

Thesis Abstract

No. _____

Registration Number:	<input type="checkbox"/> "KOU" <input type="checkbox"/> "OTSU" No. <small>*Office use only</small>	Name:	DALZIEL Gregory
Title of Thesis: Measuring Changes in the Collective Identity of Political Elites in Singapore (1955—2011) using Text Analysis on a Large Corpus of Parliamentary Discourse			
Summary of Thesis: Does collective identity change over time? And how can we measure such changes? This dissertation focuses on three inter-related questions: (1) how groups perceive themselves; (2) how they perceive others; and (3) the perceived relationship between themselves and others. Most literature in international studies sees identity as fixed and measuring identity is often carried out on small samples that are difficult to replicate. The availability of 'big data' and computational methods provides an opportunity for empirically measuring identity and identity changes. Our study is located in Singapore; its history of merger with Malaysia and subsequent independence offers a useful site to study identity changes. There is little research that systematically measures elite identity in Singapore. For this study we constructed a unique dataset: the Singapore Parliamentary Speech Corpus, containing almost 41 million words. It is the largest English-language dataset outside of Europe and North America of its kind. To answer each of our three questions we use text mining methods to measure the vocabulary of identity and use correspondence analysis to construct an identity space. This enables us to measure not only changes in identity vocabulary but also changes in time. Our findings indicate that elite self-understandings changed dramatically before and after independence. Who they paid attention to also changed from a regional focus to a more international one over time. The perceived relationship between Singapore and others can be generally divided into: (1) economic competition; (2) emulation and the borrowing of policies; and (3) an overarching category of comparison. We also carry out an in-depth case study of comparison, extracting almost 1,500 direct social comparisons and find that comparisons changed from one of competition and status attainment in the 1980s to one of monitoring rankings and image management in the 1990s and 2000s. Keywords: Identity, Culture, Text Analysis, Singapore, and Social Identity Theory			