

Study Skills: Cohesion – Part Two

Video transcript

The fourth technique is key word repetition.

Many students believe that good academic writing means using a lot of long words and showing off their extensive vocabulary. This is wrong. Good academic writing is clear and easy to follow.

Look at this short text:

This study assessed the effectiveness of different techniques to monitor a small population of koalas. We found each method had limitations, but used together, the tools were highly efficacious in surveilling the target marsupial community.

This is not cohesive.

These sentences would have better flow if the student simply repeated the key words.

This study assessed the **effectiveness** of different **techniques** to **monitor** a small **population** of **koalas**. We found each **technique** had limitations, but used together, **they** were highly **effective** in **monitoring** the target **koala population**.

Repeating the key terms makes this text much more cohesive.

The fifth technique is to use reference words. We use reference words to refer back to ideas we have already mentioned. Examples include *this, that, such, the former, the latter, the other* and a whole range of pronouns, such as *it, they, and them*.

This video will focus on one example: 'this or these + a noun'.

The noun refers to an idea mentioned previously. So, it creates a good old-new flow of information to help your reader.

Let's look at an example.

Our survey results show that 11% of respondents smoke, down from 25% in 1990. *This decline* could be due to reduced cigarette advertising.

The noun, *decline*, **summarises** the main idea in the first sentence.

Another way to start the new sentence could be: *These results*. In this example, the noun, *results*, is a **repetition** of a key word in the first sentence.

The final technique we will look at is signpost language.

Just like a signpost gives direction to a driver, signpost language guides your reader through your text because it shows the direction of your argument.

Many students are familiar with this language and use words like *firstly, secondly, and finally* to list ideas.

We use phrases like *on one hand* and *on the other hand* to show contrast.

And we use phrases like *to sum up* or *in brief* to signal that we are about to give a summary.

Although highly useful, remember that signpost language is only one of many different techniques you should use to make your writing cohesive. Continue through this material to practise the six techniques we have seen in this video.

This video has provided an overview of six different techniques for improving cohesion in your texts. Don't forget to speak to a Language and Learning Advisor if you need more help.