

What is Advanced English for International Relations and European Studies

This textbook is designed for students taking a university degree in International Relations (IR), European Studies (ES) and Political Science (PS) at Bulgarian universities, including the University of National and World Economy (UNWE). Another potential target group of users are students majoring in journalism, law or management who need to understand and express key concepts in politics, economics and international relations. Students with an advanced level of proficiency in English will gain most benefit from this textbook. The latter has been graded as advanced level, considering that a basic prerequisite for enrollment in the bachelor's degree course in the abovementioned major academic courses is B2-C1 level. Hence the central **aim** of the book is to contribute to developing and expanding students' linguistic knowledge and skills so that the level necessary be reached to meet the requirements of the Cambridge Advanced English (CAE) test, equivalent to C1–C2 level of the Common European Framework (CEF) of the Council of Europe. Furthermore, this textbook aims to help students improve their communicative competence and raise their cultural awareness in a wide range of professional settings. Such settings presumably include international conferences and multilateral meetings, to mention but a few, where professionals are expected to communicate in English with both confidence and accuracy.

In terms of **content**, the focus is on international affairs, current events and technical documents such as reports, regulations and legislation. Students will read and discuss different materials in the aforementioned discourses, which involves studying terms and concepts in the specific field, so that they become fully aware of how the selected texts should be appropriately used in various contexts relevant to diplomacy and international politics.

This coursebook attempts to apply the functional approach to foreign language teaching (FLT), according to which linguistic knowledge is acquired through integrated language skills. Hence another major goal is to facilitate the acquisition thereof: the active use of the culture-specific language code and norms (verbal and non-verbal) in both written and spoken forms of communication.

More specifically, *Advanced English for International Relations and European Studies* seeks to improve students' ability to analyse, paraphrase and summarize pieces of discourse in various contexts pertaining to a host of topics typical of the respective academic field. In support of these goals, a considerable portion of the book is devoted to building and refining **vocabulary**, not only with regard to the

specific terminology in the field of IR, ES and PS but also the academic vocabulary needed to discuss the topics related to international affairs at a professional level.

To meet these goals, *Advanced English for International Relations and European Studies* offers a wide range of exercises whose objective is to further develop students' competence in English and to perfect their language-related skills, namely the ability to¹:

- ▶ read and comprehend political, economic, and foreign policy-related texts;
- ▶ actively listen to and comprehend a listening passage on a topic in these fields;
- ▶ take notes, paraphrase and summarize
- ▶ use vocabulary, specialist terms and idiomatic expressions commonly encountered in these fields;
- ▶ discuss the ideas presented in a specific material and defend their own point of view concerning a topic.

Given the syllabus design of English at UNWE, *Advanced English for International Relations and European Studies* is most appropriate for second-year students. The units cover several broad topics introducing basic terminology and vocabulary in international politics and affairs such as:

- ▶ English as the language of global communication and international politics
- ▶ Post-WWII world and the global system of international relations: post-1945 arms race and the Cold War
- ▶ International organizations: the United Nations and its specialized agencies, NATO, NGOs
- ▶ European integration and the EU: history, policies and institutions, decision making and legal documents (directives, regulations, etc.

It is worth noting that this textbook is intended to be used in conjunction with the workbook *Test Your English* (Bozoukova et al, 2012). What is more, this textbook aims to help students prepare for the final examination in English at UNWE. A detailed description of the supplementary skills (note-taking, paraphrasing and summarizing) can be found in *Test Your English* (pp. 124-161). The latter also provides useful guidelines on essay writing (pp. 199-219).

Organization of the textbook

Advanced English for International Relations and European Studies is divided into **three major parts**.

The introductory part is aimed to introduce students to the major types of tasks and exercises that they will have to resolve during academic classes or during self-study. These include exercises related to word formation (forming derivatives). The other two types of exercises are the Open Cloze and the Multiple Choice Cloze,

¹ Bozoukova et al. (2012, p. 1)

which are intended to help students upgrade their knowledge of basic grammar units including determiners, relative clauses, auxiliary verbs and modal auxiliaries, word order and emphasis, adverb and adjective structures, linking devices. Along with the Multiple Choice Cloze tasks, these two types of exercises sum up the most frequently used phraseological units, though there are no claims to an exhaustive coverage of the specific field-related vocabulary. These tasks are aimed to improve students' knowledge and raise their awareness of the use of collocations, phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions. Furthermore, this introductory part makes an overview of useful vocabulary that can be applied to the description of charts, graphs and timelines.

The second part, which incorporates the biggest body of the textbook, is subdivided into eight topic-based units, each containing three sections. As its name suggests, **Section A** *Introducing terminology* offers reading comprehension tasks aimed to cover some specific terminology, collocations and phraseology. **Section B** named *In the headlines* is intended to introduce the media jargon on the issues at stake on the respective topic. **Section C**, *Exam practice*, provides students with the specific tasks included in their final exam at UNWE, as well as useful language in performing the two major types of tasks included in the writing section of this exam - chart or timeline description and essay writing. Listening comprehension tasks included in sections B and C of all units offer three types of vocabulary exercises namely gap-filling, replacing synonyms and summarizing on specific questions. This part aims to test students' comprehension of specific details in the listening passage, such as numbers and figures, dates, and frequently used collocations. The section also intends to test students' ability to understand the gist of the piece of discourse they are listening to.

Considering students' curiosity and computer culture in the digitalized learning environment, the final exercise is internet based. It is named *Mapping countries* and is aimed to test and add to students' knowledge of countries and nationalities through an interactive online platform provided by **Otellus.com**.

The third part encompasses the detailed key to all the exercises and tasks, including the suggested context within which the discussion points outlined at the beginning of each unit can be debated. It also includes the **audioscripts** of the listening comprehension exercises in sections B and C. *Advanced English for International Relations and European Studies* ends with a bibliography.

All selected materials are based on authentic reading and listening programs taken from prestigious English-language sources, which include periodicals such as *The Economist*, *The New York Times*, *The Time*, *The Financial Times* as well as the official websites of prominent politicians. The sources have been chosen as they are believed to offer updated information in the studied field. Furthermore, their specific style involves a jargon that combines various registers – from colloquial to technical.