

Reply to reviewers

We were very grateful to receive the reviewers' insightful comments and constructive critiques. Their concerns and observations have been replied to in the order in which they were presented to the authors by the journal editor.

Reviewer 4 comment	Author reply
<i>A typo on page 9 line 27 'indentify' – for identify</i>	This has now been corrected.
<i>I would like some explanation for Fig. 4. I see no prose related to it and it seems opaque unless you add some prose. I think it is fine to just delete this figure.</i>	More prose has been added to gloss that figure; although the reviewer suggests that the figure may even be deleted, we have elected to retain it in the manuscript as it is felt that it helps to visually illustrate what is meant by an 'integrated' list.
Reviewer 3 comment	Author reply
<i>(No suggested changes.)</i>	N/A
Reviewer 5 comment	Author reply
<i>The sources cited on p.2 and p.3 are missing.</i>	The references were originally there, but this article has been revised twice, with a section that was at one time removed (with its references) later replaced in the manuscript (apparently without its references), and a final cross-check apparently did not occur, thus causing an omission of the citations the reviewer refers to. These have now been put back in, and we apologize for the oversight.

Reviewer 2 comment	Author reply
<p><i>p. 2. While the purpose of doing this research seems to create a “useful list” for second language learners, there is no rationale at all as to why the sequences identified for the teaching and testing list are to be included “for receptive purposes” (p.2, bulleted points). Why are the discussions limited to receptive purposes only? And how does that come into play here anyway? Why is that an issue in the first place? Would we not want our students to be able to not only recognize but use these sequences after all? By the same token, how would this list be able to “aid in monitoring the vocabulary acquisition process”? (p.2, bulleted points)</i></p>	<p>Of course, all the phrases in the PHRASE List can be used by learners in their language production as well. However, there are a few reasons why we chose to develop a list that focuses especially on phrases whose semantic properties make them candidates for misunderstanding. For one, L2 readers are often required to read and understand lexis that they may not yet be ready to produce, or which has not yet been targeted for productive skills purposes yet in their lessons. An example of this has been observed recently in research conducted by Cambridge ESOL for the English Profile project, whose main objective is to better specify the level descriptors in the CEFR. Certain items, such as <i>at all</i>, <i>a number of</i>, and <i>used to</i>, are attested in the BNC at a frequency matching the most common 1000 words in English, or, roughly, the A1-A2 CEFR. However, in the Cambridge learner corpora, those same phrases only begin to appear in learner written production as of the B and even C levels. There is little doubt that even learners at the lowest levels of proficiency (if exposed to authentic language) are exposed to those items. However, the task demands of students at those lower levels, in addition to their undeveloped grammatical knowledge, limit the complexity of the discourse they produce. For example, a learner at A1 can (be asked to) write, 'He does not like pizza'; the sentence 'He does not like pizza at all' adds 'stance' and sounds natural, but is not necessarily expected to be produced at such a low level of proficiency. It is - or at least it should be - expected to be understood even at the A1/A2 levels, given its high occurrence in naturally-occurring discourse, and it is for this reason we stress that the items in the PHRASE List have been selected for their value in receptive skills.</p> <p>An “all-purposes” list of phrases – if indeed possible – would be much larger, and would likely never reach any kind of consensus given the fuzzy formal/functional boundaries of formulaic sequences if one does not delimit the field, as we have done. For example, it can easily be argued, if only on the basis of frequency alone, that both <i>the number of</i> and <i>a number of</i> are of value as lexical items. However, only one of those items can be fully understood by a literal meaning of its component parts (<i>the number of</i>). The</p>

	<p>other item, <i>a number of</i>, is essentially an adverbial rather than a noun phrase, meaning 'several' - it must be learned as an item. On the other hand, while <i>the number of</i> is surely useful, it is less clearly a discrete item: if a learner is taught that <i>number</i> can also mean 'amount', then <i>the number of</i> (and <i>a high number of</i>, <i>the huge number of</i>, <i>a small number</i>, etc.) are all phrases that extend from that core meaning. The same cannot be said for <i>a number of</i>. (<i>The troops sustained a number of casualties</i> ≠ <i>The troops sustained *an amount of casualties</i>.)</p> <p>With regard to the reviewer's last question, why this list should be an "aid in monitoring the vocabulary acquisition process," it is due to one of the envisaged applications of the PHRASE List – namely vocabulary testing. If tests such as the Vocabulary Size Test (Beglar & Nation, 2007) and the Vocabulary Levels Test purport to be able to monitor progress in the number of words known, the same should apply to phrases. However, up until now, vocabulary tests have not included formulaic language due to no list being available from which to build such a test.</p>
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Reviewer 3 comment	Author reply
<p>What a well-designed analysis with a very useful practical product, i.e., the list, that represents more of what an APPLIED linguistics journal ought to contain. I recommend publication of your article.</p>	<p>Thank you. We tried to emphasize the applied element of the research.</p>

Reviewer 3 comment	Author reply
<p>3. Beef up the part of the lit review that begins with "The limitations ..." You've jumped from 1930 to 1953 to 2000. If there is nothing in between, you might mention this. Maybe this is not important to your point, but as a reader, I felt rushed with these 3 dates as the history.</p>	<p>Yes, this is a good observation. We have added a few key citations to the lit review that span the period in question.</p>