

Name:

When should and when shouldn't we use mother tongue (MT) in our English teaching?

Age of my learners: *0-11 (primary) / 12-17 (secondary) / 18 or older*

Where I teach: *state school / private school or institute*

Get together with other teachers from your teaching context, and tell them what you do, how and why. Tick one box in each row. If you tick sometimes or occasionally, add some details (e.g. 'if they...').

	always	sometimes	occasionally	never
1. I use MT when I am giving instructions.				
2. I use MT for classroom language (e.g. "Good morning, pupils." "Sit down." etc.).				
3. I make use of MT when teaching vocabulary (e.g. eliciting / giving translation).				
4. I allow my learners to use MT during English speaking practice activities.				
5. I think about differences between MT and English when I am preparing my lessons.				
6. I listen to what my learners say in MT during lessons to help me decide what to do next.				
7. I use the mother tongue to explain grammar to my learners.				
8. I allow my learners to use the mother tongue when they are doing a grammar exercise in pairs.				
9. I allow my learners to take notes using MT (e.g. grammar, new vocabulary).				
10. I use translation activities.				

Bilingual Dialogue - Job Interview

English text:

Interviewer: Where are you from?
Ed Fawley: I'm from Vancouver in Canada.
Interviewer: Where do you teach?
Ed Fawley: I teach at a language school in Alexandria.
Interviewer: What do you do at the school?
Ed Fawley: I teach English and prepare my lessons every day.
Interviewer: Why did you choose to work in Alexandria?
Ed Fawley: I wanted to learn Arabic, and to live in a historic city.
Interviewer: How many hours do you work a week?
Ed Fawley: Usually 36 hours.
Interviewer: How much holiday do you have?
Ed Fawley: I have two months holiday every year.
Interviewer: What do you like about your job?
Ed Fawley: I like living in Egypt. I have good friends here, and I also enjoy travelling in the Middle East.
Interviewer: What would you like to do in the future?
Ed Fawley: I would like to open a language school in Cairo.

Arabic text:

Interviewer: أنت منين؟
Ed Fawley: أنا من فانكوفر في كندا.
Interviewer: بتدرس فين؟
Ed Fawley: أنا بدرس في مدرسة لغات في اسكندرية.
Interviewer: بتعمل ايه فل المدرسة؟
Ed Fawley: بدرس انجليزي و بحضر للحصص كل يوم.
Interviewer: ليه اخترت تشتغل في اسكندرية؟
Ed Fawley: أنا اعايز اتعلم عربي و اعيش في بلد اثريه.
Interviewer: بتشتغل كام ساعه فالاسبوع؟
Ed Fawley: عادة" 36 ساعه.
Interviewer: أجزاءك اد ايه؟
Ed Fawley: عندي شهرين اجازة كل سنة.
Interviewer: بتحب ايه في شغلك؟
Ed Fawley: انا بجب العيشة في مصر و عندي اصدقاء كويسين و بستمع بالسفر للشرق الاوسط.
Interviewer: عايز تعمل ايه في المستقبل؟
Ed Fawley: انا عايز افتح مدرسة لغات في القاهرة.

How to use a bilingual dialogue in class:

Students work in pairs, and need 1 copy of the bilingual dialogue per pair. Using the following procedure, pairs should be able to work independently of the teacher for 10-15 minutes. It is suitable for students at a wide range of proficiency, especially if the level of English is lower than that normally required for the coursebook:

1. Students read the English text using the Arabic text to help them understand it.
2. Students practise reading the English text out loud.
3. Students cover the English text and use only the Arabic text to try to remember and say the conversation in English. Whenever they forget something, they can look at the English.
4. One student does not look at the text, and tries to remember his/her part from memory. The other student can look at the text, and helps him/her when he/she forgets.
5. The students swap roles and repeat stage 4.
6. The students improvise their own conversation.

The text is based on a job interview text p.75, 'Hello English for Secondary Schools Year 1 (revised edition)' by Simon Haines and Don Dallas. 2008. Cairo: Longman Egypt.