

All in One: Comparison-Contrast, Coherence and Cohesion, Bloom's Taxonomy and CEFR

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Abstract

Writing coherent and cohesive comparison-contrast (CC) essays has proved to be challenging for university students. To this end, universities establish intensive English programs to boost their students' writing skills, yet the problem persists. In class, teachers sometimes resort to the explicit instruction of the discourse analysis techniques of coherence and cohesion when teaching comparison-contrast writing, but still students encounter difficulties related to essay organization and use of appropriate cohesive ties. In addition to lack of knowledge and practice, students' cognitive skills affect their comparison-contrast writing proficiency. Hence the need for a comprehensive guide that incorporates knowledge and practice in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy levels. In order to facilitate its application across EFL levels, this guide is also aligned with the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference CEFR. To examine its effectiveness, the guide was implemented in three intensive English language courses namely INTE 101 (CEFR A2), INTE 103 (CEFR B2) & INTE 104 (CEFR C1) at Beirut Arab University (BAU) during Fall 2023-2024. Following the Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) process in class, students passed through three stages of development. Each stage ended included the production of an essay. Data collected from student essays (E1, E2 and E3) were examined and analyzed. The findings revealed a significant improvement in the students' comparison contrast essay scores. The conclusion is a call for teachers and students to focus on the practice of the comparison-contrast essay in language teaching-learning in a novel way.

Keywords

Bloom's Taxonomy, Coherence, Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), Comparison-Contrast Essay, Discourse Analysis, Grammatical Cohesion, Lexical Cohesion

1. Introduction and Background

Comparison-contrast tasks are included in the various disciplines at universities (Ferris & Hedgecock, 2014; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Hyland, 2013). However, students find these writing tasks challenging (Farneste, 2012; Nenotek et al., 2022; Toba et al., 2019; Sari, 2019). Their essays lack organisation, connection between paragraphs and interconnection among ideas and sentences in the one paragraph. They also lack the grammatical and linguistic aspects related to word choice, reference and logical flow of ideas; i.e., discourse analysis (DA) techniques of coherence and cohesion. Despite emphasizing the role of various cohesive ties in class, students still encounter challenges in essay writing (Al Khotaba, 2022; Belkhir & Benyelles, 2017; Dossoumou et al., 2018; Zahara et al., 2023) attributed to inadequate writing practice, limited awareness of cohesion/coherence techniques, over-use or misuse of markers and students' cognitive abilities (Kellogg, 2008; Zhang & Zhang, 2023). Hence the need for comparison-contrast tasks based on the students' thinking skills level. In this respect, Bloom's Taxonomy is key in categorization and classification (Anderson et al., 2001; Bloom et al., 1956). Integrating Bloom's Taxonomy in the teaching and learning of EFL writing, mainly comparison contrast essay, and scaffolding coherence and cohesion skills alongside Bloom's Taxonomy levels can enhance writing development (Langer & Applebee, 2013). Also, explicit instruction on paragraph/essay structure, transitions, and evidence integration for the varied comparison/contrast tasks should be tailored to each level (Graham, Harris, & Mason, 2005).

The Intensive English Program IEP at Beirut Arab University (BAU) offers a sequence of five courses namely INTE 100, INTE 101, INTE 102, INTE 103 and INTE 104. Developed in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference CEFR, these courses are designed to foster the students' EFL skills and their components. They start with the A2 level and end with the C1 as shown in the **Table 1** below:

Table 1. IEP sequence of courses at BAU aligned with CEFR.

Course	CEFR Level
INTE 100	A1
INTE 101	A2
INTE 102	B1
INTE 103	B2
INTE 104	C1

To conduct this study, the researcher developed the comparison-contrast coherence-cohesion (CCCC) writing guide which presents the discourse analysis techniques of cohesion and coherence based on Halliday and Hasan's 1976 model in alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy levels, Lower (Remembering and Understanding), Middle (Applying and Analyzing) and Higher (Evaluating and Creating).

To ensure its ease of application in all levels of English as a Foreign Language EFL writing, the CCCC guide is also aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference CEFR (A1 - C2) which offers a worldwide framework for the classification of language proficiency levels. Three courses were chosen—INTE 101, INTE 103 and INTE 104—each representing one of the CEFR bands. The research presented in this paper examines how effective the CCCC writing guide is in composing coherent comparison-contrast essays at the three intensive English course levels at Beirut Arab University.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Coherence and Cohesion

Despite their intricate relationship, cohesion and coherence are fundamental elements for successful textual communication. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), cohesion indicates an inner semantic chain that works behind the scenes and facilitates coherence. It refers to the interconnections that relate sentences in a particular text. Major grammatical and lexical devices including reference, ellipsis, substitution, conjunctions, reiteration and collocations are what enables the writer to establish the internal relationships among sentences and provide information flow and dramatic unity. Coherence however, indicates the high quality of a text sentence by sentence. According to Todorascu et al. (2013) and Alsaawi (2016), no matter where texts are from, the ones with high consistency level would be easier to understand. Likewise, McCulley (1985) and Ramadan (2003) contributed to the idea that cohesion ultimately leads to coherence, the key feature of a good style of writing. Brown and Yule (1983) also point out the importance of coherence which by itself may not ensure cohesion. Cohesive ties can exist beyond a text in the absence of the deeper semantic connections required to produce true coherence. Carrell (1982) and Brown and Yule (1983) recognize that the connections go beyond only the linguistic markers and are of a deeper semantic level. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) explain that coherence is what contributes to the unity of various sentences and paragraphs, that in turn ensures local and global unity of the text. O'Rourke, Calvo and McNamara (2011) state that a good text (or an ideal one) uses a combination of cohesive devices which lead to the production of a fluent discourse, coherent with sound logical judgments across longer texts.

2.2. Common European Framework of Reference CEFR and Bloom's Taxonomy

The CEFR and Bloom's Taxonomy serve as valuable tools in EFL writing instruction although they address distinct aspects of learning (Anderson et al., 2001; Council of Europe, 2020). Understanding their relationship can empower teachers to design more effective learning experiences that target both language proficiency and deeper cognitive development. The CEFR provides a comprehensive framework for describing language proficiency across Europe and increasingly, on a global scale (Council of Europe, 2020). It outlines six proficiency levels (A1 - C2)

with detailed descriptors for reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. These descriptors specify what learners can understand and do at each stage. In the context of writing, the CEFR helps teachers set learning objectives aligned with specific skill sets at each level (Alderson et al., 2015). Additionally, the CEFR offers a foundation for assessment and evaluation by providing benchmarks based on “can-do” statements outlining learner capabilities (Dylan & Marnie, 2017). Bloom’s Taxonomy, on the other hand, focuses on the cognitive processes involved in learning (Anderson et al., 2001). It categorizes learning objectives into six levels of increasing complexity: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. This framework empowers teachers to design writing tasks that require learners to engage in different levels of thinking (Ferris et al., 2017). By incorporating Bloom’s Taxonomy, teachers can promote the development of critical thinking and higher-order thinking skills crucial for effective writing (Littlewood, 2012).

The CEFR and Bloom’s Taxonomy can be used cooperatively to create a more comprehensive approach to EFL writing instruction. First, with respect to mapping CEFR Levels to Bloom’s Taxonomy, while not a perfect one-to-one correspondence, a rough mapping can be established. Lower CEFR levels (A1 - A2) primarily focus on remembering and understanding basic vocabulary, grammar and information in familiar contexts, while higher levels (B1 - C2) gradually incorporate more complex skills like applying knowledge in new situations, analyzing texts, and evaluating arguments (Council of Europe, 2020). Nevertheless, creating, the highest level in Bloom’s Taxonomy, does not correlate to any specific CEFR level. It can be present at various levels depending on the complexity of the creative language task and the language proficiency (Council of Europe, 2020). Second, when designing tasks with depth, using the CEFR descriptors for a specific level, teachers can craft writing tasks that incorporate different cognitive demands from Bloom’s Taxonomy. For example, a B1 writing task could require learners to understand (summarize) a news article while also applying their knowledge by writing a simple email based on the information presented (Ferris et al., 2017).

When combined in EFL instruction, the CEFR and Bloom’s Taxonomy offer diverse benefits. Combining these frameworks allows for instruction that targets both the linguistic skills (CEFR) and the cognitive processes (Bloom’s Taxonomy) required for effective writing. This ensures learners develop not just proficiency in using the language but also the ability to think critically and express themselves effectively at a deeper level (Littlewood, 2012). Moreover, by addressing both ‘what’ (language skills) and ‘how’ (thinking processes), this combined approach fosters a deeper understanding and a more meaningful learning experience for EFL learners. They not only acquire language proficiency but also develop the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate various writing contexts. Besides, by incorporating Bloom’s Taxonomy, teachers can go beyond simply teaching grammar and vocabulary. They can encourage learners to analyze information, evaluate arguments, and create their own unique perspectives, leading to a more

sophisticated approach to writing (Alderson et al., 2015).

3. Research Questions

This research aims to answer the following questions:

- 1) How effective is the Comparison-Contrast Cohesion-Coherence writing guide in improving the INTE 101 (CEFR A2) students' comparison-contrast essay through its various tasks, strategies and coherence-cohesion techniques?
- 2) What positive impact does the Comparison-Contrast Cohesion-Coherence writing guide have on the INTE 103 (CEFR B2) students' comparison-contrast essay through its various tasks, strategies and coherence-cohesion techniques?
- 3) How efficient is the Comparison-Contrast Cohesion-Coherence writing guide in enhancing the INTE 104 (CEFR C1) students' comparison-contrast essay through its various tasks, strategies and coherence-cohesion techniques?

4. Methodology

4.1. Design

The researcher adopts the mixed-method approach to collect quantitative and qualitative data, using three comparison-contrast essays per student in each level. This helps provide insight into the students' performance and determine the improvements in coherence as well as lexical (reiteration and collocation) and grammatical (reference, ellipsis, conjunction and substitution) cohesion.

4.2. Participants

The subjects of the study were three groups of twenty-five students enrolled at the various faculties at Beirut Arab University. All students have similar characteristics as they come from various educational backgrounds in Lebanon and the region, their mother tongue is Arabic and their first foreign language is either English or French. All were newly admitted to Beirut Arab University and assigned the Intensive English language courses INTE 101, INTE 103 and INTE 104 during fall 2023-2024. The choice of these groups was not random; students were intentionally selected from these courses since as they align with the Bloom's three levels: Lower, Middle and Higher. All participants agreed to be part of the study and were ensured that their identities shall remain confidential. They were also given the freedom to withdraw from the study at any phase.

4.3. Instruments

The instruments used to collect data included three comparison-contrast essays per student. These essays were evaluated against a rubric (**Appendix A**) developed by the researcher. This rubric has six categories: Content, Coherence 1 (organisation of the essay), Coherence 2 (connectedness between ideas, sentences and paragraphs), Grammatical Cohesion, Lexical Cohesion and Language. It is used to examine the students' performance in the comparison-contrast essay. The reliability and validity of the rubric were checked and confirmed (**Appendix A-1**).

During the study, students used the CCCC writing guide as a reference for analysing and constructing their comparison-contrast essays. This guide (**Appendix B**) is designed by the researcher to help students develop a comparison-contrast essay with strong cohesion and coherence. The validity and reliability of the CCCC guide were examined and confirmed through piloting (**Appendix B-1**).

4.4. Materials

Three textbooks were used to present to students the structure and organisation of the comparison-contrast essay as well as the various cohesive devices of concern to this study: *Effective Academic Writing*, *The Researched Essay Book 3*, *English Grammar in Use* (CEFR B1 - B2) and *English Collocations in Use* (CEFR B1 - B2).

4.5. Procedures

The study plan comprised three stages. The Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) process was employed in class. The first stage (Present) started with writing the first essay (E1) to check students' background knowledge and performance before explicit instruction. This stage lasted for three weeks during which the comparison-contrast essay writing process, coherence, lexical and grammatical cohesion and the CCCC writing guide were introduced. In stage two (Practice & Produce), the teacher exposed the students to authentic compare-contrast essays which they examined and analyzed using the writing guide. Students were also given focused practice on the skills of coherence and cohesion. This stage lasted for three weeks and ended with the guided writing activity essay 2 (E2). In stage three (Produce), students produced essay 3 (E3) on their own, using the CCCC guide and consciously applying the rules of cohesion and coherence they had already learned. Essay topics were adopted from the CCCC guide.

4.6. Data Collection

Each student in the three courses was scored on the competencies in the scoring rubric [content; Coh1 (coherence1/organisation of the essay); Coh2 (coherence2/connectedness between ideas, sentences and paragraphs); CohG (grammatical cohesion); CohL (lexical cohesion); Lang (language) and Total (overall score)] across the three essays E1, E2, and E3. Data collected from the three essays were entered and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science software (SPSS17).

5. Results

5.1. INTE 101

For INTE101, statistics revealed that the total and competency mean scores increased across the three essays (**Table 2**).

The score difference between E1, E2, and E3 were significant in every competency as evident by all p-values falling below the significance level of 0.05: For example, the results of Lang scores were as follows: $F(2, 48) = 35.649$, $p \leq 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.598$ (**Table 3**).

Table 2. INTE 101 students' total and competency mean scores across E1, E2, and E3.

N	Competency	Essay	Mean	Std. Deviation
25	Content	E1	2.36	0.638
		E2	2.60	0.645
		E3	3.08	0.640
25	Coh1	E1	1.48	0.586
		E2	2.00	0.577
		E3	2.32	0.476
25	Coh2	E1	1.32	0.476
		E2	1.88	0.600
		E3	2.20	0.645
25	CohG	E1	1.36	0.490
		E2	2.12	0.600
		E3	2.52	0.714
25	CohL	E1	1.52	0.510
		E2	1.92	0.493
		E3	2.08	0.493
25	Lang	E1	1.84	0.746
		E2	2.32	0.690
		E3	2.88	0.833
25	Total	E1	9.88	2.759
		E2	12.84	2.478
		E3	15.12	2.743

Table 3. Repeated measures ANOVA results for INTE101.

Source	Measure	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Essay	Content	6.720	2	3.360	27.121	0.000	0.531
	Coh1	8.987	2	4.493	33.983	0.000	0.586
	Coh2	9.920	2	4.960	43.980	0.000	0.647
	CohG	17.360	2	8.680	52.254	0.000	0.685
	CohL	4.160	2	2.080	19.299	0.000	0.446
	Lang	13.547	2	6.773	35.649	0.000	0.598
	Total	345.147	1.672	206.434	220.776	0.000	0.902

Post hoc analyses using the Bonferroni post hoc criterion for significance indicated that the average scores for all except one of the competencies increased from E1 to E2 to E3. For example, Coh1 score in E2 was significantly higher than in E1 (Difference = 0.520, p -value ≤ 0.001), and significantly higher in E3 than in E2

(Difference = 0.320, p -value ≤ 0.001). However, CohL score showed no significant increase between E2 and E3 (Difference = 0.160, p -value = 0.129). All in all, the results indicate that the implementation of the CCCC guide had a significant positive effect on individual student performance in almost every competency.

5.2. INTE 103

Statistics showed that the total and individual competency mean scores consistently increased across all three essays (Table 4).

Table 4. INTE 103 students' total and competency mean scores across E1, E2, and E3.

N	Competency	Essay	Mean	Std. Deviation
25	Content	E1	2.28	0.678
		E2	2.48	0.510
		E3	3.28	0.542
25	Coh1	E1	1.76	0.663
		E2	1.88	0.600
		E3	2.36	0.569
25	Coh2	E1	1.40	0.500
		E2	1.56	0.507
		E3	2.00	0.500
25	CohG	E1	1.48	0.653
		E2	1.80	0.577
		E3	2.44	0.712
25	CohL	E1	1.32	0.476
		E2	1.28	0.458
		E3	1.80	0.645
25	Lang	E1	2.08	0.812
		E2	2.32	0.627
		E3	2.68	0.627
25	Total	E1	10.20	2.693
		E2	11.32	2.193
		E3	14.48	1.960

The score differences between E1, E2, and E3 were significant in each of the competencies as evident by all p -values falling below the significance level of 0.05. For example, the results of the Total scores were as follows: $F(2, 48) = 146.522$, $p \leq 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.859$ (Table 5).

Post hoc analyses using the Bonferroni post hoc criterion for significance indicated that the average score of CohG and the total score increased across the three essays. For instance, the CohG score in E2 was significantly higher than in E1

Table 5. Repeated measures ANOVA results for INTE 103.

Source	Measure	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Essay	Content	14.000	2	7.000	38.769	0.000	0.618
	Coh1	5.040	2	2.520	24.387	0.000	0.504
	Coh2	4.827	2	2.413	19.836	0.000	0.453
	CohG	11.947	1.705	7.007	26.746	0.000	0.527
	CohL	4.187	1.372	3.051	10.985	0.001	0.314
	Lang	4.560	2	2.280	9.566	0.000	0.285
	Total	246.320	2	123.160	146.522	0.000	0.859

(Difference = 0.320, p -value = 0.008) and in E3 higher than in E2 (Difference = 0.640, p -value = 0.001). However, while the average scores for the remaining competencies (Coh1, Coh2, CohL, Lang, and Content) did not significantly increase from E1 to E2, they still showed an overall increase in E3. For example, while the average Coh1 score did not significantly differ from E1 to E2 (Difference = 0.120, p -value = 0.249), it increased significantly from E2 to E3 (Difference = 0.480, p -value \leq 0.001). These results indicate that implementation of the CCCC guide in INTE103 had a positive effect on student performance.

5.3. INTE 104

Descriptive statistics revealed an increase in the scores of all competencies from E1 to E2 and further from E2 to E3 (**Table 6**).

Table 6. INTE 104 total and competency mean scores across E1, E2, and E3.

N	Competency	Essay	Mean	Std. Deviation
25	Content	E1	2.80	0.913
		E2	3.00	0.645
		E3	3.20	0.645
25	Coh1	E1	1.80	0.816
		E2	2.00	0.577
		E3	2.40	0.645
25	Coh2	E1	1.40	0.577
		E2	1.68	0.627
		E3	2.00	0.577
25	CohG	E1	1.68	0.627
		E2	2.12	0.781
		E3	2.60	0.707
25	CohL	E1	1.40	0.500
		E2	1.56	0.507
		E3	2.00	0.577

Continued

25	Lang	E1	1.80	0.816
		E2	2.00	0.577
		E3	2.40	0.645
25	Total	E1	11.68	2.704
		E2	12.96	1.881
		E3	14.96	2.208

The score differences between E1, E2, and E3 were significant in the competencies of Coh1, Coh2, CohG, CohL, and Total as evident by *p*-values falling below the significance level of .05: For example, the results of the Total scores were as follows: $F(2, 48) = 50.174$, $p \leq 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.676$ (Table 7).

Table 7. Repeated measures ANOVA results for INTE104.

Source	Measure	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Essay	Content	2.000	2	1.000	2.250	0.116	0.086
	Coh1	4.667	2	2.333	11.200	0.000	0.318
	Coh2	4.507	2	2.253	12.254	0.000	0.338
	CohG	10.587	2	5.293	14.591	0.000	0.378
	CohL	4.827	2	2.413	10.368	0.000	0.302
	Lang	0.427	2	0.213	0.475	0.625	0.019
	Total	136.640	2	68.320	50.174	0.000	0.676

Post hoc analyses using the Bonferroni post hoc criterion for significance indicated that, for competencies that showed a significant change in score across the three essays, the score difference between the first and second or the second and third essays wasn't always significant, while the overall difference between the first and third essays was always significant: For example, Coh1 mean score difference between E1 and E2 was 0.2, with a *p*-value of .288, but the mean difference between essays 1 and 3 was 0.6, with a *p*-value of 0.002. On the other hand, for competencies that showed no significant results (Lang and Content), no significant difference was found between any pair of essays. All in all, the results indicate that the implementation of the CCCC guide in INTE104 positively affected individual students' overall and competency performance except for Content and Lang.

6. Discussion

Student essays E1, E2 and E3 were utilized to explore the impact of using the CCCC guide on producing quality comparison-contrast essays in three intensive English courses. Data collected from the essays revealed that using the CCCC guide in the teaching/learning process of the comparison-contrast essay writing

was successful in the three classes. The data also provided in-depth information about the participants' interaction with the CCCC guide and the CC essay. In more specific terms, integrating the CCCC guide in the comparison-contrast essay teaching/learning process gave students additional knowledge of coherence, grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion of which they weren't aware before. They also learnt how to employ these competencies in the CC essay, and provided them with the opportunity to emphasize Bloom's thinking domains relevant to each level.

Major findings relevant to teachers and students need to be highlighted. According to the teachers, the fact that the CCCC guide integrates Bloom's taxonomy in writing a CC essay offers a framework for teachers to categorize learning objectives into different levels of cognitive complexity. Explicit instruction on paragraph/essay structure, transitions, and evidence integration for different comparison/contrast tasks were tailored to each level. Also, by incorporating Bloom's Taxonomy in the CCCC guide, teachers could easily design learning experiences that encourage students to move beyond basic memorization and engage in deeper analysis, evaluation, and creation, fostering a more well-rounded and meaningful learning experience (Anderson et al., 2001; Bloom et al., 1956). Moreover, the guide helped teachers provide clear learning goals for their writing class, differentiate their instruction, promote active learning and create effective assessment. It also helped them effectively manage their writing classes, save time and involve their students in the teaching-learning process, turning their class into a seminar room where 21st century students share ideas and discuss conclusions through classwork activities. As for the participating students, at first, they needed assistance in embracing better writing practices, consciously employing the techniques of coherence and cohesion in the CC essay and directing their knowledge of how to match their writings to the cognitive levels. The CCCC guide provided them with task examples, cohesion/coherence skills and pedagogical strategies necessary to write a well-structured comparison-contrast essay. Also, the students relied on their analytical, critical and creative thinking skills, which are ranked highest in Bloom's revised Taxonomy (Anderson et al., 2001) when creating their essays. Using the tasks presented in the guide, students analysed and channelled information into differences and similarities. The sections on Coherence and Cohesion helped in promoting the students' critical thinking skills, enabling them to examine their texts' unity, connectedness, as well as grammatical and lexical cohesion. Students also broke down their texts into smaller and more understandable components to interpret which devices to use in order to achieve text coherence and cohesion. The pedagogical strategies in the guide triggered students' creative thinking skills to come up with unexpected comparisons or contrasts, present their arguments, and compile their essays. In fact, the CCCC guide invited students and teachers to consider comparison-contrast essay writing in a more efficient, creative way.

Moreover, the study had a positive impact on other skills in an indirect way.

First, it developed the students' language and communication skills of which writing is one form. By enhancing their writing skill, students could clearly communicate with others and convey their ideas in their own voices, bridging the gap between the writer and the readers and fostering connection and understanding through authentic expression. Second, participating in the study positively affected the students in many ways. It provided them with a great learning opportunity, encouraging them to work together and appreciate the value of cooperation, thus fostering their self-assessment, interaction in class, and self-confidence. It presented them with a unique experience to be mini researchers as they were asked to critically analyse sample texts, assess their findings and draw conclusions based on their interpretations. Also, it promoted their autonomy since they were required to present their ideas in an absolutely student-centered class. Furthermore, it motivated them to communicate with each other, exchange information and provide peer feedback. Through teamwork, students learned the fundamental skills of communication, time management and resource allocation that will be valuable for them later in the workforce.

Finally, the results of the study are in line with previous research studies on the employment of cohesion and coherence in the CC essay. Many of such studies have shown the positive effect of DA coherence and cohesion on essay writing as per text comprehensibility (Jafarpur, 1991; Masadeh, 2019; McCulley, 1985; Ramadan, 2003; Todirascu et al., 2013), quality of writing (Martínez, 2015; Yang & Sun, 2012; Zhang, 2010), textual coherence (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; Louwerse & Graesser, 2005; O'Rourke, Calvo & McNamara, 2011), logical flow of ideas (Kargozari et al., 2012; Narita, Sato, & Sugura, 2004), written communication skills (Danglli & Abazaj, 2014; Jabur, 2023), and the need for explicit instruction (Adiantika, 2015; Al-Ahdal & Alqasham, 2021; Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017; Behbahani et al., 2018; Belkhir & Benyelles, 2017; Dossoumou et al., 2018; Riswanto, 2021; Toba et al., 2019; Saud, 2015; Zahara et al., 2023).

7. Recommendations for Practical Application of the CCCC Guide in Class

Some practical suggestions are presented to develop the students' comparison-contrast essay writing with strong coherence and cohesion using the CCCC guide. Here are some ways the guide can be integrated into the writing class:

- **Explicit teaching:** Teachers can use the guide to directly teach specific writing skills, such as paragraph structure, thesis statement development, coherence and cohesion.
- **Model writing:** Teachers can demonstrate how to apply the guide's principles through writing samples.
- **Guided practice:** Teachers can provide structured activities where students apply the guide's concepts under close supervision.
- **Adapting to student needs:** Teachers can use the guide to create differentiated tasks based on student abilities and learning styles.

- **Challenging advanced writers:** The guide can be used to introduce more complex writing concepts and expectations.
- **Feedback:** Teachers can use the guide to provide specific and actionable feedback on student work.
- **Reference tool:** Students can use the guide as a reference during writing tasks, helping them make informed decisions about structure, style, and mechanics.
- **Self-assessment:** Students can use the guide to evaluate their own writing, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Peer review:** Students can use the guide to provide constructive feedback to peers, focusing on specific criteria outlined in the guide.

By effectively integrating the CCCC writing guide into their instruction, teachers can empower students to become confident, competent writers.

8. Conclusion

The study attempted to illuminate the role of the CCCC guide in producing quality CC essays by students in three intensive English language courses of different levels (CEFR A2, B2, C1) at Beirut Arab University. The findings show the far-reaching role of the CCCC guide in students' EFL skills in general since writing remains a critical skill for success which affects all of the personal, academic, professional and social aspects of life. However, some challenges were met in relation to both students and teachers. When it comes to learning a new language concept or technique—in this case discourse analysis techniques of coherence and cohesion—and due to the students' diverse needs, some students needed extra time to master that new concept, a slower pace of instruction, extra tutoring, a distraction-free learning environment or explicit guidance. On the other hand, ensuring inclusivity for all learners through classroom design required teachers to invest additional time. They also needed to work together with some students more closely to determine what adjustments might be most beneficial. Therefore, teachers needed to focus on group work, classwork and homework assignments in addition to regular formative assessment which helped monitor students' progress per session.

This study offers valuable insights into the potential of the CCCC guide for enhancing comparison-contrast writing skills. However, the generalization of the findings is limited by the sample population. The research focused on students from one university, which restricts the ability to draw definitive conclusions about the CCCC guide's effectiveness across broader student demographics. Despite the fact that the population of the participants in this study was not large, the results of this study can still be applied to teachers, schools, universities, students and curriculum designers. Teachers can benefit from the findings of this study to choose which tasks and strategies are suitable to their objectives and which are applicable in their classes. Schools can use the findings of this study to train teachers to adopt the CCCC guide in their classes. Universities can also benefit from the findings by encouraging instructors to implement this guide in their

courses. Students can follow the different strategies available in the CCCC guide to learn essay coherence, cohesion and organisation. Moreover, curriculum designers can utilize the findings to update the English curriculum which necessitates adoption of the CCCC guide with its various tasks, strategies and skills.

In conclusion, this study calls teachers and students to focus on the practice of the comparison-contrast essay teaching and learning in a novel way. First, it explains to teachers how using the CCCC guide in the CC essay writing helps them include all students, and address their different needs, levels, interests, learning styles and multiple intelligences. Second, the study raises the students' awareness to the importance of cohesion and coherence in writing essays, mainly the comparison-contrast, to foster their language proficiency. Also, it indirectly clarifies to the students that adopting such a learning strategy helps nurture their higher order skills. Therefore, this study is an invitation for teachers and students to implement this guide in their writing classes to facilitate the CC essay writing process and make it more productive. Further research might examine the impact of the comparison-contrast essay on the students' problem-solving, leadership and teamwork. Researchers can also observe how the CC essay affects the students' transferable skills of organization and communication. They can also examine how to digitize the CCCC guide through utilizing online tools like collaborative writing platforms, digital graphic organizers, and interactive games for accessibility and engagement.

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The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Assessment Rubric for Comparison-Contrast Essay

1 = very poor 2 = Poor 3 = Fair 4 = Good 5 = Very Good

Skill	1	2	3	4	5	Mark
<u>Content</u> Generating ideas (similarities and differences in distinct features between two subjects)	Ideas are totally irrelevant and illogical. Target reader is not informed.	Ideas supporting examples and evidence may be incomplete, irrelevant or misrepresented. Target reader is minimally informed.	Ideas and supporting examples and evidence are somewhat complete and/or somewhat logical. Target reader is mostly informed.	Ideas and supporting examples and evidence are mostly relevant, complete and logical. Target reader is on the whole informed.	Ideas, supporting examples and evidence are thoroughly relevant, complete and very logical. Target reader is fully informed.	
<u>Coherence 1</u> Organisation of the essay Follow basic structure of a compare and contrast essay (introduction, thesis statement, body paragraphs, supporting details with similarities and differences between two subjects, conclusion)	Text contains no elements of a compare and contrast essay.	Text contains few of the elements of a compare and contrast essay.	Text contains some of the elements of a compare and contrast essay.	Text contains most of the elements of a compare and contrast essay.	Text contains all of the elements of a compare and contrast essay.	
<u>Coherence 2</u> Connectedness between ideas, sentences and paragraphs using transition words/phrases	Text is not connected.	Text is minimally connected using a very limited number of linking words.	Text is connected and cohesive using basic linking words.	Text is generally cohesive, using a variety of linking words.	Text is well connected and cohesive.	
<u>Grammatical Cohesion</u> Use of reference, ellipsis, conjunction and substitution	Cohesive devices are misused/not employed.	Cohesive devices are minimally employed/correct.	Cohesive devices are somehow correctly employed.	Cohesive devices are well employed.	Cohesive devices are very well employed.	
<u>Lexical Cohesion</u> Use of reiteration and collocation	Text has no semantic relations between words.	Text has a very limited extent of semantic relations between words.	Text has a few semantic relations between words.	Text has a good range of semantic relations between words.	Text is lexically well interconnected.	
<u>Language</u> Use of conventions, such as spelling, sentence structure, and subject-verb agreement	Text is full of spelling mistakes, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and subject-verb agreement errors.	Text contains many spelling mistakes, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and subject-verb agreement errors.	Text contains some spelling mistakes, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and subject-verb agreement errors.	Text contains very few spelling mistakes, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and subject-verb agreement errors.	Text is free from spelling mistakes, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and subject-verb agreement errors.	

Overall Mark: _____/30

Appendix A-1: Validation of the Assessment Rubric for Comparison-Contrast Essay

Developing an effective rubric is crucial for fair and accurate assessment of student writing. Here's a breakdown of key validation strategies to ensure the rubric is reliable, valid, clear, unbiased, and user-friendly:

1) Reliability Testing:

Inter-rater Reliability: Two INTE 103 instructors were randomly selected to assess five writing samples for INTE 103 students using the rubric. The level of agreement between both raters was calculated to assess consistency using percent agreement as shown in **Table A1**. An 80% agreement means that the majority of the students received the same scores by the both assessors.

Table A1. Inter-rater percent agreement.

Variable #	Rater 1	Rater 2	Difference
1	12	12	0
2	17	16	1
3	14	14	0
4	10	10	0
5	11	11	0
Number of Zeros			4
Number of Items			5
Percent Agreement			80%

Intra-rater Reliability: One of the assessors was randomly selected to score the same writing samples two times (T1, T2) at two different intervals. The correlation coefficient was calculated to check the consistency of scores in order to ensure the rubric yields consistent results over time. A correlation of $r = 0.9$ suggests a strong, positive association between two variables (**Table A2**), which means that the scores are very close to each other at both intervals of time.

Table A2. Intra-rater reliability.

Essay	T1	T2
1	12	11
2	17	15
3	14	14
4	10	9
5	11	11
r	0.956296	

2) Validity Testing:

Content Validity: The rubric was accurately reviewed and evaluated by the advisor and subject-matter experts—in this case three INTE 103 instructors—to examine if it reflects the intended learning objectives and writing skills to be assessed (herein comparison, contrast, coherence, cohesion).

Construct Validity: Students' performance on the essay using the rubric was analyzed and compared with another measure of the same essay (using a checklist) to see if the rubric captures the targeted construct. Therefore, a t-test was conducted to determine if there is a significant difference between the mean scores of two groups of essays and how they are related. A p -value of 0.368565057 (greater than 0.05) indicates that the result is insignificant. This means that the rubric yielded similar results to the other measure (Table A3).

Table A3. T-test for rubric construct validity.

Rubric Results	Checklist Results
12	11
17	16
14	14
10	10
11	10
t-test	0.368565057

3) Clarity and Usability:

Peer Assessment: Five INTE 103 students and an instructor were randomly selected to assess the understandability of the rubric's language and criteria. The essays were graded by the instructor on the one hand and by the students as well. This helped check if students were able to understand the wording and the structure of the rubric. However, all peer assessment scores were higher than those of the instructor (Table A4). A p -value of 0.004636 (smaller than 0.05) indicates that the result is significant. This means that the rubric did not yield similar results by the instructor and the students.

Table A4. T-test for rubric clarity and understandability.

Essay	Instructor's Assessment	Peer Assessment
1	12	13
2	16	17
3	14	15
4	10	12
5	11	13
T-test	0.004636	

Interviews: Based on the results of the t-test, the researcher interviewed both the students and the instructor to identify any areas of confusion or difficulty in interpreting the criteria and descriptors. The instructor found the rubric clear while the students found difficulty interpreting the sections on cohesion and coherence. Therefore, the wording and structure of these sections in the rubric were refined for clarity based on the feedback received.

4) Bias and Fairness:

Review for Bias: The advisor analyzed the rubric for language or criteria that would favor or disadvantage certain student groups, including cultural bias or focusing on specific writing styles.

Multiple Perspectives: The perspectives of two academic experts (INTE 103 instructors) were included when developing and reviewing the rubric to minimize bias.

5) User Feedback:

Student Survey: After updating the rubric based on the students', instructors', raters', experts' and the advisor's recommendations, a student survey was conducted. The five students involved in the peer-assessment activity were asked to reply to a 7-likert scale survey concerning the usage of the rubric in assessing the comparison-contrast essays. The survey includes five statements about the rubric's clarity, connection to the writing task, usefulness, fairness, and overall experience.

- I found the criteria in the rubric to be easy to understand. (This assesses clarity of the rubric language.)
- The rubric clearly explained what was expected of me in my writing assignment. (This assesses if the rubric connects criteria to the writing task.)
- The rubric helped me identify areas where I could improve my writing. (This assesses the rubric's usefulness in self-assessment.)
- I felt that the rubric fairly assessed my writing skills. (This assesses fairness of the rubric criteria.)
- Overall, I found the rubric to be a helpful tool for understanding how my writing will be graded. (This assesses the overall user experience with the rubric.)

Tables A5-A9 depict the results of the student survey concerning the implementation of the rubric in peer assessment. All results indicate that the students either agreed or strongly agreed to each statement with the percentages of 40 and 60 or *vice versa*.

Table A5. Student survey: Rubric analysis S1.

S1: I found the criteria in the rubric to be easy to understand.				
Scale	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
A	2	40	2	40%
STA	3	60	5	100%

Table A6. Student survey: Rubric analysis S2.

S2: The rubric clearly explained what was expected of me in my writing assignment.				
Scale	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
A	2	40	2	40%
STA	3	60	5	100%

Table A7. Student survey: Rubric analysis S3.

S3: The rubric helped me identify areas where I could improve my writing.				
Scale	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
A	3	60	3	60%
STA	2	40	5	100%

Table A8. Student survey: Rubric analysis S4.

S4: I felt that the rubric fairly assessed my writing skills.				
Scale	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
A	3	60	3	60%
STA	2	40	5	100%

Table A9. Student survey: Rubric analysis S5.

S5: Overall, I found the rubric to be a helpful tool for understanding how my writing will be graded.				
Scale	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
A	2	40	2	40%
STA	3	60	5	100%

Educator Interviews: An interview was conducted with the instructor to understand her experience using the rubric. The following questions were discussed:

General Use:

- How easy was it for you to integrate the rubric into your teaching and assessment practices? Very easy
- Did you require any additional training or support materials to effectively use the rubric? No.
- Effectiveness in Guiding Writing:
- In your experience, did the rubric effectively guide students in understanding the expectations for the writing assignment? To a great extent.
- Did you observe any changes in how students approached their writing after being introduced to the rubric? Students' focus on specific criteria such as

coherence increased greatly. They were able to construct a five-paragraph essay with a good thesis and linking words.

- Did the rubric provide a clear framework for providing constructive feedback to students on their writing? Definitely because it presents each section separately with very clear descriptions, so students know exactly where their weaknesses lie.

Fairness and Assessment:

- Do you believe the rubric fairly assesses the writing skills targeted by the assignment? Indeed.
- Have you encountered any situations where the rubric might not have been suitable for a particular student's writing or learning style? It meets all styles since it is clear and concise.
- Overall, how confident are you that the rubric provides a fair and accurate assessment of student writing? Very confident.

Additional Feedback:

- Are there any areas of the rubric you would like to see improved? No, everything is clear.
- Do you have any suggestions for how the rubric can be used more effectively in the classroom? In addition to instructor and peer assessment, self-assessment will help students identify their weaknesses by themselves.
- In conclusion, implementing these validation strategies ensured that the rubric is reliable, valid, clear, unbiased, and user-friendly, ultimately leading to a more effective assessment process for student writing.

Appendix B: Comparison-Contrast Coherence-Cohesion Writing Guide

A) Comprehensive Documentation

Purpose: The CCCC guide aims at helping students write a comparison-contrast essay with strong cohesion and coherence.

Intended Use: The guide was used as one of the instruments in this study to check its efficiency in enhancing the INTE 101, 103 and 104 students' comparison-contrast essays.

Structure: The CCCC guide integrates comparison-contrast writing with cohesion and coherence in alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy and CEFR levels. It is divided into three levels, lower, middle and upper. Each part includes personalized pedagogical strategies that match with its level of difficulty. These strategies include task examples, cohesion skills, coherence skills as well as recommended teaching-learning approaches.

B) Examples and Explanations

Bloom's Lower Levels:

- Remembering: Recalling and recognizing factual information.
- Understanding: Grasping the meaning and implications of knowledge.

Key Considerations:

- Focus on concrete, observable aspects: Tasks should deal with easily identifiable

features, attributes, or actions.

- Emphasize basic description: Prioritize clear and direct comparison/contrast descriptions based on readily available information.
- Maintain simple structure: Utilize straightforward point-by-point organization for ease of comprehension.
- Emphasize clear transitions: Employ basic transition words to guide the reader's logical flow.

Bloom's Level	Lower/Remembering and Understanding
Task Examples	<p>Remembering learned concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two observable features • Two basic concepts (e.g., two shapes) <p>Understanding concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factual description of two elements (e.g., two historical events or figures) • Personalities of two main characters
Cohesion Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple transitions (e.g., "similarly," "in contrast") • Basic pronoun references • Direct repetition of names • Clear labelling of similarities/differences
Coherence Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, simple sentence structure • Logical grouping of information (e.g., one paragraph per element) • Basic identification of relationships between elements (e.g., cause-and-effect) (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).
Pedagogical Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive activities: Matching games, sorting tasks (Derewianka, 2007), and Venn diagrams to visually grasp similarities and differences between concepts. • Sentence strips and graphic organizers: Providing sentence starter prompts (Langer & Applebee, 2013) and visuals (Graham, Harris, & Mason, 2005) to build clear and cohesive paragraphs. • Modeling and guided practice: Explicitly demonstrating effective use of transitions, pronouns (Halliday & Hasan, 1976), and basic coherence strategies through teacher writing and collaborative writing activities (Bazerman, 2008). • Feedback and revision: Focusing on sentence clarity, logical flow (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996), and basic paragraph structure with clear expectations and support.

Bloom's Middle Levels

- Applying: Using knowledge and skills in new situations.
- Analyzing: Breaking down information into components and understanding

their relationships.

Key Considerations:

- Move beyond basic description: Tasks should encourage applying knowledge to analyze similarities and differences, not just list them.
- Incorporate basic reasoning: Require students to explain their observations and justify their comparisons/contrasts.
- Consider multiple perspectives: Encourage consideration of different viewpoints or interpretations when comparing/contrasting.
- Emphasize clear and logical structure: Maintain a well-organized flow of ideas supported by evidence and reasoning.

Cohesion/Coherence:

- Cohesion: Builds upon lower-level skills, ensuring complex sentences with varied vocabulary and appropriate referencing.
- Coherence: Demonstrates deeper understanding by logically connecting ideas, using evidence/examples, and providing clear transitions.

Bloom's Level	Middle/Applying and Analyzing
	Applying learned concepts to real world: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two government policies • Two historical figures from different periods, focusing on their contributions and leadership styles • A review of two similar products, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses for a specific audience
Task Examples	Analyzing textual evidence to identify specific similarities and differences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literary characters' motivations and actions • Two scientific theories explaining the same phenomenon, analyzing their evidence and limitations • The impact of two different social movements on a specific historical event
Cohesion Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More complex conjunctions/ transition words (e.g., "conversely," "on the other hand") • Complex, clear referencing • Varied sentence structure using ellipsis and substitution (Halliday & Hasan, 1976) • Precise vocabulary (e.g., reiteration, collocation) (Derewianka, 2007). • Specific terminology
Coherence Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building arguments based on evidence (Toulmin, 1958, 2003) • Using signal phrases to connect points of comparison/contrast (e.g., "for instance," "in addition") • Organizing information into paragraphs with clear topic sentences and logical transitions between them (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

Continued

Pedagogical Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text analysis: Exploring literary texts, historical documents, or news articles (Langer & Applebee, 2013) to identify how authors use specific cohesive devices and coherence strategies to achieve their aims. • Debate and argumentation: Engaging in structured debates or writing persuasive essays (Toulmin, 1958, 2003) that require students to critically compare and contrast positions, using evidence and counter-arguments for strong coherence. • Sentence variety and sophistication: Using transitional phrases, parallelism, and varied sentence structures (van de Velde & Meyer, 2014) to enhance fluency and emphasize key points. • Graphic organizers and concept maps: Using visual tools to map out relationships between ideas (Glaubke, 2007), identify cause-and-effect connections, and plan cohesive paragraphs and essays.
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Bloom's Higher Levels

- Evaluating: Making judgments based on criteria and evidence.
- Creating: Generating new ideas, products, or solutions.

Key Considerations:

- Transcend simple comparisons: Tasks should encourage critical evaluation of similarities and differences, considering various perspectives and interpretations.
- Incorporate complex reasoning: Require students to justify their evaluations and support them with well-developed arguments and evidence.
- Promote original thought: Encourage the creation of new ideas, solutions, or perspectives based on the comparison/contrast analysis.
- Maintain strong cohesion and coherence: Ensure seamless integration of complex ideas, evidence, and reasoning within a well-structured and persuasive argument.

Cohesion/Coherence:

- Cohesion: Exhibits sophisticated language use with varied vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and precise referencing.
- Coherence: Demonstrates exceptional understanding by logically connecting complex ideas, providing compelling evidence, and presenting well-articulated arguments with clear transitions.

Bloom's Level	Higher/Evaluating and Creating
Task Examples	Critically evaluating the strengths and weaknesses
	• Two different approaches
	• Two competing scientific theories
	• Synthesizing information from multiple sources • Cultural norms across different countries

Continued

Task Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credibility and potential biases of different narrative • Creating persuasive arguments based on comparative analysis
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating for one policy over another based on a comparison of their effectiveness • Investigating the validity of two competing scientific theories explaining the same phenomenon
Cohesion Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sophisticated transition words and phrases (e.g., “notwithstanding,” “despite this”) • Parallel sentence structures • Figurative language for emphasis (van de Velde & Meyer, 2014) • Sophisticated terminology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex argumentation with counter-arguments addressed (Toulmin, 1958, 2003) • Seamless integration of evidence and analysis (Bazerman, 2008) • Clear identification of main points and conclusions (Glaubke, 2007).
Coherence Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent research and synthesis: Conducting research on complex topics, comparing and contrasting diverse perspectives, and crafting arguments through critical analysis and evaluation of evidence (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). • Metacognition and reflection: • Providing opportunities for students to reflect on their own writing choices (Bazerman, 2008), analyze the effectiveness of their cohesion and coherence strategies, and set goals for improvement.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genre-specific instruction: Teaching the specific conventions and stylistic choices necessary for effective comparison/contrast writing in different genres like academic essays, literary criticisms, or policy proposals. • Peer review and feedback: Implementing structured peer review sessions where students analyze each other’s writing for strengths and weaknesses in cohesion and coherence, providing constructive feedback with specific suggestions for improvement.
Pedagogical Strategies	

Appendix B-1: Validation of the CCCC Writing Guide/Middle Level

A) Purpose of Validation: The validation process is essential to ensure that the CCCC Writing Guide is an effective tool for enhancing the quality of writing, specifically in terms of comparison, contrast, coherence, and cohesion. This involves confirming that the guide is both reliable and valid.

B) Validation Process

- Participants: A group of six INTE 103 students together with their instructor were randomly selected by the researcher to implement the CCCC guide/

middle level in their comparison-contrast essay. These participants have similar characteristics as the study group students.

- Pre-Test: Before using the guide, the participants' writing skills were assessed through a writing assignment using the assessment rubric for comparison-contrast essay.
- Guide Implementation: Clear instructions on how to use the writing guide were given to both the students and the instructor. They were also informed of offering a brief training session or tutorial whenever necessary, depending on the complexity of the sections.
- Timeframe: The participants were designated a period of four weeks to utilize the guide while working on a specific comparison-contrast writing assignment.
- Post-Test: After using the guide, the participants completed another writing assignment similar to the pre-test.
- Evaluation: The pre-test and post-test writing samples were compared using the same rubric. This analysis helped assess the guide's impact on the students' comparison-contrast writing skills.
- Feedback Collection: A survey was distributed to participants after using the guide. The survey questions focus on clarity, usability, helpfulness, and any areas of confusion. Also, an interview was conducted with the instructor to gather in-depth feedback on her experience using the guide.
- Data Analysis:

1) Writing Samples Comparison: The pre-test and post-test writing samples were analyzed using the rubric to identify improvements in areas targeted by the guide.

2) Results of the Pretest: Before implementing the CCCC guide, the students had been tested on the relevant competencies through a comparison-contrast essay, resulting in a pre-test score for each. Descriptive statistics were obtained to determine students' performance in each competency and in the essay as a whole.

In Coh1, 3 students (50%) received 1/5 on the pre-test essay, and 3 (50%) received 2/5. This means that all scores were below average (3/5). Results are displayed in **Table A10**.

Table A10. Pilot group: Distribution of Coh1 scores in pretest essay.

Coh1 Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
1	3	50	3	50.00%
2	3	50	6	100.00%

In Coh2, four students scored 1/5 (66.66%) and two students scored 2/5 (33.33%). This means that none of the students received an average score on Coh2 in the pretest essay. Results are shown in **Table A11**.

Table A11. Pilot group: Distribution of Coh2 scores in pretest essay.

Coh2 Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
1	4	66.66	4	66.67%
2	2	33.33	6	100.00%

Table A12 presents the results of CohG. Two students received 1/5 (33.33%), three students received 2/5 (50%) and one student got 3/5 (16.66%). This indicates that the majority of the students performed poorly on CohG in the pretest.

Table A12. Pilot group: Distribution of CohG scores in pretest essay.

CohG Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
1	2	33.33	2	33.33%
2	3	50	5	83.33%
3	1	16.66	6	100.00%

As for CohL, three students received 1/5 (50%) while the other three students got 2/5 (50%). This reveals that all students could not achieve average performance on CohL in the pretest (**Table A13**).

Table A13. Pilot group: Distribution of CohL scores in pretest essay.

CohL Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
1	3	50	3	50.00%
2	3	50	6	100.00%

The distribution of the students' total scores in the pre-test essay is depicted in **Table A14**. One student received 9/30 (16.66%), one student got 11/30 (16.66%) and three students got 12/30 (50%). This means that all students failed the pretest essay.

Table A14. Pilot group: Distribution of total scores in pretest essay.

Total Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
9	1	16.66	1	16.67%
11	1	16.66	2	33.33%
12	3	50	5	83.33%
15	1	16.66	6	100.00%

1) Results of the Post-test: After implementing the CCCC guide, the students

were tested on the relevant competencies through a comparison-contrast essay similar to the pre-test, resulting in a post-test score for each. Descriptive statistics were obtained to determine students' performance in each competency and in the essay as a whole.

In Coh1, two students scored 1/5 (33.33%) and four students scored 3/5 (66.66%) in the post-test. This means that more than half of the students achieved the average score on Coh1 in the post-test as shown in **Table A15**.

Table A15. Pilot group: distribution of Coh1 scores in post-test essay.

Coh1 Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
2	2	33.33	2	33%
3	4	66.66	6	100%

In Coh2, one student (16.66%) received 2/5 while the other five students (83.33%) received 3/5. This indicates that the majority of the students received a passing grade on Coh2 in the post-test essay. Results are displayed in **Table A16**.

Table A16. Pilot group: distribution of Coh2 scores in post-test essay.

Coh2 Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
2	1	16.66	1	17%
3	5	83.33	6	100%

Table A17 presents students' scores on CohG in the post-test essay. Two students (33.33%) got 2/5, three students (50%) received 3/5 and one student (16.66%) received 4/5. This indicates that the majority of the students performed well on CohG in the post-test essay.

Table A17. Pilot Group: Distribution of CohG Scores in Post-test Essay.

CohG Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
2	2	33.33	2	33%
3	3	50	5	83%
4	1	16.66	6	100%

The results of CohL are similar to those of CohG as displayed in **Table A18**. Most of the students did well on CohL in the post-test essay.

The distribution of the students' total scores in the post-test essay is described in **Table A19**. One student received 14/30 (16.66%), one student got 16/30 (16.66%), another student got 18/30 (16.66%), two students received 19/30

Table A18. Pilot Group: Distribution of CohL Scores in Poste-test Essay.

CohL Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
2	2	33.33	2	33%
3	3	50	5	83%
4	1	16.66	6	100%

(33.33%) and one student scored 20/30 (16,66%). This means that 66.66 students passed the post-test while the scores of the remaining students showed significant improvement.

Table A19. Pilot Group: Distribution of Total Scores in Post-test Essay.

Total Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
14	1	16.66	1	17%
16	1	16.66	2	33%
18	1	16.66	3	50%
19	2	33.33	5	83%
20	1	16.66	6	100%

Table A20 presents the students' score progress across the pre-test to the post-test essay as represented in the score mean and standard deviation. For instance, the students' mean total scores in the post-test increased by 5.8 points in comparison with their mean total scores in the pre-test.

Table A20. Pilot Group Score Progress: Pre-test vs. Post-test Results.

Competency	Pilot Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Coh1	Pre-test	6	1.5	0.547723	0.204124145
	Post-test	6	2.666667	0.471405	0.19245009
Coh2	Pre-test	6	1.666667	0.471405	0.19245009
	Post-test	6	2.833333	0.408248	0.152145155
CohG	Pre-test	6	1.833333	0.752773	0.280541804
	Post-test	6	2.833333	0.752773	0.280541804
CohL	Pre-test	6	1.5	0.547723	0.204124145
	Post-test	6	2.833333	0.752773	0.280541804
Total	Pre-test	6	11.83333	1.94079	0.723289809
	Post-test	6	17.66667	2.054805	0.838870493

1) Pilot Group Student Survey: The pilot group students were required to reply to a 7-likert scale survey concerning the implementation of the CCCC

Guide in writing a comparison-contrast essay. The survey includes five statements about the guide's clarity, organization, and helpfulness:

- How easy was it to understand the information in the writing guide?
- Were the instructions clear and easy to follow?
- Did the guide provide enough examples to illustrate the concepts?
- Were there any sections that you found confusing or difficult to understand?
- How useful was the guide in helping you improve your writing?

Survey Analysis

The analysis of students' replies to the first statement S1 in the survey reveals that one student (16.66%) somehow agreed, three students (50%) agreed and two students (33.33%) strongly agreed that it was easy to understand the information in the guide (**Table A21**).

Table A21. Pilot group: CCCC guide survey analysis S1.

S1: It was easy to understand the information in the writing guide.				
Scale	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
SA	1	16.66	1	17%
A	3	50	4	67%
STA	2	33.33	6	100%

As for the second statement S2, one student (16.66%) somehow agreed, three students (50%) agreed while two students (33.33%) strongly agreed that the instructions were clear and easy to follow. Results are shown in **Table A22**.

Table A22. Pilot group: CCCC guide survey analysis S2.

S2: The instructions were clear and easy to follow.				
Scale	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
SA	1	16.66	1	17%
A	3	50	4	67%
STA	2	33.33	6	100%

Concerning statement three S3 (**Table A23**), one student (16.66%) somehow agreed, two students (33.33%) agreed and three students (50%) strongly agreed that the guide provided enough examples to illustrate the concepts.

Students' replies to statement four S4 varied greatly (**Table A24**). One student (16.66%) disagreed, another (16.66%) somehow disagreed, another student (16.66%) neither agreed nor disagreed, one student (16.66%) somehow agreed

Table A23. Pilot group: CCCC Guide survey analysis S3.

S3: The guide provides enough examples to illustrate the concepts.				
Scale	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
SA	1	16.66	1	17%
A	2	33.33	3	50%
STA	3	50	6	100%

while two students (33.33%) agreed that the guide contains no sections that are confusing or difficult to understand.

Table A24. Pilot group: CCCC guide survey analysis S4.

S4: The guide contains no sections that are confusing or difficult to understand.				
Scale	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
D	1	16.66	1	17%
SD	1	16.66	2	33%
N	1	16.66	3	50%
SA	1	16.66	4	67%
A	2	33.33	6	100%

Table A25 depicts the results of the students' replies to the fifth statement S5. Two students (33.33%) agreed while the other four students (66.66) strongly agreed that the guide was useful in helping them improve their writing.

Table A25. Pilot group: CCCC guide survey analysis S5.

S5: The guide was useful in helping me improve my writing.				
Scale	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
A	2	33.33	2	33%
STA	4	66.66	6	100%

1) Educator Feedback: A One-on-one interview with the teacher was held to discuss her experience using the guide in the classroom. The following questions were discussed:

- How easy was it to integrate the guide into your curriculum? It was very easy to integrate this guide in my writing class, but first I had to explain all sections in the guide first to make sure students are familiar with all terms.
- Did the guide provide enough support for you to teach the concepts effectively? Generally speaking, yes. However, the pedagogical strategies presented

need more exemplification; i.e. a teacher needs to find more sample activities to be implemented in class.

- Did you find any sections of the guide to be confusing or unclear? The guide, in general, is clear. However, the sections on task examples, coherence and cohesion should include sampling. For instance, in the Cohesion Skills section, examples on complex conjunctions/transition words must be added such as “on the other hand”.
- How did the guide impact your students’ writing skills? The guide could clearly help enhance my students’ comparison-contrast essay writing which is clear in their post-test competency and total scores.

Revisions Based on Data: The collected feedback was analysed to identify common themes and areas for improvement. The pre- and post-test results confirm that the CCCC guide has generally helped students develop their comparison-contrast essay writing. However, based on the students’ answers in the survey, it appeared that they were confused about some parts of the guide as is clear in statement 4 of the survey: The guide contains no sections that are confusing or difficult to understand. Hence, the researcher asked the students to identify the sections they found difficult. Their replies matched with the instructor’s. All of them recommended that more examples be added especially under task examples, coherence and cohesion. Moreover, they required that the section on pedagogical strategies be clarified with more explanation and examples. Based on the pilot test results, the researcher revised the writing guide to improve its clarity, usability, and effectiveness in achieving its intended outcomes. All recommendations were considered and the necessary modifications were done.