

5 Native Phrases for IELTS Speaking



1. "To be honest, I hadn't really thought about it before, but..."

Use this when a question feels unexpected. It buys thinking time and sounds very natural in Part 2 & Part 3.

Speaking Example:

To be honest, I hadn't really thought about it before, but I think public transport should be improved to reduce traffic.

2. "It's not something I do very often, but when I do..."

Perfect for habits or activities you don't do regularly. Shows control of conditionals and time expressions.

Speaking Example:

It's not something I do very often, but when I do travel abroad, I try to learn some basic local phrases.

3. "I used to think..., but over time I've realised..."

Great for showing change of opinion and using past → present tense naturally. Very strong for Part 3.

Speaking Example:

I used to think exams were unfair, **but over time I've realised** they can be useful if designed properly.

4. "That's partly because..., and partly because..."

Use this to give two balanced reasons. It instantly makes your answer sound organised and mature.

Speaking Example:

That's partly because online courses are flexible, **and partly because** they are usually cheaper.

5. “I wouldn’t say I’m an expert, but I think...”

A polite, native way to give opinions without sounding too strong or overconfident.

Speaking Example:

I **wouldn’t say I’m an expert, but I think** young people rely too much on technology nowadays.