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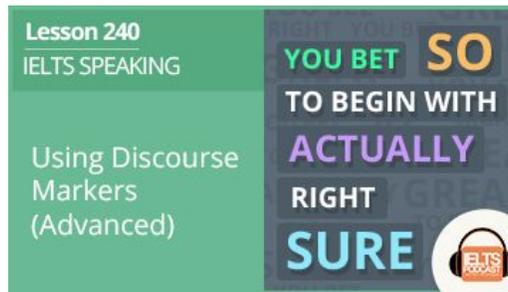
**Ben:** Hello there, my beautiful IELTS students. As you probably know, my name is Ben Worthington and in this tutorial, we are going to specifically look at discourse markers. Why are we looking at discourse markers?

Well, if we want to score a band 7 or above, we can have a look at the official IELTS criteria and under the section of fluency and cohesion, then we move down to band 7 and we read it we get, "Uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with some flexibility."

Well, what are discourse markers? Good question. When you're answering the speaking examiner's questions probably in part 1 or part 3, you want to make use of these discourse markers that show fluency and cohesion.

Discourse markers are sometimes called signposts or sequencing language or signposting language. These are usually phrases or words that make it easier to identify attitudes, changes of direction, or changes of perspective in a conversation. You probably know basic levels or intermediate ones. That's called basic signposting.

Phrases such as in my opinion, finally, we got to the bus stop and next. "Next, we went to the bus stop." You see? These are very common ones, but if we want to be scoring high, well, we're



going to be looking for less commonly used discourse markers from which we can link ideas and we can use for signposting ideas too.

Here are some examples of some discourse markers to express agreement. We can say absolutely, certainly, definitely, well, actually. Side note: do not stick to one and use it throughout your whole speaking exam. I used to have a student that would start every single answer with well. After a couple of hours, it started to get a little bit annoying.

Also, from the examiner's point of view, obviously, we need to use a variety of language in order to score high. So, some other discourse markers to express an attitude: to tell you the truth, I don't actually read a lot, for example. To tell you the truth, I much prefer walking in the Yorkshire Dales than coastal walks.

Next one: I must admit. I must admit I hardly ever read. I must admit I have a strong preference for the countryside over the city. Next one: to be honest, I don't really read that much. To be honest, I hardly ever swim. To be honest, I prefer the countryside. Next one: ideally, I would be reading every day. Ideally, I would have a job in the city center. Ideally, I would be living in Australia.

You see? We're just expressing an attitude here. Now, because the speaking exam is slightly informal compared with the writing-- because it is slightly less formal than the writing, the above words and phrases are ideally suited for the examiner's questions. For example in part 1,



"Does your name have a special meaning?" "Well, actually it does. Ben in Hebrew means son, I think. I'm not entirely sure." Just something like that.

"Do you like your home town?" "Certainly, I love Huddersfield. It's one of the best towns in the world." Anybody who is familiar with England might disagree with what I just said there. If there's any IELTS tutors living in England, they might disagree with that because Huddersfield doesn't have the best branding which is a little unfair but understandable. If you said, "Certainly I love London. It's one of the best cities in the world," you could get away with it. Anyway, let's move on.

So, how would using these terms with flexibility look like? Well, very similar to all the examples I just gave you. Let me just give you this list again. To tell you the truth-- I hope you are writing these down for expressing an attitude. To tell you the truth, I've never been to Scotland. To tell you the truth, I've always wanted to live in Australia. Can you see?

Next one: I must admit it's beautiful living in the city. I must admit I've been wanting to move to Melbourne all my life. To be honest, this is the best place in the world. I love the culture. I love the nature surrounding the city. I love the attitude of the people. Next one: to be honest, this place is simply amazing. To be honest, there is nowhere I would rather be.



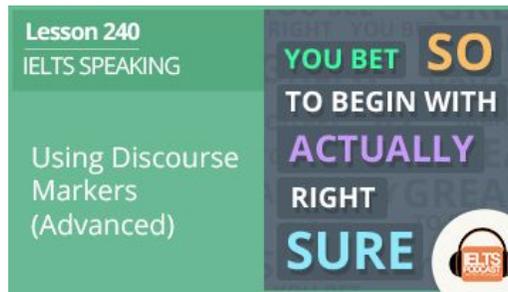
Can you grasp what I'm trying to say here? We're just using these expressions, we're putting them at the front and it's just helping break up the talk. It's making us sound more natural and it's given us an opportunity-- well basically more thinking time as well.

Try and adopt these and try and use them the next time, not only when you have your IELTS exam but try and use them in your everyday speech. You could even just go to the shop and just say, "Could I have the red one, please? No, actually to tell you the truth, I want the blue one." Write it down and make it your mission today to use these.

That's it from me. If you know anybody who you think would benefit by listening to these podcasts, send them a link, please. Let's get more people onboard and let's help more people.

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My name is Ben Worthington. Thank you very much for listening and have a great day and good luck with your IELTS. You will get there. Just put in the time, put in the work and you'll see you are going to pass IELTS. Take care.

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