

## Logical Coherence in Persuasive Writing

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Communication is the process of sharing ideas, information and messages which occurs both in speaking and writing. The verbal form of communication involves two processes: sending messages and noting the reception of them, and receiving messages and noting the intent that the messages convey. The spoken communication is mediated by nonverbal clues, which clarify meanings to the listener, as well as signal to the speaker whether his/her message is explicit enough. By contrast, the written communication process is more complicated; when sending a message the writer does not see the readers' reaction and can only anticipate what could be vague to them. Therefore, written discourse is more rule-governed. Even more than speaking, it requires not only grammatical accuracy, but also comprehensibility, good logical organization, clarity of thought and purpose. These factors give written discourse *logical coherence*.

Logical coherence helps to communicate a message effectively. Effective communication means more than just communicating facts, opinions and arguments. The message should be arranged in a logical order to avoid abrupt shifts in thought flow. The parts of written discourse must blend with each other and read as a single uninterrupted piece, in which every word-combination, every sentence and paragraph contributes to the whole meaning.

Since logical coherence is a vital criterion of persuasiveness, the present article is aimed at exploring its role in persuasive writing, namely, in a short essay: opinion (or argumentative), cause-and-effect, problem-solution, compare/contrast, and descriptive. The language of a persuasive piece of writing employs both psychological and logical tools to convince the readers that the writer's arguments are correct. Logical coherence plays an indispensable role here. We analyze a series of student-written essays and the essays assessed as model by the leading experts in standardized tests.

It is generally accepted that logical coherence in an essay involves two major components: paragraph unity and sentence cohesion. Yet, we reckon among them another factor – strategic arrangement of main points, which is widely acknowledged as part of public speeches. Let us consider the three components in detail.

### Paragraph Unity

In order to clarify the notion of *paragraph unity*, we must see into the nature of a paragraph. A paragraph is not merely a group of sentences. It should possess unity of thought. To achieve this, a paragraph should, firstly, state only ONE main idea – a generalization reflecting one aspect of the thesis statement of the essay. This idea is expressed in a topic sentence. Secondly, the paragraph must contain specific sentences – explanation(s) and examples arranged around the main idea and maintaining the same focus. They make the writing more comprehensible, and consequently, more convincing. On the whole, each paragraph should present a continuous flow of logically connected ideas that relate back to its topic sentence. There can be several points in a single paragraph as long as they concern the paragraph topic.

As compared with body paragraphs, each containing one main point, an opening paragraph has a somewhat different structure, though it possesses unity too. An effective introduction reports the essay topic, narrows it, states the thesis – the author’s position on an issue, and, in some cases, previews how the theme will be developed further in the essay. In a consistent introduction, all the sentences are closely related to the thesis statement and the ideas succeed one another smoothly.

The main ideas of a complete essay are summarized in the concluding paragraph. A conclusion possesses unity if it agrees with the thesis statement and presents the writer’s final judgment which results naturally from the previous arguments. A consistent conclusion brings an essay to a logical end and demonstrates the writer’s coherent thinking and a good grasp of the issue under discussion.

When all the three constituent parts are clearly structured, an essay is regarded as organized. Proper organization of writing is a prerequisite to coherence. It ensures the logical unity and cohesion of paragraphs and overall ideas, thus indicating the writer’s critical thinking. Organization also shows the purpose of an essay, facilitates comprehension of the message, and, above all, builds the writer’s credibility.

A short essay normally has at least three body paragraphs aimed at supporting the thesis statement. In fact, every new argument in favor of the thesis opens an independent paragraph which presents the issue from a different perspective. The overall structure of an essay repeats the structure of a single paragraph. “In an essay, a paragraph is the most important unit of thought because it is both self-contained and part of a larger whole. Paragraphs separate long and involved ideas into smaller parts that are more manageable for the writer and easier for the reader to take in” (Kennedy, Aaron 2003:715).

Paragraph unity and the right organization of an essay help the writer follow his/her line of thought. A good essay writer is able to sort ideas out and narrow the focus to three or four main points. “When everything is equally important, nothing is important” (Lucas 1998:201). The choice of main points depends on the topic and purpose of writing. In a descriptive essay, the purpose is to present the major characteristics of someone or something; in a compare/contrast essay, it is to reveal the similarities and differences between the two compared items; in a problem-solution essay, the purpose is to suggest practical solutions to a problem; in an opinion/argumentative essay, it is to persuade the readers that an argument is true by presenting reasons why it is true or by portraying an issue from different angles. Thus, if the writer wants to persuade the readers that movies and television influence people’s behavior, each of his/her main points should introduce how movies and TV influence our behavior.

Here is an outline of how the above opinion is presented in a model essay (Lougheed 2004:154):

**Thesis statement/central idea:** *I believe that movies and television do influence our behavior, both for the better and for the worse.*

**Main points: Disadvantages:** *Para 1. Movies do make people more violent.  
Para 2. Movies and television make us less active.*

**Advantages:**

*Para 3. Watching movies and TV can give us a broader window on the world.*

*Para 4. Movies and television reduce stress.*

As can be seen, each of the arguments represents the topic idea of a separate paragraph. However, some students' essays contain paragraphs where the main idea can hardly be traced. Here is a passage from a student's response on the following topic: "People are never satisfied with what they have and they always aspire to something new and different" (idem: 207). It has been partly remedied.

*The essential thing is not the material but the spiritual side of what you have. No matter what kind of person you are – rich or poor, learned or uneducated, you wish to move forward because life is not stagnant. Most of our lives we think about our past or future but very few moments about the present. But I think it is very important to stop occasionally and see what you have already done, and what is still remaining in order to fill your life. There are some rules that we can't ignore or deny. Regardless of how much we want something, we just have to take them into account and live complying with them because there are many things that are predetermined for us. But we must not forget that we always have a chance to choose how we want to live this life. Each of us chooses what to highlight in life and with what to fill his life. As people are different, their values are different too. Though the hole is boundless, you can fill it if you make the right choice preferring the values that really matter ....*

The paragraph does not close here. There seems to be no end to ideas, some of which are "central", while others support them. On the one hand, it would be wrong to call this piece of writing illogical, but on the other, the absence of paragraph unity makes it difficult for readers to follow the main idea and understand what the writer is trying to communicate.

If there are too many important points to discuss in a single essay, it is a good idea to categorize them broadly. Thus, when writing about the benefits of eating out as compared with eating at home, one student suggested five arguments in favor of eating out: 1) *eating at restaurants saves time*; 2) *restaurant food is prepared by professional cooks and hence is more delicious*; 3) *you are offered a wide choice of dishes from a variety of cuisines*; 4) *you don't have to learn to cook*; 5) *you don't have to wash the dishes*. As a result, the essay got too long. In fact, coherence suffered too, as it would be more logical to include ideas 4 and 5 as specific examples or explanations for idea 1 – saving time.

To support his opinion that *climate change is a real threat to humankind and can just be diminished thanks to the joint efforts of governments and individuals*, another student suggested the following main ideas: 1) *A major cause of climate change is mass production. In this sense, governments play an indispensable role in limiting the damage range*; 2) *Individuals play a great role in this cause too*; 3) *Another argument is to impose taxes*

*that can restrict some antisocial people from causing disorders and breaking the rules of friendly coexistence with nature.*

The paragraph expressing idea 3 contains only one single sentence (the one above). The paragraph has not been developed at all. But in fact, the idea might be grouped with other government activities in body paragraph 1 about the role of governments. For the same reason, the logical line of thought is interrupted at the point this third argument comes about. Thus, it is essential to make a critical choice of main ideas, and organize them logically.

For all that, the thesis statement and main points only make the skeleton of an essay. To produce a finished paragraph, and thus a complete essay, each of the main points is supported by specific evidence: facts, descriptions, explanations, examples, statistics, expert opinions and quotations depending on the purpose and topic of writing. Otherwise, they are just vague generalizations. The types and functions of evidence will be the subject of another article. In the present article, we will focus on how evidence contributes to paragraph unity or, vice versa, ruins it.

A paragraph is coherent if the evidence is immediately relevant to its main point. Compare the outline of a model response about celebrating national events (Sahanaya, Hughes 2004:126) and an extract from a student's response about what individuals can do to help the environment:

**MODEL ESSAY: Main point:** *All these different celebrations tend to cost a lot of money to make them spectacular or unforgettable.*  
**Explanation:** *Spending a lot of money for only a day seems to be wasteful, especially for developing countries such as Indonesia.* **Example:** *In Indonesia, we have Independence Day, and all the people make their preparations for a celebration for about 2 months in advance. The people always want to make each year's celebration better than the previous year's, so every household has to contribute about Rupiah 10,000-20,000 (A\$2-A\$4) for their neighbourhood celebration.*

**STUDENT'S ESSAY:** *There is a lot to be done by residents to save our planet. Humans are accountable to the environment for their actions. Each individual should change their habits and lifestyle, for instance, by saving electricity, petroleum, wood and other resources, using public transport or even riding bicycles instead of cars so as not to pollute the air they breathe. For example, the issue of global warming is a real menace for the world population, which brought forward the problem of melting glaciers. And if each individual consumes electricity more economically it will lead not only to saving natural resources, but will also help to struggle against such a challenging matter as global warming.*

Both responses give examples that are consistent with the respective topic ideas. The student's paragraph, however, does not read smoothly and is not very convincing because it lacks unity. As was said, the examples of citizen action are undoubtedly

relevant here. But the example of melting glaciers does not fit. Melting glaciers would be an appropriate illustration of global warming effects, but they are not at all related to any changes in people's lifestyle aimed at saving the planet. Some details/explanations that would clarify the relevance of the example to an unsophisticated reader must be missing. This missing information could provide sentence cohesion and logical sequence of ideas.

An essential factor that contributes to paragraph unity is logical sequence. The thoughts can be ordered from general to particular or vice versa, from whole to parts, from question to answer, from effect to cause, etc. This can be done by applying reasoning methods, as described in our previous article (Karapetyan 2010).

### Strategic Arrangement of Main Points

Another component of logical coherence, as we see it, is the *strategic arrangement of main points*. This component is not so commonly acknowledged as such by essay researchers, though it is regarded as an essential part of public speeches. Assuming that the main points cannot appear in an essay erratically, we have marked out several patterns of arrangement typical of a short essay. Like public speakers, effective writers should have a plan according to which they order their thoughts not only inside a paragraph but between paragraphs as well, so that one paragraph leads to another. Largely, the arrangement is determined by the essay topic and purpose.

*Topical order* is the most universal method of arranging main points, which is applicable to all kinds of essays. But it proves especially effective for descriptive, compare/contrast and opinion/argumentative essays. The presentation of the essay topic idea (thesis statement) is realized through the discussion of sub-topical ideas (the main points) in individual paragraphs. For instance, in a model essay comparing/contrasting business cultures of two countries (TOEFL IBT 2006:206) the author has divided the response into three major aspects of difference: greeting a new person, attending a meeting, and socializing after work, each expanded on in a separate paragraph.

With *causal order*, the writer expresses a cause-and-effect relationship that exists between the main points. This order is most appropriate for cause-and-effect and opinion/argumentative essays. Whether to start from the cause or the effect depends on the topic assignment. Below is one way of presenting causal relationship coherently (Haines, May 2006:43):

**Thesis statement (effect):** *The way children eat and live nowadays has led to a deterioration in their health.*

**Main point 1:** *The way children eat – food high in fat, salt and sugar.*

**Cause 1:** *There is the worrying increase in the amount of processed food that children are eating at home.*

**Cause 2:** *More and more young people are choosing to eat in fast-food restaurants.*

**Main point 2:** *The way children live – with little amount of exercise.*

**Cause 1:** *Schools are obsessed with exams.*

**Cause 2:** *Most children go to school in their parents' cars rather than walk or cycle.*

**Cause 3:** *Children are spending much time at home, playing computer games, watching TV or surfing the Internet.*

*Problem-solution order* divides an essay into two main parts: the first part introduces the problem and its possible effects, while the second part suggests one or more solutions (each described in a separate paragraph). This sequence fits problem-solution and opinion/argumentative essays best. Very often the problem is stated in the introductory paragraph, while each of the body paragraphs puts forward workable ideas on solving it, as illustrated in the outline below (Haines, May 2006:31). As some of the ideas get more detailed, they start a new paragraph. Yet, the essay is coherent as the main points follow a consistent order, which helps to prevent any deviations from the central idea:

**Problem:** *Recently, scientists worried about climate change have urged governments to introduce measures to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that are seen as its main cause.*

**Thesis statement:** *Governments and individuals should take joint responsibility for this problem.*

**Main point 1:** *Industry accounts for a large proportion of the greenhouse gas emissions, and this can only be controlled by government action.*

**Solution 1:** *Measures could be taken to discourage pollution, such as limiting or taxing the use of fossil fuels.*

**Solution 2:** *Subsidies could be offered to industries to clean up their production processes.*

**Solution 3:** *Only discussion between the governments can ensure the solutions are successful.*

**Main point 2:** *National and international policies will only succeed if individuals also change their lifestyles.*

**Solution 1:** *People could think more carefully about how they use energy in their homes.*

**Solution 2:** *Individual attitudes to transport need to change.*

With *hierarchical order*, the main points are organized according to their importance – from weightiest to less weighty or, more rarely, vice versa, depending on the writer's choice. Hierarchic order is mostly used in descriptive, opinion/argumentative and cause-and-effect essays. In the following essay on limiting the size of classes (TOEFL IBT 2006:157), the writer has adopted a teacher's viewpoint in prioritizing the main ideas. A student-writer, even having chosen the same ideas, would possibly order them from last to first, while an unbiased writer could attach no particular importance to sequencing, as long as all the ideas are relevant to the thesis statement.

**Thesis statement:** *If the number of students in a classroom were to be reduced to a reasonable number, there is no question that students would benefit.*

**Main ideas:**

1. *Large class sizes force teachers to focus on discipline, which prevents them from spending time making sure that students have the facts and skills they need in order to perform well on standardized tests.*
2. *Other challenges that students face are the constant temptations (which are easy to hide and even use during class because of noise).*
3. *With so many students in classes, teachers no longer have enough time to work with each student individually.*

A minor pattern of arrangement is *chronological order*, which puts the main ideas in time sequence and fits a small number of descriptive essays, such as the ones describing historical events and various processes.

### Sentence Cohesion

When the discourse is logically coherent, the ideas expressed by means of words, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs, are all linked by *connectives* or *transitional devices*. Written communication researchers refer to this link as *sentence cohesion*. Connectives may appear at the beginning of a part to relate it to the preceding part, or they may be used at the end of a part to look ahead, or they may encounter elsewhere in a part to ensure a smooth flow of discourse. As a matter of fact, their function is to arrange the discourse as a smooth flow of successive and coordinated ideas. The connectives most commonly used in writing are: transitions, pronoun referents, tie-in sentences, repetition of key words, parallel structures, synonyms and antonyms.

**Transitions, or transitional words and phrases**, indicate the end of one idea with a subsequent shift to another. These are also called *major connectors*, as they help organize the main ideas of an essay and the main parts of a paragraph. In fact, all conjunctions or conjunction adverbs function as transitional words.

Transitions display some kind of logical correlation between ideas, among them:

- ✓ explaining, restating or exemplifying (*such as, for instance, namely, particularly*);
- ✓ showing similarity (*likewise, similarly, in the same way*);
- ✓ contrasting (*on the contrary, in spite of, on the other hand, whereas*);
- ✓ agreeing (*one must acknowledge that ..., it is quite right to ..., I agree wholeheartedly*);
- ✓ causality (*therefore, consequently, for this reason, on the grounds that, owing to, now that*), and many others.

Without proper transitions, ideas in written discourse are unrelated and abrupt. Notice the functions of the underlined transitional words in the example below (Sharpe 2006:648). They remind the reader of the thought already mentioned and signal the thought to be developed:

*I disagree that the college years are the best time in a person's life. **Admittedly**, college often corresponds with a time when people are young, healthy and physically strong, **and** those attitudes are highly regarded in Western cultures; **however**, the college years must **also** be viewed as a period of high stress and certain uncomfortable dependence.*

In contrast, the use of wrong transitions can mislead the readers by suggesting inappropriate logical relationships, as shown in the following extract from a student's essay:

*Inhaling cigarette smoke causes even more health problems to non-smokers than it does to smokers. ... The children of smoking parents are especially threatened. The parents should realize to what risk they expose their kids and quit smoking in their presence.*

*Furthermore, if the authorities ban smoking in public places, smokers will say this is discrimination against them.*

A special type of transitions is **signposts**. These are used to indicate very briefly the different stages in a piece of writing or to focus attention on main points. Some signposts are similar to transitions, especially when expressed numerically to introduce each new point (*firstly, secondly, lastly, etc.; the first type of ..., the second type, the third type; in the first place, the next thing to do, etc.*). Other signposts are just simple phrases like *Another important thing to remember is ..., A major part of ... is ...*, which signal a new point in a discussion. The main points can also be brought to readers' attention by means of questions. By questions the writer appeals to readers' thoughts and emotions by involving them in the discussion, while an emotional appeal is one of the psychological methods of persuasion. There are two possible ways of using these signposts: 1) signpost question → topic sentence; 2) topic sentence → signpost question:

- 1) *How many of the great inventions and discoveries came along through a lucky mistake or a lucky chance? One of the biggest lucky mistakes in history is Columbus' so-called discovery of America (Lougheed 2004:156). How long should we tolerate the unbearable smell of cigarettes? This issue needs an urgent solution. Smoking in public places should be forbidden (Student's response).*
- 2) *Of course, more jobs will be created by the factory. Our population will grow. To accommodate more workers, more homes and stores will be needed. Do we really want this much growth, so fast? (Lougheed 2004:153).*

Some transitional words and phrases can also be used when linking details to the main points in an essay. In this case, they refer to another group of connectives – the so-called *minor connectors*. In the examples below, the connectors are printed in bold type, with their referents underlined:

*It is up to us to decide whether it is important to make large amounts of money or whether we are satisfied to earn a comfortable living. Certainly, there are good reasons for **both** decisions /Sharpe, 2006: 676/.*



*Some students may need longer time to concentrate on an issue to answer it properly. Formal examinations don't suit **such** students /Student's response/.*

Minor connectors also include **pronouns**. Since pronouns make an explicit indication to preceding (and following) ideas in the context, they are an excellent method of transition. Besides, the use of pronouns prevents unnecessary repetition of words and phrases (cluttering), thus making the sentences more concise and the discourse smoother and more comprehensible. Demonstrative pronouns are particularly useful as they replace whole ideas.

The sentences below, which are borrowed from a model descriptive essay, illustrate an effective use of demonstrative pronouns. The pronouns are printed in bold type, while their referents are underlined:

*He (William Lyon Mackenzie King) held the office of prime minister for a total of 21 years, which is a longer period of time than **that** of any public servant in the history of Canada.*

*He was active in government during two world wars and the Great Depression and played a key role in guiding Canada during **those** very difficult years.*

*One biographer ... has identified a quality in King called "essential Canadianness." I understand **this** to mean that he was able to understand and represent all of the people of Canada (Sharpe 2006:585).*

Note how demonstrative pronouns help the reader to sum up subconsciously what was previously said before moving to the next idea. This effect is referred to as "known-new contract" (Word Works 1999: 3), that is, each sentence contains some known information that leads to a new idea. The known-new contract is also achieved by means of other connectives.

However, pronouns must be used carefully to conform clearly to the right antecedent out of many other possible ones. In students' writing, we encounter an erratic use of pronouns, sometimes with their referents missing, as illustrated in the following sentences:

#### Incorrect

*In my opinion, smoking in public places must be banned, because other than causing health problems to themselves as smokers, **they** also affect non-smokers' health.*

*Reusing is even better because it doesn't even require the energy to recycle **it**.*

#### Corrected

*In my opinion, smoking in public places must be banned, because smokers, other than damaging **themselves**, affect non-smokers' health.*

*Reusing is even better because it doesn't even require the energy to recycle the product.*

Sentences also lose cohesiveness when students use pronouns inconsistently, as in the sentences below:

*I always try to think positively. **Your** habits have a lot to do with your stress.*

*I listen to my favorite songs when I feel stressed. When **you** are not in tune with yourself you can relax doing it.*

There is nothing wrong with these sentences, if we consider them separately. The personal pronoun ‘I’ is used to describe the writer’s personal experiences, while ‘you’ or ‘your’ are used in an impersonal sense and refer to an indefinite individual. Used in a single paragraph, these pronouns only disrupt the cohesion between sentences. It must be admitted, though, that such a use of pronouns can also be deliberate, aimed at relating personal experiences to common beliefs and practices.

The relationship between two sentences or paragraphs can be displayed not only by transitional words and phrases, but by the so-called **tie-in sentences** as well. A tie-in sentence serves as a logical connector between sentences, as does the underlined sentence in the following example (Sharpe 2006:615):

*I agree that pets should be treated like family members because they live in our homes and interact with us like family members do. Often parents allow children to have pets in order to teach them to be responsible. By feeding, walking, and grooming a dog, children learn to be dependable and kind.*

Note the effect of two missing tie-ins in the student-written passage below:

*Every individual should make the ideas of “recycling” and “reusing” common to their everyday life. People consume increasingly more products every year. Meanwhile, the production of all these goods increases the environmental pollution. For example, recycling two bottles saves enough energy to boil water for five cups of tea.*

The case illustrates two sharp shifts from one idea to another. Although the first two sentences are not very disjointed, their link would be more definite if the writer explained the terms of “recycling” and “reusing” after introducing them. The line of thought is broken between the last two sentences, when the author jumps onto an example. As a result, the discourse is deficient, ambiguous and unsound. In contrast, with a proper tie-in, the discourse acquires complete sense and reads as one uninterrupted piece:

*Every individual should make the ideas of “recycling” and “reusing” common to their everyday life. That is, we should help producers to renovate used products for further use. We consume increasingly more products*

*every year. Meanwhile, the production of all these goods increases the environmental pollution. With recycling, we would preserve natural resources. For example, recycling two bottles saves enough energy to boil water for five cups of tea.*

The next method of sentence cohesion is **repetition of key words and phrases**. This technique requires special skills. Not every word is worth being repeated; a skillful writer can recognize key words, the ones that connect ideas between sentences in a paragraph and focus the reader's attention on its central idea. Otherwise, the technique turns into a boring practice of a writer who is at a loss for words. In the example below, the author repeats the key idea (the one expressed in the thesis) several times in the course of the whole essay, and reinforces it again in the conclusion (Sharpe 2006:615):

**Thesis statement:** *I agree that **pets should be treated like family members** because they live in our homes and interact with us **like family members** do. Parents expect their children to **take care of the pets as if they were members of the family**. ... The pet becomes a family member for these people and deserves **the same kind of treatment that a family member would receive**. ... In a real sense, these pets are caring for their owners **like family members** would, and for this reason, they **should be treated like family**.*

**Conclusion:** *At every stage in life we interact with our pets in the same ways that we **interact with family**. Children, young married couples, and elderly people have reason to **treat their pets like family members**.*

Repetition is a unique technique that “creates a musical motif” in the reader's mind. “It has become part of the music of our language” (Coherence: Transition between Ideas). A very dexterous repetition is demonstrated in Lincoln's wise words: “You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time” (idem).

Unfortunately, deliberate repetition is not widely practiced by students in their writing. They prefer prosaic expression to the rhythmic, poetic style. They seek to use a variety of forms of expression, which is one of the requirements on standardized tests. However, the technique of repetition does not in any way hinder the semantic or structural diversity if used skillfully.

On the other hand, excessive and unnecessary repetition can lead to word clutters. One way to avoid cluttering is to rephrase key words or phrases with **synonyms**. Because synonyms display semantic variety, they are an excellent way to make an essay more exciting.

*You can get audio and video **data**. You can get **information** about events in the past (Lougheed, 2004:176).*

*The **principal** of a school is one of our first encounters with a figure of*

**authority**. Consequently, he or she must be a good example of a **leader** (idem:173).

*As a college student myself, I view this **time of life** as an opportunity to prepare for the next, and more important **stage of life**, when I am independent and productive (Sharpe 2006:648).*

Like the technique of repetition, synonyms and related words also require careful application to produce a desired effect on the reader. Used incorrectly, they produce word redundancy, as demonstrated in the following student-written sentences:

*This will also lead to more economical use of raw materials, which, as one must acknowledge, are **limited** and **scarce**.  
Recently the way children eat and live **nowadays** has changed and led to serious deteriorative effects on their health.*

Strangely enough, using **antonyms** or antonymous expressions can also create sentence cohesion by contrasting the meanings of related notions. Meanwhile, the grammatical forms are not necessarily identical:

*When the air is **cold**, or if it **rains**, a bicycle offers little protection from the elements, while people in a car are **warm** and **dry** (TOEFL IBT 2006: 388).*

***There is a wide assortment** of theatre, music and dance performances available in big cities. **These things are rare** in small ones (Lougheed 2004:156).*

*In spite of the **harm** that technological progress does to humanity, we see its multiple **benefits** too (Student's response).*

In the following example (Lougheed 2004:183), an antonym is used in the last paragraph of the essay to sharpen the contrast with the repetitive phrase in the topic sentences of all previous paragraphs. Because of the combination of two techniques – repetition of key phrases and use of antonyms – the ideas are particularly consistent and coherent:

*In a **large company**, I can start at an entry-level position and work myself up to the top.*

*In a **large company**, there are a variety of jobs.*

*In a **large company**, there would be more prestige.*

*Working for a **small company** would not give me the same opportunities for advancement or on-the-job training as working for a **large company** would.*

Finally, an alternative cohesive technique that students exercise is repetition of sentence structures. It is referred to as **parallelism** by writing specialists. Many sentences

present information in a series which may consist of several parts having the same grammatical structure in order to express equal thoughts.

*They sell pet food, pet toys, pet clothes, pet homes (Lougheed 2004:243).*

*When it comes to success, luck can mean being in the right place to meet someone, or having the right skills to get a job done. It might mean turning down an offer and having a better offer come along (idem:156).*

*When stress is beyond an individual's defensive capability, it turns from being helpful to being harmful (Student's response).*

*Washing machines wash kilos of dirty clothes with a push of a button; light and portable vacuum cleaners clean spacious flats in a few minutes; smart computers correct our spelling and grammar mistakes; mobile phones make people so easily accessible (Student's response).*

Parallelism creates a rhythm which makes the essay easier to read. If the structure of any of the components in a parallel series is different, the rhythm will be lost. Compare the following two versions of the same sentence:

#### No parallel

*Reading can sometimes be irritating rather than helpful, eating adds to the stress, music often makes one even more upset, and ultimately not everyone has got a garden to work in.*

#### Parallel structures

*Sometimes reading is irritating rather than helpful, eating is stressful rather than relaxing, music is upsetting rather than pleasing.*

Parallelism is frequently combined with repetition, as seen in the sentence below. This makes the rhythm even steadier and clearer:

*Most will be **the same race as you**, have **the same background as you**, and will have gone to **the same school as you** (Lougheed 2004:163).*

***No one can teach us** how to get along with others or how to have self-respect. As we grow from children into teenagers, **no one can teach us to deal with peer pressure**. As we leave adolescence years and enter adult life, **no one can teach us** how to fall in love and get married (idem:152).*

The research shows that the three components of coherent writing facilitate the comprehension of the message, build the writer's credibility and urge the readers to accept the writer's viewpoint as reasonable and just. As a final point, comparison of model and student-written essays revealed a range of differences in terms of logical coherence. Most students' works are less sophisticated in using tools which promote coherence. They can abound in simple transitions, but lack paragraph unity; they can have a well-defined cen-

tral idea, but be short of relevant examples; they can employ semantic variety, but result in word clutters. By contrast, classic essays turn to various methods of coherent writing. They present integral paragraphs with one central point, organize thoughts successively and logically, and use cohesive techniques that assist in keeping track of the ideas.

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### Տրամաբանական հետևողականությունը պերսուազիվ էսսեում

Տրամաբանական հետևողականությունը համոզիչ խոսքի կարևորագույն չափանիշներից է: Հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվում են հետևողական մտածելակերպի բաղադրիչ մասերը պերսուազիվ էսսեում ուսանողական և մնուշ էսսեների վերլուծության հիման վրա: Կատարված վերլուծությունը ապացուցում է, որ տրամաբանական հետևողականությունը և մտքերի փոխկապակցումը ընթերցողին հաղորդում են որոշակի տեղեկություն, որն օժանդակում է հաղորդագրության առավել հեշտ ընկալմանը՝ վստահություն ներշնչելով հեղինակի և նրա կարծիքի նկատմամբ: Այդ առումով, ուսանողների կողմից գրված էսսեներն ունեն մի շարք թերություններ, որոնք խոչընդոտում են մտքի հիմնավորված շարադրմանը՝ էսսեն դարձնելով պակաս համոզիչ: