

Turn taking politeness competition game

Choose one of the phrases below and compete to make it more and more polite, stopping when the last few attempts weren't actually more polite or you both give up, then repeat with other sentences below. The politest attempt each time gets a point.

Excuse me./ Hey!

Getting back to the actual topic,...

I have something to say.

I suppose so. Anyhow,...

I want to make a point.

I've nearly finished.

Let me finish./ Don't butt in.

Let me speak.

Me first!

Stop./ Stop there.

That's off topic./ That's not relevant.

What was I saying before I was so rudely interrupted?

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Suggested answers

- Excuse me./ Hey! – Sorry to interrupt, but.../ Excuse the interruption, but...
- Getting back to the actual topic,... - Getting us back on track,...
- I have something to say – Actually, there's something I'd like to say (on this point).
- I suppose so. Anyhow,... - That's a good point. Anyway,...
- I want to make a point - I'd like to make a point here (if I can/ could/ may/ might).
- I've nearly finished. - I just want to make one more point before you have your say./ Just one more thing (before you interrupt).
- Let me finish./ Don't butt in.– Can I just finish this one point?/ I can see that you want to interrupt, but...
- Let me speak. - Can I (just) say something (here)?/ Could I come in (here/ there)?/ Could I interrupt you (for a minute/ moment/ second)?
- Me first! – Can I speak first?/ Before you get started,.../ Shall I start the discussion?
- Stop./ Stop there. – Can I stop you there (for a moment)?/ Before you go on,.../ Before you move on,.../ Sorry to stop you in full flow, but...
- That's off topic./ That's not relevant. - We seem to be getting off the point./ That's a bit off topic./ I'm not sure that is very relevant (to the topic at hand/ to what we were talking about).
- What was I saying before I was so rudely interrupted? – Where was I?/ Where were we?/ What was I saying?

What are the functions of the phrases above? Are any similar to each other?

Can you think of any other phrases with similar functions?

Are there any other useful functions/ phrases for turn taking?