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TEACHING COHESION AND COHERENCE IN ACADEMIC WRITING:EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

Axmatova Maxliyo Ag‘zam qizi
Chirchik state pedagogical university
a student of Tourism faculty
Foreign language and literature, a 2nd year student

ABSTRACT: Academic writing requires not only grammatical accuracy but also the effective organization of ideas. Two essential components of successful academic writing are cohesion and coherence, which contribute to the clarity and logical flow of a text. However, many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners experience difficulties in producing well-connected and logically organized written work. This study explores the importance of teaching cohesion and coherence in academic writing and examines effective classroom strategies that can enhance students' writing performance. The article discusses the distinction between cohesion and coherence and analyzes common challenges faced by EFL learners. Cohesion refers to the linguistic devices that connect sentences and paragraphs, such as transitional words, reference markers, and lexical repetition. Coherence, on the other hand, concerns the logical arrangement of ideas and the overall unity of a text. Although these concepts are closely related, students often struggle to use them effectively in their academic writing. The study reviews several instructional strategies, including explicit teaching of cohesive devices, paragraph organization exercises, peer-review activities, model text analysis, and process-based writing approaches. These methods help learners develop a better understanding of how ideas are connected within a text and how readers interpret written discourse. The findings suggest that systematic instruction and regular writing practice significantly improve students' ability to create coherent and cohesive academic texts. The article concludes that integrating cohesion and coherence instruction into writing courses can enhance learners' academic writing skills and increase their confidence as writers. The study offers practical recommendations for teachers seeking to improve writing instruction in EFL classrooms.

KEYWORDS: cohesion, coherence, academic writing, EFL learners, writing instruction, cohesive devices, paragraph organization, writing strategies.

INTRODUCTION: Academic writing is considered one of the most challenging skills for learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Unlike speaking, writing requires careful planning, logical organization, and the ability to present ideas clearly to readers. In higher education, students are expected to produce essays, reports, research papers, and other academic texts that demonstrate not only language proficiency but also critical thinking skills. Therefore, the quality of academic writing plays an important role in students' academic success. Among the various components of writing, cohesion and coherence are essential for creating meaningful and effective texts. Cohesion refers to the grammatical and lexical connections that link sentences and paragraphs together. Coherence, on the other hand, refers to the logical flow and overall unity of ideas throughout a text. A piece of writing may contain grammatically correct sentences, but without cohesion and coherence, readers may struggle to understand the intended message. Many EFL learners experience difficulties in organizing their ideas logically and connecting them

effectively. These difficulties often result in fragmented paragraphs, repetition of ideas, and unclear arguments. Consequently, teachers need to adopt instructional strategies that specifically target the development of cohesion and coherence in students' writing. The purpose of this study is to examine the importance of cohesion and coherence in academic writing and to identify effective classroom strategies that can help EFL learners improve their writing performance. The concepts of cohesion and coherence have received considerable attention in linguistic and educational research. Halliday and Hasan (1976) introduced cohesion as a linguistic feature that creates relationships between different parts of a text. They identified several types of cohesive devices, including reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. According to Hyland (2003), cohesion contributes to the surface structure of a text, while coherence concerns the deeper meaning and logical organization of ideas. Both elements are necessary for successful communication in academic writing. Writers must ensure that readers can follow the progression of ideas from one sentence and paragraph to another. Research has shown that many EFL students have difficulty using cohesive devices appropriately. They may overuse simple connectors such as "and" or "but" while failing to employ more sophisticated transitions. Similarly, students often struggle to maintain coherence because they lack experience in developing arguments and organizing information systematically. Harmer (2004) emphasizes that effective writing instruction should include opportunities for students to analyze model texts and practice different organizational patterns. Process-based writing approaches have also been found to improve students' ability to produce coherent texts by encouraging planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Recent studies suggest that explicit instruction in cohesion and coherence can significantly enhance writing quality. Teachers who provide clear explanations and practical exercises help students develop greater awareness of textual organization and reader expectations.

This study adopts a qualitative research approach based on a review of relevant literature concerning cohesion and coherence in academic writing. Various academic books, journal articles, and research reports were examined to identify common challenges faced by EFL learners and effective strategies used in writing instruction. The collected data were analyzed thematically. Particular attention was given to instructional techniques that promote logical organization, effective use of cohesive devices, and overall text clarity. The findings from previous studies were synthesized to develop recommendations for classroom practice. The analysis identified several classroom strategies that effectively promote cohesion and coherence in academic writing.

Teachers should provide direct instruction on transition signals, conjunctions, reference words, and lexical connections. Students need opportunities to practice using these devices in meaningful contexts. Activities such as sentence-combining exercises and paragraph completion tasks can strengthen learners' understanding of textual connections.

A well-organized paragraph contributes significantly to coherence. Students should learn how to construct topic sentences, supporting details, and concluding sentences. Understanding paragraph structure enables learners to present ideas more logically and effectively.

Analyzing well-written academic texts helps students recognize patterns of organization and cohesion. Through guided analysis, learners can identify how experienced writers connect ideas and develop arguments.

Peer review encourages students to evaluate each other's writing and provide constructive feedback. This process helps learners become more aware of coherence problems and organizational weaknesses in their own texts.

The process approach emphasizes planning, drafting, revising, and editing. During revision, students can focus specifically on improving cohesion and coherence. Multiple drafts allow writers

to refine their ideas and strengthen textual organization. The findings indicate that students who receive systematic instruction in cohesion and coherence demonstrate significant improvements in writing quality. Their texts become more organized, logical, and reader-friendly. Furthermore, learners gain confidence in expressing complex ideas through writing.

CONCLUSION: Cohesion and coherence are fundamental elements of successful academic writing. They enable writers to communicate ideas clearly and effectively while helping readers understand the intended message. Despite their importance, many EFL learners encounter difficulties in developing these skills. The review of literature and teaching practices demonstrates that explicit instruction, model text analysis, peer review, and process-based writing approaches are effective methods for improving cohesion and coherence. Teachers should integrate these strategies into writing courses to support students' academic development. Future research may investigate the effectiveness of specific instructional techniques through classroom-based studies and explore how technological tools can support the teaching of cohesion and coherence in academic writing.

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