Higher education discourses: A contrastive keyword analysis of the US and Japan

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Abstract

In this investigation we use keyword analysis to critically analyze higher education discourse, specifically job advertisements. Using two sets of advertisements, one from Japan-based and another from US-based institutions, we examine what is indexed (Blommaert, et al., 2015) in the advertisements, considering how those indexes are differentially scaled by each. We discuss these scales (Blommaert, et al., 2015) from the viewpoint of the process of the advertisements' creation as encompassing multiple stakeholders and discourses that intersect with different degrees of tension and agreement. These tensions manifest in the advertisements through how they differentially scale the concepts they index. Finally, we consider the implications of our analysis for understanding higher education discourse. Specifically, this analysis helps reveal how antiracist, or "woke," inclusionary ideologies expressed in the advertisements tend to use formulaic language that signals their relatively low priority scaling relative to the other features (Khaitova & Muller, 2022) that they index.

Keywords: scale, indexicality, critical discourse analysis, contrastive keyword analysis, Japanese higher education discourse

Introduction

This critical discourse analysis investigation explores higher education discourses, focusing on job advertisements as a manifestation of the public record of those institutions' textual self-representations. Through a keyword analysis, we examine how the advertisements' discourses entextualize inclusion, equality, and "wokism," critiquing the extent to which they represent the "cynical theories" (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020, p. 16) of postmodernism. Interest in these distinctions, according to Pluckrose and Lindsay (2020), leads to problematic "obsess[ion] with power, language, knowledge, and the relationships between them" (p. 15). However, such arguments simplify what are likely more sophisticated processes. Specifically, following Soukup (2021) and Ramaswamy (2021), we are interested in tools that help examine the relationships between the various discourses present in higher education texts, specifically job advertisements, exploring whether institutional discourses shaped by corporate culture are indeed "rooted in skepticism and alienation" (Soukup 2021, p. 78). We view higher education as representing more than idealized and static Enlightenment (as imagined by Pluckrose and Lindsay, 2020). Rather, its roles are liquid and heterogeneous, simultaneously enacting and questioning the powers that produce discourses, the role of language in discourse, how knowledge is represented, and the relationships between them.

We analyze two sets of job advertisements representing two geographic perspectives: US-based and Japan-based higher education institutions. We view these texts as representations of "ideological topography" (Blommaert et al., 2015, p. 120), or ideologies mapping differentially onto imagined geographies (topologies). These are characterized by scales or "content organizers" (Blommaert et al., 2015:126) that index the "non-unified and hierarchical-layered nature of the sign and of meaning making practices" (Blommaert et al., 2015, p. 119). These indexes can include "people, institutions, concrete objects, abstractions, etc." (Francis, 1989, p. 202). We feel that Blommaert's scales are especially relevant to our study for their ability to unpack intended messages and for their power to *order* "semiotizations of the social and material world" which are often "labeled 'context'" (Blommaert et al., 2015, p. 120). This is because the scaling that academic institutions practice constructs meaning into ordered texts, or "'benchmark' scales" (Blommaert et al., 2015, p. 121). In addition, Blommaert (2015)

interprets scales as accommodating a liquidity of meanings, especially in temporary, time-bound texts such as job advertisements. Such texts "develop in a stratified, non-unified way due to the intrinsic polycentricity of any social environment in which communication takes place" (Blommaert, 2010, p. 121) as "scale is originally closely tied to space and time" (Blommaert et al., 2015, p. 123).

Here we investigate pervading indexes and their scales in job advertisement texts as representative of higher education institutional discourses, as they instrumentalize meaning making between different and possibly incompatible interpretations. They facilitate indexing

> a different order, leading us to realize the non-unified nature of signs and meaning-making practices and risks in an age of globalization to situate "errors" and "misunderstandings" at just one level of social experience and activity. (Blommaert et al., 2015:121).

In applying scales and indexes as a research lens, we use keyword analysis as an analytical tool to identify textual patterns across the two sets of job advertisements. Lists of discrete words represent discursive instances of one "type" (Partington & Marchi, 2015, p. 217) relative to others in contrastive datasets. These keywords represent primary concepts, making them a point of departure in our study (Pojanapunya & Wattson Todd, 2018). Such analysis considers "the use of linguistic forms in context" (Biber et al., 2007, p. 15), yielding "research findings [with] greater generalizability and validity" (Biber & Reppen, 2015, p. 1). These findings assist in perceiving "communicative social practices and ideological assumptions … on the social construction of discourse rather than the linguistic description of particular texts" (Biber et al., 2007, p. 17). This is because specific corpora "can be relatively small" (Zufferey, 2020, p. 139) and "specialized" (Baker, 2010, p. 99), enabling answering "research questions which do not involve rare words" (Zufferey, 2020, p. 138), making these methods particularly well-suited to examining the job advertisements analyzed here.

In the next section we review the literature on contrastive studies of job advertisements, indicating where this study helps to address their currently unelucidated features and how this investigation represents a relatively new methodology for investigating of them.

Literature Review

Representations of higher education as objectively rational, including assertions of its aculturality, are well-documented. For example, Turner (2011), building on the work of

Bazerman (1988) and Foucault (1980), describes historical processes that shape the fundamentally colonizing act of European exploration as coming to prefer "transparent" (p. 63) language. That is to say, the role of the observer is obscured with the observed phenomenon presented as if "discovering something that was already there" (p. 63). Thus, academic discourses are represented as acultural and homogenous, "devoid of emotional and interpersonal meanings, of fuzzy expressions" (Duszak, 1997, p. 1). However, popular cultural theories argue for the prevalence of distinct, country-specific styles of communication. For example, Hall (1976) characterizes Japanese and other Asian countries' communication more generally as high context, describing US communication, in contrast, as low context. In the former, communication is said to be less explicit and more implicit in terms of the level of detail conveyed while in the latter the opposite is said to be true, with more explanation generally required. Hall's theory resonates with several Japan scholars, including Arima (1989), Midooka (1990), and Markus and Kitayama (1991). Broadly, they argue that Japanese society tends to be collective, homogenous, and focused on distinctions between insider/outsider status while Anglophone (often implicitly US) culture is described as independent, individual, and interpersonal relationship focused. While problematic, such thinking has colored investigations into the make-up of Japanese higher education through describing non-Japanese faculty as outsiders (Hall, 1998; McVeigh, 2002) and part-time foreign resident English language teachers in Japan from the perspective of their outsider status (Whitsed, 2011).

The description of Japan-based adjunct faculty as outsiders contrasts with Gaillet and Guglielmo's (2014) depiction of adjunct faculty working at US institutions, despite the many issues they face as precarious workers, as part of rather than apart from their universities. Another illustration of this is Saft's (2004) study of conflicts at faculty meetings in Japan-based universities, which presents evidence that contradicts the Japanese cultural phenomenon of "preestablished concepts such as harmony and social hierarchy" (p. 549) underlying the institutional discourse. Particularly, Saft closely examines the concept of *nemawashi* or "spadework" (Davies & Ikeno, 2002, p. 160), "which refers to the process of discussing issues prior to meetings" (Saft, 2004, p. 550) used in various studies of Japanese discourse (Arima, 1989; Fetters, 1995; Villalba-Diez et al., 2015). While such broad-brush characterizations have been critiqued as requiring "in-depth description of actual interactional practices" (Saft, 2004, p. 551) and have been shown not to stand up to empirical scrutiny (Yamagishi, 1988a, 1988b), they nevertheless remain prevalent in writing about Japan. Perhaps more interestingly, these discourse

tendencies may express themselves differentially, presenting a more nuanced reality than the clear dichotomies typically presented in the literature on the topic.

Commentary on the discourse of higher education laments a move toward marketized language from a discourse of authority (Fairclough, 1993). Investigations of the implications of such shifts have explored changes over time (Kheovichai, 2014) and how higher education discourse embeds marketized language within it (Fairclough, 1993). Such investigations have included examinations of job application cover letters (Thumnong & Tongpoon-Patanasorn, 2017; Connor et al., 1995; Mohammed 2004), university prospectuses (Askehave, 2007; Fairclough, 1993; Osman, 2008), and job advertisements (Kheovichai, 2014; Fairclough, 1993). As this investigation analyzes higher education job advertisements, here we focus our review on this group of studies, acknowledging they are informed by discourse investigations more broadly, especially investigations into the discourses of higher education. Among these, specific types of jobs, such as those intended for teacher educators (Gunn, et al., 2015; Nuttall, et al., 2013) have been investigated in specific countries, such as the UK (Ellis, et al., 2011, 2012, 2013), Australia (Nuttall et al., 2013), and New Zealand (Gunn et al., 2015). These studies tend to focus on higher education within Anglophone countries (Kheovichai, 2014; Fairclough, 1993) with the implicit assumption that such trends are similar across global higher education more generally. Such findings have been reflected in the limited studies concerning other national contexts, including Xiong's (2012) investigation of Chinese language advertisements for Chinese higher education institutions and Khaitova and Muller's (2022) investigation of marketization in Japan-based higher education advertisements.

Less common are comparative studies examining how the discourses of higher education differ between different contexts. Among these limited studies, Łącka-Badura (2014) contrasts advertisements for Anglophone (6 countries) and non-Anglophone contexts (26 countries), investigating "140 online academic job postings" (p. 217), 70 for each, finding "online academic job advertisements placed by Anglophone and non-Anglophone institutions demonstrate a high level of homogeneity" (p. 218). However, using broad-brush Anglophone and non-Anglophone labels may conceal the extent to which the countries in which universities are based shape their discourses, with local considerations potentially flavoring a country's higher education discourses. Analyzing this requires a narrower focus on specific countries' higher education discourses, in contrast to broader labels, such as Anglophone and non-Anglophone. In one such study, Muller and Skeates (2022) analyzed Japan-based and Anglophone universities, comparing job advertisements

between the two to examine the extetnt to which Japan-based higher education job advertisements exhibited characteristics of advertising discourses. They found that, compared to Anglophone higher education advertisements, Japan-based universities tended not to exhibit advertising characteristics such as promoting the institution. Yet, as illustrated in Łącka-Badura (2014)'s analysis, 'Anglophone' countries do not represent one country and one uniform discourse, so assuming the discourse of higher education across Anglophone countries as homogeneous is problematic.

Further, a relatively narrow focus on marketization in university discourses may mask larger trends. While internationalizing and globalizing forces may be at play across specific higher education contexts, there is no guarantee that their local manifestations are equivalent. Rather, it is possible, even likely, that local concerns shape and interpret larger pervasive forces in specific identifiable ways. To better understand this, here we investigate job advertisements from US-based and Japan-based higher education institutions, limiting our assumptions of homogeneity to two countries. We acknowledge that higher education within individual countries is heterogeneous, with some institutions considered much closer to centers of knowledge production than others (Geertz, 1983), and with differences in the expected roles of public versus private universities (Goodman, 2010). Nevertheless, we feel that using countries where institutions are based to examine higher education can help elucidate trends regarding similarities and differences in discourses between them. Next, to further illustrate these issues, we discuss management of risk (Thesen, 2014) and the legalese it engenders in job advertisements through its relationship to legally mandated concepts such as "inclusion" (Tuck 2021, p. 72) and "diversity" (Ramaswamy, 2021, p. 30).

Trends toward improving participation rates of women and other minoritized populations in the workforce more generally and within higher education faculty specifically are commendable. However, the way they are implemented can be problematic. For example, Subtirelu (2017), in his contrastive analysis of online job advertisements in the US, found "bilingual labor is assigned value through a racial lens" (p. 477) that devalues US Latinxs.

Thus, while trends toward increased inclusivity may have commendable progressive intentions, they tend to be interpreted by institutions as presenting risks, and such interpretations end up obscuring and derailing their intended outcomes (Tuck, 2021). For example, Ramaswamy's (2021) critique of diversity in the workforce is that while "woke culture posits a new theory of who you are as a person" it simultaneously "reduces you

to the characteristics you inherit at birth" (p. 17). In contrast, what he refers to as "true diversity" (p. 26) would entail "diversity of thought" and/or "experience" (p. 285) because it would serve as a "means toward achieving excellence" (p. 354). In this sense, higher education's "interface with society" (p. 5) should reinforce, project, and further social mobility and inclusion.

However, how inclusion is interpreted at the institutional level often lacks sincerity, leading to conflict between its ideals and the unpreparedness of higher education institutions to explain and implement it (Tuck, 2021). While Tuck (2021) writes specifically about UK higher education, regarding US higher education, such unpreparedness can perhaps be explained by the generally non-diverse, non-inclusive nature of university faculty (Whittaker & Montgomery, 2014). Specifically, when those charged with increasing inclusion and diversity are not inclusive and diverse themselves, this sets up a conflict between ideals and reality (Whittaker & Montgomery 2014). For example, female representation in Japanese higher education employment was only 25% in 2019, with most female representation in less prestigious "assistant" (助手) positions (about 60% female) and not in the more prestigious "professor" (教授) positions (about 17% female) (eStat, 2021; Muller & Gallagher, in review). This compares to more than 34% female representation in higher education in the US (Kimoto, 2015), although the US also exhibits problems with female faculty generally being in more adjunct, non-tenure track positions (American Association of University Professors, 2018). Nevertheless, women have made deeper crossroads into leadership positions in US-based higher education, with 30 percent of university presidents women in 2016 (American Council on Education, 2022), compared to 12 percent in 2019 in Japan (eStat, 2021).

This tensions between inclusive ideals and persistent, exclusive realities are further reinforced by the conservative nature of higher education, which tends to resist sudden change, generally preferring incremental change (Tuck, 2021). The result is that "the legal requisite for inclusion gives the minimum-accepted outcome rather than providing an exemplar" (Tuck, 2021, p. 72), meaning that while numeric goals are set, there is not established, tested guidance provided to meet those goals. Moreover, existing guidelines and procedures of institutional bureaucracy lead their resulting execution to merely "underpin and declare the ethos of the school" (Tuck 2021, p. 72). Thus, "inclusion," while having a commonly agreed goal, is understood and implemented in different and, at times, polarizing ways, creating "different inclusions" (Tuck 2021, p. 74) or "scales-within-scales" (Blommaert, et al., 2015, p. 120).

Returning to the issue of how diversity is interpreted, inborn features end up trumping creative and constructive features (Ramaswamy 2021). This can result in a focus on diversity of **race, color, ancestry, age,** ... **creed, religion, sex,** … **ethnicity, national origin,**" (US-2021-06-04-2; author boldface), to give an example from our data. Ramaswamy (2021) argues this is nothing but a lose-lose game that only creates exclusions on different levels, with no ethnic or racial groups feeling secure. These issues are of interest to this investigation because how concepts such as diversity and equality are entextualized in the job advertisements' discourses are examined, thereby empirically interrogating variability in their implementation and interpretation.

The following research questions are used to explore the issues raised above:

1. What do the US-based and Japan-based higher education job advertisements index?

2. How are those indexes scaled differently in the advertisement texts?

3. What are the implications of these differences for understanding the culture-bound nature of higher education discourses?

Next, we present the frame and methodology we use to examine these questions.

Methods

We employ a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1993) lens because it facilitates examining institutional discourses, highlighting and untangling discursive indexes embedded within them. Specifically, we examine job advertisements produced by US-based and Japan-based universities as a manifestation of the public record of those institutions' discursive self-representations. Contrastive analysis of these advertisements facilitates cross-national comparative analysis, potentially revealing "the actualities of contemporary language use" (Fairclough, 1993, p. 138), bridging textual production with social events and practices to provide important insights. One force shaping discursive practices of "language and discourse in modernity phenomena of language standardization" (Fairclough, 1993, p. 139) is genre, which influences language standardization norms, in this case the norms of language as applied to job advertisements. Such "standard languages" (Fairclough, 1993:139) accepted at the level of discourse genres define the "textual orientation" (Muller & Skeates, 2020, p. 7) or "tone" (Nuttal et

al., 2013, p. 333) of texts regardless of field or type of activity, thereby orchestrating a narrative that echoes societal power structures and authority (Fairclough, 1993).

To better understand the texts' orientations, we applied the concept of indexes and scales (Blommaert et al., 2015), examining how the keywords we analyzed could be indexed, and what scales were present within those indexes. These concepts have primarily been used by anthropologists (Appadurai, 1996; Strathern, 2004; Helmreich, 2009), sociolinguists (Blommaert, 2007; Prinsloo, 2017; Busch & Spitzmüller, 2021), cultural geographers (Taylor, 1982; Marston, 2000; Moore, 2008), and critical geographers (Smith, 1992, 2004; Swyngedouw, 2004). Thus, their application to keyword analysis represents an expansion of the methodological traditions to which they have been applied. Therefore, this study offers a methodological contribution to the use of keyword analysis in examining contrastive corpora, as the focus is on larger concepts coded in the job advertisements rather than individual keywords, which form the basis for the indexes and scales we identified.

The "*specialized corpus*" (Baker, 2010, p. 99, italics in original) of the two cross-national subcorpora assembled for this investigation consists of 184 online academic job advertisements, 92 US-based (collected from www.higheredjobs.com) and 92 Japan-based advertisements (posted at www.jrecin.jst.go.jp – 70; www.jalt-publications.org – 8; www.jp.indeed.com – 10; www.gaijinpot.com – 2; www.japanenenglishteacher.com – 1; www.jobhaku.com – 1). The US is of interest as an Anglophone country whose higher education discourses have been the topic of considerable investigation and discussion, including by Muller and Skeates (2022), Subtirelu (2017), and Whittaker and Montgomery (2014). Japanese higher education is of interest as it has similarly been discussed extensively as representative of countries where English is a foreign language, including by Khaitova and Muller (2022), Muller and Skeates (2022), and Saft (2004). We categorized the sets of advertisements according to country of origin: JP for Japan-based and US for US-based corpora. Following the numbering style used in Khaitova & Muller (2022), the following code, XX-YYYY-MM-DD-#, was used to show the country of origin (JP or US), the date the advertisement was collected (not necessarily posted), and a number for multiple advertisements collected on the same day. For example, JP-2020-08-11-20 signifies a Japan-based advertisement, the twentieth advertisement collected on August 11, 2020. Keyword analyses were completed using AntConc 3.5.8 (Anthony, 2019).

Analysis

We examined the advertisements for major organizational indexes (Ding, 2007) through a contrastive keyword analysis of the US-based (64,629 words) and Japan-based (70,855 words) advertisement texts. A contrastive keyword analysis compares one corpus to another using keyword analysis, with the first (e.g., the Japan-based corpus) examined using a keyword analysis that examines the lexical frequency of the contrasting corpus (e.g., the US-based corpus). Thus in the previous example, a keyword analysis was done on the Japan-based corpus using the US-based corpus as a keyword list. Practically, this analysis indicates which words are significantly more and less frequent in the two corpora. This initial analysis yielded a list of 244 keyword types out of 17,182 tokens in the US-based corpus and 269 keyword types out of 25,809 tokens in the Japan-based corpus. As this analysis presents an unfiltered list of keywords by relative frequency in the two corpora, analysis was necessary to interpret the implications of these differences in keyword frequency for our investigation.

We next examined these keyword lists with reference to the underlying corpus data, organizing them into three categories, or indexes (Blommaert, et al., 2015), that are differentially expressed in the job advertisements: (i) institutional identity; (ii) applicant identifiers; and (iii) application identifiers. Examples of keywords from each are included following Table 1. While these indexes represent both subcorpora, they differ structurally and discursively. To illustrate, while the first index is the most prominent for both data sets, representing 49% of the total indexed content, the second and third indexes differ in terms of relative frequency, relevance, and size cross-nationally. Specifically, the US-based advertisements deliver institutional policies through legalese, using legal terms related to diversity and equality legislation, which helps explain the prominence of institutional identity (49%) and applicant identifier (38%) indexes over application identifiers (13%). In contrast, the Japan-based advertisements prioritizes application identifiers (30%) over applicant identifiers (21%). Thus, the US-based advertisements are characterized largely by the legal discourse of Affirmative Action and the Equal Employment Opportunities Act through legalese, while the mechanics of the application process are represented to a lesser degree (Table 1). The Japan-based advertisements, meanwhile, express an implicit authority, focusing on technicalities and application procedures. The institutional identity, therefore, expresses the logistics behind the application process, followed by the applicant and application identifiers signaling ideal candidate characteristics and detailed lists of documents required to apply.

Table 1. Ratios of discursive indexes (thematic categories) across the US-based and Japan-based advertisements

Index	US Subcorpus Scale	US Corpus	US Corpus Per 100 words	Index (%)	JP Suborpus Scale	JP Corpus	JP Corpus Per 100 words	Index (%)
Institutional identity	Institutional identity markers	1,250	1.93	49%	Institutional policy markers	2,181	3.08	49%
Applicant identifiers	Ideal candidate	961	1.49	38%	Ideal candidate	949	1.34	21%
Application identifiers	Application	340	0.53	13%	Application	1,304	1.84	30%
Total			3.95			Total	6.26	

Examining the data more closely, the indexes are entextualized differently within the two subcorpora. Table 2 presents representative examples for each of the three indexes across the two sets of job advertisements with their four corresponding scales. The first index, *institutional identity* (column two in Table 2), the most prominent for both, is represented by the scale of *institutional identity markers* for the US-based advertisements and *institutional policy markers* for the Japan-based advertisements. In the US-based subcorpus keywords include *faculty* (481 instances, see Table 2, example 1b), *college* (315 instances), and *adjunct* (162 instances) as position descriptions, along with *opportunit(y/ies)* (156) describing the institution as an "Equal opportunity employer" (99 / 156 instances). In the Japan-based subcorpus, keywords include *institution* (352 instances)*, we* (269 instances, see Table 2, example 1f)*,* and *rules/regulations* (100 instances combined, see Table 2, example 1d), which delineate institutional expectations. Thus, content in this scale diverges. Specifically, in the US-based advertisements, legalese underpins the institutional discourse represented by the *institutional identity markers* scale through terms appropriated from affirmative action and equal employment

opportunities legislation. This legalese colonizes the *applicant identifiers* index as represented by the *ideal candidate* scale.

In contrast, the Japan-based advertisements are represented by an organizational discourse of regulations, command, and discipline supported by HRisms (see Table 2, examples 1d & e). In other words, for the Japan-based subcorpus, the *institutional identity* index colonizes both the *applicant* and *application identifiers* indexes, underscoring *application identifiers* specifying types of documents, language medium, and submission methods (see Table 2, examples 3c, d, & e). Meanwhile, the *applicant identifiers* index is defined by requirements to meet governmental (see Table 2, example 2d) and institutional (see Table 2, example 2c) organizational goals (see Khaitova & Muller, 2022). Thus, within the US-based data, the first index, *institutional identity*, colonizes only one of the other indexes, *applicant identifiers*. However, within the Japan-based subcorpus, the first index, *institutional identity*, colonizes the two other indexes. This is perhaps one reason why the *application identifiers* and *applicant identifiers* indexes in the Japan-based subcorpus differ in their degree of prominence less (30% and 21%, respectively; see Table 1) than in the US-based subcorpus (13% and 38%, respectively).

Table 2. Discursive indexes and scales for the US-based and Japan-based advertisements

Scales (US)	Indexes	Scales (JP)
Institutional identity markers 1a. University is an **Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action** Employer (US-2021-06-27-1) 1b. University is building a culturally **diverse faculty** and staff (US-2021-03-10-6) 1c. …supervises site **faculty** (US-2021-03-10-4)	Institutional identity	Institutional policy markers 1d. pursuant to the **Institute's applicable rules** and **regulations** (JP-2020-08-14-3) 1e. The **mandatory retirement age** is 65 for Professors and 60 for Associate Professors. The **evaluation** of research achievements... focuses primarily on **peer-reviewed**

		publications. (JP-2020-08-03-17) 1f. **We** allocate each Excellent Young Researcher up to 12 million yen for the 1st and the 2nd year…(JP-2020-09-10-17)
<u>Ideal Candidate</u> 2a. …**qualified candidates** without regard to **race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, disability** or **veteran status** (US-2021-03-10-12) 2b. **Qualified applicants** will be prepared to contribute to **the teaching mission**. (US-2021-03-10-15)	Applicant identifiers	<u>Ideal Candidate</u> 2c. **Research achievement** … is **outstanding** (JP-2020-08-05-1) 2d. Applications from **female researchers** as well as **non-Japanese researchers** are encouraged. (JP-2020-08-14-19)
<u>Application</u> 3a. **Cover letter** addressing your **qualifications** (US-2021-03-10-9) 3b. a teaching and scholarship **statement** (US-2021-03-10-15)	Application identifiers	<u>Application</u> 3c. An **essay** in **both English** and **Japanese** (JP-2020-08-03-3) 3d. Please write on the envelope "Application for Thai Teaching Position" **in red** and submit it by **a trackable delivery method** (JP-2020-08-14-15) 3e. All the **documents except** Two letters of reference should

		be submitted via the Institution's Web Application URL below (JP-2020-08-14-7)

Turning from a discussion of the prominent indexes across the advertisements to the scales within the two subcorpora, concerning the US-based advertisements, the *institutional identity* index is realized through *institutional identity markers* as a scale. Within this scale, the advertisement texts concern describing and identifying the institution and its values along with the position advertised. Concerning the first, it underscores the protected status of minority and underrepresented groups (Table 2 1a & 2a). When describing the position advertised, the US-based advertisements are primarily oriented toward describing the open position. For example:

Faculty responsibilities for this position include a total **teaching load** of five courses per academic year, advancing a productive **research** and **publication agenda**, **advising** students, and actively **contributing** to the **department**, **college**, and **university** through participation in **shared governance** and **other service** activities. (US-2021-03-10-34; author boldface)

Similarly, for both subcorpora, the *applicant identifiers* index is realized through the *ideal candidate* scale, concerned with the characteristics institutions desire candidates to have to fill the position, with further preconditions focusing on candidate teaching skills. For example, "a teaching **statement**" (US-2021-03-10-28; author boldface) requires describing previous teaching experience without mentioning research or community activities. The continuous commitment to work within a team is emphasized by "three **professional** references" (US-2021-03-10-40; author boldface) who will ostensibly attest to candidates' previous team-work experience.

However, both subcorpora do not exhibit exactly similar language. Rather, within the US-based *institutional identity markers* and *ideal candidate* scales, a prominent theme is legalese, or language concerning legal processes and requirements. To illustrate, statements such as, "... is an **equal opportunity employer** that actively values and supports **diversity** among faculty, staff and students" (US-2021-03-19-5; author boldface), demonstrate how legalese characterizes these scales in the US-based advertisements (Table 2, examples 1a & 2a). Consequently, as we explained previously,

these scales are the most frequent, as these advertisements appear to be viewed by the institutions who produce them as primarily legal documents. The *application* scale, while present, is less prominent in the US-based advertisements, with its keywords focused around candidate-authored documents, such as cover letters and statements (Table 2, examples 3a & b).

For the Japan-based advertisements, the *institutional identity* index is represented by the *institutional policy marker* scale, which concerns institutional rules and regulations, such as mandatory retirement age (Table 2, example 1e). The next most prominent index is *application identifiers*, represented by the *application* scale, concerning the documents applicants must submit to apply for the position, for example, "The **required documents** from #1 to #8 **must be** in one **PDF document** and that for #9 **must be** in **EXCEL** format" (JP - 2020-08-14-16; author boldface). The *applicant identifiers* index is represented by the *ideal candidate* scale, which concerns characteristics applicants are expected to have, like for the US subcorpus, although it is more prominent in the Japan-based advertisements. Thus, in the Japan-based advertisements, institutional discourse largely consists of organizational guidelines and less prominently HRisms.

HRisms are generally more prominent in the US-based subcorpus, with organizational guidelines less prominent. The *applicant identifiers* index, represented by the *ideal candidate* scale, concerns organizational goals, such as "female researchers" (Table 2, example 2d) in the Japan-based advertisements and legalese in the US-based advertisements. Thus, the Japan-based advertisements are concerned with describing an ideal candidate suitable to institutional goals whereas the US-based advertisements are concerned with demonstrating that they follow legal requirements regarding the hiring of employees. Thus, in the US-based advertisements legalese increases the weight of the *institutional identity markers* and the *ideal candidate* scales (Table 2, examples 1b & 2a) while institutional guidelines colonize all three scales in the Japan-based advertisements (Table 2, examples 1d, 2d, & 3e).

These three indexes, nominally similar, vary in their structure and hierarchy between the two subcorpora, which we illustrate here through discussion of their respective scales. Hence, the US-based advertisements represent the employer"'s identity largely through legalese and faculty-related terms describing jobs as offering **opportunities**, whereas in the Japan-based advertisements the employer's identity marks **unity/group** and **institutional image** with HR-isms less prominent. Finally, the *application identifiers* index in the US subcorpus involves description of the position offered, whereas

guidelines and requirements to be followed within institutional rules and regulations prevail in the Japan-based subcorpus. Further, while the *application identifiers* index is present in both the US-based and Japan-based advertisements, it is more prominent in the Japan-based advertisements (Table 1).

Discussion and Conclusion

Concerning our first research question, what the US-based and Japan-based higher education job advertisements index, we identified three indexes (i) *institutional identity;* (ii) *applicant identifiers;* and (iii) *application identifiers*. Regarding our second research question, how the indexes we identified are scaled differently in the advertisement texts, as illustrated previously, the three indexes we identified are used differentially across through four scales. The first and most prominent index, *institutional identity*, is represented by different scales for each subcorpus. For the US-based advertisements this scale is *institutional identity markers* and for the Japan-based advertisements it is *institutional policy markers*. The remaining two scales were given the same labels for each subcorporus; *ideal candidate* scale for the *applicant identifiers* index and *application* scale for the *application identifiers* index (see Table 1). The US-based subcorpus exhibited a larger disparity between its scales, with:

- *Institutional identity markers*: "...**equal** consideration for employment and admissions…" (US-2021-03-10-11) colonizing

- *Ideal candidate*: "will be prepared to **contribute to the teaching mission** of the School of Education **at the graduate level**." (US-2021-03-10-15), and

Application: "**diversity statement**" (US-2021-03-10-47) represented to a lesser degree (see Table 1).

Thus, the US-based subcorpus was characterized by the *institutional identity markers* scale colonizing the *ideal candidate* scale, as these were disproportionately more frequent, with the *application* scale representing only about 13% of the keywords examined. In the US-based advertisements, *institutional identity*, against the backdrop of Affirmative Action, explicitly underscores issues of diversity and inclusion. For example, "populations representing **diverse ages, backgrounds, life experiences** and **abilities**" (US-2021-03-19-8). Also important are issues of equality based on Equal Employment Opportunities, such as, "...**equal** consideration for employment and admissions…" (US-2021-03-10-11) disregard for "**race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy,**

marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, **age**, physical or mental **disability**, or covered **veteran** status" (US-2021-03-10-5).

As the *ideal candidate* scale is colonized by *institutional identity markers*, it similarly develops around legal themes of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunities. To a certain extent, these legalese requirements can serve to obscure what criteria faculty are expected to exhibit. That is to say, with legalese so prominent, the advertisements can orient toward meeting legal obligations to the detriment of communicating who might successfully fill the advertised position. For example, the requirement for a "**diversity statement**" (US-2021-03-10-47) aligns the US-based advertisements' discourses around policies, such as Affirmative action and the Equal Employment Opportunities Act, that concern legally mandated requirements to diversify workplaces. What remains less clear is the extent to which the texts of such diversity statements actually influence decisions regarding who to hire and whether they help to facilitate an actual increase in faculty diversity.

Another feature of the US-based advertisements is candidates' teaching skills, as in, "a teaching **statement**" (US-2021-03-10-28) that, for example, may demonstrate how they "will be prepared to **contribute to the teaching mission** of the School of Education **at the graduate level**." (US-2021-03-10-15). Requirements for "**professional references**" (US-2021-03-10-40) "that address **teaching effectiveness**" (US-2020-11-07-12) help further demonstrate the advertisements' emphasis on teaching skills as important.

The Japan-based subcorpus was marked by:

- *Institutional policy markers*: "**We give** Excellent Young Researchers **priority for using** our common apparatus." (JP- 2020-09-10-17) colonizing both

    - *Application*: "Single offprint or copy of **the most relevant/important publication**, with an abstract (approx. **200 words in English**, or **400 characters in Japanese**). On the list of publications, **mark** the publication **with a circle**." (JP-2020-08-11-22), the second most frequent scale (30%, see Table 1), and

    - *Ideal candidate*: "Applicants **must satisfy all** the following **requirements:** 1) **Good knowledge** of computational physics methods, simulation software, and programming **experience are required.** [...] 2) The candidate **must have a high motivation** for **independent research,** show **evidence** of **good written and oral** communication **skills in English**,

and enjoy working in an international and cross-disciplinary team. 3) **Successful candidates shall have a PhD [...]**" (JP-2020-08-03-9), the least frequent scale (21%, see Table 1).

Here the *institutional policy markers* scale is characterized by reference to institutional rules and regulations explicitly asserting institutional authority through text such as:

- Explicit listing of rules and procedures: "**Evaluation will be performed upon receipt of each application** and, **if an appropriate candidate is found**, **this call may be closed in about a month after the offering has started**" (JP-2020-08-03-9),

- Documentation of qualification requirements: "**academic publications**, **published articles, books, book chapters**, and **conference presentations**" for all categories of positions (JP-2020-08-11-4), and

- Other institutional requirements: "**Must include** a **photo**" (JP-2020-10-21-1).

The *application*, colonized by *institutional policy markers*, includes teaching qualification, experience, and research achievement requirements, with research achievement largely demonstrated through publication. Here *application* is characterized by precise and detailed procedures and documentation requirements that: (i) require submission "as **PDF files**" (JP - 2020-08-06-6) (ii) following "**University format**" (JP-2020-08-06-2) (iii) in envelopes marked with "**red ink**" (JP-2020-08-11-23). Similarly, a "**university's rules** and **regulations**" (JP - 2020-08-03-13) determine particulars such as selection, compensation, and insurance. Thus, the Japan-based advertisements require applicants to comply with institutional procedures, regulations, and guidelines. While our focus of analysis is on English language medium advertisements, it is important to mention that the Japan-based advertisements are often explicitly marked as unofficial translations. For example, one advertisement includes the following notice, "the **English version** of this recruitment notice is provided **only for the benefit** of candidates who **do not read Japanese**" (JP-2020-08-14-6). Therefore, "in the event of any **dispute**, **the original Japanese version** will be regarded as being **the official notice**." (JP-2020-08-14-6). For discussion of this issue in more depth, see Skeates and Muller (2022). Here we would like to note that such distinctions require additional effort for applicants who do not have a sufficient Japanese language reading ability to fully parse the Japanese

language originals. Hence, the US- and Japan-based job advertisements, while serving the common goal of finding a suitable candidate for a certain position, are structured differently, which helps illustrate how their higher education discourses differ (see Appendix A for anonymized examples of Japan- and US-based advertisements).

Turning to our third and final research question, what the implications of the differences we identified between the advertisements are for understanding the culture-bound nature of higher education discourses, this study contributes at least three findings of significance; two empirical and one methodological. First, earlier studies have tended to examine academic institutional discourse cross-nationally using broad lenses, such as Japanese/Asian versus Western (implicitly US) discourses (Muller & Skeates, 2022) along with rather narrow analytical lenses, such as marketization (Khaitova & Muller, 2022; Kheovichai, 2014; Muller & Skeates, 2022) and Wokism (Ramaswamy, 2021). However, such foci may conceal deeper trends in higher education discourses, both in terms of individual countries' discourses and in terms of the different discourse traditions (e.g., authority versus marketization) that they draw on. To address this, here we investigate the "in-depth description of actual interactional practices" as called for by Saft (2004, p. 551), highlighting the larger discourses that underpin institutional job advertisements cross nationally through the indexes and scales we identify. We show that US- and Japan-based institutions formulaic language to ostensibly advance legally mandated diversity and inclusion, although what constitutes diversity and inclusion in the two contexts differs. In the case of the US-based advertisements, they use formulaic language to signal affirmative action ideals. However, the very formulaic nature of this language belies its lack of sincerity; the advertisements appear to include this language because it is required of them rather than because these are ideals that the institutions are striving toward (Tuck, 2021). In the case of the Japan-based advertisements, they express institutional authority and status, what Fairclough (1993) refers to as traditional higher education discoursal dispositions, along with explicit ageist and genderist signaling, evidenced through text such as "female researchers" (Table 2, example 2d). However, indications are missing of the kinds of support that may be necessary for female researchers to join institutions, such as childcare support and other similar services (see also discussion in Khaitova & Muller, 2022). Thus, like the US-based advertisements, these also represent a kind of lip-service rather than genuine efforts to increase university faculty diversity.

Second, we reveal the complexity of local discourses, both within the US and Japan,

contrasting earlier studies that suggest Anglophone and non-Anglophone advertisements are largely similar, such as Xiong (2012) for Chinese advertisements and Łącka-Badura (2014) for "Anglophone and non-Anglophone institutions" (p. 218). Thus, as universities are largely brick and mortar institutions physically based within one country, and therefore answerable to that country's ministry of education or equivalent, it makes sense that the country in which universities are based shapes their discourse. This does not negate the possibility of a larger discourse of internationalization also shaping their discourse at the same time. Rather, it appears that local/national considerations favoring internationalized rhetoric are realized (or not) in a country's higher education discourse. This is in part reflected through the three common indexes we identify between the US- and Japan-based advertisements.

Finally, concerning the methodological contribution that this study offers, here we pioneered the application of scales in keyword analysis of higher education job advertisements. Indexes and scales have traditionally been applied in disciplines such as anthropology (Strathern, 2004; Appadurai, 2006; Helmreich, 2007), sociolinguistics (Blommaert, 2007; Prinsloo, 2017; Busch & Spitzmüller, 2021), cultural geography (Taylor, 1982; Marston, 2000; Moore, 2008), and critical geography (Smith, 1992, 2004; Swyngedouw, 2004). Here they helped us to organize the themes that emerged through our keyword analysis, thereby demonstrating their viability in corpus linguistic analysis applications. We frame our study as primarily sociolinguistic, as it seeks to explore how texts are formed and organized through broader indexes that are entextualized as hierarchically more local, but nevertheless still overlapping, scales. For example, institutional identity (an index) in the US-based subcorpus referenced institutional identity markers (a scale), while in the Japan-based subcorpus it referenced institutional policy markers (a scale). Further, the US-based advertisements' institutional identity markers scale colonized the application scale, while in the Japan-based subcorpus, there was more emphasis on the processes of applying for positions, or application scale, and less about the ideal candidate (scale), or applicant identifiers (index).

Despite higher education being reflective of pervading differences in representation of the members of society from which it is constituted, as it is predominantly male (Kimoto, 2015; O'Connor, 2020) and majority population (Hall, 1998; Pechenkina & Liu, 2018; Green, 2019), its advertisements evince discourse intended to countervail these differences. Specifically, there is mention of affirmative action and equal representation. However, these discourses appear to largely exist not to facilitate minority populations'

access to higher education employment. Rather, considering the continuing unequal distribution of employment demographics in the sector, they appear to act as a kind of legal saving face. That is to say, they facilitate the institutions who produce these advertisements and perpetuate these imbalances in representation to argue that while their faculties may remain unrepresentative of the larger population in problematic ways, this isn't an artifact of the discourse of their hiring practices. The evidence to the contrary they can offer is the language of those advertisements themselves, which espouse the virtues of equal representation of minority populations.

While we acknowledge the importance of this study, we are cautious of its limitations. Indeed, though job advertisements represent an aspect of the public image universities hope to cultivate for themselves, they also tend to be targeted toward academics working within specific fields and are therefore not always consistent in the information they contain (Kureková et al., 2015). As we were interested in the broader discourses of US- and Japan-based higher education, we included several sources and advertisement types, accepting these potential inconsistencies in our data. Admittedly, this adds greater complexity to the process of analysis compared to restricting the advertisements examined to those exhibiting specific characteristics, such as Subtirelu's (2017) examination into US-based job advertisements' handling of Spanish-English bilingualism. We analyze a mix of position advertisement types, including full-time, tenured and tenure track positions, full-time term limited positions, part-time positions, as well as dispatched positions. Admittedly, there may be interesting differences to be found between the advertisements for these different position types that we leave to future research to uncover.

Moreover, we contrasted US-based English texts with Japan-based English texts, which were likely (and in some cases explicitly noted to be) translations from Japanese originals. While Muller and Skeates (2022) found Japan-based universities' English language and Japanese language texts to be similar, the contrast of US-based texts in English and Japan-based texts in Japanese could offer further insights into the higher education discourses of the two counties. Further, due to its openness, the corpus linguistic approach we employ here accommodates challenges to the process of data collection through interpretation of findings (Pollach, 2012). Aware of our subjectivity, we interpret results cautiously, as we do not account for "every possible word" (Baker 2012, p. 252) that could be pertinent to our analysis. Despite these limitations, we feel that our analysis of

the advertisement data was sufficient to answer the research questions we pose.

In closing, while there is often an implicit assumption of the dominance of discourses within higher education globally, such assumptions would benefit from empirical examination of the extent to which they have proceeded differently across higher education contexts and traditions. Our findings suggest that academic discourse, while pervasive across the US-based and Japan-based advertisements, has developed in different, distinct ways, with issues of local importance shaping and flavoring the discourses of both. As discussed previously, the US-based discourse is largely oriented around legalese, apparently seeking to meet statutory requirements for how the advertisements reference and promote diversity. In contrast, the Japan-based advertisements orient toward ageism and genderism, in some instances limiting who can apply according to how old they are (young) and their legally assigned gender (female). Methodologically, contrastive examinations of the rhetoric of higher education such as that presented here help better illustrate the competing discourses embedded within local discourse traditions.

Disclosure Statement

The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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Appendix A. Sample Japan-based and US-based job advertisements NT 2020-08-14-3 (Anonymized and formatted)

Sample Japan-based job advertisement JP-2020-08-14-3

Data number	D120080734
Date of publication	2020/08/14
Date of update	2020/08/14
Title	Assistant Professor (Transdisciplinary Science and Engineering)
Institution	[Name of the Institution]
URL of institution or department	[Institutional website]
Department	Department [Name], School [Name]
Institution type	National university

Job posting URL	[URL]
Content of job information	[Area of Specialization] [Name of the Department], especially an area from [Name] Studies, including media and communication, science communication, machine translation, science and art/design. [Job Description] ·The successful candidate will be required to engage in research, teach, and education management/administration. ·The successful candidate will teach and/or co-teach undergraduate coursework. ·The successful candidate will participate in activities for [Name] Program ([Abbreviation]) with other faculty members. ·The successful candidate will work with a relevant professor in the Department of [Name] to co-supervise undergraduate and graduate students on their thesis as well as conduct joint research projects with the professor. [Location] [Name] Campus (Nearest station: [Name]) [Available positions] Position title; Assistant Professor Number of Openings; 1 [Starting date] April 1st, 2021

Research field	1. Area Engineering
	   Discipline [Name]
	
	2. Area Others
	   Discipline [Name]

Job type	1. Assistant Professor level

Employment status	Full-time(Nontenured) Fixed-term appointments will be for up to 5 years. Reappointment may be possible (Probationary Period; 6 months)
Work location	[Name] district
Qualifications	·In-depth understanding of the vision and educational ideals of Department of [Name]. ·Ability to teach courses and to supervise students in English. ·A Ph.D. or Doctoral degree in Science or Engineering
Compensation	[Salary] The Institute is currently planning to introduce a new annual salary system in response to new, relevant guidelines of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Due to this transition to the new system, the salary will be determined as follows. ·During the transition period Monthly salary system based on the Regulations on Wage and Salary of the Institute. ·After the introduction of new system New annual salary system Note: Applicants currently working at other national universities, etc. who have Shokei Staff status (承継職員) and receive an annual salary will be employed under the Institute's current annual salary system (Regulations on Wage and Salary for Staff under the Annual Salary System). [Working Hours] De facto working hours* under the discretionary labor system: 7 hours 45 minutes per day (38 hours 45 minutes per week) *Hours considered as working hours [Social insurance and other benefits] Employee's pension, Mutual Aid Association short-term benefits (health insurance), employment insurance, worker's compensation Insurance.
Application period	2020/11/06 Deadline for receipt

Application /selection /notification of result /contact details	›Selection Process
	Selection will be based on a comprehensive review of applications and interviews of candidates.
	Selected applicants may be asked to have an on-campus or online interview and/or give a presentation.
	Please note that travel expenses for attending interviews will not be reimbursed.
	›Required Documents
	1. Curriculum vitae including professional and educational history (from high school onward), degrees, awards, and email address.
	2. Accomplishment statement, including:
	a. Refereed journal papers
	b. Refereed conference proceedings and non-refereed conference proceedings
	c. Commentaries
	d. Books
	e. Patents, etc.
	Please include details for each category. For lectures, state if it was a keynote or invited lecture. For items a. and b., include the number of citations, h-index, and name of database* used. *Google Scholar Citations, Scopus, or Inspire.
	3. Up to three reprints or copies of major publications (one copy for each publication)
	4. Acquired research grants and external funds. Include names of the funds, project titles, amounts, periods of research, and allocated amounts (if not the principal researcher)
	5. Research statement with a summary of research accomplishments and details of the future direction and plan for the applicant's work (free form, two A4 pages)
	6. Teaching statement that provides a summary of accomplishments and discusses ideas for teaching and learning (free form, two A4 pages)
	7. Social activities such as those as a member of international and academic committees
	8. Two references with names, affiliations, and contact details
	9. An Excel file* with the specified form filled in with specified information.
	*
	[URL]

›How to Submit an Application

The required documents must be submitted in hard copy and in digital media (CD, USB, etc. Note that the required documents 1 through 8 must be combined to a single PDF file).

Please write "Application for Assistant Professor" in red ink on the front of the envelope. Applications must be sent by registered postal mail.

We do not accept submissions by email or other digital formats.

›Where to Submit

Please send your application to:

Administration Office of the Department of [Name], [Institution]   -[Street], [City], [Prefecture]

›Contacts

[Full Name]

Professor

[Name of School]

Email: [e-mail address]

Online Submission	Online Submission is Not Available.	
	JREC-IN Portal web application	Not available
	Email Application	Not available
	Recruiting Institution's Web application system	Not available
Additional information	1. Application documents will not be returned. The personal information provided in the submitted documents will be used solely for recruitment and not for any other purpose, pursuant to the Institute's applicable rules and regulations. 2. [Institution], in order to ensure a diverse workforce, guarantees equal opportunities for all individuals regardless of nationality or gender. 3. Smoking is prohibited on campus except in designated areas. 4. The vision and education ideals of Department of [Name], and Graduate Major of [name of major] are available at [url] and [name of major] are available at [url] 5. For more information, please refer to the following link. [url]	
Information on external site	The information about this institution on external site will be displayed in a new window.	

Sample US-based job advertisement US-2021-06-27-3

Clinical Assistant Professor, [Department]

[University Name]

[City, State]

[Institution Website]

Type: Full-Time

Posted: 06/15/2021

Description

[Department] at the [University Name, Location] seeks a full time 9 - month faculty member for a one year, non-tenured clinical assistant professor position. The individual in this rank will have completed a degree appropriate to the discipline, is licensed or certified

to practice Nursing in the [State Name] and will demonstrate an ability to teach students in the clinical setting. [Department] offers the BSN, MSN and DNP degree in Nursing and embraces the shared governance model as well as [Name] Model of scholarship.

Position: Non-Tenured Track Clinical Assistant Professor

Effective Date: August 1, 2021

Responsibilities:

- Teach and mentor, participate in scholarship activities
- Participate in the [Department] faculty organization and committees
- Assist in monitoring and supporting learner success and collaborate with curriculum development and revisions

Qualifications:

- Master's degree in Nursing. Doctoral preparation in nursing or related field preferred.
- Will consider a Bachelor of Science in Nursing if the Master's or Doctorate will be completed by July 1, 2022.
- Recent clinical experience working with clients in acute care settings, medical-surgical nursing at all levels preferred
- Clinical instruction experience preferred
- Instruction using simulation preferred

Application Procedures:

- Submit a letter of interest,
- a current curriculum vita,
- copies of transcripts
- and a statement of teaching philosophy
- Inquiries may be made to Dr. [Full Name] via telephone at [Code] [Phone Number].
- Application review begins immediately and continues until the position if filled. Transcripts for all post-secondary academic work and three letters of professional reference are subject to be requested of all applicants during the screening process.

Qualifications

The University of [Name] [City] is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA. All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment and will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, or protected veteran status.

Campus/Institute:[Location]