

**The University of Pittsburgh ~ Department of  
Linguistics  
Colloquium Series *Presents:***

**“Does Word Coach coach words? Design and test of a  
video game”**

**Presented By:  
Professor Tom Cobb**

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It is a truism that more is known about language learning than gets into the hands of language learners. Researchers pile up information about what counts in language development, and in a parallel universe the publishers and teachers can hardly keep up with it all. So it is a researcher's dream to get an offer to build the findings in his area into a mass distribution educational video game. But which principles? Can these survive a commercial production process? Will any measurable learning result from use? My address will describe designing the vocabulary trainer My Word Coach (Ubisoft, 2007), integrating principles and lessons learned from the Compleat Lexical Tutor website, and testing the trainer over four months with 60 school-age second language learners. Tests looked for signs of growth on two receptive measures (definitional knowledge and recognition fluency) and one productive measure (oral description of a picture story).

**Friday October 3, 2008 @ 3:00 p.m.  
Room 332 ~ Cathedral of Learning  
Reception to follow on 28<sup>th</sup> floor**