

# Didactic potential of discourse markers in teaching reading in English

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One of the essential characteristics of an effective text is cohesion [1], which can be achieved by various mechanisms, including such a class of language units as discourse markers. Discourse markers are defined as “words and expressions which help to structure spoken exchanges and written text” [2]. The author presumes that the absence of discourse markers or their wrong usage can negatively affect the correct interpretation of the text or cause difficulty when dealing with it. Consequently, discourse markers can be useful in studying a foreign language, since the ability to operate with them in a text can influence the perception and understanding of incoming information.

In this regard, the author of this paper considers the didactic potential of discourse markers in teaching reading and presents the examples of exercises aimed at improving reading skills through discourse markers. These exercises can be applied at English lessons in high school. The main feature of the exercises developed by the author is that the discourse markers used in the tasks serve as tools for better reading comprehension. The tasks are as follows:

- 1) Gap task. In this exercise students are to fill in the gaps in the text with proper discourse markers.
- 2) Non-gap task. Unlike the previous task, there are no gaps in the text of this type. Students must independently determine the connections between the sentences that make up the text.
- 3) Sentence-gap task. In this exercise students have a text with missing sentences. Based on the discourse markers given at the beginning of the sentence, students need to restore the logic of the text.
- 4) Making synonymic groups. In this exercise, students must identify all discourse markers in the text, distribute them into synonymous groups and indicate the functions each group performs.
- 5) Synonymic change. The task implies replacing certain discourse markers of the text with synonymous ones.
- 6) Correcting mistakes. This exercise is aimed at correcting discourse markers that are used improperly in the text, while students may or may not know the exact number of errors.
- 7) Producing prolonged answers task, which involves answering questions about the content of the text. A distinctive feature of the answers is that students are supposed to operate with discourse markers as auxiliary tools. In this way, students implicitly demonstrate an understanding of the function of discourse markers.

Thus, the author believes that the types of tasks presented can be an auxiliary tool for improving students' reading skills. Applying discourse units and understanding their functions allows students to achieve better orientation in the structure of the text and, as a result, better reading comprehension.

**Key words:** discourse markers, discourse units, reading, reading skills, comprehension, types of exercises, didactic potential.

## REFERENCES

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