



Incorporating culturally relevant pedagogy for international students in UK higher education: challenges and perspectives

Jennifer Park
BPP University, UK

Abstract

The number of international students in the United Kingdom's (UK) higher education (HE) sector has significantly increased, yet research on pedagogical frameworks for these students remains limited, particularly within the context of private business schools. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the application of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) for international students in a UK HE private business school. CRP is a pedagogical framework that supports students' intellectual, social, emotional, and political development by integrating their cultural backgrounds into teaching practices (Ladson-Billings, 2009), emphasising the importance of aligning teaching content and students' cultural backgrounds (Yu, 2022). Using qualitative methodology, semi-structured interviews were conducted and analysed through thematic analysis with a deductive coding approach based on the three tenets of CRP: academic success, cultural competence, and critical consciousness. Findings suggested that participants, who were lecturers, were drawn to tenet 2, cultural competence, but also indicated challenges to incorporate CRP principles for international students within the UK HE private business school context. Contrary to the original CRP framework, findings in this study suggested that students and institutions, along with lecturers, should share the responsibility for students' academic success. Unlike CRP in the United States (US) context, participants hesitated to discuss social issues with international students in the classroom. Given the challenges identified in this study, further study is necessary to reconceptualise CRP for international students, not only within UK HE private business schools but across the broader UK HE landscape.

Keywords: culturally relevant pedagogy; international students; higher education; private business school; UK.

Introduction

Since the UK government launched the 'International Education Strategy: global potential, global growth' (Department for International Trade [DfIT] and Department for Education [DfE], 2019) in March 2019, the target of increasing the number of international students in UK higher education (HE) to 600,000 by 2030 was achieved within one year of the strategy's launch (DfIT and DfE, 2022). However, despite the increasing presence of international students in UK HE (HESA, n.d), there is still a significant gap in understanding pedagogies for culturally and linguistically diverse international students (Benson, 2003; Howard, 2003; Zhang et al., 2016), particularly within the context of UK private universities. The issue is further compounded by many lecturers in UK HE insisting that it is the students who should adapt to traditional British pedagogical approaches rather than them considering adapting their teaching practice to students' different educational backgrounds (Ploner, 2017; Lomer and Mittelmeier, 2021; Quinlan et al., 2024). This view has led to negative pedagogic practices that might have disadvantaged international students (Lomer and Mittelmeier, 2021), with lecturers dismissing or undermining the perspectives of these students, contributing to their lower academic achievement compared to their peers (Heringer, 2018).

Furthermore, despite the growth of private universities in the global HE industry (Gerhardt and Karsan, 2022), research on private universities in UK HE remains limited. Additionally, no research discusses how private business schools in UK HE incorporate pedagogical frameworks for their international students. To address this gap, this study explores one potential pedagogical framework for international students in private business schools in UK HE.

For this study, BPP Business School, one of the largest private business schools in the UK (HESA, n.d), was selected as the data collection site. BPP University's mission statement shows their commitment to diversity and understanding students' different cultures, and it emphasises the importance of celebrating the differences of students, learners, clients, and employees (BPP, 2024). In addition, incorporating culturally diverse business examples to enhance international students' learning experience is one of their pedagogical approaches, which resonates with the principles of culturally relevant pedagogy. Therefore, although CRP was initially developed for marginalised, non-white K-12 students in the US, it was selected as the conceptual framework for this study, as its

emphasis on recognising students' cultural backgrounds, enhancing learning experiences with culturally diverse examples, and reducing the awarding gap between marginalised students, in this case international students, and their counterparts (Heringer, 2018) echoes my previous observations in BPP Business School's teaching practices.

Culturally relevant pedagogy

CRP is defined as 'the pedagogy which empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically using cultural references to impart knowledge, skills, and attitude' (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p.20). It emphasises the integration of students' home and educational cultures into teaching practice. It also contends that incorporating CRP into teaching practice can help students achieve academic success, develop cultural competence, and become more critically conscious of social issues (Osborne, 1996; Morrison et al., 2008; Schmeichel, 2012; Howard, 2021). In addition, CRP enhances students' self-esteem and critical thinking skills by embedding cultural relevance in teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Yu, 2022). The CRP framework is grounded in three core tenets: 1) academic success, 2) cultural competence, and 3) critical consciousness. It emphasises that culturally relevant pedagogues should ensure their students engage with and develop all three tenets (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Saint-Hilaire, 2014; Chunoo and Callahan, 2017; Milner, 2017; Walker, 2019; Kondo, 2022).

Tenet 1 – academic success

Academic success is defined as 'intellectual growth that students experience as a result of classroom instruction and learning experiences' (Ladson-Billings, 2014, p.75). It posits that implementing CRP in class creates high academic standards through collaborative learning, and all students should experience academic success (May, 2010; Howard and Rodriguez-Minkoff, 2017; Kondo, 2022). However, as Howard and Rodriguez-Minkoff (2017) discussed, while ethnic and cultural diversity among students in education continues to increase, the awarding gap between non-white and white students persists and thus remains a critical concern. According to HESA (n.d.), of the total number of students awarded a first-class degree in the academic year 2022/2023, approximately 79% were white, while 21% were black, Asian, mixed, or other. This disparity highlights the importance of employing CRP for students from diverse cultural backgrounds and sharing

good teaching practices to close the awarding gap (Schmeichel, 2012). Furthermore, academic success in CRP goes beyond standardised test results. It argues that students achieve academic success if they gain more knowledge compared to when they started learning in class. In other words, academic success means gaining knowledge rather than relying on test results. Ladson-Billings (2023) emphasised that educators should understand academic success is beyond test scores (Aronson and Laughter, 2016). Other researchers, such as Walker (2019) and de Silva et al. (2018), also argued that teachers who take students' academic success as *their* responsibility and believe that every student, regardless of their ethnic and cultural background, can achieve academic success have high expectations for all students. These teachers also utilise more creative strategies to ensure culturally and ethnically diverse students' academic success in the classroom.

Tenet 2 – cultural competence

Cultural competence is 'the ability to help students appreciate and celebrate their cultures of origin while gaining knowledge of and fluency in at least one other culture' (Ladson-Billings, 2014, p.74). Cultural competence is not about teachers developing information about different cultures but about ensuring students expand their understanding of other cultural perspectives (Milner, 2011; 2017). As the goal of CRP is to develop a 'synergistic relationship between home/community culture and school culture' (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p.467), students should not give up their cultural identities for academic achievement (Morrison et al., 2008). CRP also emphasises the importance of teachers supporting students to acknowledge and respect their own culture in the learning process (Walker, 2019) while learning about different cultures, which helps them make informed decisions (Young, 2010; Milner, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2023). Therefore, tenet 2 supports students to become either bi- or multicultural citizens.

Tenet 3 – critical consciousness

As CRP emphasises that teachers should encourage academic success and ensure students recognise social inequities, it suggests that helping students build critical consciousness prepares them to act against social injustice, especially for marginalised students, and empowers students within society (Morrison et al., 2008). CRP helps students confront injustice by questioning systematic racism, and with critical

consciousness, students can understand how ethnicity, race, social class, and language influence people's behaviours and thoughts (Villegas and Lucas, 2002). Therefore, CRP helps students become more aware of inequity in society and challenge the status quo (Morrison et al., 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2009; 2023; Young, 2010; Milner, 2011; 2017; Walker, 2019) while acknowledging their cultural identities (Saint-Hilaire, 2014). Advocates for CRP claim teachers often lack awareness of the sociopolitical issues that impact their students' lives or are unprepared to discuss societal issues of inequity (Ladson-Billings, 2023; Young, 2010).

CRP emphasises that if teachers fail to recognise social inequities or racial biases and only exploit examples from different cultures without addressing these underlying issues, their teaching approach cannot be considered CRP, as they still do not acknowledge the relationship between students of colour and society. If teachers do not recognise the discrimination or inequity faced by students of colour and the challenges they encounter, they might continue to teach from a white perspective, which can ultimately fail to engage with the realities of these students (Schmeichel, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2023).

With my previous observations on teaching practices at BPP Business School, this study explores the extent to which lecturers incorporate CRP and the potential limitations of employing CRP for their international students in private business schools in the UK HE context.

Methodology

A qualitative research methodology using semi-structured interviews with lecturers was employed. This study required me to understand to what extent participants applied CRP in their teaching practice. Therefore, the qualitative methodology allowed me to understand their experiences and viewpoints. For the sampling method, purposive sampling was applied, which is often used for qualitative research as it allows the study to focus on specific situations (Teddlie and Yu, 2007), and aims to select participants who can best offer more meaningful insights and perspectives to the study (Fossey et al., 2002; Cohen et al., 2018). When the data collection process was initiated, there were 208 academic teaching staff at BPP Business School. As the first step, 25 staff who met the

inclusion criteria (Table 1) were contacted to identify their interest in participating in this study and six participants were recruited.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria.

| Inclusion Criteria | Exclusion Criteria |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time lecturers who have taught at BPP Business School for more than six months. • Lecturers who teach Business Management subjects. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time lecturers who are on probation. • Part-time lecturers • Lecturers who only teach Accounting and Finance subjects. |

Of the participants, five out of six had previous business practitioner experience before joining BPP Business School, and four participants also had multicultural backgrounds and/or multicultural experiences. Only one participant had previous teaching experience in HE (Table 2).

Table 2. Participants' background.

| Participant | Business Practitioners Experience | Previous teaching experience in HE | Multicultural experience |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Participant 1 | Yes | No | Yes |
| Participant 2 | Yes | No | Yes |
| Participant 3 | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Participant 4 | Yes | No | Yes |
| Participant 5 | No | No | No |
| Participant 6 | Yes | No | No |

Semi-structured online interviews were organised via MS Teams, and each interview lasted 45 minutes to an hour. The set of interview questions was designed based on the conceptual framework of this study to explore participants' experiences and perspectives on how much they incorporate CRP into their teaching practice.

I applied thematic analysis with a deductive coding approach based on the three tenets of CRP. As Braun and Clarke (2022) discussed, deductive orientation coding allowed the conceptual framework to offer the foundation for the codes and the themes to answer research questions. As CRP provided the conceptual framework for the research and was fundamental to answering the research question, it was vital to analyse data based on this conceptual framework. Ladson-Billings (1995; 2009) argued that the three tenets are fundamentals of CRP; therefore, I would not have been able to answer the research

questions without understanding the degree of BPP Business School lecturers' incorporation of these three tenets.

I set up three principal codes in NVivo: academic success, cultural competencies, and critical consciousness. Correspondingly, I identified sub-codes in each main code while engaging with the dataset. For example, in academic success, I also added learning experience and responsibility for students' academic success as sub-codes. All sub-codes came from the literature review, which discussed what is included in CRP's three tenets.

Findings

The analysis produced five themes: 1) responsibility for academic achievement; 2) interpretation of academic achievement; 3) lecturers' appreciation of students' cultures; 4) different cultures in a business discipline; and 5) restricted social inequity discussion.

1) Responsibility for academic success

The first theme from the analysis was who is responsible for students' academic achievement. An overall view among interviewees was that students' academic success is mainly students' responsibility. As one of the participants mentioned:

Ultimately, the student ... We can point them in the right direction, but they've got to do the work (P2).

However, one of the interesting comments was that some participants believed that the whole university is responsible for students' academic success. For example:

[Students' academic success] comes from every touch point that the student has within the university (P1).

It's mostly ... the students. Partly, it's myself as their tutor in that particular class, and partly, it's the university as an institution (P4).

They believed the whole university was responsible based on their experience. They argued that students are disengaged in class because of other challenges students face outside of class within the wider university context.

This finding is not in line with CRP, which emphasises that students' academic achievement is the teachers' responsibility, and teachers must accept this in order to be culturally relevant pedagogues.

2) Interpretation of academic success

The main views of participants on academic achievement were focused on assessment results. They saw good assessment results as students' academic success; therefore, students' assessment results were their priority. One participant stated:

I know we shouldn't teach to the test, but these are the things they're gonna get asked about.... We have to prioritise things like ... they're gonna be asked in their assessment, we need to dedicate time and effort (P2).

Another participant repeated this view and emphasised the importance of 'how to best prepare them in terms of getting them ready for the summative assignment' (P1).

Even though some participants answered that learning in class is essential and achieving the learning objectives is necessary, they still concluded that assessment results are crucial for academic success. In one case, the participant (P5) confirmed they had emphasised the importance of passing the assessment with students during a class and told students, 'That's why you're here'.

CRP argues that academic success does not mean high test results but is more about students' learning experience. However, the study's findings contradict CRP. The finding suggests that participants consider academic success to equate to test results; hence, it is more important than the learning experience.

3) Lecturers' appreciation of students' cultures

This theme emerged in relation to how much lecturers appreciate their students' cultures and how they teach their students to become multicultural. The unanimous response from participants was that they believed it was essential for them to understand students' cultures and ensure students had indirect multicultural experiences in class. The findings also suggested that lecturers involve their students in sharing different cultures with others. One participant (P2) explained how they celebrated students' cultures together in class,

and another participant (P5) shared how students were happy and appreciated when the lecturer acknowledged students' cultures.

Participants also indicated they included students in discussion by asking them to share examples from their countries after lecturers used British examples first. As one participant put it:

[I] try and get them to talk about their experiences and make [examples] ... relatable to them and how [their] experiences differ between the UK versus where they're from (P1).

Participants believed this approach had encouraged students to be part of group discussions.

In addition to discussing British culture and students' cultures, some participants indicated that they also brought their multicultural experiences into the classroom as they have either lived or had business experience outside of the UK. As a result, students could understand multicultural perspectives. This aligns with CRP, which emphasises the importance of educating students to be bi- or multicultural.

4) Different cultures in business disciplines

Another theme was how lecturers incorporate various cultural examples in their teaching practice. All participants confirmed they used various business examples from different cultures in class. Also, as most participants had multicultural business experience, they explained how they utilised this to discuss different business practices in other cultures:

I tried to explain to them how those companies ... from different countries, [for example] you have Tata in India, Hyundai in South Korea, you have in the UK, which Jaguar is part of Tata. So ... when they're exchanging information, they're exchanging different material, a different supply chain. So you have a massive cloud of ERP [Enterprise Resource Planning] that enables the message to move from South Korea to India to the UK, and this is what gives you that global element and you become that global citizenship [sic] (P3).

Think about the experience of using Netflix. So it's like an equivalent streaming platform where they come from [India] ... the Voot (P1).

All participants confirmed that their teaching focuses on sharing different business examples from other cultures. At the same time, most of them also mentioned how they spent time researching different examples in students' cultures to ensure students could relate to the teaching topics.

5) Restricted Social Inequity Discussion

The last theme from the findings was that most participants tried to avoid any topics related to social issues. As one participant (P2) explained, participants felt discussing social inequity issues might 'trigger unpleasant memories' or 'very often, politics might creep in':

I try to avoid it unless they really want to talk about those things. So we have to be very mindful and sensitive as well because, you know, they're thousands of miles away from home. They've got family home [*sic*] there (P2).

P4's experience supported this when commenting on how using Gandhi's quote to discuss a social issue received an adverse reaction among the students. However, P4 also explained how students shared their 'robust views about Gandhi's impact on Pakistan and India and connection with ethnic violence', thus supporting a CRP perspective on why discussing social inequity in class is essential.

There was a... a quote from Gandhi on one of the slides and I thought it was a good quote and it was... so famous quote. 'Be careful. Watch your thoughts because they become your words. Watch your words.. Because they become your actions', etcetera ... And we were talking about that when I showed it on screen, there was a reaction of disgust amongst the students. So we had a constructive discussion about where does that reaction come ... and discussed different view [*sic*] (P4).

Even though most participants confirmed they try not to discuss social injustice or topics on social inequity, some of them stated how they discuss inequity in the business context. In a few cases, participants mentioned:

... examples of social issues, for example, women's rights, minimum wage, etc., in module x (P6).

We'll talk about [what is] happening at the moment that then may affect an impact [on business], so, [for example]... talk about the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico (P1).

... how the war has impacted on the living cost and whether it is fair to others (P1).

However, although participants explained how they attempted to discuss social inequity issues in their discipline, it is difficult to support that this is in line with CRP as they spoke from a business perspective rather than a social inequity perspective.

Discussion

From the findings, several key themes emerged: 1) responsibility for students' academic success; 2) different interpretations of academic success; 3) appreciation of students' cultures; 4) discussing different cultures in the business discipline; and 5) avoiding social injustice/inequity discussion.

1) Responsibility for students' academic success

Another important finding is how lecturers view responsibility for students' academic success. The participants in this study believed that students are primarily responsible for their academic success, although the university also shares some responsibility. This contradicts CRP, which emphasises that teachers are primarily responsible for students' academic success; therefore, it falls upon teachers' teaching practices when students are behind in learning. Shifting responsibility onto students might reflect the different level of education in the context of this study, compared with the K-12 context in which the CRP framework was originally developed (Ladson-Billings, 2009). School-level education is compulsory for children, while, for university-level education, the students, as adult learners, choose to study the programme. Especially for international students, they are the ones who choose to come to the UK for further study despite having to pay higher tuition fees. Therefore, it is understandable for lecturers to perceive that students should take responsibility for their academic achievement. However, although shifting the primary responsibility of academic success onto students looks reasonable in the HE context, this perspective might risk reinforcing a deficit view of international students as it places the blame for academic struggles on the students themselves and might impact the awarding gap further.

One unexpected finding was that participants believed the whole university/institution was responsible for students' academic success. The lecturers emphasised that they can only be responsible for the actual teaching of students, and when other factors disrupt students'

learning, which impacts academic success/test results, they cannot be held responsible. This point may relate to the point discussed above: the difference between the HE and school education contexts. In school-level education, as students are children, teachers and parents manage other areas while children focus on learning in class. Therefore, these areas might not have a significant impact on children themselves. However, at the university level, as independent adults, students need to manage other challenges besides their learning – for example, checking their own timetable, or finding information from a different department.

2) Different interpretations of terminology: academic success

CRP defines tenet 1, academic success, as 'intellectual growth that students experience as a result of classroom instruction and learning experiences' (Ladson-Billings, 2014, p.75). From this perspective, if students learn in class, academic success is achieved regardless of their grades. However, in this study, participants associated academic success with assessment results. As such, their primary goal was to ensure students passed assessments to achieve academic success.

Although this interpretation directly conflicts with the original definition of academic success in CRP, this study only reinforces Ladson-Billings' concern regarding the misinterpretation of the meaning of academic success by educators (Ladson-Billings, 2021). However, I argue that the emphasis on assessment results by participants can be understood within the HE context. As the study focuses on international students in HE, who often pay higher tuition fees than domestic students, and getting a qualification by completing the programme is their primary goal, assessment results can be significant indicators of academic success. If they fail to complete the programme, their academic success is more difficult to recognise and validate despite gaining knowledge and learning from the curriculum.

Additionally, as the Office for Students (OfS) (2022) emphasises the importance of student programme completion rate, even though CRP suggests that learning should be considered as academic success, the lecturers in the study might have been more compelled to prioritise assessment results to ensure the student completion rate meets the OfS's threshold.

3) Appreciation of students' cultures

The area in which participants seemed to draw on CRP the most is cultural competence. All participants believed that having insight into where students come from and understanding individual students' backgrounds are important in their teaching practice. As briefly mentioned before, CRP emphasises the importance of understanding students' home cultures and utilising them in teaching, which improves students' learning as they are more engaged in learning activities. Ladson-Billings' research (1995; 2009; 2021) also confirmed that using materials more culturally relevant to students improved their learning experiences and performance.

As this study observed, engaging in discussions about different cultures helps students become multicultural, develop positive cultural identities and make informed decisions based on understanding broader cultures (Young, 2010; Walker, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 2023).

4) Discussing different cultures in the business discipline

Another finding that stands out from the results reported earlier is how participants discuss different cultures in their subject disciplines. Most participants were excited to share how they utilise their international business experiences in their teaching and engage students in classroom discussion with those examples. This result is not surprising as it relates to BPP's Professional Performance Model (BPP, 2025). This emphasises the global business experience of teaching staff and how students can learn practical management skills from international business practitioners. Also, some participants shared how they researched business examples in different cultures in their teaching preparation. They confirmed that students were more engaged in the discussion and shared their perspectives with others.

5) Avoiding social injustice/inequity discussion

I identify tenet 3, critical consciousness, as the least applied by participants in the study. Except for P6, the participants expressed how they do not want to discuss topics related to social inequity or injustice. This lies in opposition to the values outlined in CRP, which claims that if teachers do not discuss social inequity in class, they do not see societal

discrimination. If so, education loses its purpose as students repeat what they have learnt from teachers without critically assessing what they have been taught (Schmeichel, 2012).

However, I argue that CRP research in 1994 was related to African American children in the US and how they were excluded or discriminated against in the education system (Ladson-Billings, 1995; 2009), and consequently, this might be less applicable to the experiences of international students in UK HE. I do not suggest that this is less important than other tenets or that international students are not occasionally excluded from UK HE education. Although all tenets, including tenet 3, critical consciousness, should be addressed for CRP to work and to reduce the awarding gap between marginalised students and their counterparts, I debate whether this tenet is essential when considering international students in the context of UK HE.

Limitations and Future Study

Although the study attempted to fill in the research gap, there are limitations and further investigations are required.

First, the study only explored lecturers' perspectives and did not include students' perspectives. As students in HE are adult learners, it would be important to investigate the meaning of academic success and who is responsible for their academic success in HE from their perspective.

Second, although much research supports using culturally diverse examples for teaching students with different cultural backgrounds, it would also be beneficial to understand whether this is what international students in the UK would want to learn when they travel thousands of miles to study abroad.

The third limitation is that the participants were recruited from a single institution, and the study utilised a relatively small sample size. Future studies will need to include more lecturers in different business schools in the UK to gain a broader understanding.

Conclusion

This study explored to what extent CRP has been incorporated into teaching practices at a private business school in the UK, focusing on lecturers' perspectives through semi-structured interviews. The study revealed several insights that both align with and challenge the tenets of CRP.

Academic success was perceived differently because of the context of the study, as was who is responsible for student academic success. Cultural competence was recognised as an important factor in teaching international students, which aligns with CRP's principle of connecting home culture to education culture. However, when it came to critical consciousness, participants demonstrated their hesitation in addressing social issues in their class.

In conclusion, while there are benefits to incorporating CRP for international students in private business schools in UK HE, it is clear that there are limitations. However, these limitations might not be restricted to private business schools. Therefore, further study is required to explore wider UK HE sectors before reconceptualising CRP for international students in the UK HE context.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express appreciation for the anonymous reviewers whose feedback helped shape this manuscript for the better. The author also acknowledges and appreciates the engagement of participants in this study and the support from BPP Business School.

The author used the following generative AI tool in the preparation of this manuscript: ChatGPT. The tasks performed by ChatGPT include checking grammar and suggesting alternative wording. The author has complied with the JLDHE's principles of AI use.

References

- Aronson, B. and Laughter, J. (2016) 'The theory and practice of culturally relevant education: a synthesis of research across content areas', *Review of Educational Research*, 86(1), pp.163-206. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654315582066>
- Benson, B.E. (2003) 'Framing culture within classroom practice: culturally relevant teaching', *Action in Teacher Education*, 25(2), pp.16-22. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2003.10463301>
- BPP (2024) *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at BPP*. Available at: <https://www.bpp.com/about-bpp/inclusion-and-diversity> (Accessed: 5 May 2024).
- BPP (2025) *About BPP*. Available at: <https://www.bpp.com/about-bpp> (Accessed: 18 April 2025).
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2022) *Thematic analysis: a practical guide*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Chunoo, V.S. and Callahan, K. (2017) 'Pedagogy in action: teaching culturally relevant leadership', *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 11(3), pp.42-47. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21544>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K. (2018) *Research methods in education*. 8th edn. Abingdon: Oxon.
- de Silva, R.M., Gleditsch, R., Job, C., Jesme, S., Urness, B., and Hunter, C. (2018) 'Gloria Ladson-Billings: igniting student learning through teacher engagement in "Culturally Relevant Pedagogy"', *Multicultural Education*, 25, pp.23-28. Available at: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1198108> (Accessed: 8 May 2025)
- Department for International Trade and Department for Education (2019) *International Education Strategy: global potential, global growth*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-education-strategy-global-potential-global-growth> (Accessed: 8 May 2025).

Department for International Trade and Department for Education (2022) *International Education Strategy: 2022 progress update*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-education-strategy-2022-update/international-education-strategy-2022-progress-update> (Accessed: 29 June 2023).

Fossey, E., Harvey, C., McDermott, F., and Davidson, L. (2002) 'Understanding and evaluating qualitative research', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 36(6), pp.717-732. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1440-1614.2002.01100.x>

Gerhardt, T. and Karsan, S. (2022) 'Talent management in private universities: the case of a private university in the United Kingdom', *International Journal of Educational Management*, 36(4), pp.552-575. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-05-2020-0222>

Heringer, R. (2018) 'The pertinence of a culturally relevant pedagogy in internationalized higher education', *International Education Studies*, 12(1), pp.1-9. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v12n1p1>

HESA (n.d.) *Open data and official statistics*. Available at: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis> (Accessed: 29 June 2023).

Howard, T.C. (2003) 'Culturally relevant pedagogy: ingredients for critical teacher reflection', *Theory into Practice*, 42(3), pp.195-202. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4203_5

Howard, T.C. (2021) 'Culturally relevant teaching: a pivot for pedagogical transformation and racial reckoning', *The Educational Forum*, 85(4), pp.406-415. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2021.1957637>

Howard, T.C. and Rodriguez-Minkoff, A.C. (2017) 'Culturally relevant pedagogy 20 years later: progress or pontificating? What have we learned, and where do we go?', *Teachers College Record*, 119(1), 010308. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811711900104>

- Kondo, C.S. (2022) 'Walking the talk: employing culturally relevant pedagogy in teacher education', *Teachers College Record*, 124(4), pp.65-94. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681221096797>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995) 'Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy', *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), pp.465-491.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312032003465>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009) *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*. 2nd edn. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014) 'Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: a.k.a. the remix', *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), pp.74-84. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.84.1.p2rj131485484751>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2021) *Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: Asking a Different Question*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2023) "'Yes, but how do we do it?": practising culturally relevant pedagogy', pp.33-46, in J. Landsman and C.W. Lewis (eds) *White Teachers/Diverse Classrooms*. 2nd edn. New York: Routledge. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003448709>
- Lomer, S. and Mittelmeier, J. (2021) 'Mapping the research on pedagogies with international students in the UK: a systematic literature review', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 28(6), pp.1243-1263. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2021.1872532>
- May, L.A. (2010) 'Situating strategies: an examination of comprehension strategy instruction in one upper elementary classroom oriented toward culturally relevant teaching', *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 50(1), pp.31-43. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19388070903441132>

Milner, H.R. (2011) 'Culturally relevant pedagogy in a diverse urban classroom', *The Urban Review*, 43, pp.66-89.

Milner, H.R. (2017) 'Where's the race in culturally relevant pedagogy?', *Teachers College Record*, 119(1), 010303. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811711900109>

Morrison, K.A., Robbins, H.H. and Rose, D.G. (2008) 'Operationalizing culturally relevant pedagogy: a synthesis of classroom-based research', *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 41(4), pp.433-452. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665680802400006>

Office for Students (2022) *Securing student success: Regulatory framework for higher education in England*. Available at: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/qzqblugo/securing-student-success-regulatory-framework-for-higher-education-in-england-2022.pdf> (Accessed: 13 May 2025).

Osborne, A.B. (1996) 'Practice into theory into practice: culturally relevant pedagogy for students we have marginalized and normalized', *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 27(3), pp.285-314. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.1996.27.3.04x0351m>

Ploner, J. (2017) 'Resilience, moorings and international student mobilities – exploring biographical narratives of social science students in the UK', *Mobilities*, 12(3), pp.425-444. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2015.1087761>

Quinlan, K.M., Thomas, D.S., Hayton, A., Astley, J., Blackwood, L., Daramy, F.K., Duffin, M., Haider, M.A., et al. (2024) 'Promoting students' interest through culturally sensitive curricula in higher education', *Higher Education*, 88(4), pp.1331-1351. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-023-01172-z>

Saint-Hilaire, L.A. (2014) 'So, how do I teach them? Understanding multicultural education and culturally relevant pedagogy', *Reflective Practice*, 15(5), pp.592-602. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2014.900026>

- Schmeichel, M. (2012) 'Good Teaching? An examination of culturally relevant pedagogy as an equity practice', *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 44(2), pp.211-231. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2011.591434>
- Teddle, C. and Yu, F. (2007) 'Mixed methods sampling: a typology with examples', *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1), pp.77-100. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689806292430>
- Villegas, A.M. and Lucas, T. (2002) 'Preparing culturally responsive teachers: rethinking the curriculum', *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(1), pp.20-32. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487102053001003>
- Walker, A. (2019) 'Culturally relevant pedagogy, identity, presence, and intentionality: a brief review of literature', *Journal of Research Initiatives*, 4(3), pp.1-13. Available at: <https://digitalcommons.uncfsu.edu/jri/vol4/iss3/11> (Accessed on 3 May 2025).
- Young, E. (2010) 'Challenges to conceptualizing and actualizing culturally relevant pedagogy: how viable is the theory in classroom practice?', *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(3), pp.248-260. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487109359775>
- Yu, E. (2022) 'The impact of culturally inclusive pedagogy on student achievement in a multicultural urban school setting', *Urban Education*, 57(1), pp.135-153. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085918804013>
- Zhang, M.M., Xia, J., Fan, D., and Zhu, J.C. (2016) 'Managing student diversity in business education: incorporating campus diversity into the curriculum to foster inclusion and academic success of international students', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 15(2), pp.366-380. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2014.0023>

Author details

Jennifer Park is an associate professor of educational practice at BPP Business School, BPP University and a PhD researcher at the University of Surrey. Her main research interest focuses on pedagogy and curriculum for international students in UK higher education. In addition, she designs and delivers various training sessions for staff to enhance students' learning experiences at BPP Business School. She is also passionate about understanding and advocating for inclusivity and equality in education.

Licence

©2025 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>. Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education (JLDHE) is a peer-reviewed open-access journal published by the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education (ALDinHE).