

9.2 – Video: Using advanced vocabulary & grammar

There is a difference between sounding **good**, maybe even sounding like a native speaker, and sounding **professional**. Some people have an **excellent pronunciation**, but they only use **very basic words and structures**. To sound professional, **try to expand your active vocabulary**, so that you can use **more advanced words**, at least sometimes, and also use **interesting grammatical structures**. This is essential for the oral exam, because your teacher's assessment scale states that **you should speak at level B2**. And this means that you can – and do – use **at least some “complex structures”** and that you have a **good or even “wide range of vocabulary”**. It does not mean that you should use these words and structures in every sentence, but do try to showcase your skills, your **range**, from time to time.

In terms of grammar, just review all the things you learned over the years. Having sat through hundreds of English lessons, you have certainly heard of things like **participle clauses**, for example. I just used one in my last sentence. Did you notice it? I didn't say, “You have sat through hundreds of English lessons,” which would have been correct as well. I said, “Having sat through hundreds of English lessons, you have certainly heard of this.” That's one example of those **advanced grammatical structures** that you would do well to use occasionally during the exam. Other nice structures include **if-sentences**, the **passive voice**, different kinds of the **present perfect**, **relative clauses**, and **reported speech**. So it's a great idea to take a good look at these, and then use them.

On the level of words, it's extremely helpful to know the **special vocabulary related to your topic**. When you're talking about **politics**, for instance, you should know words like “**rule of law**” or “**constituency**” or “**judiciary**”. On a general level, it is definitely very beneficial to have a few alternatives to words like “**good**” or “**thing**” or “**important**” up your sleeve. In my last sentence, I just used the word “beneficial” instead of “good”, for example. In the book, you have a lot of **synonyms for “important” and “interesting”**. Try to study these and use them – and pay attention to how others use them, too.

And then, there are special constructions such as **phrasal verbs** and **idiomatic expressions**. You've got a lot of these in the book as well, and if you use one of them unexpectedly, **you just might make your teacher's jaw drop!** See, that was one of them right there – make your teacher's jaw drop. So, you get the idea.

