



# Teaching Discourse Markers in a Technologically-Enhanced Language Classroom

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**Abstract.** This paper reports on the methods and findings of a small-scale classroom research study focusing on the facilitation of the use of discourse markers (henceforth: DMs) by second language learners of English, at Cyprus University of Technology. In the framework of explicit teaching, mixed methods, combining traditional and digital tools, were employed in order to maximize the use of DMs in the EFL classroom. It was hypothesized that involvement in the lesson and the DM use of students along with the resulting coherence of their discourse is enhanced by and increases with the application of digital and interactive activities. In order to confirm or reject our hypothesis, an opinion questionnaire was administered to explore students' perceptions about the use of digital and traditional tools demonstrated in class and to investigate the effectiveness of the enhancement of their skills in the use of discourse markers and in composing coherent texts and participating in collaborative interaction. Our study shows that students enjoy using digital tools, and, as a result of teaching and practice, they use more DMs; consequently, their pragmatic competence increases, and their interaction and argumentation becomes more natural and easier to follow.

**Keywords:** Discourse markers · CALL · Digital tools

## 1 Introduction

The use of technology in the language classroom has driven new ways of learning and teaching. Language instructors are confronted with both challenges and opportunities when it comes to the use of new technologies for bringing students to the centre of the learning process. Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) remains a phenomenon for which one can draw ambiguous conclusions. This is especially true when teaching a specific linguistic phenomenon such as discourse markers (DMs). Fraser defines DMs as metalinguistic items that provide information about the segmentation and operation of a discourse [8]. These lexical expressions (such as *so*, *well*, and *now*) have been studied in various contexts and genres and most researchers agree that their use is especially important for second language learners. More specifically, research

has shown that the use of discourse markers by second language learners can convey competence in the use of a second language as well as acculturation to the target culture [5, 9]. The present study employed a variety of digital (such as interactive quizzes, Quizlet sets, authentic listening materials and videos from corpora) and traditional (such as frontal teaching and an in-class debate) tools for demonstrating the use of discourse markers and consequently engage students in their use in a real-life classroom. The study is guided by the following research questions:

- In what ways can a variety of digital (such as interactive quizzes and videos) and traditional (such as an in-class debate) tools enhance the teaching of DMs? Do they increase students' discourse marker use and their discourse coherence in EFL lessons?
- What are the students' perceptions about the use of digital and traditional tools for learning DMs?

In order to provide an answer for the above questions, we carried out a small-scale classroom study and administered a subsequent opinion questionnaire among the participating students about their perceptions of the learning methods and digital tools.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 The Class of Discourse Markers

It has been illustrated in a number of previous research studies [10, 16] that discourse cohesion and coherence, which are essential for effective interpersonal communication, are maintained by various verbal and nonverbal markers. Therefore, building coherent discourse and the expression of discourse relations must be taught for second language learners as well. Coherence relations establish the link between the discourse units, and this link can be most explicitly expressed by verbal DMs, such as *and*, *however*, *so*, *well*, *I mean* or *by the way*. Although DMs have been widely studied by researchers, issues of terminology and the set of their defining properties and functions are still unresolved in the literature. In order to provide a clearer definition of DMs, Schiffrin, one of the most quoted authors in DM studies, describes them as “sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk” and identifies their major role as “providing contextual coordinates for ongoing talk” that indicate for the hearer how an utterance is to be interpreted [21]. It is generally agreed among most researchers that besides marking discourse structure, DMs also imply the communicative function(s) of their host units and sometimes even the attitude of the speaker, both towards the speaker and the subject (or topic) of the conversation.

In the view of Relevance Theory [22], DMs play a role in relevance understanding by reducing the processing effort needed by the hearer to uncover the intended interpretation [3]. Relevance Theory calls attention to the function of DMs facilitating the hearer's mental processes of decoding the message [22]. According to this theory, DMs contribute to “relevance understanding by reducing the processing effort needed by the hearer to reach the intended interpretation” [1]. Generally, in the framework of most hearer-oriented models of interaction, the major role of DMs is to provide instructions

to the hearer(s) on how to interpret the utterance and how to integrate the host utterance of the DM into an optimally coherent discourse. From a cognitive perspective, DMs guide interlocutors to express what is not explicitly stated but is implied by the actual utterance. Because of the potential of DMs to restrict the number of possible interpretations, a segment of discourse without a DM is often more ambiguous than intended by the speaker. Fraser claims that they even “signal a sequential relationship” between discourse units [7], which means, similarly to Relevance Theory, that DMs give instructions to the hearer how to interpret the role of it and its host unit in the given context.

Weydt raised the question why, for what reasons speakers use discourse particles (*Abtönungspartikeln*, according to his terminology) and carried out experiments and surveys to uncover a satisfactory answer. His findings, based on the perception and intuitions of his informants, clearly suggest that the use of DMs makes our utterances sound more authentic, natural, cooperative and friendly, as well as easier to follow and understand [25]. According to Frank-Job, DMs are used by speakers in order to control turn-taking mechanisms and guarantee the smooth maintenance of interaction. Conversation participants use DMs and nonverbal cues in order to avoid problematic interruptions and too frequent overlapping speech and smoothly shift the right of speakership [6]. Furthermore, speakers employ DMs in order to inform their partner(s) about their attitude(s) as well as the intention that a new topical action is about to be performed, such as topic closing and topic change.

DM use has most frequently been studied in the language of native speakers (in first language) and in terms of their role in the organization of discourse structure, in sociolinguistic interviews [21], phone calls, and meeting conversations, dialogues of highly interactive nature. It has become evident by now that DMs can be useful devices to be employed not only in HCI (human-computer interaction) theories and technologies, including in discourse modeling, dialogue generation and discourse interpretation; but the usage and practice of DMs is beneficial in second language learning as well. As a result, effective ways must be identified to teach the appropriate use of DMs for learners as it can improve their pragmatic competence and communicative efficiency.

## 2.2 Approaches to Teaching Discourse Markers

Using DMs makes the language production of students less schematic and more native-like, culturally more appropriate and may contribute to the development of their communicative competence [5, 9]. Therefore, teaching the appropriate use of DMs in an effective way is necessary in communicative language teaching in order to improve the coherence and the fluency of students’ discourse. Now let us refer to some of the fundamental language acquisition theories that serve as the theoretical background for our methodology to be briefly described in the next section.

According to Krashen’s input hypothesis, learners acquire a language by receiving and understanding discourse which is a bit beyond their current level of competence ( $i + 1$ ). Provided the proper level and amount of comprehensible input, language production ability automatically emerges, without direct teaching intervention [12]. For this reason, we selected such original, authentic discourses, including several DMs in

various contexts, to be presented in lessons which are beyond the present level of the students (B1/B2) but still comprehensible for them after pre-teaching a few keywords and by relying on context.

From the perspective of Long's interaction hypothesis [14], when learners receive feedback on their production in a conversation (also referred to as negotiation), and when they are encouraged to reformulate and improve their own utterances, acquisition is facilitated. That is why group discussions and informal evaluations were promoted where both the peers could comment on each other's production and the teacher also provided corrective feedback on learners' language.

Concerning the structure and organization of our lessons, we addressed the frameworks of explicit teaching: the Illustration – Interaction – Induction (III) [15] and the Present – Practice – Produce (PPP) methodologies. With the help of pre- and post-tests, Jones and Carter [11] measured the success of the two methods in teaching DMs in two ways, in two groups of Chinese students, compared to a third, control group. The difference between employing the III and PPP frameworks was that the III groups were not provided any pre-communicative or contextualized practice of the target DMs but were given tasks which helped them analyze aspects of the DMs' uses such as the difference between the functional spectra of the DMs in English and their first language. On the other hand, the PPP groups were given contextualized and communicative demonstration and practice of the DMs in various activities, e.g. drills, dialogues and role plays which all promoted the use of the target items. Overall, based on the results of their pre- and post-tests, the PPP method was found to be more effective and more appealing to students than the III method [11].

Similarly, Yoshimi [26] also found that presentation and the explicit explanation of DMs, followed by practice and corrective feedback, helps learners to use them within informal spoken narratives. In this experiment each group was given a pre- and post-test in which learners were asked to complete a story telling task, and the quantitative analysis of their answers confirmed that students use DMs in a much greater extent than the control group which was given no instruction, illustration or description on the same items [26].

Taking into consideration the above research findings, we decided to apply the PPP method in our classroom study. In what follows we will describe our methods and findings on a technology-enhanced implementation of teaching English DMs in a second language classroom (with non-native speakers of English).

### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Participants and Settings

A total of thirty-eight first-year students majoring in Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science and Engineering at the Cyprus University of Technology participated in the study. The study was implemented in a span of two ninety-minute sessions (identical lesson plans on two subsequent occasions in two groups of about nineteen students each) of an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) module designed for Mechanical Engineering students, benchmarked to B1 level of the CEFR [4]. The two

sessions aimed at developing the students' understanding of DMs and at enhancing the use of DMs in spoken and written interaction. Out of the thirty-eight participants, thirty-one ( $N = 31$ ) completed the opinion questionnaire that was administered upon completion of the two sessions. Gender was not equally distributed in the sample as twenty-seven students ( $N = 27$ ) were male and only four students ( $N = 4$ ) were female. The unbalanced distribution of gender was neither unexpected nor surprising as engineering courses in Cyprus are mostly attended by male students at the specific educational context. Age groups ranged from eighteen to twenty-four years old, with eighteen to twenty being the dominant group ( $N = 27$ ).

### 3.2 Tools and Activities

In Sects. 3.2 and 3.3 the different tools we used (digital and traditional), the kinds of activities carried out and the design of the two lessons will be described in detail. Since DMs are commonly used in spoken language for various purposes, in order to demonstrate their authentic and contextualized uses first, several excerpts were presented from BBC interviews [2], TV series and TED Talks [21], instead of relying on traditional written sources. Concerning digital tools, besides audio and video recordings, we employed web-based study applications, such as word sets created by ourselves using Quizlet [19] and multi-party competition games created in Quizizz [17]. All these tools were adopted because we believe that their use engages the students more in the lesson and enhances the acquisition of its topic and material.

Using Quizlet [19], students can learn words, expressions, terms and definitions (usually created by teachers) in several study modes: via flashcards and various games (e.g. Match or Gravity). We mostly used the Match mode in class, and Gravity was set as homework. In Match study mode students are shown a grid with expressions in it, and the task is to drag corresponding items (e.g. terms and definitions, synonyms, paraphrases or matching contexts) to make them disappear and try to match the associated items (definitions, synonyms, paraphrases or the contexts of the gapped item) in the fastest time possible, whereby students within a class can compete with each other in order to beat others' completion time. In the Gravity game, adapted from a previous popular game called Space Race, students can even set the level of difficulty and speed, and their task is to type the correct answer (in our case, a synonym we had learnt).

Quizizz [17] is a fun multiplayer game (an alternative to Kahoot) where students compete globally on live games created and shared by their teacher. Students do not need an invitation or registration to join this game; all they need is a 6-digit code provided by their teacher, which makes the use of the quiz really quick and effective in any phase of the lesson.

In the second lesson, TED Talks [13, 23, 24] were used for the analysis of the uses of DMs in semi-spontaneous, pre-planned talks (in the subject of self-driving cars). These types of talks were chosen in order to present the powerful and strategic uses of DMs in such short semi-academic talks that the students will also need to give during their future careers. After watching the talks (to collect ideas), the second lesson centered on an in-class debate session among the students (about the same, Engineering-related topic, initiated by the TED Talks) since we wanted to trigger motivated and engaged language

production (in the form of a quasi-competition) and simultaneously improve their pragmatic competence and argumentation skills, which are all necessary assets in their careers.

### 3.3 Design of the Lessons

In order to meet the needs and interests of the students (of Mechanical Engineering) as well as fit the goals of their ESP lesson, the theme of both lessons was new types of cars, in particular, electric cars and driverless (also referred to as self-driving) cars.

#### Lesson 1

Our first lesson started with a presentation (or could also be referred to as an illustration) phase employing authentic listening activities (based on an interview from BBC corpus about electric cars and an episode from *Big Bang Theory*, an American series) followed by gap-fill listening comprehension tasks and group discussion about the attitude of the speakers towards the topic as they are expressed by the DM use of the speakers. This part was followed by some traditional frontal teaching about DMs (their definitions and functions using authentic examples of their various usages).

The upcoming practice phase involved online practice individually where students were studying Quizlet flashcards on separate computers, and afterwards, based on the previously studied flashcards, they were performing matching tasks and “gravity” games [20]. The DMs under scrutiny in both of these two activities were those expressing attitude: *If you ask me, I’m afraid, I must admit, Fortunately, Obviously, Of course, Ideally, Seriously*. These DMs were presented from different perspectives: with one task focusing on function and meaning (paraphrase or synonym), and the other on proper communicative context. This individual online task followed by a group discussion, in the format of the initiation-response-feedback (IRF) triad, on the uses and the cross-linguistic analysis of like as a DM (besides its verbal use) and its Cypriot Greek equivalent in different contexts, both in English and in Cypriot Greek.

Following this group discussion, in the production phase, students were working in groups of three, two of them having a conversation (for instance, a request and its polite rejection at work) with the task of involving as many of DMs and linking words as they can (e.g. *First of all, you know, I mean, Unfortunately, I must admit, The thing is*, etc.), while the third (listening) student gave a point to the student each time s/he managed to correctly use a DM. As a general rule, the one who uses more DMs wins. First, students found it difficult to get started with this activity, but then they enjoyed listening to each others’ dialogues and evaluated the work presented. Finally, as a wrap-up in the closing phase, an online group competition was held, employing Quizizz, about the various meanings and uses of the overviewed DMs [18]. The winner (achieving the most points in the group, projected on the screen) was given a round of applause in the end.

One of the homework assignments set was what we call the ‘Fifty shades of oh’ where students need to write several mini-dialogues including oh expressing its different functions. As a hint, several functions of oh were listed, such as surprise (negative or positive), sudden realization, recalling something, exclamation (expressing sorry, disgust or horror), irony, sarcasm, general backchanneling feedback (expressing that you’re listening). At a later stage, after the teacher has checked the compositions,

some students will be asked to act out the conversations. Even more importantly, the other homework assignment was to watch two TED Talks [13, 24] at home, both related to the topic of the next lesson, self-driving cars, as well as the uses of DMs employed by the speakers of the talks.

## Lesson 2

Our second lesson on DMs consisted of 3 phases: (1) watching excerpts, (2) group discussion and instructions for the next task, and (3) a debate (among two teams on the acceptability of the use of driverless cars). First, the group watched excerpts from the assigned TED Talks [13, 24], during which students had a twofold task: (1) to identify and note down the linking items and DMs used as well as their meaning/function/role in the particular context and discourse position, and (2) to note down reasons and arguments for and against the use of driverless cars. In the second phase, the teacher asked comprehension questions and the group discussed DM uses and collected some key words for arguments to be involved later in the debate session. Finally, in the third phase (actually, the main and longest phase), a debate was organized about (the introduction and widespread use of) driverless cars where students played different roles and they had to use DMs to make their contributions more sophisticated and sound better structured.

The debate was aided by instructions and keywords on role cards provided for the participants (see the Appendix for details), and comprised of only S-S interaction (with very little intervention by the teacher). Nineteen students participated in the debate in each of the two groups. The participants randomly picked their roles using little sheets of paper prepared by the teacher. As a result, a moderator, a timekeeper and three judges were appointed, while seven participants were assigned to argue for the use of driverless cars (PRO team), and equally, seven students were assigned to argue against the use of driverless cars thus argue for traditional cars with human drivers (CONTRA team). Each participant received a role card with prompts on it. The moderator's task was to open and close the debate, to ask for comments from the teams and for questions and evaluations from the judges. The timekeeper measured the time as well as started and stopped the preparation phase and the current team's turn. The judges monitored the use of English (during the preparatory phase as well) and made sure everyone contributed to the debate and talked. Furthermore, the judges asked questions in the final round, especially from those who had not contributed/talked much during the debate. Finally, the judges scored both teams (using rating criteria prepared by the teacher) in terms of content and discourse coherence made explicit by DMs, and consequently, they voted which team's performance was more coherent and convincing to win the debate.

Regarding the structure and timing of the debate, the session started with a preparation phase when the two teams prepared for their mini-presentation separately, based on their notes (in ten minutes). Meanwhile, the judges read the evaluation criteria, monitored the teams and took notes about the in-group use of English in both teams. The debate comprised three rounds (both teams had 2–2 min in each round), with 4-min breaks between them. In the first round of the debate, the teams presented their main ideas and arguments. The second round of debate consisted of rebuttal talks, consisting of contra-arguments in reply to the other team's arguments heard in the first



round. In the third round, the teams presented a summary of their arguments in 2 min. Before closing, a question-answer session followed where judges had the chance to ask questions from both teams. In the evaluation stage, judges evaluated both sides of the debate and voted on which team won. Finally, the teacher also evaluated the session and drew the conclusions of the task, both in terms of the argumentation and the DM use of the students.

### 3.4 Procedure and Measure

The questionnaire was administered online via Google Forms and primarily aimed at exploring the students' opinions about the use of digital and traditional tools demonstrated in class for increasing their understanding of DMs. The secondary goal was to investigate the degree to which students felt that the two sessions contributed to the enhancement of their skills in the use of DMs. Essentially, the overarching objective of this small-scale research was to gather data on the students' perceived learning of discourse markers via various digital and traditional tools, after having participated in the designed activities during the two sessions under discussion.

The questionnaire was designed by the three researchers and it comprised three parts. The first part included nine four-point Likert-scale questions pertaining to the students' opinions about the digital tools [17, 19] which were demonstrated in class for learning DMs. This part also included three open questions which required students to provide a short definition of DMs, and also indicate what they enjoyed the most and the least in the two sessions. The second part of the questionnaire included closed questions (Yes/No/Maybe) about the students' opinions regarding the traditional activities they were involved in during the second session, namely the debate. The last part of the questionnaire included two questions on students' demographics: gender and age group.

Overall, our lesson plans and the subsequent questionnaire were designed this way in order to address and test the following two hypotheses:

- DM use and involvement increases with more student-student (S-S) interaction and less teacher-student (T-S) interaction
- DM use and involvement increases with online activities.

## 4 Findings

Quantitative data analyses were performed in SPSS to determine the students' degree of understanding of DMs and their perceived enhancement of their skills in using DMs. Findings demonstrate that most of the students had not used Quizlet [19] or Quizizz [17] before participating in the two sessions under scrutiny in this study; however, they found them useful in learning about and practicing DM use. In addition, the students perceived the TED talk and the TV series episode shown in class helpful for enhancing their understanding of DMs. Table 1 indicates the students' responses regarding the degree to which the aforementioned digital tools helped students understand DMs.



**Table 1.** Students' perceptions about the helpfulness of digital tools in understanding DMs

Digital tools	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Quizlet	31	1,90	,700
Quizizz	31	2,16	,735
TED talk	31	1,97	,752
TV Series	31	2,00	,856

Students responded using a Likert scale from 1–4 whereby 1 meant 'Very much' and 4 meant 'Not at all':

Overall, students seem to have enjoyed practicing DMs with digital tools and they consider the use of technology in the two sessions as a useful component. Students indicated that the use of technology helped them with their learning throughout the two sessions on DMs. Students indicated their positive reactions towards the use of technology through their almost unanimous (30 out of 31 respondents) selection of 'Yes' in the respective question. In addition, responses regarding the degree of usefulness of technology point to the students' positive perceptions about the value of technology in the two sessions under discussion (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Students' perceptions about the degree of usefulness of technology

The use of technology in the last two sessions was	Frequency	Valid percent
Not useful at all	1	3,2
Not useful	2	6,5
Neither useful nor useless	4	12,9
Somewhat useful	15	48,4
Very useful	9	29,0
Total	31	100,0

The open question on the questionnaire which required students to provide a short definition for DMs confirms the students' understanding of the meaning and function of DMs. The fact that students provided definitions which included various uses of DMs demonstrates their deep understanding of the function of DMs in written and spoken interaction. Some of the students' definitions are provided in Table 3.

In the second part of the questionnaire, the students responded to questions about their participation in the in-class debate and indicated how this activity encouraged them to use DMs. The vast majority of students indicated that the debate encouraged them to use DMs and also to develop their verbal and critical thinking skills in English. Specifically, in the question 'Did the debate encourage you to use discourse markers?' eighteen (N = 18) students responded 'Yes', four (N = 4) students responded 'No', eight (N = 8) students responded 'Maybe' and only one (N = 1) student responded 'A little'. Finally, twenty-four (N = 24) students considered their participation in the debate session to have encouraged them to use English verbally and also to think critically in the English language.

**Table 3.** Students' short definitions of discourse markers (examples, extracts)

Students' short definitions of discourse markers
They are used to make a point more clear
Connection words
Express feelings
Small phrases or individual words that help start a phrase
They connect our sentences and make you not say again what you said
Express ideas feelings and thoughts
Discourses markers are being used for emphasizing
They help us describe better our thoughts
With discourse markers you can enrich your speech and connect different sentences with sophisticated vocabulary
Discourse markers are expressions we use in order to enrich our speech and tell with more accuracy what exactly we want to express
A word or phrase whose function is to organize discourse into segments
Discourse markers are words or phrases like anyway, right, okay, as I say, to begin with. We use them to connect, organize and manage what we say or write or to express attitude
Discourse markers help us to combine our sentences and also to give more information with the right attitude like agree or disagree with an argument
Help to start or contrast a sentence or a dialog

## 5 Conclusion

Our pilot study shows that students enjoy using digital methods in EFL classes, and, as a result of teaching and practice, they use more and more DMs with various purposes (both interpersonal and textual functions) towards the end of communicative lessons; consequently, their language production is more natural as well as easier to follow. Therefore, our methods might serve as useful guidelines for EFL teachers in connection with teaching DMs.

Naturally, further research is needed (cross-cultural as well as cross-linguistic, quantitative as well as qualitative) on classroom interaction in order to substantiate our findings about the effectiveness of our teaching methods and the long-term acquisition of DM use by students. One of our future perspectives is to expand our present small-scale study by employing an identical design of a lesson and a subsequent questionnaire in both of our home countries (Cyprus and Hungary) and consequently compare our findings (provided we have similar groups of students in terms of their level and studies). Moreover, it would also be great if we could both video record our lessons from various angles and analyze the nonverbal behavior of the students as well, including their postures, hand gestures, eye contact and pauses. Of course, it would be a question of a longitudinal study to see whether students maintained their use of DMs on the long term, which would be ideal to carry out in the future.

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## Appendix

**Role cards with prompts (for participants in the debate session, described in Sect. 3.3):**

### A. Role card and prompts for the 2 debating teams:

- Take notes during the TED talks
- During your debate, take turns talking (3 × 2–2 minutes each group)
- Use DMs in order to (1) sound more natural and sophisticated and (2) to structure your ideas and therefore make it easier for the listeners (the judges and the opposing team) to follow your ideas and logic:  
*First... Second... Third... Moreover... On the other hand... On the other hand... Also... Still... Even (if) .... However... Although... It can be true that ... but .... Don't forget... We shouldn't forget about... Keep in mind... Not to mention ... So... Therefore... To put that in perspective .... Now... Anyways... In conclusion ... To sum up.... Taking everything into consideration...*

### B. Time-keeper's role card:

- The time-keeper can also act as a judge but primarily focuses on measuring time
- The task of the time-keeper is to mark the end of the preparation phase (after 10 minutes in the beginning and then 4 minutes each round) and to stop the teams talking (after 2 minutes of speech)
- When the preparation time is over, say: "Preparation time is over."
- Then 2 minutes later, after the team's speaking time is over, say: "It's time to stop talking now. I must say that the supporting/opposing team's time is up. Thank you for your remarks."

### C. Judges' role card (2 or 3 students + the time-keeper + the teacher):

- Read the rating criteria
- Monitor the use of English (during the preparatory phases as well) and make sure everyone contributes to the debate and talks
- Ask questions (in the final round, especially from those who hasn't contributed/talked much)
- Decide and vote which team's arguments are stronger

Rating criteria for the judges:

Rate the teams overall on a five-point scale (from 1 to 5) based on:

1. discourse coherence: use of discourse markers and linking items
2. originality of content, creativity and number of arguments
3. team work (depending on how many group members contributed to the preparation and the presentation, in what proportion, etc.)
4. use of English (English used all the time vs. only partly during the preparation phase)
5. non-verbal behaviour of the speakers (hand gestures, eye-contact with both the judges and the opponent team)
6. presentation style, the level of involvedness, the persuasiveness, the convincing power of the argumentation

**D. Moderator's role card with the prompts:**

- Welcome the 2 teams and the judges
- Introduce the topic of the debate
- Introduce the members of the teams, the time-keeper, the judges, and yourself
- Set 10 minutes for the teams to prepare
- After 10 minutes of preparation, tell them:  
“Let me ask the supporting team to start their presentation (= first round). You have two minutes. You can start now.”
- After 2 minutes of talk, say:  
“Let me ask the opposing team to start their presentation (= first round). You have two minutes. You can start now.”
- After 4 minutes of preparation break between the rounds, say:  
“Let me ask the supporting team to start their rebuttal (= 2nd round). You have two minutes. You can start now.”
- After 2 minutes of talk, say:  
“Let me ask the opposing team to start their rebuttal (= 2nd round). You have two minutes. You can start now.”
- After 4 minutes of preparation break between the rounds, say:  
“Let me ask the supporting team to start their summary (= 3rd round). You have two minutes. You can start now.”
- After 2 minutes of talk, say:  
“Let me ask the opposing team to start their summary (= 3rd round). You have two minutes. You can start now.”
- When the opposing time is finished with their summary, address the judges:  
“Dear Judges, let me call you upon to ask questions from both teams.”
- In the end:  
“Thank you all for your questions and answers. Now we've reached the end of the debate. It's time for the judges to evaluate their teams and vote about the winning team. Let me ask XY to share her opinion about the teams... Thank you. Now, let me ask XZ to share her opinion about the teams...”  
After counting the points and votes:

“It seems that THE WINNER of today’s debate is TEAM PRO/CONTRA.... Congratulations to each and every member of the team. Here is your award. Thank you all for your participation and contribution.”

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