

Identifying Cohesion and Coherence in Writing - I

NLN 101 Language & Writing Skills-2 (Week 8)

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1 General Class Instructions

- In this and all following classes until your semester essay is due, you will work in your assigned group.
- All task responses are to be written up collectively on a piece of paper. Upload your work on Moodle as a PDF. **No other file formats can be entertained. If you have NLN on Tuesday and your assigned group number is '1', your file must be named GroupTu1.**

2 Cohesion

- It is the “glue” in your writing, and comes from the way we use grammar and vocabulary to stick ideas together. They can be in the form of:
 - **repeated words** — key words and phrases will be repeated, either as they are or in the form of synonyms.
 - **pronominal forms** — words like ‘that’, ‘which’, ‘these’, which refer back to something talked about already.
 - **linking words** — words/phrases like ‘therefore’, ‘however’, ‘firstly’, ‘before’, ‘at that time’ a.o., which are used to link the ideas in consecutive two sentences.
 - **ellipsis** — Something that has already been mentioned can, under some circumstances be left unpronounced (Ex. “The politician was late. So was his secretary. And his wife was too.”)

2.1 Task 1: Identify the glue (15 minutes)

1. While quickly reading the Juggernaut piece *How Horlicks, Bournvita, and Complan Took Over India* identify words and phrases of **all three types** that glue the text together. **Do not dwell on the content too much. This is not an exercise in critical reading.**
2. Observe the sentence that each glue-word/phrase is in, and the sentence that precedes and succeeds this.
3. Discuss with your group how each piece of glue helps make the text cohesive.

3 Coherence

Incorporating coherence in one’s writing means making sure the writing flows well, makes sense, and is clear. One can achieve coherence in writing by using words and phrases that show the reader where different parts of one’s writing start and end. These words act like signposts, guiding the reader through one’s ideas.

3.1 Signposts

- Signposts do the following
 - show the reader the route one’s writing will take
 - remind the reader of key points along the way
 - point to crucial changes in direction

3.1.1 Types of signposts

Four types of signposts:

1. **major signposts** indicate important elements in your writing, like its purpose, your stance, your key points, your conclusions — “In this article, I discuss...”, “This paper argues that...”, “In conclusion”
 2. **transition sentences and subheadings** explain how and why you are moving from one idea to another — “In the above discussion... It is also important, however, to examine...”, “Another key implication of ... is ...”, “Having examined..., it is now necessary to...”
 3. **linking words** — See the section on Cohesion
 4. **reminders** are useful in that they help the reader recollect the content you have already covered. They are very useful in long-form writing — “As discussed, ...”, “In brief, ...”, “To summarise ...”, “So far we have seen...”
- **Explicit sign-posting is common in academic writing.**

3.2 Task 2: Spot the signposts (15 minutes)

1. Glance through Chapter 11 of NCERT Mathematics textbook of Class XI. **Focus only on spotting signposts.** The link to the chapter is [here](#).
2. Pause at each sign-post and try to predict what direction the article is likely to take from there.