Recontextualizing Higher Education Policy: Legitimation Strategies in Economy-Related Issues

A Comparative Critical Analysis of the Chinese and Japanese Government Discourse

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Abstract

This Master’s thesis draws on the sociological work of Basil Bernstein to examine the transmittance of knowledge in the institutional construct of education. It focuses on the macro-level “recontextualizing” phase where policy is reassessed and formulated. This study looks to uncover how the Chinese and Japanese governments construct legitimation in the national higher education policy discourses concerning economy-related issues. Norman Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis and Van Leeuwen’s groundwork on legitimation strategies serve as the analytical framework.

The topic of sustainable economic development is introduced to depict how the policy discourses convey certain ideologies, values and knowledge in relation to sustainability. Along with the growing tides of globalization, the two Asian countries are dealing with their own set of political, cultural, historical and demographic challenges, which makes for interesting contrasting.

The analysis suggests that the Chinese policy discourse demonstrates a stronger use of authorization and moral reasoning to draw a picture of a competitive China that aims to challenge the status quo of global higher education with its own distinctive characteristics. The Japanese discourse, on the other hand, more commonly rationalizes its decisions by describing the causes and effects and being direct about the challenges the country is facing. Sustainable economic development is not generally mentioned in the policies, although is contemplated indirectly in discussions over controversies facing the two countries. This study argues that uncovering the legitimation strategies within policy is critical in understanding how knowledge is conveyed by the Asian governments, especially in a time when the prominence of the East is only intensifying in global higher education.

Keywords: pedagogic device, Basil Bernstein, recontextualization, legitimation, critical discourse analysis, macro, sustainable economic development, Japan, China
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List of Abbreviations

CCP Communist Party of China
CDA Critical Discourse Analysis
DA Discourse Analysis
GDP Gross Domestic Product
GDPR EU General Data Protection Regulation
HE Higher Education
HEI Higher Education Institution
ICE International and Comparative Education
MEXT Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
MOC Ministry of Commerce
MOE Ministry of Education
ORF Official Recontextualizing Field
PHD Doctor of Philosophy
PRF Pedagogic Recontextualizing Field

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Chapter 1
Background

I begin this Master’s thesis with a brief look into the current discussions and topics in Chinese and Japanese higher education. If you have ever visited Beijing or Tokyo, you probably know that a paper guidebook published over a year ago can be deemed useless. The layout of the two cities – and countries for that matter - is always changing and developing. Now, add education to the whirlwind. Keeping up with the Asian superpowers is tedious. Yet, I attempt to shed light on some of the more pressing matters impacting the countries today. In addition, I discuss the continuous allure with associating higher education to the economy.

1.1. Public Discourse

Despite other parts of the world experiencing “growing tides of anti-globalism” in recent years, China has only pushed for greater opening up and cooperation, as well as further expansion of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Mok, 2018, p. 583). President Xi Jinping initially introduced the idea of reviving the old “Silk Road” that connects China with the rest of Asia, Africa and Europe in 2013 (Li, 2018; South China Morning Post, 2019). The Belt and Road Initiative will allow trade and international collaboration to thrive once again (South China Morning Post, 2019). Interestingly, two big economies, Japan and the United States, have decided not to join the alliance (ibid). Li (2018) notes that concerns over China’s intentions echo all around the globe. Is the Asian superpower using it as headway to gain further economic influence and exercise soft power? (Li, 2018, p. 14) Higher education (HE), especially in Central Asia, has been greatly affected by the Initiative (ibid.). “Higher education has been an approach of China’s cultural diplomacy to win hearts and minds around the world” (Li, 2018, p.
Proceeding to spring 2019, the continuing trade war between China and the United States is alleged to impact global higher education negatively (Altbach, 2019). “Not only does China have the world’s largest enrolments, it is also by far the biggest exporter of students, with more than 600,000 studying abroad in 2017” (Altbach, 2019). With current adverse tensions, the Chinese government may choose to curtail and discourage Chinese students from studying abroad, and more specifically in the US, by appointing certain “instructions” or policies (ibid.). Some effects are already being witnessed as Chinese students have drifted from certain parts of the US and the rate of doctoral student enrolments has diminished (Altbach, 2019). The United States may have lost up to an estimated US$125 million from the decline of Chinese students in 2017 alone (Dennis, 2019).

Concerns do not end there, however. Within China, “ideology has reclaimed a more central place in academic life…” (Altbach, 2019). In light of the increased constraints on access to information and tightening of governmental supervision, a number of Chinese students may eventually begin to perceive overseas studies as less beneficial, while others may grow tired of the austerity and depart the country (Altbach, 2019). Dennis (2019) adds that with the slowing of the economy, Chinese families may begin to struggle to send their children abroad.

In April 2019, Japan closed a chapter by stating the end of the Heisei Era and further commencing the Reiwa Era by welcoming new Emperor Naruhito (McCurry, 2019). According to the newspaper The Guardian, China’s president Xi Jinping was one to congratulate the new Japanese emperor (McCurry, 2019). The Chinese leader asserted that the two countries have a long past of friendly correspondence and proposed they work together to advance amicable development and to strengthen ties (ibid.). But what will the new era mean for Japanese higher education? Although it is not specifically mentioned (yet), several reforms may indirectly affect the system. The Japan Times explains that during the Era of Reiwa, which means “beautiful harmony”, the
government aims to increase the representation of women in senior roles, especially in government and private sector jobs (Miller, 2019). As a matter of fact, Japan was just recently amidst a gender injustice scandal, as a government-led investigation revealed that the Tokyo Medical University and other medical institutions, had knowingly manipulated student admissions by being partial to male applicants (Kakuchi, 2019). In addition, the economy will need revamping due to the aging of the population (Miller, 2019). Currently, a third of the nation is 60 years or older (ibid.). Although from a global ranking position, Japan has managed to maintain its reputable economic stance, the Island Kingdom will soon need to bring in more foreign workers to diversify and balance out its labor force (Miller, 2019).

In correspondence to collaboration with the United States, Japanese universities are soon going to introduce stricter surveillance to prevent the leaking of leading technology to other countries, such as China (The Yomiuri Shimbun, 2019). Hence, new shields against the trickling of information, especially in the fields of “artificial intelligence (AI), robotics and biotechnology” will be instituted (ibid).

The above highlights have barely scratched the surface of the present-day accounts of Chinese and Japanese higher education. Yet, I will argue that the public discourse has given us meaningful insights into the current (and historical) power structures in the Asian countries, as well as the role higher education institutions play in operating them. Following, I will contemplate how higher education has enduringly been linked to the economy and how it has become a form of device for governments to advance their economic agenda.
1.2. “It’s the Economy…”

Countries are positioned at different levels of development and therefore, require contrasting approaches to promote economic growth (Joshua, 2016; Siddharthan & Narayanan, 2013). American economist Theodore Schultz (1960) proposed a ‘one size fits all’ solution to boost the economy by introducing the human capital theory, also known as HCT. Schultz (1960, p. 571) designates the name “human capital” to indicate the benefits an individual reaps from education. The acquired knowledge, so to say, develops into the individual – it cannot be taken away from him or her (ibid.). Hence, HCT has been used to understand the link between one's educational attainment and economic prosperity (Coppin, 1993, 2017; Tan, 2014). The theory has been prominently used in economics since the 1960s (Marginson, 2019). Yet, we must ask ourselves what type of knowledge is then considered useful for the economy and how do governments bestow it upon their nations?

Although the HCT has been widely used across disciplines, it also faces harsh criticism (Tan, 2014). Schultz (1960, p. 572) does not shy away from the drawbacks of the theory. He notes that ethical questions should always be at the forefront when examining humans (ibid.). The role of education can be easily exploited for economic purposes and individuals merely seen as pawns in the game of economic administration (Schultz, 1960, p. 572). Consequently, the theory has been critiqued for rendering education as the solution for all social issues, as well as being a means for ministries to attain more funding (Tan, 2014). Nonetheless, the intrigue with human capital has increased as states become more captivated with knowledge-based economies and global competitiveness (Jamshidi, Arasteh, NavehEbrahim, Zeinabadi, & Rasmussen, 2012; Mok, 2016; Singh, 2002). Governments now consider knowledge as the biggest agent for promoting economic development and diminishing social inequalities (Sokol, 2005). On the other hand, Singh (2002, p. 8) argues that the gap between the “knowledge rich and poor” is now only being heightened. In developing countries, knowledge is considered the gateway to making the shift from agriculture-oriented to service-driven economy (Siddharthan & Narayanan, 2013, p. 2). Human capital is not
only crucial for the work rate of the society, but also for promoting sustainable quality of life (Coppin, 2017, p. 11). Generally, low-income countries with a higher number of “informal workers” may adhere to focus on specific educational goals through scholarly programs and vocational training (Siddharthan & Narayanan, 2013, p. 2). Conversely, middle-income states, with a desire to grow in financial worth, tend to fixate on tertiary education and the promotion of innovation (ibid.).

Joshua (2016) remarks that China has been the exception. The communist state has invested heavily in tertiary education. While other emerging markets have worked to strengthen their elementary and secondary education, China’s focus has been on higher education and its correlation with economic growth. For now, the monetary benefits have mostly been reaped in the bigger metropolises. Yet, with increasing investment in infrastructure and building of higher education institutions, China is hoping to see more widespread effects. For example, the remarkable increase in total factor productivity in China can be relayed back to the advancements in technology since the economic reforms began in 1978 (Joshua, 2016, pp. 51–53).

Siddharthan and Narayanan (2013) take a stance on development strategies in the Asian context. They note that Asian economies have a great advantage due to their larger population sizes (Siddharthan & Narayanan, 2013, p. 1). Nations are able to push for substantial economic growth by investing in human capital. This leads to having a bigger workforce that, further, stimulates the economy (Siddharthan & Narayanan, 2013, p. 1). Sokol (2005, p. 227) argues that the pursuit of the knowledge-economy is an “institutionalized process”, which involves tensions between “knowledge, wealth and power”. As we will come to see later, the English sociologist Basil Bernstein (1996, 2000, 2004) was one to question how this knowledge is constructed and conveyed in the installation of education.

Globalization has led Asian governments to direct their attention towards higher education more than ever before (Mok, 2016). China began the massification of HE in the end of the 1990s in hopes to increase access to education and promote economic
growth (Mok & Wu, 2016). Although this initially led to bigger investments in schooling, it also heightened graduate unemployment levels, which, in turn, led to the slowing down of the labor market (ibid.). In addition, China - and Japan for that matter - has struggled with quality issues during the speedy expansion of higher education institutions (Mok, 2015). China has experimented with several reforms of higher education since. Li (2017, p. 134) argues the motives for these reforms can be categorized into three groups: “the modernization theory, human capital theory, and a postcolonial catch-up mentality”. We can see strong intents to link education to the economy. Globalization has also induced previously closed Asian countries to open up. China and Japan have both taken initiative to internationalize their higher education systems (Huang, 2007; F. Li, 2016; Rose & McKinley, 2018; Song, 2017). Internationalization takes many shapes, as states promptly work to meet the needs of global markets (Hellstén, 2010, p. 1). In China and Japan, it includes advancements, such as the pursuit of elite universities, promotion of exchange programs and innovation, as well as increment in foreign language instruction (Ota, 2018; Song, 2017). However, Japan’s internationalization initiatives have seemingly taken a hit due to the country’s “inward-looking youth” (Burgess, 2015). The younger Japanese generation does not consider studying or working abroad as attractive (ibid.).

Christopher D. Hammond, current researcher at Oxford University, has extensively compared China and Japan’s higher education systems. Hammond (2016, p. 556), explains that, despite the rocky relationship between the two countries, China and Japan share several similarities in regards to higher education. Although Japan has a larger number of private higher education institutions than China, both countries’ higher education systems are seen as highly privatized, as their funding depends principally on students and families (Hammond, 2016, p. 556). Privatization has allowed governments to provide more opportunities for their citizens to enter higher education, as public institutions are not able to meet the increasing demand (Jamshidi et al., 2012, p. 790). In this case, institutions are established and run by the private sector (ibid.). However, the Chinese government has never fully endorsed privatization of higher education, as it ultimately clashes with its socialist drive (Li, 2016, p. 49). In China and Japan, the State is heavily involved in the governing of higher education (Hammond, 2016, p. 556). Not
to mention, the role of education has always been considered an important medium for national development in both countries (ibid.).

In the era of globalization, Japan and China are no exceptions to addressing social and economic issues through the means of education. Basil Bernstein (1996, 2000) argued that the system of education is a transmitter of not only knowledge, but also ideologies and values. Thereupon, policy-makers can intentionally or unintentionally affect the discourse that is passed down to institutions. We must also acknowledge the normative tendencies of policies (Milani & Winton, 2017; Welch, 2015b). Especially in recent years, governments have begun to execute more evidence-based policies, which consist of absolute principles with very little rationalization (Welch, 2015b). Today, information is abundantly available, however policy-makers choose to refer to stats, economic rationale and policy assessment to legitimate their decisions (Welch, 2015b, p. 65). Education policy is considered to be objective and impartial, yet it favors certain types of knowledge over others (Welch, 2015b, p. 66). Welch (2015b, p. 68) argues that giving a mandate without providing its origin “is simply illegitimate”. Instead, policies should emphasize context and offer a comprehensive account of knowledge (Welch, 2015b, p. 69).

Bernstein’s (1971, 1975, 1996, 2004) theory of pedagogic device treads the path to begin uncovering what kind of knowledge is transmitted in the Chinese and Japanese higher education policies. Bernstein (2000, p. xxv) argues that understanding the proprietors of symbolic control and their doings has become all the more crucial in this day and age. “To know whose voice is speaking is the beginning of one’s voice” (Bernstein, 2000, p. xxv). Therefore, scrutinizing educational policy discourse becomes all the more relevant. Policies are, after all, seen as the vital principle and driving force of scholarly development in any social circumstance (J. Li, 2017).
Chapter 2
Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the purpose and aim of the Master’s thesis. I present the research questions and key concepts. In addition, I contemplate the delimitations and limitations of the study.

2.1. Statement of the Problem

We are living in the ‘golden age’ of globalization. While governments aim to gain and maintain economic and political leverage in the world, an individual influences millions with the click of a mouse. The aim is no longer to keep up with global trends, but to also set them. The perception of power is constantly being transformed. From the perspective of nation building and development, the significance of education has become quite evident (Green, 2013; Marginson, 2018). An educated nation is healthier, more egalitarian and capable of reinventing itself.

Today, Asian countries are investing in higher education more than ever (Hazelkorn, 2015, p. 196). Higher education institutions (HEIs) are considered to be key agents of the knowledge economy, which consequently affects their policies (Altbach, 2008; Altbach & Knight, 2007; de Boer et al., 2016; Hammond, 2016). “Historically, universities have enjoyed a ruling social tradition made possible by its intellectual power, economic security, and a fine measure of collective good-will” (Hellstén, 2010). HEIs have a symbolic role in the constitution of society – they affect stakeholders from macro to micro level. Education has been rendered a powerful device to not only imbue economic schemes, but also politically influence citizens (Hammond, 2016; Parelius & Parelius, 1987).
The field of sociology of education investigates these social orders and power domains (Parelius & Parelius, 1987; Whitty & Power, 2002). Sociologists have become progressively more interested in different aspects of policy, especially from a comparative cross-cultural perspective (Parelius & Parelius, 1987, p. 16). Basil Bernstein’s (1975, 1996, 2000) work has contributed largely to examining the issue. Studies have drawn on Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic device to examine policy reform and the role education plays in transmitting knowledge from macro to micro level (for example, Ashwin, Abbas, & McLean, 2015; Shay, 2015; Singh, Thomas, & Harris, 2013). Inspecting what is being communicated through education is just as important as how it is being done, as the educational discourse is “recontextualized” during the process (Fairclough, 2003; Parelius & Parelius, 1987). Parelius and Parelius (1987, p. 42) caution that the objectives and principles of the policymakers can ultimately clash:

...Using educational institutions to preserve cultural traditions may conflict with using them to promote economic development. Using education to promote socioeconomic equality may conflict with using them to maximize talent and develop a technologically sophisticated workforce. Using education to promote ideological purity may conflict with promoting science and creativity. (Parelius & Parelius, 1987, p. 42)

China and Japan face their own controversies as they simultaneously attempt to internationalize higher education and cultivate nationalistic prerequisites of an obedient and perfunctory nation (Hammond, 2016). Yet, the human capital theory and pursuit of the knowledge economy preserve the idea that higher education remains the ideal device to further political and economic objectives (Hammond, 2016). But, what measures will the states take to endorse them? Cortese (2003, p. 15) makes a case for a sustainable future. He asserts that work capacity and technology will not be the main elicitors of economic growth in the future (ibid.). Rather, a greater risk would be to ignore natural and social capital (Cortese, 2003, p. 15). Sustainable development not only considers the environment, but also addresses social issues (ibid.). Higher education will play a key role in shaping the world of tomorrow (Cortese, 2003).
In 2015, the United Nations came out with the 17 “Sustainable Development Goals”, or SDGs, to be reached by 2030 (UN DESA, 2018). The goals comprise of different development areas to globally progress sustainability in. Although the 4th SDG “Quality Education” specifically targets education, the necessity of schooling echoes throughout all the SDGs. Our focus is set on the 8th SDG “Decent work and economic growth”, which specifically captures global economies’ mission. After a quick glance at the targets and indicators of SDG8, one can easily depict areas that education, and more specifically higher education, plays a part in. Targets, such as the promotion of technology and innovation, entrepreneurship, the vanquishing of inequalities and stimulation of youth employment, urge countries to also revise their educational aims and policies (UN DESA, 2018). Furthermore, the United Nations (2016) remark that: “sustained and inclusive economic growth is necessary for achieving sustainable development”.

Higher education institutions’ tasks run on both a national and international level (Hammond, 2016). They conduce to governmental policies and funding, all the while partaking in global competition (ibid.). In Asia, the government plays a key role in supporting higher education (Mok, 2015, p. 2). However, little research has been done on how the Asian governments maintain legitimacy in the construct of education. Uncovering these legitimation strategies can begin to explain the “ideological and institutional forces” that exist within a society (Welch, 1991, p. 513). Welch (2015b, p. 70) explains that the process of creating education policy is greatly influenced by “social and political agendas”. What is more, the current trend has been to select the most effective and economically endorsed approach, while overlooking ethical fundamentals (ibid.). Advocating something as the ‘public good’ may in fact be a way to authorize economic schemes (Welch, 2015b, p. 70). It is crucial to start questioning the knowledge that is legitimized in education policies, for it has been conducted to specific motifs (Welch, 2015b, p. 70).

So, if we were to examine the Chinese and Japanese higher education policies, what would we find? I will argue that they will give us insight into the policies’ authors –
what aspects they see as relevant and crucial to emphasize. We also get an understanding of the overall culture, values and future aims of the country. It may even be appropriate to say that the whole of society is reflected through policy.

2.2. Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to uncover how macro-level stakeholders in the institutional system of education transmit norms, values and knowledge through the act of legitimation in the Chinese and Japanese higher education policy discourses. More specifically, the thesis has three objectives. Firstly, it intends to critically analyze policy discourses concerning economy-related issues to distinguish what kind of legitimation strategies have been constructed within them. The analysis of policy documents is guided by Norman Fairclough’s (1992, 2003; 1989) model of Critical Discourse Analysis, as well as Theo Van Leeuwen’s (2007) linguistic groundwork on legitimation strategies. Secondly, the study attempts to discover whether the policy documents show concern for sustainability in economic development. In addition to scrutinizing the discourse from a linguistic perspective, I also consider the content of the texts. As we will come to see later, sociological and critical research demands a constant oscillation between data material and background. The subject matter of sustainable economic development is embedded in the findings. Lastly, the thesis intends to compare the findings of the two countries. The results are contrasted with the use of conceptual mapping to visualize similarities and differences in the policy discourses.
2.3. Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How does the Chinese higher education policy discourse on economy-related issues construct legitimation?
2. How does the Japanese higher education policy discourse on economy-related issues construct legitimation?
3. How does the use of legitimation strategies differ between the selected Chinese and Japanese policy discourses?

In addition, the study examined the content of the policy documents to answer the following question:

4. Is there consideration for sustainable economic development in the policy discourses of China and Japan? If yes, how?

2.4. Delimitations and Limitations

Some delimitations had to be made in order for the study to remain within the targeted topic and be of appropriate size for a Master’s thesis. Firstly, I addressed some practical issues. This study examined the cases of China and Japan. In the case of China, the focus was limited to Mainland China. Secondly, I examined policy documents concerned with solely higher education. As we came to find out, the two countries’ higher education systems differ in many ways. Therefore, policies have also been executed differently. The aim, however, was not to find identical policies from each
country to compare. Since the study focused more heavily on the linguistic aspect of policy (constructing legitimation), rather than content, it was more crucial to be able to identify the semantic patterns that arose from the policy discourses. As Janks (1997) explains, critical discourse analysis progresses with one text a time. When all data has been deducted from one text, we can move on to the next one. Therefore, the total number and length of policies became a less critical matter.

The conceptual framework and research questions assisted in making delimitations in the data collection and analysis phases. The selection criterion of the policy documents is discussed further in ‘Chapter 5’.

In addition, this study faced four main limitations:

1. Language. I, the researcher of the study, had limited language capability, as I am not knowledgeable in either Mandarin or Japanese. This affected the results to an extent, as the study was reliant on English translations of the documents. However, I can argue that choosing to focus on the translated policy documents can also be seen as a research interest. How are the Chinese and Japanese policy discourses portrayed to the rest of the world.

2. Outsider looking in. As a non-native researcher, I had to be aware of my own assumptions, beliefs and attitudes that I may have conveyed in my study. Yang (2018) critically develops on the matter. Western researchers examining East Asian higher education will not be able to fully rid themselves of their Western lens (Yang, 2018, p. 40). Yang (2018, p. 40) questions whether outsiders are able to comprehend the research subjects, as they have not been immersed in the same cultural values. Instead, he suggests that researchers contemplate their own multiple identities that may affect the different stages of the study (ibid.). In addition, Marshall (2014, p. 61) cautions against the loose use of the term “culture” to generalize differences between countries. Adopting an ethnocentric perspective can cause the researcher to compare the cases of other countries to her own personal standards (ibid.). In this study, the findings were
contrasted with the historical, cultural and political backgrounds of the two respective countries, as well as previous literature on the matter to help diminish this narrow way of thinking.

3. Bias – This study undertook an interpretive and critical inspection of text. Fairclough (2003, p. 14) notes that discourse analysis will never be objective. Although Fairclough (2003) argues that this is not an issue, Van Dijk (1993) advises researchers to clearly articulate their own points of view and objectives for the study, which in turn, will increase reliability. Therefore, I acknowledge my female, European, university student identity that affects this study. I have aimed to be as transparent as possible in my process of thinking and going about my study. I have also referred to the triangulation method for critical discourse analysis recommended by Wodak and Meyer (2001), which I will discuss further in ‘Criteria of Trustworthiness’.

4. Little previous research on the matter - I introduced Basil Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic device to the Asian context. This added a new challenge, as the concept has, for now, mostly prevailed in studies looking at Western cases (Lim, 2017, p. 355). Admittedly, Bernstein’s theory was conceived in the British and Western European context (Wong & Apple, 2002, p. 184). However, I would have to agree with Wong and Apple (2002, p. 184) in stating that if Bernstein’s theory is applied properly, it can serve as a useful tool to investigate educational cases. By being explicit about the socio-historical context, I was able to build a stronger case that suited the specific conditions of the study.

2.5. Key Concepts

The key concepts with which this study engages are: higher education, sustainable economic development, policy and legitimation. I will now introduce and define these
four concepts. I will also elaborate on how and why these terms have played a key role in the study.

**Higher Education**

*Higher education* (HE), or tertiary education, refers to the schooling and training one can attain after high school, which generally consists of “universities, colleges, polytechnics etc.” (Collins English Dictionary, 2012). This study is specifically interested in higher education’s role in the Chinese and Japanese societies. We must note that HE systems are constructed differently depending on the country. I will go into more detail on how the higher education systems differ in China and Japan in ‘Chapter 4’.

**Sustainable Economic Development**

It is important to note that economic growth and economic development are not synonymous (Barbier, 1987, p. 101; Thirlwall, 2014, p. 26). The distinction between the two terms is critical for our study. Economic growth is concerned with the growth per capita income and although essential for development, does not provide a comprehensive mapping of the allocation of profit (Barbier, 1987; Thirlwall, 2014). Economic development, on the other hand, deals with the “increase in society’s welfare…which embraces not only economic variables and objectives, but also social objectives and values for which societies strive” (Thirlwall, 2014, p. 26). Moreover, Barbier (1987, p. 102) notes that development will not be significant, unless there is also consideration of the environment and tenable use of supplies. Hence, *sustainable economic development* recognizes the need to preserve the ecosystem, as well as address social disparities. As we noted earlier, the UN’s 8th Sustainable Development Goal, “Decent work and economic growth”, gives countries specific instructions to follow as they work towards having more sustainable economies (UN DESA, 2018).
Policy

Ball (1993) advocates the importance of defining the concept of policy, as it determines how research is then conducted and how one makes sense of the findings. He goes on to explain that the dichotomy between “policy as text and policy as discourse” is significant (1993, p. 10). This study attested to the latter version of policy as discourse. I have applied Prunty’s (1985) definition of policy. He suggests it is an agenda that transmits values and belief systems (Prunty, 1985, p. 136). As for critically analyzing policy, we must consider the dominant roles and values that are being depicted within it (Prunty, 1985). On a more practical level, however, policy is considered a systematic plan, with its calculated aims and application (Milani & Winton, 2017).

Legitimation

Dutch linguistics scholar, Van Leuuwen (2007, p. 93), explains that legitimation answers the question “Why – Why should we do this?” and “Why should we do it in this way?” Hence, legitimation is uncovered by examining the semantics of discourse (Norman Fairclough, 2003, p. 97). It presents the reasoning and arguments for maintaining the essential features of an institutional construct (ibid.). In this study, we appoint legitimation to policy discourse and attempt to uncover the different ways it is constructed. I will go into more detail on the different strategies of legitimation in ‘Chapter 3’.

2.6. Structure of the Thesis

This Master’s thesis is comprised of seven chapters: Background, Introduction, Theoretical Framework, Contextual Framework, Methodology, Findings and Conclusion. I will note that I have not included a separate “discussions” chapter, as it has been embedded into the sixth chapter ‘Findings’. 
Chapter One. We began the thesis with ‘Background’ to get an understanding of the current state of affairs in Asian higher education, as well as review some of the concepts and research that touch on the education-economy link. I introduce and question the popular ‘human capital theory’, which has situated education as the main driver for national development.

Chapter Two. In ‘Introduction’, I state the problem we attempt to address and delve into the more specific aim and objectives of the study. I also introduce the four research questions and four key concepts that prompt the study. Lastly, I contemplate necessary limitations and delimitations.

Chapter Three. The ‘Theoretical Framework’ places the study into the field of sociology of education and introduces English sociologist Basil Bernstein and his concept of “pedagogic device”. I also examine Bernstein’s perception on the “recontextualization field”, which refers to the formulation of educational discourse on a macro level. I then turn to a more critical viewpoint by examining the events that have led Norman Fairclough to create his model of Critical Discourse Analysis. Lastly, I expand on Theo Van Leeuwen’s groundwork on legitimation strategies and provide a brief look at the varied ways legitimation can be constructed in discourse.

Chapter Four. The ‘Contextual Framework’ brings us back to examining our two countries: China and Japan. I delve into the historical backgrounds and structures of the two higher education systems and raise some of the fundamental events that have shaped both countries’ higher education systems to how they are today.

Chapter Five. In ‘Methodology’, I firstly elaborate on how the field of “International and Comparative Education” has evolved through the years and how this particular study can contribute to its research. I then expand on what kind of research strategy and design the study has assumes, as well as which research methods have been used to
uncover the findings. I introduce the selected data material, which consists of eight policy documents and elaborate on how they have been analyzed. Lastly, I contemplate how the study has ensured trustworthiness and ethical standards.

Chapter Six. In ‘Findings’, I introduce the results of the analysis in a narrative style. The analysis follows a chronological order and provides further contextual evidence and excerpts from the texts to examine the policies’ legitimation strategies and relevance to the study’s theoretical framework. I also contemplate whether the policies consider sustainable economic development. Finally, I discuss how the limitations affected the findings, how Basil Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic device contributed to the study and open the floor to future research on the topic.

Chapter Seven. The ‘Conclusion’ wraps up this Master’s thesis. I compile all that has been achieved in the study.
Chapter 3
Theoretical Framework

So far, we have identified the topic, key concepts and aim of the study. This chapter will introduce and situate Basil Bernstein’s concept of pedagogic device and the critical theory into the context of China and Japan. We will also examine how the construction of legitimation can be uncovered through a critical analysis of policy texts. Furthermore, this section argues the need to investigate the discourse and normative standards in higher education policy set forth by the Asian governments.

3.1. Sociology of Education

This study is rooted in the sociology of education and adopts Basil Bernstein’s (1971, 1975, 2000) perspective on the changeover of knowledge between the macro and micro level in the institutional forms of education. Bernstein (1971) also argues for the need to integrate the study of language to identify how discourse impacts this process. In doing so, sociologists can begin to uncover how culture is conveyed in education (Bernstein, 1971, p. 121). Furthermore, it uncovers how individuals’ thinking and surrounding world is altered (ibid.). Bernstein (1971, p. 121) remarks: “the fact of the matter is that the real world is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group…”

Although having endorsed the role of linguistics, Bernstein is more commonly associated to and recognized in the field of sociology of education (Sadovnik, 2011, p. 11). This particular field is concerned with the relationship between schools and individuals of society (Sadovnik, 2011, p. xiii). More specifically, it examines how educational proceedings impact “the way people think, live and work, their place in society, and their chances for success or failure” (Sadovnik, 2011, p. xiii). It scrutinizes
and questions education’s role and capability in addressing social inequalities and exigencies in the society (ibid.). The sociology of education stems from the “classical sociology of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Émile Durkheim” and is strongly committed to empiricism (Sadovnik, 2016, p. xiv, 3). The French sociologist, Émile Durkheim, has been deemed the main establisher of the field (Dworkin et al., 2013, p. 2). Durkheim provided the conceptual framework for examining education as a system that passes down and consolidates society’s ideas and values from one era to the next (ibid.). In his lecture “Education and Symbolic Power”, Bernstein (2004) greatly associates his thinking to Durkheim. For instance, he develops on Durkheim’s example on the Christian approach to transmitting religious views in the medieval university setting (Bernstein, 2004, p. 140). The operators that exercised symbolic power “made instructional discourse about the abstract phenomenal world subordinate to regulative discourse” (Bernstein, 2004, p. 143). Hence, the religion was conveyed and a new sense of apprehension towards God was established (ibid.).

Current professor at the University of Sydney, Anthony Welch, has discussed the developments of sociology in comparative education. Welch (1991) explains that comparative education has always had an interest in the shifting accounts of knowledge in the institutional construct of education (Welch, 1991, p. 508). Although having previously adhered to a more positivistic approach, the field took a critical turn in the 1970s (ibid.). Evidently, globalization provoked new concerns in education, such as the rise of market-driven competition between countries (Dworkin et al., 2013, p. 10). Hence, a “new” sociology of education was restored (Welch, 1991). Although curriculum had always been a prominent topic in comparative education, its study gradually veered from being content-based to now also examining the ways it conveys knowledge (Welch, 1991, p. 509). Moreover, uncovering the link between knowledge and power became more prevalent (Welch, 1991, pp. 514–515). Comparativists began to question the influential power of authoritative groups in educational institutions (ibid.). “A number of scholars explored the theoretical and empirical possibilities offered by the legitimation of educational knowledge, in relation to comparative educational research” (Welch, 1991, p. 515). Knowledge was now seen as an outcome of culture (ibid.).
Consequently, research began to focus on cultural context and its effects on the institutional and ideological schemes of education (Welch, 1991, p. 515)

3.2. Basil Bernstein’s Pedagogic Device

This study follows Basil Bernstein’s contended disposition on how the macro level affects “the way in which people understand systems of meaning” (Sadovnik, 2016, pp. 9–10). Bernstein’s work has, at times, been critiqued for being intractable and challenging, but has nonetheless played a significant role in understanding how power relations play out in education (Sadovnik, 2011, p. 11).

Moore (2013a, p. 190) explains that Bernstein was not particularly interested in discussing epistemology - I noticed a similar pattern in his work. Bernstein believed that instead of struggling with explaining “what is the world”, we should be more focused on actively developing “news in the world” (Moore, 2013a, p. 190). Yet, we can depict that Bernstein’s work strongly identifies with the ontology of social realism, as he believed that a world does, in fact, exist outside of discourse (Maton & Moore, 2010; Moore, 2013a). “Social realism puts knowledge as an object centre-stage in thinking about education” (Maton & Moore, 2010, p. 2). It allows us to further investigate how knowledge is built and characterized, as well as how it impacts policies and social processes (ibid). Ontological realism “contends that objects have an independent existence and are not dependent for it on the knower” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018a, p. 5). Social realism, therefore, sees that knowledge is created outside of the individual experience (Moore, 2013b, p. 343).

Epistemologically, relativism assumes knowledge is “humanly” created and emulates the setting it has been created in (Moore, 2013b, p. 344). Bernstein saw that “knowledge-producing symbolic systems, as social kinds, have forms and generative
properties displayed in a range of historically created modalities” (Moore, 2013b, p. 344). Therefore, knowledge is not only created historically and socially, but also in independent representative manners, which have their own philosophies and means that are not connected to personal experience (ibid). Young (2008) explains that the old tradition of sociology overlooked the importance of examining what kind of knowledge students obtained at school. Moreover, no distinction was made between the types of knowledge acquired in and out of school (Young, 2008). However, sociologists, including Bernstein, slowly turned to looking at curriculum to assess how “scholarly” knowledge is constructed (Bernstein, 1971; Young, 2008).

Basil Bernstein introduces the notion of pedagogic device:

> …Pedagogic communication is often viewed as a carrier, a relay for ideological messages and for external power relations, or, in contrast, as an apparently neutral carrier or relay of skills of various kinds. (Bernstein, 2000, p. 25)

Simply put, *pedagogic device* can be understood as a tool that conveys knowledge. Bernstein originally became interested - and worried - about the ethical structure of institutions being the conveyers of “meaning, value and instrumentality” (Atkinson, 1985, p. 22). Bernstein (1975) believed curriculum to be a body of text that contains all relevant knowledge. This suggests that the content of curriculum is formulated through a set of decisions (Shay, 2015; Singh et al., 2013). Bernstein’s model of pedagogic device can be used to highlight the discourse that shapes curriculum reform (Shay, 2015, p. 433). He introduces three directives that navigate the pedagogic device. Bernstein (2000, p. 28) calls these “the distributive, recontextualizing and evaluative rules”. The *distributive* rule manages the relationship between control, social groups, knowledge and its application, “and thus constituting different orientations to meaning or pedagogic identities” (Singh, 2002, p. 2). The *recontextualization* precedent determines how pedagogic discourse is reformulated and composed (Bernstein, 2000, p. 28). Lastly, the *evaluative* rule refers to the practical proceedings in education, for example in schools (ibid.). These stages are strongly linked and follow the present order (Bernstein, 2000, p. 28).
Bernstein classified the pedagogic device into three fields: “the field of production, recontextualization and reproduction” (Singh, 2002, p. 3). Singh (2002, p. 3) notes that the production of knowledge is mainly constituted in HEIs and independent research associations. The recontextualization of knowledge takes place in “state departments of education and training, curriculum authorities, specialist education journals, and teacher education institutions” (Singh, 2002, p. 3). Lastly, the reproduction of knowledge occurs, for the most part, in the different institutions of education (ibid.).

3.2.1. Field of Recontextualization

The concept of pedagogic device has been utilized in policy and curriculum research to examine how states and governments transmit knowledge through discourse in different national contexts (for example, Lim, 2017; Loughland & Sriprakash, 2016; Mathou, 2018; Shay, 2015; C. Tan, 2010). Similarly to these studies, I have chosen to focus on the “recontextualization” stage, as this is where curriculum and policy is constructed (Lim, 2017; Loughland & Sriprakash, 2016; Mathou, 2018; Shay, 2015; C. Tan, 2010). In this specific arena, there are ramifications on what knowledge is applicable, who will be in charge of applying it and how it is constructed (Singh, 2002, p. 4). Lim (Shay, 2015, p. 433) explains that “…[Bernstein] worked to develop a language that would be able to account for macro-relations of dominance in terms of micro-levels of acquisition, resistance, and disruption”. Lim (2017, p. 354) asserts that the State is continuously reshaping and conforming to new objectives. Thus, policy is always being regenerated (Ball, 1993, p. 11).
3.2.2. The Actors Behind Policy

Bernstein (2000, p. 33) explains that the recontextualization phase can be divided into two phases: the “official recontextualizing field (ORF)” and the “pedagogic recontextualizing field (PRF)”. Whereas the ORF is constructed and led by the state and its operators, the PRF constitutes of actors in schools and institutions, as well as the private sector (ibid.). When pedagogic fundamentals are transferred from the former domain to the practical academic one, the shift permits a space for adjustment – sometimes even agitation (Singh et al., 2013, p. 8). The recontextualization field is responsible for creating the pedagogic discourse, which is allocated, redirected and referred from other discourses to form its own structure and regulations (Singh, 2002, p. 5).

Bernstein concurs that if PRF has sufficient autonomy and influential power, it is able to affect and challenge the discourse (Singh et al., 2013, p. 8). However, throughout the years states have progressively worked to diminish this autonomy (Bernstein, 2000, p. 33). For example, regionalization of higher education has resulted in regions and institutions receiving more power, while individuals’ voices have become weaker (Bernstein, 2000, p. 66). This is why Bernstein (2000, p. 66) urges policy-makers to focus on individuals’ needs and to fight the requisite to conform to outer influences. Nonetheless, the flux in globalization has intensified the remodeling of curriculums, which often seek to satisfy economic and conventional demands (Bernstein, 2000, p. 33).

Bernstein (1996, p. 74) claims that no official recontextualizing field (ORF) exists in the case of higher education. He evolves on the matter by stating that HEIs tend to contend against each other, with each school being separately in charge of recontextualization and administration (ibid.). Yet, some external factors do affect the process, such as “the Higher Education Funding Council Executive” and “Research Councils” (p. 74). Bernstein (1996, p. 74) points out that higher-ranking universities are able to operate effortlessly by virtue of already possessing top scholars, whereas lower-ranking
institutions, that want to climb the reputation ladder, are more predisposed to pressures of the market. While supervision over curriculum has become more centralized, HEIs are receiving more authority over managerial and financial matters (Bernstein, 1996, p. 76).

This study investigated policies created by the Chinese and Japanese government. Thus, the State was seen as the Official Recontextualizing Field. Policy was considered the initial precept that was then transmitted and implemented by higher education institutions. Policy is affected by different interpretations from assembly phase to execution (Bernstein, 1996, p. 74). As Ball (1993, p. 11) notes: “…policies are textual interventions into practice”, and so we cannot predict the way they will be received or assumed.

3.3. The Art of Critique

The Frankfurt School - a body of academics at the University of Frankfurt - began to notice “the changing nature of capitalism and its relation to Marxist theories of economic determinism” at the start of the 20th century (Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui, & Joseph, 2005, p. 367). The group developed on the issue further – gradually breaking away from the Marxist approach – by upholding the perspective that the world faces constraints and inequality (ibid.). The School took up a more critical approach by investigating whether language exists on the basis of the economy or in turn, in a cultural construct (Rogers et al., 2005, p. 368). In other words, do earthly forces impact language, or does it impact them? Hence, critical theory looks to find the dominant components of power (ibid.). It is important to note that power can take many shapes: “ideological, physical, linguistic, material, psychological, cultural” (Rogers et al., 2005, p. 368). Critical linguistics scholar Teun van Dijk (2009, p. 71) argues that “discourse plays a pivotal role in the exercise of power”. Discourse can work to influence dominated groups through the means of, for example, regulations, restrictions
and rhetoric (van Dijk, 2009, p. 71). Not to mention, it can convey thinking and thus, work to alter others’ understanding (ibid.).

The French post-structural philosopher, Michel Foucault, has been one of the most prominent connoisseurs in the field of critical language study (Fairclough, 2003, p. 227). Foucault explains critique as the “art of not being governed or better, the art of not being governed like that” (2007 as cited in Herzog, 2016, p. 1). Therefore, critique allows for unrestricted evaluation that commonly takes on a “prescriptive” stance (Herzog, 2016, p. 2). Simply, it states how things should be. Social critique assesses based on general approved norms, all the while aiming to make a difference (Herzog, 2016; Teun A. van Dijk, 1993). Although having applauded Foucault for his critical stance on the link between power, knowledge and discourse, Bernstein (2004, p. 126) also called for some alterations. Bernstein (2004, p. 126) believed Foucault had missed the point of evaluating the social structures "through which power, knowledge, and discourse are brought into play as regulative devices". In addition, Foucault had seemingly failed to distinguish the common divisor that pertained in discourse, education and their distributive process (Bernstein, 2004, p. 126).

The English linguist, Norman Fairclough, evolved upon Michel Foucault’s work to establish his own perception of discourse “as social practice” shaped by the formalities of social institutions (Jones, 2013, p. 13). Fairclough became concerned with the connection between language and power and created a three-fold model to identify these influences within discourse (ibid.). I will introduce Fairclough’s framework for critical discourse analysis in ‘Methods’.

3.4. Constructing Legitimation

“Every system of authority attempts to establish and to cultivate the belief in its legitimacy” (Weber (1964) as cited Fairclough, 2003, pp. 87–88). The way a society
chooses, organizes, appropriates and passes on public educational knowledge indicates how power is partitioned and control exercised (Bernstein, 1975, p. 85). Legitimation is a way to validate “how things are and how things are done (Fairclough, 2003, p. 219). Fairclough (2003, p. 89) notes that discourse analysis is a useful tool to depict these different strategies.

As we delved into the topic of sustainable economic development within higher education policy discourse, we looked to understand how policy-makers have attempted to legitimize their statements and ideas. How have they portrayed the past, current and future state of higher education? How have they justified their initiatives? Have they appealed to moral reasoning to gain the confidence of the reader? Or rather, have they exercised pervasive authority without leaving much room for deliberation?

Fairclough (2003) and Van Leeuwen (2007) discuss four ways legitimation can be constructed in discourse: authorization, rationalization, moral evaluation and mythopoesis. I will now briefly introduce these four strategies and their sub-categories. Identifying these strategies was at the forefront of the analysis. Therefore, it was crucial to get a profound understanding of the distinctiveness of each one, as well as how to interpret legitimation in different types of discourses. I will also provide further elaboration and examples of the strategies in ‘Findings’.

3.4.1. Authorization

Authorization is constructed by indicating dominant influence through the means of “tradition, custom, law, and of persons in whom some kind of institutional authority is vested” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 98).
Van Leeuwen (2007) demonstrates six ways legitimation can be constructed through authorization:

**Figure 1**

![Diagram of legitimation strategies of authority.](image)

1) Firstly, it can be done by exercising “personal authority”, which refers to the authority a person already has due to their status or institutional position (p. 94). This type of authority does not necessarily require reasoning or argumentation - for things simply are in a certain way (ibid.).

2) Secondly, “expert authority” builds upon the competence and attestation of a person (pp. 94-95). For example, a text may include quotes from a well-known expert or perhaps have an insisting connotation as to why something is “best or a good idea” (p. 95).
3) The “role model authority” thrives off the representation of a possible role model or ruler (p. 95). Examples propose an optimal way of doing things, as well as appeal to a favorable way of fitting in amongst peers (p. 96).

4) “Impersonal authority” does not refer to personal opinions or jurisdictions, but to commands from the “laws, rules and regulations” (p. 96).

5) The “authority of tradition” appeals to the way things have always been done, for it is customary (p. 96).

6) Finally, the “authority of conformity” promotes the need to comply with majority or outer influences. Because everyone else, or most, are doing it, so should we (pp. 96-97).

3.4.2. Rationalization

Rationalization appeals to the “utility of institutionalized action, and to the knowledge society has constructed to endow them with cognitive validity” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 98). According to Van Leeuwen (2007, p. 100), rationalization cannot be constructed without moral evaluation, despite it often being concealed. Rationality provides the reasoning for why social codes are present and why they are the way they are (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 101). Van Leeuwen (2007) divides rationalization into two categories “instrumental” and “theoretical” that then further extend to sub-categories. (See Figure 2)

*Instrumental rationalization* concerns itself with the meaning, aims, benefits and outcomes of proceedings. It can take the form of:
1. “Goals orientation” formulates reasoning by distinguishing the actor’s goals and intentions. “I do x in order to do (or be, or have) y” (p. 102).

2. “Means orientation” refers to the way things are achieved. It is often formulated by using clauses, such as “by” and “by means of” (p. 102).

3. “Effect orientation” highlights the consequences of action. It is, oftentimes, conveyed with clauses, such as “so that” and “that way” (p. 103).

Theoretical rationalization bases its reasoning on “some kind of truth”, rather than justifying morality or efficacy (p. 103).

4. “Definition” legitimizes by defining one activity with another. It can utilize verbs, such as “constitutes” or “symbolizes” (p. 104)

5. Legitimization through “explanation” stems from the actors’ perspective (p. 104). To rationalize, we do not refer to the actors’ activity per se, but rather, their nature. Hence, tendencies of different groups of people are often generalized. (p. 104).

6. “Prediction” refers to know-how, rather than authority. Van Leeuwen (2007, p. 104) provides the following example: “Don’t worry if you or your child cries. It won’t last long.”

Van Leeuwen (2007, p. 104) also makes the distinction between experiential and scientific rationalization. Experiential rationalization takes the form of descriptive patterns that are practical and often anecdotal. Scientific rationalization is more
standardized and is used to “legitimate institutional practices, for instance religions” (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 104).

3.4.3. Moral Evaluation

Moral evaluation assigns meaning by referring to ethical codes and integrity (Norman Fairclough, 2003, p. 98) It can, for example, be constructed with the use of words and
adjectives that appeal to the moral standards of individuals (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 97). Van Leeuwen (2007, p. 98) notes that there are no specific guidelines to identifying moral legitimation, therefore we must rely on our own cultural understanding. Nonetheless, he discusses three categories within the realm of moral legitimation. Habermas (1976 as cited in Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 98) notes that moral evaluation is “widely used to ensure mass loyalty”.

**Figure 3**

![Diagram of legitimation strategies of moral evaluation](image)

Figure 3. Diagram of legitimation strategies of moral evaluation. Adapted from *Legitimation in Discourse and Communication* by Van Leeuwen, 2007, *Discourse & Communication*, 1, p. 100. Copyright 2007 by SAGE Publications.

**Evaluation** is often constructed with the use of evaluative adjectives. Van Leeuwen (2007, p. 98) uses the example of advertisements that use words such as “green” or “cool” that appeal to certain values. **Naturalization** is commonly used to insist that something is, in fact, “normal” or “natural” (p. 98).

**Abstraction** legitimizes social proceedings by linking them with specific values (Van
Leeuwen, 2007, p. 98). For example, an activity can be “moralized” by instead describing it with a hypothetical word that appeals to values (p. 99).

Analogies are comparisons (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 99). They can, for example, switch the description of one social practice with another that is more likely linked to positive attributes. Comparison can also be done with the use of “similarity conjunctions”, such as “like” (p. 100).

3.4.4. Mythopoesis

Lastly, legitimation through mythopoesis takes the form of a narrative or anecdote (Fairclough, 2003, p. 99; Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 105) Generally, it can either consist of a moral tale that magnifies central figures who take part in legitimate social proceedings or a cautionary tale that alert the readers of the consequences if they do not conform to the social norms (Van Leeuwen, 2007, pp. 105–106). Fairclough (2003, p. 99) explains that mythopoesis could also be “the building up of a picture of the ‘new age’”.

Chapter 4
Contextual Framework

This chapter brings us back to examining China and Japan. I introduce the results of a previous systematic literature review that motivated this present study. I then first delve into the case of Chinese higher education. I examine its characteristics and historical background. Following, I present the many aspects of Japanese higher education and how it, over the Japanese eras, was shaped into what it is today.

4.1. Previous Literature Review

An initial systematic literature review was conducted to prompt this Master’s thesis (See Hentunen, 2019). The aim of the literature review was to discover what recent research has said about the link between higher education and economic development in China and Japan in the 21st century. In addition, it attempted to find out whether the studies had noticed a link between sustainable economic development and higher education in the two countries. The systematic literature review resulted in 37 articles that met the selection criteria. The articles had been published in 2015 or later and were all in English (Hentunen, 2019).

According to Hentunen (2019), the articles explain that both countries have responded to globalization with efforts to internationalize their higher education systems. China and Japan aim to increase the number of elite universities and exchange programs yet face their own set of challenges within national borders. Japan struggles with an “inward-looking youth” and aging population, while the Chinese State’s strict governance over HEIs may cause the country to miss out on prospective innovation. Nonetheless, China aims to develop its knowledge economy by increasing collaboration with other countries, especially making use of its current Belt and Road Initiative that
expands across countries south and west of Asia. The Japanese Ministry of Education, on the other hand, continues to invest heavily in international projects, as well as English-medium teaching in higher education institutions (Hentunen, 2019).

Hentunen (2019) notes that the articles raise other issues, such as the massification of higher education - especially in China - which has increased not only the number of highly qualified, but also, unemployed graduates. The literature calls for the strengthening of the ties between higher education and industry, as well as an increase in the number of vocational schools, which may aid with the dispersion of workers to different fields. In addition, the studies showed concern for the quality of higher education in several features of the system, for example teaching. Articles concerning Japan’s higher education also acknowledge the challenge of unemployment amongst graduates. The Island Kingdom intends to promote innovation and entrepreneurship, as well as incorporate more “active learning” in classrooms to promote smooth transition to work life and further boost economic growth (Hentunen, 2019).

4.2. Chinese Higher Education

China has the largest higher education system in the world (British Council, n.d.). In 2017, the enrollment rate to higher education institutions surpassed 35 million, not including the 7 million students enrolled in web-based programs (MOE, 2017). Chinese higher education has undergone a monumental amount of reforms in the last few decades, especially due to the state’s re-establishing of economic motives and globalization (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 673; Shi, Jo, Hu, & Li, 2018) Today, Tsinghua University sits in 22nd and Peking University in 31st place according to the THE (2019) World University Rankings. Notably, the long pursuit of elite universities has paid off (Song, 2017). But how did China get here? I will now explore the historical facets that have constructed the present-day HE system.
4.2.1. “China is a Sleeping Giant”

“China is a sleeping giant. Let her sleep, for when she wakes she will move the world.”

Although we cannot be certain that Napoléon Bonaparte was the one to deliver the famous quote above, he is commonly associated with it (Welch, 2015). Education scholars have also referred to the “sleeping giant” to illustrate of the amplified impact the rise of China has had on global education (Mazzarol & Soutar, 1948; Welch, 2015). The Asian country’s higher education system is one of the oldest in the world (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 667). To understand the current and future status of China’s higher education, it is suitable to first go back in time to examine the country’s history and the facets that have built the Chinese HE to what it is today. The end of the 1800s can be seen as an acceptable starting point, as this is when China established its first modern university (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 668).

At the end of the 1800s, China was on a mission to regain power after an era of being strongly impacted by Japanese and Western forces (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 668). Thus, it began to integrate Western technology, all the while remaining true to its traditional Chinese and Confucian values (ibid.). “The fact that Japan defeated China militarily in 1895 had a devastating psychological impact on China” (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 668). China based its education reform strongly on Japan’s system as an attempt to bring it up to date (ibid.). Parelius & Parelius (1987, p. 34) explain that China has sported a national formal education system with only a few privately owned institutions for thousands of years. Western experts were invited to China to help with the advancements. In addition, students were encouraged to go abroad to acquire leading-edge knowledge (Parelius & Parelius, 1987, p. 34).

Hayhoe and Zha (2007, p. 668) write that at the turn of the century, the government shifted to a Republican ruling. The division between different types of institutions became more apparent - some institutions becoming more specialized in certain fields.
Due to the unsteady central governance of the country from 1911 to 1927, autonomy of higher education institutions also fluctuated, which gave way to a period of impressive research and development (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 669).

The Nationalist Party gained power in 1927 and higher education underwent yet another reform, this time promoting more practical proficiency (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 669). However, a prevalent unease occurred concerning academic principles and specifications of subjects (ibid.). A similar type of “equalizing” of skills and knowledge amongst the nation was later endorsed in the Cultural Revolution in 1966 (Parelius & Parelius, 1987, p. 43). Education was used to further socioeconomic equality, all the while offsetting any rise of an “intellectual elite” (Parelius & Parelius, 1987, p. 43). This also meant that economic motives were ultimately overlooked (ibid.). Workers were magnified over academics and even learning was delimited to practical issues (Parelius & Parelius, 1987, p. 43).

By the 1950s, the number of higher education institutions had noticeably increased, despite a war with Japan from 1937 to 1945 and the persisting struggles of the economy (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 670). In 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) constituted the People’s Republic of China and higher education was reorganized along with it (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 670; Liu, 2017, p. 267). The now central, Soviet-induced and economy-driven higher education system followed a national plan that saw higher education as a means for fructification (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 670). All higher education institutions were turned into public ones (Liu, 2017, p. 267). The Great Leap Forward of 1958 was a strong push towards communism (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 671). Ties with the Soviet Union slowly faded, but the CCP remained fixated on the Soviet higher education model (Liu, 2017, p. 267).

Higher education took a big hit during the CCP-actuated Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976 and consequently, became decentralized (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 674; Liu, 2017, p. 267). However, in 1978, the new leader Deng Xiaoping reversed things (ibid). China underwent an economic revolution and introduced the “Reform and Open Door
Policy” (Cai, Yang, Lyytinen, & Hölttä, 2015; J. Li, 2017; Liu, 2017). The country was now striving towards a market-driven economy and slowly opening up to the world (Liu, 2017). In the middle of the 1980s, governance over higher education was distributed to “the central, provincial and major municipal levels” (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 672). However, policies remained consolidated and extended to all (ibid.).

Education has always been considered an important device for social and economic development in China (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 673; Pan, Vayssettes, & Fordham, 2016, p. 12). The 1990s instigated a newly found push to invest in education, while also gaining a more prominent role in global higher education (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 673). Several reforms were taken up, such as the expansion - also known as the massification - of higher education, dispersion of management and the betterment of performance of institutions (ibid). The human capital theory was amongst the main rationales for the many reforms (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 673).

4.2.2. Structure of the Higher Education System

Nearly all prospective university students take part in the national entrance exam, the “gaokao”, which designates whether they will be able to commence at an undergraduate program and at which institution (Pan et al., 2016, p. 11). Some students, however, may enter an institution solely based on referrals (ibid.). The Ministry of Education plays a key role in extending the Chinese government’s control over education (Chan, 2015; F. Li, 2016; Pan et al., 2016). As we noted, the education system, along with many any other sectors, became greatly centralized in 1949 when the People’s Republic of China stepped in (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007; F. Li, 2016; Liu, 2017). However, as the country began to aspire for a socialist market in the economy in the 1990s, the governance over higher education also had to be rejuvenated (Hayhoe & Zha, 2007, p. 674; Shi et al., 2018).
According to the Chinese Ministry of Education (1999), higher education institutions can only be established in compliance with the national plan set forth by the State. Higher education institutions do receive autonomy in matters, such as allotment of staff to departments, managerial responsibility and constructing of yearly plans and regulations (MOE, 1999). However, senior leaders are selected by the government, ultimately making the process a political one (Li, 2016). Subsequently, the government coordinates the funding and administration of higher education - giving it over-ruling authority (Li, 2016). The heavy “top-down” approach in higher education has been disputed, as scholars believe it may eventually hinder China’s attempts to keep up with global development and innovation (Chan, 2015; Liu, 2017; Mok, 2018).

The present Chinese Higher Education Law was put into effect in 1999 (MOE, 1999). It provides specific guidelines for national tertiary education. Higher education consists of disciplines for both academic and non-academic credentials. Studies can be either full- or part-time and may also be done through means of distance learning. Higher education students can choose from three different academic stages: “special course, regular course or graduate program” (MOE, 1999a). Figure 4 below displays the different levels of the Chinese education system and its general proceeding on the basis of the age of the student.

The Ministry of Education (1999) explains that the two to three-year *special course* is seen as an initial basis that equips the student with the needed skills and knowledge to work in his or her chosen field. In addition to labor qualifications, the *regular course* also provides the student with a more academic and research-oriented cultivation - the course lasting four to five years. Lastly, the *graduate program*, prepares the student to do more extensive research for either a Master’s degree (two to three years) or a PhD (three to four years) (MOE, 1999).
4.3. Japanese Higher Education

Japanese education is commonly known for its high numbers of attendance and for its prominent contribution to science (Marginson, 2012). In 2013, 53.2% of secondary school graduates enrolled in universities and junior colleges (MEXT, 2019). Higher education has greatly impacted the social and economic development of today’s Japan.
Japan has two universities in the top 100 according to the THE (2019) World University Rankings, with University of Tokyo in 42nd place and Kyoto University in 65th.

4.3.1. Reaching the Reiwa Era

As we remarked earlier, Japan stepped into the Reiwa Era in 2019. Modern Japanese higher education, however, can be relayed back to the Meiji Restoration in 1868 (Sylvester, 2007, p. 13; Yonezawa, 2007, p. 829) Even though Japan was never colonized, it assumed a Western-styled education model very early on (Altbach, 2008, p. 4; Huang, 2017, p. 513). The “Opening of Japan” instigated a new pursuit of international incentives (Sylvester, 2007, p. 13). Japan began to westernize its higher education more intensively, all the while upholding traditional educational arrangements, such as the “samurai (warrior) and merchant classes” (Yonezawa, 2007, p. 829). Several Western models were incorporated, with the German one having the most substantial impact (Huang, 2017, p. 513; Yonezawa, 2015, p. 830. In addition, experts from abroad were brought in to help develop the newly constituted system (ibid.). Yonezawa (2007, p. 830) explains that the government initiated the privatization of higher education in 1919, which has been a key contributor in the massification of higher education. Despite the Sino-Japanese War and World War II, Japan was able to maintain a constant upsurge in the establishing of HEIs - much like China (Yonezawa, 2007, p. 830). Following the Second World War, Japan adopted the American model (ibid.). It also began to shift from “elite” to “mass” higher education by expanding the number and size of institutions (Huang, 2017, p. 513; Newby, Weko, Breneman, Johanneson, & Maassen, 2009, p. 12) In 1962, the government removed imposed controls on the creation of faculties and departments, which meant that less-acclaimed institutions were able to add the highly appealing “training of service and industrial

Yonezawa (2007, p. 830) notes the private sector continued to broaden, but with a disproportionate point of supply. This caused the quality and surroundings to falter at several institutions (ibid.). In 1970, the government responded by commencing a monetary compensation program for private institutions that is still prominent today (Yonezawa, 2007, p. 830). However, the reimbursement only covers a small fraction - about 10% - of all expenses, with the rest still being covered by tuition fees (ibid.). Yonezawa (2007, p. 831) notes that “…the government (until quite recently) virtually prohibited the establishment of new education programs in the big cities.” This led to the formation of several new school grounds in rural areas and smaller cities (ibid.).

Yonezawa (2007, p. 831) explains that the competitive threshold and stratified system maintained institutions’ role as a “screening device”. Consequently, students at elite universities are guaranteed a lucrative life. The previously atrocious entrance exam lost some of its austerity, due to many factors. For one, the exam was regenerated. In addition, there has been decrease in demand due to the aging of population (Yonezawa, 2015, p. 830). “By 2050 the Japanese population will have declined by over 25%” (Newby et al., 2009, p. 10) Lastly, the exam is affected by “the market deregulation policy of the government” (Yonezawa, 2007, p. 831). In the last few decades, Japan has struggled with an over-supply of students, as admission rates were temporarily increased in the 1990s (ibid.). In addition, the heavy dependence on private institutions has put public higher education under scrutiny and “privatization” of higher education became a debated topic - although the idea was later abandoned (Yonezawa, 2007, pp. 831–833). In 2016, 80% of HE students attended private institutions (Krechetnikov, Pestereva, & Rajović, 2016, p. 81).
4.3.2. Structure of the Higher Education System

Japanese education is characterized by its heavy emphasis on exams throughout all grade levels. In case of higher education, a national exam must first be taken at the end of secondary school (Krechetnikov et al., 2016, p. 81). A second admissions exam must be completed before being accepted at a higher education institution (ibid.).

Figure 5

The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT, n.d.) explains that Japanese universities can be classified into three categories: national, public and private. National universities were initially inaugurated by the government, but are now run by national university associations. Public universities are governed by “local public entities or public university corporations” and private universities by academic associations (MEXT, n.d., p. 6). The Japanese higher education system consists of several entities. One can receive a “bachelor’s, master’s, doctor’s and professional degree” from a university, an undergraduate degree from a junior college (which begins after lower secondary school), practical learning from a college of technology or specialized practice from a specialized training college (MEXT, n.d., p. 4). Figure 5 displays an overall look at the Japanese education system based on grade level, with the student starting elementary school at the age of 6-7.
Chapter 5
Methodology

This chapter explores how the study contributes to the field of international and comparative education and how educational policy can be perceived as discourse. It also delves into the epistemological and ontological aspects and methods of the study. It considers the chosen research material, as well as how it was collected and evaluated. Lastly, it discusses the study’s criteria of trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

5.1. Relevance to International and Comparative Education

The field of international and comparative education, also known as ICE, was installed in the 1800s when European countries began to establish national education systems (Bray, Adamson, & Mason, 2014; Coombs, 1970; Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). Consequently, higher education institutions also underwent a transformation phase during that time (Rutten, Boekema, & Kuijpers, 2003, p. 2). HEIs went from solely cultivating scholars to now also embracing social duties (ibid.). This led to countries and their academic standards becoming distinct and specialized in different things. Nations also seized the opportunity to develop their own schemes by learning from others (Bray et al., 2014, p. 3; Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2007, p. 2). Phillips and Schweisfurth (2014, p. 1) note that comparison is ingrained in all of us. It is how we create meaning and assumptions. Comparative education explores the “similarities and differences between educational systems in two or more national or cultural contexts…” (Manzon, 2011, p. 215 as cited in Marshall, 2014, p. 28).

Bray and Thomas (1995 as cited in Bray et al., 2014, p. 9) underlined the importance of scrutiny of education on multiple levels. They developed a “Framework for
Comparative Education Analyses” that is illustrated with a cube (See Figure 6). The front side of the cube enlists seven “geographic/locational” degrees of comparison. The second length consists of six “non-locational demographic” categories. The third side showcases seven different “aspects of education and of society” (Bray et al., 2014, p. 9). Studies can utilize this framework to specify their specific degrees of comparison. As for this study, we can situate it in the intersection of countries, entire population and curriculum (or policy). Furthermore, comparing two nations can provide a more in-depth investigation of theory and social phenomenon, as we are able to contrast the findings (Marshall, 2014).

Welch (1991, p. 508) explains that legitimation of educational knowledge has become an increasingly more investigated topic in comparative education over the decades. Taking on a more critical approach towards the perception of knowledge, in which scholars have “a wider concern with the dialectic between the legitimation of educational knowledge and that state” has become more prevalent (Welch, 1991, p. 508). Scholars have begun to question how knowledge is legitimized in the construct of education and how the government maintains legitimacy of its institutional hierarchical position (p. 509). The comparison in this study allowed us to investigate whether there is a regional pattern that can be found in the Asian governmental discourse. Or do the legitimation strategies contrastingly differ? I will elaborate further on this in ‘Findings’.

This study contributes to the body of research critically investigating the transmittance of knowledge through policy. One could say the study is international and comparative in a traditional sense, as it contrasts the cases of two national contexts. Examining legitimation strategies in the policies of China and Japan has not been previously done in the English language. Additionally, higher education’s contribution to sustainable economic development has been scarcely addressed in this setting. Basil Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic device has been utilized to examine cases in the Asian context previously (for example Wong & Apple, 2002), but the literature remains limited. This Master’s thesis builds a foundation for future research on these subject matters. It hopes
to stimulate critical discussion on the normative process of distributing knowledge in the Asian institutional construct of education.

Figure 6
5.2. Research Strategy and Design

This study followed the qualitative research strategy, for it was concerned with the examination of discourse, rather than the quantification of data (Bryman, 2016, p. 374). Furthermore, it took on an inductive approach, which assumes no prior knowledge and lets the theory stem from the data (Cohen et al., 2018a, p. 4). The critical discourse analysis of policy commonly adopts this approach (Mullet, 2018; Ruiz, 2009). Consequently, “induction places limits on prediction” (Cohen et al., 2018a, p. 4). Thus, induction cannot determine a new theory, but can instead assist one (ibid.).

Additionally, this study adopted the comparative research design (Bryman, 2016, p. 64). The design allows for juxtaposition between two differing countries, which can further provide a deeper understanding of social phenomena (Bryman, 2016, pp. 64–65). Bryman (2016, p. 65) elaborates on the challenges of cross-cultural studies. In spite of skilled translation of data, callousness towards the states’ social contexts may occur. Yet, studies of this sort can also advocate the importance of recognizing cultural context (ibid.). Hence, this study considered historical, political and cultural conditions by delving into the backgrounds of the two respective countries.

This comparative study was qualitative and so, categorized as a “multiple-case study” (Bryman, 2016, p. 67). Investigating more than one case can benefit the research by allowing the testing of a theory multiple times. It can corroborate the study and advocate new notions (Bryman, 2016, p. 67). However, multiple-case studies can easily fall prey to merely focusing on comparing specific indicators and neglecting context (ibid.). This is why Bryman (2016, p. 68) proposes a more open-ended approach that allows for more flexible scrutiny of theory.
5.2.1. Policy as Discourse

We have previously defined policy as an agenda that transfers beliefs and values (Prunty, 1985). This study sees policy as discourse and draws on Fairclough’s (1992) definition of the concept: “…language use as a form of social practice, rather than a purely individual activity or a reflex of situational variables.” Hence, Fairclough saw discourse as a means to take part in the broader social system. Constructs of discourse, such as policy, are considered to be social processes that are linked to a specific time and place (Lomer, 2017, p. 84). In order for us to understand what is taught as culturally relevant at schools, we must start to question some of the prominent influences in the different stages of policy-making, as well as whose views are being endorsed (Prunty, 1985, p. 136). As we noted earlier, Basil Bernstein believed policy to be the final product of a set of decisions. Ball (1993, p. 11) agrees that policy is generated through a set of compromises at different phases of the process. Moreover, key higher education policy adjustments of a country cannot be understood without consideration of the social conditions of the system (Jones, 2013; Nokkala & Välimaa, 2017). This can further give us clues as to why and how changes are made, as well as aid in assessing future predicaments. Furthermore, the method of critical discourse analysis (CDA) can begin to unravel some of these existent forces within policy (Hult, 2017; Jones, 2013; Prunty, 1985; Woodside-Jiron, 2004).

Rather than focusing on the content of the policy discourse, this study strived to identify embedded ideologies and values within it (Ball, 1993; Jones, 2013; Prunty, 1985). “Discourse theory posits that through both language and knowledge, discourses represent, structure and imagine the world, changing it in line with particular ideologies” (Lomer, 2017, p. 83). Thereupon, I introduced Theo Van Leuven’s (2007) framework to identify the use of legitimization in policy discourse. Bernstein (1971, p. 43) notes: “language is considered one of the most important means of initiating,
synthesizing, and reinforcing ways of thinking, feeling and behavior which are functionally related to the social group”.

Bernstein was not so concerned with the text itself, but rather, the organization that allows it to be transmitted (Clark, 2014, p. 34). Van Dijk (2001, p. 357) notes that due to the normative nature of education, there is less inclination to challenge the dominant discourse - knowledge is passed down systematically and taught in the way authorities have intended it. Conversely, an individual may be more disposed to challenge the narratives coming from other channels, such as media (ibid.). Generally, people are more likely to assume knowledge from sources that seem authoritarian, authentic and reliable (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 357). Thus, governmental policies are a fitting target for critical inspection.

5.2.2. Epistemological and Ontological Aspects

Epistemology prescribes what the study considers as applicable knowledge in the social world (Bryman, 2016, p. 16). The qualitative paradigm, which is also described as “subjectivist” and “anti-positivist”, often acquires the epistemological orientation of interpretivism (Cohen et al., 2018a). This study also assumes the interpretive epistemology. Interpretivism considers that meaning is construed in accordance with social processes, rather than outside forces that are not participatory in the action (Bryman, 2016; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2011). Interpretivism is concerned with the way people make meaning of social processes (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2011, p. 11). Bryman (2016, p. 27) notes that due to its subjective disposition, the interpretive approach may bring about unexpected results, which may not correspond to cases outside of the specific context.
Social constructionism served as the ontological premise for the study. Accordingly, discourse analysis often assumes a social constructionist stand, which presumes that meaning is constructed through personal experience and furthermore, language (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2011; Jørgenson & Phillips, 2002) Social constructionism concludes that divisions, such as society and culture, are created by social actors and therefore, are not pre-disposed realities (Bryman, 2016, p. 30) Additionally, the specific ontology sees that knowledge is maintained through social practices and interaction (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2011, p. 12). Furthermore, critical pedagogy advocates the belief that knowledge is conceived within a historical context, which in turn, gives value to the “human experience” (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2009, p. 10).

5.3. Methods

I have already shortly discussed possibilities of investigating policy in the form of discourse. I will now present the research methods used in this study, which includes Fairclough’s model of critical discourse analysis. Jørgenson & Phillips (2002, pp. 3–4) assert that discourse analysis cannot be applied to research without consideration of theory and methodology. I will contemplate the use of this method and why I believe it best supports Basil Bernstein’s theoretical framework of pedagogic device. In addition, I will explain why concept mapping was a suitable addition to this study, for both the analysis and representation of the findings.

5.3.1. Critical Discourse Analysis

Discourse Analysis, or DA, is considered an all-encompassing concept that contains several different qualitative approaches to looking at language (Lester, Lochmiller, & Gabriel, 2017, p. 3). "Language is action-oriented”, as it is a medium through which
individuals express themselves and interact with others (Lester et al., 2017, p. 3). Discourse receives meaning in different social contexts where patterns begin to form (Jørgenson & Phillips, 2002, p. 1). Discourse analysis strives to uncover these sequences (ibid.).

Critical discourse analysis aims to uncover concealed forms of power, allocation of privilege and the ways meaning is construed (Bryman, 2016, p. 540). Van Dijk (1993, p. 252) argues that “critical discourse analysts (should) take an explicit sociopolitical stance”. Therefore, they should be straightforward in stating their understanding, outlook and assumptions on the field and society overall (Van Dijk, 1993, p. 525). In this study, I adopted Basil Bernstein’s (2000) viewpoint on society and the institutional distributive process of knowledge in education.

Norman Fairclough (1989, p. 25) offers a three-step model for the critical analysis of discourse (See Figure x). These stages include the 1) description of functional characteristics of text, 2) interpretation of the link between text and interaction and lastly, 3) explanation of connection between interaction and social conditions (Fairclough, 1989, p. 26). Furthermore, Janks (1997) refers to these the stages as “text, processing and social analysis”.

Fairclough (1989, 110-111) explains that the initial description phase consists of scrutinizing text through the means of “vocabulary, grammar and textual structures”. If one wants to identify the social meanings related to text, description should be combined with the second, interpretation, and third, explanation, stage (Norman Fairclough, 1989, p. 141). The interpretation phase sheds light on the social interaction, which has stimulated the discourse and provides a contrast to “background assumptions” (ibid.). Fairclough (1989, p. 162) summarizes the interpretation phase by appointing three targets of scrutiny: “context, discourse types and difference and change”. Finally, the stage of explanation investigates discourse from the perspective of social systems (ibid.). Fairclough (1989, p. 166) concludes that this stage can be addressed by examining “social determinants, ideologies and effects”. In addition, the notion of inter-textuality is highlighted in CDA (Bryman, 2016, p. 540) It places the analyzed text in relation to other texts and looks for any connections (ibid). In his work,
Fairclough (1989) provides several questions and approaches to guide the analysis of discourse. I will not go into further detail of the guidelines here, however I will be raising some of these notions in ‘Findings’

Janks (1997) provides practical guidelines for CDA on the basis of Fairclough’s model. She suggests starting with only one text and then moving on to others to complement the findings (Janks, 1997, p. 331). She recommends beginning with the textual analysis, but reminds us that we cannot make sense of text solely based on its “verbual and visual textual signs” (Janks, 1997, p. 332). Moreover, the process and social analysis support the interpretation in continuation (ibid.). This study also introduced Van Leeuwen’s (2007) framework for interpreting legitimation strategies. Fairclough (2003) builds on Van Leeuwen’s work and emphasizes the social features of legitimation in discourse.

**Figure 7**

![Fairclough's Three-step Model of Discourse as Text, Interaction and Context](image)


5.3.2. Concept Mapping
The method of concept mapping is used, in the case of this study, to communicate the findings and theory in a visual form (Kane & Trochim, 2009, p. 2). “Concepts are the elements or components of theories” (Kane & Trochim, 2009, p. 3). Therefore, a conceptual map allows for depiction of how key terms apply to one another, to their empiric phenomena and to their theories (ibid,). Although concept mapping can be executed in many ways, it generally includes a graphic representation, which can include designs of “mind maps” and “idea maps” (Kane & Trochim, 2009, p. 5). This study utilized the method of concept mapping to represent the comparative results between China and Japan, all the while referring back to Basil Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic device and Theo Van Leeuwen’s legitimation strategies.

5.4.   Data Collection

This study followed a similar order to Lomer’s (2017) in the data collection phase. In her research, Lomer (2017) takes on the topic of international student recruitment in the British context. She critically analyzes higher education policies and provides a clear benchmark for the selection of material and process of the study.

This study selected documents on the basis of five criteria. Firstly, the chosen documents had, content-wise, either (1) higher education as the main matter, had a section devoted to higher education or were aimed at higher education students. Secondly, (2) the documents were published by the ministries of education of the two respective countries. Thirdly, (3) the documents were in English. As a fourth criteria, (4) the documents needed to be accessible to anyone on the Internet. Lomer (2017, p. 52) notes: “public documents, published by the state, represent the “official” national discourse”. Lastly, (5) the chosen policies had to still be in place in 2019.
After having designated specific documents, the texts were broken down to parts that were relevant to the topic. Furthermore, the selected sections had to somehow contribute to the discourse of both higher education and the economy. This called for an initial delimitation phase where I browsed through the selected texts and identified sections that belonged to the topic area. Furthermore, the texts didn’t have to specifically mention the word “economy”, but rather discuss matters related to it. The initial systematic literature review allowed for the depiction of relevant themes. Altogether, the chosen segments can be classified into the following main topic areas:

- Professional/skill/talent cultivation
- Globalization/ internationalization of higher education
- Entrepreneurship / innovation
- Massification of higher education/ graduate unemployment

Not all policies consisted of only relevant topics. Therefore, some demarcating had to be done in order to pinpoint the sections of text that remained within the topic and inclusion criteria. One of the policies (C-He.law) included a contents table, which allowed for a quick overview of topics. In other cases, the relevant segments were identified with the search engine provided in the Mendeley Desktop Software. The search term “econom-“ was chosen to identify additional sections that may refer to economy-related matters. Furthermore, the search engine was used in two of the policy documents: C-He.law and J-HE.Jap.

5.5. Data Material

To ensure transparency and ease the following of the selection process, I have included Table 1 below, which displays all of the selected policy documents used in the analysis. In addition, the full document data, including year of release and web links, can be
found in ‘Appendix 1’ for the Chinese documents and ‘Appendix 2’ for the Japanese documents. To make identification easier, the Chinese documents have been labeled with an abbreviation starting with “C” (ex. C-HElaw) and the Japanese ones with “J” (ex. J-HE.Jap).

The Chinese and Japanese policies vary from being very concise to being more comprehensive with graphs and figures. Figures and images were delimited from the study, as they did not contribute to the topic nor did they fit the inclusion criteria. The selected policy documents are translated English versions of the actual, more extensive policies originally written in Chinese and Japanese. Contrastingly, the Japanese policies are summaries, which meant that they are even further condensed. We must note that these variances affect the way the policy texts are written. This was one of the risks I took in selecting English translations as my research material and a major limitation of the study.

However, I should emphasize that these policies have been chosen - and classified as policies - on the official websites of the ministries of education. The documents are a way for the respective ministries to provide insight into their higher education systems to anyone not knowledgeable in the local languages. The policy documents have been translated and recontextualized to accommodate international readers. Hence, this study was able to examine what the Asian policy-makers have wanted to convey from an “outsider-looking in” perspective.
### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C-HElaw</td>
<td>Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China</td>
<td>People’s Republic of China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-OP.Grad</td>
<td>Opinions on Strengthening the Cultivation of Services Outsourcing Talents and Boosting Employment of Graduates from Institutions of Higher Education</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Ministry of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-BRI</td>
<td>Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-Fut.HE</td>
<td>The Future of Higher Education in Japan</td>
<td>Central Council for Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-Sup.Int</td>
<td>Support for Internationalization of Universities</td>
<td>Office for International Planning, Higher Education Policy Planning Division, Higher Education Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-Nat.Uni</td>
<td>National University Reform Plan (Summary)</td>
<td>National University Corporation and Higher Education Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-HE.Jap</td>
<td>Higher Education in Japan (Pamphlet)</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Chinese and Japanese Policy Documents Selected for Analysis
5.6. Data Analysis

As we already discussed in ‘Methods’, the critical discourse analysis was conducted using Fairclough’s (1989) three-dimensional framework. The framework comprises of the examination of text (words, vocabulary, grammar etc.), identification of the discursive practice and consideration of social context. To complement and further guide the analysis, I refer to Van Leeuwen’s (2007) practical scheme for identifying legitimation strategies. The data analysis process and design of this study were inspired by Kirsi Marttinen’s (2011) Master’s thesis in linguistics, where she depicts how legitimation is constructed in Finnish higher education documents. Similarly, this study provided excerpts from the texts to highlight the different forms of legitimation.

There may be concern for why this study chose to follow a more linguistically oriented approach and whether this meant that it deviated from the initial sociological motif. I would like to take a moment to expand on why I believe Van Leeuwen’s framework was a suitable choice to understand the recontextualizing of the Chinese and Japanese policies. For one, Bernstein (1975, p. 154) explains that sociology of education is interested in the way educational knowledge is determined in a cultural context. He specifically notes that the examination of legitimation within curricula is a way to uncover this phenomenon (ibid.). Secondly, Bernstein (1975, p. 148) argues that any intriguing sociological case ought to incorporate both a comparative and historical lens, as well as uncover the components of organizational education during a state of transition. This study touches on all of these components. It provided a contextual and historical framing to further grasp and compare how institutional education has been constructed in time and within two national settings. The study was not only interested in the linguistic connotations of policy discourse, but also aimed to understand how the use of legitimation contributes to the institutional arrangement of education. Lastly, Van
Leeuwen (2007) argues that his framework is ideal for critical analysis of text and has personally used it to critique educational discourse.

In order to analyze the texts, I first read through all of the texts to get a comprehensive understanding. I then began to tread through each section of text more specifically by color-coding phrases and assigning them to different legitimation strategies. At times, the strategies overlapped. In order to identify which legitimation strategy was being put forward, I further leaned on Fairclough’s model. I examined the use of specific words, phrasing, connotations, overall structure and finally how the section fit into the context of the discourse. The model guided me, especially in the more challenging cases where identification was not as clear. The analysis demanded constant oscillation between framework and text to ensure I was analyzing the text in a proper manner. However, ultimately I also had to rely on my subjective understanding of the discourse. I have made my process of thinking as straightforward as possible in ‘Findings’, all the while considering triangulation, which I will elaborate on next.

5.7. Criteria of Trustworthiness

Qualitative research should be assessed through the means of different criteria (Bryman, 2016, p. 384). Validity refers to the confirmation the research findings receive from the social world (Bryman, 2016, p. 384). Validity can also serve to determine to what extent theories and findings can be assured (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018b, p. 245). Although validity is more commonly sought out in the positivist paradigm, Wodak and Meyer (2001) propose triangulation as a means to address it in critical discourse analysis. They suggest a four-step process that recognizes context as a base to further examine the: 1) evident text, 2) inter-textuality, 3) social connotations and 4) social and historical background. This study attempted to follow these steps throughout. It took into account the social, historical and political contexts of the two countries and the
documents analyzed. We can never make validity fully certain - it is rather “a matter of degree” (Cohen et al., 2018b, p. 246).

Transferability is difficult to ensure in qualitative research, as findings are tied to their unique conditions (Bryman, 2016, p. 384). Notably, critical discourse analysis will never be fully objective (Cohen et al., 2018a; Wodak & Meyer, 2001). However, this issue can be addressed by generating a detailed explanation of the cultural context (Bryman, 2016, p. 384). Critical discourse analysis should strive for ‘completeness’, which means that no new findings will arise even if the research is conducted more than once (Mullet, 2018, p. 120). This study aimed to be explicit about its processes, in case another researcher would choose to replicate it. In addition, accessibility of the research should be granted (Mullet, 2018, p. 120). This study will be made obtainable to anyone who wishes to access it.

5.8. Ethical Considerations

Ethics in social research recognizes the need for common respect and collective benefits of gaining valuable new knowledge (Sieber, 2009, p. 2). Thus, research findings are gathered conscientiously and are valid and helpful for communities (ibid.). Ethics come with a certain normative and common understanding of what is good and bad (Swedish Research Council, 2017, p. 12). Researchers want specified standards, for which their studies can support (ibid.). This study did not anticipate any ethical concerns, due to the nature of the dataset. The policy material used is open to public and accessible online. Yet, the study still aimed to contribute to the societies concerned by providing new insight into the role discourse plays in maintaining forces of power in the institution of education (van Dijk, 1993, p. 253). After all, it is easy for research to fall prey to becoming solely focused on its own agenda and forgetting the viewpoints and anticipations of the community (Sieber, 2009, p. 3).
The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) outlines the legal terms for ethics in research (European Parliament & European Council, 2016). Although this study did not include any personal or private data of individuals, it still followed the general principles of the GDPR. Going along with Article 12, transparency of the data material and its processing was ensured. The study provided a comprehensive description of the data material and its sources. In addition, the researcher was clear about her intentions throughout the whole study (European Parliament & European Council, 2016).
Chapter 6
Findings

In this chapter, I present the findings of the study in a narrative manner. I have divided the findings into two sections – first examining the Chinese policy documents and then moving on to the Japanese ones. I follow a chronological order - when applicable - in presenting the policies. Within the two national categories, I discuss the four strategies of legitimation and display how they have been constructed in the Asian discourses. I include excerpts from the texts to further build my case. Within the examples, I have either highlighted in bold or underlined the specific parts referring to the different legitimation strategies. In addition, I consider how sustainability was considered in the policy content.

Finally, I assemble the results from both countries into one comparative analysis. By creating a conceptual map that originates from the findings, I can contrast the ways the Chinese and Japanese governments have recontextualized their higher education policies.

6.1. Chinese Legitimation Strategies

The analysis of the Chinese documents showcased nationalistic and ambitious initiatives in the field of higher education. The four Chinese policies spanned from the year 1999 to 2016 and are all still in place today. The policies are presented in a chronological order: “The Higher Education Law”, “Opinions on Strengthening the

6.1.1. Legally Bound

The Higher Education Law was passed in 1999. Around that time, China began the process of massification of higher education, as well as the pursuit of having globally competitive institutions (Li, 2017). The human capital theory was one of the justifications the Chinese government gave for the great concentration on education (Li, 2017). Even based on its name, one can expect the Higher Education Law to be methodical in its way of presenting the different objectives. However, mental images can still be constructed as one reads the discourse.

Example #1:

Article 5: The task of higher education is to train people to become senior specialists imbeded with the spirit of creativeness and the ability of practice, to develop science, technology and culture and to promote the socialist modernization drive. (C-HE.law, p. 1)

Example 1 showcases how the government utilizes goals orientation (underlined) “TO develop science…and TO promote…” and moral evaluation (bold) “spirit of creativeness and the ability of practice” to rationalize the important role higher education has in educating highly skilled individuals in order to promote not only innovation and culture, but also the national political rule. The discourse appeals to coveted values and draws an image of a desirable future of a society that excels. In addition, it describes the aspired benefits and qualities an individual reaps from attending higher education.
At the turn of the century, the desire to become a knowledge economy became all the more apparent in China (Mok, 2015). China felt the pressure to compete globally (ibid.). This also raised the question of quality in higher education. However, the first official policy specifically focusing on quality issues in higher education only came out in 2016 (Liu, 2017, p. 266).

Example #2:

Article 7: In light of the needs of the socialist modernization drive and of development of a socialist market economy, the State, on the basis of the different types and levels of the existing higher education institutions, advances the restructuring of higher education and the reform of teaching in higher education institutions, and optimizes the structure of higher education and the distribution of resources, in order to improve the quality and increase the efficiency of higher education. (C-HE.law, p. 1)

Example 2 demonstrates a commonly used legitimation strategy in the ‘C-HE.law’ document. By pointing to “…the needs of the socialist modernization drive and of the socialist market economy”, the policy-makers draw a picture of a ‘new era’, which can be seen as a form of mythopoesis (underlined). This can also be seen as a way of rationalizing the demands set forth by the government (Fairclough, 2003, p. 99). The HEIs must comply, in order for China to progress. Additionally, rationalizing through means orientation (bold) is done with the use of facilitating actions, such as “advances”, “optimizes” and “improve” (Van Leeuwen, 2007). Lastly, the phrase “in order to” refers to another type of rationalizing, effect orientation (bold and underlined), and is used to accentuate the results that will come if the mandate is implemented.

Example #3:

Article 4: Higher education shall be conducted in adherence to the educational principles of the State, in the service of the socialist modernization drive and in combination with productive labour, in order that the educatees shall become builders and successors for the socialist
cause, who are developed in an all-around way—morally, intellectually and physically. (C-HE.law, p. 1)

Example #4:

Article 9: Citizens shall, in accordance with law, enjoy the right to receive higher education. (C-HE.law, p. 2)

Chinese higher education not only strives to build a strong cohesive nation, but also well-rounded individuals. The use of projected clauses, such as “shall”, “should” and “must”, is prevalent in all of the Chinese policies. This type of personal authority (bold) insinuates that the statements are to be implemented, without the need to give any further justifications (Van Leeuwen, 2007). Thanks to their authoritarian status, the policy-makers are able to exercise this kind of power in the discourse. Legitimation is also constructed in Example 3 and 4 with the use of impersonal authority (underlined), which is done by appealing to the law and regulations: “in adherence to the educational principles of the State” and “in accordance with law”.

The use of moral evaluation (bold and underlined) is displayed in Example 3 by describing attractive attributes that individuals should strive for: “builders and successors for the socialist party” and “developed…morally, intellectually and physically”. Furthermore, moral abstraction (bold and underlined) presents an action in a hypothetical way that “moralizes” (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 99). In Example 4, instead of merely stating that citizens receive the right to higher education, the discourse uses the word “enjoy the right” to give it a more positive connotation.

As we noted earlier, Chinese policies can be categorized into three rationales: “the modernization theory, human capital theory and post-colonial catch-up mentality” (Li, 2017, p. 134). The Higher Education Law policy clearly displays all of these motifs. Yet, there are no direct mentions of sustainability.
6.1.2. The Aftermath of Massification

A decade later, the “Opinions on Strengthening the Cultivation of Services Outsourcing Talents and Boosting Employment of Graduates from Institutions of Higher Education” (2009) was presented. This document is, in fact, a response to previous “Opinions” texts and addresses the issue of graduate unemployment and calls for the development of the talent-based outsourcing industry. China and other East Asian economies have showcased a clear progression throughout the years in supporting the university-industry ties (Mok, 2015, p. 2). Talent-based outsourcing refers to the allocation of talent to different companies and businesses, without actually going through the process of hiring (ManpowerGroup, 2019). Firms can work together and have employees and resources oscillate between workplaces (ManpowerGroup, 2019). Outsourcing can, therefore, be considered a form of economic rationalization from the government to invest further in higher education.

During the 21st century, the Chinese State has become preoccupied with producing esteemed higher education institutions conformed to the frame of elite universities abroad (Po, Cai, Lyytinen, & Hölttä, 2016, p. 121). However, the exigent pursuit has led the government to miss an important factor: regional development still requires a diverse set of institutions that produce a well-rounded workforce (ibid). In consequence, the country also faces growing rates of unemployment amongst graduates (Cai et al., 2015). In 2013, roughly a third of graduates remained without a job (ibid.).

According to Mok (2018), the Chinese government has worked to counteract these imbalances with several initiatives. For instance, it aims to increase collaboration with businesses not only within Mainland China, but also in other Asian states and countries along the Belt and Road Initiative. The State is also providing abundant scholarships for students to remain in the country to work (Mok, 2018). To increase diversity, the government has instituted a reform to establish 600 regional universities of applied sciences in the following years (Cai et al., 2015).
Example #5:

In order to implement and carry out the spirit of the Replies of the General Office of the State Council on the… and the Opinions of the Ministry of Education, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, the Ministry of Science and Technology, and the State-Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission, on… (C-OP.Grad. p. 2)

Example 5 shows a long list of influential government departments, such as different ministries, which constructs legitimacy of the authors through personal authority (bold) by referring to their assertive status. In addition, the text applies the phrase “carry out the spirit” to illustrate how the document intends to conform to the thinking of the earlier policy-makers. This brings out a sense of collective authority coming from the different macro-level stakeholders.

Example #6:

The services outsourcing industry is a brain-power concentrated modern services sector, with a high concentration of information technology, great added value, low resources consumption, low environment pollution, and a high level of internationalisation. (C-OP.Grad, p.2)

The “C-OP.Grad” document is the only one out of the four inspected Chinese policy documents to explicitly mention the environment and sustainability: “low resources consumption, low environment pollution”. This, in turn, appeals to the moral (bold) values of creating a more sustainable and responsible society and future for the country. In addition, the text describes the services outsourcing industry as the “brain-power” and as a “great added value”, which assigns moral (bold) value and importance to the cause. In addition, internationalization is used as an incentive to promote outsourcing.
Example #7:

Higher education institutions should, in accordance with the requirements of the fast development of the services outsourcing industry, adjust structures for the cultivation of services talents, expand the scale of the cultivation of services talents, and make considerable efforts to enhance the quality of the cultivation of service outsourcing talents. (OP.Grad, p. 2-3)

I personally interpreted the phrase “in accordance with the requirements of the fast development of the services outsourcing industry” to demonstrate authority of conformity (underlined). The government refers to the direction the global field of outsourcing is going to insinuate that higher education institutions should follow.

However, this could also be categorized as cautionary mythopoiesis. Fairclough (2003, p. 99) explains this is a way for the authors to draw a picture of the future and to warn of the ramifications if the principle is not implemented. In addition, the connotation of competing globally is portrayed as a desirable outcome, which further appeals to moral evaluation (ibid.). Example 7 also rationalizes (bold) the usefulness of services outsourcing industry with verbs referring to means orientation, such as “expand” and “enhance”.

In cases, such as the one above, where identifying the type of legitimation wasn’t as definitive, I aimed to provide a diverse set of interpretations. Although critical analysis of text will always come with its bias, I believe it also challenges the analyst to question her own understanding. In addition, relating the text back to its context is crucial. As we have noted, China intends to compete globally and build a knowledge economy (Mok, 2015). Therefore, the way the policy discourse promotes nation building by drawing a picture of a successful China in a competitive and fast-paced arena is not surprising. The incentives are legitimized through authority, for they are not described as merely a hope for the future, but rather a “requirement”.
Example #8:

Three-party agreements should be signed between institutions of higher education, enterprises and students so as to protect students’ lawful rights and interests and not to increase students’ financial burdens incurred from the practice. (C-OP.Grad, p. 5)

*Effect orientation* (bold), with the linkage of “so as to”, is used to highlight the outcome of signing three-party agreements. In addition, by pointing out that this is part of the “students’ lawful rights”, the policy-makers refer to *impersonal authority* (underlined). They emphasize the obligation of complying with the policy and law. In addition, this could contribute to a *cautionary tale*, as the policy-makers warn of the consequence of “increasing students’ financial burdens” if the services outsourcing practice is not carried out efficiently.

Example #9:

…and services outsourcing work-related training can be shifted earlier so that it is completed at college or university, making it possible for graduates from institutions of higher education to take a job immediately. (C-OP.Grad, p. 5)

Example 9 showcases further legitimation with *effect orientation* (bold), with the segment “making it possible”, which rationalizes the usefulness of introducing services outsourcing earlier on in the academic career. This also provides a concrete example of the way the government intends to approach unemployment challenges.

Example #10:

…with the intention of propelling strategic cooperation between enterprises and institutions of higher education. (C-OP.Grad, p. 6)
Lastly, Example 10 reiterates what previous literature has stated about the government’s intentions to promote the link between higher education and industry. The policy-makers display a *predictive rationalization* (bold) of their aims, by stating “with the intention…”

The “Opinions on Strengthening the Cultivation of Services Outsourcing Talents and Boosting Employment of Graduates from Institutions of Higher Education” document displayed a confident and authoritarian approach from the policy-makers. The increase of services outsourcing is rationalized as solely having positive outcomes - even the environment would benefit from it. The policy-makers sustain legitimacy by utilizing different strategies of authority, either by asserting the law or manifesting a sense of pressure to respond to global, national, political and economic demands. In addition, the policy addresses the issue of graduate unemployment and contends that services outsourcing - and its early introduction in the system of higher education - is an effective solution to counteract it.

### 6.1.3. The Chinese Dream

The “*Outline of China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020)*” (C-MLT –Plan) was presented in 2010 and showcases ambitious goals towards to what President Xi Jinping (2017) later called the “Chinese Dream”. In his wide-ranging report, Jinping (2017) applauds the advancements in the promotion of socialism with Chinese characteristics, strengthening of international ties, fructification of the economy and developments in innovation – to name a few. Chan (2015, p. 23) argues that the concept - that cleverly flouts the traditional perception of the American dream – “has become a staple of official rhetoric and propaganda.” Going along with President Xi Jinping’s attestations, leaders have vowed to make China into an “innovation-led nation by 2020” (Chan, 2015, p. 23).
The “C-MLT –Plan” touches on several topics in social development, as well as considers all levels of education, not just higher education. Due to its lengthy size, this policy demanded clearer limits as to what areas were focused on in the analysis. I chose to look at the chapter addressing reforms in higher education. In addition, I skimmed through the whole document to identify any sections specifically focusing on economy-related issues, as well as a search with the keyword “econom-“ displayed two more paragraphs that with the inclusion criteria.

Interestingly, “C-MLT –Plan” displayed the most diverse use of legitimation strategies out of the four Chinese policies.

Example #10:

Establishing a **full-fledged, vibrant** education system: **It is imperative to** further emancipate our mind, update our concepts, deepen educational reform, open education still wider, and bring about an education system that is congenial to the socialist market economy and the objective of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Such an education system should also be **vibrant, efficient, open, and well adapted** to scientific development and the requirements to run world-class modern education with Chinese features. (C-MLT-Plan, p. 10)

Several adjectives that refer to **moral evaluation** (bold and underlined), such as “full-fledged”, “vibrant”, “efficient”, “open” and “well-adapted” are displayed in Example 10. This type of legitimation is greatly used in the “C-MLT –Plan”. Policy-makers portray desirable characteristics of the education system.

The use of decisive phrases, such as “it is imperative” can be seen as a form of **instrumental rationalization** (bold). It implies that we must do it, in order to respond to the way the world is going. This type of rationalization is seen a lot in the C-MLT – Plan. “It is essential” and “it is necessary” are other ways the Plan maintains legitimacy with this strategy. However, I would argue that this also a way to convey expert
authorization. It is a way to disable the reader from contradicting the statement and for the policy-makers to further instate what is the “public good” (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 95).

Furthermore, I interpret that the use of the first-person plural “our” contributes to authority of tradition and conformity (bold). The policy-makers illustrate a desired, consistent and unanimous goal for the nation. By including the citizens in the statement, the writers hold them accountable to conform to the majority. Lastly, authority of conformity and mythopoesis (underlined) - with the statement “to run world-class modern education” - are used to build a picture of the successful role Chinese education will play on the global arena and how China will join the list of countries that already have elite institutions.

Example #11:

The fostering of young talents or professionals shall command a central position in college work, and no effort shall be spared to produce high-caliber professionals and top-notch innovators with steadfast faith, moral integrity, rich knowledge, and superb abilities. (C-MLT-Plan, p.19)

Example 11 showcases a commonly used technique that is mirrored in all of the Chinese policies: by combining goal orientation (underlined) rationalizing “TO produce..” and moral evaluation (bold) by referring to characteristics of exemplar individuals, such as “high-caliber professionals”, “top-notch innovators” that have “moral integrity”, “rich knowledge” and “superb abilities”.

Example #12:

Raising quality is at the heart of this task, and a basic requirement of the effort to build the nation into a power to be reckoned with in the global higher education landscape. (C-MLT-Plan, p. 19)
The phrase “Raising quality is at the heart of this task…” can be perceived as *moral abstraction* and *experiential rationalization* (bold). The act of raising quality is “moralized” and made more personal with the use of the word “heart”. Van Leeuwen (2007, p. 104) notes that the interpretation of *experiential rationalization* is “more open to debate”. He explains that this type of strategy is usually more informal and ‘unscientific’ and “function[s] in commonsense knowledge” (p. 104). Furthermore, the fact that raising the quality is described as a “basic requirement”, shows that the policy-makers predicate it an essential part of reform.

The Chinese policies generally take on a competitive and nationalistic approach to showcase their role in the global arena. They often illustrate China as “a power to be reckoned with”. The Chinese higher education system aims to have the “best faculties in the world”, as well as “top-notch innovators and world-class disciplines”. The “C-MLT-Plan” even states that innovation should contribute to “national defense”, which invokes a strong essence of nation building.

While the government continues to push for further internationalization and establishing of prestigious universities, it intends to keep its “Chinese characteristics” (Song, 2017) This has, however, turned out to be a bigger challenge for the State than expected (Song, 2017). During the decade that the “C-MLT –Plan” is in place, the Chinese government has come out with several policies that encourage the establishing of elite universities (Song, 2017). Furthermore, the “C-MLT-Plan” states that governance over teaching will be further rigidified to ensure better quality. This also supports what literature (for example Altbach, 2019; Chan, 2015) says about Chinese government’s tight control over the higher education institutions. Although, Song (2017, p. 731) notes that initiatives to loosen the institutional governance of the State have been taken up a few years after the “C-MLT-Plan” was issued.

Example #13:

While serving national objectives, higher educational institutions shall… (C-MLT –Plan, p. 20)
Example 13 displays another way the “C-MLT –Plan” refers to personal authority (bold), with the phrase “while serving national objectives…”. It is assumed that higher education institutions will comply with the directive. The policy-makers exercise their authority over the nation and do not see the need to provide further justification.

Economic development is also acknowledged in the “Medium to Long-term Plan”. The Plan strongly emphasizes the need to promote innovation and research in order to create a modern socialist economy. In addition, improvement of social services is mentioned, which, as Cortese (2003) indicated, is essential for a sustainable economy. The installment of entrepreneurship education is introduced, as well as the fostering of young talents through collaboration of industry and higher education institutions to alleviate graduate unemployment. The Plan endorses the modernization theory by commonly referring to globalization and setting China at opposite ends with the rest of the world. The policy-makers maintain, what Welch (1991, p. 509) calls, “overall system legitimacy” by instating their position as authorities that work to promote the public good.

6.1.4. The Belt and Road Initiative

As we noted in the first chapter of this thesis, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is China’s ambitious attempt to revive the old “Silk Road” (A. Li, 2018; Mok, 2018). Along with the increase in trade and business, the Initiative has also sparked big developments in Asian higher education (ibid). The “Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative” came out in 2016, which comes three years after President Jinping first stated China’s intentions to inaugurate the project (Li, 2018).

The Action Plan is written with international readers in mind and discusses the collaboration between China and countries along the Belt and Road Initiative. The
“win-win” cooperation and “mutual benefits” are mentioned more than once and most sections are addressed in first person plural, “we”, encompassing all actors taking part in the project. Notably, the BRI has increased the number of international students coming into China, as the Asian state is progressively seen as an opportune destination to study (Liqing & Yanhua, 2018, p. 535) In conjunction with the “C-HE.law” document, the “C-BRI” policy displays a profound use of legitimation through authorization, which emits an expert and disciplinarian feel throughout.

Example #14:

To promote the development of education in the region and produce wide-ranging support for the Belt and Road Initiative, we will work together in an endeavor… (C-BRI, p. 1)

Example 14 is a typical way the “C-BRI” document portrays its mission. Most sentences in the policy are constructed with “we will work together…”, which refers to personal authority (underlined) and to some extent, authority of conformity, making readers feel included in the operation, while policy-makers exercise authority by stating how things will be.

Example #15:

Education is vital to the strength of a country, the prosperity of a nation and the happiness of a people. (C-BRI, p. 1)

To legitimate the important role of education, in “education is vital”, policy-makers have used definition rationalization and moral evaluation (bold). They define what education symbolizes with the use of moralizing and positive words, such as “prosperity” and “happiness”.

Example #16:
Promoting a common prosperity of education in the countries along the routes will not only strengthen win-win cooperation with these countries, but also provide strong stimulus to domestic reform and development in education. (C-BRI, p. 1)

This type of prediction rationalization (bold) of “will not only strengthen…but also provide” is established on the basis of the expertise of the policy-makers, as they are able to foresee what the outcome of the Belt and Road Initiative will be (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 104).

Example #17:

As an African saying puts it: “He who travels alone travels faster, yet he who travels in company travels farther”. (C-BRI, p. 5)

This proverb is found in the concluding section of the policy that depicts a positive and hopeful look at the future of the BRI. Intrigued, I did a quick Google search of the saying and found that the American National Public Radio (NPR) had questioned the use of African proverbs, including the one above, in the speeches of American politicians, like for example Hillary Clinton (Goldberg, 2016). NPR’s investigation into these sayings concludes that the original sources cannot be found, although they do bring about an African essence. Furthermore, the article knocks down how the proverbs reference the whole African continent, instead of specifying an actual country or region (Goldberg, 2016).

The Google search results also gathered former American president Theodore Roosevelt’s expression: “It may be true that he travels farthest who travels alone, but the goal thus reached is not worth reaching” (Goodreads, n.d.). A critical discourse analysis might question whether this is a case of inter-textuality, as it could be seen as referring to another text? (Bryman, 2016, p. 540) In addition, we might ask ourselves why the policy-makers saw it as ideal to include this African proverb? Is it to win over the support of African BRI countries? We can attribute the use of this African saying to
mythopoesis and within that category, to a moral tale, as it portrays how successful collaboration will result in a positive outcome. In addition, Van Leeuwen (2007, p. 104) notes that proverbs are categorized as experiential rationalization, which commonly adopts the form of an anecdote.

6.2. Japanese Legitimation Strategies

The Japanese documents are presented in the following order: “The Future of Higher Education in Japan”, “Support for Internationalization of Universities”, “National University Reform Plan” and “Higher Education in Japan”. Not all of the Japanese policies have dates of publishing. Therefore, following a chronological order was not evident. I attempted to maintain a logical structure that would make the following of the findings as clear as possible.

6.2.1. Higher Education of Tomorrow

“The Future of Higher Education in Japan” (J-Fut.HE) was presented in 2005. Yonezawa (2007, p. 829) notes that 76.2% of 18-year-olds were enlisted at an HEI or postsecondary establishment that year. The “J-Fut.HE” document starts off with the estimate that in 2007 this percentage will has risen to 100%. Retrospectively, we can conclude that the percentage of enrollment only rose to 76.3% (Huang, 2012). This document did not show strong references to moral evaluation nor mythopoesis. Instead, the policy discourse remained rather prescriptive and condensed.

Example #1:

The important issue in the future is development of higher education in which anyone can study the field they choose at the level they choose at any time. (J-Fut.HE, p. 1)
In Example 1 the policy argues for the significance of higher education in the future by referring to *expert authorization* (bold): “the important issue in the future is…” This type of authority is brought on by the expertise of the policy-makers, rather than their status, for they know what is the “public good”.

Example #2:

Guaranteeing the quality of higher education **in order to** protect learners and maintain international validity will be an important issue. (J-Fut.HE, p. 2)

Example 2 showcases the use of the *effect orientation* (bold), with “in order to”, to rationalize why ensuring then quality of higher education is crucial. The policy often combines *instrumental rationalization*, which argues for the purposefulness of something, and *expert authorization*, which refers to the policy-makers’ expertise. It is constructed with phrases, such as “it is necessary” and “it is important”. More specifically, the word “important” is repeated several times in the policies.

Example #3:

**MEXT** intends to continue to actively advance higher education reform based on this report. (Fut.HE, p. 3)

Finally, the Ministry of Education “MEXT” refers to its *authoritarian status* to legitimate its capability in instating and progressing the initiatives.

### 6.2.2. To Internationalize?

The policy document “Support for Internationalization of Universities” (J-Sup.Int) revises some of the projects and initiatives that the Japanese government has undertaken
Japanese higher education has become quite disparate from other systems in the world, “partly because of the language barrier and partly because of its unique system of employment” (Yonezawa, 2007, p. 834). Despite uneasiness around its repercussions on “Japanese identity, national unity, and economic power”, the Japanese government has extensively experimented with internationalization since the 1970s (Rose & McKinley, 2018, p. 114). In 2003, the country achieved its goal of welcoming 100,000 international students (Yonezawa, 2007, p. 834). Internationalization of higher education is seen as crucial step to prepare graduates to succeed in “increasingly globalized knowledge economies” (Hammond, 2016).

Example #4:

The Top Global University Project is a funding project that aims to enhance the international competitiveness of higher education in Japan. (J-Sup.Int, p. 1)

Example #5:

The Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development is a funding project that aims to overcome the Japanese younger generation’s “inward tendency” and to foster human resources who can positively meet the challenges and succeed in the global field, as the basis for improving Japan’s global competitiveness and enhancing the ties between nations. (J-Sup.Int, p. 2)

A recurrent pattern in all four Japanese policies is legitimation through different strategies of rationalization. Example 4 and 5 showcase how the discourse utilizes instrumental rationalization (bold), “that aims TO overcome” and “TO foster”, to justify the purpose of “The Top Global University Project” and “The Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development”. In addition, the policy-makers point to “the international competitiveness of higher education in Japan” and the need to “meet the challenges and succeed in the global field” to highlight the role higher
education plays in global competition. Similarly to the Chinese policies, the Japanese discourse draws a picture of a state that prevails globally, which is a form of *mythopoesis*. However, the Japanese discourse does not portray a contentious approach, like China, but instead, approaches global competition in a softer manner, by “positively meeting” the requirements. In addition, Example 5 showcases that the Japanese government has considered the issue of the “Japanese younger generation’s ‘inward tendency’”, which has also been raised in literature (Burgess, 2015; Burgess, Gibson, Klapahke, & Selzer, 2010).

Example #6:

…and acceptance of **excellent** international students in Japan. (J-Sup.Int, p. 2).

Example #7:

Efforts to promote the internationalization of university education in Japan **will be given strong, priority** support. (J-Sup.Int, p. 2)

Examples 6 and 7 display one of the few uses of *moral evaluation* (bold) in the “J-Sup.Int” policy by attributing positive phrases to internationalization, such as “excellent international students” and “strong, priority support”. In addition, this can be seen as way for the government to legitimize its *authority* (underlined), by instating that it will only accept the best students and will work to monitor the level of academics coming in. In addition, it presumes that internationalization **WILL** be promoted.

The “J-Sup.Int” policy is to the point and written in a descriptive manner. The critical discourse analysis suggests that there is little reference to authorization, while rationalization is constant throughout. Sustainable economic development is mirrored in the initiatives taken up in the policy. For instance, it is considered in the “fostering of global human resources”.
6.2.3. National University Reform

The “National University Reform Plan” (J-Nat.Uni) is a summary of the reforms that undertake “measures to strengthen functions of national universities” from 2013 to 2015. The policy is presented in a large table format and consists of bullet points addressing the many reforms. The main highlighted themes of the document include “globalization, innovation, a flexible salary system, strengthening of governance and strengthening of assessment system”.

Example #8:

The Third Mid-term Plan starting FY2016 aims to reform national universities to maintain competitiveness and create new added-value ideas… (J-Nat.Uni, p. 2)

Example 8 refers to a larger-scale “Mid-term Plan”, which is common in the “J-Nat.Uni” policy, as it is a summary explaining several reforms taken up by the government. Furthermore, the policy specifies the policy’s goals with goals orientation (bold), by stating what it “aims to reform”. In addition, the purpose of the reform is justified with instrumental rationalization: “TO maintain”.

Example #9:

Foster technicians and managers who will play a leadership role in Asia. (J-Nat.Uni, p.2)

Example 9 displays a common way the policy portrays its vision for the future of the country. This can be seen as referring to a moral tale that draws the picture of desirable successful individuals who will lead Asia. The “J-Nat.Uni” document also highlights Japan’s intentions of promoting the link between higher education and the industry.
Example #10:
Strategically accept foreign students by defining priority regions (J-Nat.Uni, p.1)

Example 10 did not necessarily strike with a specific legitimation strategy. However, I wanted to include the statement in this thesis to highlight an interesting deliberate approach by the Japanese government. The State intends to specifically select countries that it will prioritize in accepting students from. The human capital theory and modernization are discretely present in the “J-Nat.Uni” document. The policy insinuates that investing in higher education will allow Japan to excel in several areas and keep up with global trends - maybe even lead them. Sustainable economic development is not referred to in the document.

6.2.4. Higher Education in Japan

Lastly, “Higher Education in Japan” (J-HE.Jap) document is classified as a pamphlet, but in fact, consists of over 20 pages of information on the Japanese higher education, as well as its policies and aims for the future. This was the most comprehensive take on the Japanese higher education out of all the English policy documents on the website of the Ministry of Education. Therefore, I believed it would provide a more substantial contribution to looking at Japanese policy discourse.

The “J-HE.Jap” document strongly relates its principles to globalization and the building of a knowledge economy.

Example #11:
To assure the quality that can meet the global demands and protect students’ benefit, the approval by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology is required in order to establish universities. (J-HE.Jap, p. 11)
Example 11 displays the Japanese policies commonly used instrumental rationalization (bold) “TO assure” and “TO protect” and combines it with moral evaluation (underlined) by referring to the desirable act of competing globally (“meet the global demands”), as well as the important task of “protecting students’ benefit”. Furthermore, the Minister of MEXT is mentioned to legitimize through personal authority.

Example #12:

In an effort to improve Japan’s international competitiveness, graduate schools have been expected to raise not only researchers, etc. but also highly specialized human resources having wide viewpoints and capable of demonstrating their abilities in diverse areas, including businesses and administrative organization. (J-HE.Jap, p. 15)

Means orientation (bold) is used to rationalize (“in an effort to improve”) how Japan can boost its knowledge economy and presence in global competition. Additionally, mythopoesis allows the discourse to illustrate the ‘new era’ where Japan excels internationally.

Example #13:

“Amid ongoing globalization, in order to develop an educational environment where Japanese people can acquire the necessary English skills and also international students can feel at ease to study in Japan…” (J-HE.Jap, p.17)

Example 13 consists of a cautionary tale. It insinuates that we must conform to the ways of the world, or else we will fall behind. Furthermore, it discusses the issues Japan is facing in its attempts to internationalize higher education. The need to develop the nation’s level of English acquisition is highlighted, as well as the promotion of Japan as a welcoming and approachable destination for foreign students.

The “J-HE.Jap” gives an overview of Japanese higher education, including its background, initiatives and future goals. It portrays the important role higher education
plays in the country’s development socially and economically, which reflects the rationalization through human capital theory. Furthermore, globalization and internationalization are big components of the document and showcase Japan’s urge to keep up with the global movement.

6.3. Comparison

After having examined the policy documents of China and Japan separately, I will now gather the findings into one comparative compilation to answer my third research question: How does the use of legitimation strategies differ between the Chinese and Japanese policy discourses?

A concept map is a way for the researcher to visualize findings and link key terms to the theory (Kane & Trochim, 2009). In this case, I have included concepts that have surged from previous literature and Van Leeuwen’s (2007) groundwork on legitimation strategies. Following, I will also consider how these notions can contribute to Basil Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic device.

Figure 8 illustrates the contrasting relationship between the Chinese and Japanese higher education policy discourses and the ways they construct legitimacy. The four main legitimacy strategies “authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization and mythopoesis” are portrayed with small icons and are situated in the middle of the figure. They have been oriented in a way that showcases which country has used the legitimacy strategy more consistently. For example, China displays a stronger use of authorization and moral evaluation. Therefore, these two legitimacy icons are situated closer to the Chinese (left) side. On the other hand, Japan displayed a more consistent use of rationalization, which means that the specific icon is positioned more towards the Japanese (right) side. Both countries actively used mythopoesis, therefore, the icon remains in the middle.
Authorization. Bernstein (1971, p. 45) explains that in public language, authority and legitimacy can be achieved merely with the relationship between actors, which is “non-verbally present”. In other words, the authoritarian status of the policy-makers is enough to present principles to citizens without giving any justifications. Van Leeuwen’s (2007, p. 94) “expert authority” supports this strategy. The Chinese and Japanese policy-makers often referred to their authoritarian status to instate principles. The policies enlisted names of different government departments and stakeholders that took part in the writing to support their authority. There were suggestions on both sides that the reforms are, in fact, for the “public good” and that the policy-makers know what is best for the nation. However, as Welch (2015b) argues, articulating mandates without giving further justification or referral to context, goes against the principle of legitimation. Especially in the case of education, which affects all of society, baseless statements do not consider the individualistic demands of citizens. The Japanese discourse, however, was more likely to provide rationalization for its choices and principles. While, impersonal authority was more apparent in the Chinese policies, as they referred to the laws and regulations of the State.

The Chinese discourse utilized the first person plural pronoun “we” to unite the national and international readers with the policy-makers. Bernstein (1971, p. 45) explains that the use of pronouns, such as “we” and “you” brings the discourse back to a community-level and becomes more subjective (Bernstein, 1971, p. 45). Conversely, the Japanese policies remained objective and commonly used prescriptive statements. Additionally, both national discourses referred to authority of conformity and mythopoesis by pointing to the growing tides of globalization. Thus, China and Japan must conform to the ways of the world in order to be able to compete with other countries. The governments set modernization and the pursuit of the knowledge economy as the basis for the macro-level objectives.

Moral evaluation. In the case of legitimation through moral evaluation, the two countries showed very different approaches. While the Chinese discourse actively used
words that ‘moralized’ and appealed to values, the Japanese discourse did it more discretely. The Japanese policies were more likely to rationalize the purposefulness and usefulness of principles by describing them as “important” or “effective”. The human capital theory can help to understand why the government highlights the crucial role of higher education. Progressive and positive characteristics were especially associated with internationalization, which is an anticipated strategy due to the uneasiness ‘opening up’ has encountered in Japan.

From illustrating the desirable citizen to attaching strong nationalistic incentives to global competition, the Chinese policies commonly used resolute descriptions to achieve legitimacy. The policies often used aspiring adjectives that gave a positive connotation. Van Leeuwen (2007, p. 97) notes that these words provoke a moral response in readers, although not necessarily “on a conscious level”. Furthermore, policies are able to present these as generic objectives for the nation in order to gain the citizens’ trust (ibid.). The key word here is desirable. Policies from both China and Japan portrayed the desired intentions for higher education and their nations. Looking at this from a Bernsteinian perspective, I would question how the transmittance of these specific values influences the readers’ opinion and actions. They could be perceived as mere guidelines or then, actively pursued in schools.

Rationalization. Although both countries rationalized their principles comprehensively, the Japanese discourse showed to be more consistent with it. It was more prominent in addressing the challenges Japan was facing and further providing a justification for why the reforms needed to be implemented. A recurrent basis for rationalization for both countries was the modernization drive and pursuit of knowledge economy. Promoting innovation and research were key objectives. Echoing with what was said in ‘moral evaluation’, the two national discourses often referred to instrumental rationalization to state that something is useful or effective. The Chinese discourse, too, justified its principles by showing cause and effect. However, it was often more likely to instate the policy-makers’ authority to explain why things should be done a certain way. Therefore, the policies were ultimately advocating the state’s views on how things should be,
instead of providing a contextual consideration. The human capital theory was often used to rationalize the usefulness of higher education, especially in the case of investing in services outsourcing.

**Figure 8**

![Concept Map: Comparison of Legitimation Strategies in Chinese and Japanese Policy Discourse](image)

**Mythopoesis.** Mythopoesis was, at times, tricky to pinpoint since it did not always take the form of a narrative as Van Leeuwen (2007, p. 105) put it. Fairclough (2003, p. 99) explains that it can also be an illustration of the “new age”, which often refers to
globalization and its effects. The two policy discourses often drew an image of a country that competes successfully globally, which took the form of a moral tale. Cautionary tale was used to warn of the consequences of not conforming to the world’s trends. The significance of keeping up with global trends is therefore conveyed as a crucial part of conforming to mass thinking.

Both China and Japan portrayed themselves as good collaborators with prosperous connections with other countries. However, due to its prescriptive style of writing, the Japanese discourse was less likely to use eloquent narration. The Chinese discourse, however, often used illustrative words to capture the nationalist drive. In addition, the reference to the “African proverb” can be considered a compelling way to portray how China intends to actively promote the collaboration with its African partners.

I already slightly touched on how the limitations affected the analysis. Since the selected policies were not original versions, the discourses had undoubtedly been reformulated during the translation phase. Therefore, recontextualization had already been completed in the Japanese policies and once again, to transfer the content into the English language. Especially in the case of Japan, the layout of the policies varied, with one of them being a summary of several policies portrayed in a two-page table format (J-Nat.Uni). This surely affected the way discourse was constructed, as its purpose was different. The function of the Japanese documents was to summarize policies, whereas the Chinese documents were translations of the original policies. Therefore, the comparison was not capable of highlighting more in the case of Japan. To increase the validity of the study, I followed Wodak and Meyer’s (2001) triangulation method for critical discourse analysis. I provided background information on the documents, national contexts and discourses to equip the readers with a solid understanding of the policies. It also helped to diminish bias in the analysis, as I was constantly relating the findings back to context. I will also note that having another person go through and elaborate on the findings would have been useful and, in turn, increased validity.

Furthermore, a future study could uncover how the analysis of the original Chinese- and
Japanese-language policies differs from this study. How would another researcher with a different background construe the legitimation strategies and policies? A combined study with local and foreign researchers could bring about more diverse interpretations. Critical discourse analysis allowed for flexible scrutiny of the policies and integrating Basil Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic device. Furthermore, this study could be expanded to looking more specifically at the political agendas embedded in educational policies. Green (2013) discusses how nationalism impacts, in the perimeters of education, nation building and economic development.

Sustainable economic development served as a sub-topic of the study. Its significance has become increasingly apparent in today’s world. The Chinese services outsourcing initiative mentions sustainability and the environment, but does not go into more detail on its purposefulness. The previous systematic literature review (Hentunen, 2019) showed that the two countries face several and similar challenges in maintaining steady economic development. A future research topic could more specifically delve into the strategies the Asian governments apply to addressing these issues.
Chapter 6
Conclusion

This study set out to find how the macro-level Chinese and Japanese higher education policy discourses construct legitimation and transmit specific knowledge to micro-level actors. Educational policy is supposedly impartial and objective, however as it passes through the different stages of institutional education, it is reformulated, reassessed and recontextualized. Today, Asian governments are pressured to compete globally and provide concrete evidence of the country’s developments. Education has become the ideal device to impact the nation: governments are able assert national goals, political agendas, economic initiatives - even instruct how citizens ought to be.

Bernstein (1975) saw that curriculum, and policy, is a compilation of a set of decisions. Therefore, examining how policy is constructed is crucial. By examining the way Chinese and Japanese policy-makers legitimate their policy principles, we become more conscious of the State’s clandestine agendas. This study contrasted the two national discourses and found differing approaches. China and Japan rationalized their reforms with intentions to modernize and pursue knowledge economies. The human capital theory was strongly reflected in the policies as higher education is portrayed as a key component of the states’ development. However, the discourses showed little concern for sustainability. The two governments may eventually need to reconsider the matter in order to prosper in the future. The Chinese discourse took on a more authoritarian approach by insinuating nationalistic rhetoric and by appealing to moral values. Contrastingly, the Japanese discourse took on a more restrained approach by clearly stating its intentions with the means of rationalization.
The ways the two countries approached their policies did not show a regional pattern. Instead, it insinuated that the governments, although having similar objectives, portrayed contrasting games plans in transmitting knowledge. As the role of East Asia becomes all the more palpable in global higher education, we remain interested to see how the Chinese and Japanese governments propel their next generation of students onward.
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## APPENDIX 1

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### APPENDIX 2

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