**Rhetoric.**

a) The art or study of using language effectively and persuasively;

b) The skill in using language effectively and persuasively;

c) A style of speaking or writing especially on a particular subject: *political rhetoric;*

d) verbal communication, discourse.

**Rhetoric in Ancient Greece**

Rhetoric or Oratory started as an art of skilful speaking, an orator is a speaker who tries to influence listeners by eloquent speeches. It started in Sicily in 466 BC when many lawsuits arose and the help was needed in presenting those cases. Corax, a Sicilian Greek, was the first to supply this help and he is considered the founder of oratory. He established a system of rules for public speaking. He said that a speech usually should have five parts; 1. **Proem (introduction); 2. Narrative; 3. Arguments; 4. Subsidiary remarks; 5. Summary.**

Other early teachers of Rhetoric said that it must have:

* **emphasized style**
* **easily memorable** and
* **perfect elegance could be joined to plainness.**

The study of speechmaking spread to Athens. In ancient Greece the approach to Rhetoric was philosophical. The outstanding Greek writer in Rhetoric was Aristotle. He defined Rhetoric as “*the faculty of discovering in every case the available means of persuasion’.* Aristotle emphasized three methods of proof: (1) *ethical* (the influence of the speaker’s personality); (2) *pathetic* (the influence of the speaker’s use of emotional appeal); (3) *logical* (the influence of the use of formal principles of reasoning in proof).

**Rhetoric in Ancient Rome**

Rhetoric in Ancient Rome developed pragmatically and practically. It was taught in all schools of Ancient Rome and became the essence of their educational system. They placed Rhetoric on top of the triangle at the basement of which was Grammar.

 **Rhetoric**

  **Logic**

 GramaGra

**Grammar**

Grammar was considered very important as it gave a person the notion of structure not only in the language but it structured reasoning as well. That is why grammar constituted the foundation of Rhetoric. The principles of Logic were second in the hierarchy and only then nuances of Rhetoric were taught in schools.

Cicero holds first place among the important early Roman orators. Authorities believe that his *Rhetorica ad Herennium* was written by Cicero at about 86 BC. It states that an orator must prepare his speech into five steps: (1) *invention* (analysis of speech situation and audience, investigation and study of subject matter and selection of speech materials); (2) *disposition* (the arrangements of the speech materials under what we now call *inroduction, discussion and conclusion*); (3) *style* (the use and grouping of words to express the ideas clearly, accurately, vividly and appropriately); (4) *memory* (methods of memorising material); (5) *delivery* (the oral presentation).

Cicero wrote three books on Rhetoric. Book 1 *De Oratore,* written about 55 BC, develops the theme that a great orator must be a *person of great learning*. Book II emphasizes the importance of *invention* and *disposition* with particular attention to court oratory. Book III deals with *style* and *delivery*. Here Cicero shows that an orator should speak *correctly, perspicuously, elegantly and to the purpose*.

**The Field of Rhetoric**

Some people are evidently good conversationalists, good story-tellers, good letter-writers, good speech-makers. What actually makes them so is the subject of Rhetoric. Rhetoric is ancient but has been able to adapt to the requirements that society and communication have put in every time. Rhetoric has experienced a continuous renewal that has shown that it is a discipline of discoursive social communication.

Rhetoric at present time is within the human field in which social dimension of communication is of utmost importance. This has expanded the audience of Rhetoric to include Humanities and Social Sciences. The function of Rhetoric was always that of unifying different spaces of knowledge. We can say that in Rome Rhetoric was in a general space of Humanities and Social Sciences. Later in the Middle Ages it was narrowed to the field of Humanities. It lost presence in the field of Social Sciences and it was weakly, rather intuitively present in Legal Studies as a means of persuasive capabilities of the language.

A linguistic perspective of Rhetoric has always been present in a variety of ways. If Rhetoric is **Ancient Stylistics**, it is also their Text Linguistics since this linguistic trend considers that linguistic communication is accomplished by means of text with completeness and coherence. This textual point of view has been very important for the consideration of modernity of Rhetoric. The role of **Textual General Rhetoric** has been decisive in the renewal of Rhetoric.

The renewal of Rhetoric has taken place on Pragmatic perspective as well. It is based on the part of Semiotics that studies the relationship between the communicating persons, the signs and the context of communication. In this respect Rhetoric includes **Pragmatics** and it is the Ancient Pragmatics too. Rhetoric is concerned with different areas of knowledge, in the area of the Theory of Literature it is relevant to **Rhetoric and Poetics.** In Discourse Analysis we can speak about **Rhetoric of Communication.** In this respect it is studied from an instrumental point of view and it is seen as a communication tool which makes possible or easier the work of law, of economy, of policy, etc.

Today’s reflection of Rhetoric should include reflection on its connection with the new technologies. Radio, television, internet and e-mail have a rhetorical ground. The organisation of web sites in general and especially of those containing political proposals has rhetorical foundations. Rhetorical attention should be paid to e-mail communication. Without losing its essential configuration, Rhetoric is giving a proof of its capacity of adapting to the changes occurring nowadays in communication.

**Textual General Rhetoric.**

**Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace.**

I. **Understanding style.**

There are two principles of good style: it’s good to write and speak clearly and anyone can do it.

II. **Correctness.**

Use standard English

1. Never begin sentences with ***and***or ***but***;

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2. Use the relative pronoun *that* not *which* for restrictive clauses. Mind restrictive and non-restrictive clauses, e.g. *Next is a typical situation* ***that*** *a practical writer usually corrects.*

3. Do not split infinitives

 4. Use ***whom***as the object of a verb or preposition not *who*

e.g. *Soon another question will occur to you:* ***Whom*** *(~~who)~~ am I writing for?*

5. Do not end sentences with a preposition.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The* *peculiarities of legal English are often used as a stick to beat the official* ***with****.* [(‒) – rhetorically bad sentence.]

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *The* *peculiarities of legal English are often used as a stick* ***with*** *which to beat the official.* [(+) – rhetorically good sentence.]

6. Never use ***like*** for ***as***or ***as if:***

e.g. *These operations failed* ***as*** *(~~like)~~ the earlier ones did.*

7. After ***different*** use *from* never ***to*** or ***than****.*

8. Use ***hopefully*** only when the subject of the sentence is in fact *hopeful.*

**(**$-$**)** e.g. ~~Hopefully~~ the matter will be resolved soon.

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *I hopefully say that…*

9. Never use ***finalize*** to mean *finish, accomplish, end. Finalize* means to clean up the last few details of a project.

10. Never, never use ***irregardless***for ***regardless.*** The word is a recognizable blend of *irrespective.*

III. **Clarity 1. Actions.**

There are two principles of clear prose.

1. We expect to see central characters in most subjects.

2. We expect to see their important actions in most verbs.

Characters and subjects:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *Our lack of pertinent data prevented evaluation of committee actions in targeting funds to areas in greatest need of assistance.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g*. Because we lacked pertinent data, we could not evaluate whether the committee had targeted funds to areas that needed assistance the most.*

Actions and verbs:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *There has been an effective exercise of information dissemination control on the part of the Secretary.*

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The Secretary has exercised effective staff information dissemination control.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *There Secretary has effectively controlled how his staff disseminates information.*

Three steps towards Diagnosing and Revising.

1) When you feel that your prose is abstract, complex, confusing do two things: a)find or construct the cast of characters; b)find the actions those characters perform.

2)Then look for two characteristics: a)actions and conditions that are not verbs and adjectives but rather abstract nouns; b)central characters that are not the subjects of verbs.

3)If you find these two characteristics do two things: a)change the nominalizations into verbs and adjectives; b)revise the sentence so that the subjects of those new verbs are the characters associated with the actions of those verbs:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The police conducted an investigation into the matter.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g.*The police investigated the matter.*

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *There is a need for further study of this program.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *The engineering staff must study* the *program further.*

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *Our discussion concerned a tax cut.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *We discussed a tax cut.*

Ways to sidestep your knowledge:

1) The quickest way is to underline the first 7-8 words of every sentence and look for the character and the action.

2) A more demanding but more reliable method is to look at the subject of every verb and then try to revise those subjects that are not characters but complex nominalizations:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *When we analyzed the results of the experiment, it still did not provide an explanation for why the failure occurred.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *When we analyzed the results of the experiment, it still did not provide an explanation for why it failed*

3)The most demanding method is to start by looking for any nominalizations that you can turn into verbs, especially when the verbs you have used already are general verbs like *be, make, do, have, occur etc.* The expression *The fact that* – is awkward, avoid it. So, after you have pinpointed the problems do the following:

a) When appropriate, express actions and conditions in verbs

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The intention of the committee is improvement of morale.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *The committee intends to improve morale.*

b) When appropriate, make subjects of verbs the agents of actions.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *A decision on the part of the Dean in regard to the funding by the Department of the program must be made for there to be adequate staff preparation.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *If the staff is to prepare adequately, the Dean must decide whether the Department will fund the program.*

However, do not revise nominalizations that do the following:

* Refer to the previous sentence:

e.g. *This decision can lead to costly consequences.*

* Name what would be the object of its verbal form:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *I do not know her intentions.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *I do not know what she intends.*

* Refer to a familiar and often repeated concepts;
* After *there is/are* introduce a topic that you intend to develop:

e.g. *There are three ways to explain our failures.*

IY**.** **Clarity 2. Characters.**

It is necessary to be very careful with the subject and object.Subject is always an agent, object – goal.

1. When you tell stories with abstract nominalizations as your main characters, use as few other nominalizations as you can:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *A nominalization is a transformation of a verb into a noun, often resulting in the displacement of real characters from subjects by actions.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *When a nominalization transforms a verb into a noun, actions often displace real characters from subjects*

Readers often have problems when the flesh-and-body characters that do appear are expressed in words that modify a nominalization or in the objects with prepositions such as *of, by, on the part of* etc*.:*

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The Federalists’ argument that the destabilization of government was the result of popular democracy was based on their belief in the tendency of factions to further their self-interest at the expense of the common good.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *The Federalists argued that popular democracy destabilized government because they believed that factions tended to further their self-interest at the expense of the common good.*

2. Feel free to revise passives into actives if the verbs are metadiscourse verbs:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *A decrease in restrictions on treatment is followed by increased rate of recovery.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *When we treat patients less restrictively, they recover faster.*

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *Any study of tensions presupposes acquaintance with certain findings of child psychology. This study may be initiated by inquiring whether … next should be investigated…*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Any study of tensions presupposes acquaintance with certain findings of child psychology. We may begin by inquiring whether … we should next investigate…*

* The passive requires an extra word, the form of *be.*
* The passive distorts what readers expect to find in the subject of a sentence – the agent of an action.
* The passive allows us to avoid assigning responsibility: e.g. *The money was lost.*
* The passive can result in sentences with complex subjects.

3. Do not revise passives if the agent of an action is obvious: e.g. *The president was reelected with 54 percent of the vote.*

4. Do not revise passives into actives if the passive gives you a coherent sequence of subjects. Passives are more characteristic of sciences.

 **(**$-$**)** e.g. *Higher education must decide whether it will focus resources on improving education in the sciences alone or whether it will try to raise the level of education across the whole curriculum. The weight we give to two factors, industrial competitiveness and the value we attach to the liberal arts will influence this decision.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Higher education must decide whether it will focus resources on improving education in the sciences alone or whether it will try to raise the level of education across the whole curriculum. This decision (*old info*) will be influenced by the weight we give to two factors, industrial competitiveness and the value we attach to the liberal arts this (*new info*).*

Readers find long subjects difficult, especially subjects that express new information. It’s better to have new info at the end of the sentence. One more point of style can distort the flow, the long compound noun phrase.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *Early childhood thought disorder misdiagnosis often occurs as a result of unfamiliarity with recent research literature describing such conditions.*

*Early childhood (1), thought (2), disorder (3), misdiagnosis (4) → misdiagnose (4), disordered (3), thought (2), in early childhood (1).*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Physicians misdiagnose disordered thought in young children because they are unfamiliar with recent research literature on the topic.*

***Y*. Concision** ‘Everything should be made as simple as possible but not simpler’ (Albert Einstein).

1. Redundant pairs.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *If and when we can define and establish our final aims and goals, each and every member of our group will be ready and willing to offer aid and assistance.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *If we can define our goals, every member will be ready to help.*

To do that delete words that mean little or nothing: *very, all,* etc.

Delete words that repeat other words.

Delete words whose meaning your reader can infer from other words, *that someone offers us → suggestion.*

Replace a phrase with a word: *listen to and think over → consider,* etc.

Change unnecessary negatives into affirmatives.

2. Redundant modifiers.

e.g. *Basic fundamentals, true facts, important essentials, future plans, sudden crisis, consensus of opinions, personal beliefs, terrible tragedy, final outcome, free gift, initial preparations.*

3. Redundant categories.

e.g. large in size, of bright color, unusual in nature, round in shape, at an early time, of a strange type, honest in character, in a confused state, area of mathematics, extreme in degree, curative process, field of economics.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The educational process and athletic activities are the responsibility of the county government.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *The county is responsible for education and athletics.*

4. Meaningless modifiers.

e.g. *kind of, really, basically, practically, actually, virtually, generally, certain, particular, individual, given, various etc.*

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *Most students generally find some kind of summer work.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Most students find summer work.*

5. Obvious implications.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *Imagine a picture of someone engaged in the activity of trying to learn the rules for playing chess.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Imagine someone trying to learn the rules of chess.*

6. Excessive detail.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *A microwave oven that you might buy at any department store uses less energy that is so expensive than a conventional oven that uses gas or electricity.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Microwave ovens use less energy than conventional ones.*

7. A word for a phrase:

*Carefully read what you have written → edit*

*The thing to do before anything else → first*

*Try and see where → find*

*Ideas expressed rather in nouns than in verbs → nominalization*

*The reason for, due to the fact that, in light of the fact that, on the grounds that, this is why, considering the fact that → because, since why*

*Despite the fact that, regardless the fact that, notwithstanding the fact that → although, even though*

*As regards, in reference to, with regards to, concerning the matter of, where… is concerned → about*

*It is crucial that, it is necessary that, there’s a need/necessity for, it is important that → must should.*

8. Excessive metadiscourse.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *It is almost certainly the case that, for the most part, totalitarian systems cannot allow a society to settle into what we would perceive to be stable modes of relationships.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Totalitarianism cannot allow stable relationships.*

9. Indirect negatives.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *There is no reason not to believe that engineering malfunctions in nuclear energy systems cannot always be anticipated.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Malfunctions in nuclear energy systems will occasionally surprise us.*

**YI. Cohesion and Coherence.**

When you locate your characters and actions you make your style readable. But try as well to locate old info toward the beginning and new info toward the ends. Use your subjects to express topics and through a series of sentences do not vary your topics randomly. To the degree that through a series of sentences you can maintain a consistent point of view, to that degree those sentences will constitute a unified passage of prose.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *fixed* | Topic |  |
| *variable* | Old info | New info |
| *fixed* | Subject | Verb |
| *variable* | Characters | Actions |

1. Open your sentences with what you have already mentioned or with knowledge that you can assume you and your reader share.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The number of wounded and dead in the Civil War exceeded that in all the other wars in American history. One of the reasons for the lingering animosity between North and South today is the memory of this terrible carnage.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Of all the wars in American history, none has exceeded the Civil War in the number of wounded and dead. The memory of this terrible carnage is one of the reasons for the animosity between North and South today.*

Cohesion, however, is only the first step towards creating in your readers a sense of a whole. Your writing must also be coherent, a quality different from cohesion:

e.g. *Saner Wisconsin is a snow-mobile capital of the world. The buzzing of the snowmobile engines fills the air, and their tank-like tracks crisscross the snow. The snow reminds me of Mom’s mashed potatoes covered with furrows I would draw with my fork. Mom’ smashed potatoes usually made me sick, that’s why I was playing with them…*

While this passage may flow cohesively from one sentence to the next, it feels incoherent because each sentence shifts to a new topic.

It’s hard to begin a sentence well, but it’s worth remembering, that:

* we announce at the beginning of a sentence its topic;
* to connect a sentence to the proceeding one we use transitional metadiscourse: *and , but, therefore, as a result*;
* to help readers evaluate what follows, we use expressions: *fortunately, perhaps, allegedly, it is important to note, for the most part, under these circumstances, politically speaking*;
* we indicate time and place: *then, later, in May, in Europe*.

A principle of coherence is consistent strings of topics. Topics are important, because readers look for the topics in a series of sentences. To make a series of sentences into a coherent passage, focus your topics on a limited number of concepts so that you do not scatter your readers’ sense of what a passage is globally about through many unrelated ideas.

2. Through a series of sentences that you want your readers to understand as coherent, focused passage, keep your topics short and reasonably consistent:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *How Asian companies that have sought to compete with American products in six market segments in the Western Pacific region will constitute the objective of the first phase of this study. The labor costs of the Asian competitors and their ability to introduce new products quickly are the main issues that we will examine in detail in each section. A plan that will show how American industry can restructure its facilities so that it can better exploit unexpected opportunities, particularly in the Pacific Rim market, will be developed from this study.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *In the first phase this study, we will examine six market segments in the Western Pacific region to determine how Asian companies have competed with American products. In each section, the study will examine in detail labor costs and their ability to introduce new products quickly. We will develop from this study a plan that will show American industry how to restructure its facilities so that it can better exploit unexpected opportunities, particularly in the Pacific Rim market.*

Some devices for keeping topics visible:

* To use passive to avoid long subjects;
* Subject-complement switching.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The source of American attitude toward rural dialects is more interesting.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *More interesting is the source of American attitude toward rural dialects.*

* To minimize metadiscourse (phrases that are obvious and the reader can infer himself).

3. Choose topics that control reader’s point of view. Your success will depend on how you can use verbs to make one or another of your characters a seeming agent. Which of theses would better serve the needs of a patient seeing a physician is obvious:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *A patient whose reactions go unmonitored may claim physician liability. In this case, a patient took a Cloromax as prescribed, resulting in renal failure. The manufacturer’s literature indicated that the patient should be observed and should immediately report any sign of infection.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *If a physician does not monitor his patient’s reactions he may be held liable. In this case, the physician prescribed Cloromax, which caused the patient to experience renal failure. The physician had been cautioned by the manufacturer’s literature that he should observe the patient and instruct him to report any sign of infection.*

**YII. Emphasis.**

1.Ending well. The first few words of every sentence control clarity and focus, last few control emphasis and strength.

**(**$-$**)** e.g.*Sociobiologists make the provocative claim that our genes determine out social behaviour in the way we act in the situations we find around us every day.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Sociobiologists make the provocative claim that our genes determine out social behaviour.*

Since *social behaviour* means the way we act it would be much better to drop everything after *behaviour.*

2. Shift more important ideas toward the end.

3. Bridging cohesion and coherence. Some useful syntactic devices – introductory *there, passive, what* shift, *it* shift, *it was (is)* shift. All of them move the main idea to the end.

4. Rhetorical emphasis.

 **YIII. Controlling sprawl.**

**Textual General Rhetoric.**

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II. **Correctness.**

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2. Use the relative pronoun *that* not *which* for restrictive clauses. Mind restrictive and non-restrictive clauses, e.g. *Next is a typical situation* ***that*** *a practical writer usually corrects.*

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e.g. *Soon another question will occur to you:* ***Whom*** *(~~who)~~ am I writing for?*

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6. Never use ***like*** for ***as***or ***as if:***

e.g. *These operations failed* ***as*** *(~~like)~~ the earlier ones did.*

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Ways to sidestep your knowledge:

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1. Redundant pairs.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *If and when we can define and establish our final aims and goals, each and every member of our group will be ready and willing to offer aid and assistance.*

To do that delete words that mean little or nothing: *very, all,* etc.

Delete words that repeat other words.

Delete words whose meaning your reader can infer from other words, *that someone offers us → suggestion.*

Replace a phrase with a word: *listen to and think over → consider,* etc.

Change unnecessary negatives into affirmatives.

2. Redundant modifiers.

e.g. *Basic fundamentals, true facts, important essentials, future plans, sudden crisis, consensus of opinions, personal beliefs, terrible tragedy, final outcome, free gift, initial preparations.*

3. Redundant categories.

e.g. large in size, of bright color, unusual in nature, round in shape, at an early time, of a strange type, honest in character, in a confused state, area of mathematics, extreme in degree, curative process, field of economics.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The educational process and athletic activities are the responsibility of the county government.*

4. Meaningless modifiers.

e.g. *kind of, really, basically, practically, actually, virtually, generally, certain, particular, individual, given, various etc.*

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *Most students generally find some kind of summer work.*

5. Obvious implications.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *Imagine a picture of someone engaged in the activity of trying to learn the rules for playing chess.*

6. Excessive detail.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *A microwave oven that you might buy at any department store uses less energy that is so expensive than a conventional oven that uses gas or electricity.*

7. A word for a phrase:

*Carefully read what you have written → edit*

*The thing to do before anything else → first*

*Try and see where → find*

*Ideas expressed rather in nouns than in verbs → nominalization*

*The reason for, due to the fact that, in light of the fact that, on the grounds that, this is why, considering the fact that → because, since why*

*Despite the fact that, regardless the fact that, notwithstanding the fact that → although, even though*

*As regards, in reference to, with regards to, concerning the matter of, where… is concerned → about*

*It is crucial that, it is necessary that, there’s a need/necessity for, it is important that → must should.*

8. Excessive metadiscourse.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *It is almost certainly the case that, for the most part, totalitarian systems cannot allow a society to settle into what we would perceive to be stable modes of relationships.*

9. Indirect negatives.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *There is no reason not to believe that engineering malfunctions in nuclear energy systems cannot always be anticipated.*

**YI. Cohesion and Coherence.**

When you locate your characters and actions you make your style readable. But try as well to locate old info toward the beginning and new info toward the ends. Use your subjects to express topics and through a series of sentences do not vary your topics randomly. To the degree that through a series of sentences you can maintain a consistent point of view, to that degree those sentences will constitute a unified passage of prose.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *fixed* | Topic |  |
| *variable* | Old info | New info |
| *fixed* | Subject | Verb |
| *variable* | Characters | Actions |

1. Open your sentences with what you have already mentioned or with knowledge that you can assume you and your reader share.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The number of wounded and dead in the Civil War exceeded tat in all the other wars in American history. One of the reasons for the lingering animosity between North and South today is the memory of this terrible carnage.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *Of all the wars in American history, none has exceeded the Civil War in the number of wounded and dead. The memory of this terrible carnage is one of the reasons for the animosity between North and South today.*

Cohesion, however, is only the first step towards creating in your readers a sense of a whole. Your writing must also be coherent, a quality different from cohesion:

e.g. *Saner Wisconsin is a snow-mobile capital of the world. The buzzing of the snowmobile engines fills the air, and their tank-like tracks crisscross the snow. The snow reminds me of Mom’s mashed potatoes covered with furrows I would draw with my fork. Mom’ smashed potatoes usually made me sick, that’s why I was playing with them…*

While this passage may flow cohesively from one sentence to the next, it feels incoherent because each sentence shifts to a new topic.

It’s hard to begin a sentence well, but it’s worth remembering, that:

* we announce at the beginning of a sentence its topic;
* to connect a sentence to the proceeding one we use transitional metadiscourse: *and , but, therefore, as a result*;
* to help readers evaluate what follows, we use expressions: *fortunately, perhaps, allegedly, it is important to note, for the most part, under these circumstances, politically speaking*;
* we indicate time and place: *then, later, in May, in Europe*.

A principle of coherence is consistent strings of topics. Topics are important, because readers look for the topics in a series of sentences. To make a series of sentences into a coherent passage, focus your topics on a limited number of concepts so that you do not scatter your readers’ sense of what a passage is globally about through many unrelated ideas.

2. Through a series of sentences that you want your readers to understand as coherent, focused passage, keep your topics short and reasonably consistent:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *How Asian companies that have sought to compete with American products in six market segments in the Western Pacific region will constitute the objective of the first phase of this study. The labor costs of the Asian competitors and their ability to introduce new products quickly are the main issues that we will examine in detail in each section. A plan that will show how American industry can restructure its facilities so that it can better exploit unexpected opportunities, particularly in the Pacific Rim market, will be developed from this study.*

Some devices for keeping topics visible:

* To use passive to avoid long subjects;
* Subject-complement switching.

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *The source of American attitude toward rural dialects is more interesting.*

**(**$+$**)** e.g. *More interesting is the source of American attitude toward rural dialects.*

* To minimize metadiscourse (phrases that are obvious and the reader can infer himself).

3. Choose topics that control reader’s point of view. Your success will depend on how you can use verbs to make one or another of your characters a seeming agent. Which of theses would better serve the needs of a patient seeing a physician is obvious:

**(**$-$**)** e.g. *A patient whose reactions go unmonitored may claim physician liability. In this case, a patient took a Cloromax as prescribed, resulting in renal failure. The manufacturer’s literature indicated that the patient should be observed and should immediately report any sign of infection.*

**YII. Emphasis.**

1.Ending well. The first few words of every sentence control clarity and focus, last few control emphasis and strength.

**(**$-$**)** e.g.*Sociobiologists make the provocative claim that our genes determine out social behaviour in the way we act in the situations we find around us every day.*

Since *social behaviour* means the way we act it would be much better to drop everything after *behaviour.*

2. Shift more important ideas toward the end.

3. Bridging cohesion and coherence. Some useful syntactic devices – introductory *there, passive, what* shift, *it* shift, *it was (is)* shift. All of them move the main idea to the end.

4. Rhetorical emphasis.

 **YIII. Controlling sprawl.**