

Unity and Coherence

What is unity?

Unity is one of the crucial elements of writing. “Unity” means one. An essay is said to be unified when all the ideas, sentences, and paragraphs are related to one and unique topic made in the thesis statement. It is “the quality of centrality and relevance, or belongingness” LepionKa (2008: 118). In other terms, when the text is united, it means that it discusses one and only one topic with supporting details that should be relevant to the same topic being written about.

What is coherence?

Murray and Hughes (2008, p. 45) who notice that a good writer is the one “who sticks his ideas together as links in a chain, each link connecting the one before it with the one after. If any links are missing, the connections become unclear and the argument structure breaks down.” Coherence is “clear connections between ideas, between sentences, and between paragraphs” (Carroll, 1990, p.7). It is a result of considering different factors, “which combine to make every paragraph, every sentence, and every phrase contribute to the meaning of the whole piece” (Kies, 1995). It is important to maintain coherence. This means that the order of the paragraphs should not be random. As you have to order the sentences of a paragraph in a given way, so you should do with the paragraphs of an essay. There should not be any gaps or sudden jumps in thought. They should follow a logical ordering of ideas depending on your topic, purpose and your personal style as a writer, your paragraphs can discuss examples, reason, effects, arguments,... etc. In addition, you can organise these topics in terms of emphatic order or order of importance (from the least important ideas to the most important ones), generality (from general to specific or vice versa), chronological order or time order (in sequence of events or steps of a process, it is good for narratives), spatial order (good for descriptions

of locations). Whatever order you might opt for, your paragraphs should follow each other in a logical way, they should include substantial examples, and evidence to support your argument and make sure that each example is relevant to your particular topic. The reader is led through the essay sequentially without any surprises. It is not confusing to read, and each

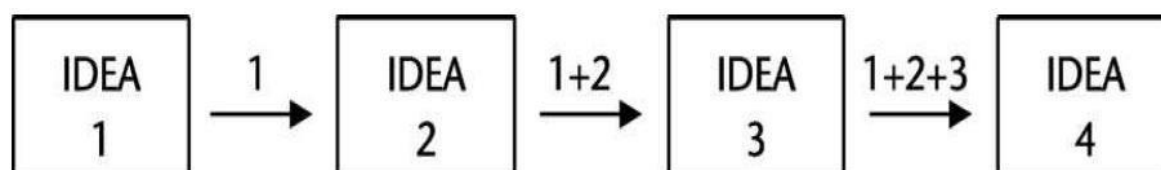


Figure.1.: A Sequence of Ideas. (Murray and Hughes, 2008, p. 46).

Many learners still confuse coherence and cohesion. Winterowd (1975, p. 225) argued that both "cohesion" and "coherence" are derived from the Latin word "cohaerere" meaning to stick, but they possess distinctive features. Cohesion differs from coherence and each of them deals with specific elements that finally lead to well-developed and written paragraphs. Cohesion is the use of linguistic devices such as words and phrases to link and stick the ideas of an essay or a paragraph together. It refers to something more specific in the text. It represents explicitly the importance of the inter- and intra-sentential links between the textual units.

In their book: *Cohesion in English*, 1976, Halliday and Hassan say that: "cohesion refers to the range of possibilities that exist for linking something with what has gone before. Since this linking is achieved through relations in meaning". They also defined

There is clear link between coherence and cohesion one could not neglect. **Cohesion** refers to the linking of ideas at a sentence level. It is the use of linguistic devices such as words and phrases to link and stick the ideas of an essay or a paragraph together. To gain coherence, ensure that transition sentences are present to create a good flow to the essay.

Transitions are extremely important and should be used regularly. When you revise your essay, make a special effort to insert transitions, so that your work will flow smoothly, and your reader will be able to follow your train of thought.. In general, here are some good places to insert transitions:

1. At the beginning of every paragraph in the body (optional between the introduction and first body paragraph).
2. At the beginning of the concluding paragraph to let your reader know that you are about to end.
3. At various places throughout the body to help the reader see the relationship between one idea and the next.
4. Within paragraphs, to show beginning of each new section of support.

Here is a list of the common transitions used in different types of essay development.

<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Transitions</i>
Writing in lists	First(ly), First of all, in the first place, first and foremost, to begin with , second(ly), third(ly), to begin with, in the second Place,

	then, after that, another, yet another, in addition, moreover, , also, next, then, lastly, finally.
Adding more to a point already made	also, moreover, furthermore, again, further, what is more, then, in addition, additionally, besides, above all, as well, (as) either, neither... nor, not only... but also, similarly, correspondingly, in the same way, indeed, in fact, really, in reality, it is found that ... as for, as to, with respect to, regarding.
Putting the same idea in a different way	in other words, rather, or, better, in that case, to put it (more) simply, in view of this, with this in mind, to look at this another way.
Comparing	similarly, just as, in the same way (manner), likewise, similarly, again, like, likewise, as well as, both, the same, equally, similar to, similarly, just as.
Introducing an alternative viewpoint	by contrast, another way of viewing this is, alternatively, again, rather, one alternative is, another possibility is, on the one hand... on the other hand, nonetheless, yet despite, even though, however, nevertheless, whereas, unlike, conversely, on the contrary, though, although, but, otherwise,

	different from, whereas, in contrast with.
Recognizing	as you probably know, certainly, naturally, no doubt, of course
Emphasizing	above all, especially, indeed, in fact, in particular, most important.
Introducing examples	that is to say, in other word, for example, for instance, to illustrate, namely, an example, for example, for instance, such as, and, as follows, as in the following examples, such as, including, especially, particularity, in particular, notably, chiefly, mainly, mostly.
Qualification	May be, perhaps, possibly.
Showing the reasons of something	because, because of, for, as, one reason for this is, for this reason, since, caused by, results from, the reason is that, for this reason.
Showing the results of something	as a result, consequently, accordingly, resulted in, since, so, so that, hence, therefore, thus, resulting from this, that implies, consequently, now , we can see, then, it is evident that.
Summing up or concluding	and so, in other words, in short, in summary, to summarize, to sum up, thus, therefore, so, in short, in conclusion, to conclude, all in all, on the whole, to summarize, in brief, altogether, overall, thus.

In order to write a coherent developmental paragraph, the following points should be taken into consideration:

1. You have to choose a singular focus for your paragraph. We mean that each developmental paragraph is regarded as a discrete unit of thought that expands one specific idea, not three or four.
2. Begin your paragraph with a topic sentence. Nothing will help you to keep a tighter focus on your paragraphs than topic sentences. Since the topic sentence describes the claim or the point of your paragraph, in this case your reader will be oriented to the purpose of your paragraph, and this will help to follow your thoughts and arguments.
3. Try to demonstrate in each developmental paragraph with clear and convincing evidence that your thesis is correct and your reader should accept your position as his or her own.
4. Develop your idea as well as you can. In order to keep focus within your paragraph and at the same time expand your ideas adequately to reach the appropriate length of a conventional paragraph.