

Level A1

Level A1 is considered the lowest level of generative language use – the point at which the learner can interact in a simple way, ask and answer simple questions about themselves, where they live, people they know, and things they have, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, rather than relying purely on a very finite rehearsed, lexically organised repertoire of situation-specific phrases.

Global

Students can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Self-Assessment for Learners

Listening

I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.

Reading

I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.

Spoken Interaction

I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.

Spoken Production

I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.

Writing

I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.

Illustrative Proficiency Scales

Listening Proficiency

Students can follow speech that is very slow and carefully articulated, with long pauses for them to assimilate meaning. They can understand instructions addressed carefully and slowly and follow simple directions. They can answer questions about personal details. They can understand everyday expressions aimed at satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type.

Reading Proficiency

Students can understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time, recognising familiar names, words and basic phrases on simple texts in the most common everyday situations. They can understand short, simple messages, i.e., on a postcard and can get an idea of the content of simpler informational material and short simple descriptions, especially with the help of visual aids. They can read a very short, rehearsed statement.

Speaking Proficiency

Students at this level can manage very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words, and to repair communication. They can ask questions and initiate conversation in simple statements in very familiar topics. They have a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details so they can make introductions, ask how people are and use basic greetings and leave expressions. They can ask questions about other people, where they live, people they know, things they have but produce simple, mainly isolated phrases about people and places. They show only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a learnt repertoire. They can link words or groups of words with very basic linear connectors like 'and' or 'then'. Pronunciation of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases can be understood with some effort by those used to dealing with speakers of their language group.

Writing Proficiency

Students can ask for or pass on personal details in written form. They can write simple isolated phrases and sentences about themselves or imaginary people. They can write a simple postcard. Can copy familiar words and short phrases and simple texts and spell their nationality and personal details.

Learner Outcomes

Students at this level will be able to use the following:

Functions:

Directions
Describing habits and routines
Giving personal information
Greetings
Telling the time
Understanding and using numbers
Understanding and using price

Grammar

Adjectives: common and demonstrative
Adverbs of frequency
Comparatives and superlatives
Going to
How much/how many and very common uncountable nouns
I'd like Imperatives (+/-) Intensifiers - very basic
Modals: can/can't/could/couldn't
Past simple of "to be" and Past Simple
Possessive s and adjectives
Prepositions, common
Prepositions of place and time
Present simple and Present continuous
Pronouns: simple, personal
Questions There is/are
To be, including question + negatives
Verb + ing: like/hate/love

Vocabulary

Food and drink
Nationalities and countries
Personal information
Things in the town, shops and shopping
Verbs – basic

Discourse Markers

Connecting words, and, but, because

Topics

Family life
Hobbies and pastimes
Holidays Leisure activities
Shopping
Work and jobs

Learner Training

Familiarity with bilingual dictionary
Awareness of style - formal / informal
Awareness of communication aims
Names of activities - listening, vocabulary, grammar, reading etc. Awareness of register - informal / formal. Accuracy vs fluency
Classroom language (e.g. "what do you call...?" / "what does mean?")
Vocabulary storage techniques
Recognition of many phonemic symbols
Recognition of stress mark
Phonetic symbols for individual problem sounds

Study Skills

Record and revise vocabulary regularly
Choose the right place and time to study
Create a timetable to study and weekly goals
Use folders, dividers, colour pens, highlighters
Organise revision get-togethers.
Use video and voice recorder for fluency and pronunciation practice.