Cohesion, Coherence and Voice

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In pairs and without your phones, what do the words mean?

- Cohesion
- Coherence
- Voice
Cohesion

- ‘sticking’ your ideas together
- Works particularly at the phrase/clause, sentence and paragraph level
- Better cohesion helps your paragraphs to make sense because the relationships between factors/ideas are clearer
- Tends to rely on **grammar** links (vocabulary, pronouns, verb tenses)
Coherence

- Sense of unity/sense of continuity
- Results from good organisation
- Works at the paragraph, section, chapter and thesis level
- Tends to rely on obvious logical progression and argument
- Incoherent = ‘doesn’t make sense’
Voice

- Connection between the writer and the reader
- Choice of vocabulary and grammar
- Honesty
- Our supported opinions
Question:

- Why are cohesion and coherence important in thesis writing?

- Cohesion: reduces *processing* load on the reader
- Coherence: reduces *memory* load on the reader
Intercultural communication and (important?) aside

- **Monochronic cultures**: context independent i.e. explicit and direct
- **Polychronic cultures**: Context dependent i.e. implicit, less direct, ‘read between the lines’

Questions:
- Which do you think your own culture tends to be?
- Do you think that this affects the way that you communicate/write?
Cohesion: making the relationships clear

- Linking words
- Linking phrases/clauses
- Repeating words/phrases
- Using different types of pronouns (this/these)
- Using the definite article
Ways of making a text cohesive (Thornbury, 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical cohesion</th>
<th>Grammatical cohesion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repetition of words</td>
<td>Cotton….cotton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chains of words belonging to the same lexical set</td>
<td>Grows, ripen, fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense agreement</td>
<td>Is, are, ripen, split, blown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun reference</td>
<td>Cotton….its</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article reference</td>
<td>White fibres….the fibres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>substitution</td>
<td>The fruits ripen. When they do,...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellipsis</td>
<td>The fibres are blown away. Before they are [blown away]...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjuncts (or linkers)</td>
<td>But, in the cotton fields</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Read the article published in September about Ebola.

• Circle any examples of where the author has made the text cohesive
Coherence: making sense

- Telling reader what has already been said (summarising)
- Telling reader what is coming in the next section (referring forward)
- Cross-referring within a chapter/thesis
- Put old information at the beginning of a sentence and the new information at the end (theme and rheme)
- Underline examples of coherence in the text
Academic voice

- Distant
- Vigorous and lively
- Not completely detached

- Read your article and highlight any example of academic voice. What language have they used?
This article is not written in formal academic style.

- Find and correct the informal words and phrases.
Language Support and Learning

- English Language Support (ELS) - classes run every semester
- Writing Advisory Service (WAS) – 1 hour individual tutorial at the ELTC on Hoyle Street
- 301 – Language support is available
- Doctoral Development Programme – a thesis writing course runs every semester
- Department Language Support (DLS)
  - 3 sessions as requested by your Faculty
  - 1 to 1 tutorials
  - More input sessions (literature reviews)