BRITISH COUNCIL

Student packs

1. INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

TASK 1
Brainstorm in groups words that you associate with research.

Here is Mouly's definition of research:
Research is best conceived as the process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. It is a most important tool for advancing knowledge, for promoting progress, and for enabling man to relate more effectively to his environment, to accomplish his purpose and to resolve his conflicts. (quoted in Cohen and Manion, 1994)

2. QUANTITATIVE VERSUS QUALITATIVE APPROACHES TO RESEARCH

Research can be carried out in a quantitative, qualitative or combined way. The quantitative approach focuses more on large numbers of respondents, and involves analysis, which yields mainly numerical information, or statistics. The qualitative approach starts from the researcher's insights, which wants to test his/her hypotheses by carrying out research in the field. In this kind of research, fewer respondents are investigated, but their responses are analysed in a very detailed way. The researcher's perception carries much weight and the findings cannot be generalised.

TASK 1
Fill in the following table with the missing information:

	Quantitative Approach	**Qualitative Approach**
Main Characteristics	It pursues facts	
		A researcher is considered to be an insider to the research
Strengths		The researcher is able to provide richer and wider-ranging descriptions than in the quantitative approach.
Weaknesses	The researcher's viewpoint is not considered in the explanation of the research.	

(Based on Cohen and Manion,1997:39)

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3. TYPES OF RESEARCH

TASK 1
Match the words on the left with the illustrations provided on the right:

Surveys	1. Two classes of students of English (same size, level, age, having the same teacher) were used to see whether error correction by the teacher during the English class had beneficial results on students' learning. With one class the teacher never corrected students' mistakes in the productive stages of the lesson, while with the other the teacher corrected all students' mistakes.
Experiments	2. A student goes every day for a week in a company to notice the way employees use English at work; s/he watches people in offices, workshops, meetings, interviews, discussions, etc, takes notes and identifies areas/situations for using English.
Case study	3. All 12th grade students in 50 schools in the district of Sibiu are asked about the continuation of their education. Questionnaires and interviews (using the same questions) are used in order to collect data which are then presented as pie charts or bar charts.

TASK 2:
Fill in the following table in order to identify some features of each type of research. In some cases it may be a combination of features.

Feature	Survey	Experiment	Case study
Quantitative/qualitative			
Natural/artificial (With/without control over informants)			
With/without the researcher's participation			
Results can/cannot be generalised			
Large/small amount of data			
Other			

(Based on Baker, 1988:15-42)

4. IDENTIFYING THE AREA(S) FOR RESEARCH

The first step in the research process – once you have decided on a topic - is that of establishing the precise focus of the study, the area which will be investigated.
In our case, the area of interest is defined by the question:
"*What are the language needs of vocational school graduates in their profession*?"
In order to investigate this main research question, we need to narrow it down and make it more detailed and specific, by considering the questions we need to ask.

TASK 1
Can you identify the two main areas that the question above refers to?

TASK 2
Let us start by looking at one of these areas in more detail.
Work in small groups. Draw up a 'first thought' list of questions that you might want to ask in order to identify factors characterising the professional field which have an impact on communication.
Write down 5 questions then report them to the whole class.

TASK 3 - *Investigating the professional field -*
Work in groups. Below are listed the main factors in any professional field which have an impact on the way people communicate at work, and thus on the type of language they use. Break each of them down into more specific components by formulating questions which will help you identify the target needs in your school's specific professional field.
Group1 – *Activities and tasks*
Group 2 – *Interaction*
Group 3 – Subject / *Content of the communication*
Group 4 – *Attitudes and tones*
Group 5 – *The situational context*

When you have finished, report to the whole class.

Factors characterising the professional field which influence communication	Possible questions

Activities and tasks	
Interaction	
Subject / Content of communication	
Attitudes and tones	
The situational context	

(From Ellis and Johnson, 1994: 72)
Now compare your list of questions with the one provided by your teacher.

TASK 4
Based on the previous discussion, try to identify the specific aspects of a secretary's job in a Romanian -Dutch company. Use the headings below as guidelines.

- Activities and tasks which involve the use of English
- People he/she interacts with and ways of interacting
- Subject of the communication
- Attitudes and tones
- Situational context

TASK 5 - *Investigating the language requirements* -
To break down this area into its main components, complete the following passage with the appropriate words (tips: each gap stands for a word and the number of dashes indicates the number of the missing letters; some letters have been given). Work in groups, then compare solutions in plenary:

> Investigating in detail the professional field will help us identify what l _ _ _ _ _ _ e aspects are required to perform effectively in specific j _ _ s :
> ❖ What l_ _ _ _ _ _ e sk _ _ _ _ are necessary?
> - s _ _ _ _ _ _ _ (*e.g.* for telephoning, job interviews,
> - Presentations, etc.)

- w _ _ _ _ _ _ (*e.g.* for drafting letters, note-taking,
- summarising, etc.)
- r _ _ _ _ _ _ for general or for specific information
  - (*e.g.* instruction manuals, the mail, etc.)
- l _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ for the gist of the message or for specific
  information (*e.g.* to instructions, radio/TV news, etc.)
- ❖ Does the profession require a specialised v _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ?
  (*e.g.* technical words, business terms, etc.)
- ❖ Can any specific g _ _ _ _ _ _ s _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ s be identified?
  (*e.g.* the Passive in scientific texts)
- ❖ What f _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ occur more frequently in communication?
  (*e.g.* requesting/giving information, explaining, thanking, etc.)

TASK 6 - *Identifying sources for data collection* -
With your colleagues identify at least eight sources from where you could collect information for your research. Now look at these sources again and decide which of them would be particularly relevant for your research.

5. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

TASK 1
Work in groups of 5. Choose one of the texts below each, read it carefully, and tell its content to your four partners. Discuss in your group and fill in the table below, then share your opinions with the whole class.
Interview

This instrument is used to find out "sensitive" information and details. Usually people find it easier to accept a less formal (even informal) discussion than a formal one (interview). But the interview (even less formal) can be better focused on relevant information. Sometimes there is the risk that the persons being interviewed could give polite, "acceptable" "kind" answers. The information obtained in interviews is often difficult to process as it usually contains a lot of qualitative data. The interview / discussion can very well be used to design questionnaires.

Observation

It is used when no formal report is required or when you believe that the information obtained from documents, interviews and / or other instruments may be incomplete, inaccurate, distorted or irrelevant. Observation can be done without taking notes, with taking sporadic, random notes or using an Observation form to ensure a more systematic character of the observed elements noted. Observation based on indicators can be done *before, during* or *after* an event or a fact. According to the type and number of indicators, the duration of observation can vary.

Questionnaire

Questionnaires are used when a number of answers (usually anonymous) are needed to the same set of questions. Using this instrument, information from a large number of persons can be obtained in a relatively short time and with relatively low costs. The better the questionnaire, the more persons will fill it in. a large variety of questions can be used in a questionnaire, including open-ended questions, like those used in interviews. Anonymity ensures a higher degree of sincerity, therefore higher relevance of the information yielded.

Diaries

Diaries used as instruments of investigation and data collection generally cover an agreed time span and are completed according to a set of instructions. They are records of the subjects' work patterns and activities, with a focus on behaviour rather on emotions. Completing a diary may be time consuming and irritating and sometimes may modify the very behaviour under focus. Diaries can be used as a preliminary to interviewing.

Focus group

Focus groups are organised small group discussions and they usually explore specific issues. They are 'focused' in two ways. First they bring together individuals chosen to meet specific profile. They may be homogeneous along some dimensions and heterogeneous along others. Second, the purpose of the discussions is to gather information about a single topic or narrow range of topics guided by a set of open discussion questions. Focus groups, unlike individual interviews, provide the added dimension of the interactions among members. The intent of focus groups is to develop a broad and deep understanding of the topic of interest rather than a quantitative summary. The emphasis is on insights, responses, and opinions rather on specific facts. The simplest way to document the focus group's ideas is to use note-takers. Focus groups are not appropriate for gathering specific quantified, factual information. Similarly they are not appropriate for determining consensus within the group. Focus groups are often combined with quantitative approaches such as surveys that can be administered at different points in the group discussion.

(Based on Bell, 1997: 5-14)

INSTRUMENT	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
Interview		
Observation		

Questionnaire		
Diary		
Focus group		

6. SAMPLING

Researchers collect information from a smaller group or subset of population (called **sample**) in such a way that the knowledge gained is representative of the total population under study. There are two methods of sampling: **probability** and **non-probability.**

TASK 1
Read the following information and try to guess the method of sampling described by your peers:

Probability sampling
1) Simple random sampling – selecting at random from a list of the population the required numbers of subjects for the sample. Because of probability and chance, the sample should contain subjects with characteristics similar to the population as a whole.

2) Systematic sampling – selecting from a population list according to a pre-established criterion, e.g. the 20th person from 2,000 people, if a sample of 100 is required.

3) Cluster sampling – selecting all the students in a group of schools for a survey on fitness levels, for example, rather than randomly select children from all schools in a region and spending a large amount of time traveling in order to collect data.

Non-probability sampling
1) Convenience sampling – choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained.

2) Purposive sampling – selecting the cases to be included in the sample on the researcher's judgment of their typicality in order to serve the purpose of the research.

3) Snowball sampling - identifying a small number of individuals who have the characteristics required by the study and then using them to identify others for inclusion and these, in turn, to further identify others.

(Based on Cohen and Manion, 1997:86-89)

TASK 2
One participant volunteers to sit in front facing the others while the teacher writes the name of a method of sampling on the board. One or more of the group describe the method which the volunteer has to guess. The procedure continues for six rounds, till all methods are mentioned.
(This activity is based on an idea by Margit Szesztay at Esztergom Hornby Summer School 2003).

TASK 3
Plenary discussion on the sampling method(s) likely to be used during the project.

TASK 4
Apply the sampling method(s) you chose and identify the groups of respondents useful for your market research.

7. DIARIES

TASK 1
Which of the definitions below matches: a) a personal diary; b) a research diary

> 1) A book in which you can write down the experiences you have each day, your private thoughts, etc. (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 2005. Oxford: OUP)

> 2) A log or a record of professional activities rather than a record of engagements or of personal thoughts or activities. (Bell 1987)

TASK 2
Think of the categories of people involved in research activities. Who may keep a research diary? Is it useful for the researcher to keep a diary? If yes, why?

TASK 3
Read the following text and try to explain the meaning of 'a critical finding'?

10-17 March 2002 – Checking documents

This morning I discussed with my supervisor what sources I might use and at his suggestion I looked through some documents, which I had obtained from an engineer (E.P.) I'd met last week. The documents were simply a collection of routine reports and memos, which had accumulated in his files in the last two years. At first, I couldn't find anything, I was disappointed, I thought I was on the wrong track. Then, incidentally, on the top-left corner of a page I saw a note: ' de scris rezumat – 100 de cuvinte-engleza - pentru revista'. *Super! Just what I needed.*

TASK 4
Think of: a critical finding/ a critical incident/ an interesting instance in your research experience so far. Write a few sentences about it.

TASK 5
Work in groups. Discuss the aspects that you, as a researcher, could include in your diary. Report to the class.

TASK 6
Write an entry of 200 words for your research diary covering the main stages of the research so far. Make sure you include all the aspects you agreed on. Don't forget to mention the dates you refer to. Give titles to the different stages in your account.

8. QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

"The world is full of well meaning people who believe that anyone who can write plain English and has a modicum of common sense can produce a good questionnaire" (Oppenheim, quoted in Bell, 1987: 75).

TASK 1
Fill in the following questionnaire. After you have done so, please indicate some *do's* and *don'ts* as far as questionnaire design is concerned.

Questionnaire

This questionnaire related to TV programmes aims at identifying the TV channels that have the largest audience. Your honest answers will help us reach our objective and improve the programmes.

1. *How much time do you spend, on average, watching TV programmes*?
   a. a lot   b. medium   c. little   d. not at all

2. *When do you watch TV?*
   a. 7-10   b. 11-13   c. 14-16   d.17-19   d. 20-22   e. 23-1

3. *What kind of programmes do you watch most often*?
   - Sports
   - Music
   - Films
   - News

4. *What TV channels does you sister watch*?
   Romania 1   Romania 2   Antena 1   Pro TV   HBO   Others (please specifiy)

5. *What programmes did you watch on Romania 1 two years ago*?

6. *Do you watch Prima and MTV*?

7. *Is it not true that the cultural programmes are the best ones*?

8. *What are the advertising criteria on Hallmark channel*?

9. *If you went on holiday to Mauritania what channels would you choose to watch*?

10. *Is it not true that cable TV prices are not high*?

11. *Do you have enough money to afford watching good programmes*?

12. *What school do your children attend*?

13. *What aspects related to interpretative debates would you like to see more often in a programme on introduction to developmental psychology which targets an intellectual audience*?

Thank you for your time!

TASK 2
Match the type of questions on the right with the actual questions provided on the left.

Question type	Question
1. *Close question*	a. Indicate your qualifications by circling any of the following diploma a. BA b. MA c. PhD
2. *Open/verbal question*	b. Indicate your salary range by circling one of the following: Less than 3,000,000 3,000,001-5,000,000 5,000,0001 - 10,000,000 more than 10,000,001
3. *List*	c. Do you have a part-time job? Yes No
4. *Category*	d. Rank the following from 1 to 4 in order of preference. I like to learn best by studying: - with the whole class - in small groups - in pairs - independently
5. *Ranking*	e. What is your favourite subject?
6. *Scale*	f. Circle one of the following to indicate your attitude to the following statement: I like to learn through interaction with native speakers. Strongly agree agree neutral disagree strongly disagree
7. *Quantity*	g. How do you self-evaluate your knowledge of English?

		Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
	Writing					
	Reading					
	Speaking					
8. *Grid*	h. Circle one of the following: How often did you practise English outside class last week? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 more than 10					

(Based on Bell,1997:75-90)

TASK 3
Before administering the questionnaire to a large number of respondents, it is recommended that it should be piloted. The purpose of the exercise is to make sure the questionnaire is clear and serving the purpose of the research, so that subjects in the main study will experience no difficulties in completing it.

In your group write down no more than 7 questions that you think are important to ask in order to get feedback from the respondents about a questionnaire they answered.

TASK 4
What groups of respondents/ informants, out of the ones you identified, are more appropriately investigated using questionnaires?

TASK 5
In groups choose to design one type of questionnaire to be administered to one of the groups of informants you identified: graduates, employers, employees or other groups.

TASK 6
If possible, pilot your questionnaire with one or two informants from the target group. Alternatively you may give your questionnaire to another group for feedback. Revise your questionnaire.

9. QUESTIONNAIRES VERSUS INTERVIEWS

TASK 1
Fill in the following table in order to identify the difference between interviews and questionnaires.

Issues for consideration	Interview	Questionnaire
Who are the people		

involved in applying the instruments?		
What are the necessary resources?		
What are the opportunities for interaction with the respondent? (asking, probing, clarifying)		
Is there more information than necessary obtained?		
How many respondents can be reached?		
Is the rate of return of 100%?		
What are the possible sources of error in applying the instrument?		
What language skills are developed by the people using the instrument? (reading, writing, speaking, listening)		

(Based on Cohen and Manion, 1994: 272)

10. INTERVIEWS

What is an interview?
An interview has been defined as a conversation between an interviewer and a respondent with the purpose of eliciting certain information from the respondent.
"*Like fishing, interviewing is an activity requiring careful preparation, much patience, and considerable practice if the eventual reward is to be a worthwhile catch.*" (Cohen, L. and Marion, I., 1980)

Here are a few general guidelines for conducting interviews:

1. Make a note of the time, date and place of the interview.
2. Explain again the purpose of the interview to the interviewee
3. Be aware of time. Stop when you promised to stop. Rather than let an interview go on and on, make an appointment for a new time.
4. Ask for any papers, documents, or artifacts that have been mentioned in the interview
5. Ask if you may return or call back if something isn't clear when you start analysing the interview
6. Always follow some courtesy and thank the interviewee.
7. Before using the data in the interview, check the text again with the interviewer

TASK 1
In groups compare the two instruments: questionnaires and interviews, and draw up a list of advantages and disadvantages of using interviews.

TASK 2
Read the description of different types of interviews. Work in groups and place the following characteristic aspects in the appropriate column:

Structured (formal) interviews	Unstructured interviews	Semi-structured interviews

- similarity to an oral questionnaire
- alternative items (yes/no, agree/disagree)
- uniformity of measurement
- easy coding
- superficiality
- low opportunity for complex answers
- open-ended questions
- flexibility of dialogue
- possibility of probing responses
- scales (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree)
- preliminary interviews (trying to find which areas or topics are important)
- minimum of note- taking
- loose structure (to ensure that all points considered important are covered)
- guided (focused) interview
- pre-established framework

Types of interviews:
a. Structured interviews consist of a set list of questions, which are to be asked in the same order each time. R.Burgess (1985) writes:
'Here [structured interviews], there is no long-term relationship between researcher and researched. It is assumed that the interviewer can manipulate the situation and has control over a set list of questions that have been formulated *before* the interview and which are to be *answered* rather than considered, rephrased, re-ordered, discussed and analysed. In short, the interviewer is assumed to have power over the respondent who is given a subordinate role in the context. The result is a situation where, it is argued, there should be some rapport between the interviewer and the respondent but there are numerous warnings about the dangers of over rapport. It would, therefore, appear that there are 'rules' about 'proper' interview behaviour, which should be friendly, but not over-sociable in order to overcome problems associated with 'bias'. The structured survey interview is, therefore, presented as a data collection device involving situations where the interviewer merely poses questions and records answers in a set pattern.

b. The alternative to the structured interview is the **unstructured interview**, which is more likely, a conversation, and in which the interviewer's agenda is more likely an aide memoire than a list which must be gone through in strict order. Unstructured interviews would seem to be particularly suitable for

situations in which the researcher already knows her respondents fairly well. Individuals and groups may be interviewed in this way (the latter are sometimes called 'focus groups')
c. Semi-structured interviews are those in which the interviewer asks specific questions but is free to probe the answers. It is suitable for individuals and groups.

TASK 3
Read the general rules of interviewing and, in pairs, decide which would be the most important rules to apply, if you are conducting interviews with the following people:
- employers
- undergraduates
- graduates
- teachers
- employees

TASK 4

1. Read the examples of types of interview questions below. **In pairs write 1 or 2 questions relevant for your research focus in 'English for the World of Work' to interview one of the types of respondents you identified previously.**
2. Interview a colleague from another pair to pilot your interview. Take notes.
1. Basic Descriptive Questions
E.g.: Can you talk to me about your car accident? Tell me what happened on that evening. Describe how you felt that evening.
YOUR question(s): ……………………………………………………………………………..

2. Follow-up Questions
E.g.: You mentioned that "planning time" is important to you. Can you tell me how you use planning time?
YOUR question(s): ………………………………………………………………………….

3. Experience/Example Questions
E.g.: You mentioned that you loved going to Paris. Can you give me an example or two of what made you love Paris? Talk about your impressions of Paris.
YOUR question(s): ………………………………………………………………………….

4. Simple Clarification Questions
E.g. :You have used the term *learner-centered* . Can you clarify that for me?
What exactly can you tell me about your learner-centered teaching?
YOUR question(s):…………………………………………………………………………..

5. Structural/ Paradigmatic Questions
E.g.: You stated that this class was a problematic one. What would you describe as the cause of these problems?
Of all the things you have told me about being a critical teacher, what is the underlying premise of your workday? In other words, what keeps you going every day?
YOUR question(s): …………………………………………………………………………..

*6. **Comparison/ Contrast Questions***
E.g.: You said there was a great difference between a great principal and an ordinary principal. What are some of these differences? Can you describe a few for me?
YOUR question(s): ………………………………………………………………………………

TASK 5
Discuss in groups your perception of the interview, by answering the following questions:
1. How did you approach the exercise of interviewing a colleague?
2. What was the most difficult thing for you?
3. Would you change anything the next time you interviewed someone?

11. ETHICAL ISSUES

When using data collection instruments, it is essential that you ensure that certain deontological rules appropriate to any scientific research are strictly applied, especially those regarding confidentiality and acceptance. The data you collect may sometimes be sensitive and have to be approached and treated very carefully.

TASK 1
Read the following suggestions related to ethical issues in research and identify the ones that you consider relevant during the data collection and data analysis stages in your own research.

GENERAL RULES FOR DATA COLLECTION
- Treat the respondents politely and respectfully – they are partners in the research.
- Be punctual and keep your promises.
- Inform the potential respondents beforehand about the research / survey you make and its purpose.
- Make your questions as unambiguous as you can.
- Do not ask personal questions unless they are absolutely necessary for your research. Respect and do not disregard the respondents' right to privacy.
- Special care is needed when research involves children.
- Do not try to impose or to suggest opinions or points of view (yours or others') to your respondents.
- Offer interviewees the opportunity to verify their statements when the research is in draft form.
- If and when necessary, participants / respondents may receive a copy of the final report.
- Take any precaution necessary to ensure confidentiality and acceptance in all occasions.
- Ethical standards are to be maintained at all times

GENERAL RULES FOR DATA ANALYSIS
- Establish a set of principles for processing all data and ensure that they are applied throughout.
- Use / Process all data obtained in relation to one area of research
- Use all data exactly as they were given.
- Avoid bias in interpreting data.
- Ensure the highest degree of objectivity in interpreting the results and in drawing conclusions.
- Do not manipulate data to reach pre-established or desired results.

- Take any precaution **necessary to ensure confidentiality in data analysis.**

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACCEPTANCE
Avoid promising anonymity. When collecting data, you will encounter "sensitive" information. Before starting data collection, explain to respondents that: **a)** only the information on a group of people will be made public, **b)** you will not use names and **c)** you will check with the respondent the text containing their opinions that you want to use. The group of respondents can be sometimes so small that other people can easily guess who said what. That is why you cannot promise total anonymity. You cannot guarantee that a reader will not be able to guess the identity of a person or of a group of persons. What you **can** promise is that you will not publicly disclose the sources of data.

- **Promise confidentiality and respect the right to it.** Try not to request the respondent's name on the form unless the questions are absolutely harmless. It is obvious that people will tend to respond differently to questionnaires if they are asked for information by which they could be identified.

- **If you use the interview for data collection,** send / show the respondent your interview notes (the data you intend to use in your research) to be checked before you use them and in this way you can ensure acceptance. Allow respondents to withdraw certain comments and to alter others.

- **Tell respondents how you intend to use the information you obtain.** Explain the aim of data collection. Show the examples of previous reports/ research. Encourage them to be sincere, honest and fair. If you use the interview, remember to send the notes to the respondent to be checked.

- **Make sure you get permission to talk to people and/ or to attend/ observe activities.** Once again, you need to explain the aim of your data collection. The more polite and respectful you are, the more chances you will have to get permission, now and at other times, to collect such data.

- **Use the data only as you have promised, or your reputation is in danger.** Do not give the questionnaires or the interview notes to other people to read. Keep the data you obtained in a secure place, **not** on your desk or in another place where they could be seen/ read by others. Your reputation is very important, especially if you intend to continue collecting data for research and working in partnership with the respondents.
Based on Cohen and Manion, 1997: 347-373

12. ANALYSING DATA

After data have been collected (questionnaires returned and interviews transcribed) there follow three stages:
A. editing
B. processing
C. interpreting

A. EDITING
The purpose of editing interviews or questionnaires is to identify and eliminate errors. Therefore, after the interviews and questionnaires have been collected, they need to be checked for:
- completeness - is there an answer to every question? (a 'not applicable' category may also be available.)
- accuracy - are all questions answered accurately?
- uniformity - have the interviewers followed instructions uniformly?
Based on Bell,1997: 127-147

TASK 1
In groups of 3-4 divide the returned questionnaires and the interview transcripts and check them for completeness and accuracy.

B. PROCESSING
The answers provided by the respondents can be processed in several ways:

1. A question-by-question recording
Example:
The answers to the question: *What qualifications did you have before you started your course ?* **can be presented as:**
a. A simple table

None 6	O level 28	A level 12	Access/ Return to Study 32	Other 16

b. Percentages
64% took Access/Return to study
24% had A levels
12 % had no qualifications on entry

2. Processing open-ended questions
When processing open-ended questions, all the responses are written on separate sheets and then categories are identified and common criteria established. Here is an example of processing the answers provided to the open-ended question:
During the past year, at school, I have changed in the following ways:
-………………………………………………………………………………..
-……………………………………………………………………………….
The question was answered by 35 students. Some of their answers were:
1.   I have made up my mind what I want to do after I graduate.
2.   I have given up on the idea of studying in another city.
3.   I have decided to take a part time job after I graduate.
4.   I have improved my study skills.
5.   I have become more aware of how and what to learn.
6.   I have realised I need to organise my time.
7.   I have joined the debate club.
8.   I have become more active during classes.
9.   I now like to work with other people during group work.
10. I wrote two articles for the school magazine.
11. I have learned two new computer programmes.
12. I started guitar lessons after classes.

These answers were grouped in the following categories:

- Career decisions after graduation (answers 1-3)
- Learning to learn skills (answers 4-6)

(Adapted from: Bardi et al, 1999:31)

TASK 2:
Find categories for the following numbers of answers above:
7-9
10-12

TASK 3
Below is an example of an interview with a Canadian employer. Part of the transcribed interview is given below. How would you use the interview for your analysis?
Transcript (excerpt):
"I think English is the most widely used second language in the world, and the language used by business people, so there's a natural incentive to choose to operate in English. My native language is French (my mother is French, you know), but in my work environment I use English and all my employees use English, too.

English is more and more widely used in international relations. Take the European Union, for example. It was a French-oriented administration, so they used French predominantly. But now, because of the European mixture, the European enlargement process, with the last members of the EU, Sweden, Austria and Finland, because of this broader perspective, the use of French, relatively speaking, loses importance in the area of science and technology (to some extent German, also) and the English language starts to be more and more important vis-à-vis French.

In Romania, too, despite the traditionally strong influence on Romanian society, and the natural orientation towards French (with Romanian being a Latin language), I think the Government should select English as a second language (rather than 3 or 4 languages) and thoroughly train their people. This is the case in the business environment – you choose one language – and as long as you are in a multinational company, you choose English, this is the working language around the world. Therefore people have to be trained in one working language, and I would favour English, as it's more spread out."
(quoted in: Bardi, M. et al. 1999. *Innovation in Teaching English for Specific Purposes in Romania – a Study of Impact*)

3) Graphic analysis of data
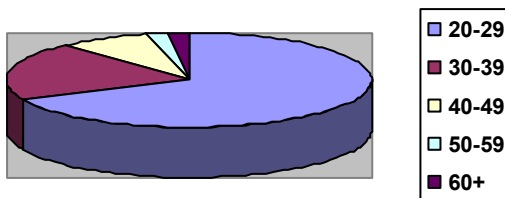After the data have been processed, they can be presented as a table, bar-chart or pie-chart.
For example, the answer to the question '*How old were you when you first registered for this course?*' can be presented in the following ways:

20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+

a. Tabel

Age	Number of respondents
20-29	34
30-39	10

40-49	4
50-59	1
60+	1
Total	*50*

b. Bar chart

c. Pie chart

TASK 4
Look at your own instruments and decide in your group what kind of graphic representation is most appropriate for each question.

C. INTERPRETING DATA
After the data have been analysed they should also be interpreted. Here is an example of how data can be processed and then analysed:

Q: *Please look at this card and tell me whether employers should or should not have the legal right to dismiss people who have political opinions that are different from their own*:
(i) definitely should
(ii) probably should
(iii) probably should not
(iv) definitely should not
(v) don't know

There were 1000 respondents to this question.
The answers were processed in different ways:
1. Percentages

Definitely Should	15%
Probably Should	25%
Probably Should Not	23%
Definitely Should Not	32%
Don't Know	5%

2. Respondent's Gender

Respondent's Gender				
	Male	Female	Total	Missing
Should-s	85	80	165	
Should-not-s	400	435	835	
Total	485	515	1000	

3. Respondent's Class

Respondent's Class					
	Professional	*White Collar*	*Manual*	*Total*	*Missing*
Should-s	20	50	95	165	0
Should not-s	479	245	111	835	0
Total	499	295	206	1000	0

There are three possible crude explanations related to the findings presented in Table 3.
(i) people's social class affects their opinion
(ii) doing manual work makes people believe more in the legal dismissal of workers with different political opinions

A possible shortcoming of the two explanations above is that they ignore all other factors besides the ones mentioned in the table. Moreover, they do not account in much detail how and why social class or manual work affect peoples' opinions. Further research into possible correlations may generate new explanations that might lead to further investigation.
(Adapted from Olsen,1995: 29)

TASK 5
Now look at one of the tables/ bar-charts/ pie-charts that you have produced and interpret the results**.**
Write your interpretation in a paragraph (no longer than 200 words).

13. PRESENTING THE RESULTS

TASK 1:
Arrange the following stages of the presentation of your research results in the right order:
a. how you have analysed your data
b. the data you have studied
c. what claims you are making about the data (e.g. as representative of some population or as a single case study)
d. why you have chosen these methods
e. how you have obtained the data (e.g. issues of access and consent)
f. the methods you have used to gather the data
g. the advantages and limitations of using your method of data analysis
(Based on Baker, 1988:430)

14. ORAL PRESENTATIONS

TASK 1
An oral presentation is a formal talk which describes or explains something to a group of people.
Can you remember any oral presentation you have heard/ watched? If yes, say one thing that impressed you most and one thing that you disliked.

TASK 2
Introduce the characteristics below under their proper heading.

Presentation read aloud	Spoken presentation

Long sentences, short sentences, simpler vocabulary, complex vocabulary, complex arguments, simpler arguments, personal style, impersonal style, spontaneous, prepared, little hesitation, no eye-contact with the audience, less spontaneous, easier to follow a topic, speaker feels more confident, the speech is too fast, impersonal tone.

TASK 3
Match the following expressions with the parts of a presentation:

A. Introduction	1. Let's start with…So that covers That brings me to.. Let's leave that there … and turn to…
B. Outline	2. To sum up
C. Main parts	3. In conclusion
D. Summary	1. I'd like to talk today about… I'm going to present…/inform you on/describe The subject/focus/topic/ of my talk
E. Conclusion	5. I've divided my talk into… The subject can be looked at under the following headings… We can break this area into the following fields… At the beginning…then

(based on Comfort, 1995:62)

Using the structure you have identified, make a 3 minutes presentation on a topic related to your research.

TASK 4

Formal phrases	Informal phrases
The subject of this paper, what I aim to do is…, I'd like to talk today about, The subject will be looked at under the following headings, We have carried out a detailed study of the respondents, I have divided my talk into the following parts, a little bit later, has no major effect on data reliability, a detailed study of respondents has been carried out, the issue will be addressed, therefore, later in the paper, we need to discuss, Let's stop here and see if there are any questions, Let's leave that, That's why, Now we come to, That covers, Let's get back to, Are there any questions?.	

According to the speaker's relationship to the audience the style can be more or less formal.
Enter the expressions given below under their appropriate heading:
(based on Comfort, 1995:92)

TASK 5
Work in groups of four. Decide on a topic from your research to be presented. Two of you make a formal presentation of it, while the other two make an informal presentation of the same topic.

TASK 6
In order to make a presentation more persuasive, presenters may use words that emphasise (=draw attention to something, or make it more important) or minimize (=make something seem less important than it really is, or reduce something harmful or unpleasant) the statements they make.

Read the following text and identify *emphasisers* and *minimisers*:

The trouble with business today is that nobody has any time at all. Companies have drastically reduced their workforces so that far fewer people have to do the same amount of work. To some extent, this means that managers don't see what is happening around them. They need their time to just work through their regular tasks, and they have absolutely no time to take on new initiatives.
Time for reflection is very important. Decisions taken now not only affect today's business, they can also have a significant influence on business in the long term. It seems that strategy is too often the concern of just senior management, when it needs to be the concern of everybody in the company.
(based on Comfort 1995: 64)

TASK 7
Can you add other emphasisers and minimizers to the ones you have already identified?
Are there any specific parts of your presentation where you would like to use them?

TASK 8
The following five aspects are extremely important as far as body language is concerned. Work with a colleague and give one piece of advice for each heading:
1. Eye contact
2. Facial expressions
3. Hands
4. Movement
5. Posture
(based on Comfort, 1995:63)

TASK 9
Work in groups of four and give three tips for managing presentation anxiety.

TASK 10
When making a presentation the way in which the ideas are linked is extremely important. Below are a few useful phrases for linking ideas (Comfort 1995:21). More such phrases will be given in relation to written reports.

Sequencing/ ordering
   I.firstly…secondly…thirdly
  II.let's move /go on to…

III. that brings us to…
IV. that covers…
V. let's get back to

Giving reasons/ causes
(iii) as a result
(iv) that's why

Contrasting
(v)   but

Comparing
(vi) similarly
(vii)   in the same way

Contradicting
(viii)   in fact
(ix) actually

Summarizing
(x)   in brief
(xi) in short

Concluding
(xii)   in conclusion
(xiii)   to conclude

Highlighting
(xiv)   in particular
(xv)   especially

Digressing
(xvi)   by the way
(xvii)   in passing

Giving examples
(xviii)   for example
(xix)   for instance
(xx)   such as

Generalizing
(xxi)   usually
(xxii)   generally
(xxiii)   as a rule

Make a three-minute presentation about one aspect of your research and use at least 3 different ways of linking ideas.

TASK 11
Here are the stages of the ending of a presentation. Match them with the phrases in the left hand column:

1. Signalling the ending	a. So. I would suggest that we… I'd like to propose…
2. Summarizing	b. That brings me to the end of my presentation. That completes my presentation. Before I stop, let me just say …
3. Concluding	c. I'd be glad to try and answer any questions So, let's throw it open to questions. Any questions?
4. Recommending	d. Thank you for your attention. Thank you for listening I hope you will have gained an insight into…
5. Closing	e. Let me just run over the key points again I'll briefly summarize the main issues To sum up… Briefly…
6. Inviting questions	f. As you can see, there are some very good reasons… In conclusion… I'd like to leave you with the following thought/idea

(based on Comfort, 1995:85)

TASK 12
When you answer questions remember to:
(i)   Welcome the question
(ii)   Listen carefully to the question - don't interrupt
(iii)   Take time to think before you answer
(iv)   Check that you have understood the question - rephrase or clarify if necessary
(v)   Reply positively - be brief and clear
(vi)   Accept criticism positively
(vii)   After your answer, check that the person who asked it is satisfied.
(based on Comfort 1995:83-96)

**List one phrase for the following situations**:
1. welcome the question

2. clarify a question
3. check that the person who asked the question is satisfied with the answer.

15. GRAPHIC PRESENTATION
TASK 1
Decide whether and what visuals you want to use in your report (tables, pie charts, bar charts, etc.).Remember that your report should not be a bald recitation of facts but it has to explain the information it contains. It also has to draw the reader's attention to what is significant about the data, not repeat the information already presented in a visual way. **Study the examples below, and note how the graphic information is reported in the text:**

a. The data indicate that a lot fewer graduates of technical and economic universities go into education and research nowadays than they used to before 1989. As can be seen from the chart below, 25.5% of those who graduated before 1989 were employed in education, compared to only 9% of recent graduates. Similarly, 15.7% pre-1989 graduates versus 2% current ones worked in research.
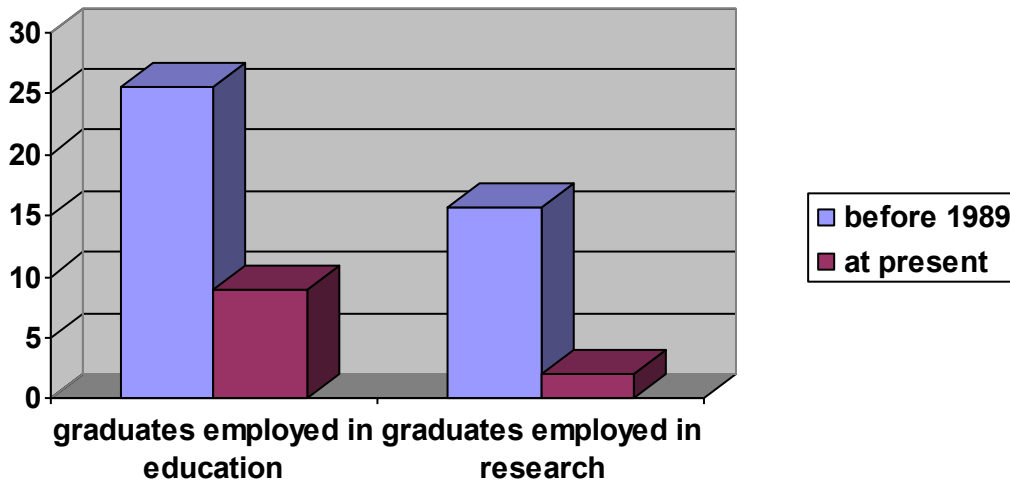
b. The data collected through the Employer Questionnaire indicate that English was a compulsory criterion for the selection of applicants both between 1993-95 and after 1995 (see the Table below). It will be noted, however, that the figures show a significant increase in the importance of English as a selection criterion after 1995.

Was English a compulsory criterion for the selection of candidates?	Between 1993-1995 %	Beginning with 1995 %
Yes	55.3	70.2
No	44.7	29.8

Now look at one of your graphs or charts and describe what it represents.

You may need some of the phrases below:

Describing change
Upward movement:
4. to increase/ rise/ go up
5. to grow/ expand
6. to rocket/ boom
Downward movement:
7. to decrease/ fall/ drop/ decline/go down
8. to contract
9. to slump/ collapse
An end to movement:
10. to flatten out/ level off
No change:
11. to remain constant/ stable
12. to stay the same/ at the same level
Degree of change:
13. dramatically/considerably/ significantly/ moderately/ slightly
Speed of change:
14. rapidly/ quickly/ suddenly/ gradually/ steadily/ slowly
16. WRITTEN REPORTS

> Definition
> A report is a document which communicates information or advice, from someone who has collected and studied the facts to someone who needs it for a specific purpose.

TASK 1
John Seely (2002:94) identifies three purposes of reports. **Read them and decide what the purpose of your report is.**

1. To inform
You know something your readers don't. Your purpose is to give them that information as clearly and concisely as possible. This involves not just factual statements but also interpretation to help them grasp the relative significance of different pieces of information.

2. To record
The information in your report will be needed at some point in the future. It provides a picture of how things are at this point in time. It may be read by people who don't have the background information you possess.

3. To persuade
The purpose of your report is to lead to action of some kind. You have to provide an interpretation of the available information which makes it possible for a decision to be made. The report may offer a choice (with the pros and cons for each option) or strongly urge one course of action.

TASK 2
Put the parts of a report in logical order. Match the part with its description.

1. Conclusion	a. which divide the information into logical sections
2. Subheadings	b. which expresses the main idea or the focus of the section. It is clear and factual
3. Introduction	c. which provides a brief summary of the information and may include recommendations for improvement
4. Heading	d. which says what the aim of the report is and how the information was obtained.

TASK 3
Seeley (2000: 45) describes three types of report writing:
a. Narrative
b. Exposition
c. Argument
Decide which type you are going to use for your report.

TASK 4
The writing process usually covers the following stages. Go through them and arrange them in chronological order:
1. write fast
2. cover all your points
3. get ready to write
4. read the draft
5. cut/ add/ reorder
6. print the text
7. improve the text

TASK 5
The style of reports is usually formal and usually personal opinions are only given in the concluding part. Therefore impersonal 'it' constructions and passive ones are used. E.g. *It seems that… It was found that…*

Enter the following phrases under the appropriate heading:

Intro-duction	Repor-ting	Specula-ting	Generali-sing	Commen-ting	Making a reco-mmenda-tion	Summing up
The aim of this report is, it seems that, it may well be that, in general, a majority of, a minority of, this report is intended to, it appears that, in short, to sum up, on balance, it is recommended that, as might have been expected, predictably, surprisingly, it is interesting that, it could be that, it would be advisable , to summarise						

(based on Jordan, 1989:68-70)

TASK 6
Paragraphs are usually organised into two parts – one or more *lead* sentences and a *concluding* sentence. **Read the following two paragraphs and identify the lead and the concluding sentences**.

a. The data collected through interviews with several Human Resource managers indicate that over 60% of the employees hired after 1995 were tested for their level of English. Also, nearly 50% of the companies who responded to our questionnaires are willing to offer a higher salary or some other incentive to employers with excellent English. This confirms that knowledge of English is becoming an important selection criterion.

b. The results indicate that companies want their employees to be able to communicate orally in various job-related situations, of which *telephoning, socialising, meetings and discussions* are the most important. Employees are also expected to read and write a variety of business documents (*contracts, reports, business letters, etc.*). The data shows that employees' professional duties require a wide range of oral and written communication skills.
(based on Seeley, 2000: 93)

TASK 7
a) Read the two sentences below and decide which one is better and why:
1. Shorter sentences are certainly easier to read than long sentences, but it isn't just a question of length and some sentences that are not particularly long may be difficult to understand if they have a complex structure.

2. While length may be important, although shorter sentences are certainly easier to read than long sentences, it isn't just a question of length but also of complexity, since some sentences that are not particularly long may be difficult to understand if they have a complex structure.

b) Now change the following sentence into a shorter and clearer one:
The previous Managing Director, Sir Marcus Riley, a man of enormous experience both in electrical engineering and in product development, as well as being a skilled negotiator with an excellent head for figures has, unfortunately, left the company. (Seeley, p. 68)

Linkers

The way in which you make the relation between the paragraphs explicit is very important. Below there are a few useful phrases for linking paragraphs. Make sure they are familiar to the students and use then when you write your report.

(Based on Jordan, 1989, 94-95)

Sequencing/ordering
15.firstly…secondly…thirdly
16.then… next… finally

Giving reasons/causes
17.therefore
18.as a result

Contrasting
19.but
20.However

Comparing
21.similarly

Contradicting
22.in fact
23.actually

Summarizing
24.To sum up
25.in short

Concluding
26.in conclusion
27.to conclude

Highlighting
28.in particular
29.especially

Giving examples
30.for example
31.for instance

Generalizing
32.usually
33.generally
34.as a rule

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