



## University Centre Abdelhafid Boussouf E-learning Centre



### English - Level 2

## Lesson 06 Cohesion and Coherence

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<i>Letters and Languages</i>	<i>-Foreign Languages</i>	<i>Licentiate 02</i>	<i>French</i>
<i>Economic Sciences</i>	<i>-Economic Science -Commercial Science -Management Science</i>	<i>Licentiate 02</i>	<i>All specialties</i>

### **Objectives of the Lesson**

- This lesson has been designed to help learners write academic essays in the future, they provide flow and sequence to student's work and helps make paragraphs clear for the reader.

## Cohesion and Coherence

**Coherence** is defined as the quality of being logical, consistent and able to be understood. Imagine coherence as a building (It's an analogy, go with it).

Sentences should logically fit together in writing, connecting one idea to the next. This is referred to as *cohesion*. To ensure your writing is cohesive, consider using the *old-new principle*, where sentences begin with old information and end with new information. Notice how these two sentences work together:

*For many economists, the Great Depression was less a result of historical events than it was of poor international monetary policy. Such policy included the Federal Reserve's failure to regulate interest rates and Great Britain's return to Pre-WWI gold standard rate.*

The second sentence begins by recapping the ending of the first sentence. This enables readers to solidify the connection between one idea and the next.

- Just as sentences are cohesive when they “stick” together.
- paragraphs are *coherent* when they contain one controlling idea.
- Paragraphs should contain a single focus supported by related sentences that form into a major and coherent point. It is helpful to first state the topic of the paragraph thus informing the reader of its purpose and summarizing what the paragraph is about. The rest of the paragraph should be focused on that topic. To ensure that your paragraphs are coherent, make sure each paragraph is structured to make a particular point.

**Cohesion:** on the other hand refers to the act of forming a whole unit. It is effectively a subset of coherence. Picture cohesion as the bricks and cement which make up the building.

To achieve coherence in an essay, writers use lexical and grammatical cohesive devices. Examples of these cohesive devices are repetition, synonymy, antonymy, meronymy, substitutions, and anaphoric or cataphoric relations between sentences.

### Cohesive Devices:

When sentences, ideas, and details fit together clearly, readers can follow along easily, and the writing is coherent. The ideas tie together smoothly and clearly. To establish the links that readers need, you can use the methods listed here. Note that good writers use a combination of these methods. Do not rely on and overuse any single method – especially transitional words.

### Repetition of a Key Term or Phrase

This helps to focus your ideas and to keep your reader on track.

Example:

The problem with **contemporary art** is that it is not easily understood by most people. **Contemporary art** is deliberately abstract, and that means it leaves the viewer wondering what she is looking at.

### Synonyms

Synonyms are words that have essentially the same meaning, and they provide some variety in your word choices, helping the reader to stay focused on the idea being discussed.

Example:

**Myths** narrate sacred histories and explain sacred origins. These **traditional narratives** are, in short, a set of beliefs that are a very real force in the lives of the people who tell them.

### Pronouns

*This, that, these, those, he, she, it, they, and we* are useful pronouns for referring back to something previously mentioned. Be sure, however, that what you are referring to is clear.

Example:

When **scientific experiments** do not work out as expected, **they** are often considered failures until some other scientist tries them again. Those that work out better the second time around are the ones that promise the most rewards.

### Transitional Words

There are many words in English that cue our readers to relationships between sentences, joining sentences together. See below for a table of transitional words. There you'll find lists of words such as *however, therefore, in addition, also, but, moreover*, etc.

Example:

I like autumn, **and yet** autumn is a sad time of the year, too. The leaves turn bright shades of red and the weather is mild, **but** I can't help thinking ahead to the winter and the ice storms that will surely blow through here. **In addition**, that will be the season of chapped faces, too many layers of clothes to put on, and days when I'll have to shovel heaps of snow from my car's windshield.

Note that transitional words have meaning and are not just used at beginnings of sentences. They can also be used to show relationships between different parts of the same sentence. As mentioned above they cue readers to relationships between sentences/clauses. If you use the wrong transitional word then you confuse your reader. It would be better if you didn't use any transitional word rather than the wrong one. Furthermore you do not need a transitional

word at the beginning of each sentence. Good writers rarely use them as they achieve coherence by using other techniques. Many students overuse transitional words. Your instructor will guide you as to what problems you may have with transitions.

### Sentence Patterns

Sometimes, repeated or parallel sentence patterns can help the reader follow along and keep ideas tied together.

Example: (from a speech by President John F. Kennedy)

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country.

- Cohesive devices are sometimes called linking words, linkers, [connectors](#), discourse markers, or transitional words.
- Cohesive Devices are words or phrases that show the relationship between paragraphs or sections of a text or speech.
- Cohesive devices are words like **'For example, 'In conclusion, 'however' and 'moreover'**.



