii) “rationalization;” (iv) “mythopoesis” (van Leeuwen, 2007, 2008). Van Leeuwen (2007, 2008) designed a system network for each of these major strategies, which means that multiple sub-strategies have been identified. Owing to the space constraint, it is not possible to give a thorough account of the complete system network. The salient aspects of the nomenclature are highlighted below and Table 2.2 is constructed to offer brief explanations and examples for the analytical categories that will be used for data analysis.

32 The preliminary version comes from the work of van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999). To make the present study more up-to-date, the latest version of the model (van Leeuwen, 2007, 2008) is adopted for analysis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytical categories</th>
<th>Explanations</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main categories</td>
<td>Sub-categories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorization</td>
<td>Personal authority</td>
<td>Legitimate authority comes from people due to their position or role in a specific institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expert authority</td>
<td>Legitimacy is invoked on the basis of expertise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role model authority</td>
<td>People take on the behavior of role models or opinion leaders who are positively “endorsed.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impersonal authority</td>
<td>The foundation for the legitimacy is related to the law, rules and regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authority of tradition</td>
<td>Legitimacy is established through key words such as “tradition,” “custom,” “habit” and “practice.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authority of conformity</td>
<td>People do this because everybody else does.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral evaluation</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Evaluative lexis is used to “naturalize” certain practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstraction</td>
<td>Practices are referred to in an abstract way so as to “moralize” them.</td>
<td>Young adults attend military training. They are taking up independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td>People must (not) do this because it is similar to another activity with positive/negative values.</td>
<td>Like alcohol consumption, gambling is addictive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental rationalization</td>
<td>Goal orientation</td>
<td>Its realization takes the form of a purpose clause.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Means orientation</td>
<td>Linguistic triggers include circumstances of means with “by,” “through,” “by means of,” etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effect orientation</td>
<td>The outcome of actions is emphasized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical rationalization</td>
<td>Experiential rationalization</td>
<td>General knowledge that is commonsensical or derived from anecdotes is utilized for legitimation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scientific rationalization</td>
<td>Modern science or other organized bodies of knowledge are used to legitimize actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>One item is defined as another, moralized item.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>Justifications for a practice are given.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prediction</td>
<td>Future consequences are anticipated when certain conditions are fulfilled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mythopoesis</td>
<td>Moral tales</td>
<td>Protagonists are rewarded due to their legitimate actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cautionary tales</td>
<td>Protagonists face tragic endings because of their deviant actions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Authorization” represents legitimation by referring to the authority of the legal system, traditions, customs or people who are empowered with institutional authority of some kind (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 105). “Authorization” may take six different forms: (i) “personal authority;” (ii) “expert authority;” (iii) “role model authority;” (iv) “impersonal authority;” (v) “authority of tradition;” (vi) “authority of conformity” (pp. 106–109).

“Moral evaluation” is a type of legitimation derived from the value systems (van Leeuwen, 2008, pp. 109–112). It can be expressed in three ways: (i) “evaluation;” (ii) “abstraction;” (iii) “comparison.”

“Rationalization” means constructing legitimation with reference to the purposes and functions of institutionalized social action as well as to the knowledge which is created by society and is provided with cognitive validity (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 106). There are two strands of “rationalization”—“instrumental rationalization” and “theoretical rationalization.” The former can be realized in three manners: (i) “goal orientation;” (ii) “means orientation;” (iii) “effect orientation.” The latter can take five different forms: (i) “experiential rationalization;” (ii) “scientific rationalization;” (iii) “definition;” (iv) “explanation;” (v) “prediction” (pp. 113–117).

As for “mythopoesis,” legitimation is attained via storytelling where legitimate behaviors attract rewards and deviant activities result in penalties (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 106). “Mythopoesis” can be divided into “moral tales” and “cautionary tales” (pp. 117–118).

2.3.1.2 Discursive construction of hegemony (“equivalence and difference”)

Following Laclau and Mouffe (1985), Fairclough (2003, p. 88) theorized about the operationalization of “hegemony” in terms of the concurrent functioning of “difference” and “equivalence.” The former refers to the proclivity for producing and exacerbating differences between objects or social groups. The latter denotes the subversion of differences by representing objects or social groups as identical to each other. Fairclough (2003, p. 101) argued that hegemony,
as materialized through “equivalence and difference,” is reminiscent of the endless “social process of classification.”

Fairclough (2003, p. 101) pointed out that discursively, the semantic relations of “addition” and “elaboration” can help to set up equivalence and to background differences between entities because the expressions (viz., the clauses or sentences) involved tend to be connected to one another in a “paratactic” way. “Parataxis” is a term employed under SFL\(^{33}\) to describe “logical dependency relations” between clauses; “paratactic” clauses are usually independent clauses joined by coordinating conjunctions such as “and” (Thompson, 2004, p. 198). Closely related to parataxis is the representation of different elements as “co-hyponyms.” It is believed that the use of “co-hyponyms” can convey a sense of inclusiveness or equivalence since “co-hyponyms” are expected to share at least one common attribute (Fairclough, 2003, p. 101). For instance, by saying that penguins, ostriches and eagles are birds, we are trying to subsume these animals under one umbrella whereas their differences become secondary.

While additive/elaborative semantic relations and hyponyms are contributors of equivalence formation in discourse, differences are bred by contrastive/concessive relations—e.g., cases where the contrastive conjunction “instead of” is used (Fairclough, 2003, p. 101). Contrastive/concessive relations underscore a division or dichotomy between objects or social groups, making them appear to be incompatible with one another. It was suggested that the strategies of equivalence and those of differences have to co-exist for the mechanism of social categorization and segregation, hence the phenomenon of hegemony (p. 88).

Fairclough’s (2003) theorization essentially centers on the semantic relations which he identified. A search of the literature shows that “equating” and “contrasting” are studied comparatively more often by researchers of stylistics.

\(^{33}\) Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) is a paradigm that emphasizes the functional aspects and the social implications of language use. For more information, see Section 2.3.2.
Capitalizing on Fairclough’s (2003) idea, the study of newspaper forum letters will integrate the linguistic model of “equivalence and opposition” found in the works of Jeffries (2010a, 2010b) into the analysis. The analytical categories devised are summarized in Table 2.3. As can be seen, constructed opposition in discourse basically takes seven forms: (i) “negated opposition;” (ii) “replacive opposition;” (iii) “transitional opposition;” (iv) “comparative opposition;” (v) “concessive/contrastive opposition;” (vi) “explicit opposition;” (vii) “parallelism.” On the other hand, equivalence triggers can be divided into four types: (i) “intensive relational equivalence;” (ii) “appositional equivalence;” (iii) “hyponymy;” (iv) “synonymy.”

Table 2.3 Taxonomy of opposition and equivalence (Based on Jeffries, 2010a, 2010b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytical categories</th>
<th>Explanations</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main categories</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sub-categories</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>Negated opposition</td>
<td>X not Y; many of X, a lack of Y; some X, no Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opposites are constructed through negation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The negative particle “not”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pronouns (e.g., “none,” “no one,” “nobody” and “nothing”)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The adjectival use of “no”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prefixes (e.g., “in-,” “un-” and “anti-”)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Content words (e.g., “lack,” “absence,” “fail” and “scarce”)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Replacive opposition</td>
<td>X in place of Y; X rather than Y; X in preference to Y; X instead of Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incompatibility is signaled via specifying the “proposed alternative.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional opposition</td>
<td>Contrasts arise from lexis that shows changes/transitions.</td>
<td>Transform X into Y; X turns into Y; from X to Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative opposition</td>
<td>Comparative structures are employed to construe opposition.</td>
<td>Less X than Y; more X than Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concessive/contrastive</td>
<td>The oppositional frame is set up by conjuctions.</td>
<td>While X, Y; X, but/yet Y; despite X, Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opposition</td>
<td>The oppositional relation is explicitly mentioned.</td>
<td>X as opposed to Y; X contrasted with Y: between X and Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit opposition</td>
<td>Parallel structures create opposition.</td>
<td>Your work is X, mine is Y; children like X, adults like Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallelism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equivalence</td>
<td>Intensive relational equivalence</td>
<td>X is Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Intensive relational processes” are used to convey sameness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appositional equivalence</td>
<td>Textual equivalence is set up in a repeated structure where the individual items share the same referent.</td>
<td>X,Y,Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyponymy</td>
<td>Items are equated by being subsumed under one big category.</td>
<td>X and Y are alphabets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synonymy</td>
<td>Equivalence is constructed through a synonymous expression.</td>
<td>People need water to survive. Air is essential for human beings too.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It has to be noted that Jeffries’ (2010a, 2010b) framework is based on her own earlier works and those of Davies (2008). Besides, the taxonomy stipulated in Table 2.3 encompasses few minor adjustments to Jeffries’ (2010a, 2010b) paradigm.

First, similar to the semantic relations suggested by Fairclough (2003), “contrastive” and “concessive” oppositions are conflated into one analytical category in the present research. Although Jeffries (2010b) maintained that contrastive oppositions are marked by coordinating conjunctions like “but” and concessive ones are indicated via “concessive conjuncts” such as “though” which introduce subordinate clauses, the two kinds of oppositions are semantically highly similar. Thus, it is more convenient to combine them together.

Second, Jeffries (2010a, p. 54) designated a separate category for “metaphorical equivalence.” Nevertheless, as she elucidated, “metaphorical equivalence” includes the various ways in which metaphors and similes are deployed as discursive resources for constructing sameness or commonality between two entities. The prototypical syntactic structure for metaphors (viz., X is Y) unarguably coincides with that of “intensive relational processes.” Also, the use of similes, which is usually indicated by the word “like,” does not differ vastly from hyponymy. By declaring that X is like Y, we are exhibiting an attempt to group the two entities under one canopy. Owing to the aforementioned overlaps, the category “metaphorical equivalence” is removed.

2.3.1.3 “Logic of appearances” against “explanatory logic”

Another social research issue advocated by Fairclough (2003, pp. 88–89) is the contrast between the “logic of appearances” and the “explanatory logic.” The “logic of appearances” entails “taking things at face value” by presenting them as an “unordered list of appearances” without exploring any causal implications. Fairclough (2003, pp. 95–96) aligned the “logic of appearances” with the genre called “hortatory report” that is prevalent in many policy texts nowadays. In these texts, the prescriptive mode of presentation is adopted and
things are portrayed as incontestable and unavoidable. Among the six semantic relations, addition and elaboration are the ones that characterize the “logic of appearances.”

Conversely, the “explanatory logic” implies a careful tracing of causal relations between events mentioned. It normally comprises “explanation, causality, and expository argument” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 95). It is thought that the “explanatory logic” is analytical by nature, and it aims to initiate dialogue in texts, as compared to the “logic of appearances.” Linguistically, the “explanatory logic” is said to be created within a text via “hypotaxis,” particularly the causal semantic relations (pp. 96–97). Juxtaposed with “parataxis,” “hypotaxis” is a label in the SFL nomenclature. A “hypotactic” relation is typically manifested through the occurrence of dependent clauses which begin with a subordinating conjunction (Thompson, 2004, p. 199).

2.3.2 Systemic functional linguistics (SFL)—Process types

As noted above, there are many ways to conduct critical discourse analysis. Given its hybrid nature and versatility, there is no particular approach prescribed to CDA. However, systemic functional linguistics (SFL) developed by Halliday is de facto the common tool for CDA practices since it provides researchers with unambiguous and thorough linguistic taxonomy for exploring the relationship between discourse and its social significance (Blommaert, 2005, pp. 22–23).

As pointed out by Young and Harrison (2004), concordance between SFL and CDA can be identified in three respects. First, they both perceive language as a “social construct;” they also share the “dialectical view of language” in the sense that specific communicative events shape the contexts in which they take place, and vice versa; furthermore, both SFL and CDA stress the historical and cultural facets of meaning (p. 1).

According to Martin and Wodak (2003), SFL is complementary to CDA due to its faculty for situating interest in ideology and power within detailed
textual analysis as the texts are deciphered, clause by clause, in authentic settings of language use. Also, SFL offers CDA a pool of jargon for describing language use, which enables analysts to closely study meaning by using unambiguous and well-defined terms that are widely shared within the discourse community, and to perform quantitative research, like frequency counts and statistics, if deemed necessary (p. 8).

Universally regarded as the architect of SFL, Halliday (1978) discussed the fundamental tenets of a social-functional approach to language through his publication entitled *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*. This book foreshadowed the subsequent release of the first edition of his influential work called *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* in 1985, which underwent two revisions—one in 1994 and the other in 2004 as a collaborative work with Matthiessen. The essence of SFL is that language and society, or what Halliday (1978, p. 12) called “language and social man,” are inseparable and have to be construed and examined as a whole.

In SFL, it is said that language serves three “metafunctions”—“ideational,” “interpersonal” and “textual.” The term *metafunction*, rather than simply “function,” is used because it signifies that such function is an element vital to the overarching theory (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 31). The “ideational” metafunction denotes the use of language to represent human experience; the “interpersonal” metafunction refers to the utilization of language to enact personal and social relations with other members of society; the “textual” metafunction means the capacity of language to assemble sequences of discourse, arrange the “discursive flow” and produce “cohesion and continuity” while it proceeds (pp. 29–30).

SFL stipulates that language is like a system or taxonomy of resources employed by the users to realize the three metafunctions. Following this line of thought, SFL researchers believe that producing and comprehending a text is a procedure that involves selection or choice of items from the system (Stillar, 1998, pp. 14–15; Thompson, 2004, pp. 8–9). Due to the space constraint, it is impossible to provide a full account of all these linguistic resources/items,
especially when the SFL model has been elaborated by a number of linguists (e.g., Eggins & Slade, 1997; Goatly, 2000; Stillar, 1998; Thompson, 2004). Hence, the following discussion will be kept as focused as possible.

The grammatical system through which language users attain the ideational metafunction is known as “transitivity.” Unlike traditional grammar, SFL defines transitivity as a system for describing the entire clause, instead of only the verb and its object. Under the transitivity system, human experience is construed as a basic set of “process types,” which constitute the major element of the clause and are normally expressed via the verbal group (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, pp. 169–170). Based on the kind of experiences represented, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 171) argued that processes can be divided into six main types—material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral and existential. Apart from the process types, there are two other secondary elements that serve the ideational metafunction of language: “participants” and “circumstances” which are mostly realized by the nominal and the adverbal groups respectively (p. 176).

2.3.3 Appraisal theory

The discussion of the evaluative nature of language was openly taken up by Martin and White (2005, p. 1), who developed the notable “appraisal theory” which is commonly described as an elaboration and extension of the SFL account of the interpersonal metafunction. In fact, the evaluative function of language was addressed by linguists as early as the 1970s (e.g., Labov, 1972, p. 370). According to Martin and White (2005, p. 35), appraisal involves three “interacting domains,” which are “attitude,” “engagement” and “graduation.” Attitude has to do with people’s emotions, judgments of behavior and evaluation of artifacts; engagement is about the positioning of the writers’ or speakers’ voices in relation to the viewpoints of others; graduation refers to the use of language to intensify or weaken the feelings conveyed. Martin and White’s (2005) appraisal theory is an intricate system with many subdivisions and complicated nomenclature. In this study, attitude and engagement are the two domains that will be looked at.
Attitude can be divided into three categories—“affect,” “judgment” and “appreciation.” Affect encompasses the discursive resources for expressing emotions. Judgment involves the assessment of human behavior based on different social rules while appreciation deals with the evaluation of objects (Martin & White, 2005, pp. 35–36). Each of the three categories includes its own sub-systems. The sub-categories of judgment are of particular concern to the present study. As mentioned before, the governmental campaign stresses the need for differentiating between social and problem gambling. To draw the line between the two, certain social norms unavoidably have to be deployed. Hence, the sub-systems of judgment offer an excellent platform to examine how the gamblers in the present research express their evaluation of various gambling behaviors, thereby providing insights into the construction of gamblers’ identities. As suggested by Martin and White (2005, p. 52), judgment can be classified into “social esteem” and “social sanction.” Social esteem is concerned with “normality,” “capacity” and “tenacity.” Social sanction deals with “veracity” and “propriety.”

Engagement in Martin and White’s model is inspired by the ideas of “dialogism” and “heteroglossia” from Bakhtin (1981), who argued that all communication is “dialogic” in that to communicate is to show the influence of what was previously said, and to predict the reactions of the audience. Martin and White (2005, p. 99) stated that “heteroglossic” engagement recognizes the presence of other “voices” concerning the proposition conveyed. Details of “heteroglossic” engagement can be found in Figure 2.2. “Dialogically contractive” resources—“disclaim” and “proclaim”—narrow the space for other voices whereas “dialogically expansive” ones—“entertain” and “attribute”—open up the space for alternative positions (2005, p. 103). Engagement is relevant to the linguistic representations of identity. As pointed out by Gunthner (2007, p. 421), when incorporating or suppressing other “voices” in discourse, people are simultaneously engaged in “self-positioning,” which plays a significant role in identity construction.
2.3.4 Code choice

Singapore—the primary site of investigation of this study (see Section 3.1 for more information)—is a multiracial country with Chinese, Malays and Indians being the major ethnic groups. Each group has its own mother tongue while English is a lingua franca. The ethnolinguistic diversity causes English to come into contact with other languages, leading to the unique characteristics of Singapore English (Lim, Pakir & Wee, 2010, pp. 4–7). Code switching and mixing, which often involve English, Mandarin, Hokkien, Teochew and Malay, are always cited as one of them\(^\text{34}\) (Tay, 1989, p. 407). Conventionally, scholars

\(^{34}\) More information will be given in Section 2.5.6 where other relevant previous studies are reviewed.
have been differentiating between Singapore Standard English (SSE) and Singapore Colloquial English (SCE). The former is used in formal situations, such as education and government administration. The latter is common during daily interactions between friends and relatives (Kamwangamalu, 1992, pp. 34–35). Code choice is included in the present research because of its relevance to identity construction. One example was given by Deppermann (2007), who found that German local teenagers appropriate certain foreign language features of the new immigrants in conversations so as to mark their “in-group” identity (p. 348).

2.3.5 Sociocognitive approach to discourse

Van Dijk (1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) has been a long-term advocate of the sociocognitive approach to discourse. Given the large amount of scholarly discussions that he has initiated, it is impossible to offer a voluminous account of this approach. Only the gist of it that is relevant to the present research will be provided. Also, it should be noted that van Dijk periodically fine-tunes his viewpoints. Nevertheless, one central idea that he irrevocably emphasizes is the tripartite relationship between discourse/text, cognition and society/context. He argued that practitioners of the sociolinguistic approach indiscriminately presume a direct relation between text and context, viz., certain structures of a social situation resulting in particular discourse features. Van Dijk believed that if this were true, everybody under such a social situation would produce the same utterance. To account for individual variation in text and talk, he maintained that a “cognitive interface” is needed in discourse studies (2008b, p. 165).

As declared by van Dijk (2006), the sociocognitive approach focuses on the “mental” aspects of discourse. Among all the “cognitive” notions, he suggested that “knowledge” is the most fundamental as every social actor needs knowledge to take part in many discourse events and certain types of knowledge tend to be socially or culturally shared, hence taken for granted and assumed implicitly in discourse (pp. 5–6). Figure 2.3 illustrates how the concept of “knowledge” operates within the sociocognitive framework. Prior to further explication, it should be highlighted that van Dijk’s discussion of cognition or
mental representations is formulated on the basis of schemas and their categories, not in terms of the neurological understanding of cognition (viz., network structures, connections and the strength of such connections) which is more commonly found in the literature of psycholinguistics (2008a, pp. 65–66).

Figure 2.3 Representation of the sociocognitive approach to discourse (summarized from van Dijk, 1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012)

As Figure 2.3 shows, cognition falls into two main strands under the sociocognitive framework. “Social cognition,” which is also called “semantic/social memory” (van Dijk, 2008a, p. 103), controls mental representations or knowledge that is socially shared. Van Dijk (2011, p. 385) stated that some representations transcend all social groups and are shared by a whole community. Such representations are regarded as “Common Ground” or “general-sociocultural” knowledge. On the other hand, there exist mental
representations that are socially shared in a narrower or more confined manner. These representations cover specific group knowledge, ideologies and attitudes towards particular issues (p. 395). It can be said that the specialized technical knowledge regarding pathological gambling in psychiatry is an example of specific group knowledge. As van Dijk (2011, p. 397) remarked, ideologies can be manifested discursively in countless ways but the “meta-strategy” deployed is “positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation.” Closely related to and yet different from ideologies is the concept of attitudes, which is defined as “ideologically-based belief clusters” concerning particular social issues (p. 389). While ideologies are general and abstract, attitudes are specific and concrete.

Alongside “social cognition,” there is another level of sociocognitive analysis called “personal cognition” or “episodic memory” (van Dijk, 2011, p. 390). As the name implies, “personal cognition” governs individual experiences and these experiences, according to van Dijk (2011), are represented as “mental models.” Since “mental models” are subsumed into “personal cognition,” van Dijk (2011) argued that they are essentially subjective representations. There are two types of “mental models”—“event models” and “context models.” The former refers to “subjective, personal representations of specific events, actions and situations” while the latter encompasses “subjective definitions of the communicative situation” (pp. 390–391). Precisely, “event models” take in what van Dijk identified as “personal knowledge,” i.e., “private” knowledge not shared by others unless communicated (2005a, pp. 77–78). “Context models” control what people say and particularly how they express it on a specific occasion. This mechanism is managed by a cognitive device called the “K-device,” which functions in accordance with the principle of “relevance.” Whenever encountering a communicative situation, the “K-device” would inform the participants which knowledge has to be asserted, which knowledge needs to be told again and which knowledge can be presupposed or even excluded because it is not relevant or it is “inferable” for the recipients (2005a, pp. 74–76).

Van Dijk’s (1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) theorization is employable as the principal analytic framework in the study of the medical texts to examine how knowledge is discursively represented and
“recontextualized” in medical discourse for “essentializing” the identities of pathological gamblers. It is said that van Dijk’s sociocognitive approach to discourse is particularly valuable for exploring texts produced within the institutional environments (MacDonald, Badger & Regan, 2009, pp. 180–181). In van Dijk’s terms, these texts, such as newspapers, textbooks, legal documents, political speech and parliamentary debates, are generally classified as “elite discourse,” which usually displays the “stereotypical polarization between Us and Them” (2005b, p. 72). However, van Dijk’s (1995, 2005a, 2005b, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) research has been revolving around state policies, especially those on immigration. Although he did conduct a case study of medical discourse, his data came from a Spanish textbook of modern genetics and he only focused on the presentation of specialized knowledge (van Dijk, 2003b). In this particular study of his, van Dijk (2003b) did not address the underlying linkage between the various types of knowledge and how they are discursively “recontextualized” across texts in different medical settings.

2.4 Rationale behind the selection of analytical categories

As mentioned at the beginning of Section 2.3, CDA researchers do not prescribe any particular analytical frameworks or methods. CDA is not a “homogeneous theory” but instead it should be regarded as a “heterogeneous perspective” supported by ideas from various fields (Forchtner, 2013, p. 1440). Each study is unique and the choice of analytical methods is closely related to the texts (or data) being investigated. In fact, such heterogeneity is witnessed not just within the CDA community, but also among discourse analysts in general. On the one hand, the flexibility exercised by the analysts in conducting research epitomizes the interdisciplinary spirit of discourse analysis. On the other hand, it undoubtedly poses challenges for researchers (Kong, 2013, p. 317). For instance, one may question why certain analytical categories or methods are chosen over the others in a specific study. Another typical query is: “What findings would have been yielded if different methods had been adopted?”

To address the concern about possibly varying research findings produced via different methods, it is important to emphasize that in discourse studies there
are always patterns which remain undetected, no matter which frameworks or methods are used. While discussing the “analyst’s paradox,” Sarangi (2007, p. 567) cited Burke’s (1965, 1966) notion of “terministic screening”—viz., “every way of seeing is also a way of not seeing.” In his CDA-informed research on the changing political identity of Hong Kong, Flowerdew (2012) also acknowledged the presence of multiple readings, which cannot be captured within only one single study. He maintained, “Each reading of a discourse is a new one; each analysis has the potential to provide new understanding and insight on what happened at a given historical moment in a given discourse” (p. 301).

The defense given above does not mean that the analytical categories employed in the present study are randomly selected without thorough consideration. The rationale behind the selection is firmly grounded in the theoretical notions specified in Section 2.2 as well as the nature of the three individual data sets.

The newspaper forum letters, for example, constitute a “public sphere” where the widest audience and a large variety of “voices” are attracted. In order to justify or legitimize what they put forward, the writers have to make an effort to frame their argument. Thus, studying meaning relations between sentences/clauses becomes highly appropriate as clausal relations can help to unfold how legitimation or justifications are made.

The governmental gambling campaign is considered to be a didactic event targeted at the general public, in particular potential gamblers. To bring deterrent effects among the receiving party of the campaign, the state organization may have to construct a clear symbolic contrast between problematic and non-problematic gamblers. This can be done by means of diverse linguistic resources. SFL, which essentially includes appraisal theory, appears to be the most plausible method for analysis because the fundamental statement advocated by SFL scholars is that language is a reservoir of “meaning-making resources” for its users to achieve the three “metafunctions” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Code choice is included because it has been shown by numerous Singaporean studies to
be a resource for marking identities (e.g., Alsagoff, 2010; Lee, 2003; Lim, Pakir & Wee, 2010; Low & Deterding, 2003; Tay, 1989).

Examination of the third data set, which is the medical discourse, is intended to demonstrate how knowledge is “recontextualized” while a “medicalized” image of pathological gamblers is created and even popularized. With this aim of revealing the subtle transformation of knowledge, using the sociocognitive approach to discourse suggested by van Dijk (1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) is justifiable since it focuses on how knowledge is manifested at the discourse level.

Based on the above discussion, it can be argued that different analytical categories are needed for the different data sets in order to ensure the relevance of the ensuing investigation. Given the elastic character of CDA, it is certainly possible to apply the same analytical categories across all the three sets of data. Although this way of exploring the data may generate findings which can be more conveniently aligned and compared, the patterns identified may hinder our understanding of the social issues in question. To illustrate this point, a hypothetical example has to be used here. If SFL was used in the examination of the newspaper forum letters, transitivity analysis on process types would indicate high instances of verbal processes. The reason is that one salient function of the forum letters is to give responses to earlier letters. Since the detection of verbal processes is highly predictable in this case, using SFL to analyze the forum letters may not be conducive to a comprehensive scholarly discussion of the issues related to legitimation and justifications. As Chilton (2013, p. 1434) said, what makes CDA “critical” is its aspiration to “make the implicit explicit.” If a particular framework produces results which are highly expected, its suitability for analysis in a study has to be called into question.

2.5 Relevant empirical studies

The link between language and identity has been an area of investigation among discourse analysts for a long period of time. When studying the discursive construction of identities, different scholars focused on different social groups.
Some of these social groups may enjoy prestigious status in society, like doctors (e.g., Gallardo & Ferrari, 2010), lawyers (e.g., Maclean, 2010), geologists (e.g., Dressen-Hammouda, 2008), teachers (e.g., Trent, 2012) and managers (e.g., Iedema, Ainsworth & Grant, 2008). Others are on the peripheral social stratum. A few notable examples include immigrants (e.g., Caldas-Coulthard & Alves, 2008; Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008; Ladegaard, 2012; Mick, 2011), homosexuals (e.g., Alías, 2008; Jones, 2000), prisoners (e.g., Mayr, 2004) and other stereotyped groups (e.g., Cheng, 2008; Hester, 1998; Ladegaard, 2011; Ribeiro & Dantas, 2008; Stommel, 2009). The book volumes *Identities in Talk* edited by Antaki and Widdicombe (1998) and *Identity Trouble: Critical Discourse and Contested Identities* by Caldas-Coulthard and Iedema (2008), despite the ten-year gap, have shown the heterogeneity of identity studies across discourse analysts. The two relevant journals *Discourse Studies* and *Discourse and Society* also publish a wide range of research related to identity and discourse. Notwithstanding the diversity, gamblers’ identities seem to have received scant attention. Such “terra incognita” produces a research niche for the present study.

2.5.1 *Discursive construction of legitimation*

Van Leeuwen’s (2007, 2008) model concerning the discursive construction of legitimation is shown to be useful in discourse studies. Recent works that have been completed under this framework include Peled-Elhanan (2010), Pinto (2013) and Reyes (2011).

With the intention to uncover how the historical massacres of Palestinians are represented in Israel, Peled-Elhanan (2010) investigated eight Israeli history textbooks. It was found that the killings are legitimated through multiple strategies. For example, “moral tales” are told in such a way that the massacres are depicted as events which invite positive outcomes like triumph or salvage for the country—as in the phrase “enabling the establishment of a coherent Jewish state” (p. 382). Also, by asserting that “many nations and armies do such things,” legitimation of the massacres is attained via the “authority of conformity” (p. 384). The researcher concluded that school history books are largely performing ideological work, rather than accurately mirroring the past.
Pinto (2013) examined how social etiquette had been taught to children and young adults in Fascist Spain between 1939 and 1975. The data of the study came from the relevant sections of 33 textbooks published during the period concerned. The textbooks were said to harbor ample use of legitimation. Examples include instances of “role model authority” where Jesus Christ is represented as the exemplary figure, as in “Jesus Christ taught us that we must love our neighbors like we love ourselves” (p. 135). Being a sub-category of “moral evaluation,” “comparison” is utilized to build a connection between school and family, thereby legitimizing the family-like treatment which teachers and classmates should receive (“School is a prolongation of the family. We will think of the teacher as a loving father, and classmates as brothers.”) (p. 136). Pinto (2013) described the teaching of etiquette at that time as “dictatorial” because students had been indoctrinated to comply with the rules and norms formulated by both the tyrannical government and the religious institution (p. 140).

The work of Reyes (2011) focuses on the speeches delivered by the American political leaders George Bush and Barack Obama in relation to the army-equipped clashes in Iraq and Afghanistan. Reyes’ (2011) analysis highlights the legitimating force of the speeches. For instance, Bush was found to legitimize his military actions via “authorization” by making use of quotations from the Prime Minister who expressed positive endorsement (p. 800). “Theoretical rationalization” in the form of “prediction” was used by Obama when he was discursively constructing a terrifying hypothetical future in order to make his decision justifiable (e.g., “And this danger will only grow if the region slides backwards, and Al-Qaeda can operate with impunity.”) (p. 795). It was argued that the legitimation strategies employed “naturalize” the military occupation in the “War on Terror.”

2.5.2 Discursive construction of hegemony (“equivalence and difference”)

As Jeffries (2010a, p. 65) noticed, equivalence and differences that are discursively constructed, together with their ideological implications on target readers, remain relatively under-researched.
Davies (2007) studied how opposites are created in news discourse. The research is a qualitative analysis on a news report of an anti-war protest in the British press *Sunday Mirror* in February 2003. It was found that “oppositional pairings” are consistently used as a means to differentiate between “acceptable protestors” and “unacceptable protestors” in the textual space. The demarcation is triggered by, for example, conjunctions like “while/but” and negation as in “Worried mums and dads of all ages, all races and religions. Not traitors or cowards. Not faint-hearts. But people who had come to express a genuine feeling they cannot ignore” (p. 86). Davies (2007) suggested that the division between the two different groups of protestors is a reflection of the news producer’s value system and it has the ideological effect of orientating the target audience towards a specific world view that is artificially represented so that group stereotypes are solidified in society (pp. 92–97).

Unlike the research of Davies (2007), Downing (2002) looked into the role of negation in literary discourse. The texts studied are the poems by the Polish author called Wisława Szymborska. Using those poems as evidence, Downing (2002) demonstrated how negation stylistically contributes to the construction of “alternativity.” In one of the poems entitled *In Praise of my Sister*, negation is constantly used to construct a fictional world where the persona’s relatives do not write poems. Downing (2002, p. 125) argued that negation in this case evokes the “alternate world” (viz. the reality) in which the poet herself engages in poetry. In another poem *Family Album*, negation is said to take readers from the previous world of the persona’s antecedents, who led a monotonous life, to another more fictitious and vivid world of people who suffered from love or other “romantic” grounds (pp. 125–126). Downing (2002, p. 126) thought that negation is employed to conjure up “complementary realities” so that readers are prompted to reinterpret or reflect upon their routines, practices and conventions.

### 2.5.3 “Logic of appearances” against “explanatory logic”

Recent works that touch upon Fairclough’s (2003) dichotomy between the “logic of appearances” and the “explanatory logic” include the research of
Ferreira and Heberle (2013) and that of Resende (2013). It has to be noted that the dichotomy only forms part of the analysis in both studies as the researchers examined other discursive features at the same time.

Ferreira and Heberle (2013) carried out a multimodal discourse analysis on a credit card advertisement in the magazine *Newsweek*. In the advertisement, the credit card (*Diners Club International*) is presented as the key to a “closed massive wooden door” for overseas journeys. The researchers deciphered the closed door as the “problem” which needs a solution, i.e., the credit card. They said that the “logic of appearances” applies here as the door is simply an “unquestionable and inevitable fact” in the context of overseas traveling while no real argumentation or concrete examples are given (p. 128).

The work of Resende (2013) primarily concerns a text corpus of reports on sexual abuse of children in Brazil published by its major daily newspaper. One of the research objectives is to cast light on the relationship between journalism and society as well as the scope of journalistic discourse (p. 263). Capitalizing on Fairclough’s (2003) dichotomy, Resende (2013) found that the reports display the explanatory role of journalistic practice, even though numerous earlier studies suggested that newspaper texts have been employed in an ideological fashion as an apparatus for “reification of meanings” (p. 265).

### 2.5.4 Systemic functional linguistics (SFL)—Process types

As Martin and Wodak (2003, p. 8) suggested, SFL is an effective tool for examining ideology and power embedded within discourse. For example, Li (2010) made use of SFL and examined how the press reported the anti-American demonstrations in China after the NATO bomb attack at the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia in 1999. It was found that in *The New York Times*, Chinese protestors tend to be realized as “actors” in material processes whereas the bombing is hidden. Li (2010, p. 3453) argued that this is the newspaper’s strategy to foreground the Chinese responsibility for the clashes that threatened the American values.
Another example is the research of Kong (2001), who studied the director’s messages in the official reports of two network marketing organizations (NMOs), a listed company and a charitable organization. It was found that there is a lack of “business tone material processes,” like “grow,” “rise” and “expand,” in the NMO texts. Kong (2001, p. 491) suggested that the NMOs would like to portray the image that they are different from the usual profit-driven companies.

2.5.5 *Appraisal theory*

Martin and White’s (2005) model of appraisal, as well as its earlier versions (Martin, 1996, 2000), has been employed by a number of scholars to examine the relationship between the use of language and the construction of identity. Some of these scholars include Becker (2009), Gallardo and Ferrari (2010) and Page (2003).

Becker (2009) performed a comparative analysis of the *engagement* resources used in British and German political media interviews. Tokens of “proclaim” were identified significantly more often in the German data, suggesting that the German interviewees are more committed to what they said than their British counterparts. Associating the finding with the dichotomy of “indirectness” and “directness” regarding the British and the German identities, Becker (2009, p. 18) opined that instances of “proclaim” contribute to the realization of “directness.”

Gallardo and Ferrari (2010) explored how medical practitioners perceived and identified themselves. They conducted a qualitative textual analysis on a discussion forum where Spanish-speaking doctors in Latin America talked about their health and work. The two researchers discovered that when commenting on their health, the doctors tend to employ negative *judgments* of “social esteem,” as they believe that by neglecting their own physical and mental well-being due to the heavy workload, they are setting a bad example for their patients (p. 3180). Also, there is an inclination among the doctors to display negative *appreciation* towards the medical profession because of the potential risks involved (p. 3177). As Gallardo and Ferrari (2010, p. 3186) concluded, the appraisal system is useful
for providing linguistic evidence that helps to reveal how members of professional
groups view various aspects of their job.

Page (2003) analyzed 23 oral narratives given by both men and women
about childbirth experiences. It was found that the women employ *affect* markers
more often than the men do, and this echoes the stereotype of women’s emphasis
on affective meaning (pp. 221–222). Nevertheless, analysis of the *judgment*
markers used by men in childbirth narratives disconfirms the general assumption
that men should be brave and daring. Page (2003, pp. 227–229) found that the
men tend to resort to negative *judgment* of their capacity and tenacity when
talking about their lack of knowledge and even their fear about the whole
childbirth events. Based on the findings, Page (2003, p. 211) argued that there is
no universal matching between gender and linguistic resources, and gender
identity should be regarded as “culturally constructed” and is related to contextual
factors in a multifaceted manner.

### 2.5.6 Code choice

Empirical studies on code choice in Singapore have been carried out by a
number of scholars. Some of them are Lee (2003), Low and Deterding (2003) and

Lee (2003) examined the conversations of Chinese major undergraduates;
Low and Deterding’s (2003) data came from interviews with Singaporean trainee
teachers; Tay (1989) investigated conversations of university graduates. It was
found in all the three studies that the use of particles, such as *lah, ah, lor* and *ho,*
is common. As Tay (1989, p. 409) remarked, these particles may have derived
from Hokkien but they have been given a large variety of semantic meanings
when utilized in Singaporean English. These particles are so widespread that they
can be found in any language in the colloquial variety in Singapore, including
413) suggested that the particles could be used to establish bonding between
interlocutors, Low and Deterding (2003, p. 63) maintained that speakers tend to
use particles when they feel agitated or when they are talking about sensitive
issues. Apart from the particles, Lee (2003, p. 150) noticed that instances of code switching may include single lexemes or phrases from Hokkien and Malay. For example, expressions like *sian* and *bo-pian* were found. The former means “tired of something” while the latter means “hopeless” (p. 159). Lee (2003, p. 150) believed that these expressions bring about the Singaporean flavor to the conversations.

2.5.7 Sociocognitive approach to discourse

Attempts have been made by MacDonald, Badger and Regan (2009) to investigate the discursive manifestation of medical knowledge, viz., childhood epilepsy, across three text types: medical research articles, medical textbooks and clinician-client interviews (p. 177). Capitalizing on van Dijk’s theoretical framework, MacDonald and his associates (2009, p. 199) found that technical knowledge (i.e., socially shared knowledge among the medical professionals) tends to be presupposed in the research articles whereas it is transmitted explicitly in the textbooks as little prior specialized knowledge is shared by the expert writers and the apprentice readers. On the other hand, the medical interviews are the point of intersection for specialized knowledge and “Common Ground” knowledge. As the scholars said, “one way in which this took place was through the mapping of a conventionalized epistemic framework for epilepsy onto the phenomenological experience of the child/patient, which would be understood otherwise in terms of a common ground knowledge that is less well-defined” (p. 199). MacDonald, Badger and Regan’s (2009) findings and discussion appear to portray the laypersons as the key agents who introduce “Common Ground” knowledge into medical discourse. The fact that medical practitioners simultaneously share “Common Ground” knowledge and may deploy it either consciously or subconsciously in discourse seems to be downplayed. It is hoped that the present research on medical texts about pathological gambling will yield more comprehensive findings on how different types of knowledge are discursively manipulated by the medical professionals to constitute a medicalized “subject.”
2.6 Chapter summary

In addition to a brief overview of CDA, this chapter has presented the various theoretical notions in which the current research is grounded. The analytical categories employed for examining the data in the study are also laid down. This is followed by a review of the relevant earlier scholarly studies. Given the volume of the literature which continues expanding and flourishing, it is naturally impractical to explore all of them in detail. It has to be stressed that the intention of the present research is not to offer an exhaustive discursive treatment or analysis of gamblers’ identities. As Scollon (2000, p. 142) opined, our understanding of social life and mankind through discourse can never be “finalized.” Such “unfinalizability” constitutes a significant feature of discourse analysis and echoes what the renowned French scholar Barthes (1974, p. 5) mentioned in his work S/Z regarding the “infinity of languages” and the “plurality of entrances” for interpretation.

Despite the diversity associated with research in identities, the primary assumption governing this study will not drift from the one upheld by critical discourse analysts, i.e., identity being embedded in the grammar of language so identity analysis should involve “a close engagement with the language of texts” (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p. 44). As illustrated above, scholars have established a range of analytic tools for discourse analysis. However, what is rare among the previous researchers, as is evident in the literature review on the relevant empirical studies in Section 2.5, is a genuinely eclectic approach that involves diversified textual methods within one individual project. Moreover, it has been shown (and mentioned repeatedly) that gamblers’ identities still remain untouched by discourse analysts. In the light of these, the present research is intended to display how a bona fide synthesis of analytical concepts developed by different researchers can generate a language-cum-ideology-driven perspective towards the scholarly understanding of gamblers’ represented identities.

Having the analytic tools per se is not sufficient to engender meaningful research findings. Since CDA research is data-informed, the analytic tools have to work hand in hand with the data. In the following chapter, the three data sets
collected for the present study will be discussed.
Chapter 3 Research Methodology

CDA practitioners often avoid prescribing research methodology. Scholars such as Fairclough (2009, p. 167; 2010, pp. 6–7), Lee and Otsuji (2009, pp. 66–67), Norris and Jones (2005, p. 201) and van Dijk (2001, pp. 95–96) have stated that analysts should apply whatever methods suitable given the research questions, social issues and knowledge which they have in hand at a particular moment. The practice of eschewing any prescribed methods is sometimes referred to as “heuristic” (Bärenreuter, 2005, p. 198; Norris & Jones, 2005, p. 201; Scollon & Scollon, 2004, p. 16). Although diversity is well accepted and promoted by CDA researchers who try to restrain any methodological regulators, systematization is certainly an indispensable element for CDA studies. Systematic analysis of texts, which prevents scholars from merely offering “general commentary on discourse,” is the criterion that determines if a particular project should be placed within the realm of CDA (Fairclough, 2010, p. 10). In order for systematization to materialize in this study, vigilance has been practiced during the selection of the data sets.

The multifaceted character of CDA can be captured by the “principle of triangulation,” which means that a wide array of background theories and methods are taken into consideration during research (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 89). In fact, this principle can be extended to cover the multiplicity of data sources utilized by CDA scholars. Scollon (2001, p. 152) used the word “triangulation” when he urged researchers not to depend on only one or two kinds of data for analysis. Although Scollon (2001) mainly talked about mediated discourse analysis (MDA), the value of using multiple data sets is also applicable to CDA.

35 MDA is quite similar to CDA in the sense that both approaches attempt to address social problems by unfolding power relations in society. Nevertheless, MDA departs from CDA in one salient respect. While texts (or discourse) are in the spotlight for CDA practitioners, MDA researchers focus on social actions and downplay the role of language (Scollon, 2001, pp. 140–141). The approach of MDA is not suitable for the present research which is interested in gamblers’ institutionally represented identities in discourse. MDA would be deemed more appropriate if the research was aimed at exploring gamblers’ enacted behavior and any associated naturally-occurring interactions arising from their betting in casinos.
research as these two approaches to discourse analysis are usually regarded as close siblings. As Reisigl and Wodak (2009, p. 119) maintained, using multiple types/sets of data within a single research can help researchers move towards a “kaleidoscopic” view vis-à-vis the research object.

Hence, the present research will adhere to the “principle of triangulation” by making use of multiple data sets. Section 3.1 will define the site of investigation for this study; Section 3.2 will discuss the selection of the data sets and the procedure for data analysis; Section 3.3 will provide a chapter summary.

Before Section 3.1 begins, the three research objectives of the current project are re-stated below:

1. To devise a holistic framework for discourse analysis of gamblers’ represented identities as an institutional construct;
2. To examine how gamblers’ identities are discursively constructed and mediated by multiple social institutions—the press, the state and the medical professionals;
3. To discuss the social and ideological implications of the “multi-vocalic” institutional construction of gamblers’ represented identities.

3.1 Site of investigation

Gambling is an increasingly common social phenomenon in which countless discourses can be found. Some examples are gambling-related campaigns launched by the government, materials published by medical institutions about gamblers’ behavior and remarks on the gambling issue made in the media. All these offer excellent research substances for CDA scholars who generally welcome variability and fluidity. However, in order to carry out systematic analysis on the discursive construction of gamblers’ identities, it is necessary to nail down the site of investigation to a manageable size. In the present research, Singapore was chosen as the situational context where data were gathered and analyzed.
The reasons for selecting this Asian island city-state are two-fold. First, Singapore experienced the controversial legalization of casino gambling in recent years. In 2005, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (2005) announced that in order to boost tourism, the government had decided to abolish the ban on casino operations and two casino-based holiday resorts called Integrated Resorts, one at Marina Bayfront and the other at Sentosa Island, would be built. The decision to liberalize casino gambling was surrounded by a web of discourses. Despite the monetary pros which casino operations could potentially bring, one huge concern among government officials and the general public was the social ramification as having a casino readily available might lure local citizens into the gambling trajectory. Therefore, the debates about legalizing casino establishments within the country, some of which carry the pronounced anti-casino “voices,” inevitably encompass the portrayal of gamblers. Studying such portrayal can help to dissect the discursive construction of gamblers’ represented identities.

Second, due to its stringent law such as capital punishment meted out to drug dealers, the Singapore government is frequently given the status of “Nanny State” where the institutional power tends to be centralized for the purpose of maintaining social order. As Arnold (2006) expressed in The New York Times, “strait-laced Singapore and free-wheeling Las Vegas make strange bedfellows.” Thus, Singapore makes the site par excellence for researchers to study how the institution, albeit its desire to reap the financial benefits associated with casino operations, attempts to ward off the “unsavory elements” and create a “sanitized casino culture” (Arnold, 2006). One way to achieve this is to define and solidify the line between “problem” gamblers and its “non-problem” counterparts (see Section 1.1.2 for details). The state then has to take up the task of introducing the public to this “line” and reminding people not to transgress it. Following the Foucauldian thought and the basic principles of CDA stipulated in Section 2.1.2, the present research believes that the “line” is inseparable from the problem gamblers’ identities which are discursively formed by the state and other relevant
institutional parties. Singapore, due to the protective stance of its government, provides an ideal setting to explore this issue.\textsuperscript{36}

3.2 Data sets

As highlighted above, it is important to include multiple sets of data for discourse analysis. Figure 3.1 shows the data collection architecture designed for this study.

There are three sets of data in total. Different data sets represent “voices” or perspectives of various community members. By using the term from Scollon, Scollon and Jones (2012, p. 8), these data sets can be described as the products of various “discourse systems,” which collectively contribute to the construction of gamblers’ identities.

Figure 3.1 Data architecture

\textsuperscript{36} As pointed out by one member of the examination board, the sociopolitical climate of Singapore, together with the ideological forces behind the institutional organization of gambling, makes it particularly engaging as a site for CDA research, as compared to other places such as Macao and Las Vegas.
3.2.1 Newspaper forum letters

The first set of data comprises 47 forum letters from the prominent Singaporean broadsheet daily newspaper *The Straits Times*. Through the database LexisNexis, the letters were extracted and selected in accordance with a number of well-defined criteria (including the use of specific search words, the time span covered and the relevance of their contents). This is to ensure that all the letters chosen are related to the issue of gambling. Detailed information concerning the compilation of this text corpus will be given in the following sub-sections.

By capitalizing on the work of the notable critical thinker Habermas (1989), it is argued that while formally being a discursive product of the press as a social institution, the newspaper forum letters constitute a “public sphere” where relatively more “voices” in society are overtly gathered since all members of the community are welcome to be a contributor. In fact, among the 47 letters analyzed, 4 were written by the government officials, 9 were contributed by the mental health-care professionals and the rest were—broadly speaking—authored by non-affiliated individuals. It is believed that this “public sphere” offers a good point of entry for the interrogation of gamblers’ institutionally represented identities and it paves the way for the ensuing exploration of the other two data sets.

3.2.1.1 Time span

It was decided that only those letters published from 2005 onwards (17 April 2005 precisely) would be included in the pool of data because it was on 18 April 2005 that the Ministerial Statement about the government’s plan to cancel the ban on casino operations was delivered to the public (Lee, 2005). Since then, there have been countless debates in the community with respect to the consequences of the government’s action, one of which is the potential increase in the number of gamblers. To err on the side of caution, the cut-off date for the retrieval of the letters was set at one day prior to the release of the Ministerial

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More information has been given in Section 2.2.1.
Statement. As noted by Baker (2006, p. 13), one motive for compiling a
diachronic text corpus is to reveal the “incremental effect of discourse.” Thus, a
longer time frame for the inclusion of letters, which covers as lately as the time
when the compilation of this corpus began (i.e., 28 April 2013), would thus be
recommended.

3.2.1.2 The Straits Times

The Straits Times was selected as the source of data for four main reasons.
First, The Straits Times is one of the long-standing broadsheet daily newspapers in
Singapore. It was first published on 15 July 1845 and is now regarded as the
signature publication of the Singapore Press Holdings group which is publicly
listed.\footnote{Despite plenty of hearsay, Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) is not officially owned by
the government. SPH has a diversity of management and ordinary shareholders
(Singapore Press Holdings Ltd., 2013c).} The newspaper covers a wide range of news, but with particular focus on
Singapore and the Asian region (Singapore Press Holdings Ltd., 2013a).

Second, The Straits Times can be deemed the national daily paper in
Singapore as it is the most commonly perused within the territory. According to
the report prepared by the Audit Bureau of Circulations in Singapore (2012), The
Straits Times had an average net circulation of 352,003 per issue during the period
of January to December 2010, beating all its rivals within the industry. Being an
English language newspaper, The Straits Times is surely able to maintain a
considerably large quantity of target readers in Singapore. As said by Lim, Pakir
and Wee (2010), due to the language policy implemented in this multi-racial
society, English has become the de facto working language and is “implicated
everywhere” (p. 3). The high popularity of English in Singapore can be reflected
by the citizens’ effortless use of the language in naturalistic settings such as home
and casual peer communication (p. 9).

Third, it has been suggested that The Straits Times is imbued with an angle
that is slanted towards the governing party. Some people even claim that The

38 Despite plenty of hearsay, Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) is not officially owned by
the government. SPH has a diversity of management and ordinary shareholders
(Singapore Press Holdings Ltd., 2013c).
Straits Times is the “government’s mouthpiece” through which its readers would accede to the government’s actions and rhetoric (Koh, 2010, p. 33). This comment concerning The Straits Times makes it an extremely engaging site to investigate how the press mediates between the institutional voice of the government and other non-government voices.

Fourth and most importantly, there is a feature called “Forum Letters” (or “ST Forum” prior to the end of 2012) in The Straits Times. Contributors from anywhere, even the government officials, are invited to write in but they have to observe 12 rules and guidelines (see Appendix A for details). There is no restriction on the topics that the contributors can discuss. It can therefore be deduced that the forum letters constitute a platform that can potentially cater for a broader range of societal voices pertaining to the local gambling issues.

Inevitably, one may argue that the mediational role of the forum editor, who has the sole discretion to select contents for publication, poses a limitation to the use of the letters for examining the public sphere. However, the other side of the coin is that the editor is the institutional gatekeeper that ensures the relevance of each posting, so that it would not contain defamatory remarks or comments which are blatant personal attacks. In fact, attempts to explore other channels of studying the public sphere have been made. For instance, online comments made by the Internet users in “Yahoo! News Singapore” have once been briefly surveyed but it has been found that without any party acting as a mediator, the postings are turned into a tool for bloggers to mainly express their discontent or anguish about the governing party. Also, the identity of the writers on the virtual space can hardly be traced, whereas contributors of the forum letters in The Straits Times have to provide their full name, address and phone number when submitting their text (Singapore Press Holdings Ltd., 2013b). This can enhance the reliability of the forum letters as the data source in the present research.

3.2.1.3 Procedure

As regards the corpus compilation procedure, a collection of newspaper texts was first downloaded from the Internet archive LexisNexis, which is a top international commercial provider of searchable documents from around 50,000
sources, including *The Straits Times* (LexisNexis, 2013a). As building a specialized corpus of newspaper forum letters about gamblers in Singapore is what the present research is intended for, specific search words were needed to retrieve texts that are relevant to this study. Following the query logic laid down by LexisNexis (2013b), a decision was made to formulate the search request as “Singapore AND gambler.” This means that all documents from *The Straits Times* containing both words “Singapore” and “gambler(s)” in any segment of the text would be located. Since plural markers are included by default when a search in LexisNexis is executed (LexisNexis, 2013b), neither of the “wild card” symbols (“*” and “!”) was used for the word “gambler.” Figure 3.2 is a screen capture of the LexisNexis search engine interface with the request “Singapore AND gambler.”

The search query generated 896 hits, which comprise various types of newspaper texts like news reports, feature stories, commentary and editorials. The next step was to extract all the forum letters from the 896 hits. In total, 56 such letters were identified. Then, these 56 letters were read through manually in order to: (i) check whether they are directly related to gamblers in Singapore; (ii) obtain a general grasp of who the contributors are.

Figure 3.2 The search engine of LexisNexis
Seven out of the 56 letters were considered irrelevant and remotely connected to gambling due to two main reasons. First, they predominantly concern social issues other than gambling. Such non-gambling topics include smoking, property prices, fund-raising for cancer patients, etc. Second, although the word “gamblers” does appear in these texts, it is usually part of the metaphorical expressions that denote other “risk-taking” actions, such as traveling to the neighboring country Malaysia, where the crime rate is reportedly higher.

The contributors of the remaining 49 letters can be classified into five main categories: (i) the media corporation; (ii) the casino representative; (iii) government bodies; (iv) mental health-care professionals; (v) other non-affiliated individuals (hereafter referred to as laypersons). The first two categories—the media corporation and the casino representative—only have one letter each. So a decision was made to exclude these two letters from the analysis. Apart from the small quantity of letters in these two categories which might render the findings not reliable, another justification for such removal is that room can be made for more in-depth comparative analysis on the other three groups of “voices.”

Ultimately, 47 letters were included in the corpus. The distribution of the letters among the three categories as well as the number of words analyzed can be found in Table 3.1. More information about these letters, like the headings, contributors’ names and publication dates, can be located in Appendix B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Number of letters</th>
<th>Total number of words</th>
<th>Average number of words per letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government bodies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>838</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health-care</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2451</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professionals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laypersons</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7023</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10312</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.2 The government campaign—“Know the Line”

The second set of data came from gamblers’ speeches released by the Singapore National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) <http://www.ncpg.org.sg/>. As part of the national framework to tackle problem gambling, the NCPG, which was established in 2005, shoulders the responsibility for providing public education, preventive and rehabilitative programs on gambling addiction (Ministry of Community Development, Youth & Sports, 2005).

One campaign initiated by the NCPG is called “Know the Line,” which gives people advice on how to establish a boundary between social gambling and problem gambling. The Council invited members of the general public to express their views and/or experience about gambling and the spoken response produced was then uploaded online in the form of video clips. Instead of providing a black-and-white definition of problem gambling, the Council showed the videos through which the identities of problem gamblers and non-problem gamblers were constructed. Although the invited speakers appeared to be giving a monologue in the videos, it is likely that a moderator was present during the production and this person might have controlled or structured the speakers’ response in one way or the other. Therefore, it can be argued that the gamblers’ speeches are “censored” data and in essence reflect the institutional voices, or more specifically the voices of the government. Despite the unknown intervention from the moderator and lack of certain information such as the production date, the gamblers’ speeches still constitute valid and valuable resources for data analysis as they are readily available for public access and are intended to be seen by the audience in such an “edited” way.

In comparison with the four forum letters from the government bodies in the first data set, the didactic purpose of the governmental campaign is much more overt. In the forum letters, the government officials primarily are responding to public enquiries about the administrative measures regarding casino gambling in Singapore (e.g., the entry levy imposed on local citizens and the Casino Control
Thus, the letters are more informative by nature. On the other hand, the campaign initiated by the NCPG carries a salient instructional goal. It is intended as a tool or resource for the governing party to construct a boundary between non-problem gambling and problem gambling. The differences between the forum letters and the governmental campaign will become more noticeable in the data analysis.

3.2.2.1 The four speakers

As said above, the campaign initiated by the NCPG involves the Council interviewing people and posting their testimonials, which are in the form of video monologues, on its website. Figure 3.3 is a screen capture of the speech made by one speaker. As of June 2012, six speeches were provided. Table 3.2 shows the particulars of each speaker (NCPG, 2009b). The labels—“social gambler,” “affected family” and “recovering problem gambler”—are attached to the speakers by the NCPG without any explicit clarification. The Council does not specify the speakers’ ethnic and linguistic background, although the videos for the social gamblers WeiJie and MingCai, as well as their names, may suggest their Chinese ethnicity. For the remaining four speakers, the entire videos are blacked out. Since cross-linguistic variation is not the major concern of the present research and English is used extensively in Singapore, only the four English testimonials numbered 1, 3, 5 and 6 were examined. This results in a balanced number of social and recovering problem gamblers for the analysis. All the four testimonials were transcribed. The duration of the transcribed interviews amounts to 18 minutes. Table 3.3 indicates the number of running words transcribed. As can be seen, there is some variation in the length of the monologues. The recovering problem gamblers’ speeches are generally longer than those of the social gamblers.

Concrete examples of this can be found in the data analysis (Chapter 4).
Figure 3.3 A screen capture of the video monologue by WeiJie (NCPG, 2009b)

Table 3.2 Interviewees’ particulars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Testimonial numbers</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Language used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>WeiJie</td>
<td>Social gambler</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>Affected family</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ming</td>
<td>Recovering problem gambler</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Alan</td>
<td>Recovering problem gambler</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>Recovering problem gambler</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>English (with a short introduction in Chinese)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>MingCai</td>
<td>Social gambler</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40 These labels are prescribed by the NCPG. As mentioned at the beginning of this thesis in Section 1.1.2, within the context of the present research, social gamblers are considered non-problem gamblers while recovering problem gamblers are subsumed under problem gamblers.
Table 3.3 Number of running words transcribed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Number of running words</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social gamblers</td>
<td>WeiJie</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>1195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MingCai</td>
<td>689</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovering problem gamblers</td>
<td>Ming</td>
<td>1306</td>
<td>2116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>810</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.2.2 Procedure

As shown in Table 2.1 of Chapter 2, this study aims to investigate how gamblers’ identities are constructed through a set of linguistic means: process types, appraisal resources and code choice. This sequence was followed when the data were processed.

All the verbal groups connected to gamblers as participants were coded, based on the six process types. As remarked by Kong (2001, p. 476), there exist differences in terminology across scholars. For the sake of clarity, the framework of Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) was used. The data were then examined for attitude and engagement. According to Martin and White (2005, pp. 61–68), attitude can be “inscribed” or “invoked.” “Attitudinal inscription” refers to the explicit realization of attitude via evaluative lexis while “attitudinal invocation” is implicit and is based on the “selection of ideational meanings,” which may vary across contexts. To reduce the level of subjectivity of the findings, only instances of “attitudinal inscription” were identified. After the attitudinal analysis of affect, judgment and appreciation, the data were further investigated with respect to the sub-systems of judgment. Finally, the data were examined for code switching and mixing.

3.2.3 Texts by medical experts

The third set of data is derived from materials published by medical professionals. There are three sources of the data: (i) an international clinical handbook; (ii) a complimentary leaflet distributed by a public medical unit in
Singapore; (iii) a self-help volume authored by trained medical experts for a popular commercial series.

As mentioned above, diagnostic criteria for “pathological gambling” have been laid down by the American Psychiatric Association in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)* under the section of “impulse-control disorders not elsewhere classified” (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 663). The latest available copy of the *DSM* during the period of data collection was the revised fourth edition printed in 2000. At first glance the *DSM*, which was produced by a western organization, may seem incompatible with the site of investigation in this research. Nevertheless, the manual is an important document for researchers to understand how the identities of pathological gamblers were constructed in psychiatry, which after all is a western-dominated field as shown in Foucault’s (1965) genealogical account of madness. Also, the *DSM* is widely adopted as the global standard and it has been used by Singapore medical practitioners to undertake population-based research on mental disorders in the country (Chong et al., 2012; Lee, Hariram, Chan, Alexander & Ong, 2013).

Owing to the increasing demand of citizens who need help with respect to problem gambling, the Institute of Mental Health in Singapore set up the National Addictions Management Service (NAMS), which offers evaluation and treatment of disordered gambling by health-care professionals (National Addictions Management Service, 2008). To raise public awareness of problem gambling, the organization also maintains a website that provides educational materials, one of which is a free-of-charge downloadable brochure about gambling addiction. Data analysis would be performed on the brochure.

Nowadays, a number of private medical practitioners embark on the journey of writing self-help books as a way of not only promoting the medical paradigm among the general public, but also increasing their own reputation. As a medium of “professional-lay” (Linell, 1998b) communication, a self-help text about compulsive gambling from a well-known profit-making series “For Dummies” was selected for data analysis.
It has to be stressed that the three sources of data here were not chosen randomly. They were carefully selected so as to facilitate the investigation of how the medical epistemology (or knowledge) is “recontextualized” (Bernstein, 1990, 1996) from one text to another, depending on the “communicative purposes” (Swales, 1990) and target readers. More information, including the justifications for the choice of the texts, will be offered in the subsequent sub-sections.

In comparison with the first two sets of data, gambling discourse produced by professional institutions constitutes a different voice, which constructs and presents a medicalized image of problem gamblers. Unlike the nine forum letters from mental health-care professionals mentioned in Section 3.2.1, the medical texts in this set of data are the explicit embodiment of medical knowledge. While the forum letters cater for readers who are interested in gambling as a general social issue, readers of the medical texts are more likely to be concerned about the diagnostic features (viz., the medicalization) of problem gambling.

3.2.3.1 Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

The entry for pathological gambling was taken from the latest available version of the DSM, i.e., the revised fourth edition (referred to as the DSM-IV-TR hereafter) released in 2000. At the moment of data analysis, the fifth edition was not ready for publication, though it was said that by May 2013, the document would be formalized for clinical use (American Psychiatric Association, 2012b). The manual contains diagnostic information for various mental disorders, one of which is pathological gambling. The relevant text on pathological gambling, which was taken from pages 671 to 674 of the handbook for the purpose of analysis, can be found in Appendix C. The text comprises 1367 words. It begins with detailing the diagnostic features of pathological gambling and ends with a numbered list that summarizes the diagnostic criteria for the disorder. Although the DSM is produced by a western organization, it is a handbook commonly adopted to guide the practice of psychiatrists and psychologists in many parts of the world. Thus, this document is important for unraveling how the identities of pathological gamblers are constructed in psychiatry.
3.2.3.2 National Addictions Management Service promotional leaflet

The free-of-charge promotional leaflet entitled “Gambling Addiction Service” (see Appendix D) was obtained from the official website http://www.nams.org.sg/ of the National Addictions Management Service (NAMS) established by the Institute of Mental Health in Singapore in 2008. As is officially stated, the NAMS “treats problem gambling and other behavioral addictions (internet, gaming, etc.), and substance addictions (alcohol and drugs)” (National Addictions Management Service, 2008). The inception of the NAMS is closely related to the government effort to combat the potential rise in hardcore gambling due to the opening of the first two Singapore casino-based holiday resorts—Resorts World Sentosa and Marina Bay Sands—in 2010 (Kok, 2010). The leaflet consists of six pages. Like most tri-fold leaflets, a majority of the printed text clusters on the three inside panels while the outside panels include the cover page and some basic facts (e.g., the address and the phone number) about the NAMS. In stark contrast to the clinical manual, the NAMS leaflet embodies some visual ingredients, which will be excluded from the present research as textual analysis is its primary concern. In total, there are 426 words in the leaflet.

3.2.3.3 Addiction and Recovery for Dummies

The self-help material was taken from the reference series called “For Dummies.” Although there are few other comparable self-help series like “Teach Yourself” and “Overcoming Series” available in the market, the “Dummies” one was selected because of its high global omnipresence and its explicitly articulated goal to popularize specialized knowledge. As declared by its publisher, the “For Dummies” brand name has gained worldwide recognition. With the tagline “Making Everything Easier,” the series aims to enable readers to turn “I can’t” into “I can” (Wiley, 2013a). In other words, it is mainly targeted at the laypersons so that they will be “empowered” with specific knowledge. Thus, the series is an exemplar of “popularization discourse” that narrows the gap between the technical world and the realm of ordinary daily experience (Calsamiglia, 2003, p. 139). Under this series, there are multiple books written and they are arranged by topics, such as “computers and software” and “health and fitness” (Wiley, 2013b).
Attempts were first made to locate a book written exclusively on pathological or compulsive gambling under the two sub-topics “general health” and “mental health,” but to no avail. The closest match identified is the book *Addiction and Recovery for Dummies* written by Shaw, Ritvo and Irvine (2005). All these authors are clinical scientists and psychologists. The book covers different types of addiction like drugs, sex, computer games, food and work as well as a reasonable amount of information on treatment choices and recovery that is broadly applicable to any addiction. Since the present research is interested in the medical constitution of problem gamblers per se, only the text that is relevant to this scholarly inquiry would be selected and analyzed. The text under examination hence came from a section called “Compulsive Gambling” in “Chapter 3: Behavioral Addictions: Addictions without Substances.” The section occupies the book from pages 36 to 41 and is predominantly textual, except for the icons which mark the various sidebar features. With a total of 1670 words, the text is attached in Appendix E.

3.2.3.4 Justifications for the choice of texts

The choice of the three texts as the data pool for this study is based on three major considerations: (i) their commonality; (ii) their differences; (iii) the current research aim. The three texts are all produced by medical institutions or their representatives such as clinicians and practitioners. They fundamentally represent the medical “voice,” and can be categorized as medical discourse. Besides, they all originated in non-interactive settings. For the past two decades, research on medical discourse has been flourishing; however, there seems to be a skewed interest in the examination of spontaneous doctor-patient encounters and other forms of real-time communication in health-care environments (e.g., Cheng, Chung & Wong, 2013; Cordella, 2004; Iedema, 2007; Scheeres, Slade, Manidis, McGregor & Matthiessen, 2008). Medical discourse that is non-interactive by nature tends to be neglected, despite its significant role in constituting the medicalized “subject.”
Despite the commonality, the three texts differ in their “communicative purposes” (Swales, 1990, p. 58). Notwithstanding its availability to the public, the DSM, which is a clinical manual stipulating the diagnostic criteria for various mental illnesses, is principally an operational document for doctors to refer to. In other words, it is mainly for intra-group knowledge sharing among medical practitioners, viz., “expert-expert communication” in Pearson’s (1998, p. 36) terms. The promotional leaflet is reminiscent of a persuasive text for soliciting responses from potential problem gamblers so that they will seek medical advice or treatment. These “would-be” problem gamblers are assumed to have no working knowledge of pathological gambling. They have to be informed of the essential “symptoms” of pathological gambling before they are persuaded to look for professional assistance. The leaflet is therefore a medium of unidirectional knowledge transmission from experts to novices. Likewise, the self-help text provides layman readers who want to know more about gambling addiction with subject-specific information. However, it is different from the NAMS leaflet in one important respect. As stated above, the self-help text belongs to a commercial series which is intended to be purchased by the target readers. The text gives the medical practitioners a means of acquiring fame and profiting from the royalties. To a certain extent, it resembles a paid service offered by the professionals. By contrast, the NAMS leaflet is available for the audience gratis. It is like a publicity campaign launched to enhance the awareness of problem gambling in society.

The similarities and the differences between the three texts make the selection of data in the present research justifiable. The purpose of this study is to explore the medical creation of disordered gamblers through the “recontextualization” of knowledge in discourse. The clinical manual is included because it represents the prime discursive articulation (viz., codification) of medical knowledge vis-à-vis pathological gambling. It can be regarded as the most axiomatic presentation of the specialized knowledge. Such knowledge is transmitted and reproduced in the NAMS leaflet and the self-help text via “popularization.” As explained by Calsamiglia and van Dijk (2004, p. 371), “popularization” involves “recontextualization” of knowledge which is initially generated in specialized settings to which the laypersons have restricted access. Calsamiglia and van Dijk (2004) went on to suggest that “recontextualizing”
knowledge necessitates a change in its presentation because the parties who produce “popularization discourse” are not “passive mediators” of specialized knowledge. Thus, “recontextualization” may result in removal of certain information and/or addition of new information. It is said that the communicative events in question govern how knowledge gets “recontextualized” (p. 371). Due to the aforesaid inherent differences between the NAMS leaflet and the self-help text, the inclusion of one text but not the other would render the analysis less complete. It is hoped that the examination of the three texts along the line of knowledge “recontextualization” will yield a comprehensive, intellectually informed reading of the medical constitution of problem gamblers.

3.2.3.5 Qualitative approach to textual analysis

The present research on medical texts will take on a qualitative approach to textual analysis. Although the qualitative methodology in language studies has been criticized by researchers such as Stubbs (1997, p. 111) for its lack of neutrality and statistical reliability, its value in research should not be dismissed. As Breeze (2011, p. 505) pointed out, detailed, qualitative analysis of a small sample of texts can be the only plausible option in certain research projects so it should never be ruled out. In fact, Fairclough, the pioneer of critical discourse analysis (CDA), has been repeatedly performing qualitative textual analysis on dominating discourse produced by “hegemonic” power (e.g., Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1995, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2010). Similarly, when applying the sociocognitive framework in discourse studies, van Dijk (2003b, 2005a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) was inclined to approach his data qualitatively. Such practice was also adhered to by researchers who used van Dijk’s model in their analysis (e.g., MacDonald, Badger & Regan, 2009).

3.2.3.6 “Semantic units” identified

In order to systematically examine how knowledge is “recontextualized” via discourse, some common denominators applicable to the three medical texts had to be set up at the beginning. This would facilitate the subsequent “micro-level” linguistic analysis apropos specific “lexico-grammatical resources” (Bhatia,
The common denominators in this study were derived from the “macro-structure” of the clinical manual. As mentioned before, the clinical manual is the specialized text from which knowledge is “popularized” into the other two texts for the lay readers (viz., “popularization discourse”). It makes sense to use the clinical manual as the starting point to work out what the common denominators are. According to van Dijk (1977, p. 148), the term “macro-structure” is used to denote the global organization of a text; it is analogous to the concept “topic of conversation.” The common denominators that are generated from the “macro-structure” of the clinical manual are summarized in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Major “semantic units” identified in the clinical manual and their descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Semantic units”</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>General descriptive statements of what pathological gambling is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Individual specific diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence</td>
<td>Ubiquity of pathological gambling in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other problems</td>
<td>Non-diagnostic features and disorders associated with pathological gambling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To ease the ensuing discussion, the label “semantic units” (see below for further information) will be adopted to refer to the common denominators identified. These semantic units are the major “topical” elements which the clinical manual contains. Without any doubt, sub-topics can always be identified but it is necessary to keep the semantic units as broad as possible. The purpose of coming up with the semantic units is to facilitate the investigation of knowledge “recontextualization.” Units that are too specific and delicate may not be helpful for the analysis; instead they may even become a burden as every text is bound to be unique (Barthes, 1977, pp. 146–147).

In fact, many labels have been coined to talk about the “macro-structure” of a text since van Dijk’s (1977) discussion of this notion. Beaugrande and
Dressler (1981) used the expression “schematic structure” while Widdowson (1973) applied the label “rhetorical structure” (as cited in Bhatia, 2004, pp. 8–9). In genre analysis, the term “move” has been popularized among scholars who attempt to derive meaningful intra-textual units from a representative sample of texts belonging to one genre for subsequent systematic analysis of the associated “lexico-grammatical” characteristics (e.g., Bhatia, 1993, 2004, 2008; Hyland, 2006, 2013; Swales, 1990). At first sight, it might seem reasonable to conveniently borrow any of these terms to denote the common denominators stated in Table 3.4 above. Nevertheless, the label “semantic unit” is believed to be much more suitable, given the context of the present research.

Terms closely related to genre analysis, such as “schematic structure,” “rhetorical structure” and “move,” all embody the researchers’ central concern over the “patterns of connectivity” in texts, or more specifically the “regularities of discourse organization” with respect to structural components (Bhatia, 2004, pp. 8–9). Practitioners of genre analysis are primarily interested in making generalizations about the presence of specific structural elements and their ordering within a particular genre. This direction of research has been reflected in the work of Swales (1990)—the pioneer of genre analysis who demonstrated an overt endeavor to devise a model that illustrates the “rhetorical movement” in research article introductions (p. 140). Since the present study focuses on knowledge “recontextualization” across three selected texts in medical discourse rather than the search for any conventional organizational patterns, using labels which evoke the work of genre analysis can be misleading.

Conversely, the label “semantic unit” is literally free from any explicit association with genre analysis, thereby representing a better fit for this study. The adoption of the label is inspired by the linguistic concept of “semantic field.” As Murphy and Koskela (2010, p. 148) remarked, a “semantic field” is considered to be a “theoretical representation of a set of related vocabulary.” Likewise, it can be argued that for the purpose of the present research, a “semantic unit” theoretically comprises a set of related utterances or statements vis-à-vis the medical constitution of pathological gamblers.
After the semantic units are identified, a “matrix analysis” similar to the one suggested by Hoey (2001, p. 113) was carried out for the three texts. Although Hoey (2001) mainly applied such analysis on stories in order to find out the parallels and differences between characters, this method can be adapted to the present research to dissect the information that each text contains. Due to limited space, Table 3.5 constitutes only a partial representation of the matrix analysis performed. The analysis provides a reference point to compare how knowledge is reproduced, reformulated and “recontextualized” across the three texts.
Table 3.5 A partial representation of the matrix analysis conducted on the three texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Semantic units”</th>
<th>Clinical manual</th>
<th>NAMS leaflet</th>
<th>“Dummies” text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>“The essential feature of Pathological Gambling is persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior (Criterion A) that disrupts personal, family, or vocational pursuits. The diagnosis is not made if the gambling behavior is better accounted for by a Manic Episode (Criterion B).”</td>
<td>“Gambling addiction is a disease much like alcohol and drug addictions...”</td>
<td>“Pathological gambling has been officially defined, in psychiatric terms, as ‘a persistent, recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior that disrupts personal, family, or vocational pursuits’ (DSM-IV-TR).”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>“The individual may be preoccupied with gambling (e.g., reliving past gambling experiences, planning the next gambling venture, or thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble) (Criterion A1). Most individuals with Pathological Gambling say that they are seeking ‘action’ (an aroused, euphoric state) or excitement even more than money. Increasingly larger bets, or greater risks, may be needed to continue to produce the desired level of excitement (Criterion A2)...”</td>
<td>“Signs of a Possible Gambling Problem Gambling more often Gambling for longer periods of time Gambling with larger amounts of money Gambling in spite of negative consequences e.g. huge losses, poor job performance, relationship problems Gambling to escape from emotional problems, worries or frustrations...”</td>
<td>“At the same time, you can’t maintain the excitement unless you’re continually involved in high-risk bets. Your bets increase, and ultimately, the increased risk puts you in a vulnerable situation where you can’t afford to lose... and then, sure as the sun rises, you do lose.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence</td>
<td>“Community studies estimate the lifetime prevalence of Pathological Gambling to range from 0.4% to 3.4% in adults, although prevalence rates in some areas (e.g., Puerto Rico, Australia) have been reported to be as high as 7%.”</td>
<td>“According to a 2008 MCYS study, nearly 2% of Singapore residents aged 18 years and above who were surveyed may experience problems related to their gambling.”</td>
<td>“Many groups, from governments to native peoples to criminals are involved in the gambling business. In fact, research reveals that gambling is a $100 billion per year business in the United States...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other problems</td>
<td>“Distortions in thinking (e.g., denial, superstitions, overconfidence, or a sense of power and control) may be present in individuals with Pathological Gambling...”</td>
<td>“We also provide basic debt management information, or refer you to credit counselors if necessary.”</td>
<td>“All of the people who wound up with these huge problems went through a phase of denial...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 Rationale behind the selection of the three data sets

A typical criticism about CDA is that the selection of small data sets reduces the level of objectivity associated with the analysis. As noted by Chilton (2013, p. 1436), the two scholars who have openly criticized CDA along this direction are Stubbs (1997) and Widdowson (2004). In response to the criticism, there have been suggestions on merging corpus linguistics into the analysis of discourse (Mautner, 2009). The corpus approach to discourse (or more commonly known as corpus linguistics) refers to the utilization of computer-assisted means or tools to study huge quantities of authentic language data (Stubbs & Halbe, 2013, p. 1377). Although empirical support can be derived from using computer software programs to study a large amount of texts, corpus linguistics does not provide the type of rich, multifaceted, meticulous and interpretive analysis obtained via close manual examination of individual texts (Bednarek, 2009, p. 22).

The small data sets collected for the present study cannot diminish its value. First and foremost, the small data size facilitates the above-mentioned in-depth textual analysis. Second, the texts come from multiple institutional sources, and the significance of these sources among people in Singapore is incontestable. As explained in Section 3.2, the newspaper forum letters were published in The Straits Times, which has a large readership in the country. The governmental campaign is a nationwide promotion against problematic gambling, despite the fact that only four monologues were selected for analysis. Justifications for the choice of the three medical texts have been spelt out in Section 3.2.3.4. Actually, attempts were made to look for additional medical texts originating from the Singaporean context; however, the texts identified do not strictly reflect the medical “voices.” For instance, counseling services are also available for problem gamblers from voluntary bodies such as Christian Care Services Singapore, One Hope Centre and Shan You Counselling Centre (Gordon Moody Association, 2013). The first two are run by Christians while Shan You Counselling Centre is governed by the Buddhist principles (Government of Singapore, 2014; Shan You Counselling Centre, 2010). If the texts produced by these organizations were included, the presence of religious “voices” would complicate the analysis of the
current research, which is primarily interested in the medical “recontextualization” of knowledge.

3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter introduces the site of investigation as well as the three data sets for the present research. It has been shown that the selection of the data was carefully done and is hardly arbitrary. Many factors, even the researcher’s ability to gain access to the research materials, were taken into consideration when the data were chosen. In the forthcoming chapters, the analysis of the data, which involves the use of the analytical categories stipulated earlier in Chapter 2, will be offered. To end this chapter, it is worth highlighting that the combination of various analytic tools (viz., textual methods) for the examination of a diverse range of texts across different contexts renders the methodology used in this study unique. As mentioned at the beginning of this thesis, it is hoped that such uniqueness will aid the development of a research paradigm for future studies of gambling discourse.
Part II Opening Scene: The Public Sphere

Chapter 4 Data Analysis of Newspaper Forum Letters

As the opening scene for the analysis of the subsequent two data sets, this chapter reports on and discusses the findings in relation to the discursive representation of gamblers via the press. To this end, a corpus of newspaper forum letters which had been published between 2005 and 2013 in the leading English language local newspaper *The Straits Times* was compiled.

As stated in Chapter 2, Fairclough (2003, pp. 87–88) suggested that analyzing the meaning relations (i.e., causal or logical relations) between sentences or clauses can offer illuminating insights into three particular concerns in social research: (i) legitimation; (ii) hegemony, aka “equivalence and difference;” (iii) “surface” appearances versus “underlying” realities. Fairclough’s (2003) socially-oriented explication of the meaning relations between sentences or clauses will lay the groundwork for the analysis of the newspaper forum letters. To make the discourse analysis performed richer, Fairclough’s (2003) taxonomy is strengthened by incorporating models from social semiotics (van Leeuwen, 2007, 2008) and critical stylistics (Jeffries, 2010a, 2010b).

In the coming sections, salient patterns obtained from the data will be presented and discussed, alongside their ideological implications. The chapter will conclude by summarizing the analytic outcomes. Further questions which arise from the data analysis and hence pave the way for the next two chapters will be revealed as well.

4.1 Legitimation strategies identified from the data

As displayed in Table 4.1 below, the government bodies tend to construct legitimation through “authorization” more often. Tokens of “authorization” take up more than half (68.42%) of all the legitimation instances identified. On the other hand, the laypersons and the mental health-care professionals exhibit
predominantly similar legitimation behaviors as “rationalization” is more prevalent among both groups of writers.

Table 4.1 Legitimation strategies identified in the forum letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authorization</th>
<th>Laypersons</th>
<th>Government bodies</th>
<th>Mental health-care professionals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>189 (100%)</td>
<td>19 (100%)</td>
<td>77 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokens per 100 words</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before the discussion of specific findings, it is important to first take note of the normalized frequency (i.e., the number of tokens per 100 words) at the bottom of Table 4.1. The between-group comparison indicates that despite the
relatively narrow variations across the three groups, legitimation is the most robust (3.14 occurrences per 100 words) in the letters from the mental health-care professionals. The ideological implications of this finding will be explored later.

4.1.1 Personal authority

Most tokens of “authorization” produced by the government bodies belong to the sub-category “personal authority.” In these cases, the government usually uses itself or its institutional representative—the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG)—as the source of authority to establish legitimation within the text. It is worth noticing that on some occasions, the first-person plural exclusive “we” is employed. Examples are provided below:

(1) We plan to adopt a risk-based approach, taking into consideration a patron’s individual circumstances, including frequency and pattern of visits and other telltale signs such as overstaying beyond the 24-hour period. (Beck, 9 July 2012)

(2) The NCPG had earlier streamlined and shortened its workflow for family exclusion orders. We agree with Mr Law that family support is an important source of help and encouragement to the gambler. […] The NCPG has taken note of Madam Chia’s suggestion. We will continue to study the feedback from affected families, counselors and the public, and review how else to better protect families affected by problem gambling. (Lim, 2 July 2011)

(3) The NCPG agrees with the views expressed that problem gambling could arise from other forms of gambling and at venues other than the casinos. The NCPG has a Responsible Gambling sub-committee that has started to liaise and have dialogue with gambling operators to develop responsible gambling practices for these operations. (Lim, 19 January 2007)
Van Leeuwen (2007, 2008) stated that “personal authority legitimation” is usually marked by the verbal process $^{41}$ “say,” as in “the government says.” However, the above examples show that the linguistic realization of “personal authority legitimation” is much more diverse. Material processes (e.g., “adopt,” “had streamlined” and “study”), mental processes (e.g., “agree” and “has taken note of”) and relational processes (e.g., “has”) can be found. The presence of verbal processes does not seem to be the crucial element in “personal authority legitimation.”

Instead, closer observation of the examples reveals that identifying the performed speech acts (Searle, 1975) is more important. “Commissives,” which are “illocutionary acts” that commit the speaker to a future action, can be identified in Examples 1 and 2 when the government bodies write, “We plan to adopt a risk-based approach…” and “We will continue to study the feedback…” On the other hand, “representatives” are in operation when the government bodies say in Examples 2 and 3, “We agree with Mr Law that family support is an important source of help and encouragement to the gambler” and “The NCPG agrees with the views expressed that problem gambling could arise from other forms of gambling and at venues other than the casinos.” By articulating their agreement to certain idea, the speakers are committing themselves to the “truth of the expressed proposition” (Searle, 1975, pp. 10–11). In this case, the “expressed propositions” are those shared by members of the public like Mr Law.

Why do the aforementioned “commissives” and “representatives” matter to the readers of the letters? The credibility of these speech acts stems from the “personal authority” associated with the government bodies. Due to such authority, the target readers would be less likely to doubt the promises and the assertions made by the writers of the letters. Thus, it can be argued that through “personal authority,” the writers are legitimizing not just their undertakings to tackle the gambling issue in society, but also specific public opinions on problem gamblers.

$^{41}$ Under SFL, process types reflect the “experiential” functions of language. In general, there are six major process types—material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral and existential (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 171). For more information, refer to Section 2.3.2.
4.1.2 Expert recommendation

Another salient pattern spotted for the category of “authorization” is the ubiquity of “expert recommendation” in the texts from the mental health-care professionals. Ten such tokens (12.99%) are found. Examples are given below:

(4) **As a volunteer counselor, I** have seen a few hardcore gamblers who have wasted their money and lives at the casinos here. Some have even lost their homes and families in the process. (Goh, 3 May 2012)

(5) **Based on our clinical experience in treating problem gamblers, we** think it is a grave misconception to believe that ‘while the gamblers may sound desperate, they actually pose a low suicide risk and are more impulsive than anything else’ […] *We* have managed many cases of people suffering from gambling disorders who have attempted suicide or have had serious suicidal thoughts. (Tan & Lee, 30 July 2011)

(6) **We** found that problem-gambling numbers do not increase, and may even decrease if the introduction of casinos is accompanied by the provision of substantial services to prevent problem gambling. These include a vigorous public-awareness program about the dangers of gambling and how to avoid them. **We** also found that more than 80 per cent of those who completed our free-treatment program overcame their problem. (Collins, 5 May 2005)

As van Leeuwen (2007, 2008) remarked, legitimacy is attained via expertise in “expert authority/recommendation.”42 The expertise can be overtly indicated, for example by the explicit description of credentials, or it can simply be taken for granted. In Examples 4 and 5, the use of the marked Themes43 “as a

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42 Although “expert authority/recommendation” can be closely related to the other legitimation strategy known as “scientific (theoretical) rationalization,” there is a fundamental difference between the two. As shown in Table 2.2, “expert authority” refers to the use of the experts’ own status as the source of legitimation whereas “scientific rationalization” relies heavily on foregrounding objectified knowledge as the sentence subject.

43 The term *Theme* is well-defined under SFL. It functions as the “point of departure” of a message and is typically the initial “ideational” component of a sentence/clause. The
volunteer counselor” and “based on our clinical experience in treating problem gamblers” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 73) helps to foreground the expertise of the writers. What can be regarded as idiosyncratic experience about the undesirable consequences of gambling (“I have seen a few hardcore gamblers…”) or a personal judgment about gamblers’ suicidal risks (“we think it is a grave misconception to believe that…”) is legitimized by means of “expert authority” as counselors and clinicians are assumed to possess expert knowledge, rendering their utterances trustworthy.

Although the marked Theme is not used in Example 6, the propositions conveyed in the two “projected clauses,” which are introduced by the conjunction “that,” are legitimized due to the referent of the agent “we,” i.e., the writer and his fellow researchers who specialize in problem-gambling prevention and treatment. What is expressed in the “projected clauses” is derived from the research work done by experts. Through “expert authority,” the significance of the prevention and treatment vis-à-vis problem gambling becomes legitimized.

4.1.3 Moral value evaluation

Table 4.1 shows that “moral value evaluation” is quite remarkable (23.28%) in the letters from the laypersons. The figures for the government bodies and the mental health-care professionals are 5.26% and 16.88% respectively. For the laypersons, 33 out of the 44 tokens of “moral evaluation legitimation” are pertinent to the use of evaluative lexis. This is evident from the following examples:

(7) The recent anti-gambling campaign by the National Council on Problem Gambling urges problem gamblers to seek help to “turn your luck around”.

The choice of the word “luck” is inappropriate. The sentence should be “turn your life around” instead, because the actions taken by the gambler to salvage remaining part of the sentence/clause is the Rheme. Generally, the Theme is realized by the sentence subject. Otherwise, it is called a “marked Theme” since it does not follow the expectation of a usual sentence order in English (Kong, 2004, pp. 345–346).
the situation will change his life, and have nothing to do with luck. (Lee, 21 February 2013)

Surely such publicity would make it even more attractive for seniors to try their luck, or continue gambling. I can well imagine seniors now citing Madam Choo’s example to rebut family members and friends who try to dissuade them from gambling at the casinos. The media should stop reporting about Ms Choo, which has inadvertently glamorized gamblers like her. (Tan, 12 November 2011)

In Example 7, the writer comments on the slogan “turn your luck around” designed by a governmental anti-gambling organization for its campaign. He uses the evaluative adjective “inappropriate” to describe the use of the word “luck” in this context, as he believes that tackling problem gambling is not by any means related to the reversal of the gamblers’ luck. He moves on to provide a substitute—“life”—for the word “luck.” As van Leeuwen (2008) mentioned, the identification of “moral evaluation” in texts goes beyond an “explicit, linguistically motivated method” and text analysts are able to only “spot” it in accordance with the “commonsense cultural knowledge” (p. 110). Generally, based on the moral value system, when a specific social practice is considered “inappropriate,” it is expected to be discarded or rectified. Via “moral value evaluation,” the writer, who is a non-affiliated individual, legitimates the life-wrecking nature of gambling and de-legitimizes the belief in luck.

De-legitimization of people’s reliance on luck is also manifested in Example 8. A 58-year-old working-class woman visited one of the two casinos in Singapore and won the jackpot. She told the press about her intention to donate half of the money won to charity. Because of this, her case received massive public attention, especially through the media reports. The writer of the letter attempts to de-legitimate the glorification of the woman’s “generosity,” which he attributes to the outcome of luck. The words utilized—“attractive” and “glamorized”—are heavily loaded with value evaluation. While de-legitimizing the act of trying one’s own luck, the writer is legitimizing the deterrence (or at least the non-advocacy) of gambling. And this is done by appealing to “moral evaluation” without recourse to authority of any sort.
4.1.4 Instrumental rationalization

Both the laypersons and the mental health-care professionals make use of all the three sub-types of “instrumental rationalization” whereas the government bodies solely rely on “goal-oriented” “instrumental rationalization.”

Accounting for 14.81% of all the legitimation tokens identified, “means-oriented” “instrumental rationalization” is prominent in the letters written by the laypersons. Besides being marked by “circumstances of means” (viz., with words like “by” and “through”), this kind of “instrumental rationalization,” as van Leeuwen (2008, pp. 114–115) explained, may emphasize the “potential” of certain actions for serving particular purposes with the use of clauses which signal “facilitating” processes including “allow,” “help,” “promote,” etc. Some examples extracted from the data of the present research are:

(9) Monthly ‘chip exchange limits’, based on salary, might also be imposed on top of an entry levy. This will help to more effectively mitigate the social risks posed by the casinos, while enabling them to continue to deliver economic value to Singapore. (Chen, 18 July 2012)
(10) Singapore should implement what the South Korean government has done, by forbidding its citizens from entering its casinos. This will definitely help frequent gamblers to overcome their addiction. (Ng, 10 July 2012)
(11) I think concerned parents should concentrate on bringing up their children with strong moral values. This will enable them to make the correct decisions when they face the world as we will never be able to hide all things ‘evil’ or potentially evil from them. (Gill, 4 January 2007)

As the above examples demonstrate, “means-oriented” “instrumental rationalization” is employed to legitimize the suggestions given by the laypersons concerning how to eradicate or alleviate the gambling problems in society. In Examples 9 and 10, the suggested purposeful actions are administrative measures which only the institutional parties, especially the state, have the power to initiate. By offering such suggestions, the writers are in fact subjugating themselves and/or
the whole society to institutional control. On the other hand, in Example 11, the writer resorts to the moral value system to instrumentally rationalize the necessity of parental guidance in preventing problem gambling (see the previous subsection for details on “moral value legitimation”).

Although “goal-oriented” “instrumental rationalization” is common across the three groups of writers, there is a clear demarcation in terms of its realization, as the following examples exemplify:

**Government bodies**

(12) Casino patrons can also use the pre-commitment system that both casinos have already set up **to limit how much they will spend at any visit.** (Beck, 9 July 2012)

(13) The NCPG has a Responsible Gambling Sub-committee that has started to liaise and have dialogue with gambling operators **to develop responsible gambling practices for these operations.** (Lim, 19 January 2007)

**Mental health-care professionals**

(14) I have worked with professional counselors **to help gamblers.** (Loh, 10 March 2012)

(15) Perhaps, more online modes of support can be formed **to provide problem gamblers with privacy and some sense of dignity** when they call in for assistance. (Goh, 28 February 2012)

(16) Instead of piling blame and guilt on gamblers, I suggest that a counseling program be put in place **to help this group of people.** […] Do we have a comprehensive national program **to assist gamblers in weaning off their addiction,** and if so, how successful has it been? (Goh, 20 January 2010)

**Laypersons**

(17) The CRA**[^44]** should spell out the criteria **to ensure that only those who are not likely to end up in financial trouble are accredited.** (Cheng, 12 March 2012)

[^44]: CRA=Casino Regulatory Authority, a Singaporean government organization
The Government must impose stricter rules and regulations on the casinos’ premises to prevent these problems. (Balu, 14 April 2011)

The Government must do more to discourage this vice. To prevent both Singaporeans and foreign workers from falling prey to the gambling trap, the entrance fee to both casinos could be raised to $500 per day and $10,000 per year. (Low, 11 November 2010)

Comparison across the three groups of writers displays three different patterns. First, the government bodies engage in “goal-oriented” “instrumental rationalization” to legitimize the regulatory measures implemented, such as the restriction on the amount of money wagered (Example 12) and the establishment of a sub-committee that works closely with casino operators (Example 13). Second, the mental health-care professionals’ utilization of “goal-oriented” “instrumental rationalization” is to mainly legitimize the benefits of counseling (Example 16) and other psychological support (Examples 14 & 15). This can be inferred from the constant use of the material processes “help” and “assist” where the gamblers are the “goal.” Third, similar to the use of “means-oriented” “instrumental rationalization,” “goal-oriented” “instrumental rationalization” is adopted by the laypersons to legitimize their suggestions on what the governing party should do to handle problem gambling, as the “agent” of all the proposed purposeful actions is the government (Examples 17, 18 & 19).

4.1.5 Theoretical rationalization

For both the laypersons and the mental health-care professionals, “theoretical rationalization” comprises nearly 40% of all the legitimation instances identified in the letters. Notwithstanding the popularity of this legitimation strategy among the two groups of writers, the findings show that a notable difference exists between them in two important respects.

First, there is a tendency for the mental health-care professionals to mobilize numerical facts or research results (i.e., “scientific rationalization”) to
legitimize the seriousness as well as the essential monitoring of problem gambling, as evidenced by the following examples:

(20) **Credit Counseling Singapore statistics** show that the proportion of people seeking counseling and attributing gambling as a main cause for being in debt climbed from 22 per cent last year to 29 per cent in the first half of this year. (Kuo, 10 September 2011)

(21) Elevated rates of suicide attempts among problem gamblers are well established. For example, a **2002 study on treatment-seeking pathological gamblers** reported that 49 per cent had a history of suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts. **In a more recent local study published in the Singapore Medical Journal this year**, 17.2 per cent of help-seeking gamblers had a history of suicide attempts. (Tan & Lee, 30 July 2011)

(22) **On the basis of the research described above**, this need not lead to an increase in gambling-related problems among Singaporeans, provided it is accompanied by appropriate public education. (Collins, 5 May 2005)

In Example 20 and the first half of Example 21, the writers make use of the representational choice called “utterance autonomization” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 46), where social actors are represented via reference to their utterances, reminiscent of “the fact speaking for itself.” Here, the medical voice is conveyed by means of the “statistics” and the “2002 study,” which are represented as the agents of the “showing” and the “reporting” processes. In the second half of Example 21 and Example 22, the medical voice is further accentuated by the two marked Themes—“in a more recent local study published in the Singapore Medical Journal this year” and “on the basis of the research described above.”

“Scientific rationalization” is used by the mental health-care professionals not only to legitimize: (i) the various problems like debt and suicide arising from gambling; (ii) the importance of education for the purpose of prevention, but also to evoke the “medicalized” image of gamblers in the sense that problem gamblers are no different in any way from specimens that can be examined under the realm of medical science.
While the health-care professionals favor the use of established knowledge to rationalize their claims, the laypersons prefer using “explanation” as a strategy of “theoretical rationalization.” Examples are specified below:

(23) The idea of limiting the number of casino visits for Singaporeans and permanent residents does not address the root of the problem, as frequent gamblers still get the chance to gamble away their hard-earned savings. (Ng, 10 July 2012)

(24) Since we cannot remain isolated from the onslaught of gambling, at least have personal responsibility to control oneself. (Kao, 27 August 2010)

(25) As they have already paid $100 to enter, most people will be thinking in order to make their trip there worthwhile, they must at least win back their $100. (Lim, 14 February 2006)

(26) As the gambling institutions would be unable to distinguish and filter out “true gamblers” from “recreational gamblers”, the proposed entry fee would act as one of the many prongs of social safeguard applicable to all. (Low, 21 October 2005)

In all the four examples above, “hypotaxis” is employed. The explanations are marked by the subordinating conjunctions “since” and “as.” These explanations function as the writers’ justifications for their affirmation or disapproval of the different possible ways to deal with gambling in society, such as restricting local residents’ access to the casinos and charging them for casino admission (viz., the $100 entry levy). Unlike the health-care professionals’ letters where statistics or sophisticated research results are used for legitimation, the explanations given by the laypersons to legitimize their claims are pieces of information that belong to the field of non-specialized knowledge. For instance, it is commonly known that other than visiting the casinos, “frequent gamblers still get the chance to gamble away their hard-earned savings” (Example 23); many people are aware that “we cannot remain isolated from the onslaught of gambling” (Example 24).

Based on the finding, it can be inferred that the laypersons have the propensity to mobilize commonly-shared knowledge to provide justifications for
or to rationalize their viewpoints vis-à-vis how gambling can be curbed. The relatively more frequent use of “explanation” as a means of “theoretical rationalization” also reveals the laypersons’ reluctance to take things at face value. Instead, they are continually examining the causal relations between gambling-related events, i.e., the “explanatory logic” in Fairclough’s (2003) terminology. More detailed discussion about this can be found in Section 4.3.

4.1.6 Mythopoesis

The least popular legitimation strategy is “mythopoesis.” It cannot be identified in any of the letters from the laypersons or the government bodies. Only the mental health-care professionals make use of it. This is not surprising as “mythopoesis” is essentially “storytelling” and narration usually consumes more textual space, which might make the writers’ contributions overly long for publication.

All instances of “mythopoesis” found in the data are in the form of a “moral tale,” where legitimate behavior attracts rewards (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 117). One example is as follows:

(27) I used to gamble on sports at Singapore Pools kiosks for many years and after losing a lot of money, I stopped. Nevertheless, it was an uphill battle as the addiction is more psychological than anything else. One is literally drawn to place a bet on certain days at a certain time and I realized that trying to end the habit was virtually impossible. I succeeded only after I moved abroad. The move somehow broke my habit. I have been gambling-free for close to two years and can now watch soccer games in peace rather than sweating over my betting slips. (Goh, 28 February 2012)

The writer, who is a mental health-care professional himself, admits that he is a former gambler and has successfully quit the habit due to strong willpower. His prize is “peace while watching soccer games.” Using himself as the protagonist of the “moral tale,” the health-care professional is blurring the boundary between gamblers and professionals, demonstrating the omnipresence
of gambling regardless of one’s occupation. At the same time, the writer is legitimizing not only the addictive nature of gambling, but also the proposition that problem gambling is “curable.”

4.1.7 Summary and ideological implications

The analysis has revealed how the three groups of writers construct their own legitimized worlds with respect to the issue of problem gambling in society. The patterns of the legitimation strategies used vary across the three groups, and this in some way reflects their within-group ideologies. Nonetheless, the legitimized worlds created are not mutually exclusive; in fact, they are inextricably intertwined with one another, leading to the “macro-ideology”—the legitimized clampdown on problem gambling.

The government bodies tend to employ legitimation strategies less often, as compared to the other groups, and their use of legitimation is rather distinctive because a large majority of legitimation tokens are attributed to the category of “authorization.” The government representatives are inclined to capitalize on their own authority (i.e., “personal authority”) while performing specific speech acts such as “commissives” and “representatives.”

Two main implications can be derived from such findings. First, the Singaporean government has long been perceived as being “paternalistic.” By adopting a “heavy-handed approach” in public administration, the government becomes a social actor that can hardly be challenged (Lam, 2000, p. 397). Because of this, even without any legitimation strategies, the letters would still carry a lot of weight among the readers. Naturally, the need to employ various legitimation devices to strengthen or bolster the ideas conveyed is less imminent. Second, the prevalence of “personal authority” identified in the letters is an unequivocal sign of the government’s superiority and its dominance over the citizens. Nevertheless, the institutional control is not executed bluntly. Instead, when aligning “personal authority” with their speech acts, the government tries to pacify the readers by reassuring them that the institution is aware of the ills.
associated with gambling and is committed to protecting the citizens from the social problems through implementation of policies and administrative measures.

The laypersons, as a party supposedly subjected to domination, cling onto the moral value system (manifested via the use of evaluative lexis) for not only legitimizing the pitfalls of gambling, but also de-legitimizing people’s reliance on luck for material gain. “Rationalization” is a preferred strategy when the laypersons are legitimizing their suggestions on what the government could do so as to curtail gambling problems within the community. They even make use of their general knowledge to explain or to justify their statements, displaying their initiative in forging a causal link between gambling-related events.

At first glance, the laypersons seem to show their dissociation from institutional power by minimizing the use of “authorization” as a means of legitimation. However, this is not really the case, as the instances of “instrumental rationalization” always concern how the laypersons desire the government to help them. This is also the spot where “intertextuality” between the government bodies and the laypersons emerges. In other words, the forum letters constitute a “dialogic” discourse space or channel for the laypersons to communicate to the governing party within the social institutional confine of the press. For the laypersons, problem gambling should be managed in accordance with both moral principles and institutional force.

The mental health-care professionals’ letters contain a wider spectrum of legitimation strategies. Besides, they are the most legitimation-intensive, as shown by the normalized frequency of legitimation tokens. Detailed analysis demonstrates that there is a propensity for the mental health-care professionals to promote their expertise or the scientific paradigm while doing legitimation work. This claim is supported by the occurrences of “expert recommendation” and “scientific rationalization,” which far outnumber those identified in the letters from the other two groups. Legitimation strategies are typically applied to talk about the ramifications (such as suicide) of problem gambling as well as the usefulness of medical intervention (like counseling and education).
It can be argued that with the use of legitimation strategies in the forum letters, the mental health-care professionals are boosting the publicity to their vocation. Unlike the government bodies whose institutional authority tends to be automatically generated and noticed, the mental health-care professionals have to utilize legitimation strategies more frequently in order to get their voice heard in the public sphere. Legitimation strategies can be considered a means for the mental health-care professionals to “dialogically” reach out to the general public, making them more visible in society.

4.2 Tokens of hegemony (“equivalence and difference”) identified from the data

The findings in relation to the linguistic realizations of equating and contrasting are reported in Table 4.2. For the convenience of the following discussion, the term “hegemonizing strategy” is coined to broadly denote any of the opposition/equivalence linguistic markers laid out in Table 4.2.

The normalized frequency at the end of the table shows that the laypersons tend to employ hegemonizing strategies more intensively (4.00 tokens per 100 words) than the other two groups. By contrast, in spite of occupying the pinnacle of the social hierarchy, the government bodies apply hegemonizing techniques least frequently (3.10 tokens per 100 words). The ideological implications of the variation will be explored later.

Apart from the normalized overall frequency, the letters from the laypersons and those from the government bodies differ vastly in the use of opposition and equivalence. As Table 4.2 displays, triggers of opposition are found more often (72.95%) in the texts produced by the laypersons whereas the texts from the government bodies exhibit a reverse pattern as triggers of equivalence are more common (65.38%). As for the mental health-care professionals, the use of hegemonizing strategies is relatively more balanced since the amount of opposition triggers is close to that of equivalence markers.
Table 4.2 Opposition and equivalence identified in the forum letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Laypersons</th>
<th>Government bodies</th>
<th>Mental health-care professionals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opposition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negated (e.g., X not Y)</td>
<td>205 (72.95%)</td>
<td>112 (39.86%)</td>
<td>9 (34.62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacive (e.g., X instead of Y)</td>
<td>9 (3.20%)</td>
<td>1 (3.85%)</td>
<td>1 (1.09%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional (e.g., from X to Y)</td>
<td>9 (3.20%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative (e.g., more X than Y)</td>
<td>12 (4.27%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (3.85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concessive/contrastive (e.g., despite X, Y; X but Y)</td>
<td>36 (12.81%)</td>
<td>1 (3.85%)</td>
<td>8 (8.70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit (e.g., X by contrast with Y; X as opposed to Y; between X and Y)</td>
<td>8 (2.85%)</td>
<td>1 (3.85%)</td>
<td>2 (2.17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallelism (e.g., He liked X. She liked Y; your house is X, mine is Y)</td>
<td>19 (6.76%)</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
<td>5 (5.43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equivalence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive relational (e.g., X is Y)</td>
<td>76 (27.05%)</td>
<td>29 (10.32%)</td>
<td>17 (65.38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appositional (e.g., X,Y,Z)</td>
<td>4 (1.42%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyponymy</td>
<td>38 (13.52%)</td>
<td>9 (34.62%)</td>
<td>5 (19.23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synonymy</td>
<td>5 (1.78%)</td>
<td>5 (19.23%)</td>
<td>7 (7.61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>281</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tokens per 100 words</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.10</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.75</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1 **Opposition markers**

The laypersons’ letters are full of opposition markers. Many of these markers are instances of “negated opposition,” including especially the use of prefixes and the negative particle “not.” Examples are provided below:

(28) Current measures are passive and **ineffective** to prevent or discourage the impulse to gamble. […] Third, implement an “inclusion rule” for citizens who
can afford to gamble in addition to an “exclusion ban” for those who cannot, and scrap the casino membership scheme. (Chan, 21 September 2011)

(29) Let’s safeguard Singaporeans from gambling. Casinos have provided jobs to Singaporeans, paid taxes and helped charities. However, gamblers cannot control their addictions. (Balu, 14 April 2011)

(30) Unlike the gambler, the casino does not take risks. To ensure its sustainability, the casino carefully manages and balances its daily wins and losses through the natural laws of mathematics and statistics. For example, table games are strictly regulated and played to exacting rules albeit tweaked. […] Efforts to educate the uninformed and new converts about the risks involved are of utmost importance. The aim is never to encourage gambling but to warn of the risks and dangers so punters can make an informed decision. (Kao, 27 August 2010)

(31) The sad truth is that many problems associated with compulsive gambling is discovered too late. And many families will be affected by this social ill of irresponsible gambling. (Lee, 10 July 2007)

By using prefixes and the negative particle “not,” the laypersons are in fact building a dichotomy in society or they are fortifying one that is already in existence. In Example 28, with the word “ineffective,” the writer is trying to draw a line between effective and ineffective measures for defeating the urge to gamble. In Example 30, casinos are discerned from gamblers because the former do not bear any risk. In Example 31, “irresponsible gambling” means the opposite of “responsible gambling.” Such “social categorization” or “classification” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 88) is not limited to entities or actions; human beings are also divided into (i) those who can afford to gamble and those who cannot (Example 28); (ii) those who can control their addictions and those who cannot (Example 29); (iii) those who are “informed” about the danger of gambling and those who are not (Example 30).

Most importantly, the “social classification” results in different societal treatment or perceptions of entities, behaviors or people. For instance, effective measures should be upheld while ineffective ones should be discarded. Casinos have the edge over gamblers. Responsible gambling is free from problems
whereas irresponsible gambling adversely affects families. Those who cannot afford to gamble or those who are unable to control their addictions should be treated differently, as compared to the others. People who are uninformed about the detriment of gambling should be “educated” so that they will become “informed.” To put it in a nutshell, for the laypersons, the community is unceasingly dichotomized.

More than half of the hegemonizing tokens (51.09%) identified in the letters from the mental health-care professionals are instances of opposition. Like the laypersons, the health-care professionals attempt to create a world that bifurcates. However, the bifurcation projected by the health-care professionals is more about their goal to cement their in-group unity, viz., their “collective identity” as experts (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p. 83). Here are some examples:

(32) Nevertheless, it was an uphill battle as the addiction is more psychological than anything else. (Goh, 28 February 2012)

(33) Suicide risk is best assessed on a face-to-face basis, and these gamblers should be referred to professionals for evaluation and treatment. (Tan & Lee, 30 July 2011)

(34) Just like alcoholism and drugs, football gambling is an addiction that carries grave financial consequences if left untreated. (Goh, 24 December 2009)

(35) It also seems likely that help will be much more readily available to Singaporeans who already suffer from problem gambling, but whose condition is largely undetected at present. (Collins, 5 May 2005)

The above examples show that the writers are discursively setting up the professional territory of the mental health-care discipline through linguistic triggers of opposition. “Comparative opposition” is used in Example 32 to highlight the psychological cause of addiction. When claiming that “the addiction is more psychological than anything else,” the writer is elevating the significance of psychology in solving addiction problems and degrading all the other schools of thought. In Example 33, “parallelism” is utilized. Despite the lack of an explicit marker, gamblers and professionals are put side by side in the sentence, evoking a
contrast between the two parties vis-à-vis the provision of medical treatment and services. The prefix “un-” in Examples 34 and 35 frames two contradictions: (i) gamblers who are treated and those who are not; (ii) gamblers who are detected and those who are not. Since the job of the mental health-care professionals is to detect and treat gamblers or other psychological deviants, it can be argued that by creating the opposition, the health-care professionals are simultaneously displaying their vocational dedication to reduce the “untreated” and the “undetected” population.

4.2.2 Equivalence markers

It has been mentioned earlier that equivalence markers predominate the letters written by the government bodies. A closer look at the sub-categories of the equivalence markers demonstrates that the government bodies apply “hyponymy” frequently, as this equivalence strategy accounts for 34.62% of all the hegemonizing tokens identified. It has been found that the government tends to conjure up a unitary voice regarding problem gambling by capitalizing on equivalence techniques. Examples are offered below:

(36) With the recent amendments to the **Casino Control Act (CCA)** passed in Parliament on Nov 16 this year, it will now be a specific offence under the **CCA** for someone to impersonate another person to enter the casino. […] We also wish to remind the public that winnings of excluded persons and minors will be forfeited under the **CCA**. (Foo, 3 December 2012)

(37) With support from all stakeholders, we can continue to have stringent and comprehensive casino social safeguards. (Beck, 9 July 2012)

(38) The NCPG has taken note of Madam Chia’s suggestion. We will continue to study the feedback from affected families, counselors and the public, and review how else to better protect families affected by problem gambling. (Lim, 2 July 2011)

(39) The exclusion measures come under the **Casino Control Act** and cover only the casinos. Hence the NCPG’s consultation on the proposed measures is confined to the casinos. (Lim, 19 January 2007)
In Examples 36 and 39, the government bodies subsume all the rules, regulations and governmental measures of casino gambling into the Casino Control Act (CCA). The CCA becomes a superordinate, centralized and supreme label within the legal system regarding how to govern casino gambling. In addition, the writer in Example 36 uses the umbrella term “the public” rather than its precise equivalent like “readers” so as to deliver a universal message—everybody regardless of who he/she is has to be subjected to institutional control and the government’s reminder. Examples 37 and 38 constitute another manner through which a unitary voice is constructed. In Example 37, “all stakeholders” encompass the social actors who are involved, one way or the other, in casino gambling; and they are depicted as allies of the government in combating problem gambling. In other words, they are aligned with the government’s standpoint. On the other hand, in Example 38, the affected families, counselors and the public are portrayed as the “co-hyponyms” of parties that can help the government to better protect the community.

Besides the government bodies, the mental health-care professionals make use of “hyponymy” quite substantially (28.26% of all the hegemonizing tokens). Same as the use of opposition triggers, “hyponymy” is employed by the health-care experts to bring their expertise or their professional philosophy to the limelight. Some relevant examples are:

(40) Social workers and counselors have to go through formal training in the form of an undergraduate or postgraduate course. (Loh, 10 March 2012)

(41) Gambling is mostly a habitual vice, like drugs or alcohol addiction. (Goh, 28 February 2012)

(42) The risk of suicide among gamblers is exacerbated by the high levels of impulsiveness, as well as depression and other substance abuse, which are often reported in association with gambling disorders. We have managed many cases of people suffering from gambling disorders who have attempted suicide or have had serious suicidal thoughts. (Tan & Lee, 30 July 2011)

(43) Yes, gambling is an addiction and like drug consumption and alcoholism, it takes much effort and time for the habit to be weeded out. (Goh, 20 January 2010)
We found that problem-gambling numbers do not increase, and may even decrease if the introduction of casinos is accompanied by the provision of **substantial services to prevent problem gambling**. These include a **vigorous public-awareness program about the dangers of gambling** and **how to avoid them**. (Collins, 5 May 2005)

In Example 40, “social workers” and “counselors” are represented as the “co-hyponyms” of people who have to undergo proper training at university. Again, their “collective identity” as professionals is signaled (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p. 83). Examples 41 and 43 both equate “gambling” with the behavioral deviance that is normally under the domain of mental health-care. Two layers of equivalence are involved here. First, “intensive relational equivalence” (viz., X is Y) is employed when the writer declares, “Gambling is mostly a habitual vice” or “Gambling is an addiction.” Second, with the use of the preposition “like,” a relation of hyponymy is created among gambling, drug consumption and heavy drinking. These activities are all grouped into something that mental health-care professionals are interested in tackling under their occupational setting.

The medical philosophy or belief with respect to “gambling disorders” is noted through Example 42. In this case, “gambling disorders” appear to be an umbrella/superordinate concept which is composed of numerous hyponyms, some of which are “suicide,” “impulsiveness,” “depression” and “substance abuse.” By the same token, in Example 44, “hyponymy” is used to show the components or elements of services available for prevention of problem gambling. The verb “include” helps to make the relation of “hyponymy” more salient.

Apart from “hyponymy,” “synonymy” is another popular equivalence technique practiced by the government bodies, as it makes up 19.23% of the hegemonizing tokens. A relevant example is displayed below:

The headline of yesterday’s article (‘More than five casino visits could trigger curbs’) gives the impression that there will be a single pre-determined number of visits that will trigger the proposed casino visit limit for every local **casino patron**. This is not the policy intention. We plan to adopt a risk-based
approach, taking into consideration a patron’s individual circumstances, including frequency and pattern of visits and other telltale signs such as overstaying beyond the 24-hour period. […] As this is a targeted measure, it is expected to impact some 4,000 to 6,000 local casino patrons. […] Casino patrons can also use the pre-commitment system that both casinos have already set up to limit how much they will spend at any visit. The proposed amendments to the Casino Control Act will also require casinos to benchmark their Responsible Gambling against international best practices, for example, in educating patrons on problem gambling and the social safeguard measures available to them […]. (Beck, 9 July 2012)

The above example shows that the writer makes use of the euphemistic synonym “patrons” rather than its non-euphemistic literal counterpart “gamblers.” This obfuscates the difference between gamblers and the rest of the community. As Eggenschwiler, Biggs and Reinhardt (2011, pp. 140–141) put it, euphemisms somewhat project a “distorted” view of the reality as they can be used to replace words or expressions that are regarded as negative, viz., as a means of “covering up.” Since the government is the one who abolished the casino ban in Singapore, its role in facilitating gambling and inflating the number of gamblers in society is irrefutable. It can thus be argued that by using the euphemistic synonym “patrons,” the government clouds its contribution to gambling problems, rendering its decision to legalize casino operation less condemnable.

4.2.3 Summary and ideological implications

Patterns concerning the use of hegemonizing strategies are different across the three groups of writers. Echoing what is identified in the previous section on legitimation strategies, the differences found in this section also uncover the within-group ideologies of the writers.

Using the forum letters as the medium, the laypersons constantly craft a dichotomized society via triggers of opposition such as prefixes and the negative particle “not.” In the poststructuralist nomenclature, it can be said that the world constructed by the laypersons is neatly made of endless “binary oppositions” as
they tend to think and convey their idea on the basis of contrary pairs (Murfin & Ray, 2009, p. 40). Like what the analysis above has shown, one item within each pair (e.g., effective measures, or responsible gambling) is privileged over the other (e.g., ineffective measures, or irresponsible gambling). With such societal division, “stigmatization” becomes a natural consequence. As said by Goffman (1963), “stigma” arises from a “deeply discrediting” attribute, and a person with this attribute is reduced to a “tainted, discounted” individual (p. 3). For instance, one of the writers proposes in his letter that those who cannot afford to gamble should be singled out for additional supervision.

Although triggers of opposition are quite widespread in the letters written by the mental health-care professionals, it is found that opposition is a tool for the experts to mark their professional terrain, thereby solidifying their institutional “collective identity.” In fact, analysis on the equivalence markers also demonstrates the intention of the mental health-care professionals to defend their professionalism and to promote the medical philosophy or belief. One example is the use of “hyponymy equivalence” to draw an analogy between gambling and other abnormal behaviors such as alcoholism and substance abuse.

Conversely, the government representatives rely profoundly on equivalence triggers, particularly “hyponymy,” to build a unified voice in relation to problem gambling. With equivalence techniques, the government brings together different social groups so that they are in alignment with the official stance relating to the institutional monitoring of gambling issues in society. Additionally, equivalence triggers are employed to subdue the methods of solving problem gambling under the legal domain, i.e., the Casino Control Act. Interestingly, it is discovered that the government attempts to obscure its liability for the rise in the number of gamblers with the use of the euphemistic synonymous expression “casino patrons.”

Even though this section is coming to an end, there are still questions which remain unanswered. The laypersons, who are supposed to be non-affiliated contributors, are the heaviest users of hegemonizing strategies in the forum letters, as reflected by the normalized frequency at the bottom of Table 4.2. On the other
hand, the letters from the government bodies are the least hegemony-intensive. Why is there such a difference? Does it disconfirm the “hegemonizing” function of the governing party? Or could there be any social force behind the scene that is shaping or priming the laypersons’ “hegemonizing” mind? Also, with the equivalence and the opposition triggers, the mental health-care professionals are securing their vocational territory. Given its importance among the professionals, it is reasonable to assume that the discursive manifestation of their disposition to expand the mental health-care empire is not just a matter of equating and contrasting. This makes further research necessary.

4.3 “Logic of appearances” versus “explanatory logic” with reference to the data

Table 4.3 captures the findings regarding the major semantic relations stipulated by Fairclough (2003, p. 89).

Table 4.3 Semantic relations identified in the forum letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Laypersons</th>
<th>Government bodies</th>
<th>Mental health-care professionals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Causal Reason</td>
<td>68 (13.71%)</td>
<td>20 (4.02%)</td>
<td>23 (12.64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 (12.5%)</td>
<td>2 (4.17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13 (2.62%)</td>
<td>7 (3.85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequence</td>
<td>13 (2.62%)</td>
<td>2 (4.17%)</td>
<td>7 (3.85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>35 (7.06%)</td>
<td>3 (6.25%)</td>
<td>12 (6.59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>24 (4.84%)</td>
<td>1 (2.08%)</td>
<td><strong>10 (5.49%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal</td>
<td>21 (4.23%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>11 (6.04%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additive</td>
<td>286 (57.66%)</td>
<td><strong>36 (75%)</strong></td>
<td>90 (49.45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration</td>
<td>54 (10.89%)</td>
<td>4 (8.33%)</td>
<td><strong>40 (21.98%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrastive</td>
<td>43 (8.67%)</td>
<td>1 (2.08%)</td>
<td>8 (4.40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following five patterns deserve special attention:

(i) The laypersons display the highest usage of causal relations (viz., the “explanatory logic”) in the letters;

(ii) Both the laypersons and the mental health-care professionals use the conditional and the temporal relations more frequently than the government bodies;
Additive relations constitute a much more noticeable proportion of all instances of semantic relations identified in the government bodies’ letters;

The mental health-care professionals prefer the use of elaborative relations;

Contrastive relations occur more often in the laypersons’ letters.

4.3.1 Causal relations

The three types of causal relations (Reason, Consequence, Purpose) altogether account for 13.71%, 12.5% and 12.64% of all the semantic relations found in the letters written by the laypersons, the government bodies and the mental health-care professionals respectively. Although the inter-group variation is not too discernible, it can still be said that the laypersons’ letters exhibit the highest percentage. It should be noted that in terms of the percentage, the occurrences of the causal relations of reason in the laypersons’ letters are almost twice as much as those in the texts produced by the other two groups. This pattern actually is in line with the predominance of “explanation” as a legitimation strategy among the laypersons, as reported and illustrated earlier in Examples 23 to 26. The causal relations of reason can mark the writers’ intention to explain the proposition(s) expressed. In addition to Examples 23 to 26, more relevant examples are given below:

(46) But I urge the authorities to consider a temporary exclusion order to prevent those like my husband from entering casinos during the investigation process. Meanwhile, we can only pray that he will stop going to the casinos because in the intervening days, he could pile up a lot of debt. (Chia, 24 June 2011)

(47) We do not want non-gamblers to enter the casino and pick up the habit when they cannot afford it. The current levy is priced fairly and is justified, as a figure that is any higher would make gamblers seek their thrills abroad. (Koh, 1 September 2010)

(48) The push in Parliament against loan sharks will not make much headway since the loan sharks have gone deep underground. (Hwang, 27 November 2009)
All the three examples above concern the laypersons’ opinions with respect to the government policies. In Example 46, the writer named Madam Chia comments on the measure implemented by the government for citizens to exclude their family members from visiting the casinos. She complains that the application procedure is time-consuming as it takes time for the government organization to verify whether there is a genuine need to enforce the exclusion order on an individual. Madam Chia wonders if it is possible to introduce a provisional exclusion order while the government is carrying out its investigation. To justify or explain her suggestion, she makes use of the causal relation of reason—“because in the intervening days, he could pile up a lot of debt.”

Examples 47 and 48 are about the government policies on charging for casino admission and outlawing loan sharks within the territory. The writer in Example 47 explains why he thinks the $100 entry levy imposed by the government is pitched at the right level. Using the causal relation of reason, he expresses that an amount which is higher than $100 would drive local residents to gamble overseas. Similarly, the writer in Example 48 tells the readers why he believes that the government’s plan to make loan sharks illegal is deemed ineffective. The causal relation of reason signals his justification, i.e., loan-sharking being so deep-rooted in society.

4.3.2 Conditional and temporal relations

The laypersons and the mental health-care professionals utilize the conditional and the temporal relations more frequently than the government bodies. Many instances of the conditional relations are in the form of “prediction.” Examples are provided below:

Laypersons

(49) **Unless** something significant is done, it can only get worse. Singaporeans and permanent residents must be discouraged from frequenting the casinos. (Teo, 10 September 2011)

(50) Any plan to help gamblers kick their bad habit is unlikely
to succeed if the cause of the addiction is not tackled. (Distant, 1 November 2005)

(51) A dollar spent at the casino disappears like light into a black hole with very little multiplier effect, unlike a dollar spent in a restaurant. Now we have billions of dollars being wagered and diverted from spending, investments and savings. This money will be a dead weight on our economy if we go into a recession. (Kuo, 7 February 2012)

(52) Loan sharks feed on the weakness of gamblers to entice them with their high-interest loans, and if we can tackle the addiction of our gamblers, we may have nipped the problem in the bud. (Goh, 20 January 2010)

The two examples extracted from the layperson’s letters and Example 52 demonstrate how the conditional relations are employed by the writers to speculate about a forthcoming scenario in society based on the precautionary action(s) taken or not taken in the present. This actually echoes what Reyes (2011, pp. 793–794) said about the legitimization process of using conditional sentences to construct an imaginary future. Using conditional sentences for such a purpose is by no means different from the legitimation strategy of “prediction” suggested by van Leeuwen (2007, 2008).

Example 51 is a prediction as well, but the projected future is not derived from the action in the present. Instead, the writer resorts to the economic paradigm and predicts how the casino industry will aggravate the economy in times of recession. Here, it can be argued that the use of the conditional relation and the prediction would induce fear among the readers, thus legitimizing the negativity of gambling.

As for the use of temporal relations by the laypersons and the mental health-care professionals, two salient functions are observed: (i) narrating personal experiences; (ii) referring to earlier discourse and making judgments about it. Examples are shown below:
(53) Laypersons Credit Counseling Singapore was right when it stated that the present system of daily levy and annual membership to discourage citizens from gambling in the two casinos merely raises revenue for the Government. (Chan, 21 September 2011)

(54) Laypersons Minister Lim Boon Heng was emotional when recalling his struggle with the decision six years ago to allow two casinos in Singapore. (Balu, 14 April 2011)

(55) Mental health-care professionals So when I saw a character portraying a professional counselor in a MediaCorp Channel U program, Show Hand, giving $500 to a gambler to settle his debts to a loan shark, I found it to be an injustice to the profession. (Loh, 10 March 2012)

(56) Mental health-care professionals I used to gamble on sports at Singapore Pools kiosks for many years and after losing a lot of money, I stopped. [... ] I succeeded only after I moved abroad. (Goh, 28 February 2012)

With the temporal relation, the writer of Example 53 verbalizes his own evaluative thought pertaining to a previous remark made by Credit Counseling Singapore. In this case, the temporal relation marker “when” is used to introduce an indirect quote, and what precedes “when” is the writer’s appraisal regarding the quotation. In Martin and White’s (2005, p. 52) terminology, the adjective “right” is a “judgment marker” as it is used by the writer to comment on what Credit Counseling Singapore has said. Likewise, in Example 54, the conjunction “when,” together with the verb “recalling,” helps to signal the incorporation of earlier/outside discourse (i.e., a statement made by a minister) into the forum letter. Different from Example 53, the adjective “emotional” is an “affect marker” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 42) because it construes the feeling of the minister.

The two examples taken from the mental health-care professionals’ letters represent the use of the temporal relations to narrate past experiences. Example 55 appears at the beginning of a forum letter and it tells the readers why the writer has the urge to write in—owing to an inaccurate portrayal of counselors in a
television program. The temporal relations in Example 56 provide a chronology of how the writer, despite being a mental health-care professional, has transformed from a gambler to a non-gambler.

Based on the examples shown above, it is worth noting that other than serving the core function of indicating a specific time frame, the temporal relations perform the value-added task of increasing “dialogism” within the letters (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984). It can be argued that while the temporal relations are utilized, the writers are simultaneously drawing other texts into the forum letters (e.g., statements made by other social actors, the content of a popular cultural product and even one’s personal experiences in the past).

4.3.3 Additive relations

According to Table 4.3, additive relations occupy the most prominent proportion (75%) of the semantic relations identified in the letters from the government bodies. As noted by Fairclough (2003, p. 91), additive relations mean that “one thing is simply added to another, there is no implication of any further relationship between them.” Examples of additive relations found in one letter written by the government representative are displayed below:

(57) The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) shares Madam Chia’s concern that her husband might be incurring more losses in gambling at the casinos. ADDITIVE Madam Chia was given a hearing date for the family exclusion order on Thursday. ADDITIVE The NCPG had earlier streamlined and shortened its workflow for family exclusion orders. ADDITIVE We agree with Mr. Law that family support is an important source of help and encouragement to the gambler. ADDITIVE The two-week process for family exclusion orders includes at least one counseling session for affected family members on how to minimize the harm brought about by problem gambling as well as how they may offer help and support to the problem gambler in managing his addiction. ADDITIVE The NCPG has taken note of Madam Chia’s suggestion. ADDITIVE We will continue to study the feedback from
affected families, counselors and the public, and **ADDITIVE** review how else to better protect families affected by problem gambling. (Lim, 2 July 2011)

As can be seen from the example, additive relations are consistently used by the writer, who is responding to the remarks or suggestions made by two different persons, Madam Chia and Mr. Law. The government representative’s way to write the letter is very mechanical. He responds to Madam Chia first before Mr. Law. But in both cases, the government official begins with what Scollon, Scollon and Jones (2012, p. 51) called the “linguistic strategy of involvement” by claiming a common viewpoint or empathy—“The NCPG shares Madam Chia’s concern that…” and “We agree with Mr. Law that…” This is then followed by a matter-of-fact description of what the government has already done, like restructuring its workflow for family exclusion orders and provision of counseling service for family members. At the end, the writer expresses the continual effort of the government to address the issue of problem gambling.

It is noticed that in Example 57, each piece of information is added on top of the other. The whole letter, as a result, is like an “unordered list of appearances.” This mode of presentation resembles the “hortatory report” (viz., descriptions with a hidden prescriptive purpose) as mentioned by Fairclough (2003, pp. 95–96). It seems that the writer is trying to report on what the government has done with no explanation given and the public simply has to indiscriminately take the report the way it is.

### 4.3.4 Elaborative relations

As a contrast to the aforementioned pattern found in the letters of the government bodies, the mental health-care professionals employ elaborative relations much more often in comparison with the other two groups of writers. The following examples illustrate the use of elaborative relations in the health-care professionals’ texts:
(58) But gamblers have ample avenues. **ELABORATION** They can borrow from loan sharks or from moneylenders, especially with the recent explosion of moneylending services. (Goh, 28 February 2012)

(59) Elevated rates of suicide attempts among problem gamblers are well established. **ELABORATION** For example, a 2002 study on treatment-seeking pathological gamblers reported that 49 per cent had a history of suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts. (Tan & Lee, 30 July 2011)

(60) What our research in South Africa shows is that experience there is broadly in line with that of other jurisdictions where casino gambling has been legalized. **ELABORATION** We found that less than 1 per cent of those who gamble develop an addiction-like problem, and about 5 per cent exhibit less severe problems with excessive gambling at some time in their lives. (Collins, 5 May 2005)

In the three examples above, the writers intend to elaborate on what they are discussing. Example 58 gives details about the borrowing sources for gamblers. The two writers of Example 59 offer figure-based evidence on their proposition concerning the suicidal risk of problem gamblers. Such evidence can be regarded as an elaboration of the proposition. In a similar fashion, the writer of Example 60 disseminates further information about the research conducted in South Africa, thereby producing an elaborative relation within the text.

Although Fairclough (2003, p. 104) categorized both additive relations and elaborative relations as contributors to the “logic of appearances,” the two types of semantic relations are intrinsically different and they have different discourse bearings. Here, it can be said that the use of elaborative relations by the mental health-care professionals tends to fill out the information given vis-à-vis a topic through specifying its details. The resulting text is like a more in-depth (or “specialized”) report as compared to the one with additive relations.

### 4.3.5 Contrastive relations

Contrastive relations are much more recurrent among the laypersons than the other two groups of writers. Table 4.3 shows that 8.67% of the semantic
relations identified in the laypersons’ letters are contrastive relations while the figures for the government bodies and the mental health-care professionals are 2.08% and 4.40% respectively. The relative prevalence of contrastive relations in the laypersons’ texts is not surprising, as it has been reported in Section 4.2.1 that the laypersons have a preference for opposition triggers, some of which in fact also coincide with contrastive relations. Comparable to the use of opposition triggers, contrastive relations are the resources which the laypersons mobilize in order to conjure up oppositions or differences in discourse, as the following examples exemplify:

(61) The inclusion rule may allow high net-worth individuals greater frequency of entry, subject to a formula proportionate to his net worth to protect the family. The conditions may seem cumbersome and unpalatable but they are effective to break the urge of compulsive gamblers while limiting damage to those who can afford it. (Chan, 21 September 2011).

(62) While the integrated resorts and their casinos may have generated an upsurge in tourism arrivals, they have worsened the problem of gambling among Singaporeans. (Teo, 10 September 2011)

(63) In my view, the “recreational gamblers” are not likely to fork out $100 to possibly lose $500 more, while the “true gamblers” would not mind paying a small sum in order to win big. (Low, 21 October 2005)

All the examples given make use of the explicit contrastive markers (“but” and “while”) to construe a dichotomized world. In Example 61, the contrastive relation tells readers that effective measures to control problem gambling are always implemented at the expense of administrative convenience. The contrastive relation in Example 62 projects a gap between the casinos and the gamblers. It seems that the former party thrives on the latter. The writer of Example 63 attempts to rationalize the discrepancy between “recreational gamblers” and “true gamblers” on the basis of their willingness to pay for admission into the casinos.
Analysis in this section is illuminating in two respects. First, it affirms or adds strength to the findings reported in the two previous sections on legitimation and hegemonizing strategies. Second, certain identified patterns reveal further ideological implications of the forum letters as a “public sphere.”

It has been found that the laypersons favor the use of the causal relations of reason. This finding concurs with that about the use of “explanation” as a legitimation strategy mentioned previously. The laypersons, despite being a non-affiliated party, are concerned about the causal effects between events or the everyday phenomena they encounter. By contrast, the government representatives make frequent use of additive relations. Given the fact that the forum letters serve as a means for different parties to get their idea across, it can be argued that the government bodies, with the use of additive relations, exhibit their proclivity for conversing with the public in a matter-of-fact manner. Unlike the mental health-care professionals who strive to offer detailed information, the government bodies minimize the use of elaborative relations. This indicates that the government representatives intend to feed the public (via the press as a social institutional medium) with only selected basic information while withholding the rest.

In line with the findings on the use of opposition triggers, the laypersons utilize the contrastive relations more often, as compared to the other groups of writers. The laypersons’ disposition to dichotomize the world is undeniably resilient. Apart from this, the laypersons share some commonality with the mental health-care professionals in the sense that both groups use conditional relations more frequently than the government bodies. With conditional relations, the laypersons and the mental health-care professionals project a future scene on the basis of what is done at present to tackle problem gambling. For them, inactivity will lead to an undesirable future. It can be inferred that the two groups of writers are trying to stir up fear in society by construing the risk associated with gambling. According to Giddens (1999, p. 5), this tactic of “scaremongering” is common for managing risk in the postmodern world. What is more, the use of temporal relations in the texts produced by the laypersons and the mental health-care
professionals offers intriguing insights. It is found that the function of temporal relations transcends the sole specification of time. They are in fact used by the writers to introduce external texts or discourse into their letters, making the “dialogic” nature of the “public sphere” more pronounced.

4.4 Chapter conclusion

The present chapter has reported on the exploration of Singapore newspaper texts about gamblers from the approach of critical discourse analysis. In order to examine how the different major voices converge or diverge in a specific locality (viz., the “public sphere”), 47 forum letters from the popular daily paper *The Straits Times* (Singapore) were retrieved through LexisNexis based on a series of stringent criteria. The extracted texts, which were dated over a span of eight years from 2005 to 2013, constitute the 10,312-word corpus of the current study. Out of the 47 letters, 34 were written by the laypersons, 9 were from the mental health-care professionals and 4 were authored by the government representatives. To analyze the data, Fairclough’s (2003) socially-oriented reading of the meaning relations between sentences or clauses is adopted as the primary framework of the research. It was suggested by him that such meaning relations can shed some light on three social research issues: (i) legitimation; (ii) hegemony (aka “equivalence and difference”); (iii) “appearance versus reality” (p. 87). Based on these three issues, the interrogation is enriched by incorporation of models from van Leeuwen (2007, 2008) and Jeffries (2010a, 2010b).

4.4.1 Analytic outcomes

Interesting analytic outcomes are generated vis-à-vis the portrayal of gamblers or problem gambling in Singapore. Table 4.4 is a summary of the major analytic outcomes.
### Table 4.4 A summary of the analytic outcomes of Chapter 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legitimation strategies</th>
<th>Government bodies</th>
<th>Mental health-care professionals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laypersons</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There is a preference for “moral value evaluation” and “rationalization.”</td>
<td>- The overall use of legitimation strategies is the lowest.</td>
<td>- Letters are the most legitimation-intensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- While using legitimation strategies, laypersons express their desire for the government to help the community.</td>
<td>- Many legitimation tokens are attributed to the category of “personal authority,” especially when specific speech acts are performed.</td>
<td>- The use of legitimation is mainly for the promotion of their expertise or the significance of medical intervention regarding problem gambling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hegemony (“equivalence and difference”)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A dichotomized world or society is consistently crafted through triggers of opposition, resulting in social “stigmatization.”</td>
<td>- There is heavy reliance on equivalence triggers. Differences are collapsed, leading to the projection of a unitary voice in relation to problem gambling.</td>
<td>- Despite the widespread use of opposition triggers, the major ideological implication is to mark their professional terrain, and this can fortify their “collective identity.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The government’s liability for the increase in problem gambling is covered up via euphemistic synonymy.</td>
<td>- The government’s liability for the increase in problem gambling is covered up via euphemistic synonymy.</td>
<td>- Equivalence markers are also employed to instill the medical philosophy or belief into the public (e.g., equating gambling with other deviant behaviors like alcoholism and drug abuse).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Logic of appearances” against “explanatory logic”</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The use of the causal relations of reason is favored, reflecting the laypersons’ interest in the causal effects between events.</td>
<td>- The use of additive relations is robust, revealing the government’s scheme for conveying only the basic information to the public in a matter-of-fact way.</td>
<td>- Elaborative relations are preferred, indicating the mental health-care professionals’ explicit effort to provide detailed information, particularly when the proposition discussed is related to the medical territory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Contrastive relations demonstrate their resilient intention to dichotomize the world.</td>
<td>- Conditional relations are used to construe an unwanted future.</td>
<td>- Conditional relations are used to construe an unwanted future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conditional relations are used to construe an unwanted future.</td>
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<td>- Temporal relations simultaneously function as a facilitator for “dialogism.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>- Temporal relations simultaneously function as a facilitator for “dialogism.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the laypersons in principle are not delegates of any particular institutions, they considerably display their willingness to be institutionally subjugated. For example, they attempt to justify their suggestions or requests to the governing party through legitimation strategies. In addition to their faith in institutional force, the laypersons hold onto the moral value system when commenting on gambling-related issues in society. Moreover, it can be inferred from the use of opposition triggers or contrastive relations that the laypersons seem to inherit the trait of “social classification,” which is typically believed to be the “hegemonizing” manifestation of institutional domination (Fairclough, 2003). The institutional element can hardly be detached from the laypersons’ letters. In fact, these letters can be regarded as an institutional output since they are situated within the press, which might play a mediating role in the selection of the letters. Hence, it is possible that the letters also contain the latent “voices” of the press as an important social institution.

On the other hand, it looks as if the government representatives intend to background their didactic aspiration in the forum letters. This can be reflected by the minimal use of legitimation strategies. What they want more is the subtle construal of a centralized voice or stance on the matter of gambling. Given the prevalence of additive relations, it can be said that the government bodies simply present information to the public at its face value—viz. the “logic of appearances” as proposed by Fairclough (2003). They are reluctant to disclose the “underlying” realities through the letters.

As for the mental health-care professionals, there is a notable shared drive to diffuse their in-group vocational belief into the wider community. This is achieved by the intensive use of legitimation techniques to concretize and celebrate their expertise. Opposition and equivalence markers are utilized very skillfully to claim their professional territory and to subsume gamblers under medical attention, alongside alcoholics and drug consumers. Unlike the government representatives, the mental health-care professionals are eager to give detailed information on certain medically-related propositions via elaborative
relations. The intention to expand their sphere of institutional influence is thus highly discernible.

4.4.2 Synthesis

The three sets of analysis in this study (i.e., legitimation strategies, equivalence and difference, “logic of appearances” against “explanatory logic”) should not be treated discretely. In fact, the analysis has already revealed that they are interrelated. Sometimes they can offer checks and balances. For instance, findings in relation to the use of opposition triggers tally with those about contrastive relations. The utilization of certain legitimation strategies such as “explanation” and “prediction” can be verified by analysis of the causal relations of reason and the conditional relations respectively.

Furthermore, “dialogism” (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984) of the forum letters can serve to weave the three sets of analysis together. It has been shown that the forum letters, as a “public sphere,” are the discursive space where multiple voices mingle. Analysis of the legitimation strategies used demonstrates that the laypersons are making suggestions to the government; analysis of the “hegemonizing strategies” used indicates that the government representatives are formulating a unified voice with respect to problem gambling; analysis of the temporal relations used uncovers the blend of external texts (e.g., indirect quotes) into the letters. The “multi-vocalic” makeup of the forum letters is unfolded by all the three sets of analysis.

4.4.3 Emerging issues

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, this study on newspaper forum letters provides a useful point of entry for discourse analysts to study how gamblers and problem gambling are discursively represented by not only one, but also multiple social groups. The findings of the present research become a stepping stone to additional investigation vis-à-vis the linguistic configurations of gamblers’ identities represented by social institutions.
The analysis, together with the ideological implications discovered, produces several queries, which have been briefly discussed above. They are now reiterated below:

(i) The government representatives tend to minimize the use of legitimation strategies, and they also undermine social differences via equivalence triggers in the forum letters. Does this mean that they are genuinely in the process of relinquishing the institutional power?

(ii) The laypersons, notwithstanding their status as non-affiliated writers, perceive or even construe the social world in a binary manner. Why is that so? Is there any “invisible hand” pushing them to visualize the world in such a way?

(iii) The mental health-care professionals appear to be dedicated preachers of their expertise. If this is really their ultimate goal, how would they capitalize on the medical school of thought and discursively represent gamblers in texts other than the forum letters?

In order to find answers to the above questions, it is necessary to explore other relevant sites and data sets. In short, further research is needed, and this will be what the subsequent two chapters are about. Chapter 5, which shows the findings and the analysis with respect to the governmental campaign, will address (i) and (ii). Chapter 6, which concerns knowledge “recontextualization” across three medical texts, will deal with (iii).
Part III Juxtaposition as a Symbolic Resource for Public Governance

Chapter 5 Data Analysis of the Government Campaign

The information presented in this chapter will only focus on the second set of data mentioned above, i.e., the gamblers’ speeches from the Singapore National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG). In addition to Goffman’s (1963) idea of “stigmatization” and Foucault’s (1965) account regarding social construction of deviants (see Sections 1.1.7 and 2.1.2 for details), Derrida’s (1976) “différance,” which has been surveyed in Section 2.2.3, will constitute part of the theoretical background for the analysis of this data set. The selected linguistic tools for analysis include process types, appraisal resources and code choice. After the findings are presented and discussed, there will be a chapter conclusion that addresses the questions raised in the earlier chapter.

5.1 Amount of talk analyzed

As Table 3.3 in Chapter 3 has shown, the recovering problem gamblers’ speeches presented to the public by the NCPG are generally longer than those of the social gamblers. The number of words transcribed and analyzed for the two recovering problem gamblers is 2116 while the figure is 1195 for the social gamblers. One possible reason for this is that the social gamblers mainly discuss what they think about gambling, whereas the recovering problem gamblers do not just talk about gambling per se, but they also extensively narrate their gambling trajectory. This is illustrated by the following example:

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45 This chapter of the thesis, together with the related literature, has given rise to the published journal article of Leung and Kong (2013).
(1) Henry (Problem gambler)

I always got thought erm erm thinking that jackpot now never mind I lose now never mind. Erm today later, I sure can win it back. If not today, tomorrow, not tomorrow, the day after. So every day I go.\textsuperscript{46} At the end, when I cannot my personal finance cannot support my jackpot, I use company money. Ok so the first time I take $1000, second time I take $2000; then subsequently I take $4000, $5000. Then for the one one whole year I take company about a hundred over thousand. Ok then later my company find out. I admit and I decided to go to jail.

5.2 Process types identified from the data

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the process types identified. The recovering problem gamblers make use of material processes more frequently. They take up almost half (47.5\%) of all the processes found. Also, the recovering problem gamblers use verbal processes more often. On the other hand, relational processes are more prevalent among the social gamblers.

As can be easily observed, material processes are used more often by the recovering problem gamblers because their narration is action-laden. Through the frequent use of material processes, the two recovering problem gamblers try to construct their identity as a typical problem gambler—one that is full of dramas and actions, where the gamblers can be the actors as well as the ones acted upon. This is illustrated by the following excerpt from Ming’s speech:

(2) Ming (Problem gambler)


\textsuperscript{46} It has been found that in Singapore English, there is a tendency that verbs are not marked for past tense (Ho, 2003).
go [MATERIAL PROCESS]. Ok probably they [ACTOR] will beat [MATERIAL PROCESS] me [GOAL] up the fifth time.

The negative association of the material processes found in the recovering problem gamblers’ speeches concurs with the pattern that Kong (2014) identified from legal ordinances, where material processes tend to be used for crafting the punishable behavior of criminals (p. 62).

Table 5.1 Process types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Process types</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social gamblers</td>
<td>WeiJie</td>
<td>26 (32.1%)</td>
<td>16 (19.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MingCai</td>
<td>54 (40.3%)</td>
<td>34 (25.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>80 (37.2%)</td>
<td>50 (23.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovering problem gamblers</td>
<td>Ming</td>
<td>100 (43.5%)</td>
<td>36 (15.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>73 (54.5%)</td>
<td>21 (15.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>173 (47.5%)</td>
<td>57 (15.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbal processes can be a resource for the recovering problem gamblers to signify different levels of their identity. Verbal processes are used when the problem gamblers recount the interactions that they had with their significant others. These interactions, to a certain extent, reflect their interpersonal identity within the family or among friends. As stated by Brewer and Gardner (1996, p. 83), interpersonal identities are developed from close dyadic relationships like friendships and marriage. The example below shows that Henry’s friends began to be worried about his gambling obsession. This is evident from the verbal processes “warn” and “say”:

(3) Henry (Problem gambler)

My some of my friends [SAYER] do warn [VERBAL PROCESS] me [RECEIVER].
They [SAYER] say [VERBAL PROCESS] that\textsuperscript{47} eh watch out ah.

The use of verbal processes could also signify the problem gamblers’ collective identity, as the following example indicates:

(4) Ming (Problem gambler)


Calling other people and discussing their problems are strategies that problem gamblers adopt when they want to seek help. Ming is portraying himself as a member of the support group, i.e., part of the group that is socially stigmatized as problem gamblers. By identifying himself with the group, Ming attempts to foreground his collective identity. Different from interpersonal identities, collective identities do not call for personal relationships between group members and are instead based on “common identity” (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p. 83).

Relational processes are identified frequently among the social gamblers. Nearly half of them are attributive relational processes. They are employed especially when the social gamblers express their opinions about gambling:

\textsuperscript{47}According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 253), the reported clause is regarded as part of a “clause complex” rather than a participant of the verbal process in the reporting clause.
(5) WeiJie (Social gambler)

I feel that gambling [CARRIER] is [RELATIONAL PROCESS] a recreational hobby [ATTRIBUTE]…

Whether I win or whether I lose [CARRIER] is not should not be [RELATIONAL PROCESS] a motivation for my gambling activities [ATTRIBUTE]. That is why I feel everybody [CARRIER] should be [RELATIONAL PROCESS] different [ATTRIBUTE] in terms of threshold. But the motivation [CARRIER] should be [RELATIONAL PROCESS] the same [ATTRIBUTE]…

I think knowing the line [CARRIER] is [RELATIONAL PROCESS] important [ATTRIBUTE]…

I like to think of problem gambling in the sense that it [CARRIER] is [RELATIONAL PROCESS] colorless and odorless [ATTRIBUTE].

While the social gamblers define gambling and explain what problem gambling means to them, they are presenting themselves as self-aware individuals by highlighting their “self-aspect” (Simon, 2004, p. 76) of being rational and self-disciplined. This trait of theirs is realized through the use of relational processes. In other words, the relational processes constitute a resource for them to construct their individual identity—a person’s sense of uniqueness as distinguished from others (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p. 83).

In sum, from the analyses above, we can see how processes are invoked as a symbolic device of identity construction. By using different processes, recovering and social gamblers not only can situate themselves in an ongoing negotiation of their identities but they can also bring in other participants like their friends and families in their narration.

5.3 Attitude resources identified from the data

The use of attitude resources in the monologues is outlined in Table 5.2. There is a tendency for the social gamblers to use appreciation markers more often:
(6) WeiJie (Social gambler)

I feel that gambling is a **recreational** [APPRECIATION] hobby that I should take to interact with erm my friends…

That means to say that they view gambling not as er **money making** [APPRECIATION] tool but rather a **social** [APPRECIATION] activity. I think knowing the line is **important** [APPRECIATION]…

And that was one **main** [APPRECIATION] reason why I feel that problem gambling is a very **apparent** [APPRECIATION] situation especially now.

Table 5.2 *Attitude* resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Attitude resources</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Affect</td>
<td>Judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social gamblers</td>
<td>WeiJie</td>
<td>1 (4.3%)</td>
<td>5 (21.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MingCai</td>
<td>1 (4.2%)</td>
<td>5 (20.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2 (4.3%)</td>
<td>10 (21.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovering problem gamblers</td>
<td>Ming</td>
<td>16 (37.2%)</td>
<td>10 (23.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>1 (4.3%)</td>
<td>7 (30.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17 (25.8%)</td>
<td>17 (25.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In brief, while using *appreciation* markers, the social gamblers are evaluating gambling as an activity rather than judging gamblers’ behavior. By doing so, they present problem gambling as a negative ubiquitous activity while non-problem gambling as socially constructive. Such demarcation resonates with the statement made by Derrida (1976) with respect to his notion of “différence” (see Section 2.2.3).

Among the four monologues, the one by Ming contains a significantly higher number of *affect* markers: 48 37.2% of the evaluations given by him are

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48 It should be noted that some *affect* markers might overlap with mental processes.
realized through affect while the figure is just 4.3% for Henry although they are both recovering problem gamblers. A closer look at the data reveals that Ming uses affect to show his remorse about the harm he created for his family:

(7) Ming (Problem gambler)

I feel very very bad [AFFECT]. I say no and this way I’ll harm my family throughout…
Slowly I become more guilty [AFFECT] because I find that I borrow money from beside my wife, my in-laws, my brother sister…
I was brought back to IMH. And from there ok a new chapter start. I was there for five days lah. My family member was there every day. And I was very touch [AFFECT]. So the relationship there is not damage lah. But I still internal feel that I feel very ashamed [AFFECT]…
Sometime when they come and disturb me, I also get frustrated [AFFECT] and I even shout at [AFFECT] them, especially my kids. Which I feel very bad [AFFECT] now, and without this kind of habit, since after I started a new life I’m very content [AFFECT].

With the frequent use of affect, Ming underscores his identity as an emotional individual. The sentiments that he displays are derived from his interpersonal identity as a husband, a son-in-law, a sibling and a father. He repeatedly recalls that his family members have been very supportive and understanding.

Analysis of the sub-categories of judgment presented in Table 5.3 shows that the social gamblers tend to use social esteem more often. On the other hand, social sanction is more popular among the recovering problem gamblers.

---

49 IMH is an acronym for the Institute of Mental Health.
Table 5.3 Sub-categories of judgment markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Judgment markers</th>
<th>Social esteem</th>
<th>Social sanction</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Normality</td>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Tenacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social gamblers</td>
<td>WeiJie</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MingCai</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 (70%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovering problem</td>
<td>Ming</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 (30%)</td>
<td>2 (20%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gamblers</td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (57.1%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>9 (52.9%)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(47.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Social sanction* constitutes a larger proportion of the *judgment* markers used by the recovering problem gamblers. More than half of these *social sanction* markers deal with *propriety*. This finding can be attributed to the fact that the recovering problem gamblers’ narration of their gambling trajectory contains judgments of unethical behavior. For instance, when Ming recounts his deceptive behavior, he uses the word “ridiculous”:

(8) Ming (Problem gambler)

I lied [JUDGEMENT: VERACITY] to her around no 30, 40K…

Ridiculous [JUDGEMENT: PROPRIETY] right? I think no no woman can take it. That is my first lie [JUDGEMENT: VERACITY] to her…

I don’t have all the hassle calls from … all those illegal [JUDGEMENT: PROPRIETY] ah-long ‘loan shark’.

Henry, on the other hand, makes use of the *judgment* marker “addicted” to highlight how susceptible human beings are to gambling addiction. It is worth noting that in the two instances of *judgment* identified in Example 9 below, the “appraised” is “you,” not Henry, even though he himself is a recovering problem gambler. Apart from the advisory nature of Henry’s monologue, the use of the pronoun “you” as the “appraised” helps to remind the audience that problem
gambling may happen to any person, so its ubiquity should not be overlooked by the general public.

(9) Henry (Problem gambler)
If you’re too addicted [JUDGEMENT: PROPRIETY] to something to a certain thing, you have to watch out already…
So when my when my friend brought me erm to jackpot, I got the thinking that eh jackpot is seems like quite easy to win. Ok, I got this type of wrong impression. So later I did win from jackpot. But when the more you play, the more you get addicted [JUDGEMENT: PROPRIETY]…

Seventy percent of the judgment markers used by the social gamblers are about social esteem. A large majority of these markers come from the sub-category normality. When discussing his viewpoints about gambling, MingCai attempts to remind the audience not to take winning for granted:

(10) MingCai (Social gambler)
Sometimes people get lucky [JUDGEMENT: NORMALITY]; sometimes people don’t. But the fact is those that those that get lucky [JUDGEMENT: NORMALITY] never tell you about losses that they’ve actually incurred.

By using the word “lucky” twice to describe people who win, MingCai wants to emphasize the importance of luck in gambling and that people should not reply on gambling to earn a living.

5.4 Engagement resources identified from the data

Table 5.4 summarizes the findings about the two categories of heteroglossic engagement: dialogic expansion and dialogic contraction. As each of these categories can be further subdivided, Table 5.5 gives a more detailed presentation of the findings.
Table 5.4 Dialogic contraction and expansion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Engagement resources</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contraction</td>
<td>Expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social gamblers</td>
<td>WeiJie</td>
<td>19 (65.5%)</td>
<td>10 (34.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MingCai</td>
<td>27 (67.5%)</td>
<td>13 (32.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46 (66.7%)</td>
<td>23 (33.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovering problem gamblers</td>
<td>Ming</td>
<td>43 (84.3%)</td>
<td>8 (15.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>36 (90%)</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>79 (86.8%)</td>
<td>12 (13.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5 Sub-categories of dialogic contraction and expansion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Engagement resources</th>
<th>Expansion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disclaim</td>
<td>Proclaim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deny</td>
<td>Counter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social gamblers</td>
<td>WeiJie</td>
<td>11 (37.9%)</td>
<td>7 (24.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MingCai</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
<td>11 (27.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23 (33.3%)</td>
<td>18 (26.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovering problem gamblers</td>
<td>Ming</td>
<td>23 (45.1%)</td>
<td>19 (37.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>24 (60%)</td>
<td>12 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47 (51.6%)</td>
<td>31 (34.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The recovering problem gamblers make more frequent use of dialogic contraction. Table 5.5 demonstrates that among the instances of dialogic contraction, the problem gamblers use deny/negation very often. One possible interpretation for the recurrent use of dialogic contraction, particularly deny/negation, among the problem gamblers is that through their monologues, the gamblers intend to let the audience know that they are discarding their former identity of a problem gambler. In other words, they are in the process of getting rid of their bad habits:
(11) Ming (Problem gambler)

The logic is that something desirable need not be discarded. Only undesirable objects or ideas need to be dispossessed. Hence, deny/negation can be argued to be the most explicit marker of “différance”: proclaiming an identity with an explicit denial of someone’s presence.

On the contrary, the social gamblers use dialogic expansion more frequently, and many instances of dialogic expansion fall under entertain. The sub-category entertain reveals the “internal voice of the speaker/writer as the source.” It can be triggered by phrases such as “I believe” and “in my view” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 111). 22 instances of entertain are identified in the social gamblers’ monologues whereas the figure is 9 for their counterparts. This is demonstrated in the example below:

(12) MingCai (Social gambler)
I guess [ENTERTAIN] when gamblers draw the line, they need to know what exactly the line is talking about… So I guess [ENTERTAIN] before embarking on anything, if I were to advise youth gamblers or anybody who’s starting to contemplate about. Oh should I place soccer bet; should I buy 4D, Toto and stuff like that? I think [ENTERTAIN] they should know what they are getting themselves into, know how much time they want to spend in it and most of all, I know [ENTERTAIN] this is going to sound really weird, but most of all, know how much you can lose.

---

50 4D and Toto are forms of lottery legalized in Singapore (Singapore Pools, 2011).
In most of the examples with *expansion* markers (*entertain*), the social gamblers are expressing their opinions about gambling. At the same time, they are signaling the self-awareness or reflexive identity of what they are doing and their will of refraining from something negative even though tempting. Also known as “hedges,” these *expansion* markers such as “I guess” and “I think” do not necessarily mitigate the statements made; instead, as shown in the example above, they are symbolically establishing the image of the speakers as a social gambler who has the will and ability to control their behavior. This finding is important because most previous studies tend to overemphasize the mitigating functions of hedging (Grundy, 2008, pp. 100–101) and downplay the symbolic functions of those hedges in signifying other more important meanings like our will to control and our abilities to argue.

5.5 *Instances of code switching and mixing*

As indicated in Table 5.6, instances of code switching and mixing\(^{51}\) are not found in the social gamblers’ monologues. This is in sharp contrast to the patterns identified for the recovering problem gamblers. Ming is more prone to code switching and mixing than Henry is. For both recovering problem gamblers, code switching and mixing are more frequently realized through particles than non-English expressions.

---

\(^{51}\) As Tay (1989, p. 408) mentioned, code switching refers to the alternate use of two codes across clause boundaries (viz., “intersentential”) while code mixing occurs within a clause (viz., “intrasentential”). However, she added that there are occasions on which it is difficult to differentiate between the two. For instance, if one of the two codes involved is Mandarin Chinese, difficulty arises as Mandarin Chinese is not necessarily clause-bound. Since the subtle distinctions between code switching and code mixing are not the focus of the present research, the phrase “code switching and mixing” is adopted here to denote all types of code alternation.
Table 5.6 Code choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Code choice</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-English</td>
<td>Particles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>expressions</td>
<td>Tokens</td>
<td>Tokens per 100</td>
<td>Tokens</td>
<td>Tokens per 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tokens</td>
<td>words</td>
<td>Tokens</td>
<td>words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social gamblers</td>
<td>WeiJie</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MingCai</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovering problem gamblers</td>
<td>Ming</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lah is the particle most commonly used. 9 out of the 16 tokens of the particles found are lah. Examples of the use of lah are provided below:

(13) Ming (Social gambler)

I started Year 2000. I was invest in share purely investment lah [PARTICLE]…

I don’t know whether I’m lucky unlucky lah [PARTICLE]. Every time they beat me up…

Total I relap (relapse) 5 times, okay which happened this year lah [PARTICLE] this year…

That one it was a very bad erm bad experience lah [PARTICLE]…

A number of functions of the particle lah in Singapore English have been suggested (Wee, 2004). Generally, the particle is employed by speakers to express a certain mood, and the audience would need to rely on their contextual knowledge to retrieve what attitude is being communicated (p. 118). The above examples of the use of lah by Ming show that the particle emerges mostly when he is narrating his previous bad experiences.
Other particles found in the monologues include *lor* and *ah*:

(14) Henry (Problem gambler)

So every gambler got this kind of thinking *lor* [PARTICLE], *xiao-du-yi-qing*\(^{52}\) *lor* [PARTICLE]…

When when work working you’re also thinking about that, some something wrong with some something happen already. So you yourself better watch out. Ok? But honestly, until that stage *ah* [PARTICLE], it is quite erm I mean you’re already at the bottom line already.

*Lor* can be used to mark the “obviousness” of a piece of information. Also, *lor* has the connotation of “resignation”—a situation that cannot be changed easily so people have to accept it despite their resentment (Wee, 2002, p. 723). As the above example illustrates, Henry uses *lor* to indicate that the audience should already know the information conveyed, i.e., the Mandarin Chinese idiom *xiao-du-yi-qing*, which is commonly used in Chinese gambling discourse to describe gamblers’ mentality.

The particle *ah*, by contrast, functions like an “audible comma,” having “more of a syntactic role” (Low & Deterding, 2003, p. 63). The instance of *ah* found in Henry’s speech in Example 14 seems to serve this particular purpose.

As regards the non-English lexemes and phrases, the term *ah-long* is used most frequently. *Ah-long* is a phrase from Hokkien and it means “loan shark” (The Coxford Singlish Dictionary, 2003). Ming uses it five times throughout his monologue. Like its English equivalent, *ah-long* is used to refer to the illegal moneylender. However, one example shows that *ah-long* can in fact refer to the loan itself:

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\(^{52}\) *Xiao-du-yi-qing* is a phrase from Mandarin Chinese, meaning “small bets are pleasant.”
(15) Ming (Problem gambler)

The fourth time when I took an ah-long [NON-ENGLISH EXPRESSION] is about I think it’s up to 20 over K.

Ah-long is an expression with a referential role in the discourse. The expression alamak, which usually marks an interjection, is found in Henry’s speech:

(16) Henry (Problem gambler)

Beginning I just observed, just observing like see how they play. Then slowly I play in small amount $50, $100. I say alamah [NON-ENGLISH EXPRESSION], small money lah [PARTICLE].

Alamak is a Malay expression that is used to convey surprise, anxiety or fear. It is said that this expression originated from the Arabic Allah Ma’ak, which means “God be with you” (The Coxford Singlish Dictionary, 2003).

As is shown in Example 14 above and Example 17 below, Henry attaches the non-English expression xiao-du-yi-qing to his utterance. Meaning “small bets are pleasant,” this Chinese idiom is used when Henry generalizes about gamblers’ mindset by commenting that many of them start from placing small bets:

(17) Henry (Problem gambler)

Xiao-du-yi-qing [NON-ENGLISH EXPRESSION] lor [PARTICLE]. Ok, start from small. But when as time goes on, your bet will be higher and higher.

The reason behind the discrepancy in the use of code switching and mixing between the social gamblers and the problem gamblers is worth exploring. The NCPG website does not provide any personal background information about the interviewees; hence, it is impossible to determine whether the use of code switching and mixing by the recovering problem gamblers is related to social factors like class and education. Besides, all the interviewees should know in
advance that their monologues would be made available for public access, and the setting where the interview took place should be similar across interviewees. So code switching and mixing in this scenario cannot be attributable to variation in function or domain. Instead, the “global and local identity orientations” stipulated in Alsagoff’s (2010, p. 116) “glocalization model” can shed light on the findings. It can be argued that by using non-English expressions and particles, the recovering problem gamblers are projecting a local identity that emphasizes their “rootedness in indigenous culture” (2010, p. 117). On the other hand, the social gamblers refrain from code switching and mixing as they strive to forge a global identity that can “foreground less differentiation and more congruence with perceived international norms” (2010, p. 115). From the analyses above, it can be deduced that code choice may not be random but a potential marker of identity. A code attributed to a more sophisticated identity, i.e., that of globalization, can be invoked to portray a more positive identity; on the other hand, a more local code associated with the working class in society is being drawn on to create a negative identity.

5.6 Chapter conclusion

To examine how the juxtaposing identities of social and problem gamblers are constructed discursively so that they can be deployed as a symbolic resource for state control, four gamblers’ monologues taken from the NCPG website were analyzed. The results support the claim that “identities,” as an elastic concept, can be constructed out of the varying discursive practices. It has been shown that the gamblers make use of different linguistic means to highlight aspects of their own self, thereby producing from the situated context a range of identities. An identity, constructed even out of a monologue, is always constructed in the presence of others. One identity mirrors another identity as if one is saying “I am what I am because of what I am not.” In fact, the present research on identities echoes Butler’s (1990) notion of “performativity” (see Section 1.1.9).

The conclusion has to move one step further however. It is through the undisclosed editorial involvement in the selection of the interviews that the
gamblers of this study are performing their identities in the monologues. The monologues are mediated texts produced by the NCPG—a state regulatory agency established to tackle the gambling issue in Singapore. Although the texts are self-reflective monologues of gamblers, these reflections are initiated by the Singaporean government. Of course we cannot be sure about the extent of this influence on the monologues but it can be deduced in some ways or others that the monologues must somehow reflect the general perception of what social and problematic gamblers are like; otherwise there will be no way for the general public to relate to what they are watching. Having said that, the presence or the mediational influence of the government on the monologues is undeniable. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, psychological deviants under the Foucauldian lens are considered harmful to the state and this gives rise to institutional control. By launching the campaign, the NCPG foregrounds the serious ramifications of deviant gambling so as to deter the local citizens from becoming inveterate gamblers who might ruin societal stability. Nonetheless, divorcing the identities of social and problem gamblers and solidifying the boundary between the two can also serve as a justification for abolishing the casino ban in Singapore. Based on the aforesaid, it can be argued that the monologues constitute a tool of multifaceted “mind control” for the state (van Dijk, 2008b, p. 11). In other words, the juxtaposing identities which the gamblers “perform” through discourse are mobilized as a symbolic resource by the governing party to socially construct the stigmatized identity of “problematic gamblers,” to rationalize its decision to license casinos and to subsequently regulate people’s behavior.

In fact, what is reported and discussed in this chapter vis-à-vis the NCPG campaign can address the issues which have arisen from the previous chapter. Although the newspaper forum letters and the government campaign constitute different discourse events, the interconnectedness between them with respect to the discursive representation of gamblers’ identities cannot be overlooked. While in the public sphere the government appears to conceal its intention to control the citizens through minimization of legitimation strategies used, there are many other avenues for it to exert its institutional imprint—one of which is a well-designed campaign as the analysis of this chapter has demonstrated. From the CDA
perspective, it can be argued that with its explicit endeavor to project and mobilize the discursively represented identities of recreational and problematic gamblers in juxtaposition, the NCPG campaign itself could be a useful resource for generating an educated guess towards the laypersons’ tendency to dichotomize the world as identified in Chapter 4. Via detailed language-driven analysis of naturally-occurring data which were not elicited by the researcher for the purpose of academic work, the state is shown to be a highly plausible agent that imparts and indoctrinates certain ideologies in society. Such ideologies are then passively accepted or even “internalized” by members of the public.  

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53 In child psychology or psychoanalysis, “internalization” refers to the process by which moral values are “absorbed” into the child’s “mental apparatus” so that his/her behavior is constrained despite no extrinsic rewards or penalties (Chopra, 2005, p. 140; Colman, 2009, p. 385).
Part IV Diffusion of Specialized Knowledge from Experts to Novices

Chapter 6 Data Analysis of Medical Texts

Chapter 5 has looked into the government’s voice in relation to the institutional construction of gamblers’ identities. This chapter will examine how gamblers’ identities are represented in texts produced by medical experts. Since Chapter 4 has revealed that mental health-care professionals are committed to their occupation and expertise, this chapter is conceptualized from the perspective of epistemological “recontextualization” (Kong, 2009; Linell, 2009) and will pay attention to how medical experts “recontextualize” knowledge through discourse while constructing and popularizing the identities of pathological/compulsive gamblers. Van Dijk’s (1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) sociocognitive approach to discourse, which centers on the notion of “knowledge,” will be adopted as the primary analytic framework. Following the presentation and the discussion of the findings, van Dijk’s framework will be revisited and the issues which have not been dealt with in the previous chapters will be addressed.

The current research is based on a tripartite body of data. The three texts under investigation came from: (i) the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR) entry with respect to pathological gambling; (ii) a complimentary promotional pamphlet about problem gambling issued by a mental health organization; (iii) a self-help book on addiction written by health-care professionals for a popular profit-making series. Justifications for the choice of data have been given in Section 3.2.3.4.
6.1 Semantic unit—Definition

In general, the medical experts share the ideological attitude that problem gambling is a pathological condition which needs medical attention. As part of their “social cognition” within the epistemic community (van Dijk, 2011, p. 395), this idea is noticeably represented in the semantic unit “Definition” across the three texts. Although the semantic unit “Definition” is comprised of multiple stretches of discourse, a detailed look at the defining statement is essential for uncovering how professional group knowledge or ideas are discursively “recontextualized” through the writers’ “context model” (van Dijk, 2008b, p. 177).

The pathologization of problem gamblers is evident in the defining statement of excessive gambling in all the three texts as shown below:

1. **Clinical manual**
   The essential feature of **Pathological Gambling** is persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior (Criterion A) that disrupts personal, family, or vocational pursuits. The diagnosis is not made if the gambling behavior is better accounted for by a **Manic Episode (Criterion B)**. (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 671)

2. **NAMS leaflet**
   **Gambling addiction** is a disease much like alcohol and drug addictions. (NAMS, 2011)

3. **“Dummies” text**
   **Pathological gambling** has been officially defined, in psychiatric terms, as “a persistent, recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior that disrupts personal, family, or vocational pursuits” (**DSM-IV-TR**). (Shaw, Ritvo & Irvine, 2005, p. 37)

Explicit reproduction of specialized knowledge from the clinical manual into the “Dummies” text is indicated by the use of the attributed direct quote.
Attributed direct quotes are regarded as the most explicit or dialogical intertextual markers (Fairclough, 2003, p. 46; Kong, 2009, p. 117). In fact, there is only one such occurrence within the entire pool of data in the present study. The use of the attributed direct quote in the “Dummies” text reinforces the idea that the clinical manual serves as a “holy book”—or in van Dijk’s (2011, p. 392) terminology, an “explicit ideological text”—of mental disorders within the medical domain. The quotation ends with an in-text citation of the source “(DSM-IV-TR)” and is prefaced by the performative verb “define” as well as the circumstantial adjuncts “officially” and “in psychiatric terms.” These linguistic signals constitute the “familiarization devices” that contextualize technical definitions in professional-lay communication like academic lectures (Flowerdew, 1992, p. 206). Besides, these devices collectively contribute to the “discursive construction of legitimation” by appealing to expert authority (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 107).

Despite the use of the attributed direct quote in the “Dummies” text, it can be seen that certain knowledge or information is blocked or “filtered out” by the writers’ “context model.” It is shown in Example 1 above that the clinical manual explicitly asserts the medical initiative to rule out the possibility of the gamblers experiencing manic episodes in the diagnosis of pathological gambling. This consideration is referred to as “Criterion B” within the manual and is completely stripped away in the “Dummies” text. Similarly, in the NAMS leaflet, no trace of such knowledge can be found either.

With reference to van Dijk’s (2009) sociocognitive approach to discourse studies, it can be argued that the medical experts (i.e., the speakers), who produce the NAMS leaflet and the “Dummies” text, subjectively construe a “context model” of the professional-novice communicative situation where the specific group knowledge regarding manic episodes is irrelevant for the readers of the texts (i.e., the recipients). However, by removing such specialized information from the “recontextualized” defining statement of excessive gambling, the medical experts deny the lay readers access to the overriding consideration about manic episodes in the clinical diagnosis of pathological gambling. This also leads to the overgeneralization or simplification of pathological gambling among the
public, who may misinterpret people experiencing manic episodes as pathological gamblers.

In the clinical manual, although pathological gambling is partially defined in terms of the absence (or non-presence) of manic episodes, the term “manic episode” is not further explicated within the text. This means that medical knowledge about manic episodes among the specialist readers or users of the manual is assumed in the “context model” of the text producers, so an explicit assertion of what manic episodes are becomes unnecessary. It can also be inferred that a full understanding of pathological gambling cannot be attained without the expert knowledge of manic episodes.

From the defining statements, it can furthermore be noted that “recontextualization” of knowledge is manifested at the lexical level. The lexis used to denote abnormal gambling behavior differs across the three texts. Both the manual and the “Dummies” text make use of the specialized terminology “pathological gambling.” One difference between the two texts is that a more technical slant is conveyed by the clinical manual which presents the term typographically as a proper noun via initial capitalization. The use of capitalization may uphold the medical definition and institutionalization of disordered gambling. It symbolizes pathological gambling as a definable and canonical category within the realm of medical science. Similar practice is found in the legal profession where initial capitalization is adopted in legislative writings for words which have been precisely defined in a document (Ahmad, 2009, p. 106; Crystal & Davy, 1969, p. 199). As Gibbons (2003, p. 46) remarked, words or expressions may be endowed with a specific meaning in a particular legal text via the process of defining. For instance, in a consultancy agreement, nouns such as “client” and “party” are usually established as a defined term at the beginning. The context-specific meanings taken up by these nouns will then be adopted throughout the document. To signal the unambiguous reference created within the communicative space, capitalization is typically applied to the nouns concerned (p. 65).
On the other hand, the NAMS leaflet employs the negatively connoted lexis “addiction” to represent what is called “pathological” in the clinical manual and the “Dummies” text. Compared to the lexis “pathological,” “addiction” is less technically oriented and is geared towards what van Dijk (2011, p. 395) identified as “general-sociocultural” knowledge, which is shared by all members of a given culture, regardless of which ideological group(s) they belong to.

The tendency of the NAMS leaflet to align itself with the “Common Ground” knowledge (van Dijk, 2011, p. 395) is apparent in the rest of the defining statement as well. Instead of recalling verbatim the technical definition given in the clinical manual, the NAMS leaflet draws an analogy between gambling and other kinds of everyday common over-indulgence such as alcohol and drugs. The pathological underpinning of the defining statement however is not sacrificed, owing to the nominal group “a disease,” which is the Attribute of the relational process whose Carrier is the term “gambling addiction.”

Notwithstanding the absence of a relative pronoun, the defining statement in the NAMS leaflet is by and large in line with the paradigm form (“An A is a B which C”) of “formal definitions” prescribed by Flowerdew (1992, p. 209). While A stands for the term in question, B is the class word and C represents the key characteristics. In the case of the NAMS leaflet, C is filled by examples (“alcohol and drug addictions”) of the class word “disease.” The use of such examples and the class word, which can be found very often in non-specialist popularized discourse (Pearson, 1998, p. 39), represents an effort made by the text producers to bridge the gap between sociocultural knowledge and medical technical knowledge for the lay target readers’ perusal.

It should be stressed that the reduction of the aforementioned gap does not necessarily imply that the readers and the experts have the same understanding of the technical concept. Undoubtedly, the use of general language can orientate readers towards the “Common Ground” knowledge. Nonetheless, this is done at the expense of technical knowledge. Rather than introducing the term “pathological gambling” in a rigorous fashion, the leaflet simply highlights the
addictive potential of gambling and compares it with drugs and alcohol. In this way, the specialized knowledge embedded in the technical term “pathological gambling” may not reach the non-specialist audience (Pearson, 1998, p. 38).

While some specialized knowledge about the medical definition of excessive gambling is withheld by the producers of the NAMS leaflet and the “Dummies” text, the two texts signal or remind readers about certain “general-sociocultural” knowledge which is dormant in the clinical manual. This can be illustrated by the following excerpts:

(2) NAMS leaflet

The National Addictions Management Service (NAMS) provides treatment for people who are concerned about their gambling or that of someone close to them. We provide comprehensive assessment and treatment for problem gamblers and their significant others. (NAMS, 2011)

“Dummies” text

Pathological gambling is a progressive disorder that involves impulse-control problems. The consequences of pathological gambling are severe and may be devastating to the addicted person’s family and career, but the disorder can be treated. (Shaw, Ritvo & Irvine, 2005, p. 37)

A common conception in society is that medical illnesses are treatable. If not, there would be no reason for making the diagnosis. Such “Common Ground” knowledge, which is neither expressed nor implied in the clinical manual, is brought up by the NAMS leaflet and the “Dummies” text in various ways.

As van Dijk (2003b, pp. 23–24) put it, socially shared general knowledge is usually presupposed in discourse. This discourse strategy is materialized in the NAMS leaflet through nominalization (“treatment”) followed by a circumstantial adjunct that indicates the receiving party of the treatment. As the excerpt in Example 2 shows, what is asserted is the organization that provides treatment. The idea that problem gamblers need medical treatment or problem gambling is
treatable is assumed or implicitly signaled in the text. This “propositional presupposition” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 55; Kong, 2009, p. 118) accords with the general abstract knowledge that medical conditions can be treated.

Unlike the NAMS leaflet, the “Dummies” text makes use of a “modalized assertion” to express the same proposition, as Example 2 above illustrates. Compared to presuppositions, assertions are more explicit or dialogical intertextual markers (Fairclough, 2003, p. 46; Kong, 2009, p. 117). The use of discourse explicitness to convey general knowledge that tends to be socially shared seems to contradict van Dijk’s (2003b) suggestion mentioned earlier. This issue can be resolved with recourse to the “context model” of the “Dummies” text producers. As van Dijk (2008b, p. 167) maintained, “context models” normally oversee not just what is being said but also how it is said. Therefore, it can be argued that the “Dummies” text producers subjectively construct a “context model” where the target readers need to be “reminded” about the “general-sociocultural” knowledge that medical illnesses call for treatment.

Another difference in the semantic unit “Definition” between the clinical manual and the “Dummies” text is worth mentioning. This difference is evident in the following excerpts:

(3) Clinical manual

Pathological Gambling must be distinguished from social gambling and professional gambling. Social gambling typically occurs with friends or colleagues and lasts for a limited period of time, with predetermined acceptable losses. In professional gambling, risks are limited and discipline is central. (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 673)

“Dummies” text

Gambling involves the betting or wagering of valuables on uncertain outcomes and takes many forms — from games of chance to skill-based activities. People have many motivations for gambling, but all involve the hope of gaining more. Gambling is sometimes a rite of passage by which
people discover more about themselves and how to compete with others. It is sometimes a way of life (for people such as casino pros and escape gamblers). It can be, in its healthiest form, a way of socializing and having fun.

Pathological gambling is a progressive disorder that involves impulse-control problems. . . . (Shaw, Ritvo & Irvine, 2005, p. 37)

Both texts make a distinction between pathological gambling and its non-pathological counterpart. It is unlikely that lay readers are familiar with the distinction; hence it should fall in the realm of group specific knowledge. The data show that such specialist knowledge is asserted by the text producers in different ways.

As Example 3 displays, the difference between pathological gambling and non-pathological gambling is expressed in the clinical manual through an overt statement that marks an “antonymic” relation. The trigger for the “antonymic” relation is the cognitive mental process “distinguish” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 208). Although the Senser of the mental process is unspecified, it is assumed that the users of the manual, viz., legitimate members of the medical institution, are the party who performs the cognitive action of “distinguishing.” The explicitness of the assertion is signified by the verb “must,” which is considered to be a “modal operator” marking a high degree of obligation (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 116).

Another feature of the excerpt is that information is presented in a condensed manner, partly via the strategy of “grammatical metaphor” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 636), which turns the action (or material process)—“somebody gambling non-pathologically” into two compound nouns: “social gambling” and “professional gambling.” Grammatical metaphor in the form of nominalization like this is said to be found frequently in the discourse of experts, where processes are realized “incongruently” as entities (Norgaard, Montoro & Busse, 2010, p. 97). Following the work of Gibbons (2003, p. 20) on legal
discourse, Figure 6.1 is provided in order to diagrammatically illustrate the linguistic transformation involved.

It can further be argued that in the manual, the linguistic transformation associated with grammatical metaphor represents the medical attempt to theorize other non-pathological forms of gambling behavior, making them “definable.” How this attempt is linguistically realized will be explicated in the following paragraphs.

Figure 6.1 Diagrammatical representation of grammatical metaphor

As seen from the excerpt in Example 3, both “social gambling” and “professional gambling” become the Hallidayan Theme in the subsequent statements, while the Rheme bears classificatory information concerning these
forms of gambling behavior (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 64). In Enkvist’s (1973, p. 13) words, “social gambling” and “professional gambling” can be regarded as “notational terms,” which are essentially “abbreviations” that can be paraphrased. As Enkvist (1973, p. 14) elaborated, “notational terms” always have to be defined with the help of more fundamental concepts.

One more remark has to be made with respect to the use of the marked Theme “in professional gambling” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 73). On the one hand, the importance or relevance of the concept “professional gambling” towards the readers’ understanding of pathological gambling is elevated through the marked Theme. However, it should be noted that the technical information conveyed remains abstract and lacks precision, unlike what one would expect from specialized discourse. Other than the use of the adjectives “limited” and “central,” no further details about the extent of the “risks” and “discipline” are specified—what count as limited risks and central discipline. In van Dijk’s (2012, p. 598) terms, it can be said that the information is provided merely with “coarse granularity.”

The “Dummies” text displays a different pattern. Before discussing the psychiatric definition of pathological gambling, it describes gambling in a broadly inclusive manner so as to show the readers what non-pathological gambling is. Here, the technicality of the information delivered is masked by the non-specialized lexis that is associated with everyday discourse (e.g., “a rite of passage,” “a way of life” and “a way of socializing and having fun”). “Notational terms” like those found in the clinical manual (e.g., “social gambling” and “professional gambling”) are circumvented. The writers’ personal stance is made visible through the occasional use of hedges, such as “sometimes” and “can be,” as well as the superlative adjective “healthiest.” Similar to the case of the NAMS leaflet discussed above, the use of all these discursive strategies enables the writers to “recontextualize” specialized knowledge and then pass it on to the laypersons as if it were common knowledge that is socially shared.
6.2 Semantic unit—Criteria

The semantic unit “Criteria” is modeled upon the ten inclusive diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling laid down in the clinical manual. Given the context of medical pathologization of problem gambling, these ten criteria constitute the backbone of the specialized knowledge conveyed because they are the determining factors in medically scrutinizing disordered gamblers. The importance of these criteria is supported by a comparison of the three texts, all of which are found to have enunciated these criteria. In spite of such consistency, the linguistic realizations of the criteria vary considerably across the texts.

The strategy adopted by the clinical manual to present the ten inclusive diagnostic criteria highly echoes the systematic nature of medical science, as the following examples indicate:

(4) Clinical manual

The individual may be preoccupied with gambling (e.g., reliving past gambling experiences, planning the next gambling venture, or thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble) (Criterion A1). Most individuals with Pathological Gambling say that they are seeking “action” (an aroused, euphoric state) or excitement even more than money. Increasingly larger bets, or greater risks, may be needed to continue to produce the desired level of excitement (Criterion A2). Individuals with Pathological Gambling often continue to gamble despite repeated efforts to control, cut back, or stop the behavior (Criterion A3). There may be restlessness or irritability when attempting to cut down or stop gambling (Criterion A4). The individual may gamble as a way of escaping from problems or to relieve a dysphoric mood (e.g., feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety, depression) (Criterion A5). . . . When the individual’s borrowing resources are strained, the person may resort to antisocial behavior (e.g., forgery, fraud, theft, or embezzlement) to obtain money (Criterion A8). The individual may have jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of
gambling (Criterion A9). The individual may also engage in “bailout” behavior, turning to family or others for help with a desperate financial situation that was caused by gambling (Criterion A10). (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, pp. 671–672)

(5) Clinical manual

Persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior as indicated by five (or more) of the following:

1. is preoccupied with gambling (e.g., preoccupied with reliving past gambling experiences, handicapping or planning the next venture, or thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble)

2. needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement

3. has repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling

4. is restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling

5. gambles as a way of escaping from problems or of relieving a dysphoric mood (e.g., feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety, depression)

6. after losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even (“chasing” one’s losses)

7. lies to family members, therapist, or others to conceal the extent of involvement with gambling

8. has committed illegal acts such as forgery, fraud, theft, or embezzlement to finance gambling

9. has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling

10. relies on others to provide money to relieve a desperate financial situation caused by gambling (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 674)

Within the clinical manual, there are two instances where the ten inclusive diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling are explicitly asserted. As Example 4 demonstrates, the first instance in which the criteria are mentioned falls on a ten-part paragraph. All the criteria are compressed into one single paragraph. To avoid confusion, each criterion however is separated from one another via a gloss (e.g.,
“Criterion A1”). Likewise, as shown in Example 5, these ten criteria reemerge at the end of the text with ten corresponding numbered points. The list of the diagnostic criteria is preceded by the specialized information—five or more of them have to be fulfilled before a diagnosis of pathological gambling is made.

By using the terminology in critical stylistics, it can be said that in both instances described above, the criteria are spelled out via “enumeration.” Similar to “exemplification,” “enumeration” is a discourse strategy through which a specific topic or subject matter is expanded. Nevertheless, “enumeration” elaborates by exhaustively documenting all the individual items involved, one after another. It is said that this strategy is commonplace in medicine-related discourse, such as medical prescriptions (Jeffries, 2010a, pp. 66–69).

Two more remarks have to be made with respect to Examples 4 and 5. First, gamblers tend to be represented as “genericized” social actors (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 35) in the manual through the nominal group “the individual.” Although the nominal group is made up of the definite article “the” and a singular noun, reference is not made to any specific gambler. It is argued that such “genericization” of gamblers makes the specialized knowledge (viz., the ten diagnostic criteria) more abstract, general and easily applicable, as every person can be referred to as an individual. At the same time, a universalized image of pathological gamblers can be forged.

Second, in the semantic unit “Criteria,” the clinical manual makes very frequent use of what Hyland (1998) called “code glosses.” According to the scholar, “code glosses” constitute one form of “textual metadiscourse”—the writer’s initiative to offer extra information in order to make sure that the reader can retrieve his/her intended meaning. “Code glosses” are usually signaled by phrases including “such as,” “in other words,” “for example,” or are enclosed by parentheses (p. 443). As can be seen in Examples 4 and 5, “code glosses” are repeatedly employed to guide the target readers through the search of specific meanings for various expressions like “dysphoric mood,” “antisocial behavior” and “get even.”
As opined by Hyland (1998, p. 443), “code glosses” mirror the writer’s estimation of the reader’s “knowledge-base.” By using van Dijk’s (2008b, p. 177) notion of the “context model,” it can be deduced that the target readers of the manual, despite being medical specialists, are assumed in the manual producers’ “context model” that they are unfamiliar with certain specific ideas so additional information has to be given. It should be noted that when using “code glosses,” the text producers resort to knowledge that is directed towards the “Common Ground.” For instance, the “code gloss” for the expression “antisocial behavior” is “forgery, fraud, theft, or embezzlement.” This clearly shows that even during intra-professional knowledge exchange, there is an interface between “Common Ground” knowledge and specialized knowledge.

Similar to the clinical manual, the NAMS leaflet also utilizes the strategy of “enumeration,” as Example 6 shows:

(6) **NAMS leaflet**

**Signs of a Possible Gambling Problem**

- Gambling more often
- Gambling for longer periods of time
- Gambling with larger amounts of money
- Gambling in spite of negative consequences e.g. huge losses, poor job performance, relationship problems
- Gambling to escape from emotional problems, worries or frustrations
- Telling lies to hide gambling and related problems

**Recognizing Gambling Problems Among Your Loved Ones and Friends**

- Spending more time and money to gamble
- Borrowing money to gamble
- Stealing or committing other illegal acts to gamble
- Unexplained debts or financial problems
- Unexplained absences from work or school
• Missing family and social important events to gamble
• Feeling restless or irritable when not gambling (NAMS, 2011)

The NAMS text lists the diagnostic criteria in bullet points. Different from the manual, the criteria are organized under two lists with different titles. One is named “Signs of a Possible Gambling Problem” and the other is entitled “Recognizing Gambling Problems Among Your Loved Ones and Friends.” The specialized information regarding the fulfillment of five criteria or more as the prerequisite for the diagnosis of pathological gambling is not traceable. Unlike the clinical manual, each bullet point begins with a non-finite verb so the social actor involved in each action is “excluded” through “backgrounding” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 29).

There are three important features that set the NAMS leaflet apart from the clinical manual. These three features are displayed in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Three important differences between the NAMS leaflet and the clinical manual vis-à-vis the semantic unit “Criteria”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical manual</th>
<th>NAMS leaflet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The individual may gamble as a way of escaping from problems or to relieve a dysphoric mood (e.g., feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety, depression) (Criterion A5).”</td>
<td>“Gambling to escape from emotional problems, worries or frustrations”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“When the individual’s borrowing resources are strained, the person may resort to antisocial behavior (e.g., forgery, fraud, theft, or embezzlement) to obtain money (Criterion A8).”</td>
<td>“Stealing or committing other illegal acts to gamble”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Diagnostic criteria for 312.31 Pathological Gambling”</td>
<td>“Recognizing gambling problems among your loved ones and friends”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There may be restlessness or irritability when attempting to cut down or stop gambling (Criterion A4).”</td>
<td>“Feeling restless or irritable when not gambling”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First, “code glosses” are rarely found in the leaflet. Expressions like “dysphoric mood” and “antisocial behavior” are taken away and are paraphrased in a way that resembles more closely non-specialist discourse (e.g., “worries or frustrations” and “stealing or committing other illegal acts”).

Second, rather than “textual metadiscourse,” the NAMS text is marked by “interpersonal metadiscourse.” The leaflet writers make use of the second-person possessive determiner “your” to directly address the target audience. As Hyland (1998) declared, “interpersonal metadiscourse” directs the reader towards the writer’s voice concerning the information presented as well as the reader him/herself, hence building a writer-reader relation. One manifestation of “interpersonal metadiscourse” is the use of “relational markers”—devices such as second-person pronouns and imperatives that overtly address the reader (p. 443). By using the “relational marker” to introduce the diagnostic criteria, the authors of the leaflet are engaged in what Linell (2002, p. 47) referred to as “re-perspectivization” while recontextualizing the specialized knowledge. Although the word “diagnosis” is not used, the phrase “recognizing gambling problems among your loved ones and friends” seems to “re-distribute” the task of medical diagnosis from the professionals to the lay readers, who should have no prior formal training. The “would-be” gamblers are represented as “your loved ones and friends” and apparently the target readers are expected to share the work of identifying pathological gamblers.

Third, there is an obvious attempt from the leaflet producers to unpack the grammatical metaphor used in the clinical manual. It is found that in the manual, nominalization is used in an existential process, where “restlessness or irritability” is the Existent. The Existent is actually a “metaphorical variant” of what would be “congruently” represented as adjectives (“restless or irritable”) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 270). In the NAMS leaflet, the existential process is transformed into an attributive relational process through which the “congruent” realization (i.e., the Attribute) is recovered. Figure 6.2 below exemplifies the transformation.
All the three distinctive features identified above epitomize the medical practitioners’ scheme to diffuse the technical knowledge of pathological gambling constructed and held by them to the public. While the specialized knowledge is “recontextualized,” its medical or technical undertone is diluted via various discourse strategies. The technical information conveyed becomes “Common Ground”-like. As a purely medical construct, pathological gambling transcends the specialist “confinement” and encroaches upon the “social cognition” (van Dijk, 2011, p. 395) of non-specialists. This is reminiscent of Habermas’ (1987, pp. 196–197) ideas of “colonization of lifeworld by systems” and “secularization of bourgeois culture.”

Nonetheless, the seemingly blurry boundary between the specific knowledge possessed by the medical professionals and the “general-sociocultural” knowledge shared among the wider community does not mean that the professionals relinquish their authority. This is evident from Example 7.
(7) NAMS leaflet

We provide comprehensive assessment and treatment for problem gamblers and their significant others. (NAMS, 2011)

Though the text producers of the NAMS leaflet, as mentioned earlier, assign the lay readers the job of identifying pathological gamblers, power is reclaimed by explicitly asserting that medical professionals are the ones who offer “comprehensive assessment and treatment” for pathological gamblers.

As for the “Dummies” text, the discourse strategy of “enumeration” is not found. Instead, the ten diagnostic criteria are scattered around the text. The configuration of these diagnostic criteria is less detectable for the uninformed readers as the information is presented as either “predictions” or “cautionary tales” (van Leeuwen, 2008, pp. 116–118). This finding is partially captured in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2 Differences between the “Dummies” text and the clinical manual vis-à-vis the semantic unit “Criteria”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical manual</th>
<th>“Dummies” text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “Increasingly larger bets, or greater risks, may be needed to continue to produce the desired level of excitement (Criterion A2).”</td>
<td>• “At the same time, you can’t maintain the excitement unless you’re continually involved in high-risk bets.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “When the individual’s borrowing resources are strained, the person may resort to antisocial behavior (e.g., forgery, fraud, theft, or embezzlement) to obtain money (Criterion A8).”</td>
<td>• “Most importantly, you’re concerned with how you’ll raise more money, legally or illegally.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “The individual may have jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling (Criterion A9).”</td>
<td>• “If you don’t change your pattern, however, you’ll be engaging in more and more self-destructive behavior.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As delineated in Table 6.2, many of the diagnostic criteria which are stipulated in the clinical manual take the form of predictions in the “Dummies” text. The text producers (i.e., the medical professionals) appear to be invested with prophetic power, as the text is laden with what Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 417) called “hypotactic enhancing clauses of condition” which are introduced by the conjunctions “unless” and “if.”

Figure 6.3 Diagrammatical representation of the linguistic transformation with respect to clause complexity

Figure 6.3 shows the linguistic transformation involved in one diagnostic criterion from the clinical manual to the “Dummies” text. The convention of marking clause complexes in systemic functional linguistics is adhered to (Thompson, 2004). The triple slash is used to indicate the entire utterance under examination. This utterance is usually a clause complex itself. Embedded clauses are marked with [[]]. Hypotactic relations are shown by the use of Greek letters. While the dominant/main clause is represented by α, the dependent/subordinate clause is labeled β. These two clauses are separated by a single slash (pp. 198–201). It is noted from Figure 6.3 that the purpose of making larger bets, which is
conveyed through an embedded clause in the clinical manual, occupies the position of a main clause in the “Dummies” text. Such a transformation, accompanied by the conditional clause beginning with “unless,” facilitates the construction of the medical practitioners’ predictive voice.

The predictive voice is furthered by a high incidence of the modal verb “will” identified in the “Dummies” text. As one of the “temporal finite verbal operators,” the modal verb “will” is utilized to construe the future within the “semantic space” created between the interlocutors (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 116). According to van Leeuwen (2008, p. 116), predictions are one form of “theoretical rationalization” that contributes to the discursive construction of legitimation because they provide overt representations of how things are or will be, based on some kind of expertise or experience.

Similar to what is noticed in the NAMS leaflet, “interpersonal metadiscourse” is infiltrated into the specialized knowledge when it is being “recontextualized” and promulgated through the “Dummies” text. The “relational marker” “you,” which directly addresses the target readers, is frequently used, as the examples in Table 6.2 demonstrate. Here, the second-person pronoun is employed simultaneously to address the audience and to represent the gamblers. This can be interpreted as a breach of the Gricean (1975) maxim of quality—hence giving rise to an implicature, because it is not true that all readers are gamblers. As Hyland (2005, pp. 53–54) pointed out, “relational markers” can craft authority by discursively positioning the audience, dragging readers into the communicative event at important moments, anticipating potential objections and directing them to specific interpretations. Therefore, it can be said that the recurrent use of the second-person pronoun in the “Dummies” text to overgeneralize readers as prospective pathological gamblers, together with the use of predictions as “theoretical rationalization,” helps to solidify the medical professionals’ status as the institutional gatekeeper of specialized knowledge to which all laypersons, whether or not they gamble, are subjugated.
As mentioned above, another noteworthy strategy deployed by the “Dummies” text writers to “recontextualize” the specialized knowledge concerning the ten diagnostic criteria is the use of “cautionary tales.” Relevant examples are given in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 Instances of “cautionary tales” in the “Dummies” text with reference to the diagnostic criteria in the clinical manual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical manual</th>
<th>“Dummies” text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “When the individual’s borrowing resources are strained, the person may resort to <strong>antisocial behavior</strong> (e.g., forgery, fraud, theft, or embezzlement) to obtain money (Criterion A8).”</td>
<td>• “Here are just a few examples of crimes committed because of compulsive gambling:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The president and CEO of a company</strong> fraudulently obtained loans of more than $10 million to pay off gambling debts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The chairman of a bank</strong> passed $8 million in checks with insufficient funds to cover debts to 2 casinos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>A physician</strong> borrowed over $8 million to cover gambling debts and then declared bankruptcy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>A 66-year-old grandmother</strong> embezzled $4.9 million to feed her gambling habit.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As van Leeuwen (2008, p. 106) suggested, storytelling (or “mythopoesis”) is a common way to discursively construct legitimation. He then differentiated between “moral tales” and “cautionary tales.” In the former, legitimate social practices attract rewards; in the latter, illegitimate actions result in penalties (pp. 117–118).

As Table 6.3 shows, the “Dummies” text provides a succession of brief anecdotes to exemplify the archetypal problem gamblers’ “antisocial behavior” specified in the clinical manual. Different from the manual as well as the NAMS leaflet, the “Dummies” text tends to represent the gamblers through “individualization” and “functionalization” (van Leeuwen, 2008, pp. 37–42).
They are frequently referred to “individually” on the basis of what they do for a living. There is a noticeable tendency to “functionalize” problem gamblers as holding prestigious occupations in society (e.g., “the president and CEO of a company,” “the chairman of a bank” and “a physician”). By “individualizing” gamblers as people with high economic status, the “Dummies” text tries to portray an omnipresent icon for problem gamblers.

A full-fledged “cautionary tale” (see Example 8 below), which contains detailed descriptions of the deviant activities and the ensuing punishment, is provided in the “Dummies” text.

(8) “Dummies” text

[ORIENTATION] **Ryan B.** is a 26 year old who was facing several charges of **theft and forgery** related to his gambling habit. He loved the rush of the casino but was equally at home at the racetrack or the poker table. He was on the lookout for *pigeons*, inexperienced people who would get into a game with him. He forgot that as one of the players at the table, he too was caught up in the game. He loved going to the action spots, from Monte Carlo to Las Vegas, more than he loved people or himself.

[COMPLICATING ACTION] Ryan won and lost millions. He would be up thousands and even though he knew enough to leave, sometimes he would stay, and lose. He was in debt more than $300,000, and he started stealing from his employer to pay off his gambling debts. [RESULT/RESOLUTION] **After serving five years for fraud.** [CODA] he is now a member of Gamblers’ Anonymous, and as of today, remains in control. (Shaw, Ritvo & Irvine, 2005, p. 40)

In this “cautionary tale,” the gambler is represented via “nomination” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 40) as “Ryan B.” Due to his gambling addiction, he had to engage in theft and forgery which led to an unhappy ending. The punishment that the gambler received is highlighted by the marked Theme “after serving five years for fraud.” This mini-story essentially conforms to the conventional narrative
structure proposed by Labov (1972, p. 369) as it comprises the following components: “orientation,” “complicating action,” “result/resolution” and “coda.” In the case of Ryan, negative “complications” arose due to his excessive gambling behavior and these “complications” were “resolved” by a five-year jail term, which was also the unwanted “result” of the “complicating action.”

Van Leeuwen (2008) seemed to assume a direct connection between “cautionary tales” and their power of legitimation. The sociocognitive framework suggested by van Dijk (2008a) will be brought into play to demonstrate that such a relationship does not materialize on its own without the intermediary role of “cognition.” First and foremost, it has to be kept in mind that the “cautionary tales” actually embody the socially shared specialized knowledge of pathological gambling within the medical community (viz., the diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling). Such specialized knowledge is “recontextualized” into the “Dummies” text as if it were private, personal, autobiographical knowledge about episodic events and experiences (van Dijk, 2005a, p. 77).

Under sociocognitive analysis, mental representations of personal knowledge or experiences are overseen by the “event model” that constitutes part of “personal cognition” (van Dijk, 2011, p. 395). The “cautionary tales” in the “Dummies” text thus signify the convergence of “personal knowledge” and “specialized group knowledge.” By mobilizing their “personal cognition,” the “Dummies” text producers map their episodic knowledge onto the specialized knowledge that they intend to transmit. Once the mapping is completed, the specialized knowledge is reproduced under the guise of “cautionary tales” in which the authors’ personal knowledge is explicitly articulated. The legitimation of the specialized knowledge regarding pathological gambling stems from the proximity of the “cautionary tales” to the “Common Ground” knowledge shared among the readers. Such “Common Ground” knowledge includes the aforesaid prototypical narrative structure where “complicating actions” caused by the protagonist’s socially disapproved behavior will give rise to undesirable “results.” Such a pattern is recognizable in the characters of many well-known fairy tales,
such as the Queen in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and the stepsisters in *Cinderella*.

### 6.3 Semantic unit—Prevalence

The data analysis has hitherto shown how writers “recontextualize” their technical knowledge in discourse by aligning it with the “Common Ground” knowledge and even their subjective “event model” (van Dijk, 2011, p. 395). At the same time, the “general-sociocultural” knowledge may be packaged or “recontextualized” as knowledge that is guarded by specialists, hence constituting new information for the lay readers. This technique to manipulate the transmission and/or reproduction of knowledge can be found in the three texts. The ubiquity of gambling is widely known, and so is the preponderance of those who experience gambling-related problems. This kind of knowledge should be subsumed under the “Common Ground” compartment of “social cognition” (van Dijk, 2011, p. 395). Nevertheless, when being “recontextualized,” such commonly shared knowledge is clothed with details that resemble information generated through sophisticated research and careful studies. The semantic unit “Prevalence” is where these details are located.

(9) **Clinical manual**  
*Community studies* estimate the lifetime prevalence of Pathological Gambling to range from 0.4% to 3.4% in adults, although prevalence rates in some areas (e.g., Puerto Rico, Australia) have been reported to be as high as 7%. (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 673)

**NAMS leaflet**  
According to a **2008 MCYS study**, nearly 2% of Singapore residents aged 18 years and above who were surveyed may experience problems related to their gambling. (NAMS, 2011)
“Dummies” text

Many groups, from governments to native peoples to criminals are involved in the gambling business. In fact, research reveals that gambling is a $100 billion per year business in the United States. (Shaw, Ritvo & Irvine, 2005, p. 38)

As Example 9 reveals, all the three texts make use of quantification to signal the magnitude of gambling in society. Via the addition of figures, the text producers concretize the common general societal conception regarding the predominance of gambling. All these figures are in fact “intertextually” incorporated into the texts by means of attributed indirect quotes (Fairclough, 2003, p. 47; Kong, 2009, p. 120). One across-the-board pattern is that the sources of the quotes (viz., “community studies,” “a 2008 MCYS study” and “research”) are all represented in the form of “utterance autonomization” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 46). “Utterance autonomization” is a representational strategy to “impersonalize” or “objectivate” social actors through reference to their utterances (p. 46). In the clinical manual, “community studies” are used to substitute for the Actor/Sayer of the estimation. The medical professionals who undertook the community studies are actually the ones who did the estimation. Similarly, in the NAMS leaflet, the marked Theme “according to a 2008 MCYS study” replaces the Sayer/Reporter of the gambling survey result, i.e., the government or the MCYS (Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports).

The figure-laden information which the authors “dialogically” inscribe on their texts via “utterance autonomization” is inherently specific and precise. As van Dijk (2008a, p. 62) put it, readers may be able to recall details of the information shortly after they finish reading; however, it is likely that such concrete memories will become inaccessible a few weeks later. What the readers will probably remember is the pervasiveness of gambling, and this is exactly equivalent to the “Common Ground” knowledge that many laypersons are assumed to have. Then why do the authors still take the trouble to integrate the information into their discourse? The answer is discernible in van Leeuwen’s
(2008, pp. 46–47) explication relating to the use of “utterance autonomization.” As he said, “utterance autonomization” employed with respect to high-status social actors can communicate a sense of “impersonal authority,” like “the facts speak for themselves.” It can therefore be argued that by blending highly exclusive information into their discourse and attributing it to parties on which authority is conferred, the writers aim to underline their “professional autonomy,” to legitimize their expert status and to normalize their discourse (van Leeuwen, 2008, pp. 105–109). In this case, what has been normalized is the seriousness or ubiquity of problem gambling.

Example 9 also illustrates how the text producers privilege the institutional power through their representational treatment of the government. This can further legitimize or naturalize their claims in the discourse, as the writers themselves are also speaking with an institution-oriented voice. In the “Dummies” text, “governments,” “native peoples” and “criminals” are lumped together vis-à-vis the “gambling business.” This representational choice is known as “association” (van Leeuwen, 2008, pp. 38–39). Since “criminals” tend to be perceived negatively, the association formed somehow problematizes the governments’ involvement in the gambling industry as well. Yet, such problematization emerges in a subtle way, as it is not asserted explicitly. It can merely be activated by the readers’ recourse to the “Common Ground” knowledge—the governing party’s contribution to the growth of the gambling business by making it readily available through legalization.

The problematization with respect to the governments’ connection to gambling is made more implicit in the clinical manual, where the governing party is not mentioned at all in any part of the text.

(10) **Clinical manual**

The prevalence of Pathological Gambling is influenced by both the availability of gambling and the duration of availability such that with the increasing availability of legalized gambling, there is an increase in the
prevalence of Pathological Gambling. (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 673)

In Example 10, the government is “excluded” in the most radical manner through “suppression” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 29). It can be argued that the removal of the government from the linguistic context takes away its responsibility for the surge in problem gamblers, which could be caused by the lawmaker in its legalization of gambling. In the NAMS leaflet, the government’s role as a facilitator in problem gambling is not even hinted at. Instead, as Example 9 above demonstrates, the government is represented as a “benevolent” actor that is keenly helping the general public to better comprehend the issue of problem gambling.

The representation of the governing party in the three texts, particularly the clinical manual and the NAMS leaflet, is an instantiation of what van Dijk (1995) called “impression management,” which is regularly implemented by the dominant groups to legitimize or obfuscate their dominance (p. 258). Here, the government is portrayed as the “responsible agent” of a positive act (viz., conducting a survey to “demystify” the phenomenon of problem gambling in society), while at the same time its “agency” or “active responsibility” for the negative action associated with gambling legalization is deemphasized (van Dijk, 2011, p. 398).

6.4 Semantic unit—Other problems

While the negative acts of the government or the state are played down, the gamblers tend to be subjected to “derogation” through the writers’ emphasis on their socially unwelcome actions. Projecting a negative, demeaning image for the “Other” (viz., the “out-group”) is a common rhetorical feature of dominating discourse and its effect is to “polarize” different social groups or classes (van Dijk, 2011, p. 380). Throughout the three texts examined, the gamblers are consistently represented as the deviants. Some notable examples can be found in the semantic unit “Other problems.” This semantic unit is devised to include
descriptive features and other mental disorders that are medically associated with pathological gambling, and yet according to the clinical manual, they are not part of the ten inclusive diagnostic criteria. In principle, this semantic unit constitutes a quasi-residual category. Examples in relation to this semantic unit are offered in Table 6.4 below.

Table 6.4 A “cautionary tale” in the “Dummies” text with reference to the associated descriptive features of pathological gambling stipulated in the clinical manual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical manual</th>
<th>“Dummies” text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Distortions in thinking (e.g., denial, superstitions, overconfidence, or a sense of power and control) may be present in individuals with Pathological Gambling.”</td>
<td>“Mary B. was a 66-year-old widow who loved to go to the casino on weekends with her seniors’ group. Unlike her friends, Mary loved the casino for its calming influence, a chance to get away from her humdrum life, and, especially, to get away from the grief she typically felt on weekends.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Individuals with Pathological Gambling are frequently highly competitive, energetic, restless, and easily bored.”</td>
<td>“Mary was concerned that her daughter was going to cut her off from her only form of entertainment, because she had gone a little wild and lost $1,500 in one weekend, ‘a silly mistake for a retired person.’”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Females with the disorder are more apt to be depressed and to gamble as an escape.”</td>
<td>“Mary was in denial. She didn’t see or accept the extent of her problem. In reality, Mary had lost over $60,000 of her life savings. She went to the casino and didn’t really care if she won or lost. She only wanted to escape and ‘have some fun.’ Mary still hasn’t gotten it. We are trying to help her daughter understand her mother’s problem.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.4 demonstrates how the specialized knowledge regarding certain associated features of pathological gambling is “recontextualized” from the clinical manual into the “Dummies” text. Similar to what has been discussed above, the “Dummies” text producers make use of a “cautionary tale” to obscure the technical information transmitted. The protagonist of the narrative, Mary B., displayed the associated behavioral attributes mentioned in the clinical manual (e.g., “get away from her humdrum life” echoing “easily bored;” “get away from the grief” resonating with “more apt to be depressed” and “gamble as an escape”). The three assertions taken from the clinical manual are all realized as attributive relational processes (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). This stands in contrast to the wide array of process types adopted in the “Dummies” text. Examples include mental processes (e.g., “loved,” “felt,” “see” and “wanted”), material processes (e.g., “lost,” “went” and “won”) and relational processes (e.g., “was”). The diversity of process types used can create a vivid image of a typical problem gambler. Embedded in a “cautionary tale,” such an archetype is geared towards the lay readers’ everyday experiences, so they may unwittingly recognize it as part of the socially shared knowledge rather than the specialized knowledge imparted by the professionals.

The “cautionary tale” in the “Dummies” text also turns the assertion made in the clinical manual (“distortions in thin thinking”) into evaluative statements about the protagonist (“Mary was in denial. She didn’t see or accept the extent of her problem.”). As Labov (1972, pp. 366–368) remarked, evaluation is an important aspect of narratives, and it can make specific characters look good or bad. The use of evaluative statements in the “cautionary tale” can be said to aggravate the difference between the professionals and the gamblers. The “polarization” (van Dijk, 2011, p. 380) between these two social groups is further intensified by the use of the exclusive “we” to represent the medical professionals in the material process of “helping” Mary’s daughter understand the gambling problem. As Hyland (1998) stated, the exclusive “we” is a manifestation of “interpersonal metadiscourse.” Specifically, it is regarded as a “person marker” which indicates the significance of the level of “author presence” in discourse (p. 444).
explicitly signaling their influential positive presence in the “cautionary tale,” the writers of the “Dummies” text purposely contribute to what Labov (1972, p. 368) identified as “self-aggrandizement.”

It is found that the semantic unit “Other problems” is virtually absent in the NAMS leaflet. This reflects the writers’ intention to exclude such specialized knowledge from “recontextualization” or reproduction. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the gamblers are less “derogated.” This can be illustrated through the following example:

(11) NAMS leaflet

We provide comprehensive assessment and treatment for problem gamblers and their significant others.

We also provide basic debt management information, or refer you to credit counselors if necessary. (NAMS, 2011)

As Example 11 shows, the exclusive “we” is used regularly to refer to the medical professionals, vis-à-vis the material process of “providing” something beneficial for the gamblers. It can thus be argued that even though other associated features of pathological gambling are not mentioned, the occurrences of the “person marker” in the NAMS leaflet once again help to endorse what van Dijk (2009, p. 78) called “out-group derogation and in-group celebration.”

6.5 Chapter conclusion

The present research capitalizes on van Dijk’s (1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) sociocognitive approach to discourse analysis and explores along the lines of knowledge “recontextualization” how the identities of problem/pathological gamblers are constructed discursively by medical professionals. The data of the study came from three sources: (i) an authoritative clinical manual; (ii) a free promotional leaflet prepared by a mental health-care unit in Singapore; (iii) a self-help book written by trained medical practitioners for
a popular money-making series. Although the texts assume different “communicative purposes” and target readers, they can all be said to reflect and constitute the medical “formula” for the discursive construction of pathological gamblers as each of the texts was produced by representatives from the medical domain. Indispensable to this medical “formula” are the various kinds of knowledge that the medical professionals generate, reproduce, popularize and “recontextualize.” In this conclusion, the key findings of the study will first be summarized. There will then be a brief discussion on the implications of the findings. At the end, van Dijk’s (1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) sociocognitive framework presented earlier in Figure 2.3 will be reexamined to see how discourse analysts can become better informed about the “cognition-cum-discourse” composition of the medicalized “subject” within the institutional context.

The findings of the current research show that specialized knowledge concerning pathological gambling, which is supposed to be socially shared only among medical specialists, can take multiple forms when “recontextualized.” The most explicit realization is the use of attributed direct quotes, as is seen in the “Dummies” text which incorporates an overt intertextual link to the clinical manual. Nevertheless, it is noticed that such direct “reproduction” of specialized knowledge is something of a rarity. The producers of the NAMS leaflet and the “Dummies” text very often align the specialized knowledge with “general-sociocultural” knowledge shared by a wider community, which consists of the non-specialist audience. The linguistic tools triggering the alignment are the use of non-specialized lexis, “congruent” manifestation of grammatical metaphor and the presentation of “cautionary tales.” It is also found that while “recontextualizing” the diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling into the “Dummies” text by means of “cautionary tales,” the text producers deploy their “personal cognition” (viz., the subjective “mental model”) so the information presented looks like private, personal and episodic knowledge.

Interestingly, knowledge “recontextualization” is not just about specialized knowledge “trespassing” on the “Common Ground” realm. The reverse pattern is
also identified in the data. “General-sociocultural” knowledge in relation to the prevalence of gambling in society is sprinkled with figures or statistics derived from prior research. Coupled with the use of “utterance autonomization,” the information conveyed bears a resemblance to the kind of specialized knowledge disseminated by the professionals. Whilst “Common Ground” knowledge vis-à-vis the magnitude of gambling is assimilated into the technical sphere and hence becomes “marked,” there is a tendency for silence to reign over the government’s agency in facilitating gambling through legalization. This is evident in the clinical manual where “suppression” is applied. In the NAMS leaflet, the government is even represented as the “activated” social actor in conducting surveys that help the community better understand problem gambling.

What is found throughout the analysis of this chapter can shed light on the discursive legitimation strategies and the “hegemonizing” patterns identified in the newspaper forum letters written by the mental health-care professionals (see Chapter 4 for details). Unlike the governing parties whose authority or power of legitimation tends to be taken for granted, the medical experts may have to rely very much on the manipulation of specialized and non-specialized knowledge in order to make their “voice” more forceful. Precisely, there are four main implications that can be drawn from the findings of this chapter. First, the seemingly neat boundaries between the different types of knowledge are shown to be fluid, unstable and mobile, especially in the case of “recontextualization.” Text producers are constantly manipulating the boundaries when producing ideological texts like those on pathological gambling. Second, by making the specialized knowledge “Common Ground”-like, the medical expert writers are simultaneously “popularizing” their specific group knowledge, thus “colonizing” the “lifeworld” (Habermas, 1987, pp. 196–197). Third, the “destabilization” of the boundaries between specialized and non-specialized knowledge does not go hand in hand with a diminution in medical authority. Authority is reasserted through, for instance, a clear discursive demarcation between the professionals and the laypersons (including the gamblers) via “interpersonal metadiscourse” and the transformation of “Common Ground” knowledge into technical information that appears to be accessible to the specialists only. This echoes the Derridean doctrine
of the relation between “form” and “force.” Despite the change in forms concerning the medical knowledge conveyed, the medical “force” prevails (Derrida, 1992, p. 7). Fourth, this study demonstrates that the identities of pathological gamblers are not only discursive artifacts per se, but they are also cognitive/epistemic entities that emerge from the “meta-strategies” of “positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation” adopted by the medical professionals (van Dijk, 2011, p. 397). This once again concurs with Foucault’s (1965) statement about madness as an institutional construct arising from the “knowledge systems.”

Last but not least, van Dijk’s (1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) sociocognitive model described earlier can be enriched by the present study on knowledge “recontextualization” and deviant identities. Figure 6.4 captures how different cognitive and discursive components flow together in construing the medicalized “subject” of pathological gamblers. The double arrows represent the unrestrained movement among the various types of knowledge. Such movement is believed to be a tactic exploited by the medical professionals when they craft and popularize the marginalized identities of problem gamblers. However, this tactic is hardly discernible so the lay readers may be led to take the medical voice at face value. It is only through detailed textual analysis that the oppressive “force” of the medical institution becomes visible. As suggested by van Dijk (2009, p. 73), such detailed textual analysis, or what he named “Critical Discourse Studies” (CDS), is not rule-bound; and which linguistic items should be inspected depends very much on the research project and data in question. In the current research, the textual analysis includes discursive construction of agency (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; van Leeuwen, 2008), theme status (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), “metadiscourse” (Hyland, 1998, 2005), “intertextuality” (Fairclough, 2003; Kong, 2009) and discursive construction of legitimation (van Leeuwen, 2008). The flexibility of the textual analysis is diagrammatically symbolized by the dotted circles.
Part V Conclusion

Chapter 7 Summary and Concluding Remarks

As stated in Section 1.2 of this thesis, the present project is directed by three main objectives, which are once again listed as follows:

1. To devise a holistic framework for discourse analysis of gamblers’ represented identities as an institutional construct;
2. To examine how gamblers’ identities are discursively constructed and mediated by multiple social institutions—the press, the state and the medical professionals;
3. To discuss the social and ideological implications of the “multi-vocalic” institutional construction of gamblers’ represented identities.

This concluding chapter will return to all these three objectives. First, the salient findings of the entire research will be recapitulated in Section 7.1. Such a summary is expected to address Research Objective 2. Section 7.2 will respond to Research Objective 3 by explicating the research results with reference to their implications. The discussion will not just cover the ideological and the social facets vis-à-vis the discursive representation of gamblers’ identities, but it will also encompass the implications of the research within and beyond academia. Since the present study utilizes a synthesis of analytical categories, attempts will be made in Section 7.3 to provide a clear consolidation concerning these analytical categories, which will attend to Research Objective 1. At the end of this chapter, possible areas for additional research will be proposed.

7.1 Recapitulation of major findings

The current research is interested in the discursive construction of gamblers’ represented identities within the context of social institutions. To investigate this issue, three sets of data have been collected and analyzed: (i)
newspaper forum letters; (ii) a governmental campaign; (iii) texts by medical experts.

As the opening scene for the data analysis, the newspaper forum letters constitute the discursive space in which a variety of “voices” are ingrained. Among the 47 letters gathered, three major groups of stakeholders (i.e., non-affiliated individuals, the governing parties and the mental health-care professionals) have been identified. Inspired by Fairclough (2003), the analysis focuses on the linguistic markers/triggers for three broad social research issues: (i) legitimation; (ii) hegemony (viz., “equivalence and difference”); (iii) “appearance versus reality.”

It has been found that the non-affiliated individuals exhibit their compliance with the state power. Via the forum letters, they make suggestions or requests to the government concerning how problem gambling can/should be monitored. These suggestions are usually accompanied by legitimation strategies such as “moral value evaluation” and “rationalization” (van Leeuwen, 2008). Also, these non-affiliated writers tend to dichotomize the social world with the use of opposition triggers and contrastive relations. On the other hand, the governing parties are less keen to construe a divisive world within the forum letters. Instead, they use equivalence markers to develop a unified voice. The didactic intent, which is typically associated with the state, is obfuscated through minimization of legitimation strategies. As for the mental health-care professionals, legitimation techniques are regularly employed in their letters. Nevertheless, legitimation is mobilized as a means to promote their knowledge or expertise. This agenda of the professionals is further confirmed by the frequent use of elaborative relations to provide detailed information on particular medically-related statements within the letters.

Strictly speaking, the newspaper forum letters collectively constitute an institutional output because the selection of specific letters for publication is governed by the press. The findings yielded offer a suitable stepping stone to the analysis of the two subsequent data sets, as several important questions arise from
the analysis of the newspaper forum letters. Why do the non-affiliated contributors tend to interpret the world in a binary manner? Could it be the government that has primed them to understand the world in this way? Also, the governing parties seem to weaken social differences in the forum letters, but would the same phenomenon be observed in other “communicative events” where the instructive nature of the state is more pronounced? Moreover, the mental health-care professionals appear to be preoccupied with their specialized knowledge. How would they capitalize on their expertise and discursively represent gamblers in other contexts?

To explore the government’s “voice” in more detail, the NCPG campaign has been used as a source of data. Four gamblers’ speeches recorded for the campaign have been investigated. The linguistic means under examination include process types, appraisal resources and code choice. It has been discovered that the gamblers, as discursively represented, underscore particular aspects of their self, thereby performing different identities. For instance, the two gamblers who have been identified as “social gamblers” tend to employ relational processes to make descriptive remarks regarding the definition of gambling. The other two gamblers who have been labeled “recovering problem gamblers” make use of material processes to project the drama/action-laden life of problematic gamblers. The two problem gamblers also self-appraise their gambling-induced unethical behavior by using markers that show social sanction judgment (Martin & White, 2005). As regards the code choice, the two social gamblers are found to refrain from code switching and mixing, thus conjuring up a more sophisticated image that is usually well received in society. Based on the findings, it is suggested that the juxtaposed identities between social and problem gamblers are symbolically activated by the state to construe the stigmatized character of “problematic gamblers.” The ultimate goal of this is to control the citizens’ behavior while making casino gambling legitimate.

The medical “voice” is studied from the perspective of knowledge “recontextualization” (Kong, 2009; Linell, 2009). The data have been gathered from: (i) a clinical manual; (ii) a free-of-charge leaflet of a mental health-care
organization; (iii) a self-help book from a leading commercial series. Van Dijk’s (1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) sociocognitive approach to discourse analysis has been adopted to examine the data. It has been found that when reaching the non-specialist audience (by means of the leaflet and the self-help text), medical practitioners align their technical knowledge with “general-sociocultural” knowledge via a range of linguistic/discourse strategies such as non-specialized lexis, “cautionary tales” and “congruent” configuration of grammatical metaphor. At the same time, selected “Common Ground” knowledge like the prevalence of gambling in society is presented under a veneer of sophistication as if it were specialized knowledge. Nonetheless, there is a tendency to “suppress” the widely-shared non-specialized knowledge regarding the government’s legitimate role in facilitating gambling activities. The results lead to the conclusion that the text producers are relentlessly maneuvering the boundaries between various kinds of knowledge with the purpose of not just “popularizing” their ideas and beliefs, but also “colonizing” the “lifeworld” (Habermas, 1987).

7.2 Implications of the present research

This study has a number of contributions to our understanding of the social world. These contributions will be discussed along three parameters: (i) ideological; (ii) scholarly; (iii) social. The scholarly implications are further divided into those for discourse analysts and those for academics in other disciplines.

7.2.1 Ideological implications

The present research has produced solid linguistic evidence on the proposition stated in Section 1.1.6 of this thesis. Gamblers’ identities, as represented through discourse, are shown to be an instrument for the institutional parties to achieve “subversion and containment” (Greenblatt, 1988, 2005). Both the state and the medical professionals, together with the press as a mediator, discursively construe the identities of “problematic gamblers.” The aim of the
construal is to screen out and “subvert” the social group which carries those identities. While the “problematic gamblers” are subverted, the disposition to transgress the “safety line” among the entire population is “contained.” In other words, the gamblers’ discursively represented identities become part of what Althusser (1984) identified as “Ideological State Apparatuses” (ISAs). Although this study does not intend to evaluate the effectiveness of such ideological operation, its impact on the general public is certainly visible as the analysis of the newspaper forum letters from the non-affiliated writers has demonstrated.

Another implication of the research is that similar to what Foucault (1965, 1972) said, gamblers’ identities are found to be an “epistemic” entity—i.e., a construct based on knowledge. This study has even managed to enrich the Foucauldian thought by blending van Dijk’s (2008a) theorization of discourse and cognition into the analysis. In order to exert their influence in society, the medical experts construct the identities of gamblers through the manipulation of specialized and non-specialized (“general-sociocultural”) knowledge.

What is more, this thesis has confirmed the “dialogic” (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986) makeup of gamblers’ identities. Nonetheless, such “dialogicality” is not just about the simple construction of the gamblers’ identities by multiple social actors. Apart from the explicit embodiment of differing “voices” in the discursive representation of gamblers’ identities, it has been revealed that the text producers are deliberately meddling in the “dialogic” space within the discourse (Fairclough, 2003; Kong, 2009; Martin & White, 2005) so as to formulate their own institutional construal of gamblers’ identities. For example, it is found in the NCPG campaign that the social gamblers tend to make use of dialogic expansion markers (entertain), such as “I guess” and “I think,” when expressing their opinions about gambling, thus foregrounding the self-awareness of non-problematic gamblers as well as their ability to argue rationally.

7.2.2 Scholarly implications

7.2.2.1 Among discourse analysts
There are three major implications of this study for other fellow discourse analysts (in particular the CDA practitioners). First, as said earlier, there has been a shortage of research concerning gambling among language experts. This thesis may be considered a pioneering discourse-oriented study on gambling. At a broader level, it is hoped that the present study can instigate—within the CDA community—new scholarly projects on questioning the ideological underpinnings of a virtually endless list of “marginalized” identities in society, which might include ex-convicts, persecuted religious groups and other socially disadvantaged people.

Second, one outcome of the current research is a tailor-made procedure for analyzing gamblers’ represented identities in discourse. Analytical categories developed by a range of prior researchers have been integrated into the process of data analysis. More information about this will be given in Section 7.3 below.

Third, the present study has demonstrated anew the dynamism of CDA research. Prominent researchers (e.g., Fairclough, 2010, p. 7; Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 89) have emphasized the flexibility of CDA studies in terms of the methods and the data employed. It is said that researchers have to make their informed decision on how to systematically analyze the data. This thesis has moved one step further by illustrating why it is preferable not to rely on one single framework/model in data analysis. For instance, Chapter 4 has shown that the analytic potential of Fairclough’s (2003) model about the meaning relations between sentences/clauses can be greatly enhanced by the inclusion of Jeffries’ (2010a, 2010b) theorization vis-à-vis critical stylistics. Another example is van Dijk’s (1995, 2003b, 2005a, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2011, 2012) sociocognitive approach to discourse analysis. Although in his works van Dijk did discuss a bunch of discourse representations concerning the “social cognition” and the “personal cognition,” the analysis in Chapter 6 of this thesis has indicated that researchers adopting his model may need to decide on which specific linguistic/discursive features to look at on an ad hoc basis in order to maximize the explanatory power of the model. In the present study, the ideas of
“intertextuality” (Fairclough, 2003; Kong, 2009), “metadiscourse” (Hyland, 1998, 2005), theme status and grammatical metaphor (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), for example, have been mobilized to analyze the linguistic realization of the different kinds of knowledge/cognition proposed by van Dijk.

7.2.2.2 Among other academics

At the outset, it is said that gambling has been widely investigated in many disciplines outside linguistics, such as sociology, psychology and cultural studies. The present research epitomizes the initiatives of discourse analysts to engage in the scholarly dialogues on gambling issues. Even though this thesis is geared towards the linguistic paradigm, it is hoped that by bringing it into the academic discussion of gambling, new perspectives and opportunities for future cross-disciplinary studies can be generated. As Bennett (2007, p. 151) opined, having academic research skewed towards one epistemological model “crystallizes the dynamic flux of experience into static, observable blocs, rendering the universe passive, inert and devoid of meaning.” The current study is believed to be offering fellow contemporary gambling scholars from other fields interesting insights, leading to more collaborative work across disciplines in the future.

7.2.3 Social implications

At the social level, this thesis has implications as well. It has to be stressed that the purpose of conducting the entire study is not to “solve” or “eliminate” social problems, particularly those in Singapore. In my opinion, any academic research which boldly claims to “eradicate” social problems can be deemed idealistic. What researchers in the realm of humanities can do is to draw the public attention to a particular social issue and to address it from an angle which is acceptable within the scholarly conventions. This is in line with the Derridean literary movement of “deconstruction.” Here, “deconstruction” does not mean the demolition or displacement of anything or any social parties through textual analysis. Instead, “deconstruction” serves to stir up contemplative reflections or questioning on the ontology of “privileged authority” by critically examining texts.
and discourse—viz., the “destabilization of metaphysics” (Collins & Mayblin, 2000, p. 100). Having explored the discursively represented identities of gamblers, the present research underlines the domineering nature of institutions and the citizens’ susceptibility to be subordinated.

Having said that, this thesis does not plan to emotionally castigate or pacify either party. Actually, in order to maintain societal functioning in the postmodern world, the two parties—i.e., the institutional power holders and the “docile bodies” (Foucault, 1977)—have to co-exist. In other words, they are complementary to each other. What the current study aims to accomplish is in fact to encourage critical thinking by increasing public awareness of the “colonizing” (Habermas, 1987) temperament of the discursive events initiated by institutional representatives.

Of course, what is found in this study is related to the social and political environment of Singapore and readers may be able to obtain a better understanding of what has been happening there. However, as mentioned at the start, gambling is a globalized issue and Singapore—being a “Nanny State” as well as a highly consumerist society—provides an interesting, excellent and up-to-date platform for us to witness how institutions strive to maintain their societal influence amidst liberalization of certain human activities which can arguably lead to indulgence. Therefore, it is believed that the results of this study can be appreciated by a wider range of audience—not just people who are concerned about the Singaporean society per se, but also those who are interested in gambling as a potentially universal phenomenon.

7.3 Revisiting/Consolidating the analytic tools for examining discursive identities

As mentioned at the beginning of Chapter 3, this doctoral project takes a “heuristic” (Bärenreuter, 2005, p. 198; Norris & Jones, 2005, p. 201; Scollon & Scollon, 2004, p. 16) approach in the choice of research tools. Thus, it is possible that what has been done here, like the concoction of specific analytical categories for data analysis, cannot be completely replicated in another project as a different
study with a new set of data may require different theoretical treatments. Nonetheless, the present research does have its theoretical offering when all the analytical categories used are consolidated into one diagram.

Figure 7.1 A recommended procedure for analyzing discursively represented identities under the Foucauldian lens

Discourse from the public sphere

Data collected: Newspaper forum letters

Analytical categories used:
- Meaning relations between sentences/clauses (Fairclough, 2003)
  - Equating and contrasting (Jeffries, 2010a, 2010b)
  - Legitimation strategies (van Leeuwen, 2008)

Discourse from a specific site

Data collected: A government campaign

Analytical categories used:
- Process types (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004)
- Appraisal resources (Martin & White, 2005)
- Code choice

Discourse from a specific site

Data collected: Texts produced by medical experts

Analytical categories used:
  - Theme status and grammatical metaphor (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004)
  - Intertextuality (Fairclough, 2003; Kong, 2009)
  - Representation of social actors and legitimation strategies (van Leeuwen, 2008)
Figure 7.1 shows how various analytical categories have been mobilized at different stages of the research. When these categories are put together diagrammatically, the analytic procedure adopted in the current research becomes more visible. Despite the fact that the procedure is tailor-made, its applicability to other studies should be highlighted. Researchers who undertake Foucauldian-inspired studies on the discursive representation of social identities (e.g., gamblers’ identities and other marginalized identities enforced by institutions) may try this recommended procedure with their own data. Of course, the procedure is not meant to be prescriptive and hence can be modified to suit an individual project.

First, researchers may select relevant discourse from the “public sphere” as a point of entry to identify the major stakeholders involved in the discursive construction of the social identities in question. Newspaper forum letters have been chosen as the data in this current study. Fairclough’s (2003) framework regarding the meaning relations between sentences/clauses, together with ideas from Jeffries (2010a, 2010b) and van Leeuwen (2008), has been deployed to analyze the forum letters written by three identified groups—the governing parties, the mental health-care professionals and the non-affiliated contributors.

The findings obtained from the analysis in the first stage may result in questions which pave the way for the following stages of research. Based on the findings, the researchers may zoom in on a specific site and gather data accordingly in order to conduct more in-depth analysis vis-à-vis the discursive construction of the identities. The present research focuses on two specific sites: (i) the state; (ii) the medical field. The data collected from these sites are the gamblers’ spoken testimonials from a governmental campaign and the texts produced by mental health-care experts. To study the state “voice,” analytical categories like process types (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), appraisal resources (Martin & White, 2005) and code choice have been utilized. As for the medical

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54 A specific site here denotes one that is less free (and more restricted) than the public sphere. That is, a narrower range of social “voices” would be accommodated.

7.4 Potential directions for further studies

Due to the scope of the present study, only the gamblers’ discursively represented identities, particularly those constructed “externally” by institutions, are investigated. On the one hand, this makes the present research more focused. On the other hand, this becomes a constraint at the same time. As described in Section 1.1.9, gamblers’ self-enacted identities can also be a fruitful area of research. It is undeniable that gamblers’ first-hand experience and narration are important resources for enhancing the understanding of the gambling issues within academia. And conducting interviews with the gamblers could be one way to generate relevant discursive data.

There is no doubt that interviews could be a useful method for data elicitation. However, future projects which adopt this method to explore gamblers’ self-constructed identities may have to take into consideration a few issues. The first concern is the genuineness of what gamblers would say in interviews, especially when disclosure of sensitive private issues like family relationships is involved. As Schensul and his associates (1999, p. 147) said, the informants’ responses can be distorted by the interlocutor’s questions and they may also make conscious or subconscious judgments on how to “frame their stories.” Second, what the gamblers would say in the interviews is merely a retrospective account of their direct experiences on gambling so their feelings might not be truly revealed (Bryman, 2004, pp. 339–341). This situation could be further aggravated in the Asian context where “disordered” gambling tends to be a taboo subject because of the stronger general stigmatization attached to problem
gamblers, as compared to the West (Dhillon, Horch & Hodgins, 2011, p. 641). Third, as pointed out by Loseke (2013, pp. 93–95), the researchers have to be cautious about the well-being of respondents. As she elaborated, psychological damage can be caused by putting people in uncomfortable situations, such as inviting them to verbalize their excruciating experiences and to talk about overly personal matters. In this case, Loseke (2013, p. 95) proposed that the researchers may look for alternatives like blogs or other text types that are publicly accessible.

Another plausible direction for future research is the discursive construction of gamblers’ identities by business enterprises like casino operators. As stated briefly in Section 1.1.4, the “gaming complex” (Kingma, 1997) exists in society. While gamblers are the targets of control for the institutional parties, gambling/casino industry can be a cash cow for corporations. Hence, promotional discourse where gambling activities are glamorized and gamblers are construed as consumers is omnipresent. It would be worthwhile to unfold the complicated interactions between the institutional and the commercial “voices” with respect to the discursive portrayal of gamblers. Similar to the institutional voices, the commercial voices project an artificial image of gamblers with a hidden agenda behind the creators’ act (viz., making a profit in this case). Such creation of gamblers’ identities would be the type of research where the tailor-made analytic procedure recommended in Section 7.3 can be applied.

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One examiner asked about the difference between investigating the construction of gamblers’ identities in Singapore and studying it on the Internet. Two remarks can be made regarding this question. First, the Internet may be interpreted as simply a corpus of data for researchers, especially when nowadays a lot of information is disseminated formally by institutions through the Internet. Second, the Internet (e.g., personal blogs and public forums) can also be the space where gamblers’ identities are constructed in real time. Although what is written in blogs and forums tends to be accessible to people irrespective of their geographical location, any CDA research conducted on blogs and forums still needs to address the issue of locales because arguably there is a local (or geographical/cultural) element for every webpage (e.g., Singaporean websites, American-based forums, etc.).
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Derrida, J. (1992). Force of law: The “mystical foundation of authority”. In D. Cornell, M. Rosenfeld & D. Carlson (Eds.), Deconstruction and the possibility of justice (pp. 3–67). New York: Routledge.


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Appendix A

Rules and guidelines about Forum contributions stipulated by *The Straits Times* (From http://www.straitstimes.com/premium/forum-letters)

Write in to us

Kindly note the rules and guidelines about Forum contributions

1. Please include your full name (as in IC), your address and a phone number.
2. Letters must be unpublished in any platform and meant for exclusive publication only in Forum/Forum Online.
3. Unless advised, Forum exclusivity lapses if we do not contact you within five working days of receiving your letter and it will not be published.
4. Letters should be no longer than 400 words and must state the writer's full name, address and telephone numbers. Letters to "Your Letters" in The Sunday Times should be no longer than 300 words each.
5. Published letters will state the contributor's name. Pseudonyms will not be accepted.
6. The Forum editor reserves the right to edit a letter.
7. Official replies must reach stforum@sph.com.sg by noon if they wish to be considered for publication the next day.
8. For security reasons, attachments will not be opened. Kindly write your letter or reply in the email.
9. For women, please indicate Miss, Ms, Mrs or Madam.
10. Your profile (optional): We welcome more details about yourself such as your age, marital status, family members, occupation and a brief description of your expertise/interests (maximum of three).
11. Your profile, address and telephone numbers will be kept confidential and will only be released with your consent.
12. Reactions and postings in Forum Online at www.straitstimes.com are under the purview of the ST Online Editor. Email your queries and comments to The ST Online Editor: stonline@sph.com.sg

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Podium, Level 2 Singapore
318994

For assistance, contact:
Noor Alza Mohamed Joz (Ms)
Forum Administrator
DID: 6319-5454
Fax: 6319-8274
Email: stforum@sph.com.sg
Appendix B

Information of the 47 forum letters analyzed

Government bodies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Headline</th>
<th>Contributor</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Repeated visits by banned gambler: Regulator replies</td>
<td>Cheryl Foo</td>
<td>3 Dec 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NCPG notes feedback from gambler’s wife</td>
<td>Lim Hock San</td>
<td>2 Jul 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Panel on responsible gambling liaising with operators</td>
<td>Lim Hock San</td>
<td>19 Jan 2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mental health-care professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Headline</th>
<th>Contributor</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>IRs can do more to help gambling addicts</td>
<td>Gilbert Goh</td>
<td>3 May 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Show’s inaccurate portrayal of gambling counselors</td>
<td>Christopher Jude Loh</td>
<td>10 Mar 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tackle gambling addiction aggressively</td>
<td>Gilbert Goh</td>
<td>28 Feb 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Local gamblers and record casino profits</td>
<td>Kuo How Nam</td>
<td>7 Feb 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Limit a citizen’s visits to casinos</td>
<td>Kuo How Nam</td>
<td>10 Sep 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Don’t take gamblers’ SOS lightly</td>
<td>Tan Hwee Sim Thomas Lee Kae Meng</td>
<td>30 Jul 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tackling loan-sharking means taking aim at gambling sources too</td>
<td>Gilbert Goh</td>
<td>20 Jan 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Addicted to soccer gambling? Here’s how you can get over it.</td>
<td>Gilbert Goh</td>
<td>24 Dec 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Gambling-linked woes won’t grow with casinos</td>
<td>Peter Collins</td>
<td>5 May 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Laypersons

<table>
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<th>Headline</th>
<th>Contributor</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Inappropriate anti-gambling message</td>
<td>Lee Kek Chin</td>
<td>21 Feb 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Banned gambler’s repeated access remains unexplained</td>
<td>Rajasegaran Ramasamy</td>
<td>6 Dec 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Raising gambling levy not the answer</td>
<td>Rajasegaran Ramasamy</td>
<td>18 Jul 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Use credit card membership format to check casino gamblers</td>
<td>Jeremy Chen</td>
<td>18 Jul 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Date</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>How about $1000 entry levy to deter gamblers</td>
<td>Thomas Sim</td>
<td>16 Jul 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ban citizens from casinos</td>
<td>Harry Ng</td>
<td>10 Jul 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A more effective way to stop citizens from casino gambling</td>
<td>Cheng Shoong Tat</td>
<td>12 Mar 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Perils of gambler’s glam effect</td>
<td>Sebastian Tan</td>
<td>12 Nov 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Impose punitive measures to control casino entry</td>
<td>Paul Chan</td>
<td>21 Sep 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Up the ante</td>
<td>Michael Teo</td>
<td>10 Sep 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Time to crack down hard on taxi fare cheats</td>
<td>Laura Ler</td>
<td>25 Jul 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Family support best way to help gamblers</td>
<td>Jeffrey Law</td>
<td>28 Jun 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nail-biting days of a gambler’s wife</td>
<td>Chia Guek Hong</td>
<td>24 Jun 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Stricter casino rules to deter S’poreans</td>
<td>V. Balu</td>
<td>14 Apr 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Raise entry fees, ban foreign workers</td>
<td>Patrick Low</td>
<td>11 Nov 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ban on IR shuttle service not the answer</td>
<td>Tang Shangjun</td>
<td>18 Sep 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Give young people lessons in perils of gambling</td>
<td>Harry Koh</td>
<td>1 Sep 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Hard to stop the reason for gambling—greed</td>
<td>Kao Jong-Shyan</td>
<td>27 Aug 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Take charge, Singaporeans</td>
<td>Agnes Tan</td>
<td>27 Aug 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Pawnshop worry</td>
<td>Kaliannan Tamilselvam</td>
<td>11 Mar 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Tackle borrowers too to deter loan sharking</td>
<td>Thomas Hwang</td>
<td>27 Nov 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Preventing gambling addiction isn’t solely the Govt’s job</td>
<td>Syu Ying Kwok</td>
<td>18 Sep 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Gambling and its illusions</td>
<td>Nelson Quah</td>
<td>27 Jun 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Gambling addiction: Prevention is better than cure</td>
<td>Patrick Lee Song Juan</td>
<td>10 Jul 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Strong values will help children make correct decision about gambling</td>
<td>Jaipal Singh Gill</td>
<td>4 Jan 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>High bids for integrated resort show there’s big money to be made</td>
<td>Danny Chua</td>
<td>26 Oct 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Gambling, gambling everywhere now with pre-paid betting cards. Do more to highlight dangers</td>
<td>Chan Siew Leong</td>
<td>16 May 2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>$100 levy for casino entry might lead to more gambling</td>
<td>Lim Teck Meng</td>
<td>14 Feb 2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Move Singapore Pools from HDB heartland to shopping malls</td>
<td>Wong Yuen Yuen</td>
<td>10 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Plans to help gamblers kick habit won’t succeed</td>
<td>Denis Yuen Yuen</td>
<td>1 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Lower casino entry fee or do away with it</td>
<td>Alwin Low Mun Kit</td>
<td>21 Oct 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Horse racing punters create a nuisance</td>
<td>David Chang Miang Gek</td>
<td>29 Jul 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Students stole to feed their smoking habit</td>
<td>Michael Wee Swee Poh</td>
<td>29 Apr 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>‘No’ to gambling, ‘yes’ to integrated resorts</td>
<td>Grace Lim Kah Wei</td>
<td>20 Apr 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specific Age and Gender Features

Although fire setting is a major problem in children and adolescents (over 40% of those arrested for arson offenses in the United States are under age 18 years), Pyromania in childhood appears to be rare. Juvenile fire setting is usually associated with Conduct Disorder, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or Adjustment Disorder. Pyromania occurs much more often in males, especially those with poorer social skills and learning difficulties.

Prevalence

Pyromania is apparently rare.

Course

There are insufficient data to establish a typical age at onset of Pyromania. The relationship between fire setting in childhood and Pyromania in adulthood has not been documented. In individuals with Pyromania, fire-setting incidents are episodic and may wax and wane in frequency. Longitudinal course is unknown.

Differential Diagnosis

It is important to rule out other causes of fire setting before giving the diagnosis of Pyromania. Intentional fire setting may occur for profit, sabotage, revenge; to conceal a crime; to make a political statement (e.g., an act of terrorism or protest); or to attract attention or recognition (e.g., setting a fire in order to discover it and save the day). Fire setting may also occur as part of developmental experimentation in childhood (e.g., playing with matches, lighters, or fire). Some individuals with mental disorders use fire setting to communicate a desire, wish, or need, often directed at gaining a change in the nature or location of services. This form of fire setting has been referred to as "communicative arson" and must be carefully distinguished from Pyromania. A separate diagnosis of Pyromania is not given when fire setting occurs as part of Conduct Disorder, a Manic Episode, or Antisocial Personality Disorder, or if it occurs in response to a delusion or a hallucination (e.g., in Schizophrenia) or if it is due to the direct physiological effects of a general medical condition (e.g., epilepsy). The diagnosis of Pyromania should also not be given when fire setting results from impaired judgment associated with dementia, Mental Retardation, or Substance Intoxication.

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Diagnostic criteria for 312.33 Pyromania

A. Deliberate and purposeful fire setting on more than one occasion.
B. Tension or affective arousal before the act.
C. Fascination with, interest in, curiosity about, or attraction to fire and its situational contexts (e.g., paraphernalia, uses, consequences).
D. Pressure, gratification, or relief when setting fires, or when witnessing or participating in their aftermath.
E. The fire setting is not done for monetary gain, as an expression of sociopolitical ideology, to conceal criminal activity, to express anger or vengeance, to improve one's living circumstances, in response to a delusion or hallucination, or as a result of impaired judgment (e.g., in dementia, Mental Retardation, Substance Intoxication).
F. The fire setting is not better accounted for by Conduct Disorder, a Manic Episode, or Antisocial Personality Disorder.
Impulse-Control Disorders Not Elsewhere Classified

strained, the person may resort to antisocial behavior (e.g., forgery, fraud, theft, or embezzlement) to obtain money (Criterion A8). The individual may have jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling (Criterion A9). The individual may also engage in “bailout” behavior, turning to family or others for help with a desperate financial situation that was caused by gambling (Criterion A10).

Associated Features and Disorders

Associated descriptive features and mental disorders. Distortions in thinking (e.g., denial, superstitions, overconfidence, or a sense of power and control) may be present in individuals with Pathological Gambling. Many individuals with Pathological Gambling believe that money is both the cause of and solution to all their problems. Individuals with Pathological Gambling are frequently highly competitive, energetic, restless, and easily bored. They may be overly concerned with the approval of others and may be generous to the point of extravagance. When not gambling, they may be workaholics or “binge” workers who wait until they are up against deadlines before really working hard. They may be prone to developing general medical conditions that are associated with stress (e.g., hypertension, peptic ulcer disease, migraine). Individuals seeking treatment for Pathological Gambling have relatively high rates of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. Studies of men with Pathological Gambling suggest that a history of intermittent and hyperactive symptoms in childhood may be a risk factor for development of Pathological Gambling later in life. Increased rates of Mood Disorders, Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder, Substance Abuse or Dependence, other Impulse-Control Disorders, and Antisocial, Narcissistic, and Borderline Personality Disorders have been reported in individuals with Pathological Gambling.

Associated laboratory findings. There are no laboratory findings that are diagnostic of Pathological Gambling. However, a variety of laboratory findings have been reported to be abnormal in males with Pathological Gambling compared with control subjects. These include measures of neurotransmitters and their metabolites in cerebrospinal fluid and urine, and response to neuroendocrine challenges, implicating abnormalities in a variety of neurotransmitter systems, including the serotonergic, noradrenergic, and dopaminergic systems. Abnormalities in platelet monoamine oxidase activity have also been reported in males with Pathological Gambling. Individuals with Pathological Gambling may display high levels of impulsivity on neuropsychological tests.

Specific Culture and Gender Features

There are cultural variations in the prevalence and type of gambling activities (e.g., pai gow, cockfights, horse racing, the stock market). Approximately one-third of individuals with Pathological Gambling are females, but in different geographic areas and cultures, gender ratios can vary considerably. Females with the disorder are more apt to be depressed and to gamble as an escape. Females are underrepresented in treatment programs for gambling and represent only 2%–4% of the population of

Pathological Gambling

Gamblers Anonymous. This may be a function of the greater stigma attached to female gamblers.

Prevalence

The prevalence of Pathological Gambling is influenced by both the availability of gambling and the duration of availability such that with the increasing availability of legalized gambling, there is an increase in the prevalence of Pathological Gambling. Community studies estimate the lifetime prevalence of Pathological Gambling to range from 0.4% to 2.4% in adults; although prevalence rates in some areas (e.g., Puerto Rico, Australia) have been reported to be as high as 7%. Higher prevalence rates, ranging between 2.8% to 8%, have been reported in adolescents and college students. The prevalence of Pathological Gambling may be increased in treatment-seeking individuals with a Substance Use Disorder.

Course

Pathological Gambling typically begins in early adolescence in males and later in life in females. Although a few individuals are “hooked” with their very first bet, for most the course is more insidious. There may be years of social gambling followed by an abrupt onset that may be precipitated by greater exposure to gambling or by a stressor. The gambling pattern may be regular or episodic, and the course of the disorder is typically chronic. There is generally a progression in the frequency of gambling, the amount wagered, and the preoccupation with gambling and obtaining money with which to gamble. The urge to gamble and gambling activity generally increase during periods of stress or depression.

Familial Pattern

Pathological Gambling and Alcohol Dependence are both more common among the parents of individuals with Pathological Gambling than among the general population.

Differential Diagnosis

Pathological Gambling must be distinguished from social gambling and professional gambling. Social gambling typically occurs with friends or colleagues and lasts for a limited period of time, with predetermined acceptable losses. In professional gambling, risks are limited and discipline is central. Some individuals can experience problems associated with their gambling (e.g., short-term chasing behavior and loss of control) that do not meet all the full criteria for Pathological Gambling. Loss of judgment and excessive gambling may occur during a Manic Episode. An additional diagnosis of Pathological Gambling should only be given if the gambling behavior is not better accounted for by the Manic Episode (e.g., a history of maladaptive gambling behavior at times other than during a Manic Episode). Alternatively, an individual with Pathological Gambling may exhibit behavior during a gambling binge that resembles a Manic Episode. However, once the individual is away from the
Impulse-Control Disorders Not Elsewhere Classified

gambling, these manic-like features dissipate. Problems with gambling may occur in individuals with Antisocial Personality Disorder; if criteria are met for both disorders, both can be diagnosed.

Diagnostic criteria for 312.31 Pathological Gambling

A. Persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior as indicated by five (or more) of the following:

1. is preoccupied with gambling (e.g., preoccupied with reliving past gambling experiences, handicapping or planning the next venture, or thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble)
2. needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement
3. has repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling
4. is restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling
5. gambles as a way of escaping from problems or of relieving a dysphoric mood (e.g., feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety, depression)
6. after losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even ("chasing" one's losses)
7. lies to family members, therapist, or others to conceal the extent of involvement with gambling
8. has committed illegal acts such as forgery, fraud, theft, or embezzlement to finance gambling
9. has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling
10. relies on others to provide money to relieve a desperate financial situation caused by gambling

B. The gambling behavior is not better accounted for by a Manic Episode.

312.39 Trichotillomania

Diagnostic Features

The essential feature of Trichotillomania is the recurrent pulling out of one's own hair that results in noticeable hair loss (Criterion A). Sites of hair pulling may include any region of the body in which hair may grow (including axillary, pubic, and periareolar regions), with the most common sites being the scalp, eyebrows, and eyelashes. Hair pulling may occur in brief episodes scattered throughout the day or in less frequent but more sustained periods that can continue for hours. Hair pulling often occurs in states of relaxation and distraction (e.g., when reading a book or watching television) but may also occur during stressful circumstances. An increasing sense of tension is present immediately before pulling out the hair (Criterion B). For some, tension does not necessarily precede the act but is associated with attempts to resist the urge. There is gratification, pleasure, or a sense of relief when pulling out the hair (Criterion C). Some
Appendix D

The educational leaflet published in March 2011 by the Singapore National Addictions Management Service
(From http://www.nams.org.sg/page.aspx/33/information-on-addiction/downloads-educational-materials-3)
According to a 2008 MCYS study, nearly 2% of Singapore residents aged 18 years and above who were surveyed may experience problems related to their gambling. Gambling addiction is a disease much like alcohol and drug addictions. Problem gamblers have difficulties controlling their gambling behaviour which increases over time in terms of frequency, time spent on gambling and money wagered.

They are so preoccupied with gambling that it becomes the main activity in their lives. They may want to stop gambling but have difficulty doing so. Problem gamblers experience negative consequences related to gambling e.g. mounting debts, family problems and poor job performance.

Recognising Gambling Problems Among Your Loved Ones and Friends

- Spending more time and money to gamble
- Borrowing money to gamble
- Stealing or committing other illegal acts to gamble
- Unexplained debts or financial problems
- Unexplained absences from work or school
- Missing family and social important events to gamble
- Feeling restless or irritable when not gambling

How You Can Benefit from Treatment

During your first appointment, you will be seen by a doctor and Addictions Counsellor for a comprehensive assessment. They will explore treatment and recovery options with you to determine the best plan for your recovery. Your loved ones will be encouraged to participate in treatment to learn how they can best help you.

We also provide basic debt management information, or refer you to credit counsellors if necessary.

All information given by you will be kept strictly confidential.

This is an overview of what you and your loved ones can expect from our treatment services:

- Through assessment
- Doctor’s consultations and medical treatment
- Individual counselling with assigned counsellor
- Group treatment
- Family support group

For further enquiries, please refer to our website at www.name.sg or call the National Problem Gambling Helpline at 1800-5-668-668.
Appendix E

The section on compulsive gambling extracted from *Addiction and Recovery for Dummies* (Shaw, Ritvo & Irvine, 2005)

Compulsive Gambling

*Gambling* involves the betting or wagering of valuables on uncertain outcomes and takes many forms — from games of chance to skill-based activities. People have many motivations for gambling, but all involve the hope of gaining more. Gambling is sometimes a rite of passage by which people discover more about themselves and how to compete with others. It is sometimes a way of life (for people such as casino pros and escape gamblers). It can be, in its healthiest form, a way of socializing and having fun.

Pathological gambling is a progressive disorder that involves impulse-control problems. The consequences of pathological gambling are severe and may be devastating to the addicted person's family and career, but the disorder can be treated. Pathological gambling has been officially defined, in psychiatric terms, as "a persistent, recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior that disrupts personal, family, or vocational pursuits" (*DSM-IV-TR*). As with all addictions, pathological gambling has personal, familial, and neurochemical aspects. Pathological gamblers may even have a genetic vulnerability, although such complex behaviors are unlikely to be traced to one specific gene in the same way some medical conditions, like cystic fibrosis, have been.

Three phases of compulsive gambling

Dr. Robert Custer has identified three phases to a progressive gambling problem: a winning phase, a losing phase, and a desperation phase.

Winning

In the winning phase, you may experience a "big win" or a series of smaller wins that result in excess optimism. You may feel an unrealistic sense of power and control and you're excited by the prospect of more wins. ("Hey Doc, this is a sure thing. I'm betting the farm.") At the same time, you can't maintain the excitement unless you're continually involved in high-risk bets. Your bets increase, and ultimately, the increased risk puts you in a vulnerable situation where you can't afford to lose... and then, sure as the sun rises, you do lose.
Losing

In the losing phase, you may brag about past wins; how you had the casino or track or bookie on the ropes. But in the immediate situation, you're losing more than winning. You're more likely to gamble alone, and when not gambling, you're more likely to spend time thinking about how and when you'll gamble next. Most importantly, you're concerned with how you'll raise more money, legally or illegally. You may have a few wins that fuel the size of your bets. But the dominant pattern is that of losing. Moreover, making the next bet becomes more important than the winning of any previous bet.

As you continue to read these descriptions, you may find yourself feeling more desperate. A sense of futility may begin building. You may think "How stupid can they be?" or "I don't do that!" The emotions within you are building for a reason. Don't avoid seeing the compulsive nature of your gambling behavior. If the shoe fits, at least try it on. If our descriptions fit your experiences, be aware that your behavior may be getting progressively out of control!

As the losing continues, you start lying to family and friends and feeling more irritable, restless, and emotionally isolated. You start borrowing money that you're unsure about being able to repay. As your life becomes unmanageable, you may be developing some serious financial problems. Your denial of the huge financial pressures that are building may seem unbelievable to some people: You're also likely to start chasing your losses, trying to win back what you lost. ("Doc, I'll stop, but first I've got to get back to even.") If you don't change your pattern, however, you'll be engaging in more and more self-destructive behavior.
The business of gambling

Many groups, from governments to native peoples to criminals are involved in the gambling business. In fact, research reveals that gambling is a $100 billion per year business in the United States. People spend more money on legal gambling than on movie tickets, recorded music, theme parks, spectator sports, and video games combined. This fact indicates how strong commercial gambling interests are — and how difficult they are to restrain.

Desperation

The next phase, the desperation phase, involves still another marked change in your gambling behavior. You may now make bets more often than is normal, in more desperate attempts to catch up and "get even." The behavior that’s now out of control is associated with deep remorse, with blaming others, and with the alienation of family and friends. You may engage in illegal activities to finance your gambling. You may experience a sense of hopelessness and think about suicide and divorce. Other addictions and emotional problems may also intensify during this phase and drag you down.

The impact of compulsive gambling

If any of the preceding descriptions fit you, you may be one of the 3 percent of adults in North America who experience a gambling problem that results in debt, family disruption, job loss, criminal activity, or suicide. There is another important statistic to keep in mind if you’re a youthful gambler or a parent of one: According to researchers Dr. Henry Lesieur and Dr. Durand Jacobs, people who begin gambling as adolescents are about three times more likely to become problem gamblers than people who begin gambling as adults.
An excellent review, available at [www.wasc.noaa.gov/wrso/security_guide/gamble.htm](http://www.wasc.noaa.gov/wrso/security_guide/gamble.htm), lists the prosecutions and convictions associated with gambling debts. Some of the amounts of money involved are staggering. All of the people who wound up with these huge problems went through a phase of denial. If you’re unsure whether you have a gambling problem, you may want to check out this Web site and the movie Owning Mahowny, the true story of a bank employee who became a compulsive gambler.

### Examples of frauds related to compulsive gambling

Here are just a few examples of crimes committed because of compulsive gambling:

- The president and CEO of a company fraudulently obtained loans of more than $10 million to pay off gambling debts.
- The chairman of a bank passed $8 million in checks with insufficient funds to cover debts to 2 casinos.
- A physician borrowed over $8 million to cover gambling debts and then declared bankruptcy.

- A 66-year-old grandmother embezzled $4.9 million to feed her gambling habit.

### It’s about money

Money helps buy fantasies. When people play the lotteries, they can dream of winning money and living out fantasies. But what really happens to the people who win? Most donate to charity; some report being happy afterwards; but many stories don’t have happy endings. In fact, many stories of lottery wins remind us that winning doesn’t help some people. As is true for problem gamblers, winning can be the first slippery step in a downfall.
Researchers at Emory University demonstrated that working toward rewards is more stimulating to the pleasure centers in the brain than simply winning rewards. If you watch people play slot machines, you can observe this in their behavior. What dominates them is the compulsion to keep playing. They seem to be in a trancelike state. This finding can be understood in combination with the often-observed experience of numbness in casino winners. After you’re in a numb state of mind, even winning loses its thrill and you wind up putting your winnings right back into play in order to recapture your excitement with more betting. You’re trying to hold on to the excitement.

Ryan B. is a 26 year old who was facing several charges of theft and forgery related to his gambling habit. He loved the rush of the casino but was equally at home at the racetrack or the poker table. He was on the lookout for pigeons, inexperienced people who would get into a game with him. He forgot that as one of the players at the table, he too was caught up in the game. He loved going to the action spots, from Monte Carlo to Las Vegas, more than he loved people or himself.

Ryan won and lost millions. He would be up thousands and even though he knew enough to leave, sometimes he would stay, and lose. He was in debt more than $300,000, and he started stealing from his employer to pay off his gambling debts. After serving five years for fraud, he is now a member of Gamblers’ Anonymous, and as of today, remains in control.

It isn’t about money

Some would argue that compulsive gambling isn’t about the money. Well, then what is it about? What is the motivation for gambling? Some gamblers are sensation seekers or action gamblers. They love the stimulation and excitement. They like being the center of attention, with people admiring their risk-taking and their courage to stay in the game — no matter what the stakes.

Other gamblers are known as escape gamblers. If you’re an escape gambler, you gamble to get away from the tedium of your everyday life.

So, gambling may not be about the money. For compulsive gamblers, it rarely is. The thrills come from the action and the escape, among other things — these behaviors are understandable but, nonetheless, destructive.
Mary
Mary B. was a 66-year-old widow who loved to go to the casino on weekends with her seniors’ group. Unlike her friends, Mary loved the casino for its calming influence, a chance to get away from her humdrum life, and, especially, to get away from the grief she typically felt on weekends.

Mary was concerned that her daughter was going to cut her off from her only form of entertainment, because she had gone a little wild and lost $1,500 in one weekend, “a silly mistake for a retired person.”

Mary was in denial. She didn’t see or accept the extent of her problem. In reality, Mary had lost over $60,000 of her life savings. She went to the casino and didn’t really care if she won or lost. She only wanted to escape and “have some fun.” Mary still hasn’t gotten it. We are trying to help her daughter understand her mother’s problem.
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