Connecting Assessment and Learning through Online Gaming:
A Cross-Disciplinary Endeavor

Knowledge of vocabulary is considered to be one of the fundamental prerequisites that enable language use for foreign or second language learners (McCarthy, 1990; Nation, 2001; Nation and Waring, 1997). In Taiwan, one of the challenges that English language teachers often face is that the traditional way of learning vocabulary by memorizing the words and their meanings has a limited effect in terms of expanding students' vocabulary repertoire. In recent years, however, the notion of using games in the language learning classroom has been advanced. In particular, various studies have indicated that digital game-based learning offers a fun and meaningful way to increase students' motivation in learning, promote self- and peer-learning, and enhance the effectiveness in acquiring vocabulary knowledge (Chik, 2014; Hsin, 2012; Kou, 2016; Nunan and Richards, 2015; Reinders, 2012; Shyu, 2006; Yang, 2011(?)).

To illustrate this approach, this presentation will demonstrate how LTTC's General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) provides learning and assessment resources by collaborating with a multi-student social game platform to build an educational game. The game includes vocabulary items from both A1 (GEPT Kids) and A2 (GEPT Elementary) levels. The vocabulary items are presented in four different task types, allowing leaners to enhance vocabulary power through multiple language modalities. Other key features of the learning game include self-diagnosis before the game, adaptive learning support based on a learner's ability, and learning profile. It is expected that these features will offer opportunities for learners to individualize learning and self-assess their progression in learning over time, facilitate vocabulary acquisition through spiral learning, and enhance learner autonomy by allowing learners to flexibly arrange their learning plans. Preliminary statistics on users' performance and feedback from players of the game and the challenges of developing such a digital language learning courseware will also be discussed.