

Q_Lex v4.00: The Manual

Paul Meara

Q_Lex is an exploratory program that assesses how easy it is for an L2 learner to access a small set of high frequency words. The program is basically a word recognition task, but it uses an innovative methodology that gets round some of the problems that arise in standard L2 word recognition tasks.

Q_Lex does not require any data preparation before administering the test. However, you will need to check that your internet connection is working reliably and is not subject to long delays.

1. The Q_Lex **opening screen** looks like this:

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Q_Lex v4.00

Q_Lex 4.00 is an exploratory program that can be used to evaluate how easily learners of English can access a high frequency vocabulary. The program was developed by Paul Meara and David Coulson.

Please read the [Manual](#) before you use the test, and make sure that you understand what test-takers are expected to do with the program.

enter your id code here

START Click **START** to begin

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The program stores any data that is submitted to it in an on-line database. If you will want to recover your data at some later date, then you should enter a unique ID code into the box on this page. The unique ID code can be any sequence of letters and digits. It is your responsibility to keep a record of any codes that you create. If you are unlikely to need to access the data – for instance, if you are just running a one-off test – then you can leave the ID box in its default state.

2. Click **Start** when you are ready to begin. Q_Lex moves into its data collection phase, which looks like this:



Click **Ready** to start displaying the test items.

3. Each test item is displayed in a screen that looks like the figure below. In this display, Q_Lex presents you with a single target word hidden inside a longer string of randomised letters. The test-taker's job is to find the hidden word. This display will remain on screen for two seconds. You do not need to take any action during the display.



4. After two seconds, the data display screen will be replaced by the **data capture screen**, which looks like the figure on the next page:



5. In the data capture screen we have five buttons, each containing a single word. One of these words is the target word that was hidden in the previous screen. The test-taker signals that s/he recognised a target word by clicking the appropriate button, or by clicking the **Next** button.

There are 55 items in total. The first five items are not scored. They are intended to provide a small number of practice items so that test-takers can familiarise themselves with the testing method. This leaves a total of 50 “live” items which are scored. Test-takers get one point for each word they correctly identify.

6. Scores are provided in a **report screen** (see the figure on the next page). The report tells you how many words you correctly identified, and how your score compares with other people who have taken the test.

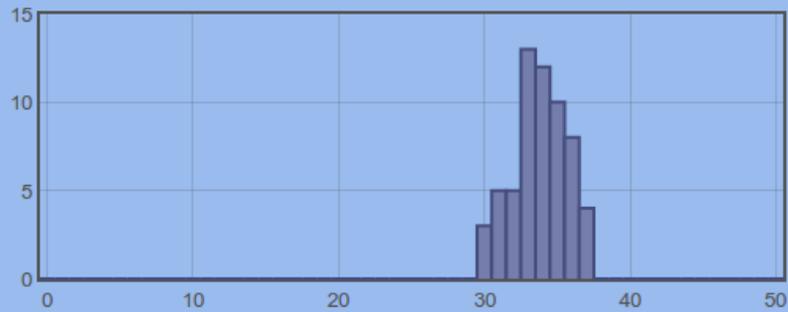
Q_Lex scores can range between 0 and 50. Native speakers typically score above 35 points on this test (normal literate adults usually identify about 40 of the target words). For an L2 learner, anything above 30 is a good score. We do not have any data which relates Q_Lex scores to other aspects of L2 performance.



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Q_Lex4

60 people have done the test so far
here are their scores



RESTART

your score was 35

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Background reading:

Meara, P. M. (1986) The DÍgame Project. In V.J. Cook (ed.) *Experimental Approaches to Second Language Learning* (pp. 101-110). Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Coulson, D. and Meara, P. (2017) The development, validation and use of a test of word recognition for English learners. In R. Al-Mahrooqi, C. Coombe, F. Al-Maamari and V. Thakur (Eds.) *Revisiting EFL assessment: Critical perspectives* (pp. 171-188). Berlin: Springer.

For a more detailed discussion of *Q_Lex*, see **PM Meara and I Miralpeix (2017)** *Tools for Researching Vocabulary*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.