

Introduction to Discourse Markers

Discourse markers can be described as the 'glue' that binds together a piece of writing or dialogue, making the different parts of the text or dialogue 'stick together'. They express different relationships between ideas, for example to add something, to make a contrast, or to give an example.

In writing, they are usually words or phrases such as 'however', 'although' and 'Nevertheless'.

In conversation, discourse markers are usually words or phrases such as 'oh', 'like', 'you know', 'well', 'OK', 'bye' or 'right'. They can also be sounds such as 'Um..', 'Err..' or 'Ouch!'

Types of linking words

1. Prepositions = at, on, in, during, for

(because of, due to, in addition to, in spite of)

2. Conjunctions

Co-ordinating = FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)

Subordinating = if, when, while, because

3. Adverbials

Firstly, finally, generally speaking, however, for example etc

4. Relative pronouns

Which, that, whose, whom, where, with which etc