

Mini Investigation – What's in a Name?

Task

Your task is to investigate a small area in which it may be possible to identify patterns of language use.

Data

Choose a topic area and collect between 10 and 20 names – e.g. names of: chocolate snacks ... perfumes ... national newspapers ... heavy metal bands ... celebrity magazines ... reality TV shows ... aftershave lotions ... comedy-horror films ... driving schools ... hairdressers ... biscuits

Presentation of Your Investigation

Introduction

Briefly explain why you chose this topic area and your **research question** – e.g. What linguistic patterns or genre characteristics can be found in this area?

Methodology

Explain how you collected your data and how you made a reasoned choice from all the possible names in that topic area – e.g. you used the Yellow pages and chose the first ten driving school names beginning with A ... you chose the ten most downloaded heavy metal bands of 2010 ... you asked your local newsagent which were the most popular snacks sold in that shop ... you chose perfumes advertised in three magazines targeted at young women ...

Analysis

This is the most important section. Here you analyse and interpret your data in a systematic way, using relevant linguistic methods – e.g. **lexically**, you might find foreign words used ... **semantically**, you might consider the connotations of the names and see whether there are any common semantic fields ... **grammatically**, you might find significance in adjectives used or abstract nouns ... **phonologically**, you might find significant alliteration ...

You may support your analysis with tables, lists, charts or any other way of giving quantitative representation of your data.

Conclusion/Evaluation

Here you should sum up what you have discovered about the names in your data and explain how this relates to what you expected. You should explain how valid you think your conclusions are. You should also suggest how a further study might be developed.