

## Creating Cohesion with Reader Guidance

When writing an academic text, you have read a lot and gained a breadth of knowledge on your topic. In your paper it is your task to convey this information to your readers. **Effective reader guidance**, or the effective use of connectors and cohesion-making syntax, makes it easier for your readers to follow your train of thought and to understand and value the information you provide. Read the following paragraph, which has been stripped of reader guidance:

*Reader guidance is important. There are helpful elements to achieving reader guidance. The reading will not get interrupted because your readers will always know where they are in the text. You are more familiar with your own thought process than your readers. A separate revision is necessary to identify interruptions in the flow. References, connectors, and re-directing elements are helpful tools for reader guidance.*

You can certainly understand the content of this paragraph, but is it pleasant to read? When writing and/or revising, these tools can help you brush up your text so that it reads smoothly and fluently:

- Make sure your text follows a clear structure and you can distinguish textual elements such as an **introduction**, **body**, and **conclusion**, **references**, **summaries**, etc.
- If necessary, change the sentence order to create logical chains of thought.
- Use **pronouns** (*it, this, that, these...*) and **summary phrases** (*this situation, these circumstances, the previous, the following...*) in order to avoid repetition.
- Use **connectors** (to connect sentences) and **subordinators** (to introduce dependent clauses) to make your text flow smoothly (but also make sure not to overuse them!).
  - Connectors: additionally, however, therefore, thus, nonetheless, for example, etc.
  - Subordinators: while, whereas, because, since, though, despite the fact, etc.
- Make sure that all connectors have a **point of reference**. The connector *therefore*, for example, indicates a conclusion from a previously stated argument or example (*"The statistics show X. Therefore, my argument is valid."*).
- When re-reading your text for revision, highlight your elements of reader guidance.

Now, read this paragraph:

*Reader guidance is important in writing. It guides the readers through a text using elements **such as references, connectors, or re-directions**. Since you as the writer are more familiar with your own thought process than your readers, a separate revision might be necessary to identify breaks in the flow. This way, the reading will not get interrupted, and your readers will always know where they are in the text.*

Worksheet concept: JGU Mainz Writing Center

