

Guest editorial: Defining the scope of critical perspectives in international business education research: Frontiers in international business education

Aušrinė Šilenskytė

School of Management, University of Vaasa, Vaasa, Finland

Miguel Cordova

Business School, Tecnológico de Monterrey, Monterrey, Mexico

Daria Panina

Mays Business School, Texas A&M University, Galveston, Texas, USA

Cyntia Vilasboas Calixto Casnici

Leeds University Business School, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK, and

Brent Burmester

Department of Management and International Business, University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

Received 12 January 2026
Revised 12 January 2026
Accepted 12 January 2026

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to define the scope and outline directions for research on critical perspectives in international business (IB) education.

Design/methodology/approach – Combining levels of higher education, curriculum components, the concept of critical perspectives and diverse approaches to IB in educational design, the editorial defines a research scope of critical perspectives in IB education. It also outlines the content of the special issue “Critical Perspectives in International Business Education: why, what, and how?” and analyzes how the papers included address identified areas of research related to critical perspectives in IB education and what future research would create value in each identified area.

Findings – There are four intertwined thematic layers that form the scope of research on critical perspectives in IB education, each producing many research questions to be addressed on this topic. Interaction of these four layers is an additional challenge to be explored when forming a comprehensive understanding of why, what and how to enrich IB education with critical thought.

Originality/value – The editorial offers a comprehensive view of areas that form research agenda on critical perspectives in IB education and therefore organizes a sporadic discussion on the topic. This helps



© Aušrinė Šilenskytė, Miguel Cordova, Daria Panina, Cyntia Vilasboas Calixto Casnici and Brent Burmester. Published by Emerald Publishing Limited. This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) licence. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this licence may be seen at <http://creativecommons.org/licences/by/4.0/>

Critical Perspectives on
International Business
Vol. 22 No. 1, 2026
pp. 1-10
Emerald Publishing Limited
1742-2043
DOI 10.1108/cpoib-08-2025-0170

understand the status of research in this area and meaningfully proceed with developing impactful research on the topic.

Keywords International business, Business education, Teaching, Curriculum, Critical perspectives

Paper type Editorial

1. Critical perspectives in international business and international business education

Too often we enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought.

John F. Kennedy.

In the rapidly changing global landscape, characterized by technological advancements, profound social transformations and shifting geopolitical dynamics, critical perspectives in international business offer a much-needed counterpoint to the mainstream view of multinational enterprises (MNEs). Defined as radical critique of socially divisive and ecologically destructive, critical perspectives go beyond standard skepticism to examine how specific beliefs and practices sustain broader harmful patterns (Adler *et al.*, 2007).

International business (IB) as a discipline has traditionally been guided by theories such as the Eclectic Paradigm, Transaction Cost Economics and the Uppsala model, which provide frameworks for understanding how companies operate across borders (Dunning, 1980; Williamson, 1979; Johanson and Vahlne, 1977). These theories have offered valuable insights into factors like market entry, strategic decision-making and competitive advantage. However, this focus has often ignored the power imbalances inherent in global trade, where MNEs can exploit tax regulations, informal markets and lower wages in developing countries (Burmester, 2024). Critical perspectives challenge this by emphasizing fair labor practices, living wages, ethical sourcing throughout the supply chain as well as other corporate social activities of the firm (Burmester, 2024); democratic ownership and governance and social enterprises that promote a more equitable distribution of profits and empower local communities (Aubert *et al.*, 2024) going beyond Western intellectual traditions and academic institutions (Zagelmeyer, 2023). Furthermore, they shed light on the power dynamics within global value chains, where MNEs often hold dominant positions (Boussebaa and Morgan, 2014). To ensure that the more just and socially responsible approaches captured within the research on critical perspectives become embedded in the market, IB educators and education leaders may enrich their programs and courses with critical perspectives, bringing these perspectives to the attention of (future) managers.

Going beyond cultural sensitivity training, the education of IB professionals can explore the deeper implications of cultural differences on MNE operations and incorporate critical perspectives on other aspects of IB (Roberts and Dörrenbächer, 2012). These include understanding local political landscapes, navigating diverse business practices and fostering meaningful partnerships with local stakeholders. Critical perspectives can help to disclose and evidence the existence of hidden behaviors, attitudes, triggering drivers, covered power relationships, informal codes and unseen patterns of organizational culture (Banerjee, 2010; Trehan, 2004). By acknowledging the impact of business on development, critical perspectives encourage MNEs to contribute positively to host economies through infrastructure development, knowledge transfer and job creation. This fosters responsible business leaders who can navigate the complexities of international operations while promoting societal well-being alongside profitability. Furthermore, climate change and resource depletion necessitate a critical examination of the environmental footprint of international business. Critical perspectives help managers in training and business students explore sustainable practices throughout the education on MNE lifecycle, from responsible

sourcing and energy efficiency to waste reduction and pollution control. This aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), international CSR policies and international stakeholders' expectations, fostering MNEs that can contribute to a healthier planet (Gonzalez-Perez and Cordova, 2024; Sinkovics *et al.*, 2022).

Critical thinking is now a mandatory major learning outcome in universities worldwide, in part driven by their need to achieve international accreditations (Desai *et al.*, 2016). Critical thinking is rational, skeptical and unbiased analysis and evaluation of the facts considering entire set of evidence (Clarke, 2020). By contrast, critical perspectives emphasize the importance of subjectivity, inter-personal connections, power use based on interests and their influence on knowledge and on individual and organizational behavior in local and international contexts. Critical perspectives go beyond analytical investigation to consider context and power-sensitive realities within and around MNEs (Boussebaa and Morgan, 2014). Thus, critical perspectives address "critical themes such as corruption or corporate and social responsibility (CSR)", but also various interdisciplinary perspectives and bring "discussion of the many political, social, economic and environmental problems and concerns cross border economic activity raises" (Roberts and Dörrenbächer, 2012, p. 6). In other words, critical perspectives raise normative considerations to augment analytical observation of social trends and capitalism's various forms; they question our underlying assumptions concerning the positive impact of MNEs and their operations.

Critical perspectives were present in seminal IB theories. For example, Hymer (1976) made observations about MNE social impact inspiring further explorations on the topic of power (e.g. Yamin and Forsgren, 2006). Forsgren (2017), in his noteworthy overview of all six classical IB streams of thought, dedicated a separate section to analyze how each view of the MNE addressed (or not) social and political impact. More recently, critical perspectives have begun to surface in mainstream IB journals.

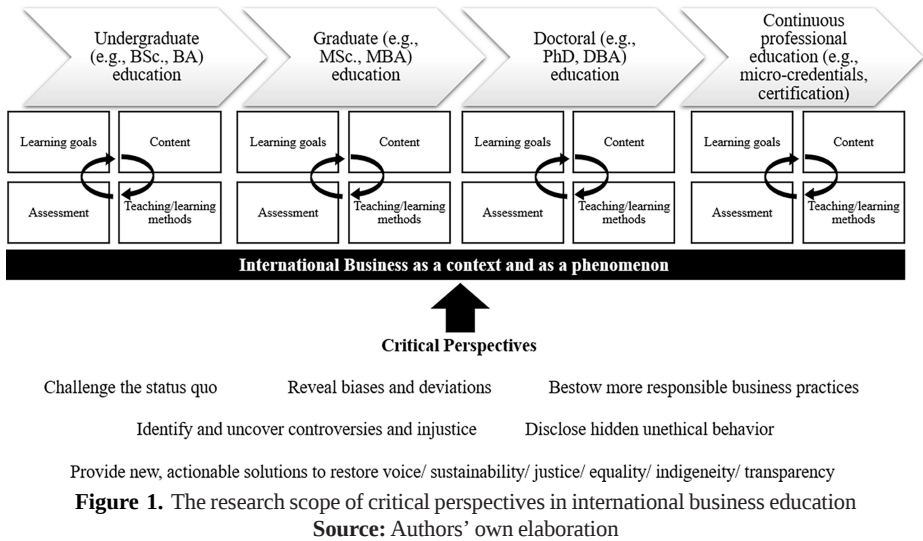
To conclude, critical perspectives can fortify business education and help students understand the roles of business in society. The broadened scope of unconventional topics to which learners are exposed when IB education is enriched with critical perspectives expands the horizons of learners, allowing them to enter business practice ready to question international corporate strategies and market structures. As we face the grand challenges, the next generation of international business leaders must put forward more responsible, just and inclusive practices at every geographic scale.

2. The research scope of critical perspectives in international business education

Currently, strategies to integrate critical perspectives, in the IB curriculum are few and no systematic approach has been developed to enrich IB education with critical thought. The lack of a systematic approach hinders the preparation of business professionals for the complexities of international careers. IB needs an expanded theoretical repertoire, bringing into focus the pedagogical value of critical perspectives in educating (future) international business leaders.

Considering the nature of critical perspectives in international business and major elements of international business education, i.e. its levels and components, we provide a systematic framework to enrich IB education with critical thought (see Figure 1). Currently sporadic discussions around critical perspectives in IB education can be grouped around several layers of education design ensuring that we have a comprehensive view of what we know about critical perspectives in IB education and what remains to be discovered. The systemic approach explains why and when critical perspectives are needed, and it also provides methods – the how – for teaching and learning with critical perspectives.

First, it is necessary to trace how critical perspectives are integrated across the *levels of education, i.e. undergraduate, graduate, doctoral and continuous professional education*. This



leads to many research questions: What competencies should be developed in each level of education to ensure that we grow responsible business professionals capable of navigating complexity? When is the best time to introduce learners to critical perspectives in IB programs? How should educators accommodate the diverse capacities of learners to engage with critical thought? How are responsible business professionals grown along the entire educational path in business schools? How are critical perspectives integrated at successive levels of higher education in business given the multiplicity of institutional frameworks (regulatory, cultural and cognitive) across countries, regions and globally? How can we ensure that once students have finished their formal education they will act upon critical principles and work toward inclusive and responsible organizational cultures in their workplace?

Second, *components of curriculum, i.e. learning goals, content, teaching/learning methods, assessment*, present an additional dimension to questions of when and how to bring critical perspectives to IB education. What are the ways to systematically integrate critical perspectives across all the components of IB curriculum? What are the topics we should bring in learning goals and teaching/learning content to secure the sufficient presence of critical thought? Critical perspectives focus on the critical issues that are key for socioeconomic systems and are at the frontiers of human development, such as corruption, social responsibility, climate change, politics, social issues and trends, to name just a few (Roberts and Dörrenbächer, 2012) – but is the integration of these topics in courses and classes a sufficient way to enrich IB education? What are suitable teaching and learning methods as well as assessment practices to help learners develop skills and mindset to go beyond the current ways of thinking and seek transformational insights? How can we understand whether critical perspectives were understood by learners, whether engaging with critical perspectives in the class or course delivered an expected outcome of creating more responsible and reflective international business professionals?

Critical perspectives delve into current practices, methods, approaches, general assumptions or taken-for-granted realities, to bestow new transformational insights to shift the long-established concepts, roles and applications of those realities, processes or actors (Antonacopoulou, 2010; Blackburn and Kovalainen, 2009; Flood, 2010). Discussing critical perspectives allow students

and instructors to identify and uncover double discourses, dialectic issues, key controversies, dichotomies and opposing opinions which could be usually unnoticed in the daily and ongoing business activities (Ahen and Zetting, 2015; Arsel and Büscher, 2012; Banerjee and Jackson, 2016; Brei and Böhm, 2011).

The third layer of analysis concerns treating critical perspectives in business education when international business is a *context* and/or when international business is a *phenomenon*. Not all higher education institutions have IB programs where IB is considered a unique phenomenon. In many classes and programs IB remains a context to functional studies of marketing, management, finance, etc. Do we approach critical perspectives in the same way when IB is a context and/or a phenomenon, or do we need to enrich business education with critical thought differently as the approach to IB changes? Critical perspectives help discovering new actionable opportunities for firms (Aubert *et al.*, 2024; Geppert and Dörrenbächer, 2014; Kowalska *et al.*, 2023), but do we need to have an international business class to have the opportunity to bring critical perspectives to students' attention or can it be done effectively in any other contextual setting or format?

The fourth layer of analysis concerns the *outcomes that critical scholarship seeks to achieve*: challenging the status quo, revealing biases and irresponsible behaviors, bestowing more responsible business practices, providing new, actionable solutions to restore voice, sustainability, transparency, equality and fighting against structural injustices. Critical perspectives are constantly challenging stereotypes, hierarchical systems and conventional labels, going deep into the drivers and patterns that propel business phenomena (Billing and Alvesson, 2000; Kearins and Springett, 2003). Profound discussion of critical perspectives reveals deviations, misunderstandings, organizational biases and obstructive mindsets that could be undermining the development of firms' strategies and values (Bondy *et al.*, 2012; Ergene *et al.*, 2020; Laine, 2019). What should IB education be like to achieve as wide as possible variety of the outcomes promoted by critical scholarship? Can we claim to have a positive impact when only one or a few outcomes are achieved, or should IB education aim for more given the global and local pressures facing business and society? Can critical perspectives thrive within the mainstream IB curriculum, or can it only be effectively integrated when educational programs are labeled as critical and formed according to critical scholarship views and principles?

Finally, *how do all these thematic layers and their components interplay?* Can we manage all of them when trying to enrich IB with critical thought and achieve desired outcomes? Do we have unintended and unexpected outcomes when managing some layers and components?

These and similar research questions are still to be explored if we aim to have a more systematic approach to critical perspectives in IB education. To address some of these questions, we developed a special issue "Critical Perspectives in International Business Education: Why, What, and How?" that sought conceptually and empirically driven articles seeking to enhance the conversation on a more systematic engagement of critical perspectives in IB education. In the following section we present six contributions featured in this special issue and discuss how they enhance the debate that we intend to promote.

3. Contributions to the special issue

This special issue features six papers, each of which aim to provide a more comprehensive and systematic view on critical perspectives in international business education. These articles provide a foundation for IB educators seeking a proactive way to sustainable and responsible education, equipping them to navigate potential resistance. Table 1 summarizes the contributions to the special issue.

Abdelzاهر and Onumonu (2026) propose developing a "synergistic mindset" competency in international business education to better manage risks and opportunities. This mindset

comprises five different intelligences: cross-cultural, emotional, public policy, orchestration and digital. Building synergistic mindsets is crucial for producing future global decision-makers capable of operating effectively in volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) contexts. In this way, authors contribute to our understanding of competencies in different stages of business education needed to be developed for growing responsible business professionals.

Along similar lines, the second article by [Pilato and Voss \(2026\)](#) proposes that IB education needs to incorporate systems thinking capabilities through novel pedagogical approaches like simulations, case competitions and engagement with practitioners to help future decision-makers address grand challenges. The authors suggest that adopting a systems perspective can help bring the growing body of IB research on societal and environmental impacts into classroom teaching. To operationalize this approach, they introduce a dynamic, multi-step framework – illustrated through the example of location choice – that demonstrates the practical application of systems thinking in IB education.

Moving to the second layer of explorations on critical perspectives in IB education, the third article of this special issue authored by [Beaumont and colleagues \(2026\)](#) presents a systematic, multidisciplinary and comprehensive literature review that examines the current state of knowledge regarding sustainability in business education – an extremely important topic to be included in IB education when aiming to promote critical perspectives. Qualitatively analyzing existing literature on the subject, the authors argue for the necessity to adopt a holistic approach to sustainability and the use of interdisciplinary pedagogical strategies. Such approaches are crucial for preparing business leaders for a sustainable future. Implementing these strategies requires modifications to existing curricula and encourage a shared mindset that emphasizes the values and skills necessary for sustainability. Moreover, it is vital to engage both external and internal stakeholders to foster opportunities that transform business education and establish policies to integrate sustainability effectively.

Also within the second layer of explorations, [Šilenskytė et al. \(2026\)](#) offer a conceptual framework and a set of actions directed at integrating critical perspectives into the IB curriculum through a three-part spectrum approach that is built on contextual considerations, such as the level of support or constraints toward engaging with critical perspectives stemming from institutions and skillset that scholars have to engage with critical thought. In other words, the paper addresses concerns that scholars may have when trying to understand when, how and why to engage with critical perspectives in the courses that we teach. The paper further discusses specific actions related to key curriculum components, including learning goals, content, teaching methods and assessment. The paper is particularly timely in the context of increased challenges to academic freedom and free speech, and it calls for a nuanced approach by educators when incorporating critical perspectives into their teaching.

The last two papers in the special issue expand on complexities of achieving outcomes promoted by critical IB scholarship, especially in the context of doctoral education. The fifth article by [Barnard \(2026\)](#) exposes us to inequalities in doctoral education that reduces scholarly voices from certain regions. The paper discusses the divide between the developed and developing world that reduces possibilities of development of scholars from emerging markets. The paper explains why creating research on and education about the under-represented regions, such as Africa, is difficult and what needs to change. While emerging market scholars should take the lead in developing knowledge about their unique contexts, scholars face significant constraints and inequalities, starting from the level of the doctoral training, that constraints these efforts.

Building further the discussion on doctoral education in IB, [Boncheva et al. \(2026\)](#) discuss solutions to various challenges faced in IB doctoral education, including those explored by [Barnard \(2026\)](#). The paper examines four illustrative cases of collaborative IB doctoral

Table 1. Contributions to the special issue on critical perspectives in IB education

Authors	Focus	Contribution
Abdelzaher and Onumonu (2026)	Conceptual exploration on how to equip international business graduates to make decisions in today's volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) marketplace	The paper provides a framework to build the <i>risk management competencies</i> and prepare future global managers for addressing global international crises, like pandemics and similar
Plhato and Voss (2026)	Conceptual work on <i>systems thinking capabilities</i> , their necessity in IB education and how systems thinking capabilities could be taught in IB	The paper showcases how IB education can be improved to better engage with the grand challenges and better prepare graduates to address them
Beamond <i>et al.</i> (2026)	Literature review on sustainability in IB education, including future opportunities for researchers and practitioners interested in the topic	The paper offers a systematic investigation on the topic and proposes that adoption of holistic perspectives in business education plays a pivotal role in cultivating the mindsets and competencies required for the next generation of socially responsible practitioners
Šilenskytė <i>et al.</i> (2026)	Conceptual paper explores how critical perspectives can be embedded in the IB curriculum, especially under the existence of institutional sanctions or when critical-curious scholars lack skills to engage with the critical thought	The study proposes a critical perspectives framework and a set of actions across four components of curriculum directed at defending academic freedom in IB education. The framework also emphasizes the value of coexistence of multiple approaches to problem solving
Barnard (2026)	The reflection sheds light on the often-overlooked challenges encountered by scholars from emerging markets, especially in doctoral training, which can limit their full participation in the field.	The study outlines the obstacles faced by emerging market scholars who could bring knowledge about and voice for the region. The study also details the strategies the author has used to navigate and address these obstacles
Boncheva <i>et al.</i> (2026)	The conceptual work examines the state of doctoral education in the field of IB and the ways collaborative IB doctoral programs at global, regional and local levels work to solve existing doctoral education challenges	The paper defines requirements for impactful IB doctoral education, spots problems in the institutionally-siloed doctoral training and provides suggestions for how current challenges can be potentially solved through collaborative doctoral education

Source(s): Authors' own elaboration

First layer: what competencies should be developed in each level of education to ensure that we grow responsible business professionals capable of navigating various complexities?
First layer: what competencies should be developed in each level of education to ensure that we grow responsible business professionals capable of navigating various complexities?
Second layer: what are the topics we should bring in learning goals and teaching/learning content to secure the sufficient presence of critical thought?

Second layer: what are the ways to systematically integrate critical perspectives across all the components of IB curriculum?

Fourth layer: what should IB education be like to achieve as wide as possible variety of the outcomes promoted by critical IB scholarship?

Fourth layer: what should IB education be like to achieve as wide as possible variety of the outcomes promoted by critical IB scholarship?

education – AIB-CIBER Doctoral Academy (global), Nordic Research School of IB (regional – Nordics), Emerging Scholars from Emerging Markets Program (regional – emerging markets) and the Finnish Graduate School of International Business (local) – and provides a number of actionable suggestions for how to enhance IB education through working on formal and informal doctoral program components across institutional borders. This is suggested to help addressing 3Cs – context, connection and complexity – that form IB disciplinary demands.

The collection in the special issue serves as a foundational resource, paving the way for a more comprehensive approach to international business education, ultimately empowering future generations of leaders to navigate the complexities of the globalized business environment. However, all these papers, while being excellent contributions, capture only a small part of the remaining questions defined within the research scope of the critical perspectives in IB education (see Section 2). Moreover, the third layer identified in our systematic approach to the integration of critical perspectives in IB education did not emerge in any of the articles in the Special Issue. Thus, it is our hope that future studies will work on addressing a more comprehensive range of issues and strengthen the foundations for building IB education capable of growing engaged, responsible and open-minded international business professionals who know how to use critical perspectives to create a more sustainable, just and responsibility-driven business environment.

Acknowledgements

The guest editors would like to express their deepest gratitude to Prof. Christoph Dörrenbächer, Former Editor-in-Chief, with whom some of the guest editors co-organized the panel on *Critical Perspectives in IB Education* at AIB 2021, which inspired this special issue, and who supported us in its initial stages. The guest editors are extremely grateful to Prof. Rudolf R. Sinkovics, current Editor-in-Chief, whose continuous guidance throughout the process was invaluable.

The guest editors thank all authors and reviewers for their dedicated contributions, which have advanced both the development of this special issue and the enrichment of IB education through critical perspectives.

References

- Abdelzaher, D.M. and Onumonu, M. (2026), "Building synergistic mindsets in international business education: the unmet demands of a VUCA marketplace", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 11-34, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-05-2022-0050](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-05-2022-0050).
- Adler, P.S., Forbes, L.C. and Willmott, H. (2007), "Critical management studies", *Academy of Management Annals*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 119-179, doi: [10.5465/078559808](https://doi.org/10.5465/078559808).
- Ahen, F. and Zettinig, P. (2015), "Critical perspectives on strategic CSR: what is sustainable value co-creation orientation?", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 92-109, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-03-2012-0022](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-03-2012-0022).
- Antonacopoulou, E.P. (2010), "Making the business school more 'critical': reflexive critique based on phronesis as a foundation for impact", *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 21 No. s1, pp. s6-s25, doi: [10.1111/j.1467-8551.2009.00679.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2009.00679.x).
- Arsel, M. and Büscher, B. (2012), "Nature™ inc.: changes and continuities in neoliberal conservation and market-based environmental policy", *Development and Change*, Vol. 43 No. 1, pp. 53-78, doi: [10.1111/j.1467-7660.2012.01752.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2012.01752.x).
- Aubert, N., Cordova, M. and Hernandez, G. (2024), "Sharing the ownership in Peru and Mexico: the case of a French MNE prompting the SDGs achievement", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 20 No. 2, pp. 246-271, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-12-2022-0133](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-12-2022-0133).
- Banerjee, D.B. (2010), "Governing the global corporation: a critical perspective", *Business Ethics Quarterly*, Vol. 20 No. 2, pp. 265-274, doi: [10.5840/beq201020219](https://doi.org/10.5840/beq201020219).

- Banerjee, D.B. and Jackson, L. (2016), "Microfinance and the business of poverty reduction: critical perspectives from rural Bangladesh", *Human Relations*, Vol. 70 No. 1, pp. 63-91, doi: [10.1177/0018726716640865](https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726716640865).
- Bamard, H. (2026), "Stepping stones across a fast-flowing river: supporting emerging scholars from emerging markets", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 107-115, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-09-2023-0086](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-09-2023-0086).
- Beamond, M.T., Schmitz, M., Cordova, M., Ilieva, M.V., Zhao, S. and Panina, D. (2026), "Sustainability in business education: a systematic review and future research agenda", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 56-83, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-06-2022-0071](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-06-2022-0071).
- Billing, Y.D. and Alvesson, M. (2000), "Questioning the notion of feminine leadership: a critical perspective on the gender labelling of leadership", *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 7 No. 3, pp. 144-157, doi: [10.1111/1468-0432.00103](https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0432.00103).
- Blackburn, R. and Kovalainen, A. (2009), "Researching small firms and entrepreneurship: past, present and future", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 127-148, doi: [10.1111/j.1468-2370.2008.00254.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2008.00254.x).
- Boncheva, K., Gajewska-De Mattos, H., Griffith, D.A., Pirrone, G., Šilenskytė, A. and Tonn, A. (2026), "Examining the context, connection, and complexity of collaborative doctoral programs in international business", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 116-138, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-12-2024-0170](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-12-2024-0170).
- Bondy, K., Moon, J. and Matten, D. (2012), "An institution of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Multi-National corporations (MNCs): form and implications", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 111 No. 2, pp. 281-299, doi: [10.1007/s10551-012-1208-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1208-7).
- Boussebaa, M. and Morgan, G. (2014), "Pushing the frontiers of critical international business studies", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 10 Nos 1-2, pp. 96-106, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-11-2013-0046](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-11-2013-0046).
- Brei, V. and Böhm, S. (2011), "Corporate social responsibility as cultural meaning management: a critique of the marketing of 'ethical' bottled water", *Business Ethics: A European Review*, Vol. 20 No. 3, pp. 233-252, doi: [10.1111/j.1467-8608.2011.01626.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8608.2011.01626.x).
- Burmester, B.M. (2024), "MNE intercession, antitrust, and supply chain slavery: a new regulatory strategy to realise SDG 8.7", in Sinkovics, N., Sinkovics, R.R., Boussebaa, M. and Fletcher, M. (Eds), *International Business and SDG 8*, The Academy of International Business. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, doi: [10.1007/978-3-031-46802-5_5](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-46802-5_5).
- Clarke, J. (2020), *Critical Dialogues: Thinking Together in Turbulent Times*, Policy Press, Bristol, doi: [10.1332/policypress/9781447350972.001.0001](https://doi.org/10.1332/policypress/9781447350972.001.0001).
- Desai, M.S., Berger, B.D. and Higgs, R. (2016), "Critical thinking skills for business school graduates as demanded by employers: a strategic perspective and recommendations", *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 10-31.
- Dunning, J. (1980), "Toward an eclectic theory of international production: some empirical tests", *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 9-31, doi: [10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8490593](https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8490593).
- Ergene, S., Banerjee, S.B. and Hoffman, A.J. (2020), "(Un)sustainability and organization studies: towards a radical engagement", *Organization Studies*, Vol. 42 No. 8, pp. 1319-1335, doi: [10.1177/0170840620937892](https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840620937892).
- Flood, R.L. (2010), "The relationship of 'systems thinking' to action research", *Systemic Practice and Action Research*, Vol. 23 No. 4, pp. 269-284, doi: [10.1007/s11213-010-9169-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11213-010-9169-1).
- Forsgren, M. (2017), *Theories of the Multinational Firm: A Multidimensional Creature in the Global Economy*, 3rd ed. Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK.
- Geppert, M. and Dörrenbächer, C. (2014), "Politics and power within multinational corporations: mainstream studies, emerging critical approaches and suggestions for future research", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 16 No. 2, pp. 226-244, doi: [10.1111/ijmr.12018](https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12018).

- Gonzalez-Perez, M.A. and Cordova, M. (2024), "Redefining multinational operations: the impact of CSR on international business policy", in Gugler, P. and Tavares-Lehmann, A.T. (Eds), *Handbook of International Business Policy*, Edward Elgar, doi: [10.4337/9781035308682.00019](https://doi.org/10.4337/9781035308682.00019).
- Hymer, S.H. (1976), *The International Operations of National Firms: A Study of Direct Foreign Investment (Mit Monographs in Economics; 14)*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Johanson, J. and Vahlne, J.E. (1977), "The internationalization process of the firm—a model of knowledge development and increasing foreign market commitments", *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 23-32, doi: [10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8490676](https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8490676).
- Kearins, K. and Springett, D. (2003), "Educating for sustainability: developing critical skills", *Journal of Management Education*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 188-204, doi: [10.1177/1052562903251411](https://doi.org/10.1177/1052562903251411).
- Kowalska, A., Lingham, S., Maye, D. and Manning, L. (2023), "Food insecurity: is leagility a potential remedy?", *Foods*, Vol. 12 No. 16, p. 3138, doi: [10.3390/foods12163138](https://doi.org/10.3390/foods12163138).
- Laine, M. (2019), "Meanings of the term 'sustainable development' in Finnish corporate disclosures", *Accounting Forum*, Vol. 29 No. 4, pp. 395-413, doi: [10.1016/j.accfor.2005.04.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.accfor.2005.04.001).
- Pilato, V. and Voss, H. (2026), "A systems thinking approach to international business education", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 35-55, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-06-2022-0072](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-06-2022-0072).
- Roberts, J. and Dörenbächer, C. (2012), "The futures of critical perspectives on international business", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 4-13, doi: [10.1108/17422041211197530](https://doi.org/10.1108/17422041211197530).
- Šilenskytė, A., Burmester, B. and Casnici, C.V.C. (2026), "Defending liberal international business education: a critical perspectives framework", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 84-106, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-05-2023-0044](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-05-2023-0044).
- Sinkovics, N., Vieira, L.M. and van Tulder, R. (2022), "Working toward the sustainable development goals in earnest – critical international business perspectives on designing and implementing better interventions", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 445-456, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-05-2022-0059](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-05-2022-0059).
- Trehan, K. (2004), "Who is not sleeping with whom? What's not being talked about in HRD?", *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Vol. 28 No. 1, pp. 23-38, doi: [10.1108/03090590410513875](https://doi.org/10.1108/03090590410513875).
- Williamson, O.E. (1979), "Transaction-Cost economics: the governance of contractual relations", *The Journal of Law and Economics*, Vol. 22 No. 2, pp. 233-261, doi: [10.1086/466942](https://doi.org/10.1086/466942).
- Yamin, M. and Forsgren, M. (2006), "Hymer's analysis of the multinational organization: power retention and the demise of the federative MNE", *International Business Review*, Vol. 15 No. 2, pp. 166-179, doi: [10.1016/j.ibusrev.2005.07.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2005.07.006).
- Zagelmeyer, S. (2023), "Moving beyond delinking, decoloniality and the pluriverse: reflections on the 'decolonizing international business' debate", *Critical Perspectives on International Business*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 71-93, doi: [10.1108/cpoib-04-2023-0028](https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-04-2023-0028).

Further reading

- Atabaki, A., Keshtiaray, N. and Yarmohammadian, M. (2015), "Scrutiny of critical thinking concept", *International Education Studies*, Vol. 8 No. 3, pp. 93-102, doi: [10.5539/ies.v8n3p93](https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v8n3p93).

Corresponding author

Aušrinė Šilenskytė can be contacted at: ausrine.silenskyte@uwasa.fi