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**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**



**Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra**

**Faculty of Letters and Languages**

**Department of Foreign Languages**

**Section of English**

## **Developing Students' Paragraph Writing through the Use of Transitional Signals**

**Case Study: First -Year LMD Students at Mohamed Kheider Biskra University**

**Dissertation presented to the Department of Foreign Languages as partial fulfilment for  
the Requirements of the Master's Degree in Sciences of Language**

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*“Have something to say, and say it as clearly as  
you can. That is the only secret of style.”*

*(Matthew Arnold)*

*“Sometimes I will stay up in my room for a  
day trying to get two sentences that will flow, that  
will seem as if they were always there.”*

*(Maya Angelou)*

## *Dedication*

*In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate,*

*Prayers and peace be upon our Profet Mohamed*

*His servant and messenger*

*This work is dedicated:*

*To my beloved parents whose support, encouragement and constant  
love have sustained me throughout life.*

*To my dear brothers and sisters*

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## **Abstract**

Mastering all the writing aspects which help to produce coherent paragraphs is not an easy task for many EFL students. This research work attempts to show the impact of the right use of transitional signals on first-year LMD students' writing achievement in the Department of Foreign Languages, the English Division at Mohamed kheider Biskra University. Writing is the skill foremostly used to examine learners' performance in terms of organization, unity, and coherence. Since the latter cannot be achieved only through the right use of transitions, the problem is that the majority of the students, especially first year students, become only acquainted with the meaning and the functions of the most widely used connectors and misuse and even neglect the rarely used ones. From that point, we hypothesize that : if students are trained to use transitional signals, their writing will be developed in terms of coherence. This research investigates whether training to use the different transitional signals would lead the involved participants to write more coherent texts. For this purpose, a quasi- experiment was carried out where participants were taught under the framework of Crewe's three approaches of teaching transitions which are 'Reductionist, Expansionist, and Deductionist' (1990) to check its effectiveness on students' written productions especially paragraphs since the latter is the core of any form of writing, and because it is programmed in their syllabus. One group pre-test and post-test design was followed which is considered as one of the effective types of a quasi- experiments. A pre and a post-test were conducted then the results of the two tests were compared. Summing up, the participants' post-test results show the effectiveness of those approaches which indicate that training students to use transitional signals in their written productions following such an approach will help them develop their writings in terms of coherence.

## **List of Abbreviations**

**CDs** : Cohesive Devices

**D** : Dependent Variable

**EFL** : English as a foreign Language

**ID**: Independent Variable

**L2** : Second Language

**LMD** : Licence, Master, Doctorate

**SD** : Standard Deviation

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# General Introduction

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# General Introduction

## 1. Statement of the Problem

Writing, as one of the basic skills of any language, is supposed to be concise and precise where the meaning of the sentence is not only balanced by words but also by spelling mistakes, tenses, and even punctuation which may mislead the reader and hide the right meaning of any written production' ideas and even the writer's objectives. In addition, it is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously.

The writer's ideas, expressions and thoughts should be stated smoothly and clearly to be comprehensible. Generally, the extent to which writing "**Flows**" is referred to as "**Coherence**" which means the result of tying information in our writing together so that connections we have made in our own mind are apparent to the reader. However, many learners find it so hard to produce a clear and coherent pieces of writing because of the misuse of one of the important aspects in writing which is "**Transition Signals**" that some learners do not know and others are not even able to differentiate their uses. Ways of achieving coherence- as being one of the characteristics of good writing in general- are not the same; the distinction between the concepts of coherence and cohesion was made clear, and the contribution of a certain number of other features was recognized.

After observing many of students' written productions, it has become evident that coherence is a reccured problem. Many often either misuse or overuse some cohesive devices which make their writing contain no clear, logical organization. This problem is, in fact, shared by both : students who recieve training on the use of cohesive devices as well as with those who do not. Possibly more than the other skills, and because of the considerable production time learners take to plan and revise their text before it is put in final form, the writing skill gives foreign language learners a sense of command over the language being taught, and allows them to discover more about how English works. However, many EFL Learners all over the world – including the Algerian ones- find it a very complex task to deal with because it needs careful thought, discipline, and concentration. It thus appears to be a challenging task for them.

In addition, writing is the skill foremostly used to examine learners' performance in terms of organization, unity, and coherence. Since the latter can not be achieved only through the right use of transitions, the problem is that the majority of the students, especially first year LMD students, become only acquainted with the meaning and the functions of the most widely used connectors and misuse and even neglect the rarely used ones.

## **2. Significance of the study**

The present research tries to give importance to the most common problem faced by many students or writers in general which is how to connect ideas coherently. Sometimes what they write can not be understood by readers ; their thoughts and objectives can not be reached just because of the misuse of some major cohesive devices which make their writing a bit ambiguous. This work is important for both teachers who should know how to help their students at least to be able to connect their ideas easily, and for students who need to be aware of which cohesive device should be used ? When ? and Where?

## **3. Aim of the Study**

We are interested in this particular subject because of the belief that coherence is a significant element in writing instructions. Since it is a shared responsibility, teachers should be able to use specific terms to explain the concept and to give instructional feedback on students' errors. This research work seeks to suggest practical strategies that help students write more coherent texts. The research's objective is to help students:

- To use transitional signals correctly and easily.
- To develop strategies to improve the Coherence of their writing.
- To become acquainted with the meaning and the functions of not only the most widely used connectors but also with the rarely used ones.

## **4. Research Questions**

This work aims to answer the following questions :

- 1- Does the use of transition signals help students develop their writing?
- 2- How can students achieve coherence ?
- 3- Is there an effective way to guide students write more coherent texts with fewer connectors ?
- 4- How can teachers help learners develop strategies to improve the coherence of their paragraph's writing?



- 5- How to help students become acquainted with the meaning and the functions of both the most widely used connectors and the rarely used ones?

## **5. Research Hypothesis**

The concept of coherence covers a large number of grammatical and discursive features of texts that need to be mastered by language learners ; it has been noticed that learners seem to have a vague conception of coherence since it can be achieved by both aspects. Many recent studies tried to focus on the latter ; however, many other ones insist on the former because having a clear idea about the real meaning of the different linkers, their appropriate uses, knowing something about the grammatical rules may guide students to write more simply and clearly producing coherent texts.

From that point, we hypothesize that :

If students are trained to use transition signals, their writing will be developed in terms of coherence.

## **6. Research Methodology :**

The research method followed in this study was a Quasi-Experimental.

### **6.1. Population and Sample**

The chosen population was the level of First-Year LMD students of the English Division in the Department of Foreign Languages at Mohamed Kheider Biskra University which contains fifteen groups (nearly about nine hundred students). The chosen sample in this experiment consisted of one existing group of 16 participants.

### **6.2. Data Gathering Tools**

To test the hypothesis, a quasi- experimental design has been used in this reseach. The participants were tested before and after the experiment. One group pre-test and post-test design was implemented which is considered as one of the effective types of a quasi-experiment. A pre-test and a post-test were conducted then the results of the two tests were compared to test the formulated hypothesis.

## **7. Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is a general overview on Academic writing which includes some definitions, characteristics of good writing, the major steps of the writing process with some basic rules of this skill, and definitions of the two markers that lead to making or producing good writings which are coherence and cohesion.

The second Chapter presents ways of achieving coherence through using transition signals with the definition of a coherent Paragraph. It also focuses on the Transitional phrases, words, and expressions that may help to produce coherent pieces of writing (mainly Paragraphs), and the Basic transitions that indicate specific relationships within the paragraph. The final one represents the Field Work ; it gives firstly a detailed information about the population and the sample involved in the study, and the assessment tool used to score the papers of both pre- and post- tests. Then, it focuses on the analysis of the final results.

# ***Chapter One***

## ***An Over View on Academic Writing***

# Chapter One

## A General Over View on Academic Writing

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## **Introduction**

Educators, course' designers, and mainly language teachers focus on the writing skill because it demands careful thought, discipline, and concentration. Thus, we find many EFL learners consider it as a challenging task. Writing in general provides a relatively permanent record of information, opinions, beliefs, personal experiences, feelings, arguments, explanations, and theories. For this reason, it should be fully developed by respecting all its basic rules. This chapter will give a general overview on Academic writing, providing some definitions. Its basic part is about the basic rules of writing, and its main components which have been proposed differently by many researchers. Since writing involves making an utterance visible, it is considered as one of the most significant cultural accomplishment of human being. So, to make their audience understand their written production in the appropriate way, students or writers in general have to pay particular attention to their writing in terms of clarity, unity, different writing mechanics , word choice, and organization which all may lead to a successful result by making their readers grasp the right intended meanings.

### **1.1. What is Academic Writing?**

Writing in general as White (1988) stated is not a natural activity. This means that we have to be taught how to write because this activity is a process where writers have to consider various aspects such as: punctuation, structure of sentences and choice of words simultaneously. Widdowson (2001) defined it as the transformation of the linguistic rules of language into usage. Thus, producing any written discourse demands conscious intellectual effort from learners to write coherent and meaningful paragraphs and requires competence and selection. Writing in a broad sense as Weigle (2002) defines is not only putting one 's thoughts to paper as they occur, but actually using writing to create new knowledge. We find that Olshtain too, (1991, p. 235) states that "writing as a communicative activity needs to be encouraged and nurtured during the language learner's course of study" by relating this skill to speaking.

Many students have the impression that writing equals only spelling and grammar; however, their writings should be based on certain rules, mechanics, and specific requirements to be academically appreciated. Academic writing has been defined differently; according to Bowker (2007), it differs from other forms of writing in terms of its " rules and

practices” which are mainly related to a formal structure of ideas, referencing, and writing mechanics (grammar, punctuation and spelling).

Academic writing is specific and it deals with facts, not assumptions. It is based on critical judgments of ideas rather than an appeal of emotions. The purpose of academic writing varies according to the writers’ objectives. Bailey (2011), states that people or writers in general may write because of many reasons such as:

- To report on a piece of research the writer has conducted.
- To answer a question the writer has been given or chosen.
- To discuss a subject of common interest and give the writer’s view.
- To synthesize research done by others on a topic.

Alfred and Eschholz (2008) state that in any discipline, academic writing is governed by the discipline’s conventions, or specific customs and requirements. For them, writing in academic settings requires paying attention to the following:

- Purpose: It is often related to the instructions given by instructors.
- Content: Learners need to approach their subject as someone who is knowledgeable about the topic.
- Audience: The immediate audience have special interest in the writer’s thoughts and the way he expresses them.
- Structure: Academic Writing is heavily weighted in favor of reasoned argument and factual evidence, and gives less attention to personal opinions or emotional appeals.

Fulwiler also argues with that opinion paying attention to purpose, situation, and audience (2002). He proposes several questions to be asked while doing this task in case writers are blocked about what next to do such as: “Is your purpose for doing the writing clear? Can you explain it in a sentence or two? What are the circumstances in which this writing is taking place? Can you identify the social or cultural milieu in which the writing takes place? Do you know and understand your audience? and Can you articulate what your audience wants or expects?”

Fulwiler adds that the explicit or stated reason for writing symbolizes the writers’ purpose, and he stated the following questions: Why are you writing in the first place? and What do you hope your words will accomplish? To talk about Situation, he explains that the subjects of college papers do not exist in isolation where we find that the environment,

setting, or circumstance may all influence what we write, and where more particular circumstances will surround each specific assignment that will be affected to some extent by the specific disciplinary expectations of a given college, course, and grade level:

- Know who you are. Be aware that your writing may reflect your gender, race, ethnic identity, political or religious affiliation, social class, educational background, and regional upbringing. Read your writing and notice where these personal biases emerge; noticing them gives you more control, and allows you to change, delete, or strengthen them depending upon your purpose.
- Know where you are. Be aware of the ideas and expectations that characterize your college, discipline, department, course, instructor, and grade level. If you know this context, you can better shape your writing to meet or question it.
- Negotiate. In each act of writing, attempt to figure out how much of you and your beliefs to present versus how many institutional constraints to consider. Know that every time you write you must mediate between the world you bring to the writing and the world in which the writing will be read.

Concerning the audience, Fulwiler sees that the greatest problem for writers, concerns the audience who will read their writing (2002). In fact, writers should know something about their readers' prior knowledge, their biases, values, and assumptions, and how can they make sure their readers understand them as they intend for them to.

For Bailey (2003), writing in academic settings requires understanding "purpose and register" stating that understanding a text is not just a matter of vocabulary; instead, the reader needs to find out the writer's intentions (i.e., is the writer aiming to inform, to persuade, to describe or to entertain?). In this case, it is so clear that both writer's purpose and register are closely related and the choice of the latter depends on the former.

In addition, Heaton (1975) claims that using the correct registers becomes an important skill at advanced levels of writing, and those who fail to use the correct register frequently leads to incongruity and embarrassment. So, choosing the right register might be an effortless matter for native speakers, yet for EFL learners, it is very important to be able to differentiate between the various kinds of register such as: (Colloquialisms, Slang, Jargon, Standard English, Business English...) which require tremendous efforts and an effective exposure to the English language.

Usually College instructors are the most common audience for college writing; they make the assignments and read and evaluate the results. They are considered as difficult audiences because they are experts in their subject and commonly know more about it than writers do. Fulwiler states that the writer may also write for other audiences such as for himself or for classmates, but the primary college audience remains the instructor who made the assignment for whom we most commonly write in academic settings (2002).

So, it is so obvious that students or writers in general at the stage of planning their writings, may ask themselves several questions about the purpose of their writing which is related to the topic, what information do they need to collect or find in order to do their writing, and they also should know how to structure (organize) it paying particular attention to the audience.

## **1.2. Characteristics of Academic Writing**

To write academically, students have to be sure that their writing includes the following features: thesis statement, evidence to support it, documentation, language and tone (Alfred and Eschholz, 2008). They see that the two latter are considered to be the most distinguishable characteristics of academic writing where the degree of formality established between writers and their audience is largely based on their choice of vocabulary and their sentence' complexity.

Moreover, to produce academic pieces of writing, students need to ask a good question provided with clear answers which should be discussed and interpreted with logic. In addition, they should provide the different arguments which show their understanding and appreciation of their topic. Hartley (2008) stated that the language in any academic piece of writing tends to be "Precise, Impersonal, and Objective " (i.e., writers - in general- should avoid value judgments and biases; instead, they use formal vocabulary and references).

For Heady a good academic writing is the one which demonstrates good mechanical skill (including grammar, spelling, and punctuation); it is well organized, coherent and unified. In addition to this, it explores and explains worthwhile content, it is free from filler phrases, verbal tics, and space-wasters, it is aware of its audience, and it situates itself within a discipline, discourse community, or scholarly field (2007). After revising what the writer proposes, we find that the ability to master the language sub-skills with the ability to produce



well organized, coherent, and fully developed productions may all lead to write academically with regard to formality and audience.

According to Huck (2015), good writing is just a matter of taste; this means that the way writers feel something, they believe in it, the way it will be expressed. Moreover, Li considers it as being a join of multiple thread of linguistic and non-linguistic, cultural and historical stands (1996). Furthermore, Academic writing assignments enables students to investigate an issue, to present their position based on the evidence of their research, and it enables them to choose the different subjects that interests them where they feel free to stand up and convey their messages. It also gives them the opportunity to contribute to the academic debate, to evaluate the arguments of others where they will be able to suggest their own.

### **1.3. Components of Writing**

To acquire or to practise the writing skill in the right way cannot be achieved or mastered by the students only if they are knowledgeable about the other language skills. Thus, they should have an idea about the basic constituents of writing. Moreover, students should know how well their paragraphs are structured and organized not only grammatically, but also semantically. When it comes to writing, learners and teachers should be aware about all the other sub-skills related to it.

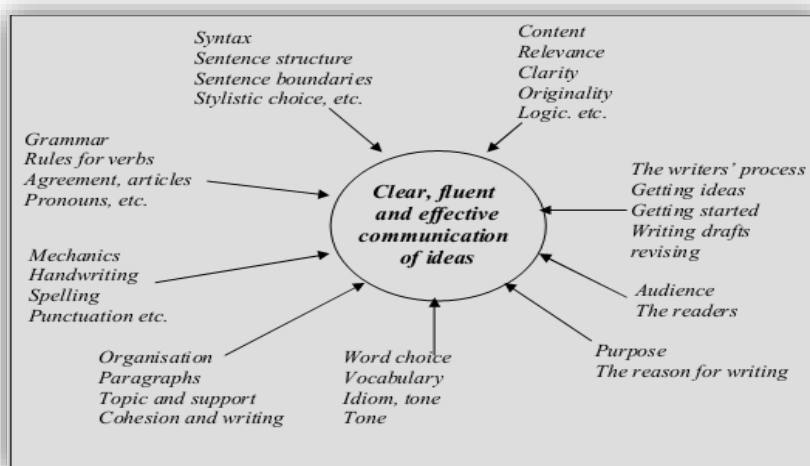
Heaton (1975) views writing as a very complex skill that is a bit hard to be taught claiming that in order to write, one has to know the different sub-skills that will ensure for a coherent and cohesive written production. He grouped those skills into five general components:

1. Language use: the ability to construct well-formed sentences.
2. Mechanical skills: the ability to use correctly those conventions that are peculiar to written language -e.g. punctuation, spelling.
3. Treatment of content: the ability to think creatively and develop thoughts, excluding all irrelative information.
4. Stylistic skills: the ability to manipulate sentences, paragraphs, and use language effectively.
5. Judgment skills: the ability to write in an appropriate manner for a particular purpose with a particular audience in mind, together with the ability to select , order, organize all the relevant information .

Heaton (1975) also argues that the ability to construct well-formed sentences requires the correct use of writing conventions such as punctuation and spelling. He also states that while writing, writers should generally know their audience, especially for EFL learners because this enables them to choose the suitable tools for their writing assignments such as the register of words, the type of format, the degree of formality and other choices which are based on Judgment skills that are - as Heaton advocates- essential in writing for both natives and non-natives learners.

The components of writing have been grouped under six main headings by Raimes: Content (or the message to generate), Organization of the ideas, Tools used to convey the message, Purpose, Audience and Process (1987). She sees that the content must be “judgmental, appropriate, and understandable”, and it should be well organized to produce coherent paragraphs. Moreover, learners have firstly to set their objectives and purposes behind their writings; they should pay particular attention to their audience. In addition to that, the way for writing their paragraphs should be clear by following the different steps of the process approach “planning, drafting, revising, and editing”.

In fact, these constituents are not enough to convey the intended meaning of the message, and they require some linguistic tools such as grammar, vocabulary, and syntax. Raimes (1983, p. 6) in the following diagram shows ‘what writers have to deal with’ when they produce a piece of writing where she added other three components to the previous six ones which are Syntax, Grammar and Word choice.



**Figure 1.1: What writers deal with as they produce a Piece of Writing. (Raimes 1983, p. 6)**

From this diagram, we find that all these components are needed to help students communicate their ideas clearly, fluently and effectively where they need to think about knowledge, abilities and interests of their audience who are, in their case, their teachers, the choice of their words, structure of their sentences, and the basic grammatical rules that govern writing in general.

Collins and Gentner also agree with Raimes; both suggest four structural levels which are: the overall text structure, paragraph structure, sentence structure, and word structure (1983). For them, paying attention to these four levels, writers or learners will be able to express their thoughts easily. If they know well how to construct the basic elements of writing, their production will be coherent.

However, Kress views the different components of writing as follows: “Command of social and political areas. The person who commands both the forms of writing and speech is therefore constructed in a fundamentally different way from the person who commands the forms of speech alone” (1989, p. 46). So, according to this view, it is so clear that learning to write is not only limited to the development and mastery of certain set of mechanical orthographic skills, but it also involves the mastery of a set of cognitive and social relations. According to Applebee (1982), during writing tasks, the writer brings three areas of knowledge: knowledge of the topic, knowledge of the audience (particularly the shared knowledge between the writer and his readers) and knowledge of the conventions.

From all what have been proposed as writing basic constituents, we understand that writing is a particularly difficult skill for both native and non-native learners alike. It is considered as a challenging task for writers, especially for students. Thus, many students find it difficult to produce their writings; this is mainly due to the multiplicity of the sub-skills that should be involved in the production of any piece of writing.

#### **1.4. Writing and Reading Relationship**

Writing and reading are considered as basic academic skills which are closely related. Many teachers observe that students who read extensively, they write better than those who do not. While reading, students' prior knowledge will be rich, and they will be provided with ideas and information that help them to enrich their language; they will be able to deepen and widen their ideas and content. Furthermore, reading helps writers to assimilate stylistic choices, tones, structures, norms, both grammatical and semantic features, and even the

different markers of cohesion and coherence. Through this skill, students' writing style will be improved. Thomas (1976) claims that: "a significant relationship existed between writing achievement and the amount and variety of reading experiences." (As cited in Flippo and Caverly 2000, p. 15). In addition, Celce-Murcia (2001) argues that: "At the very least, readings provide models of what English language texts look like, and even if not used for the purpose of imitation, they provide input that helps students develop awareness of English language prose style."(pp. 224-225)

Since the main focus of the whole research is how to achieve coherence through using transitional words and phrases, Gould views that the best way to "get a feel" for these words is through reading. Most textbooks and articles are well-written and will probably include a lot of these cohesive devices where students or writers in general should note how they are used and they try to emulate what they have read (2011). Both skills are mainly based on communication because when writing, writers communicate their thoughts, ideas and opinions. So, they need to make sure that their objective is clear and will be easily understood by their readers. Farrell (1977) stated that: "reading and writing affect how people communicate, what they think is involved in communicating, and what they think is involved in thinking."(As cited in Flippo and Caverly 2000, p. 166).

Writing and reading processes are complementary; both include similar cognitive processes that are involved in constructing meaningful productions where we find that both skills involve generating ideas, planning, drafting, and revising. Tierney and Pearson (1983) claim that: "reading and writing involve similar, shared, linguistic, and cognitive elements. As readers read and writers compose, both plan, draft, align, revise, and monitor as they read and write." (As cited in Flippo and Caverly 2000, p. 151).

Student readers will acquire "new knowledge structures born of reading other texts on the same subject" (Spack, 1985), when they return to the text they read earlier. Teachers; therefore, should facilitate students acquisition of reading and writing skills to stimulate their creativity. Krashen's report (1984, p.10) contains a comparison between classes that did more reading than writing and the conclusion was that the reading group showed more progress than the writing one in the writing test. Krashen (ibid) also sees that writing competence derives from 'self-motivated' reading. Furthermore, Byrne (1979, p.10) argued that "reading of course can be a goal in itself and in any case is likely to be a more important one than writing, but the two skills can and should be developed in close collaboration".

Stotsky (1983) views that : “Better writers tend to be better readers (of their own writing as well as of other reading material), that better writers tend to read more than poorer writers, and that better readers tend to produce more systematically mature writing than poorer readers” (p. 636). So, good writers tend to be good readers, and those who are good writers tend to read more than poor ones because those who read a lot come out with good and effective writing. Eisterhold (1990) assumes that reading passages will function as primary models from which writing skill can be learned or at least inferred. So, reading helps for progressing learners’ writing abilities which enable them to write cohesive paragraphs.

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The learners’ writing abilities to write coherent and well-structured paragraphs or even the other forms of writing will be improved by reading. Writing and reading seem closely tight since reading results in good writing, and good writing is the result of exposure to a lot of readings. So, it becomes obvious that learners cannot master the writing skill unless they practice well the reading skill; learners need to receive more to be able to produce where writing will be reinforced.

## **1.5. The Basic Rules of Writing**

Producing good pieces of writing requires respecting certain rules and principles as clarity, simplicity, brevity, word choice and organization. The major role of these rules is helping learners to write well-structured, unified, and coherent pieces of writing. Moreover, these basic rules may help readers to grasp the writers’ intended meanings easily. Students also will be able to communicate their ideas clearly, fluently and effectively.

### **1.5.1. Clarity and Simplicity**

Usually clarity and simplicity are related to precision. Thomas (2000), states that learners’ writings (or writers in general) should be effective and this can be realized through using precise words and sentences. Precision means that words serve their purpose (i.e., that

they express exactly what they think, feel, see or hear. He claims that Precision establishes an appropriate relationship between writers and their readers; it also guides their responses.

Many students consider writing as simply a question of deciding what they perceive, think, know or feel, and then they choose appropriate words, but the distinction between what goes on in their minds and how they put it into language is not that clear-cut. In fact, the process of “thinking, knowing, seeing, feeling” requires the process of using words carefully (Kane, 2000). We all agree that Sentences, paragraphing and clear organization are very important, but words are fundamental and their choice is not easy as many students think. The writers’ words should be clear, simple, concise, and original. For many readers, words that are simple and concise will be clear; however, sometimes the need to be exact will override the need to be simple or concise. Thus, writers should aim first at clarity, and then they may strive for simplicity and concision.

Written communication demands a precision and clarity that oral communication does not. Starkey states that the learner’s goal when writing in an academic context is to convey information, including the fact that he can write well (2004, p. 11). The learners should become skilled to make their writings clear so that their written production will be readable, and guarantee that readers will understand exactly what they aim to convey. Murray and Hughes (2008, p. 86) emphasize its importance as a fundamental element in making one’s writing easy to be read and accessible. They see that the key to achieve clarity is to make sentences short and to the point. Thus, learners (or writers) should be relevant where it is better to express only one main idea in each sentence. According to Starkey (op. cit, pp.9-12), to achieve clarity in writing learners should:

- Eliminate ambiguity by avoiding words or phrases that have more than one possible interpretation. The learner should focus on what he means and keep away from any language structure that could mislead the reader.
- Use powerful, precise adjectives and adverbs One way to accomplish clarity is to use powerful and specific adjectives and adverbs. The right modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) help out the learner to convey his message across in fewer, more accurate words.
- Be concise, this means getting right to the point without unnecessary spinning around, worthless repetition or wordiness.

From this opinion, we can say that writers or students need to state their ideas clearly by using short sentences and simple style. They should also avoid wordy sentences by repeating some words and phrases that add nothing to the meaning simply because they make it difficult for readers to get the right message.

### **1.5.2. Brevity**

Complicated constructions with lengthy, unwieldy sentences not only bore the reader, but they also provide an instant barrier to effective communications. In fact brevity spells time saved for readers, thus the writers' Copy must be clear, concise and unambiguous.

Unlike listening, speaking, and reading, the writing skill is the way we make our thinking visible to the world, Thus, our ideas should be stated clearly and briefly. The best ways to achieve Brevity are Using short words, and simple language instead of complex terminology. Too lengthy sentences will tire the reader and make him skip the copy. In addition, while writing, it is better for writers to get into the habit of asking themselves some questions ; for example, whether there is a shorter word that means the same thing or not. Is there a better word? or Are any words sheer verbiage and should be cut out?

Furthermore, King (2000, p. 160) claims that to achieve brevity, students should:

- Try to keep sentences variable in length, but generally short.
- Use long sentences do not necessarily make you a better writer.
- To use only full stops is as unnatural as walking without using your knee and ankle joints.

In fact, wordiness and repetition may mislead the reader. Starkey (2004) sees that: “wordiness is boring, and it takes up valuable time and space... there are two equally important approaches to more concise writing: eliminating unnecessary words and phrases, and using active (as opposed to passive) voice whenever possible.” (p. 15). For this reason, learners should state their ideas clearly and briefly as possible as they can so that they will be easily understood.

### **1.5.3. Organization and Word Choice**

Organization and word choice are very helpful to produce effective pieces of writing. Using transitions appropriately may help learners reach this aim. According to Starkey (2004), an effective piece of writing is the one that is organized, clear, and coherent, with accurate language and effective word choice. In addition to this, to make their readers

believe in what they are saying, writers should present their ideas and thoughts in a structured format by following the different patterns of organization.

Starkey states: “By following [an organized method of writing], you will guide your reader from your first to last sentence. He or she will be able to see how the various points you make in your [piece of writing] work together and how they support your thesis.” (2004, p. 2). Organization usually occurs before even starting the act of writing (i.e., during the first stages: prewriting and brainstorming) where writers may first read, plan, and classify their ideas.

To convey their ideas clearly, writers need to choose the right words. In fact, saying something requires understanding both the denotative (the literal) and the connotative (implied) meanings when making word choices. Sometimes, writers use some words which sound or look almost identical, but they have very different meanings and this makes their readers a bit confused. Thus, writers or students need to understand the purpose of inclusive language and using it in their writing, which will assure that their message or objective gets across without misleading their readers.

According to Kane (2000) and Starkey (2004), to choose their words, two aspects should be considered by learners which are: denotation and connotation. Thus, learners should use their words correctly and appropriately to avoid readers’ confusion. So, learners should confirm that their word choices suit what they intend. We understand from all what have been said that both organization and word choice are very serious elements which may make readers understand the right intended meaning or they mislead them and lead to confusion.

## **1.6. Approaches to Teaching Writing**

Writing in its nature is a hard task to deal with by many learners. For this reason, many approaches to teaching this skill have been emerged to enhance the learners’ level to practice it. Applying those approaches depends on the teachers’ objectives whether they focus on their learners’ final draft or on the different steps students go through to reach the final production. The approaches to teaching writing have been influencing and guiding writing instruction at schools and universities all over the world. They all aim to enhance the learners’ final written products just to make them comprehensible to their audience. Many teachers have been searching to come up with the effective approaches which positively impact the learning process. The product approach, the Genre approach, Process and Paragraph-pattern



approaches -and other ones- are the different applied approaches to teach this skill; since writing paragraphs is the present study's focus, only the last two approaches will be discussed just to show to what extent they may help learners to practice this form of writing in the right manner.

### **1.6.1. Paragraph-Pattern Approach to Teach Writing**

The Paragraph-Pattern Approach' main emphasis is based on organization and imitation, where teachers provide their learners with varied written samples to imitate aiming to make them identify, select, add, and omit any odd statement in order to write effective paragraphs. Furthermore, one of the special features of this approach is that it gives the priority to organization rather than accuracy of grammar and fluency of content ( Raimes, 1994).

Zamel (1985) argues that “good writers are those who are ready to compose and express their ideas using strategies similar to those of native speakers of English.”(p. 32). Thus, different approaches should be applied by teachers so that they suit the needs of learners depending on their objectives (i.e., whether to make them produce, process, create or work cooperatively).

In addition, the most important points for this approach are: The paragraphs, the sentences, the supporting ideas, cohesion and unity where students' role is copying and analyzing the samples. One of the types of activities proposed by teachers is giving scrambled sentences to be ordered into a coherent paragraph, followed by several sub-questions such as: identifying general statements, finding out the topic sentence, inserting or deleting sentences. This approach may help many students to be at least knowledgeable about how to build unified and coherent paragraphs. They will be also able to use the different connectors to achieve coherence.

### **1.6.2. The Process Approach**

Learning to write coherently is something that many writers, especially students, find it a bit difficult to manage in both first and foreign language, and it is believed that the mastery of writing requires an understanding of how the writing process works. After having a rough draft of their production (mainly paragraphs and essays) which occurs after following the planning and drafting stages, students or writers can begin to transform it into a polished

piece of writing. Moreover, correcting mistakes may occur at any stage in the writing process before publishing it. Brown (1994) puts it as follows: “Writers generally have more time to plan, review, and revise their words before they are finalized, while speakers must plan, formulate, and deliver their utterances within a few moments if they are to maintain a conversation” (As cited in Weigle, 2002, pp. 15-16)

For Kroll (1991), this approach is not interested on what the final product looks like (pattern of organization, spelling, grammar); instead, it focuses on what the writer does (planning, revising). Its main focus is only on the different stages that writers go through in order to create their productions.

At the stage of re-reading their writing and making additions, eliminations, and changes, students may ask several questions that will help to make their writing more effective; they may ask for example, whether or not their writing is easy for people to follow and understand, if it is interesting or not, did they meet their goals? They also need to check in case there are any unnecessary parts or repetitive ones to omit them

The process approach aims to capture the temporal complexity of writing by emphasizing the recursive nature of problem solving within the activities of composing, prewriting, writing, and rewriting. Olson (1999) identified ten essential characteristics of the process approach:

1. Writing is an activity, an act composed of a variety of activities.
2. The activities in writing are typically recursive rather than linear.
3. Writing is, first and foremost, a social activity.
4. The act of writing can be a means of learning and discovery.
5. Experienced writers are often aware of audience, purpose, and context.
6. Experienced writers spend considerable time on invention and revision.
7. Effective writing instruction allows students to practice these activities.
8. Such instruction includes ample opportunities for peer review.
9. Effective instructors grade student work not only on the finished product but also on the efforts involved in the writing process.
10. Successful composition instruction entails finding appropriate occasions to intervene in each student’s writing process. (As cited in Bloom, 2003, pp. 32-33)

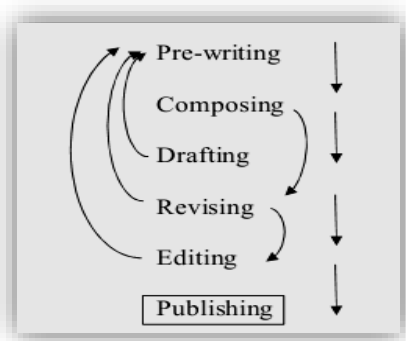
Referring to these characteristics, we find that the process approach main focus is to show to novice writers or students that writing can involve extensive planning and revising, and it must be recognized that academic writing is recursive (not linear) because the usual case in writing is that writers switch directions and they backtrack their ideas.

O'Brien (2004) assumes that the process approach as an activity that helps instructors encourage students not to deem writing as grammar exercises but as discovery of meaning and ideas. Tsui (1996) believes that the process approach is a way of interaction between teachers and learners in which both have hidden objectives to achieve. However, its application creates a collaborative workshop rather than an individual work where students may share different ideas and knowledge. On the contrary, after writing the final production and even before handing it to the reader, writers still have enough time to plan, draft, write and rewrite, where they can modify and correct their mistakes at any stage in the writing process. White and Arndt (1991) recognize that a Process Approach to writing is enabling in that:

“ The goal of this approach is to nurture the skills with which writers work out their own solution to the problems they set themselves, with which they shape their raw material into a coherent message, and with which they work towards an acceptable and appropriate form of expressing it.” (p. 5)

Both writers, here, see writing as being not only a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols; instead, it is a thinking process in its own right that demands conscious intellectual effort which usually has to be sustained over a considerable effort of time.

Writing is viewed as a process in which students interact with what they have written, planning, writing and revising what has been written, then editing and publishing. This can be as presented in the following figure which shows the whole process not as fixed sequence but as a dynamic and unpredictable process as Tribble (1996) proposed:



**Figure 1.2: Process model of writing (Tribble 1996, p. 39)**

To write academically, certain stages should be followed. Bailey claimed that understanding the basic writing process is not sufficient; it will be useful to be aware of the elements which contribute to good academic writing. The Writing Process examines each of these stages in turn especially when learners have sufficient time to do the task (2003). In this case, they should work through every unit, following the order of the stages. The polishing process consists of three major steps: Revising, Editing, and Proof- reading.

#### **1.6.2.1. Revising**

Revising checks the draft in its large- scale. According to Fulwiler, revising differs from editing (the former is a ‘conceptual’ work, but the latter is a ‘stylistic’ one). While revising, we reread, rethink, and reconstruct our thoughts until they match those in our mind. Moreover, revising is reseeing our approach, topic, argument, evidence, organization, conclusion, and experimenting with change (2002). In addition, good writing is rewriting, reseeing first words and determining whether or not they do the job writers want them to do. Brady (2003) states that all of the steps in the revision process prewriting, drafting, proofreading, revising, and editing are intended to make the writers’ piece of writing clearer and therefore, better.

The revision process for Starkey (2004) can seem overwhelming; it involves a general examination of our writing. This step helps to check if the writer has achieved his goal, and if any part of his writing needs to be improved. Flippo and Caverly (2000) claim that during the revising step, readers should reexamine the text. Similarly, writers reread, reexamine, revise and reflect on the text by selecting words that convey meaning.

#### **1.6.2.2. Editing**

Editing deals with changing language more than ideas. Writers usually edit after they know what to say by testing each word or phrase to see whether it is necessary, accurate, and correct or not . Editing equals finishing; editing a text means to make it convey precisely and clearly what the writer intends. Brady states that editing occurs when the writer really focus on “trimming the fat”, i.e., the final draft will end up to be half the length it was before (2003). The writer for him may examine each sentence to see if a word or two can be cut, he may also eliminate auxiliary verbs, rewrite clichés, cut out redundancies, and create sentence variety.

Fulwiler states that editing is “sentence-level work.” This stage helps to make the paragraphs, the sentences, and the individual words communicate carefully, accurately, and correctly with clarity, style, and grace (op. cit). When writers edit for clarity means making sure their purpose is clear to their audience, and also to make sure that the style suits the occasion. Editing for grace is to ensure that this text is not only clearly and appropriately written, but that it is enjoyable, moving, and even memorable. Thus, editing is more a matter of making choices than following rules. At this stage, writers need to check the accuracy of their grammar/punctuation, the correctness of their spelling, and whether their writing is interesting or not.

Editing to Starkey (2004), is reading many times paying careful attention to all sentences and the words that comprise them. It is a “word-by-word and sentence-by-sentence” task. All the following questions for Lauren, may facilitate this stage, and help to improve the different written productions.

- Do I reinforce each point with a concrete and/or personal example?
- Is my sentence structure varied? Sentences should not be the same length, nor should they be repetitive in any other way, such as all beginning with “I”.
- Are there any clichés or other types of overused language?
- Do I use the active voice whenever possible?
- Are there too many or too few adjectives and adverbs?
- Are verb tenses consistent?

Kienzler views editing as checking the draft at the sentence level to correct spelling and mechanical errors, besides checking word choice and format (2008). So, editing makes surface-level changes that ensures the correctness of the text. Fulwiler ( 2002) views this stage as a way to see that everything works, from the clarity of ideas to the logic of the paragraphs, the vitality of sentences, the precision of words, and the correctness and accuracy of everything, from facts and references to spelling and punctuation. They do so first to please themselves; at the same time, they hope to please their audience as well.

### **1.6.2.3. Proofreading**

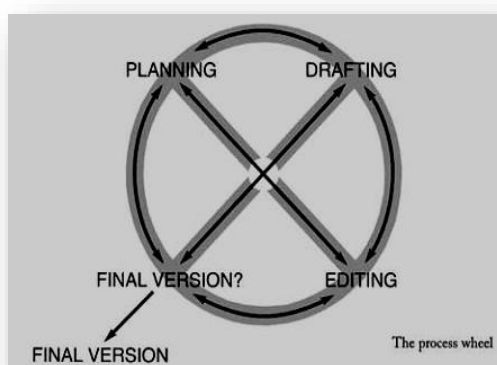
The last stage is proofreading, which means checking spelling, punctuation, capitalization, where it is better to revise before editing. Starkey (op.cit), states that good proofreading involves far more than a simple run of spell and grammar checks on your

computer. Brady (2003) states that in this stage writers will be correcting mistakes in their production and looking for ways to improve and perfect it.

Fulwiler also states that Proofreading usually occurs at the very end, where writers or learners proofread the revised and edited pages to make sure there are no errors in spelling, punctuation (especially commas), noun/verb agreement, paragraphing, typing, formatting, and the like (op.cit). After this stage, we move to the final one which is publishing where we decide that the final copy is finished and ready for the audience to read.

As Hacker writes, “Proofreading is a special kind of reading: a slow and methodical search for misspellings, typographical mistakes, and omitted words or word endings” (2009, p. 30). So, while editing and proofreading their writing, writers have to check the following points: off-topic thoughts, effective transitions between ideas, complete sentences (no fragments or run-ons), variety in sentence structure, concise word choices, ambiguity, proper punctuation and capitalization and correct spelling.

Harmer 2004 suggests the process wheel stated below to show the many directions writers can take while doing their written tasks. He also tries to show how writers may travel “backwards and forwards around the rim or going up and down the wheel’s spokes” (p. 6).



**Figure 1.3: The Process Wheel (Harmer 2004, p. 6)**

Harmer views that the attention we as writers give to the process’ different stages depends completely on “what kind of writing we are doing, what medium they are using, what the content and length of their piece of writing, and finally who they are doing it for” (2004, p.6).

Since the process approach to writing stresses the creativity of the individual writer and sees writing as a highly complex activity, it pays attention to the development of good writing

rather than the imitation of model texts. Thus, writers and specifically students should pay particular attention to the stages that may help them to create and state their own ideas clearly without being imitative.

### **1.7. Writing Paragraphs**

Mennens and Wilkinson (2002), state that Students during their academic studies are supposed to write different forms of assignments such as: essays, research papers, dissertations, articles..., which follow certain conventions of structure, style, and content. However, these assignments have the same goal and principles, and address a specific type of audience who are known as the ‘‘Target Reader.’’ Both authors here mean that all what students are asked to write during their studies should be based on certain rules and conventions just to be easily understood by their readers, who are their instructors or their classmates.

In fact, all these forms are based on one basic unit which is the paragraph. Since the chosen sample -for the experiment- is First year students, we have chosen writing Paragraphs instead of the other forms because it is a part of their syllabus. Writing paragraphs for many students is considered as a hard task to be done. Many of them struggle to produce unified and coherent paragraphs which may make it a bit difficult to communicate successfully. Therefore, students who cannot produce a good paragraph, they will not be able to produce a good essay, report, or almost any other type of text.

#### **1.7.1. What is a Paragraph?**

The paragraph is a group of sentences related to each other. Boardman and Frydenberg (2008) consider it as the basic unit of academic writing in English. For them students should be able to write paragraphs because all the other types of academic writing (essays, dissertations, research papers ...) are based on this basic unit.

Berger (1990) defines this form of writing as a distinct unit of thought, usually a group of related sentences in a written or printed composition. It expresses and develops a topic. The paragraph as defined in The Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary is a section of a piece of writing, usually consisting of several sentences dealing with a single subject. The first sentence of a paragraph starts on a new line, that is to say, an opening or introductory sentence (2010).

Dorothy and Carlos state that in academic writing, a paragraph has a topic sentence that directly tells the reader the main idea; the other sentences in the paragraph which are called ‘supporting sentences’ give more information about the topic. They add specific details and explanations (2006). For them, a paragraph can give information, tell an opinion, explain something, or even tell a short story. They see that if the paragraph sentences are arranged logically, the reader can easily understand the writer’s message.

### 1.7.1.1. Paragraph Structure

Brady (2003) states that good sentences need to be organized in strong, well-shaped paragraphs. A good paragraph contains a thesis sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence; the average paragraph is four to six sentences long. Boardman and Frydenberg (2008) see that basic academic writing in English is ‘linear’ in structure, i.e., it has a beginning, a middle, and an end, and it continues directly from one part to the next. They insist on the first component of the paragraph which is the topic sentence. For them a good topic sentence should contain two parts: a topic which is the subject of the paragraph and a controlling idea which limits the topic and shows the aspect of that topic the writer wants to explore in his paragraph. They supported their opinion with the following examples:

- a. New York is a fun place to be on New Year’s Eve.

T

C I

- b. New York has great entertainment.

C I

- c. New York is the loudest city.

C I

We observe that the three examples have the same topic but different controlling idea. In this case, each one would introduce a paragraph with different ideas and information. So, the controlling idea is so important and it facilitates the development of the topic.

Writers or students should pay particular attention to the ways of supporting their topics. Boardman and Frydenberg (2008), state that all the supporting sentences may explain the topic sentence with facts, examples, using illustration that is based on a personal experience. They are divided to major details (tell more about the topic) and minor details (to explain the major ones). The final sentence, as Boardman and Frydenberg state is called the concluding sentence which expresses the same information stated in the topic sentence



differently. It usually starts with a transition like: all in all, in short...to signal the end of the paragraph.

Griswold (2002, p. 34) claims that “a concluding sentence retells the content of the paragraphs and closes the paragraph... students should create a fresh, newly-worded sentence for their concluding sentence” (2002, p. 34). So, it leaves a final statement of the main idea of the whole paragraph, it summarizes the whole content, and it closes the paragraph’ main idea. For the same condition, Hogan states that “the concluding sentence should leave the reader feeling that the writer has said everything needed to support and develop the topic sentence” (2011, p. 41).

The structure of the paragraph can take almost an infinite variety of forms. However, certain patterns occur frequently. Alfred and Eschholz (2008) state that sentences in a paragraph are usually arranged according to one of three patterns :

1. A Chronological Order : (time order) which presents the events as they occurred ( personal experience, historical event...)
2. A Spacial Order : used to describe a person, place, or thing (from top to bottom, left to right, far to near, front to back...)
3. A Logical Order : It may be most logical to move from the easiest to understand aspects of the subject, to the most difficult, from the least important example to the most important, from the specific to the general and so on.

The most suitable arrangement, as stated by Alfred and Eschholz (ibid), depends on purpose, subject and audience. Therefore, whatever the pattern chosen, writers should follow it consistently and thoughtfully to knit their paragraph’ ideas and elements into seamless whole that their readers can easily follow.

#### **1.7.1.2. Characteristics of a Good Paragraph**

To write good and well-structured paragraphs, students should follow certain rules, or some principles such as: The paragraph as must contain a topic sentence, all remaining sentences should support and develop the topic sentence , only one main idea should be developed, the sentences should flow smoothly and logically , and a concluding sentence may be added (but it is not essential). In addition, Students’ paragraph word length should be varied where they should be neither so lengthy, so that they will be easily read, nor too short which make them look

'Choppy' as a form of a list. According to Boardman and Frydenberg (2008), writing paragraphs in English requires correct format by providing learners with some rules to do so:

- Put your name and the date in the upper righthand corner.
- Center your title on the next line.
- Indent the first sentence by using the tab key or by going in five spaces to the right.
- Start each sentence with a capital letter.
- End each sentence with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point.
- Begin each sentence where the previous sentence ends.
- Write in every other line. This is called double –spacing.
- Put margins of about one inch on each side of the paper.

Unity and Completeness are two other main characteristics to produce a good paragraph. While the former means that all the paragraph' supporting sentences relate to the topic sentence, the latter reached when the paragraph has all the needed major supporting sentences to fully explain the topic sentence and all the needed minor supporting sentences to explain the major ones (ibid, 2002).

Furthermore, one of the most important concepts to produce effective paragraphs are coherence and cohesion which means that all the sentences within the paragraph follow each other in a good order. To achieve coherence is to display all the sentences in some pattern that will generate an orderly, natural flow of the ideas. All what concerns cohesion and coherence which are the present research core with the different ways to achieve them will be discussed in details in the next chapter.

## **Conclusion**

The writing skill is considered as the most significant cultural accomplishment of human being. For this reason, students or writers in general have to pay particular attention to their writings in terms of clarity, unity, different writing mechanics, word choice, and organization to make their audience understand the right intended meanings of their written productions. Students should know something about the paragraphs' format and structure that may help them to produce well- structured writings. They also need to be guided to master

this skill which does not only require being knowledgeable about its nature or definition, but also being aware about its fundamental principles that enable writers or students to progress in its practice. The right practice of this skill shows and even helps to know the students' abilities and efforts. This chapter also tries to show in general the importance of reading in improving the writing skill. It outlines some approaches to the teaching of writing where we have shed light specifically on the writing process which is helpful for students to improve their writings especially its last three stages since they have a relation with the research main focus.

## ***Chapter Two***

### ***Achieving Paragraph Coherence through Using Transitional Signals***

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**Transitional Signals**

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## **Introduction**

The writing skill is considered by many researchers, teachers, and even by learners as an action which contains the writers' thoughts, experience, feelings, emotions, and different language' strategies. Learners mastery of the graphic grammatical and rhetorical resources of the target language is clearly manifested in their written productions where they should not only know how to build sentences in isolation, but also to be aware about how to build several sentences to form well-structured paragraphs , essays, dissertations, and even articles. The focus of this chapter will be on the two crucial concepts that are 'coherence' and 'cohesion'. It concentrates on the main ways to achieve coherence which may help learners or writers in general to produce coherent pieces so that they will be easily read and undertood by their readers. It also clarifies the relation between coherence and cohesion. The chapter's important part contains some of the approaches that are applied to make learners achieve coherence through the right use of transitional signals.

### **2.1. What is Coherence ?**

When something has coherence, it means that its parts are well connected and heading in the same direction smoothly and clearly. According to the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, coherence is a reasonable connection or relation between ideas, arguments, statements etc. When sentences, ideas, and details fit together clearly, readers can follow along easily, and the writing is coherent (2010). The lack of this concept will make it difficult for a reader to follow and may not make sense to any written production. To understand coherence writers need to consider how readers make sense out of larger groupings of sentences. Yule (1996), states that both writers and readers are viewed as using language not only in its interpersonal function (i.e., taking part in social interaction), but also in its textual function ( i.e., creating well-formed and appropriate texts), and also in its ideational functions where they should represent their thoughts in a coherent manner.

Since the writers' goal in academic writing is to convey information clearly and concisely, transitions will help them to achieve these goals by establishing logical connections between sentences, paragraphs, and sections of their papers. Those transitions function as signs that tell readers how to think about, organize, and react to old and new ideas when reading the writers' productions. In addition, they signal the different relationships between ideas (i.e., an example, an exception, addition...). Basically, transitions are not used for decorating one' writing; instead, they are words with particular meanings that tell the reader

to think and to react to the writer's ideas. Those transitions will help him to understand the logic of how the writer's ideas fit together.

Blum-Kulka (1981) considers coherence as a covert (implicit) relationship among parts of the text because it is a complex concept which requires cultural knowledge of the language. Williams and Colomb (2012) state that writing is coherent when all of the sentences in a paragraph, while slowly unfolding new information, do so around a single topic or idea. A general advice about Coherence has been proposed by the graduate writing center :

- Establish a routine for reading journals and other writing that circulates among your potential readers to determine what kinds of information will be “given” for them and what will be “new.” In addition to helping you think through coherence, this will also help you think about how much literature to review and how much of an introduction to write.
- Especially if you are writing the script of an oral presentation, an article in a journal not in your immediate field, or a grant proposal, ask at least one person outside your field to read your writing for “flow.” Ask them to mark places where it breaks down.
- Print a draft and circle the links in your chains between paragraphs and sentences. If you cannot find them, your readers probably will not be able to, either.
- As you re-read and revise your draft, try to write the main point of each paragraph in the margin. Use this information to help you see if whole paragraphs need to be moved.

To check their writings for coherence, learners or writers in general may ask other persons to read them by marking places where they break down, or even doing this by themselves using the margins to state the main points, and circling the links to make it easy for check.

### **2.1.1. Paragraph Coherence**

Boardman and Frydenberg say that a paragraph has coherence when the supporting sentences are ordered according to a principle. This latter depends on the paragraph' type we are writing which are grouped under three main types : narrative, descriptive, and expository paragraphs (2008). The sentences' order will help readers to understand the writers' ideas easily. Readers must also feel that sentences are not just individually clear but constitute a unified passage focused on a coherent set of ideas. Trimmer (1995) says “ A paragraph is coherent when the sentences are woven together in such a way that readers move easily from

one sentence to the next and read the paragraph as an intergrated discussion rather than a series of separate sentences’’(p, 169).

Coherence is relevant to every level of organization, from the sentence level to the other forms of writing. In this study we will focus on the paragraph level. Paragraph coherence is achieved when sentences are ordered in a logical manner and when clear transitions link sentences. According to the Academic Support Center (2009), the paragraph coherence is related to the writers’ order of sentences which will best develop the paragraph’s main idea, and this order could be based on several factors:

- Chronological sequence : This is useful for describing a sequence of events.
- Modified chronology : Sometimes a major idea presented early in a paragraph can be supplemented with necessary background information
- Spatial position of different objects : This method is useful for description.
- ‘Conversation’ between different experts : By moving between a series of key positions, a writer can establish a sense of dialogue and develop a complex argument.
- Logical form of argument : Some form of logical proof can serve as the basis for order.

So, a paragraph has coherence, or flows, when the details of this paragraph fit together in a way that is clear to the reader. The logical order of the paragraph’ ideas will undoubtedly help readers to grasp the right intended meaning. So, writing is coherent when one sentence sticks to the next.

### **2.1.2. Methods of Development**

Coherence is partially the product of choosing an appropriate paragraph pattern for your ideas, and partially the product of sentence-level control. Methods of development are patterns of organization that writers use to organize their ideas about a topic ; understanding these patterns will help them to get their writings more quickly.

Almost in any college or university programs, writing paragraphs are considered as the core of the program. The Las positas college too gives great importance to this part providing students by definitions, examples, thechniques, and all what is related to paragraphs to help them produce acceptable pieces. The best way to help them reach this goal is to make them aware about the different methods of development which are also named ‘Patterns of organization’. narration, cause and effect, process, examples, classification, description, persuasion, comparison and contrast all these are considered as methods of development



which are closely related to the writer's purpose (i.e., Is he trying to explain how something happened, to give someone tips on how to do something, to point out the differences between two things, or to argue with an opinion ? (ibid). So, knowing the purpose helps to choose the right pattern.

Gould (2011), provides students with some questions that may help to choose the right pattern by always asking themselves what the exact relationship is between the sentences or parts of sentences, Are they leading to the result of something? Are they making a deduction? Are they introducing some contradictory evidence or ideas? So, here their choice of words or phrases obviously depends on this. In addition, if they are not quite sure about a word's use or its position in a sentence, they always have to check in a good dictionary paying particular attention to punctuation which almost all the time affects what they use.

### **2.1.3. What is Cohesion ?**

Cohesion refers to how a group of sentences "hang together." Readers must feel that they move easily from one sentence to the next, that each "coheres" with the one before and after. To put their sentences in order, writers should express the connections between them with transitional words or phrases. Boardman and Frydenberg define Cohesion as one of the main characteristics of a good paragraph where all its supporting sentences connect to each other in their support of the topic sentence. Cohesive devices are the different methods of connecting sentences within the paragraph such as: connectors (coordinating or subordinating, conjunctions, transitions, and prepositions), definite articles, personal pronouns, and demonstrative ones (2008). Cohesion is a crucial marking criterion to judge L2 writing quality where using conjunction and lexical elaboration are permanent challenges to EFL learners.

According to the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, cohesion is a close relationship based on grammar or meaning between two parts of a sentence or a larger piece of writing (2010). Canale (1983), defines discourse competence as "mastery of how to combine and interpret meanings and forms to achieve unified text in different modes by using (a) cohesion devices to relate forms and (b) coherence rules to organize meanings" (p. 339). From this definition we find that the different cohesive devices will help to relate forms that enable readers to understand the right meanings. To add more details, Bachman includes the 'textual competence' as a part of the communicative competence by involving both cohesion and rhetorical organization:

“Cohesion comprises ways of explicitly marking semantic relationships such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion, as well as conventions such as those governing the ordering of old and new information in discourse. Rhetorical organisation pertains to the overall conceptual structure of a text, and is related to the effect of the text on the language user” (1990, p. 88).

It is so obvious that both cohesion and rhetorical organisation are closely related. While the former has a relation with the semantic relationships inside the text, the latter deals with its overall structure.

Additionally, Tribble (1996) describes it as: “The grammatical and lexical relationships that exist between the different elements of a text. These can include the direct types of relationships which exist between subjects and verbs, or the less direct relationships between, for example, pronouns and the words or phrases to which they refer.” (p. 157). For Halliday and Hasan (1976), cohesion is no more structural, it is external, marked by “lexico-grammatical items”. They describe it as a semantic concept since it is about the relations of meaning which exist within a text. They see it as “a semantic relation between an element in the text and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation of it” (ibid, p. 8). They also explain that: “Cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens, a relation of cohesion is set up, and the two elements, the presupposing and the presupposed are thereby at least potentially integrated into a text.” (ibid, p.4).

Moreover, McCarthy (1991) claims that: “basically most texts display links from sentence to sentence in terms of grammatical features such as pronominalisation, ellipsis (the omission of otherwise expected elements because they are retrievable from the previous text or context), and conjunction various kinds” (p.25). While reading this quotation we find that he does not present a clear definition; instead, he insists on its importance saying that: “markers of various kinds, i.e. the linguistic signals of semantic and discourse functions are very much concerned with the surface of the text...they create links across sentence boundaries and pair and chain together items that are related (e.g. by referring to the same entity).” (ibid. pp.26-27).

Similarly, Hatch (1992) claims that cohesion is a guide to coherence which is as he explains a general text marker through which the connections between the different parts of the discourse are sometimes not clear enough especially for non-native speakers.

However, cohesive ties make the relations between clauses and sentences of the discourse more explicit, and this is what facilitates the understanding. Hatch (1992) says that: “much of the meaning can only be understood by looking at linguistic markers that have a “pointing function “in a given context.” (p. 209). From her part, Blum-Kulka (1981) believes that cohesion is an overt (explicit) relationship that holds between the sentences of a text. She says that: “cohesion...will be considered as an overt relationship holding between parts of the text, expressed by language specific markers (ibid. p.17). In other words, this definition reveals the fact that the cohesive relationship is explicit because it is built through grammatical markers, otherwise known as surface markers, which can be seen at the level of sentences, and which participate to a great extent in creating the meaning.

## **2.2. Coherence and Cohesion Connection**

Coherence and cohesion are two terms used mutually to refer to semantic and linguistic flow of sentences within a paragraph and flow of paragraphs within an essay and so on. Coherence refers to the proper order of ideas that is presented in space order, time order and logical order. This order is usually related to the type of the piece of writing we as writers are dealing with : Narrative, Descriptive, or Expository. On the other hand, cohesion refers to the use of transitional words and phrases like conjunctions, connectives and adverbial phrases.

Harmer 2004 states that for a text to be truly accessible, it needs to be both coherent and cohesive. Halliday and Hasan (1985) view that an important contribution to coherence comes from cohesion which is the set of linguistic resources that every language has from linking one part of a text to another. Gelbukh (2012, p. 450) shows that “Coherence defines the overall structure and meaning of the text -the discourse. In other words, cohesion is the fabric while coherence is the outfit. Obviously, same fabric could lead to very different outfits, and some are more coherent than others.” So, cohesion in this case serves to keep coherence in the text by using the different cohesive devices.

Lepionka defines coherence as “the quality of sequentiality and integrity, or togetherness. Sentences and paragraphs progress in a logical or natural order, flowing smoothly from one to the next while sticking together in meaning” (2008, p. 118). Coherence is the semantic consistency of sentences positions in a paragraph. Sentences should be tied together through the transitional devices to form a coherent paragraph. With the different cohesive devices, EFL students can avoid choppy writing. In addition, they will be able to

show the progress of their thoughts to produce fully- developed paragraphs and even the other forms of writing. So, both coherence and cohesion help writers to keep unity and relevance of topic development.

In fact, many discourse analysts noticed the existence of discourse sequences which are (a) coherent without being cohesive, and others which are ( b) cohesive without being coherent. To explain the first case (a) Coulthard (1977) gives the following example :

- A: Can you go to Edinburgh tomorrow ?
- B: B.E.A. pilots are on strike (p. 10).

This example, or sequence is coherent, but this can be understood only from the question's response. There is nothing ties A and B together only the meaning (i.e., no cohesive device used apparently to show the relation between them).The following example, which is given by Van Dijk (1980), is given to explain the second case (b) :

- 'Peter went to the movies. He has blue eyes'(p. 53).

This example is cohesive through the use of pronoun reference 'He', but it is not coherent because the first part means something and the second one means something else. It is so clear from both examples that cohesion is neither necessary nor sufficient for the establishment of coherent discourse (Coulthard 1977, Brown and Yule 1983, Van Dijk 1980, and Nunan 1993).

So, we may come to the conclusion that coherence and cohesion share the same function (that of creating text) ; however, cohesion is a surface feature we recognize it immediately, and coherence may only emerge slowly. Both concepts are required to help readers understand the intended meaning of any written passage.

### **2.3. Ways of Achieving Coherence**

There are four basic mechanical considerations in providing transitions between ideas: Repeating key words and phrases, using pronoun reference or synonyms, using parallel structure, and using transitional expressions. These ways will help to improve paragraph coherence. **Transitions within paragraphs** act as cues which may help readers to anticipate what is coming before reading it, and they tend to be single words or short phrases.

To establish the links that readers need, writers can use the methods listed above. Good writers usually use a combination of these methods. Thus, they should not rely on and overuse any single method – especially transitional words. When sentences, ideas, and details fit together clearly, readers can follow along easily, and the writing is coherent. The ideas tie

together smoothly and clearly. The Southeastern Writing Center prepared a handout about ways of achieving coherence presenting definitions, examples, and a list which contains some of the transitional signals to help learners achieve coherence in their writings.

### 2.3.1. Repeating key Words and Phrases

Repetition of a key term or phrase helps to focus the writers' ideas and to keep their reader on track. The following is an example about this method ; the repeated key word is in bold :

- The problem with **contemporary art** is that it is not easily understood by most people. **Contemporary art** is deliberately abstract, and that means it leaves the viewer wondering what she is looking at (Purdue University handouts).

In this example, we notice that the key phrase 'contemporary art' is repeated twice because it cannot be replaced by another term so that to make it clear for readers. In fact, repeating some key words from time to time may create a musical motif on the reader's head. Repetition also helps the reader remain focused and headed in the right direction.

### 2.3.2. Pronoun Reference and Synonyms:

Pronouns like this, that, these, he, she, it, they, and we, are very useful for referring back to something previously mentioned. For this reason, writers should make sure that what they are referring to is clear. Pronouns are the most common and used method to connect ideas because they almost always refer the reader to something earlier in the text. They cause the reader to sum up, quickly and subconsciously, what was said before. Thus, it must always be perfectly clear what a pronoun refer to, and that can help to eliminate wordiness and unnecessary repetition.

Example:

- When **scientific experiments** do not work out as expected, **they** are often considered failures until some other scientist tries **them** again. **Those** that work out better the second time around are the ones that promise the most rewards (Purdue University handouts).

In this example, we find that the pronouns : they, them, and those all replace the key phrase 'scientific experiments' to avoid repetition for three times which may make the meaning a bit boring while reading.

**Synonyms** are words that have essentially the same meaning, and they provide some variety in your word choices, helping the reader to stay focused on the idea being discussed. They are words that have the same or nearly the same meaning as another word. They provide alternative word choices that can help eliminate unnecessary repetition.

Example:

- **Myths** narrate sacred histories and explain sacred origins. These **traditional narratives** are, in short, a set of beliefs that are a very real force in the lives of the people who tell them (Purdue University handouts).

In this example, The key phrase ‘traditional narratives’ works as a synonym for the word ‘myths’ because whenever there is a possibility to replace a word by its synonym writers in general should do that to make their writings more powerful and in the same time beautiful.

### 2.3.3. Create Parallel Structure

Parallelism can be applied to parts of a sentence. It can also be applied to sentences within a paragraph. It is the use of matching words, phrases, clauses, or sentence structures to express similar ideas. Parallel structures allow the reader to flow smoothly from one idea, sentence, or paragraph to the next and to understand the relationships and connections between ideas.

Example:

- Usually, the children spend the summer weekends **playing** ball in park, **swimming** in the neighbor’s pool, **eating** ice cream under the tree, or **camping** in the backyard. (Southeastern writing centre’s handouts)

In this example, the words ‘playing, swimming, eating and camping are parallel forms; they make the meaning sound better and it is so clear (easy) to be understood.

### 2.4. Transitional Phrases, Words, and Expressions

A transition can be any word, phrase, or sentence that clearly shows the reader how an idea (and, by extension, a paragraph) is related to the ones that precede it. Gould states that writers and specifically students can use words or short phrases which help to guide their reader through their writing, and to link sentences, paragraphs and sections both forwards and backwards (2011). For him, good or right use will make what they have written easy to follow; instead, bad use might mean their style is disjointed, probably with too many short sentences, and consequently difficult to follow (ibid). Transitional words and expressions, such as however, because, therefore, and in addition, are used to establish relationships

between ideas, sentences, and paragraphs. Providing transitions that explain how ideas in a text are related to one another is sometimes difficult to many writers.

Coherence in writing is the "logical glue" that allows readers to move easily and clearly from one idea to the next. To achieve coherence, writers usually rely on conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositional phrases and clauses that function as adverbs. Many words in English cue our readers to relationships between sentences, joining sentences together. Transitions are words or phrases that specify a relationship between sentences and between paragraphs. They help direct the reader from one idea to another. Skilled writers use transitions with care, making sure neither to use the wrong ones nor to overuse them.

Example

- Many students believe they cannot write a good essay **because** they are not writers. **However**, as they practice writing and work on developing their writing skills, most students are able to gain the needed confidence to start thinking of themselves writers. (Southeastern writing centre's handouts)

In this example, both key words 'because and however' functions as linking words or transitions to clarify the meaning for readers.

Alfred and Eschholz state that all the previous techniques knit the sentences of a paragraph into a tight structure (2008). Connecting paragraphs and sentences with linking words is very helpful to reach the writers objective, but as the British Council advises writers not to over-use linking words or phrases or use them inappropriately (this could become confusing or irritating for the reader), and not to always use linking words at the beginning of sentences (to show more variety).

## 2.5. Basic Transitions that Indicate Specific Relationships

Words and phrases that work as transitions within paragraphs indicate specific relationships. In English, a variety of those transitions can be found, but this part will present only some of the most common ones with their meanings (see Appendix 03). The choice of the following particular relationships is just to give examples, such as Cause and Effect, Comparison and Contrast, and transitions that are used to specify a summary, repetition, or conclusion.

A cause and effect paragraph develops an idea by explaining the causes of something or by showing the effects of something. The paragraph might move from cause to effects or from an effect to its causes. In this type, students should not neither confuse time order with causation nor confuse causes and effects which are considered as problems in writing in this

pattern. The following table contain some transitional expressions for Cause and Effect paragraphs :

<p><b><i>To Show Causes</i></b>          The first cause / reason (second, third), yet another factor, because, is caused by, results from...</p>	<p><b><i>To Show Effects</i></b>          One important effect, another result, a third outcome, as a result, consequently, therefore, thus, so...</p>
---	--

Comparison and Contrast pattern focuses mainly on giving simillarities and differences of two or more items. While a Comparison paragraph looks at the similarities between two or more items, a Contrast paragraph looks at the differences between two or more items. Sometimes items are both compared and contrasted. Transitional Expressions for Comparison and Contrast paragraphs may include the following :

<p><b><i>To Specify Comparison</i></b>          Again, also, in the same way, likewise, similarely, once more...</p>	<p><b><i>To Specify Contrast</i></b>          Although, but, despite, even though, however, in contrast, in spite of, instead, on the contrary, yet...</p>
--	--

Different transitional expressions and phrases can be used to indicate Summary, Repetition, or Conclusion, and their main role is to signal the end of a piece of thought. Transitional Expressions to signal the end of any piece of writing may include the following :

<p><b><i>To Specify Summary, Repetition, or Conclusion</i></b>          As has been noted, as I have said, as mentioned earlier, in conclusion, in other words, in short, on the whole, to summarize, summing up...</p>
---

All what have been stated in the tables above are just some of the most used transitions. Using those transitions appropriately will help readers to grasp the writers' meaning easily by knowing the begining, and the end of any piece of writing whatever its length is.

## 2.6. Editing for Coherence

Sanders and Pander (2006) see that editing for grammar, punctuation and spelling is not sufficient ; writers also need to edit for content, coherence and cohesion.

Example :



The ancient Egyptians were masters of preserving dead people's bodies by making mummies of them. Mummies several thousand years old have been discovered nearly intact. The skin, hair, teeth, fingernails and toenails, and facial features of the mummies were evident. It is possible to diagnose the disease they suffered in life, such as smallpox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies. The process was remarkably effective. Sometimes apparent were the fatal afflictions of the dead people: a middle-aged king died from a blow on the head, and polio killed a child king. Mummification consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages.

This paragraph is complete in terms of organization since its sentences are clearly related to the topic sentence. It is also unified (i.e., it contains no irrelevant details). However, it is not coherent. The sentences are disconnected from each other, making it difficult for the reader to follow the writer's train of thought. Below is the same paragraph revised for coherence. Italics indicates pronouns and repeated/restated key words, bold indicates transitional tag-words, and underlining indicates parallel structures.

The ancient Egyptians were masters of preserving dead people's bodies by *making mummies* of them. **In short**, *mummification* consisted of removing the internal organs, applying natural preservatives inside and out, and then wrapping the body in layers of bandages. **and** *the process* was remarkably effective. **Indeed**, *mummies* several thousand years old have been discovered nearly intact. *Their* skin, hair, teeth, fingernails and toenails, and facial features are still evident. *Their* diseases in life, such as smallpox, arthritis, and nutritional deficiencies, are still diagnosable. **Even** *their* fatal afflictions are still apparent: a middle-aged king died from a blow on the head; a child king died from polio.

The paragraph is now much more coherent. The organization of the information and the links between sentences help readers move easily from one sentence to the next. It is noticeable that the writer uses a variety of coherence devices, sometimes in combination, to achieve overall paragraph coherence.

Duke University's Writing Studio includes in their handouts some ways to improve coherence saying that coherence is established in two ways: (1) Topics of individual

sentences are clear, and (2) Topics of paragraphs are clear. A paragraph is much more than a group of sentences set off by an indentation. If readers can't quickly and briefly say what a paragraph's main point is, it lacks coherence. When editing for coherence, writers should check whether all the parts of their assignment fit together to make one well connected answer to the assignment question. They may ask themselves some questions as suggested by Sanders and Pander (2006) like :

- Does the assignment make sense to someone who is not in your course ?
- Is the argument consistent ?
- Are the ideas presented in a logical order ?
- Have you made the structure of your argument explicit ?
- If there are headings, are they expressed in a parallel form ?

By asking these questions, students or writers in general will be able to edit their writings for coherence to make what they write easily understood by their readers.

## 2.7. Editing for Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the overall connectedness of the ideas in a piece of writing. Cohesion refers more specifically to connections between sentences. There are a number of ways in which writers can create cohesion between sentences : Transitions from old information to new, Summary words, Thematic consistency, Parallel constructions, Lexical ties, and Transition signals. Duke University 's Writing Studio also presents some ways to improve cohesion followed by some conditions related to both Cohesion in Sentence Beginnings and Cohesion in Sentence Endings as stated in the following table:

For Cohesion in Sentence Beginnings		For Cohesion in Sentence Endings	
<b>Put the 'Old First'</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin your sentences with information familiar to your readers</li> <li>• Don't begin a sentence with a bit of new information</li> <li>• Don't begin a sentence with a bit of technical information</li> <li>• Use your openings to refer back to previous material or gently introduce a new topic</li> </ul>	<b>Put the 'New Last'</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End your sentences with new information your readers cannot anticipate</li> <li>• Don't end a sentence with old information</li> <li>• Put the new, technical, and difficult information at the end of the sentence, and</li> <li>• Use transitions to convey the connections between the ideas in your sentences</li> </ul>

**Table 2.1 : Editing for Cohesion : Cohesion in both Sentence Beginnings and Sentence Endings** (adapted from Duke University 's Writing Studio <http://twp.duke.edu/writing-studio>)

## **2.8. Approches to Teach Coherence and Cohesion**

To help their students, teachers should encourage them to consider the semantic relations between their ideas through examining their topic sentences. This latter is considered as a preliminary step to decide which Cohesive Devices (CDs) to be used. Yule (2010) suggests that it will be better for teachers to make their students identify the semantic relations underlying the texts they read before asking them to write appropriately by giving them enough time for doing so. Different stages and approaches have been suggested to help students achieve coherence.

### **2.8.1. Zamel' Suggested Activities (1983)**

To teach cohesive devices, Zamel (1983) suggests a number of activities which aim at helping students understand the semantic and the grammatical restrictions that govern their use. Sentence combining and completion exercises are proposed as an alternative to the lists of transitions that figure in many textbooks. For example, she suggests the reordering of scrambled sentences and the addition of any necessary linkers (ibid). Zamel also recommends that students should be helped to observe that conjunctions are not always necessary, and that other linking devices, for example, lexical cohesion, pronouns, ellipsis and substitution, are equally or more important (1983, p. 28). So, ordering sentences, or omitting some of them is the main focus in Zamel's proposal where students should be guided and helped to reach coherence.

### **2.8.2. Crewe's Proposed Approaches to Achieve Coherence (1990)**

Additionally, Crewe (1990) for the same purposes, outlines three pedagogical approaches which represent, he says, "[...] three stages of awareness that connectives have a textual meaning and are not just surface-level fillers" (p. 321). He suggests three different approaches (stages), which he believes may be adopted to remedy the misuse of connectives by L2 students; he refers to these stages as 'Reductionist, Expansionist, and Deductionist'. In the first stage students are taught only a small selection of connectors (and, but, also ...etc.), and through practice or exposure the other connectors will be learnt.

In the second stage, discourse markers are categorised into implicit and explicit items. Students are encouraged to use more explicit items such as connectors with more than one word, which make the connection clearer. So, the previous list of 'opaque' connectives is replaced by a list of their paraphrases ('in addition to this', 'because of this', 'as a result

of/consequence of, reaction to this'...etc.), which state more explicitly the nature of the relationships they are intended to signal.

In the last stage, students will focus more on the nature of the semantic relations of their ideas (content) rather than on the connectives themselves. The best way for learners as Crewe suggests is to write their first draft without the aid of any discourse markers, to ensure that the content of the text has a logical progression before the connectors are added (all this occurs during the planning stage). For him, learners will not be able to supply connectives on their ideas only when they find the logical semantic relations between them. To help them do so, he proposes a series of questions to be answered like :

- Does your next section add a similar point to the argument?
- If so, is it of the same importance or of greater importance?
- Same? Use 'also', 'in addition', or 'besides'.
- Greater? Use 'moreover' or 'furthermore'. (Crewe, 1990.pp 321-3).

According to Crewe, the three stages usually occur at the planning stage of the writing process (1990). Thus, if these steps are followed carefully and in the right manner, they will help students- to a certain extent- to produce coherent paragraphs and even the other forms of writing.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has been devoted to discuss the most important points related to the two crucial concepts coherence and cohesion which in fact share the same function (that of creating text). While cohesion is a surface feature we recognize it immediately, coherence may only emerge slowly especially if cohesive features are rare in text. In developing any academic piece of writing, writers or specifically students must present their ideas in a logical and organised way using a logical organisational pattern. For this reason, students need to make sure that they fully understand the meaning of their ideas to be able to link them appropriately (i.e., incorrect use could change completely what they are trying to say). Coherence is a matter of perception (i.e., it's a completely subjective judgement). A piece of writing is coherent if and only if the reader thinks it is. Thus, most people can already write a fairly coherent sentence, even if their grammar is not perfect. In the present research' practical part, students will be taught under the application of Crewe's approaches to check its effectiveness on students' written productions especially paragraphs since this latter is the core of any form of writing, and it is programmed in their syllabus.

# ***Chapter Three***

## ***Design of the Study and Data Analysis***

## Chapter Three

### Design of the Study and Data Analysis

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## **Introduction**

The main focus of the present study is to test the effect of the training students in the use of transitional signals on developing their paragraphs. This chapter deals with a quasi-experimental study which took place in the Department of Foreign Languages, section of English at Mohamed Kheidher Biskra University. It presents a detailed description of the experiment, including the sample, population, and the experiment content and data analysis.

### **3.1. Aim of the Experiment**

The main objective of this Quasi- Experiment was to contribute in testing the effect of the training students in the use of transitional signals on developing their paragraphs (mainly paragraph' Organization) for the sake of achieving paragraph' coherence. For this reason, the chosen sample was one group of First year LMD students since writing paragraphs is a part of their syllabus.

### **3.2. Population and Sample**

Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle state that reaching all members of an ideal population (all EFL learners at Biskra University) is by no means undoable and not realistic for it is time and effort consuming (2006). For this reason, we limited the population only to First year LMD students at Mohamed Kheider Biskra University in the academic year 2016-2017, exactly in the Department of Foreign Languages, Section of English where the empirical study took place. The sample consists of One group (n= 16). The real number of participants was larger (about 25) but some of the participants' copies were eliminated from the study because some of them did not attend the whole sessions during the experiment, and others attended all the sessions including the pre-test, but they did not attend the post- test session.

Since the chosen sample for this quasi-experiment consists only one group, only one teacher was enough to carry out the experiment. The teacher was provided with different lesson plans prepared by the researcher herself before, during, and after the treatment. The lessons were planned according to Crewe' stages of teaching transitions.

### **3.3. Experimental procedure**

This quasi-experimental study was conducted with participants to gauge the success of the approaches proposed by Crewe to teach transitional signals to help students achieve coherence in their paragraphs. In fact, the quasi-experiments have some features in

common with true experiments, mainly to find out the causal relationship between variables that results from a specific treatment or manipulation.

We opted for quasi-experiment that relies on ‘One group Pre-test and Post-test Design’ because it is usually used to guarantee the maximum validity and reliability of research (Nunan 1999). Furthermore, conducting a pre-test and post-test experimental design will put the researcher in a better position to claim that the differences in tests’ scores values are due to the experimental treatment. In addition, this type of design requires collecting data on the production and outcomes of one group of participants before and after the experimental treatment. The National Center for Technology Innovation (2007) advocate that the purpose of having a pretest and posttest is to allow the researcher to make inferences on the effect of the intervention by looking at the differences in the pretest and posttest results.

The following is a detailed description of the different stages of the quasi- experiment which was carried out in eight sessions (12 hours) on three stages : The pre-test, the quasi-experimental treatment and the post-test.

### **3.3.1. Stage One: The Pre-test**

In this stage, participants were given two tasks : in the first task, they were asked to underline the suitable Connector from the choices stated between parentheses so that the sentences’ meaning will be complete. The aim of this task was to check participants’ abilities to use connectors firstly at the level of the sentence. In the second task, participants were asked to improve the coherence of a paragraph by filling the blanks with the appropriate listed transition signals, and the aim of this task was to check participants’ abilities to use connectors at the level of the paragraph. The two tasks major objective was to see whether participants are able to connect their ideas using the appropriate connectors or not (see Appendix 1).

### **3.3.2. Stage Two: The Quasi-Experimental Treatment**

The treatment was carried in seven sessions; participants were taught under the application of Crewe’s three approaches of teaching transitions to check its effectiveness on students’ written productions especially paragraphs since this latter is the core of any form of writing, and it is programmed in their syllabus. The three approaches are ‘Reductionist, Expansionist, and Deductionist’.



In the first stage students were taught only a small selection of connectors (and, but, also ...etc.), and through practice or exposure the other connectors would be learnt. In the second stage, discourse markers were categorised into implicit and explicit items. Students were encouraged to use more explicit items such as connectors with more than one word, which make the connection clearer. So, the previous list of 'opaque' connectives was replaced by a list of their paraphrases ('in addition to this', 'because of this', 'as a result of'/consequence of, reaction to this'...etc.). In the last stage, students focused more on the nature of the semantic relations of their ideas (content) rather than on the connectives themselves. The best way for learners as Crewe (1990) suggests is to write their first draft without the aid of any discourse markers, to ensure that the content of the text has a logical progression before the connectors are added (all this occurred during the planning stage).

### **3.3.3. Stage Three : The Post-test**

In this stage, participants were asked to write a paragraph on the 'Benefits of working in groups'. As proposed by Crewe, the aim of this activity was to check the students' ability to write their paragraphs without the aid of any transitions by using listing, then putting them in a form of a paragraph without using any linking words. After finishing this step, they were asked to read their paragraphs carefully, then to analyse the connection between its sentences. When participants finished the analysis, the teacher asked them to rewrite their paragraphs using the appropriate transition signals referring to the second chart. In addition, participants have been provided by a 'Paragraph Checklist' proposed by Boardman and Frydenberg (2002) to help them evaluate their work by themselves.

### **3.4. Content of the Quasi-Experiment**

The treatment was carried in the Department of Foreign Languages, the English Division at Mohamed Kheider Biskra University in seven sessions including the post-test one. Seven lessons had been planned to provide participants with at least the necessary points and rules that, if they were followed carefully and correctly, will enable them to produce coherent paragraphs. The lessons were divided as follows :

#### **3.4.1. Lesson N° 1 : Paragraph' components (a)**

**Date :** 07 / 03/ 2017

**Place :** Betaibi, room 09

**Time :** 13:10 / 14:40

**Module :** Written Expression

**Lesson :** Paragraph' components and format

**Required materials and / or resources:** - Pens, papers, board, chalk

**Lesson focus :**

- The lesson will focus on checking the students background about paragraph' components, and format.
- This lesson has been chosen on purpose because coherence occurs only in full paragraphs.

**Objective :**

- By the end of the course, participants will be able to write a short paragraph as they will know its main parts, and format.

**Competencies :** One of the competencies planned for the learners to achieve in this course is:

- The ability to write a short paragraph respecting both content and format.

**Personal goals:**

- Helping students to practise paragraph writing.

**Training content:**

**Part One : Warm-up activities**

In this part the teacher asks participants some questions to check their prior knowledge before moving to the experiment' main focus such as :

- a. Asking participants some questions about difficulties they face while writing.
- b. Asking them about writing paragraphs and their main components.

After discussing all students' answers, the teacher writes the right ones concerning (b) on the board.

**Part Two : Follow-up activities**

In this part, the teacher gives participants a topic on 'Benefits of reading', and he asks them to follow his instructions.

**Activity:** (Group work)

**Part one :**

**Aim :** To guide them to practice the main components of the paragraph with the right form which all will lead to reach the experiment' main focus.

- The teacher asks the participants firstly to brainstorm all the ideas related to the topic, then to make a plan where they will choose only the appropriate ideas.
- The teacher moved between the rows to check the work' progress and to give feedback.
- After discussing the different ideas, and thoughts proposed by participants, the teacher asks them to choose a suitable topic sentence.

**Part two:**

**Aim :** To check students' ability to practice the three main components of the paragraph correctly.

- After brainstorming, outlining the work, discussing the different participants' ideas on the board, and choosing a suitable topic sentence, participants were asked to write the whole paragraph (to be done at home).

**Assessment** (the success of the lesson):

- Students were totally engaged and motivated to know more about writing paragraphs.

**3.4.2. Lesson N° 2 : Paragraph' components (b)**

**Date :** 12 / 03/ 2017

**Place :** Betaibi, room 09

**Time :** 09:40 / 11:10

**Module :** Written Expression

**Lesson :** Paragraph' content and format

**Required materials and / or resources:** Pens, papers, board, chalk, reading passages

**Lesson focus :**

- The lesson focus will be on the same points which are paragraph' components, and format.

**Objective :**

- By the end of the course, participants will be able to write a complete paragraph in terms of content and format.

**Competencies :** One of the competencies planned for the learners to achieve in this course is:

- The ability to write complete, well-formed and well-developed paragraphs.

**Personal goals:**

- Helping students to practice writing paragraphs paying attention to both content and format and the way they connect their ideas.

**Training content:**

**Part One : Warm-up activities**

- In this part the teacher asks participants some questions about the previous session just to make them ready for the new one.
- He asks them some questions about paragraph' problems.
- He also asks them about the way to link ideas in a paragraph.

**Students' expected answer :** different ways were proposed by participants : using conjunctions, prepositions, linking words, punctuation...

**Instructions :**

- After checking the students' paragraphs, the teacher selected a sample to be written on the board with participants' ideas and suggestions.
- Linking words were suggested by participants to link sentences.
- After discussing the sample together, participants copied the sample down on their copybooks.

**Part Two : Follow-up activities**

In this part, the teacher provides students with five sample paragraphs to be read, then he directly gives them two activities.

**Activity 01:** Read the following paragraphs, then pick out the different transition signals used in them, then divide each one to its main components.

**Aim :** To check the students' abilities to find the right transition signals used in these paragraphs which in the same time guide them to find the main components of each paragraph.

**Paragraph one :**

First they can see better what is written on the board. They also can hear the instructor more clearly, so they take better notes. Moreover, when they are close to the teacher, they feel less shy about asking questions ; so they get a lot of help. Students who sit in front of the class often are more attentive and receive better grades in the class. There are many reasons for this.

**Paragraph Two :**

Synonyms, words that have the same basic meaning, do not always have the same emotional meaning. For example, the words “Stingy” and “frugal” both mean “careful with money”. However, to call a person stingy is an insult, while the word frugal has a much more positive connotation. Similarly, a person wants to be slender but not skinny, and aggressive, but not pushy. Therefore, you should be careful in choosing words because many so-called synonyms are not really synonymous at all.

**Paragraph Three :**

There are large ones with religious significance, such as Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter. There are colorful one-day celebrations, including Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day. There's a scary one called Halloween. There are also lots of patriotic ones like Independence Day, Memorial Day, and Veteran's Day. There are a number of days to remember important people and historical figures such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, Presidents' Day, Lincoln's Birthday, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Columbus Day, Labor Day, and Cesar Chavez Day. The U.S. has many different holidays.

**Students' expected answers :** all the students' answers were right.

- After discussing the students' answers together, the teacher writes them on the board.

**Paragraph one :** first, also, moreover, and so.

**Paragraph two :** For example, while, however, similarly, Therefore, and, but, because.

**Paragraph three :** such as, and, also,

**Activity 02:** Identify the problems in the following paragraphs.

**Aim :** To attract the students' attention to how paragraphs that contain no signals at all may lead to ambiguity and need to be improved.

**Paragraph four :**

Gold, a precious metal, is prized for two important reasons : It is both beautiful and useful. First of all, gold has a lustrous beauty that is resistant to corrosion. For example, a Macedonian coin remains as untarnished today as the day it was minted twenty three centuries ago. Another important characteristic of gold is its utility in industry and science. The most recent application of gold is in astronauts' suits.

**Paragraph Five :**

Dogs in the U.S. are treated like humans. People talk to their dogs and buy them special toys and clothing. There are special parks, hotels, restaurants, and bakeries for dogs. Some owners take their dogs to see a psychiatrist as well as the veterinarian. American dogs are spoiled like children.

**Students' expected answers :**

- After discussing orally the students' answers together, the teacher writes the right ones on the board.

**Paragraph four :** No concluding sentence

**Paragraph five :** No transitions

**Assessment** (the success of the lesson):

Students were totally engaged and motivated to know more about using transition signals.

### **3.4.3. Lesson N° 3 : Characteristics of a good paragraph**

**Date :** 14 / 03 / 2017

**Place :** Betaibi, room 09

**Time :** 13:10 / 14:40

**Module :** Written Expression

**Lesson :** Coherence and cohesion

**Required materials and / or resources:** board, chalk, Chart of transition signals (1), pens , papers.

**The approaches suggested by Crewe (1990) to teach cohesion and coherence:**

**The first approach : Reductionist :**

**Lesson focus :**

- The lesson will focus on checking the students ability to differentiate between the transition signals and their logical relationships.

**Objective :**

- By the end of the course, participants will be able to differentiate between those signals and their logical relationships which will help them to write coherently.

**Competencies :** One of the competencies planned for the learners to achieve in this course is:

- The ability to use transition signals and to understand their logical relationships.

**Personal goals:**

- Helping students to use and put transitions in the right place to reach coherence.

**Training content:**

**Part One : Warm-up activities**

- Asking participants about the main characteristics of a good paragraph, and to explain them briefly.

**Students' answers:** Unity, coherence, format, length, development, and they gave different definitions.

- What happend in case the paragraph lacks one of them or all of them especially coherence since it is the lesson's main focus.

**Students' answers :** readers will be lost, confused, bored, misunderstanding.

**Instructions:**

After providing participants with a chart which contains only the most used signals as proposed by Crewe (simple ones), the teacher asks them to do the first activity.

**Part two : Follow-up activities**

**Activity one:**

1. Try to fill the gaps in the chart below by adding other transitions you know.
2. Try to give some of them you heard about, but you do not know how to use them.

**Aim :** To check students' background about transition signals and even their ability to differentiate their uses.

LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP	TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSION
To Specify Sequence (addition)	again, also, and, besides, next, .....
To Specify Time	before, now, since, then, until, when, next, .....
To Specify Comparison	again, also, likewise, .....
To Specify Contrast	although, but, even though, however, though, yet, .....
To Specify Examples (example or illustration)	for example, in fact, of course, such as, even, .....
To Specify Cause and Effect	because, since, so, then, therefore, thus, .....
To Specify Place	above, below, beyond, far, here, near, there, .....
To Specify Concession	although it is true that, of course .....
To Specify Summary, Repetition, or Conclusion	therefore, to summarize, finally, in short, .....

**Table 3.2 : Chart of Transitional Signals (1)**

**Students' expected answers :**



- All what students added was acceptable and common except some signals such as ‘nevertheless’ where they classify it within addition by some participants.
- They also did not mention any transitions they have difficulties with.

**Activity two :** Choose two of the following topics and write short paragraphs ( to be done on holidays)

**Aim :** To give students more chances to practice writing paragraphs using signals.

1. Participation in class
2. Correction
3. Internet and learning

**Assessment** (the success of the lesson):

- Students were so interested to know more about transitions to produce coherent paragraphs and way not the other forms of writing.

#### **3.4.4. Lesson N° 4 : Paragraph’ coherence (a)**

**Date :** 02 / 04/ 2017

**Place :** Betaibi, room 09

**Time :** 09:40 / 11:10

**Module :** Written Expression

**Lesson :** Ways of achieving coherence (a)

**Required materials and / or resources:** board, chalk, pens , papers, Examples.

**The second approach : Expansionist (part one).**

**Lesson focus :**

- The lesson will focus on some ways of achieving coherence which are Repetition of key words and phrases, Pronoun reference, synonyms, and Parallel structure.

**Objective :**

- By the end of the course, participants will be able to know how they may achieve coherence using the three suggested ways.

**Competencies :** One of the competencies planned for the learners to achieve in this course is:

- The ability to know how repeating key words and phrases, pronoun reference, synonyms, and Parallel structure may help to reach coherence.

**Personal goals:**

- Making participants aware about the different ways they may use to achieve coherence.

**Training content:**

**Part One : Warm-up activities**

- Making a general revision about the previous lesson

**Instructions:**

- After making the revision, the teacher asks them questions about the different ways of achieving coherence they know.
- Participants did not know the right ways, so the teacher explains some of them and provides participants with an example for each way :

**a. Repetition of key words and phrases :**

**Example :**

- The problem with **contemporary art** is that it is not easily understood by most people. **Contemporary art** is deliberately abstract, and that means it leaves the viewer wondering what she is looking at.

**b. Pronoun reference :**

**Example :**

- When **scientific experiments** do not work out as expected, **they** are often considered failures until some other scientists try **them** again. **Those** that work out better the second time around are the ones that promise the most rewards

**c. Synonyms :**

**Example :**

- **Myths** narrate sacred histories and explain sacred origins. These **traditional narratives** are, in short, a set of beliefs that are a very real force in the lives of the people who tell them

**d. Parallel Structure :**

**Example :**

- Usually, the children spend the summer weekends **playing** ball in park, **swimming** in the neighbor's pool, **eating** ice cream under the tree, or **camping** in the backyard.

The teacher explains those examples and provides participants with other orally just to enable them to use those ways in their writings.

**Assessment** (the success of the lesson):

- This session was an introduction to some ways of achieving coherence just to make participants aware about them; it was provided by clear examples through which students were so attentive and involved by asking many questions just to know more about ways of achieving coherence.

### **3.4.5. Lesson N° 5 : Paragraph' coherence (b)**

**Date :** 04 / 04/ 2017

**Place :** Betaibi, room 09

**Time :** 13:10 / 14:40

**Module :** Written Expression

**Lesson :** Ways of achieving coherence (b)

**Required materials and / or resources:** board, chalk, Chart of transition signals , pens , papers, Examples.

**The second approach (part two).**

**Lesson focus :**

- The lesson will focus on the most important way of achieving coherence which is Using transitional words and phrases.

**Objective :**

- By the end of the course, participants will be able to know how they may achieve coherence through the use of transitional words and phrases.

**Competencies :** One of the competencies planned for the learners to achieve in this course is:

- The ability to know how Transitional words and phrases may help to reach coherence.

**Personal goals:**

- Helping students to achieve paragraph' coherence through using transitional words and phrases.

## Training content:

### Part One : Warm-up activities

- a. Making a general revision about what has been discussed in the previous session.
- b. Giving them some rarely used transitional signals which are an expansion to what they have seen in the first chart always to check their ability to differentiate their logical relationships.

**Students' answers :** They are a bit confused because they are not acquainted with those signals.

### Instructions:

- After providing participants with the second chart which contains some of the rarely used signals, the teacher gives them an example of this way to be analysed.

### e. Using transitional words and phrases :

#### Example 1 : Paragraph without transitions

Inspiring teachers who are highly valued by their students have two outstanding characteristics. Inspiring teachers have excellent communication skills. They are able to arouse great interest in whatever they teach. They have enormous patience. They never appear threatening to their students.

- After reading the first version, participants noticed that the ideas are not connected just as list.
- The teacher asks them what is wrong with it.
- **Participants' answer** was the lack of linkers or transitions, and they were asked to add some of them to make it more organized.
- All participants were involved and gave many suggestions.
- After discussing the suggestions together, the teacher gave them the second version.

#### Example 2 : Paragraph with Transitions

Inspiring teachers who are highly valued by their students have two outstanding characteristics. **Firstly**, inspiring teachers have excellent communication skills. **Therefore** they are able to arouse great interest in whatever they teach. **Another** important characteristic

of inspiring teachers is that they have enormous patience. This means they never appear threatening to their students.

All participants noticed that the underlined words are new, and they connect the different ideas on inspiring teachers and also indicate the relationship between these ideas. The teacher asks them about what does each word indicate.

**Students' ewpected answers :** All participants' s answers were right.

- Firstly signals the first chracteristic.
- Therefore indicates result.
- Another indicates an additional and perhaps equally important idea.
- This means indicates effect.

### **Part two : Follow-up activities**

#### **Activity :**

- The teacher asks participants just to listen carefully while reading two sample paragraphs trying to catch the different signals used in them.
- The teacher also asks them to guess the type of both samples.

**Aim :** To check their ability to catch the different signals used in the following paragraphs

#### **Paragraph one :**

### **Football Vs Rugby**

American football and rugby have more differences than similarities. For instance , football requires eleven players, whereas rugby requires thirteen to fifteen. Also, a football field is longer than a rugby field but is less wide . Football has four quarters of fifteen minutes each, but rugby has two forty-minute halves. A touchdown in football is worth six points ; however, a goal in rugby is worth four points. There are also a few basic similarities. Both games are played with a leather, oval-shaped ball, and both are based on soccer. In short, while football and rugby have some similarities, their differences help make them two unique games.

**(adapted from Boardman and Frydenberg, 2002, p.9)**

**Paragraph two :**

**A Child's Face**

The child's face reflected her cheerful and determined nature. Her hair was bright red and had a royal-blue bow tied at the top. The skin on her forehead, as well as her entire face, was soft white and covered with freckles. Her eyes were a sparkling blue and, at that moment, were focused on the end of her turned-up nose. Her lips were a pretty pink, and coming from between them was a tongue stretching to its limit in an upward direction. It was clear that she was determined to touch her tongue to her nose, perhaps simply to prove to herself that it could be done.

**(adapted from Boardman and Frydenberg, 2002, p.9)**

**Students' expected answer :** They nearly gave the right answers

**Paragraph one :** For instance, Also, but, however, and, In short. (Expository paragraph)

**Paragraph two :** No transitions but its ideas are so clear and related to each other that makes it coherent ( Descriptive paragraph).

**Assessment** (the success of the lesson):

- Participants were involved and they asked the teacher to give them further information and other samples to know more about those ways which enable them to produce coherent pieces of writing.

**3.4.6. Lesson N° 6 : Paragraph' coherence (c)**

**Date :** 09 / 04/ 2017

**Place :** Betaibi, room 09

**Time :** 09:40 / 11:10

**Module :** Written Expression

**Lesson :** Ways of achieving coherence (c)

**Required materials and / or resources:** board, chalk, pens , papers, examples.

**The second approach (part three).**

**Lesson focus :**

- The lesson will focus on practicing transitional words and phrases.

**Objective :**

- By the end of the course, participants will be able to know how they may achieve coherence through the use of transitional words and phrases.

**Competencies :** One of the competencies planned for the learners to achieve in this course is:

- The ability to know how Transitional words and phrases may help to reach coherence.

**Personal goals:**

- Helping students to be acquainted with not only the most used signals but also with the rarely used ones.

**Training content:**

**Part One : Warm-up activities**

- Making a general revision about what has been discussed in the previous session.

**Part two : Follow-up activities**

**Aim :** The aim of the following **two** activities is to check the students' ability to find and to practice using transitional words and phrases always for the sake of achieving coherence.

**Activity one :** Decide which transitions to use from the following list :

- Second, also, furthermore, another reason is that, for example, moreover, however, to sum up, first, one reason is that.

There are many reasons why I do not smoke. ...., smoking is unhealthy. It can cause lung cancer, and it can lead to an early death. ...., smoking is expensive. A pack of cigarettes costs five dollars. If I bought one pack of cigarettes every day, I would spend over \$1500 each year. ...., sigarettes smell bad. When people smoke, you can smell the sigarettes on their clothes all day. ...., the other night, I went to a restaurant that allowed smoking. After I left, all of my clothes smelled terrible, as did my hair. I do not like drinking alcohol as well. I f I were a smoker, I would smell that way all the time. ...., I do not smoke because it is unhealthy, expensive, and unattractive.

**Students' expected answer :**

- Some participants gave the right answer, and others suggested other ones wondering whether they fit the meaning or not.

**Activity two :** Fill in the gaps by choosing the appropriate transitions from the following list.

- One of the most pleasant ways, but, Another common method, A third method, such as, also, because.

**Sweet Dreams**

When people have a hard time falling asleep at night, there are three things that they can do to relax before going to sleep. .... to relax is to imagine a beautiful and peaceful place. This requires a creative mind, ..... it is very effective. .... is to practice deep-breathing exercises. These rhythmic exercises are good for getting rid of the tension that causes people to stay awake. .... is to listen to relaxing music, ..... classical or baroque music. Baroque music is ..... popular ..... it helps students study better. Some people have developed unique ways to help them fall asleep, but these three methods are extremely effective for the majority of people with sleep problems.

**Students’ expected answer :** In this activity all participants gave the right answer.

**Paragraph one :** One reason is that, Another reason is that, Finally, For example, To sum up.

**Paragraph two :** One of the most pleasant, but, Another common method, A third method, such as, also, because.

**Assessment** (the success of the lesson):

- Students were involved and very attentive to do the activities asking the teacher for further activities to know more about ways of achieving coherence.

**3.4.6.1.Lesson N° 7 : Achieving coherence (Post test)**

**Date :** 11 / 04/ 2017

**Place :** Betaibi, room 09

**Time :** 13:10 / 14:40

**Module :** Written Expression

**Lesson :** Writing a paragraph on ‘Benefits of reading’



**Required materials and / or resources:** board, chalk, pens, papers, examples.

**The third approach : Deductionist.**

**Lesson focus :**

- The lesson will focus on writing a paragraph using transitional words and phrases after practicing the final stage proposed by Crewe..

**Objective :**

- By the end of the course, participants will be able to know how they may achieve coherence through the use of transitional words and phrases and even the other ways after brainstorming their ideas without the aid of any transitions.

**Competencies :** One of the competencies planned for the learners to achieve in this course is:

- The ability to know how Transitional words and phrases may help to reach coherence.

**Personal goals:**

- Helping students to be able to write paragraphs firstly without the aid of any transitions, and after analysing the relations between their ideas carefully they may choose the suitable transitions.

**Training content:**

**Part One : Warm-up activities**

- Making a general revision about what has been discussed in all the previous sessions focussing on paragraph' coherence.

**Part two : Follow-up activities**

**Aim :**

- The aim of the following activity is to check the students' ability to write their paragraphs without the aid of transitions as proposed by Crewe.
- After this step, participants analyse the connection between their sentences, and they try to combine them using transitional words and phrases always for the sake of achieving coherence.

**Acitivity:**

**Instructions :**

- Write a paragraph on the following topic : ‘Benefits of working in groups’
- Use listing, then put them in a form of a paragraph without using any linking words.
- Read your paragraph carefully, then analyse the connection between its sentences.
- Rewrite your paragraph using the appropriate transition signals referring to the second chart.

Participants have been provided by a ‘Paragraph Checklist’ (Appendix 4) proposed by Boardman and Frydenberg (2002) to help them evaluate their work by themselves.

**Assessment** (the success of the lesson):

- Students were involved and motivated to do the activity.

### **3.5. Scoring Criteria**

After the data collection, and after getting participants scores before the treatment (pre-test scores) which was easy to be corrected, we started the post-test results analysis. Since this latter was participants’ personal written productions, there should be some criteria to be followed to correct their copies. According to Boardman and Frydenberg, there are many things to consider when evaluating academic writing. While different teachers and schools will use their own evaluation tools, most will include categories similar to those proposed by them (2002, p.178). They suggest five aspects that should be evaluated : Content / ideas (25%), Organization (25%), Grammar/structure (25%), Word choice/ word form (15%), Mechanics (10%). Because of the nature of the present research, the chosen aspects that will serve to evaluate the participants final production are only content and organization, and since the main objective of this study is how to help learners achieve coherence through using signals the most important aspect will be organization. Thus the percentage given to both aspects will be as follows : Content= **20%** , and Organization= **80%**. The scoring criteria in this research will include four categories as proposed by Boardman and Frydenberg (ibid) : Exceptional, very good, Average, needs work.

Criteria	Scores	Level of criteria
Content	2	<b>Exceptional</b> , has excellent support, unified, and complete.
	1-1,5	<b>Very good</b> , good support, unified and complete.
	0,5	<b>Average</b> , week support, unified and complete
	0	<b>Needs work</b> , not fully developed, irrelevant sentences, not complete
Organization	7-8	<b>Exceptional</b> , the right use of all the used transitional signals with excellent flow of ideas
	5-6	<b>Very good</b> , the right use of some transitional signals
	3-4	<b>Average</b> , the wrong use of many used transitional signals
	0-2	<b>Needs work</b> , the wrong use of all the used transitional signals, no signals at all.

**Table 3.3. : Scoring criteria (adapted from Boardman and Frydenberg, 2002, p. 178)**

### 3.6. Quantitative Results

In this part, the focus will be on the descriptive statistics of both pre and post-tests achievements.

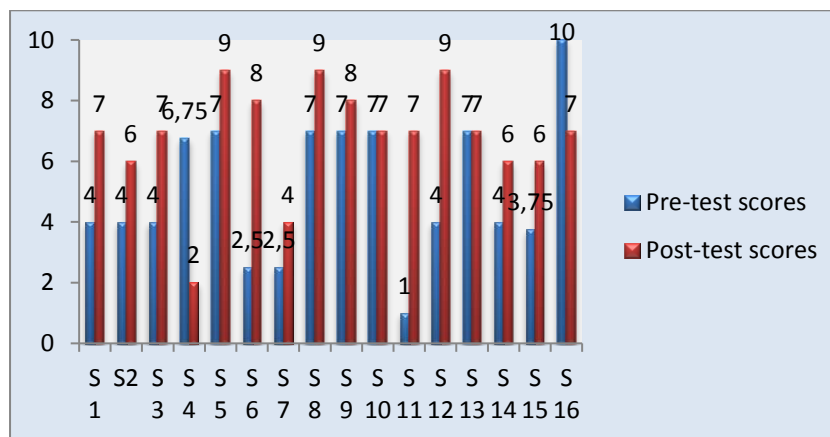
#### 3.6.1. Pre and Post -test Results/ Scores

The following data are obtained from the pre-test and post-test scores which were out of ten. The table below shows the participants' code and their scores in both tests:

Students' code	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
S 1	4	7
S2	4	6
S 3	4	7
S 4	6,75	2
S 5	7	9
S 6	2,5	8
S 7	2,5	4
S 8	7	9
S 9	7	8
S 10	7	7
S 11	1	7
S 12	4	9

<b>S 13</b>	7	7
<b>S 14</b>	4	6
<b>S 15</b>	3,75	6
<b>S 16</b>	10	7

**Table 3.4 : Participants Pre and Post-test' Scores Difference**



**Figure 3.4: Participants' Pre and Post-test' Scores Difference**

It is clear from the table (3.4), and the Graph above that four participants out of sixteen have scored from 0 to 3 in the Pre-test, six participants have got from 4 to 6, and five participants' scores were 7. While the lowest score was 1 which was obtained only by one participant, the best score was 10 / 10 which was also obtained by only one participant. However, the participants' post-test scores as shown in the same table are better than the pre-test ones. The most repeated score is 7 which has been obtained by six participants out of sixteen. We find that from 0 to 3 there is only one participant who has got 2. Eleven participants have got from 7 to 9, and no participant reached the complete score because of the nature of the post-test' task. Frequencies of the two tests' scores are shown in the table (3.5) below :

Tests'scores	Frequencies	
	<b>Pre-test</b>	0-3
	4-6	6
	7-9	5
	10/10	1
<b>Post-test</b>	0-3	1
	4-6	4

	7-9	11
	10/10	0

**Table 3.5: Students' Pre and Post-test Scores and their Frequencies**

### 3.6.2. Scores Means and Standard Deviation of Pre and Post-tests

The mean, which is symbolized in writing by  $\bar{X}$ , is the most frequently employed measure of similarity, which represents the average of a set of numerical data (numbers).

Its formula is as follows:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum Fx}{N}$$

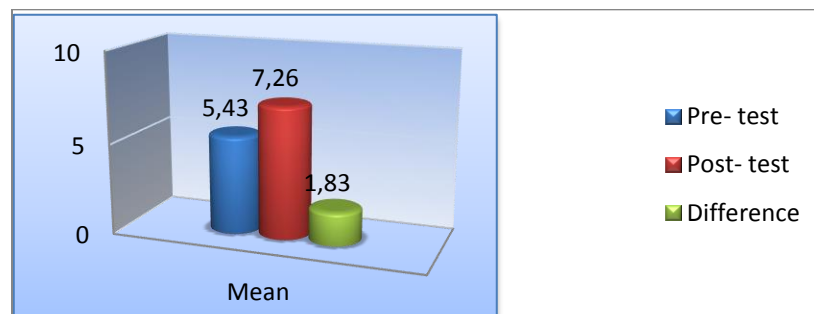
$\bar{X}$  : Mean       $F_x$ : Score frequency       $N$ : Number of scores       $\Sigma$ : The sum

- $\bar{X}_{pre} = \frac{81,5}{15 (n-1)} = 5,43$
- $\bar{X}_{post} = \frac{109}{15 (n-1)} = 7,26$

From these results, it is obvious that there is a slight difference between the pre-test and the post-test scores. In the pre-test, the sum of scores was 81,5 whereas on the post-test the sum of scores was 109. The table below shows the mean of each test with the difference between them :

N	Tests	Mean	Difference
16	Pre- test	5,43	1,83
	Post- test	7,26	

**Table 3.6 : The difference between Tests' Means**



**Figure 3.5: The difference between Tests' Means**

The Standard Deviation 'SD' measures the dispersion of the mean to compute the extent to which a set of scores varies in relation to the mean. SD is the square root of the variance S. To calculate the former, we should first calculate the latter. The following two tables contain the Scores and the Mean' Difference with the Difference Squared :

Students' code	Pre-test scores	Mean	Difference	Difference Squared
S 1	4	5,43	-1,43	2,04
S 2	4	5,43	-1,43	2,04
S 3	4	5,43	-1,43	2,04
S 4	6,75	5,43	1,32	1,74
S5	7	5,43	1,57	2,46
S6	2,5	5,43	-2,93	8,58
S7	2,5	5,43	-2,93	8,58
S8	7	5,43	1,57	2,46
S9	7	5,43	1,57	2,46
S 10	7	5,43	1,57	2,46
S 11	1	5,43	-4,43	19,62
S 12	4	5,43	-1,43	2,04
S13	7	5,43	1,57	2,46
S 14	4	5,43	-1,43	2,04
S15	3,75	5,43	-1,68	2,82
S16	10	5,43	4,57	20,88
				$\Sigma$ of S <sup>2</sup> = 84,72

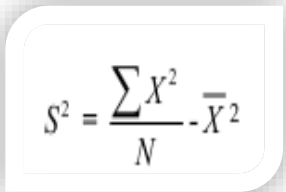
**Table 3.7 : The Pre- test Scores and the Mean' Difference with the Difference Squared**

Students' code	Post-test scores	Mean	Difference	Difference Squared
S 1	7	7,26	-0,26	0,06
S 2	6	7,26	-1,26	1,58
S 3	7	7,26	-0,26	0,06

<b>S 4</b>	2	7,26	-5,26	27,66
<b>S 5</b>	9	7,26	1,74	3,02
<b>S 6</b>	8	7,26	0,74	0,54
<b>S 7</b>	4	7,26	-3,26	10,62
<b>S 8</b>	9	7,26	1,74	3,02
<b>S 9</b>	8	7,26	0,74	0,54
<b>S10</b>	7	7,26	-0,26	0,06
<b>S11</b>	7	7,26	-0,26	0,06
<b>S12</b>	9	7,26	1,74	3,02
<b>S 13</b>	7	7,26	-0,26	0,06
<b>S14</b>	6	7,26	-1,26	1,58
<b>S 15</b>	6	7,26	-1,26	1,58
<b>S 16</b>	7	7,26	-0,26	0,06
				<b><math>\Sigma</math> of <math>S^2 = 53,52</math></b>

**Table 3.8 : The Post- test Scores and the Mean Difference with the Difference Squared**

Finding the difference squared helps to calculate the Variance using the following formula:

 $S^2 = \frac{\sum X^2 - N \bar{X}^2}{N}$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>S_{pre} = \frac{84,72}{15} = 5,64</math></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>S_{post} = \frac{53,52}{15} = 3,56</math></li> </ul>

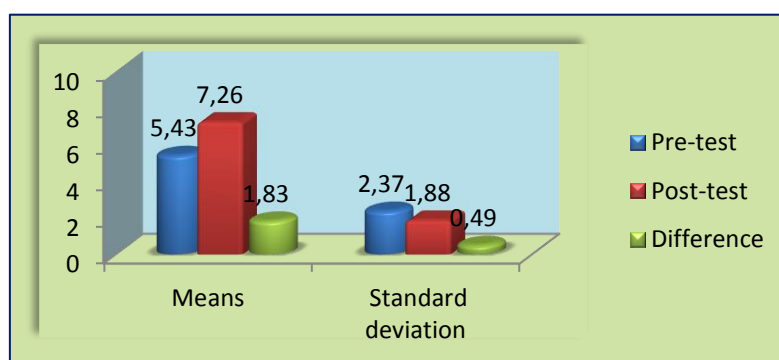
After calculating the Variance, we move to the standard Deviation which is the square root of the variance :

- $SD_{pre} = \sqrt{5,64} = 2,37$
- $SD_{post} = \sqrt{3,56} = 1,88$

The table (3.9) and the Histogram (3.6) below show the standard Deviation of both tests with the difference between them, and the displayed statistics in both reveal that the scores of the participants have slightly improved.

N	Tests	Means	Standard Deviation
16	Pre-test	5,43	2,37
	Post-test	7,26	1,88
	Difference	1,83	0,49

**Table 3.9: Comparison of the Pre and Post-test Mean and Standard Deviation**



**Figure 3.6 : A Comparison of the Pre and Post-test' Mean and Standard Deviation**

### 3.7. Inferential Statistics and Data Analysis

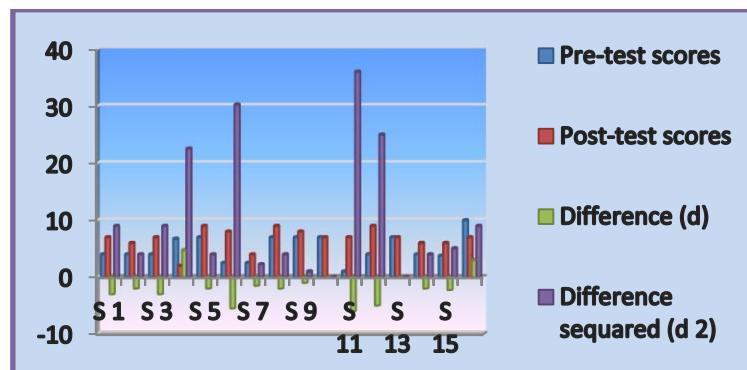
The appropriate testing and statistical procedure for checking our assumption is the t-test which is considered to be the most suitable test to compare two means. Paired-samples t-tests (dependent t-tests) are for the research design where we want to compare two sets of scores obtained from the same group in both stages before and after the treatment. Inferential statistics make inferences and prediction based on the data gathered. This includes ; for example, Hypothesis Testing. They are often more valuable for researchers to rely on to get the results.

The following table with the Histogram show the participants' Pre and Post-test Scores with the Difference and the Difference Squared



Students' code	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores	Difference (d)	Difference squared (d <sup>2</sup> )
S 1	4	7	-3	9
S2	4	6	-2	4
S 3	4	7	-3	9
S 4	6,75	2	4,75	22,56
S 5	7	9	-2	4
S 6	2,5	8	-5,5	30,25
S 7	2,5	4	-1,5	2,25
S 8	7	9	-2	4
S 9	7	8	-1	1
S 10	7	7	0	0
S 11	1	7	-6	36
S 12	4	9	-5	25
S 13	7	7	0	0
S 14	4	6	-2	4
S 15	3,75	6	-2,25	5,06
S 16	10	7	3	9
			$\Sigma d = -27,5$	$\Sigma d^2 = 165,12$

**Table 3.10 : The participants' Pre and Post-test Scores with the Difference and the Difference Squared**



**Figure 3.7 : The participants' Pre and Post-test Scores with the Difference and the Difference Squared**

- To calculate the t- value, the following formula needs to be applied:

$$t = \frac{\frac{\sum d}{N}}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}}{N(N-1)}}$$

$$t = \frac{-27,5}{\sqrt{16}} \\ \frac{-27,5}{\sqrt{165,12 - \frac{(-27,5)^2}{16}}} \\ 16 (15)$$

$$t = \frac{-1,71}{\sqrt{165,12 - 47,26}} \\ 240$$

$$t = \frac{-1,71}{\sqrt{0,49}} = \frac{-1,71}{0,7} = -2,44$$

### 3.8. Hypothesis Testing and Interpretations

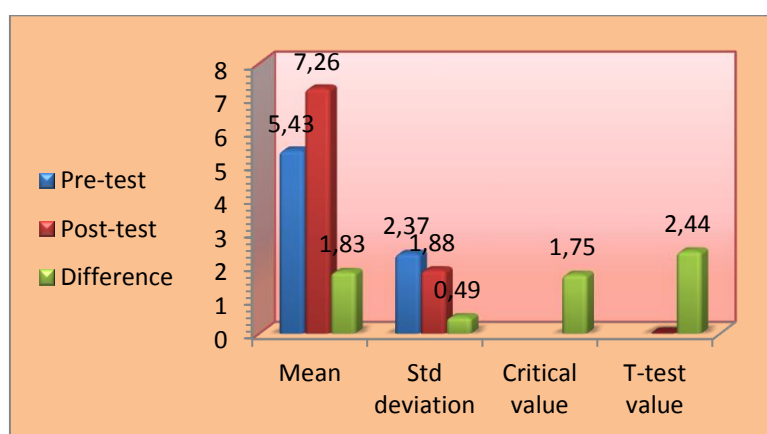
The null hypothesis  $H_0$  means that there is no statistically significant difference between the means of the group in the pretest and posttest ; however, the alternative hypothesis  $H_1$  means that there is statistically significant difference between the means in the pretest and posttest.

- $H_0$  = Training to use the Transitional Signals will not develop students' paragraph writing in terms of Coherence.
- $H_1$  = Training to use the Transitional Signals will develop students' paragraph writing in terms of Coherence.
- Statistical Hypothesis :  $H_0 : \overline{X}_{post} = \overline{X}_{pre}$   
 $H_1 : \overline{X}_{post} > \overline{X}_{pre}$
- **P- Value** or  $\alpha = 0.05$
- **Degree of freedom** =  $df = N-1$  /  $df = 16 - 1 = 15$  /  $df = 15$
- **Critical Statistics**  $t_{crit} = 1,75$
- **Observed Statistics**  $t_{obs} = 2,44$

The following table with the graph conclude the final obtained results :

N	Tests	Mean	Std deviation	P-value	Critical value	T-test value
16	Pre-test	5,43	2,37	0,05	1,75	2,44
	Post-test	7,26	1,88			
	Difference	1,83	0,49			

**Table : 3.11 : The final Obtained Results**



**Figure 3.8 : The final Obtained Results**

### Interpretations

As the observed value of  $t(2,44)$  is greater than the critical value for fifteen degrees of freedom (1.75), we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null

hypothesis. This means that the treatment realized through the application of the three approaches suggested by Crewe (1990) had positive effects on the participants' productions and proves that Training to use the different transitional signals is effective in helping first year students to produce coherent paragraphs and even the other forms of writing. Since the null hypothesis was rejected, this means that we are **95 %** sure that the relationship between the dependent variable 'D' (the post-test scores) and the independent variable 'ID' (the use of signals) did not occur by chance.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has primarily described in detail the different steps undertaken to carry out the present study : the pre-test, the quasi-experimental period and the post-test. It has provided full description of the applied approaches proposed by Crewe (1990). After calculating the statistics, it was so obvious that the observed statistics value is higher than the critical one which makes the alternative hypothesis acceptable. This latter means that training to use transitional signals statistically brought a significant difference to writing in terms of achieving coherence. Teaching coherence explicitly and giving importance to its different ways to be achieved especially using transitions has helped the participants in this study improve their written production, but what is really important in such an approach is that teachers need to make their students aware of the role each feature plays in building coherence and of the fact that not all the ways of achieving coherence are obligatory and that some of them can substitute for the others. It is hoped that the findings of the study will help instructors to design appropriate writing instruction for such students, as well as helping the them to become familiar with coherence, in the process allowing them to get the most out of their college education and their efforts to improve at writing.

## General Conclusion

Since the writing skill is a bit hard because it demands careful thought, discipline, and concentration, it is considered to be a challenging task for EFL learners. In fact, this skill is neither an easy nor a difficult task; it just needs desire and pressing from the writers, so that they can express their thoughts, feelings, or points of view towards a given topic easily. This research was conducted to gain a thorough understanding of the concept of coherence and to look for effective teaching methods or approaches that focus more on cohesive devices and that draw students' attention to the different ways which may help them to reach coherence which are similarly important. So, If First year students are trained to use transition signals, their writing will be developed in terms of coherence. In addition, they will be able to use those signals correctly, appropriately, and easily.

Writing remains the most practical means through which the proficiency level of language learning is assessed. It is a basic skill in language learning, since the learners have to make considerable effort and they may practise many writing activities to reach an acceptable level of writing. In other words, an increased level of effectiveness in writing can be acquired through a thorough understanding about the nature of the skill itself. To test the formulated hypothesis we implemented three approaches of teaching coherence suggested by Crewe (1990) which are proposed as an alternative. He refers to these stages as 'Reductionist, Expansionist, and Deductionist', which he believes may be adopted to remedy the misuse of connectives by L2 students. According to Crewe, the three stages usually occur at the planning stage of the writing process. Thus, if these steps are followed carefully and in the right manner, they will help students- to a certain extent- to produce coherent paragraphs and even the other forms of writing.

This dissertation was divided into three chapters. The first Chapter was a general overview on academic writing which includes its varied definitions, characteristics of good writing, the major steps of the writing process with some basic rules of this skill, and definitions of the two markers that lead to making or producing good writings “ **coherence and cohesion**”. The second Chapter looked for ways of achieving coherence through using transition signals with the definition of a coherent paragraph. It also focuses on the transitional phrases, words, and expressions that may help to produce coherent pieces of writing (mainly Paragraphs), and the Basic transitions that indicate specific relationships within the paragraph. The final one was the field work ; it presented, firstly, a detailed

information about the population and the sample involved in the study, and the assessment tool used to score the papers of both pre- and post- tests. Then, it focused on the analysis of the final results.

The chosen population for the quasi-experiment was the level of First-Year LMD students of English at Mohamed Kheider Biskra University, Department of Foreign Languages which contains fifteen Groups (nearly about nine hundred students); the chosen sample in this experiment consisted of one group of about 16 participants. To test the hypothesis, a quasi- experimental design used in this reseach. The participants were tested before and after the experiment. One group Pre-test and Post-test Design has been implemented which is considered as one of the effective types of quasi- experiments. A pre-test and a post-test were administered and the results of the two tests were compared.

The results of the quasi-experimental study we conducted show that the participants' post-test scores were higher than the pre-test ones. Since the observed value of  $t(2,44)$  is greater than the critical value for fifteen degrees of freedom ( $1.75$ ), we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis. This means that the treatment realized through the application of the three Approaches suggested by Crewe (1990) had positive effects on the Participants' productions and proves that Training to use the different transitional signals was effective in helping first year students to produce coherent paragraphs. The rejection of the null hypothesis means that we are **95 %** sure that the relationship between the dependent variable 'D' (the post-test scores) and the independent variable 'ID' (the use of signals) did not occur by chance.

Based on the empirical evidence from this study, it seems that students will produce cohrent paragraphs and even the other forms of writing if they are trained to use signals to make them acquainted with not only the most used signals but also with the rarely used ones. It is hoped that the findings of the study will help instructors to design appropriate writing instruction for such students, as well as helping the students to become familiar with coherence, in the process allowing them to get the most out of their college education and their efforts to improve at writing.

### **Limitations of the Study**

A brief reference to the limitations identified in this study will be presented in this part. The most important reason is that this quasi-experiment was carried out in a very short

duration. In fact, it was not a longitudinal study and it did not allow the researcher to have the maximum of the sessions to provide participants with further practices and way not the feedback that was used only with some practices. Since the study was confined to only one group of students from the Department of Foreign Languages, Section of English at Biskra University, the findings of the study may not be generalized to represent all the Algerian universities or elsewhere.

Any conclusions established in this study do not provide a full picture of the impact of the right use of Transitional signals on learners' writing which help to reach coherence. Another problem concerns data collection ; only two participants in this study : the researcher who designed the courses, and scored the papers of both tests, and the teacher who taught the quasi- experimental group. It would have been more reliable if more researchers and teachers were involved. Another weakness is the limited time devoted to practice. Some participants needed more feedback than others, but the restricted time of the instruction made opportunities for further practice impossible. it would have been more interesting to observe the performance of the participants in the different types of writing, and the different patterns of organization.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are offered for developing writing instructions :

Firstly, investigating the effects of the process-oriented approach on the development of coherent and cohesive written paragraphs and even the other forms of writing. In addition to reminding the writing students with the benefits of revising and editing activities before publishing their final drafts.

Another important point that is applying the effective approaches and methods that will enable students do further practices on signals. They also may help them to know where ? when ? and how ? to use those signals to be able to produce coherent pieces of writing.

The role that reading plays to enhance students' written productions requires reconsidering reading skills in the courses of EFL classes which can promote writing proficiency if it is integrated in the core courses starting from their first year at university.

Finally, teachers should comment on coherence aspects used on students' output. It is also imperative that feedback and editing follow immediately the lectures; otherwise the instruction is going to be pointless.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

It would be more practical to focus on teaching cohesive devices for first year students in Grammar sessions, but of course, without separating the grammatical properties from the meanings of Conjunctions. Another important issue which was pointed to in the pre-test analysis is that some participants were able to fill in the gaps with the right transitions just at the level of the sentence ; they failed to do so at the level of the paragraph. It is worthwhile reemphasizing the crucial role of revising and editing in this study. In addition, Applying some eclectic approaches and methods to help students improve their written productions in terms of cohesion and coherence.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

This research study raised a number of issues and questions that may provide a basis for future research. Future studies may replicate the same study with other ways of achieving coherence. Furthermore, future research on this topic may be done by focusing on some specific patterns of development, and may also involve a larger sample and more than one researcher to get more reliable results.



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## Appendices

### *Appendix 01 :*

#### *The pre test Tasks:*

##### *Task One :*

Underline the suitable connector from the choices stated between parentheses so that the sentences' meaning will be complete.

- 1) My sister prefers drawing (**but / and / or**) reading short stories.
- 2) Her friend is absent (**in addition / however / because**) she is ill.
- 3) (**Though / because / moreover**) this computer is old, it is very reliable.
- 4) The best source of Calcium is milk (**but / so / therefore**) many people dislike the taste of milk.

##### *Task Two:*

Improve the coherence of this paragraph by filling the blanks with the appropriate transition signals listed below.

- On the other hand // Because // For example // and // Although // So.

### **HAPPINESS**

Happiness means different things to different people. ...., some people believe that if they have a lot of money and possessions, they will be happy..... they believe that if they are wealthy, they will be able to do everything they want, and ..... they will be happy. ...., some people believe that money is not the only source of happiness. These people value their religion, intelligence, or health ; these make them happy. For me, happiness is closely tied to my family. I am happy if my wife and children live in harmony. When all members of my family share good and sad times, ..... when my children communicate with each other and work together, I am happy. .... the definition of happiness depends on each individual, my “wealth” of happiness is my family.

**Appendix 02 :**

**Chart of Transitional Signals (01) :**

<b>LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP</b>	<b>TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSION</b>
To Specify Sequence (addition)	again, also, and, besides, next .....
To Specify Time	before, now, since, then, until, when, next .....
To Specify Comparison	again, also, likewise .....
To Specify Contrast	although, but, even though, however, though, yet .....
To Specify Examples (example or illustration)	for example, in fact, of course, such as, even .....
To Specify Cause and Effect	because, since, so, then, therefore, thus .....
To Specify Place	above, below, beyond, far, here, near, there .....
To Specify Concession	although it is true that, of course .....
To Specify Summary, Repetition, or Conclusion	therefore, to summarize, finally, in short .....
Emphasis	certainly, indeed, .....

**Appendices (2) : Chart of Transitional Signals (01)**

Adapted from : <http://www.getitwriteonline.com/archive/tips.htm>

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/>

**Appendix 03 :**

**Chart of Transitional Signals (02) :**

Here is a chart of the transitional devices (also called **conjunctive adverbs** or **adverbial conjunctions**) accompanied with a simplified definition of function ( some devices appear with more than one definition):

<b>LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP</b>	<b>TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSION</b>
To Specify <b>Sequence</b> <b>(addition)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>again, also, and, and then, besides, finally, first . . . second . . . third, furthermore, last, moreover, next, still, too, equally important, further, in addition, in the first place, additionally, as well, then...</li> </ul>
To Specify <b>Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>after a few days, after a while, afterward, as long as, as soon as, at last, at that time, before, earlier, immediately, in the meantime, in the past, lately, later, meanwhile, now, presently, simultaneously, since, so far, soon, then, thereafter, until, when, and then, eventually, finally, formerly, last, next, second, still, shortly, subsequently, too, after, currently, during, recently, again, at length, further, in the first place, until now...</li> </ul>
To Specify <b>Comparison</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>again, also, in the same way, likewise, once more, similarly, just as ... so too, similar to, as, like, just like, compared to,...</li> </ul>
To Specify <b>Contrast</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>although, but, despite, even though, however, in contrast, in spite of, instead, nevertheless, nonetheless, on the contrary, and yet, on the one hand . . . on the other hand, regardless, still, though, yet, but at the same time, despite that, even so, for all that, notwithstanding, on the other hand, otherwise, whereas, unlike, while ...</li> </ul>
To Specify <b>Examples</b> <b>(example or illustration)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>for example, for instance, indeed, in fact, of course, specifically, such as, the following example, to illustrate, as an illustration, even, in other words, namely, after all, it is true, that is...</li> </ul>
To Specify <b>Cause and Effect</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, for this reason, hence, as a consequence, if . . . then, since, so, then, therefore, thereupon, thus, to this end, due to, the effect of, the consequence of...</li> </ul>
To Specify <b>Place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>above, adjacent to, below, beyond, closer to elsewhere, far, farther on, here, near, nearby, opposite to, there, to the left, to the right, in front, in back...</li> </ul>

<b>To Specify Concession</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>although it is true that, granted that, I admit that, it may appear that, naturally, of course, regardless, certainly, it is true that, it may be the case that...</li> </ul>
<b>To Specify Summary, Repetition, or Conclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>as a result, as has been noted, as I have said, as mentioned earlier, as we have seen, in any event, in conclusion, in other words, in short, on the whole, therefore, to summarize, all in all, altogether, as has been said, finally, in brief, in particular, in simpler terms, in summary, that is, to put it differently, in a word, briefly, in the end, in the final analysis, thus, to conclude, in sum, to sum up...</li> </ul>
<b>Emphasis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>certainly, indeed, in fact, of course, even, truly...</li> </ul>

**Appendices (3) : *Chart of Transitional Signals (02)***

Adapted from : <http://www.getitwriteonline.com/archive/tips.htm>

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/>

**Appendix 04 :**

**Paragraph Checklist for good coherence and correct use of cohesive devices :**

1. I have a topic sentence.....
2. I have underlined the topic and circled the controlling idea.....
3. My paragraph has good supporting sentences.....
4. The major supporting sentences are well developed by minor ones.....
5. My paragraph has good coherence. It follows :
  - Chronological order.....
  - Spacial order.....
  - Logical order.....
6. My paragraph has good cohesion between sentences : I have used the following cohesive devices :
  - Linking Words or Transitional Signals.....
  - Pronoun Reference.....
  - Parallel Structure.....
  - Synonyms.....
  - Repeated key words and phrases.....

**Appendix (03) : Paragraph Checklist for good coherence and correct use of cohesive devices (Adapted from Boardman & Frydenberg, 2002, p. 43)**

*Appendix 5 :*

**Table of Critical Values of the T- distribution: One-Tailed**

<b>Degree of freedom</b>	<b><math>\alpha = 0.05</math></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>6.3138</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>2.9200</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>2.3534</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>2.13 19</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>2.0150</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>1.9432</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>1.8946</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>1.8595</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>1.8331</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>1.8124</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>1.7959</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>1.7823</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>1.7709</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>1.7613</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>1.7530</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>1.759</b>

**Table of Critical Values of the T- distribution: One-Tailed (Adapted from:**  
<http://www.easycalculation.com/statistics/t-distribution-critical-value-table.php>

Appendix 06 : Students' Pre- test scores

Student n° 1 :

The pre test Tasks  
07-02-2017

31

**Task One :**

Underline the suitable Connector from the choices stated between parentheses so that the sentences' meaning will be complete.

- 1) My sister prefers Drawing (but / and / or) Reading short stories.
- 2) Her friend is absent ( in addition / However / because ) she is ill.
- 3) (Though / because / moreover) this computer is old, it is very reliable.
- 4) The best source of Calcium is milk (but / So / therefore) many people dislike the taste of milk.

**Task Two:**

Improve the coherence of this paragraph by filling the blanks with the appropriate transition signals listed below.

➤ On the other hand // Because // For example // and // Although // So.

HAPPINESS

3pts

Happiness means different things to different people. For example, some people believe that if they have a lot of money and possessions, they will be happy..... ~~and~~ they believe that if they are wealthy, they will be able to do everything they want, and ~~and~~ they will be happy. On the other hand, some people believe that money is not the only source of happiness. These people value their religion, intelligence, or health ; these make them happy. For me, happiness is closely tied to my family. I am happy if my wife and children live in harmony. When all members of my family share good and sad times, ~~but~~ when my children communicate with each other and work together, I am happy. .... ~~and~~ the definition of happiness depends on each individual, my "wealth" of happiness is my family.

Student n° 3 :

**The pre test Tasks**  
07-02-2017 §3

**Task One :**

Underline the suitable Connector from the choices stated between parentheses so that the sentences' meaning will be complete.

- 1) My sister prefers Drawing (but / and / or) Reading short stories.
- 2) Her friend is absent (in addition / However / because) she is ill.
- 3) (Though / because / moreover) this computer is old, it is very reliable.
- 4) The best source of Calcium is milk (but / So / therefore) many people dislike the taste of milk.

**Task Two:**

Improve the coherence of this paragraph by filling the blanks with the appropriate transition signals listed below.

➤ On the other hand // Because // For example // and // Although // So.

**HAPPINESS**

3 Pts

Happiness means different things to different people. ~~For example~~, some people believe that if they have a lot of money and possessions, they will be happy. ~~and~~..... they believe that if they are wealthy, they will be able to do everything they want, and ~~although~~ they will be happy. ~~on the other hand~~ some people believe that money is not the only source of happiness. These people value their religion, intelligence, or health; these make them happy. For me, happiness is closely tied to my family. I am happy if my wife and children live in harmony. When all members of my family share good and sad times, ~~however~~..... when my children communicate with each other and work together, I am happy. ~~and~~..... the definition of happiness depends on each individual, my "wealth" of happiness is my family.



Student n° 5 :

**The pre test Tasks**  
07-02-2017

§ 5

**Task One :**

Underline the suitable Connector from the choices stated between parentheses so that the sentences' meaning will be complete.

1) My sister prefers Drawing (but / and / or) Reading short stories.

2) Her friend is absent ( in addition / However / because) she is ill.

3) Though because / moreover) this computer is old, it is very reliable.

4) The best source of Calcium is milk (but / So / therefore) many people dislike the taste of milk.

**Task Two:**

Improve the coherence of this paragraph by filling the blanks with the appropriate transition signals listed below.

➤ On the other hand // Because // For example // and // Although // So.

**HAPPINESS**

Happiness means different things to different people. For example, some people believe that if they have a lot of money and possessions, they will be happy. but ~~because~~ they believe that if they are wealthy, they will be able to do everything they want, and ~~because~~ they will be happy. On the other hand, some people believe that money is not the only source of happiness. These people value their religion, intelligence, or health ; these make them happy. For me, happiness is closely tied to my family. I am happy if my wife and children live in harmony. When all members of my family share good and sad times, and when my children communicate with each other and work together, I am happy. ~~So~~ the definition of happiness depends on each individual, my "wealth" of happiness is my family.

Student n° 6 :

**The pre test Tasks**  
07-02-2017

56

**Task One :**

Underline the suitable Connector from the choices stated between parentheses so that the sentences' meaning will be complete.

- 1) My sister prefers Drawing (but / and / or) Reading short stories.
- 2) Her friend is absent ( in addition / However / because ) she is ill.
- 3) Though / because / moreover) this computer is old, it is very reliable.
- 4) The best source of Calcium is milk (but / So / therefore) many people dislike the taste of milk.

**Task Two:**

Improve the coherence of this paragraph by filling the blanks with the appropriate transition signals listed below.

MS

On the other hand // ~~Because~~ // For example // ~~and~~ // ~~Although~~ // ~~So~~

**HAPPINESS**

Happiness means different things to different people. ~~For example~~....., some people believe that if they have a lot of money and possessions, they will be happy..... they believe that if they are wealthy, they will be able to do everything they want, and ..... they will be happy. ....; some people believe that money is not the only source of happiness. These people value their religion, intelligence, or health ; these make them happy. For me, happiness is closely tied to my family. I am happy if my wife and children live in harmony. When all members of my family share good and sad times, ..... when my children communicate with each other and work together, I am happy. .... the definition of happiness depends on each individual, my "wealth" of happiness is my family.

Student n° 8 :

The pre test Tasks  
07-02-2017

§ 8

Task One :

Underline the suitable Connector from the choices stated between parentheses so that the sentences' meaning will be complete.

- 1) My sister prefers Drawing (but / and / or) Reading short stories.
- 2) Her friend is absent (in addition / However / because) she is ill.
- 3) Though / because / moreover) this computer is old, it is very reliable.
- 4) The best source of Calcium is milk (but / So / therefore) many people dislike the taste of milk.

Task Two:

Improve the coherence of this paragraph by filling the blanks with the appropriate transition signals listed below.

8pts > On the other hand // Because // For example // and // Although // So.

HAPPINESS

Happiness means different things to different people. ~~For example~~, some people believe that if they have a lot of money and possessions, they will be happy. ~~because~~ they believe that if they are wealthy, they will be able to do everything they want, and ~~although~~ they will be happy. ~~On the other hand~~ some people believe that money is not the only source of happiness. These people value their religion, intelligence, or health; these make them happy. For me, happiness is closely tied to my family. I am happy if my wife and children live in harmony. When all members of my family share good and sad times, ~~and~~ when my children communicate with each other and work together, I am happy. ~~the~~ the definition of happiness depends on each individual, my "wealth" of happiness is my family.

Student n° 12 :

**The pre test Tasks**  
07 - 02 - 2017 \$ 12

**Task One :**

Underline the suitable Connector from the choices stated between parentheses so that the sentences' meaning will be complete.

1) My sister prefers Drawing (but / and / or) Reading short stories.

2) Her friend is absent (in addition / However / because) she is ill.

3) (Though / because / moreover) this computer is old, it is very reliable.

4) The best source of Calcium is milk (but / So / therefore) many people dislike the taste of milk.

**Task Two:**

Improve the coherence of this paragraph by filling the blanks with the appropriate transition signals listed below.

➤ On the other hand // Because // For example // and // Although // So.

**HAPPINESS**

Happiness means different things to different people. ~~For example~~ some people believe that if they have a lot of money and possessions, they will be happy. ~~and~~ ..... they believe that if they are wealthy, they will be able to do everything they want, and ~~although~~ they will be happy.

~~on the other hand~~, some people believe that money is not the only source of happiness. These people value their religion, intelligence, or health; these make them happy. For me, happiness is closely tied to my family. I am happy if my wife and children live in harmony. When all members of my family share good and sad times, ~~because~~ ..... when my children communicate with each other and work together, I am happy. ~~So~~ ..... the definition of happiness depends on each individual, my "wealth" of happiness is my family.

Student n°16 :

**The pre test Tasks**  
07-02-2017 S 16

**Task One :**

Underline the suitable Connector from the choices stated between parentheses so that the sentences' meaning will be complete.

- 1) My sister prefers Drawing (but / and / or) Reading short stories.
- 2) Her friend is absent (in addition / However / because) she is ill.
- 3) Though because / moreover) this computer is old, it is very reliable.
- 4) The best source of Calcium is milk (but / So / therefore) many people dislike the taste of milk.

**Task Two:**

Improve the coherence of this paragraph by filling the blanks with the appropriate transition signals listed below.

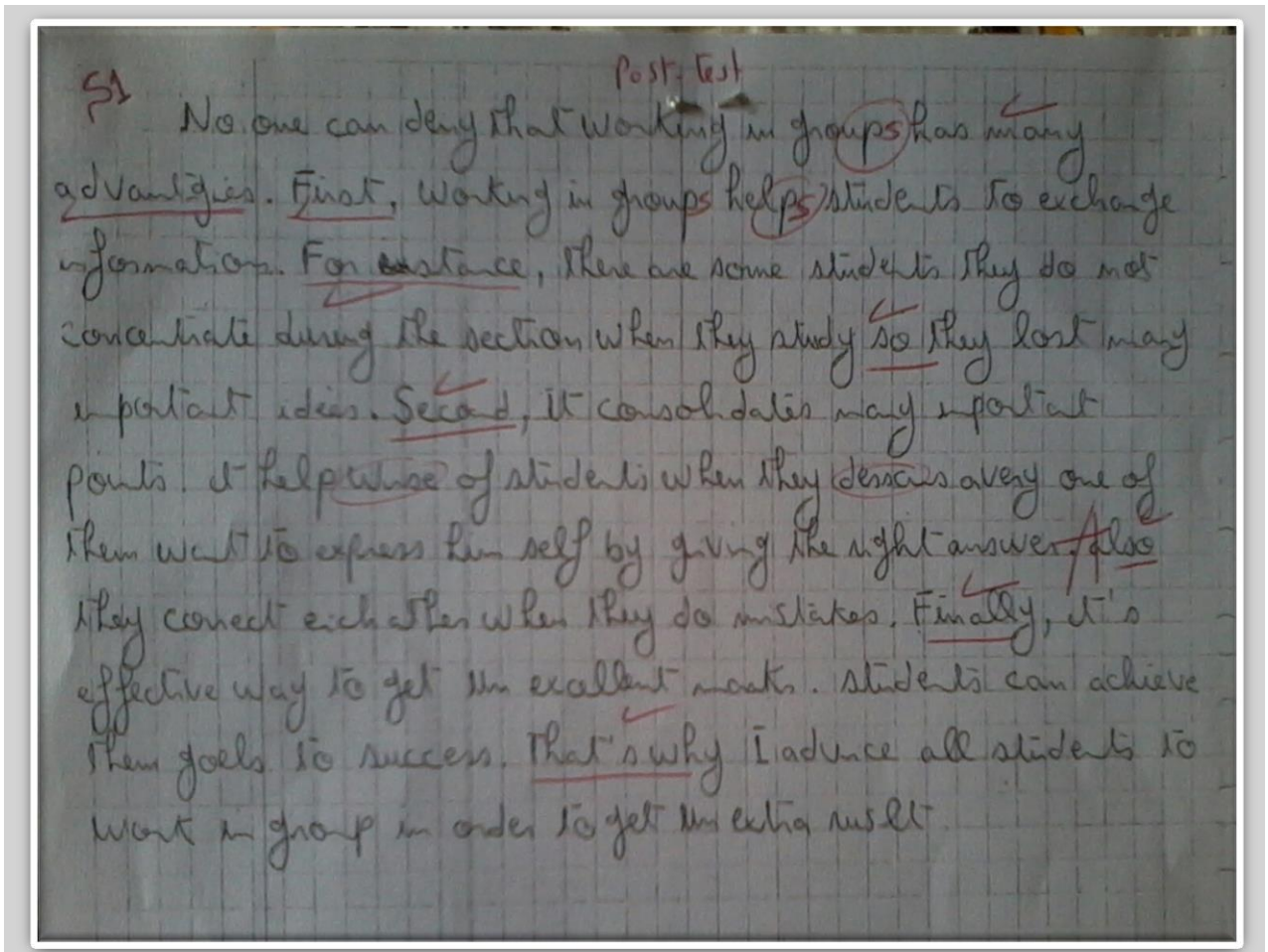
gifs > On the other hand // Because // For example // and // Although // So.

**HAPPINESS**

Happiness means different things to different people. For example, some people believe that if they have a lot of money and possessions, they will be happy. because they believe that if they are wealthy, they will be able to do everything they want, and so they will be happy. On the other hand, some people believe that money is not the only source of happiness. These people value their religion, intelligence, or health ; these make them happy. For me, happiness is closely tied to my family. I am happy if my wife and children live in harmony. When all members of my family share good and sad times, and when my children communicate with each other and work together, I am happy. And the definition of happiness depends on each individual, my "wealth" of happiness is my family.

## Appendix 07 : Students' Post- test productions

Student n° 1 :



Student n° 3 :

Post-test

Working in groups has a lot of advantages in learning and one of the best methods that good learners do to learn better. First, students can learn new information when they work in groups. For example, one of the students has a new information about the subject may be he gets it from the internet he will share it with his friends. Second, they can correct their mistakes. In fact, some times when you study with your friends you find that you have a wrong information about something your friend will correct it for you and give you the right information. Finally, they can get a new strategies and new methods that they have to tackle in their learning. Of course, in any group you find excellent student having some strategies and excellent ways in their learning you can benefit from them. That's why the teachers advice their students to work in groups to benefit more and getting a good results.

Student n° 5 :

14 Paragraph

SS

Post-test

Working in groups during the session is an important and helpfull method for developing our study skills, to this reasons.

First, it helps us to increase our H skills like reading, writing, listening and speaking from doing them in front of the group, which make us learn from our mistakes and be more confident for now on. Second, it unwish and refersh our mind with new ideas besides, it gives us the chance to discover new information and collect different words, such as: Synonyms, antonyms.. etc. As a result of sharing ideas together. Third, it let us know the weak points in each one of us in the group. So, when we know this points we'll be able to understand and solve them by asking the more intelligent members.

Finally, it develops our cooperation spirit and the sense of responsibility, in other words in the team work each one of the member will learn to be responsible and aware for the work that he / she takes even he / she works individually. In the end, working in group should be done in every school in view of this benefits.

22



Student n° 6 :

56 2) Paragraph: Post-test

There are many benefits of working in groups. First, the variety of having more than one opinion, in fact that make the answers of giving task more correct. In addition, working in groups make the work easier for instance, divide the work to each person of the group. Finally, working in groups will lead the members to a good friendship also, moment of working in groups make a nice memories with friends. To sum up working in groups it's good and friendly, Take advantage of that and spend a good time while you are learning.

Student n° 8 :

58 Post-test

Working in groups is one of the best strategies for learners and no one can deny that it has many advantages. First of all, students would gain a lot of informations thus they share their knowledge. Moreover, working in groups make the relation between students stronger, because it's psychologically proven that when we help someone we feel much comfortable into that person. In addition, learners would learn from one another, so they can teach one another through working in groups. As a result, students are advised to work in groups in order to benefit more in fact that a bunch of brains together are better than one alone.

Student n° 12 :

S12 Post test

Working in groups

Working in groups is very useful for many students.

First, Working in groups can make students to be more relaxed into the class. Indeed, students can discuss and help each other and ask questions if there are some students do not understand the lessons very well. Second, Encourage the students to participate in class. Of course student or teacher can be more confident and feels good if his friend be with him and sit beside him.

Third, team helps to learn and discover new things because some students are intelligent than the other and that can make students learn new things and new methods from their classmates. In addition to that make the teacher satisfied on his work if he find his student work together and there is a competition between groups.

All in all, Working in groups is very important and cool. I advise all the student to work together.

2/ Paragraph: 516 Post-test

There are 4 benefits of working in groups. First, working in groups help students to share ideas and feeling. Second, they make them to develop they skills in hearing, pronunciation and articulatory. Third, they supporte the students to communicate each other, for example someone who shy and calm the working in groups making it easy and free to express he opinions. Finally, working in groups create students to challenge between other groups in class. Working in groups very important and effective for the students.

## Résumé

Maîtriser tous les aspects de l'écriture qui aident à produire des paragraphes Cohérents n'est pas une tâche facile pour de nombreux étudiants. Ce travail de recherche tente de montrer l'impact de la bonne utilisation des Signaux Transitoires sur la réussite de rédaction des étudiants de première année LMD dans le département des langues étrangères, Filière d'anglais, à l'Université de Mohamed kheider de Biskra. L'écriture est l'habileté prioritairement utilisée pour examiner les performances des apprenants en termes d'organisation, d'unité et de cohérence. Étant donné que cette dernière ne peut être obtenue que par la bonne utilisation des transitions, le problème est que la majorité des étudiants, en particulier ceux de première année LMD, ils connaissent seulement le sens et les fonctions des connecteurs plus largement utilisés mais avec une négligence de ceux rarement utilisés. Dès lors, nous émettons l'hypothèse que : Si les étudiants sont formés à l'utilisation des signaux de transition, leur écriture se développera en terme de cohérence. Cette recherche examine si la formation pour utiliser les différents signaux transitoires conduirait les participants impliqués à écrire des textes plus cohérents. À cette fin, une Quasi-expérience a été menée où les participants étaient enseignées sous l'application de trois approches de Crewe de l'enseignement de transition (1990) pour vérifier son efficacité sur les productions écrites des apprenants, plus précisément les paragraphes puisque ces derniers sont au cœur de toute forme d'écriture, et parce qu'ils sont programmé. Un groupe de pré-test et post-test Design est considéré comme l'un des types d'une quasi-expérience efficace. Un pré et un post-test ont été administrés et les résultats des deux essais ont été comparés. Les résultats après les tests par les participants montrent l'efficacité de ces approches.

## الملخص

اتقان كافة جوانب اللغة التي تساعد على انتاج فقرات مترابطة ليس بالعمل السهل بالنسبة لكثير من الطلبة و حتى الجزائريين. يسعى هذا البحث الى ابراز مدى تاثير الاستعمال الصحيح لادوات الربط على النتاج الكتابي لطلبة السنة اولى ل م د كلية الاداب و اللغات ، معهد اللغات الاجنبية ، تخصص انجليزية، بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة. تعتبر الكتابة المهارة الاكثر استعمالا لاختبار اداء المتعلمين من ناحية التنظيم، الوحدة و الترابط. بما انه ليس من السهل تحقيق هته الاخيرة الا بواسطة الاستعمال الامثل للروابط ، فان المشكلة المطروحة تكمن في ان معظم الطلبة و خاصة السنة اولى مطلعين فقط على معاني و وظائف الروابط الاكثر شيوعا و استخداما و لا يجيدون استعمال و ربما يجهلون الروابط نادرة الاستخدام م. ومن هذا المنطلق، نفترض أنه: إذا تم تدريب الطلبة على استخدام هذه الروابط، فان كتاباتهم ستتطور من ناحية الترابط. هذا التحقيق للبحث يهدف عما إذا كان التدريب على استخدام مختلف الروابط سيؤدي المشاركون المعنيين الى كتابة نصوص أكثر تماسكاً. ولهذا الغرض، أجريت تجربة في هذا القسم على فوج من طلبة السنة اولى تحت تطبيق ثلاثة مناهج مقترحة من طرف كرو (1990) لكيفية استعمال الروابط للتحقق من فعاليتها على النتاج الكتابي للفوج الخاضع للتجربة، و خاصة كتابة الفقرات بما انها جوهر أي شكل من أشكال النصوص الكتابية، و لانها مقررة في البرنامج الدراسي. وكان اختبار فوج واحد قبل وبعد البحث باعتباراه أحد الأنواع الفعالة لمثل هذا النوع من التجارب. و تمت مقارنة نتائجها. تؤكد النتائج ان المناهج المقترحة في البحث ادت الى تحسين اداء الفوج الخاضع للتجربة.