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## Volume 16

Aomori Prefecture English Education  
Society

### Discourse Marker の効果

英語を自ら学んだり、他に指導したりする場合に discourse marker を意識しないで進めることはおそらくないと思います。読んだり聞いたりした内容が、すっと頭に入る時は、書き手や話し手が無理なく discourse marker を使用しているとも言えると思います。実際の表現を読んで、その効果について考えて行きましょう。

#### *Discourse Markers: Helping the Listener*

Discourse Markers are used to signal important connections and relationships in speech and writing. They guide the listener or reader through the content ... *organizing, connecting and clarifying* parts of the conversation or text. Read the samples below ... first using the Discourse Markers ... and then without; you should notice the difference.

[Note: the focus here is speaking.]

Discourse Markers add, contrast, show sequence, show cause and result, and show conclusion.

Addition: *and / in addition / furthermore / also + as well or either*

*I have always been interested in music. In addition, I have played the piano since I was five.*

*I don't like playing sports. Furthermore, I don't like watching sports, either.*

Contrast: *but / however / on the other hand / although*

*I like playing sports. However, I don't often watch the sports I like to play.*

*Although my father was a piano teacher, I never took up any musical instrument.*

Sequence: *first / then / next / finally*

*First, I began watching this sport. Then, I started playing.*

*Next, I studied the strategy of the sport. Finally, I became a coach.*

Cause and Result: *because / therefore / so / as a result*

*I worked very hard studying my sport. Therefore, I am a good coach.*

*Because I have spent many years practicing the piano, I have become a good musician.*

Conclusion: *in conclusion / to sum up / in summary / which is to say*

*(the long history of my life in sports) To sum up, it is clear that I have dedicated my life to sports.*

*(the long history of music in my life) Which is to say, music has always been meaningful for me.*

Discourse Markers also ...

Organize what we say:

1. to start a conversation/interaction: Now, we have to clean up this room by lunchtime.
2. to end a conversation/interaction: So ... I will see you on Sunday at 3:00 pm then. OK?
3. to change a topic of conversation/interaction: Speaker A: We need a gift for him.  
B: Yea ... but we don't have very much money. A: Anyway, we have to get him something.  
Anyway brings the topic back from money to the necessity of buying a gift.

#### Monitor and Share what we say:

1. say something in another way: I listened for a while. Then I decided to leave.  
What I mean is – it just wasn't interesting for me, so I left.
2. stress shared knowledge/understanding: You know, renting a car was a great idea – thank you for suggesting it.

#### Show Opinion or Experience:

1. If you ask me, Olivia is doing the right thing moving to Tokyo. Shows my opinion.
2. Sadly, Olivia's family doesn't support her decision. Shows my opinion.
3. Believe me, I understand your position. Look, we have all experienced this. Shows experience.

#### Make our language Softer and Less Direct:

1. Can I just ask a question? (instead of Can I ask a question?)
2. We should probably try doing that another way. (instead of We should try doing that another way.)  
3. Perhaps you should turn off the music when you study.  
(instead of You should turn off the music when you study.)

What kind of Discourse Marker are these examples?

1. That restaurant? First of all, the food was terrific. On top of that, the service was fantastic.  
So, if you ask me, I would highly recommend that restaurant to anyone.
2. To be honest, I don't think he knows what he is talking about.  
Even though everyone likes him, I'm afraid I will never ask his advice again.

#### \* We are very grateful to have received a question about last month's REAL ENGLISH content:

— what is the difference between [habit] and [custom]? —

A **habit** is something that an individual does regularly ... it is usually viewed as either a good habit or a bad habit.

*She has good study habits – she always reviews the content after a class.*

*I don't know about him ... he has a lot of bad habits ... he smokes, he drives too fast, he doesn't answer emails promptly.*

A **custom** is a cultural activity or social practice that takes place regularly and is joined by most of the people.

*Japan has many seasonal customs that originated in agricultural life ...*

*The gift-giving customs in western Europe are very different than those in eastern Europe.*

Thank you for the question...if anyone ever has questions – about the content or something you would like to see REAL ENGLISH present – don't hesitate ... send it in!

あっという間の夏。夏を感じる瞬間も世代によって異なるのではと懐気に感じています。私にとってみては電車のエアコンの寒さと遠くに聞こえるねぶた囃子の練習の響きでしょうか。人によっては、スマホアプリの壁紙の着せ替えとか好きなYouTuberの動画の内容とかかも知れませんね。若い世代の発想で、自らの学びのスタイルや指導方法についてもアップデートされたアイディアを聞く機会がもっと欲しいと思う今日この頃です。とりあえずのチャンスは7月28日のサマーセミナーか。(文責伴)

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