



Symposium title: Language and Critical Thinking Integrated Teaching: Content, Consumption and Production of EFL Course Materials

Coordinator 1 (Youzhong, SUN, School of English and International Studies, Beijing Foreign Studies University, People's Republic of China):

Coordinator 2 (Limin, JIN, School of English and International Studies, Beijing Foreign Studies University, People's Republic of China):

Symposium format:

- **Symposium Multimodal**

Symposium mode:

- **Hybrid**

Sub-theme:

- LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING: teacher education, curricula and education, classrooms, instruction, task-based learning, EAP, study abroad, (virtual) exchanges, materials and methods

Short abstract:

In EFL (English as a Foreign Language) countries, conventional English language teaching (ELT) focused on language knowledge, skills and communicative competence. However, it has been recognized by many language educators and applied linguists that language has a close relationship with thinking and cognition. As the development of critical thinking is an essential goal of tertiary education, developing critical thinking simultaneously in ELT is of vital importance, especially for students who major in English studies. EFL instructional materials are often considered a platform that reflects educational philosophy and innovation, understanding of language and language learning, and educational and cultural contexts. Therefore, an analysis of instructional materials that try to integrate the development of critical thinking with the teaching of language skills will provide insight into this educational reform. This symposium explores the issues related to materials evaluation, development and use guided by the approach of Language and Critical Thinking Integrated Teaching (LaCTIT). It invites qualitative/quantitative studies that examine the design, writing and use of materials that reflect and support LaCTIT. The discussions will offer valuable insights for developing both content and pedagogical knowledge of teaching critical thinking skills in ELT.

Argument:

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) instructional materials are often considered a platform that showcase educational philosophy and innovation, understanding of language and language learning, and educational and cultural contexts. In many contexts, published textbooks “constitute the syllabus, teachers being expected to follow them more or less faithfully, with end-of-course exams being based exclusively on textbook content” (Harwood, 2021:1). In other contexts, teachers are given freedom to use the assigned textbooks more creatively (Bao, 2021). Therefore, the analysis of EFL instructional materials and how they are designed and used will provide us with insight into the educational philosophy and innovation of a cultural context, teachers’ understanding and implementation of such philosophy and innovation in the classroom.



In EFL countries, conventional English language teaching (ELT) focused on language knowledge, skills and communicative competence. However, it has been recognized by many language educators and applied linguists that language has a close relationship with thinking and cognition. As the development of critical thinking is an essential goal of tertiary education, developing critical thinking simultaneously in ELT is of vital importance, especially for students who major in English studies. In the past two decades, there has been considerable research on critical thinking (CT) in language teaching in university classrooms (See Zhang and Yuan, 2022, for a brief review).

This symposium invites qualitative/quantitative studies that examine the design, writing and use of materials guided by the approach of Language and Critical Thinking Integrated Teaching (LaCTIT) or any teaching approach that is in line with LaCTIT. We hope the discussions will offer valuable insights for developing both content and pedagogical knowledge of teaching critical thinking skills in ELT.

References

Bao, D. (2021). *Creativity and Innovations in ELT Materials Development: Looking beyond the Current Design*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. Originally by Multilingual Matters in 2018.

Harwood, N. (2021). *English Language Teaching Textbooks: Content, Consumption, Production*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. Originally by Palgrave Macmillan in 2014.

Zhang, H. & Yuan, R. (2022). Rethinking the infusion approach to teaching critical thinking in Reading in Chinese tertiary English classes. *RELC Journal*, 53, 1-15. DOI: 10.1177/00336882221087466