“This activity is far from being a pause for reflection”: An exploration of ELT authors’, editors’, teachers’ and learners’ conceptualisations of critical thinking

Investigations into English language teaching (ELT) materials have tended to focus on the design of those materials or, less frequently, on their development, implementation or post-use evaluations. Although important conclusions have been drawn from a number of those studies, there still seems to be lacking a more integrative approach to research into ELT materials exploring the implications of decisions made at writing, editing and production stages of materials development onto teachers’ and students’ perceptions of those materials. In this talk I will address some of those issues by presenting the results of an investigation of a set of ELT materials designed for the development of young learners’ critical thinking in the context of Brazilian state schools. Two sets of data are examined in the study, namely (1) the multiple drafts of those activities and the changes they went through following discussion between co-authors and editors; and (2) classroom interactions around those materials. Results suggest that participants may take up conflicting positionings in their conceptualisations of critical thinking, and I will conclude the talk by discussing the implications of those findings for research and pedagogy.