

ABSTRACT

How High School Speakers of Jamaican Creole Achieve Cohesion in Narrative and Persuasive Writing

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This study investigated the ways in which Jamaican high school students achieve cohesion when producing writing in English as well as the comments that their teachers provide as feedback on errors in cohesion. Two hundred students who are native speakers of Jamaican Creole were selected from two high schools in the corporate area. The students produced two hundred narrative and one hundred and twenty persuasive pieces for analysis. Halliday and Hasan's (1976) classification was used to identify the cohesive ties used by the students.

The results indicate that Jamaican students who are native speakers of Jamaican Creole achieve cohesion in some ways that are different from the ways in which cohesion is achieved in English. While some of the differences appear to be developmental, others seem to be influenced by how cohesion is achieved in the students' native language. The data also revealed that there are differences between the ways in which cohesion is achieved in narrative writing and the ways in which it is achieved in persuasive writing. The results also led to the conclusion that teachers do not consistently comment on errors in cohesion that students make.

Keywords: Sharon Joy Gardner; Halliday and Hasan; Discourse Analysis; Contrastive Rhetoric; Cohesion; Narrative writing; Persuasive writing; Jamaican Creole; English as a Second Language; Teacher Evaluation; Language Teachers.