

**Bibliometric Mapping of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)
and Teachers' Pedagogical Competence**

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Abstract

The application of learning that is responsive to students' cultural backgrounds is a crucial step, especially in the context of multicultural learning. This study aims to map trends in international publications on Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and Teachers' Pedagogical Competence and to formulate future research directions on related topics. This research uses bibliometric analysis method in Scopus-indexed data sources obtained through searches by using the keywords "Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)" and "Teachers' Pedagogical Competence", with a focus on publications from 2020 to 2025. A total of 232 Scopus-indexed publications were collected from the Elsevier, MDPI, Springer, and Taylor and Francis databases. Based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria determined, 51 publications were selected for in-depth analysis using VOS Viewer. The findings of the study show that fluctuating research trends are caused by educators' awareness of positioning CRT as a form of learning strategy that is responsive to indigenous peoples' identities and communities in the learning curriculum. These findings can provide a new perspective for more professional teacher pedagogical practices in terms of cultural responsiveness and fostering the students' cognitive and affective aspects in understanding the realities of a multicultural society. Further density mapping reveals research gaps in the systematic and continuous integration of CRT approaches into teacher professional development programs. This gap implies opportunities for future researchers to bridge and strengthen the role of teachers' pedagogical abilities, considering the influence in implementation of CRT learning approaches.

Keywords: Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), teachers' pedagogical competence, multicultural education

INTRODUCTION

Cultural diversity in the context of education can no longer be positioned merely as a normative discourse but must be understood as a concrete challenge faced by teachers in everyday learning practices, particularly in multicultural classrooms. In the era of globalization and increasing social mobility, schools have become spaces where students from diverse religious, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds interact intensively. In Indonesia, for instance, cultural diversity is reflected not only in the recognition of six official religions but also in the coexistence of various ethnic traditions, languages, and social perspectives. This condition highlights the need for educational approaches that are able to support students' cognitive and affective development while helping them understand and navigate multicultural realities (Cathrin & Wikandaru, 2023).

On the one hand, cultural diversity has the potential to enrich learning experiences. This potential is realized through intercultural interaction and dialogue (Mou et al., 2025). On the other hand, diversity also increases the pedagogical complexity faced by teachers, especially for those who lack the competence to manage differences constructively (Dursun et al., 2021). In this context, teachers are expected to adopt learning approaches that do not merely acknowledge students' cultural identities but also integrate them meaningfully into classroom practices. These demands emphasize the importance of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), which refers to a learning approach that connects students' cultural backgrounds, experiences, and identities with instructional strategies and curriculum design (Eppard et al., 2021; Sianturi et al., 2025). Therefore, the implementation of CRT becomes a strategic effort to address the challenges arising from cultural diversity in the classroom. By applying the principle of CRT, teachers can create more inclusive, equitable, and engaging learning environments for all students.

The implementation of CRT is closely related to teachers' pedagogical competence. Pedagogical competence can be understood as teachers' ability to design, implement, and evaluate learning processes effectively, including the capacity to adapt teaching strategies to students' diverse needs. In Indonesia, changes in educational practices following the transformation of the education system since 2020 have significantly altered learning patterns and instructional demands (Firmansyah et al., 2021; Martha et al., 2021). These changes further underline the importance of teachers' pedagogical competence, not only in technical aspects such as lesson planning, but also in reflective and transformative dimensions that enable teachers to respond to cultural diversity in meaningful ways. As noted by (Maharani et al., 2025), teachers' pedagogical skills are often discussed in fragmented ways, even though they play a central role in integrating interdisciplinary competencies and responding to increasingly complex classroom demands.

Previous studies have consistently shown a strong relationship between Culturally Responsive Teaching and teachers' pedagogical competence. Recent research suggests that effective implementation of CRT requires teachers to possess appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes to address the needs of multicultural students (Alhanachi et al., 2021). Teachers who are competent in applying CRT have been shown to enhance student participation, motivation, and sense of belonging in learning activities (Anyichie et al., 2023). Other studies indicate that CRT can strengthen teacher-student relationships and support students' adaptability by fostering a learning environment in which students feel recognized and valued Abdalla & Moussa (2024) and Bahari et al., (2025). From the teachers' perspective, CRT also enables the creation of fair and inclusive classrooms that support social transformation in schools (Berlian & Huda, 2022; Walker, 2023).

Despite the growing body of literature on Culturally Responsive Teaching, several research gaps can be identified. First, there is still a limited number of systematic studies that explicitly focus on the relationship between CRT and teachers' pedagogical competence. For example, the systematic review conducted by Alamsyah et al., (2025) discusses the implementation of CRT and its implications for student engagement and learning outcomes, but does not specifically examine teachers' pedagogical abilities as a central focus. This indicates that pedagogical competence is often discussed implicitly rather than being analyzed in depth within CRT-related studies.

Second, bibliometric analyses that examine Culturally Responsive Teaching and teachers' pedagogical competence simultaneously remain scarce. Existing studies, such as the work by Tanjung et al., (2025) on CRT in science education, tend to focus on subject-specific applications without systematically mapping pedagogical aspects such as culturally responsive lesson planning, material adaptation, and assessment practices. As a result, there is a lack of comprehensive mapping that illustrates research trends, thematic relationships, and gaps at the intersection of CRT and teachers' pedagogical competence.

Therefore, this study aims to address these gaps by conducting a bibliometric analysis of research on Culturally Responsive Teaching and teachers' pedagogical competence. By identifying publication trends, thematic patterns, and research gaps, this study seeks to provide a clearer overview of how CRT and pedagogical competence have been discussed in the literature and to offer directions for future research in multicultural education contexts.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design using bibliometric analysis. Bibliometric analysis is used to map relationships, identify patterns, and explore research developments related to specific topics and publication trends within a particular field of study (Khan et al., 2022). In this study, bibliometric techniques are applied to examine research trends concerning Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and teachers' pedagogical competence, allowing for a systematic overview of how these topics have been studied over time. The final stage involves visualizing the data using VOSviewers. Furthermore, the analysis was carried out using the VOSviewer application version 1.6.20, which is commonly used to visualize bibliometric networks and identify thematic patterns in academic publications (Wulandari et al., 2023). Through this approach, the study is able to identify dominant themes, research directions, and potential gaps in the existing literature, which form the basis for further analysis and discussion.

Data Source and Search Strategy

References collected data for this study were obtained from the Scopus database, which was selected due to its comprehensive coverage of peer-reviewed international journals relevant to educational and social science research. To ensure data consistency and quality, only Scopus-indexed journal articles published by major academic publishers, including Elsevier, MDPI, Springer, and Taylor & Francis, were included in the search results. The selection of this database is based on its high-quality publications, broad scope, comprehensive digital library, and the ease of finding information related to the topic being researched (Ulum et al., 2025).

Table 1. Database Search Strategy

Filter	Description
Year	2020-2025
Subject	Social Science
Keywords	Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), Teachers' Pedagogical Competence
Document Type	Article
Language	English
Document Search	Open access

The results of the data search at this stage obtained a total of 84 articles indexed by Scopus. The article was then analyzed to identify publication trends, which included the number of documents published each year, the distribution of keywords, collaboration between authors and institutions, and the journals that have published the most significant quantity of relevant articles.

Data Selection Criteria

After obtaining the initial data, the next stage is the screening of the documents found. This stage is carried out to obtain documents that are in accordance with the predetermined keywords. The screening was carried out using clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria to maintain the quality and focus of the analysis (Djeki et al., 2022). The criteria were designed to align closely with the research objectives, particularly in examining the relationship between Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and teachers' pedagogical competence.

The inclusion criteria covered articles published between 2020 and 2025, indexed in Scopus, written in English, categorized as research articles, and available in open-access format. Publications that did not meet these criteria were excluded from the analysis. The application of these criteria ensures that the literature analyzed is current, easily accessible, and directly aligned with the objectives of this bibliometric study. Table 2 explains specifically the inclusion and exclusion criteria used in this study.

Table 2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Year	2020-2025	Outside the 2020-2025 period
Journal Index	Scopus	Not indexed by Scopus
Language	English	Non-English
Publication Type	Article	Editorial, book reviews, non-empirical studies
Accessibility	Open Access	No open-access

Data Selection Process

The results of the initial search on the Elsevier, MDPI, Springer, and Taylor & Francis databases, using the keywords "Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)" and "Teachers' Pedagogical Competence", yielded a total of 232 relevant articles. The article is then filtered based on the stipulated provisions. During the data selection process, 138 articles were excluded because they required payment to access the full text. Additionally, 33 articles were excluded because they used languages other than English and were

inconsistent in their use of keywords. The results of the data selection stage yielded 51 relevant articles, comprising 19 articles from the Springer database, 11 articles from Elsevier, and 21 articles from Taylor & Francis.

The initial database search using the keywords “Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)” and “Teachers’ Pedagogical Competence” resulted in 232 articles. These publications were then reviewed to ensure their relevance to the research objectives and their suitability for bibliometric analysis. Articles that were not accessible in full text or did not meet language and keyword consistency requirements were excluded at this stage.

As a result of this selection process, 51 articles were identified as relevant for further analysis. The final dataset consisted of 19 articles published by Springer, 11 articles from Elsevier, and 21 articles from Taylor & Francis. This refined collection of publications provides a focused basis for examining research trends, thematic patterns, and scholarly attention to CRT and teacher pedagogical competence, enabling the identification of research gaps and the formulation of recommendations for future research.

Data Analysis

A total of 51 selected articles were exported in CSV and RIS formats for analysis. The RIS files were managed using Mendeley to refine and standardize metadata and were subsequently analyzed and visualized using VOSviewer. Meanwhile, the CSV files were tabulated using Excel to facilitate the identification of publication patterns across the selected literature. The analysis focused on citation counts, publication output, authorship, country-based productivity, and frequently used research approaches to examine research trends related to Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and teachers’ pedagogical competence. The synthesis of these findings enabled the identification of dominant themes and underexplored areas, which served as the basis for recognizing research gaps and formulating recommendations for future research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Distribution of Publications

Publication Distribution Every Year

In recent years, the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) learning approach and teachers’ pedagogical abilities have gained increasing attention in educational studies. The graph in Figure 1 illustrates the development trend of research on the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) learning approach and teachers’ pedagogical abilities from 2020 to 2025, based on a total of 51 articles.

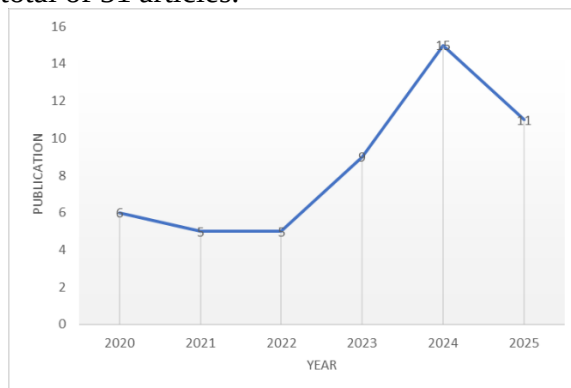


Figure 1. Publication Trends in Scopus from 2020 to 2025

The number of publications related to the topics of “Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)” and “Teachers’ Pedagogical Competence” declined in 2021 and remained stagnant in 2022. An increase in publication output is observed in 2023, with the number of articles rising from 5 to 9, followed by a further increase to 15 articles in 2024. In 2025, the number of publications decreased compared to the previous year. This distribution illustrates variations in research output across the observed period.

Distribution of Publications by Country and Affiliation

Based on the results of the Scopus database analysis, the researchers identified the top 10 countries with the highest number of publications, as shown in Figure 2. The country with the highest number of publications is the United States, with 21 or 41.17%, followed by Australia with 9 or 17.65%. Canada has 4 or 7.84%, South Africa and the United Kingdom have 3 or 5.88%, followed by China, Finland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United Arab Emirates, each with 2 or 3.92% of the publications.

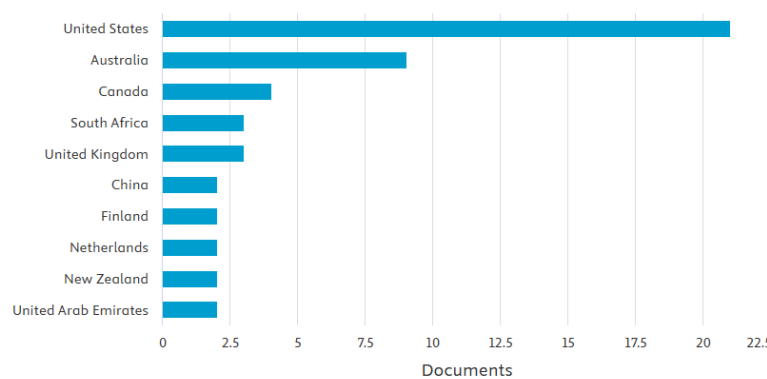


Figure 2. Leading Country Distribution

An analysis based on institutional affiliation is presented in Figure 3. The University of Sydney recorded the highest contribution with 7.84% of the publications, followed by Universiteit Utrecht, Åbo Akademi University, and UNSW Sydney, each contributing 3.92%. Other institutions, including the University of the Visual and Performing Arts, Cairns School of Distance Education, Open Development Education, Bahar Institute of Higher Education, and the University of Castellón de la Plana, each accounted for 1.96% of the total publications.

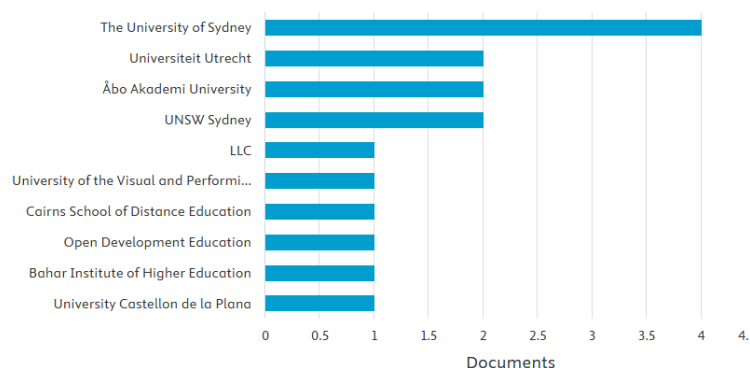
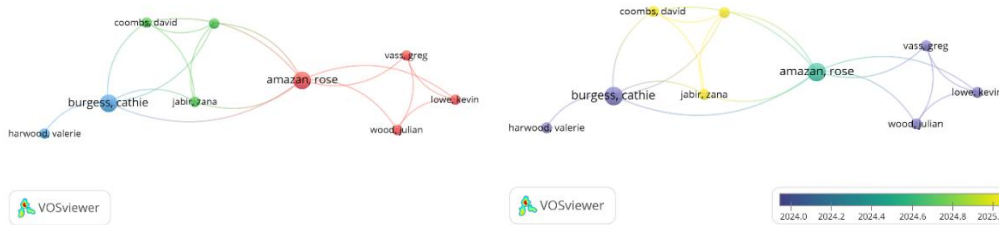


Figure 3. Top 10 Affiliate Contribution

Author Community Network



(4)

(5)



(6)

Figure (4) *Network visualization co-occurrence*, (5) *Overlay visualization co-occurrence*,
(6) *Density visualization co-occurrence*

To gain a comprehensive understanding of collaboration patterns and research dynamics in community development, three types of visualizations are presented. Based on Figure (4), the structure of the collaboration network is divided into several groups of interconnected authors. Amazon Rose plays a central role in extensive connectivity, demonstrating that Rose is a key figure in connecting the various research communities. Other authors, such as David Coombs, Cathie Burgess, and Zana Jabbar, also demonstrate a strong connection, highlighting a significant contribution to building academic networks. These findings indicate the presence of a collaborative core that drives knowledge production in this field. Such a structure reflects the importance of influential authors in shaping research directions and fostering interdisciplinary partnerships. Overall, this network configuration reveals a concentrated yet cooperative pattern of scholarly collaboration.

Figure (5) overlay visualization shows the temporal network of the author. The color difference in circles, such as those of Cathie and Valerie, with the blue-purple color, suggests that the author had earlier writing contributions compared to other authors. Meanwhile, Rose Amazon and David Coombs, who are marked with green-yellow color, indicate the novelty of the research contribution. This temporal pattern illustrates the evolution of scholarly engagement over time. It also highlights how newer contributors expand and refresh existing research networks with emerging perspectives.

Consequently, the visualization provides insight into both the historical foundation and the emerging trends within the research field.

Figure (6) emphasizes the intensity of the connection between the authors. The bright yellow color indicates a high level of collaboration. In Figure (6), the highest intensity of collaboration is held by Rose Amazon, followed by several other writers, such as Cathine and David. At the same time, other writers, such as Valerine and Julian, have a relatively low affinity, characterized by a faint yellow area. This variation demonstrates differing levels of research engagement and partnership strength among scholars. Overall, the visualization underscores the unequal yet interconnected nature of collaboration within the academic network. This pattern further confirms the presence of dominant contributors alongside peripheral participants within the collaborative landscape.

Co-occurrence Analysis of the Author's Keywords

Keywords	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	18	19
Culturally Responsive Teaching	13	12
Teacher Education	11	18
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy	6	5
Indigenous Education	4	7
Cultural Competence	3	6
Cultural Diversity	3	1
Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy	3	4
Teacher Professional Development	3	6
Aboriginal Education	2	5
Critical Consciousness	2	3
Culturally Relevant Teaching	2	1
Culturally Responsive	2	4
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP)	2	4
Diversity	2	5
Instructional Strategies	2	5
Language Ideologies	2	3
Multilingual Learners	2	4
Pre-service Teachers	2	4
Self-Regulated Learning	2	4
Teacher Preparation	2	3
Teachers	2	4

Figure 8. List of Relevant Keywords

Based on the analysis of 51 articles, a total of 204 keywords were identified. These keywords were then filtered according to their relevance to the research topic, resulting in 21 keywords retained for further analysis. Among the identified keywords, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy shows the highest frequency of occurrence, appearing 18 times with a total of 19 links. Other frequently occurring keywords include Culturally Responsive Teaching, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, Culturally Relevant Teaching, and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP). In addition,

keywords related to teacher-related themes were identified, such as teacher education, teacher professional development, critical consciousness, pre-service teaching, and teacher preparation. Keywords associated with specific educational contexts, including Indigenous Education and Aboriginal Education, also appear within the dataset. This distribution indicates that the research landscape is strongly centered on pedagogical approaches that emphasize cultural inclusivity and responsiveness. Furthermore, the prominence of teacher-focused and context-specific keywords suggests that implementation and practice are central concerns within this body of literature.

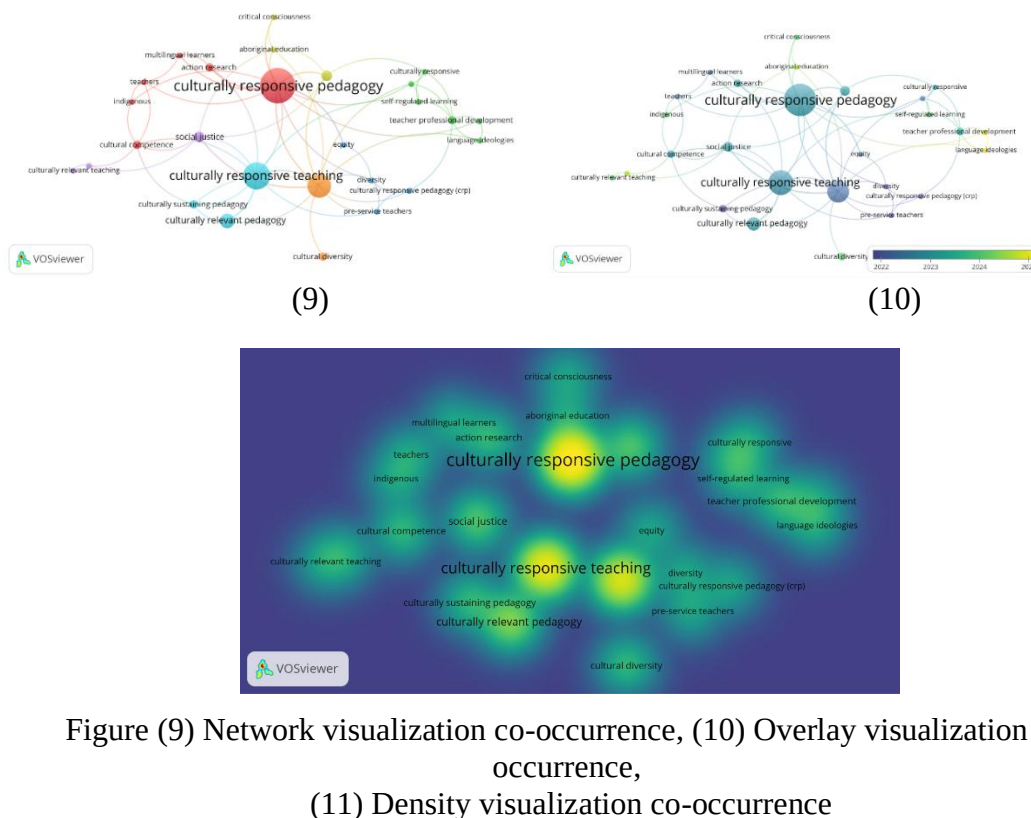


Figure 9 presents a network visualization of the 21 retained keywords related to Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and Teachers' Pedagogical Competence. In this visualization, each circle represents a keyword, while the size of the circle indicates the frequency of its occurrence in the analyzed articles. Larger circles represent keywords that appear more frequently in the dataset (Rahmawati et al., 2022). The relationships between keywords are illustrated by connecting lines, where the thickness of each line reflects the frequency of co-occurrence between two keywords. The distance between circles represents the strength of their association, with closer distances indicating more frequent co-occurrence. Several clusters of keywords are visible, including clusters containing keywords such as teacher professional development and self-regulated learning. These clusters suggest thematic groupings that reflect interconnected areas of scholarly focus within CRT research. Overall, the visualization demonstrates how central and peripheral concepts are structurally linked within the broader pedagogical discourse.

Figure 10 displays an overlay visualization of the keyword network based on the publication period from 2020 to 2025. In this figure, each circle represents a keyword,

while the color of the circle indicates the year of publication. The color scale ranges from green to purple, as shown in the legend, with green representing earlier publications and purple indicating more recent ones. Keywords such as teacher professional development, self-regulated learning, and language ideology appear in colors associated with later publication years. Meanwhile, keywords such as cultural competence and social justice are displayed in colors corresponding to earlier years. Keywords with larger circle sizes, including Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Teaching, appear centrally within the network. This temporal distribution highlights a shift in research emphasis toward more specific pedagogical strategies and reflective practices in recent years. It also indicates the sustained centrality of core CRT concepts across different publication periods.

Figure 11 presents a density visualization illustrating the intensity of keyword occurrence within the network. In this visualization, areas with higher keyword density are represented by brighter yellow colors, while areas with lower density appear in darker shades. The keywords Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Teaching are associated with broader yellow areas, indicating higher density within the dataset. Other keywords appearing within the visualization include critical consciousness, Aboriginal Education, multilingual learners, action research, equity, diversity, pre-service teachers, teacher professional development, self-regulated learning, and language ideologies. The concentration of bright areas around core pedagogical terms underscores their dominant role in structuring the research landscape. Consequently, the density pattern reinforces the importance of culturally grounded teaching approaches as the foundation of ongoing scholarly inquiry.

Discussion

The results of this study provide a comprehensive and systematic overview of the development, focus, and direction of research on Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and teachers' pedagogical competence. Through bibliometric mapping, this study reveals that research on CRT has experienced a consistent increase over time, accompanied by a growing emphasis on pedagogical competence, teacher education, equity, and diversity. This trend indicates that CRT has moved beyond its early conceptualization as a theoretical or ideological framework and has become a central analytical lens for examining teaching practices, professional development, and instructional effectiveness in culturally diverse educational contexts. Furthermore, the findings highlight the interconnectedness between CRT and the development of teachers' professional competencies in responding to diverse student needs. These insights suggest that future research should continue to explore practical strategies and policy implications to strengthen the implementation of CRT in various educational settings.

This finding strengthens and extends previous research that positions CRT as a critical response to the challenges of multicultural education. Prior studies have emphasized that CRT integrates principles of social justice, cultural identity, and equity into the learning process (Reagan & Hambacher, 2021; Ulbricht et al., 2024). More recent studies further demonstrate that CRT contributes to the creation of inclusive learning environments through the use of adaptive teaching strategies and equitable assessment practices that acknowledge students' diverse cultural backgrounds Eden et al., (2024). The present study confirms these arguments while adding new insight by showing that contemporary CRT research increasingly situates these values within the domain of teachers' pedagogical competence. This indicates a shift in the literature toward viewing

CRT not only as a normative framework, but also as a set of pedagogical skills that teachers are expected to develop and apply in classroom practice.

Furthermore, the strong clustering of keywords related to teacher professional development, pre-service teaching, and teacher preparation highlights the growing expectation that teachers must be equipped with pedagogical competencies that are responsive to students' linguistic, cultural, social, and economic diversity. This finding aligns with Flory et al., (2023) and Tanjung et al., (2025), who argue that effective teaching in contemporary classrooms requires adaptive and reflective pedagogical approaches. At the same time, this study extends previous research by demonstrating that CRT serves as a key framework connecting pedagogical competence with broader educational goals, including equity, inclusion, and social justice. In this regard, the findings support and reinforce earlier evidence that culturally responsive teaching practices enable teachers to better understand, appreciate, and accommodate student diversity (Kong et al., 2022).

The bibliometric visualization also reveals that keywords such as Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Teaching occupy central positions with high density, indicating that they function as the main conceptual axes of the research field. These keywords are closely associated with concepts such as cultural competence, social justice, indigenous and Aboriginal education, multilingual learners, and action research. This pattern corroborates findings by (Anyichie et al., 2023), who show that consistent implementation of CRT principles in multicultural classrooms not only enhances students' academic achievement but also supports their social and psychological development. By situating these outcomes within a broader bibliometric landscape, the present study provides empirical support for the argument that CRT and pedagogical competence are closely interconnected across diverse research contexts.

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study have important implications for classroom practice and teacher education programs. The prominence of CRT-related pedagogical themes suggests that teachers can strengthen their pedagogical competence by integrating culturally relevant learning materials, employing flexible instructional strategies, and implementing inclusive assessment practices that reflect students' diverse cultural experiences. These practices are consistent with the conclusions of Eden et al., (2024), who emphasize that culturally responsive approaches promote inclusive learning environments by aligning teaching methods with students' sociocultural realities. In teacher education and professional development programs, the findings also support the integration of CRT as a core component of pedagogical training, particularly in developing teachers' cultural awareness, cross-cultural communication skills, and reflective teaching practices (Berlian & Huda, 2022).

In addition, the temporal analysis of keywords indicates a growing scholarly interest in themes such as teacher professional development, self-regulated learning, and language ideology in recent years. This trend suggests that current CRT research increasingly focuses on how teachers can be continuously supported in developing culturally responsive competencies throughout their professional careers. At the same time, earlier emphases on cultural competence and social justice remain prominent, indicating that foundational concerns about equity continue to shape emerging pedagogical discussions.

Finally, the findings point to several important directions for future research. The close conceptual relationship between Culturally Responsive Teaching and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy highlights the need for further empirical studies examining how CRT can be systematically embedded in pre-service and in-service teacher education.

Moreover, the increasing attention to language ideology suggests a critical area for future inquiry, particularly in multilingual educational contexts. Further research in these areas can strengthen the theoretical development of CRT while contributing to the design of more inclusive, equitable, and contextually responsive educational policies.

CONCLUSION

Based on the bibliometric mapping of studies on Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and teachers' pedagogical competence, this study indicates a steady growth of research from 2020 to 2025, emphasizing the close relationship between culturally responsive learning approaches and the development of teachers' pedagogical competence in multicultural educational contexts. The findings position CRT as an important framework for effective pedagogy that addresses students' diverse cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds, while also highlighting its increasing relevance in contemporary educational research. These findings have important implications for teacher professional development, classroom practices, and educational policy, particularly in integrating culturally responsive principles into pedagogical training, adapting instructional strategies to learner diversity, and promoting inclusive policy frameworks. Despite limitations related to the exclusive use of the Scopus database, the six-year publication scope, and the inclusion of emerging 2025 trends, this study provides a structured overview of current research and identifies future directions, especially in the sustainable integration of CRT in teacher education and the exploration of language ideology in multicultural and multilingual learning environments.

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