### jon.hird@conted.ox.ac.uk



### 🥤 @jonhirdelt



# Yeah, but ... No, but ... The real language of opinions

ELT Council, Malta October 2021



# **Three things:**

- speaking activities to activate opinions
- traditional ELT opinions language
- the *real* language of opinions



# What kinds of 'opinions' speaking tasks are there?

Work in groups. You are going to hold a <u>debate</u> about which is better, box sets and on-demand viewing or more traditional weekly TV shows.

#### Traditional weekly TV shows are better.

Here are some ideas for your argument. Add some ideas of your own.

- You look forward to the show more.
- You don't become too obsessed with the show.
- There is no danger of binge-watching, which can ... be bad for your health or eyesight.

make your brain too active and cause sleeplessness. waste time. Box sets and on-demand viewing are better.

Here are some ideas for your argument. Add some ideas of your own.

- You can watch episodes when you want to and when is convenient for you.
- You will never miss an episode.
- It is easier to find a time to watch an episode or several episodes with other people, which can ...

be a fun social event.

bring people closer together because of shared interest. help people to get to know each other.



# Debating language

# Building an argument

- *First,* ...
- Also, ...
- Furthermore, ...
- On top of that, ...

# Agreeing and disagreeing

- I (don't) agree.
- Yes, but ...
- I see what you mean, but ...
- You have a point, but ...



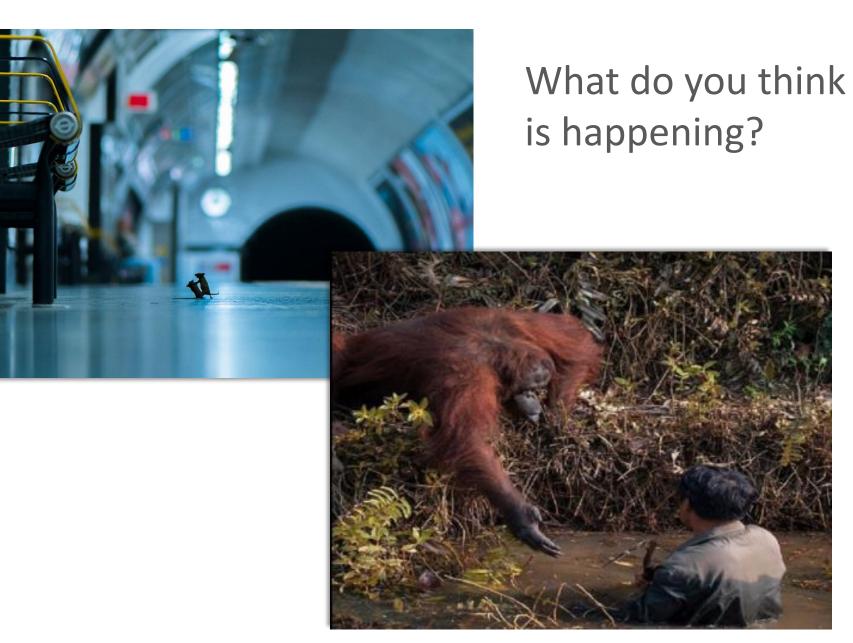
**SPEAK** Work in pairs. Which sentences in Exercise B do you agree or disagree with? Tell your partner.



Work in groups. Compare your ideas. In your group, decide on the best animal picture.







**SPEAK** Work in pairs. Discuss your opinion of the two adverts. Which do you think is the more creative, clever or original? Why?

Identifying opinion and attitudes of speakers

Listen for expressions that people use to express their opinions and attitude and to agree or disagree.

### Expressing opinion or attitude

I (don't) think ...

In my opinion, ...

... to be honest.

### To agree

l agree.

Yes, ... / Yes, and ... / And yes, ... / Yes, but ...

### To disagree

I don't agree. / I disagree.

Actually, ...

l'm not (so) sure . . .



# The language of opinions

#### Elementary

I (really) think that ... I believe (that) ... I'm sure that ... In my opinion / My opinion is ... **Pre-intermediate** I agree with ... I feel that ... I guess/imagine ... I have no doubt that / I'm certain that ... I strongly believe that ... I've never really thought about this before, but I have come to the conclusion that ... My personal opinion is that / Personally, my opinion is that ... To be honest / In my honest opinion, ... Intermediate As far as I know, ... I agree with the opinion of ... I could be wrong, but ... I'd definitely say that ... I'd guess/imagine that ... I'd say that ... I'm absolutely certain that ... I'm fairly confident that ... I'm no expert (on this), but ... I'm positive that ... I'm pretty sure that ... It seems to me that ... It's a complicated/difficult issue, but ... My (point of) view (on this) is ... Obviously, ... Some people may disagree with me, but ... This is just my opinion, but ...

Without a doubt, ...

You probably won't agree, but ...

#### **Upper-intermediate**

After much thought, ... After weighing up both sides of the argument, ... Although I can see both points/the opposite point of view, ... As I see it, ... Correct me if I'm wrong, but ... For me/ From my point of view, ... Frankly, ... I am not very familiar with this topic, but ... I do believe/ feel/think ... I might change my mind later, but ... I reckon/suppose ... I tend to think that .... I'm not sure I'm the right person to ask, but I have very limited experience of this, but ... I'm pretty confident that ... I've always thought that ... If you ask me, ... I'm (absolutely) convinced that ... In my humble opinion / IMHO, ... It could be said that ... It seems clear to me that ... It would seem to me that ... My initial reaction is ... Not everyone will/would agree with me, but ... Personally speaking / Speaking for myself, ... The way I see it (is) ... To be (perfectly) frank, ... To the best of my knowledge, ... What I think is ... You could say ...

#### Advanced

After giving this matter some (serious) thought, ... As far as I'm concerned. ... As the old saying goes, ... Having given this question due consideration, ... I am of the opinion that ... I can't help thinking that ... I know this is a minority view, but / I'm in the minority in thinking that ... I tend towards the opinion that ... I think it's fair/reasonable to say ... I'll tell you what I think, ... I'm entirely/quite convinced that ... I've come the conclusion that ... If I must come up with an opinion / If you (really) want my opinion, ... In my limited experience, ... It could/might well be that ... Know what I think? ... My opinion was best expressed by ... when s/he said/wrote My view/position on this (issue) (is clear and) is that ... Off the top of my head, ... Plainly, ... Quite frankly. ... There is a part of me that says ... This may well be controversial, but ... To my mind / To my way of thinking, ... To summarise my (rather complex) views on the matter, ... What I always say is ... With some reservations. ... Without a shred/shadow of doubt, ... You'd have to be crazy not to agree that / Any idiot can see that ...

#### Elementary

I (really) think that ... I believe (that) ... I'm sure that ... In my opinion / My opinion is ... **Pre-intermediate** I agree with ... I feel that ... I guess/imagine ... I have no doubt that / I'm certain that ... I strongly believe that ... I've never really thought about this before, but I have come to the conclusion that ...

My personal opinion is that / Personally, my opinion is that ...

To be honest / In my honest opinion, ...

#### Intermediate

As far as I know, ... I agree with the opinion of ... I could be wrong, but ... I'd definitely say that ... I'd guess/imagine that ... I'd say that ... I'm absolutely certain that ... I'm fairly confident that ... I'm no expert (on this), but ... I'm positive that ... I'm pretty sure that ... It seems to me that ... It's a complicated/difficult issue, but ... My (point of) view (on this) is ... Obviously, ... Some people may disagree with me, but ... This is just my opinion, but ... Without a doubt, ... You probably won't agree, but ...

#### **Upper-intermediate**

After much thought, ... After weighing up both sides of the argument, ... Although I can see both points/the opposite point of view, ...

#### As I see it, ...

Correct me if I'm wrong, but ... For me/ From my point of view, ... Frankly, ... I am not very familiar with this topic, but ... I do believe/ feel/think ... I might change my mind later, but ... I reckon/suppose ... I tend to think that .... I'm not sure I'm the right person to ask, but I have very limited experience of this, but ... I'm pretty confident that ... I've always thought that ... If you ask me, ...

I'm (absolutely) convinced that ... In my humble opinion / IMHO, ... It could be said that ... It seems clear to me that ... It would seem to me that ... My initial reaction is ... Not everyone will/would agree with me, but ... Personally speaking / Speaking for myself, ... The way I see it (is) ... To be (perfectly) frank, ... To the best of my knowledge, ... What I think is ... You could say ...

Advanced After giving this matter some (serious) thought, ... As far as I'm concerned, ... As the old saying goes, ... Having given this question due consideration, ... I am of the opinion that ... I can't help thinking that ... I know this is a minority view, but / I'm in the minority in thinking that ... I tend towards the opinion that ... I think it's fair/reasonable to say ... I'll tell you what I think, ... I'm entirely/quite convinced that ... I've come the conclusion that ... If I must come up with an opinion / If you (really) want my opinion, ... In my limited experience, ... It could/might well be that ... Know what I think? ... My opinion was best expressed by ... when s/he said/wrote My view/position on this (issue) (is clear and) is that ...

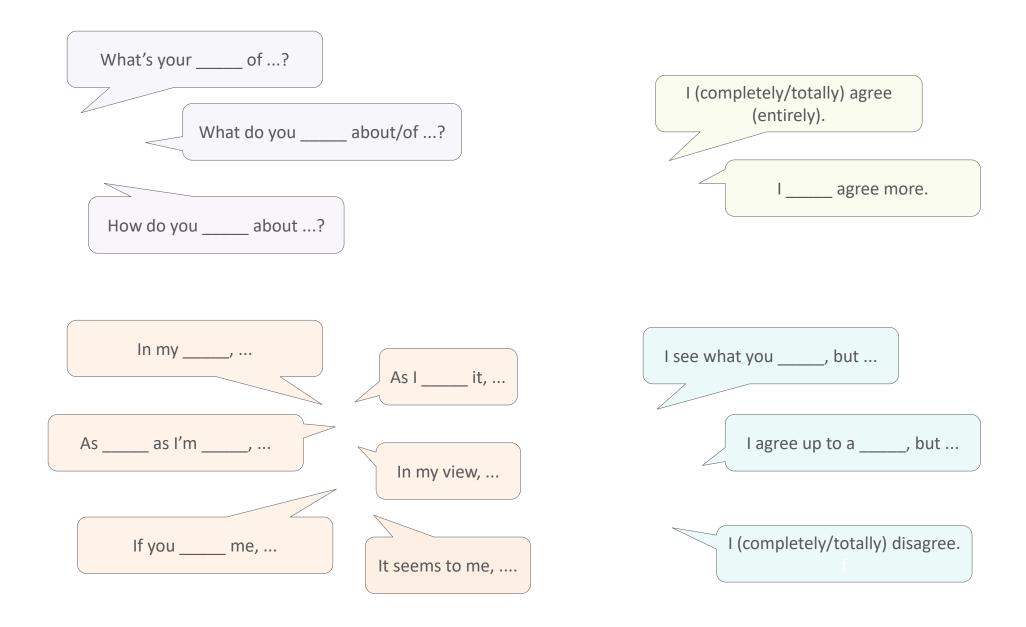
Off the top of my head, ... Plainly, ... Quite frankly. ... There is a part of me that says ... This may well be controversial, but ... To my mind / To my way of thinking, ... To summarise my (rather complex) views on the matter, ... What I always say is ... With some reservations. ... Without a shred/shadow of doubt, ... You'd have to be crazy not to agree that / Any idiot can see that ...

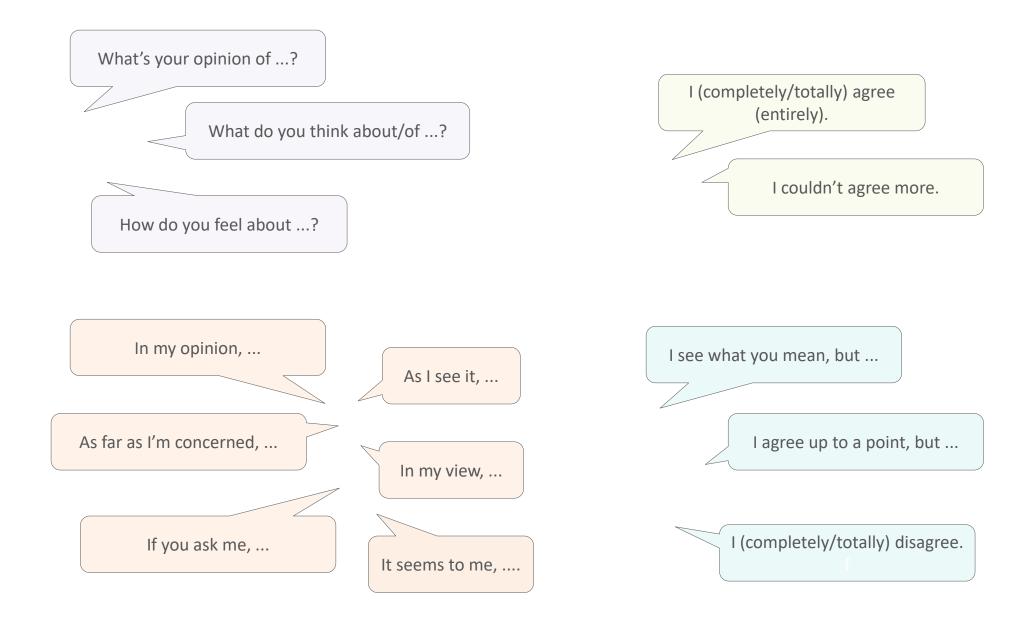
In my opinion, ... 20

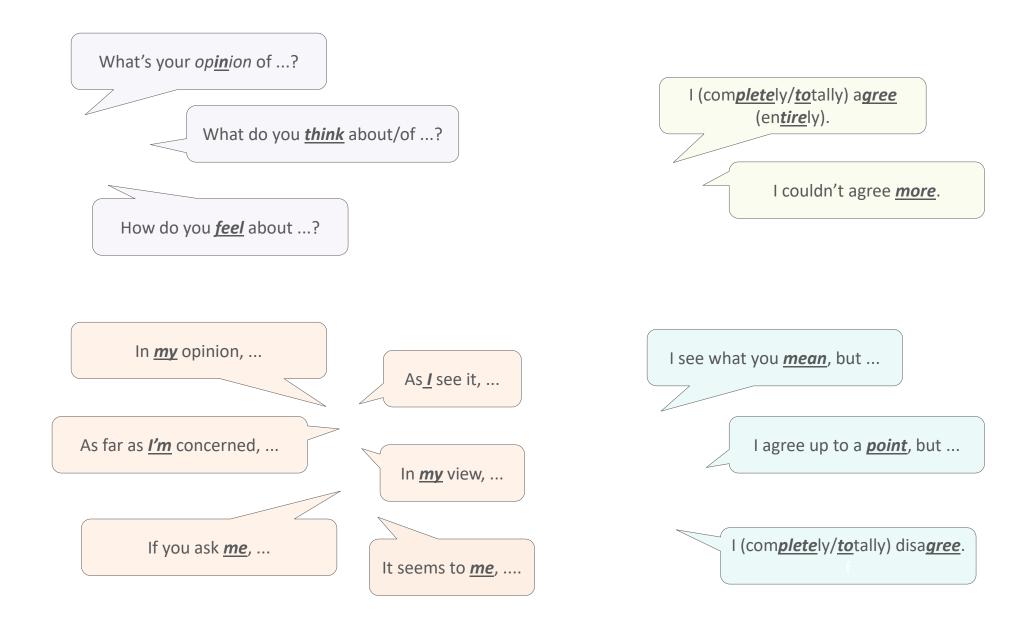
In my view, ... As far as I'm concerned, ... To me, .. 10

If you ask me, ... 4

As I see it, ... 1







			_
Boris Johnson	Joe Biden	The anti-vax movement	- 0
The British	Brexit	Donald Trump	×
The handling of the pandemic	North Korea	The Climate Crisis	
Being a student	Studying (in) English	Oxford	

X

In my opinion,	As far as I'm concerned,	If you ask me,	~
I see what you mean, but	l agree up to a point, but	In my view,	R
I don't disagree, but	I agree entirely.	I completely disagree.	•
As I see it,	I couldn't agree more.	To me,	

X

PRONUNCIATION Agreeing and disagree		SPEAKING
<ul> <li>A Listen to and read a conversa disagreeing. Then work in gr conversation copying the work in the second sec</li></ul>	oups and practice the ord stress and intonation. ball's pretty <u>bor</u> ing.	<ul> <li>A Complete the sentences with your own opinions.</li> <li>1 I think is the greatest band of all time.</li> <li>2 In my view, food is the best food in the world.</li> <li>3 I think the safest way to travel is</li> <li>4 It seems to me that most celebrities are</li> </ul>
Beth: I com <u>plet</u> ely agree. Sarah: E <u>xac</u> tly. Andy: I totally <u>dis</u> agree. Sarah: Oh, <u>plea</u> se!	Complete the conversation with the words disagree see seems strong true view A: It <sup>1</sup> to me that things a and more expensive all the time. B: Yeah, that's <sup>2</sup> Each time	<ul> <li>B Work in pairs. Student A – read one of your sentences in Exercise A. Student B – agree or disagree. Take turns.</li> </ul>
	supermarket, things have gone up in price A: In my <sup>3</sup> , footballers' pay B: 1 <sup>4</sup> what you'	is disgusting!
	pleasure to millions of people. A: I'm sorry, but I totally <sup>5</sup> think, Chris? Mario: C: I don't have a <sup>6</sup> honest. I'm not at all interested Tim: Asif: Ana:	ete the TV discussion with the correct phrases to s opinions. Let's ask our panel of experts. You first, Tim, what do you think? Well, in my <sup>1</sup> , they should be banned. If you <sup>2</sup> me, we shouldn't ban them. As far as I'm <sup>3</sup> , a ban is the answer. I think we should do more research. Don't you



ELF question: How long before 'I am agree with you' becomes generally accepted in academic discussions? #ammarking #eap #academicenglish? The *Real* language of opinions

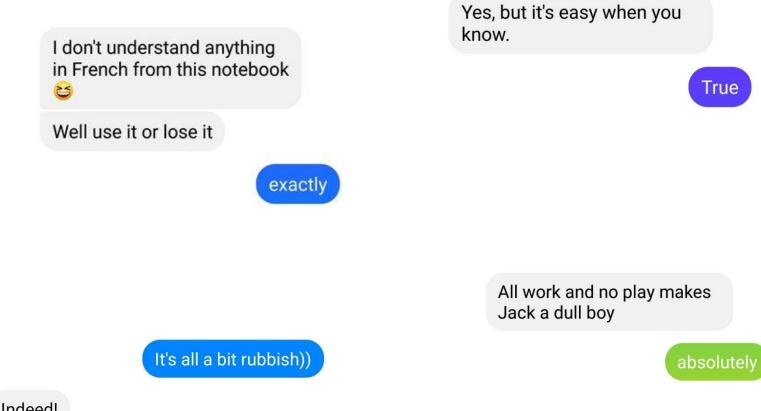
The most common way of agreeing: The most common way of disagreeing: Yeah, and ... Yeah, but ...

Nice. Wintry

Yeah, and not that cold.

But those that learn your preferences are pretty cool

Yeah, but a bit scary, too



Indeed!

# A: MAN! THAT SHOW WAS INSANE! B: HELLA!

Respond to the statements using the words in the box.

absolutely indeed exactly true

- 1 What a great film, hey.
- 2 It was a bit confusing, I thought.
- 3 Not the best meal I've ever had.
- 4 ...

Agreement by ...

exemplifying: A The exam was tough. B Yeah, especially paper three. generalising: A He's being a real pain. B He usually is. repeating the intensifier: A It'll be very expensive, no? B Yeah, very. replying with an intensifier: A It'll be expensive, no? B Yeah, very. synonym: A It was great, wasn't it? B Brilliant, I thought. repeating the auxiliary: B No, it won't. A It won't work. run-on/continuation: A This wine's great! B And it's not expensive. echoing: A It's much too late. B Yeah, much too late. additional point: A We need to think again. B Yeah, and soon.

Disagreement by ...

stating an exception: mitgating: negating the intensifier: negative intensifier antonym: query with the auxiliary: run-on/continuation: echoing as query:

additional point:

A The exam was tough. B Well, except paper three.
A He's being a real pain. B Mmm, that's not like him.
A It'll be very expensive, no? B No, not very.
A It'll be expensive, no? B No, not very.
A It was great, wasn't it? B Terrible, I thought.
A It won't work. B Won't it?
A This wine's great! B But it's a bit pricey.
A It's much too late. B Too late?
A We need to think again. B Yeah, but not just yet.

## Agreement by ...

exemplifying:	A B	The exam was tough. Yeah, paper three.
	A B	The weather's been awful recently. Yeah, the last couple of days.
generalising:	A B	The lecture was really good. It is.
	A B	It's been raining non-stop for days. Yeah, it does this time of year.
synonym:	A B	Well, that was rubbish. , wasn't it?
	A B	That was a useful presentation, wasn't it? Absolutely. ReallyI
	A B	We'd better hurry, then, if we want to get there on time. Yeah, we need to
	A B	The problem is, he worries all the time. Yeah, he's always

## Agreement by ...

exemplifying:	A B	The exam was tough. Yeah, especially paper three.
	A B	The weather's been awful recently. Yeah, especially the last couple of days.
generalising:	A B	The lecture was really good. It <mark>usually</mark> is.
	A B	It's been raining non-stop for days. Yeah, it generally does this time of year.
synonym:	A B	Well, that was rubbish. Awful, wasn't it?
	A B	That was a useful presentation, wasn't it? Absolutely. Really helpful.
	A B	We'd better hurry, then, if we want to get there on time. Yeah, we need to get a move on.
	A B	The problem is, he worries all the time. Yeah, he's always fretting about something.

### Practise agreeing with the statements by exemplifying. Use the cues given.

<u>Statement</u>	<u>cue</u>	response
Great film, that!	the ending	Yeah, especially the ending.
I love Led Zep.	early stuff	
Lovely meal!	that yummy dessert	•••••
Social media, aaargh!	so-called experts	

### Practise agreeing with the statements by generalising. Use the cues given.

### **Statement**

Overton's are late paying again. The can't reach a final decision. It's all down to agreeing a price. It's not just a marketing issue. The new Ferrari is overpriced. Germany would be better than the UK.

<u>cue</u>	response
always	They always are.
never	
usually	
rarely	
all	
anywhere	•••••

### Practise disagreeing with the statements using Yeah, but ... and No, but ... and the cues given.

<u>Statement</u>	<u>cue</u>	response
It's time we went.	not just yet	Yeah, but not just yet.
We could email them.	won't reply	
It's not ideal.	could be worse	
I don't wanna go.	gotta	

Respond to the statement using the prompts.

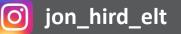
Great conference, so far! Yeah, especially ... Yeah, and ... Yeah, but ... ..., I think.

# Thank you!

jon.hird@conted.ox.ac.uk















Tim doesn't disagree that it's time for the US to get out of Afghanistan - but the way it's being done has him questioning the strategy.

It's not that I disagree. But ..

It's not that I don't agree, but ....

I don't necessarily disagree. But ..,

I'm not unsympathetic to it ... I'm not saying not anyone can't come.

Jeremy Corbyn, 2017

