

Relating the GEPT Reading Comprehension Tests to the CEFR

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Abstract

English learning and assessment in Taiwan has been undergoing a critical change, particularly in relation to the establishment of a common standard of English proficiency through the adoption of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) by the Ministry of Education, starting in 2005. This article describes a project initiated by the Language Training and Testing Center (LTTC¹) to relate the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) reading comprehension tests in Taiwan to the CEFR. Firstly, this article introduces the background, purpose and context of the linking project. Secondly, the article reports on the process and product of the project which was conducted by following the procedures and methods in both the preliminary draft of a Manual for relating language examinations to the CEFR (Council of Europe 2003) and the Dutch CEFR Construct Grid (Alderson et al 2006). In addition, as the CEFR framework is a rather new input to the Taiwanese EFL context, the impact of using the CEFR as a common framework of reference on language teaching and testing in Taiwan is discussed. Drawing from previous experience with the linking project from a local exam board's perspective, the article offers reflections on the process and contributes to the ongoing and increasingly important discussion of the CEFR.

¹ The LTTC, founded in 1951, is a non-profit cultural and educational foundation, dedicated to meeting Taiwan's social and economic development needs through research, development, and administration in the language teaching and testing fields.