

TEACHING UNITS/LEVELS

The seven teaching units/ levels in the program are named as Basic (A), Basic + (A+), Independent (B), Independent + (B+), Upper (C), Upper + (C+) and Advanced (C++). In relation to the level specifications of “Common European Framework (CEF)”, which is the basis for the curriculum formed by the international standards, these teaching units/levels can be defined as follows:

COURSES/AIMS OF THE COURSES

Basic (A)

This teaching unit is the lowest level of language use at which the student can communicate in a short and simple way by asking and answering simple questions about familiar people, objects and places; can listen and understand words and/or short sentences if people speak slowly and clearly; can read and understand simple forms and short messages; can write short and simple sentences about familiar topics such as themselves, their families, places they know etc.; can show limited control of simple grammatical structures and has very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases on familiar topics.

Basic+ (A+)

This level reflects most of the features of **waystage** specification of CEF. At this level, a wide range of descriptors reflecting social functions such as using polite forms of greeting, making and responding to invitations or offers etc. appear. Thus, the student, at this level, can exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday situations; listen and understand what is said clearly, slowly, directly to them in simple everyday conversation; can identify general and specific information in simpler written material such as short newspaper articles, brochures, letters, emails etc.; can write short descriptions of people, places, processes and personal experiences in a unified and coherent paragraph ; can use some simple structures correctly and has adequate vocabulary to conduct everyday transactions about familiar situations.

Independent (B)

This level reflects a strong **waystage** performance together with a few features of **Threshold** specification of CEF. The same features at Basic + (A+) continue to be present but the student is more active and comfortable in simple and everyday conversation when compared to the previous level. At this level, the student can manage simple, routine everyday tasks without too much effort because s/he can use more grammatical structures accurately and has more extended vocabulary compared to the previous level.

At this level, the student can also perform a few of the goals of **Threshold** specification such as listening and understanding the main points in discussions, conversations and interviews; reading and understanding the main points in straightforward factual texts on subjects of personal and professional interest. Actually, the student can start, maintain and close simple face to face conversations, discussions and interviews on topics that are familiar or of personal interest.

Independent + (B+)

This level reflects most features of the **Threshold** specification of CEF and can be defined by two main features; the ability to maintain interaction and get across what they aim at in a variety of contexts and the ability to cope with common problems in life such as dealing with less routine situations on public transport and entering unprepared into conversations on familiar topics. In brief, the student at this level can follow in outline straightforward short talks, presentations and

conversations on familiar topics provided these are delivered in clearly articulated standard speech; can maintain a conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest and can help to keep it going by expressing and responding to suggestions, opinions, attitudes, advice, feelings; can read with more independently by using dictionaries and other reference sources when necessary; can write papers developing their argument with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting details.

Upper (C)

This level represents a strong **Threshold** performance. The two features of B+ continue to be present with the addition of more descriptors. At this level, the student can understand in detail what is told to him in conversations; can follow the essentials of lectures and other forms of academic or professional presentations; can read and understand with a large degree of independence and can obtain information from highly specialized sources within his/her field; can give clear and systematically developed presentations; can write essays and reports which develop arguments systematically in a coherent and unified way. In fact, the student at this level can show relatively a high degree of grammatical control and has a sufficient range of vocabulary to give clear descriptions.

Upper + (C+)

This level includes a few features of **Vantage** level specifications. The focus on argument present at *Independent + (B+)* continues, this time with an emphasis on social discourse. Hence, the student can understand the spoken language even in noisy environment; communicate spontaneously and fluently so s/he can interact with native speakers comfortably. The other emphasis at this level is on language awareness as the student can correct their own mistakes if they led to misunderstanding or correct slips and errors if s/he is aware of them. As for reading, the student at this level, can understand not only articles in their area but also specialized articles outside their own field if they occasionally check with a dictionary.

Upper ++ (C++)

This level involves some features of **Vantage** level specifications. The emphasis on argument, effective social discourse and language awareness present at C+ continues. In addition, the student at this level can understand recordings in standard dialect likely to be encountered in social, academic and professional life; can read and understand specialized articles outside his/her field of study provided that he/she uses a dictionary to confirm his/her interpretation of terminology; can scan through long and complex texts, locating relevant ideas; can write clear and detailed descriptions of events and experiences by following established conventions of the genre concerned; can communicate spontaneously often showing remarkable fluency and ease of expression; has good grammatical control and wide range of vocabulary use but may experience difficulty with low frequency words.

CURRICULUM PRINCIPLES

1. The aforementioned descriptors regarding each level reveal that there is a spiral curriculum implemented at School of Foreign Languages (SFL) at Yıldırım Beyazıt University (YBU), meaning that the goals and objectives of the previous and/or lower levels are repeated at each level and new goals and objectives relevant for the natural process of language learning are added.
2. There is a learner centered curriculum implemented at SFL at YBU. This means that during the design and implementation of the curriculum the learners' needs and interests are taken into account. In the light of this view, the learning styles and strategies are considered. Together with this, the students are encouraged to show the qualities of an autonomous and/or independent learner. To promote these, there is an Independent Learning Center (ILC) established within the school.
3. There are some of the elements of the social constructivist curriculum. Thus, this curriculum enables students to survive in both academic and real life situations. This is achieved through sustaining a collaborative learning environment.

4. The curriculum at SFL at YBU is to provide its students with English language education in accord with the quality conditions applied at an international level. The specifications of this curriculum are based on the ones presented at “Common European Framework(CEF)”