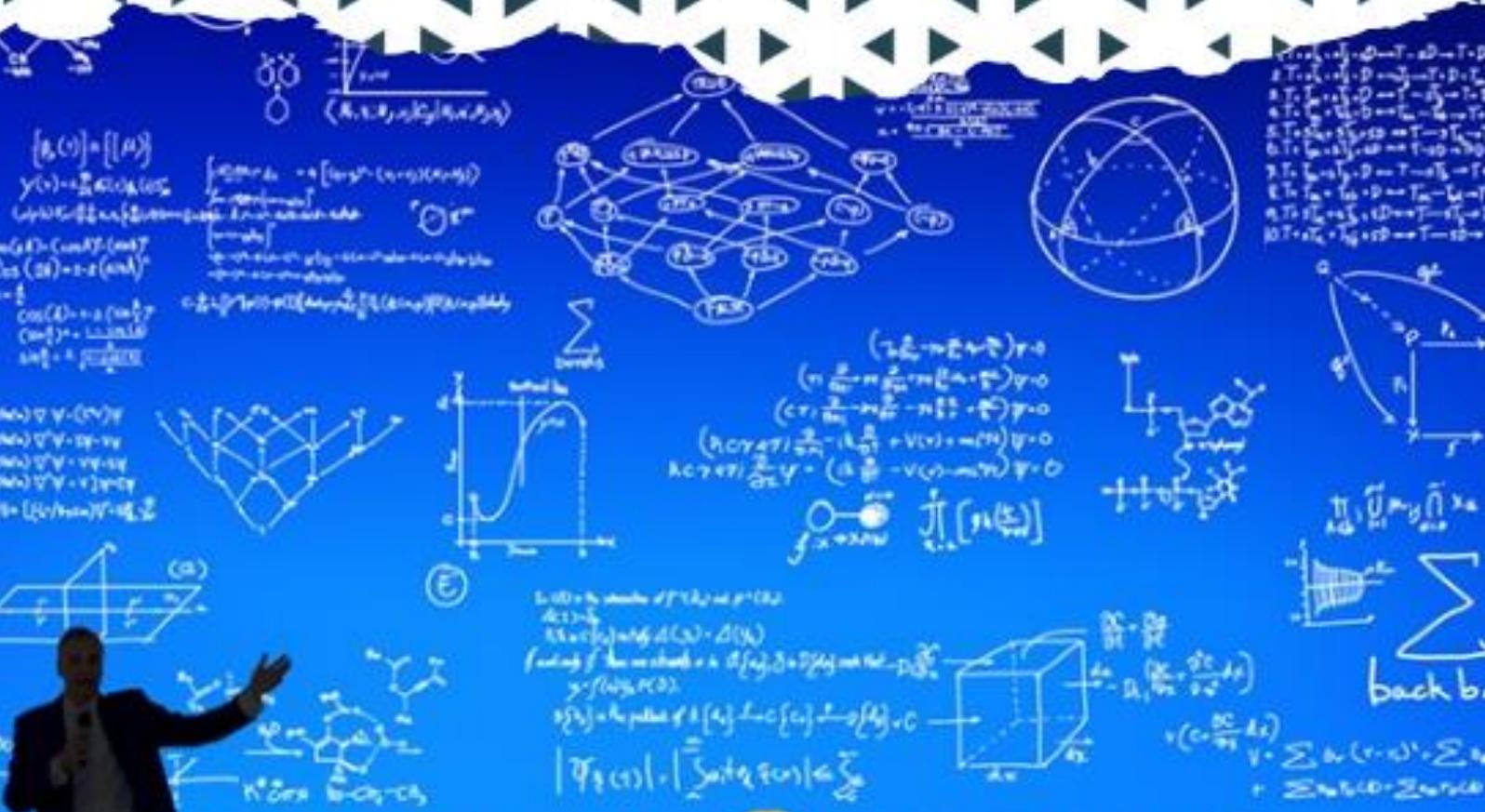




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**«ZAMONAVIY ILM-FAN VA TADQIQOTLAR: MUAMMO VA
YECHIMLAR» NOMLI 2025-YIL № 4-SONLI ILMIY, MASOFAVIY,
ONLAYN KONFERENSIYASI**

**ILMIY-ONLAYN KONFERENSIYA TO'PLAMI
СБОРНИК НАУЧНЫХ-ОНЛАЙН КОНФЕРЕНЦИЙ
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O'ZBEKISTON-2025

Some Difficulties of Using the Mother Tongue in the English Class

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Annotation: This article explores the difficulties that arise when teachers and students overuse the mother tongue (L1) in English language classrooms. While the native language can sometimes help to explain complex grammar or vocabulary, excessive use of it reduces exposure to English and prevents learners from developing real communicative competence. The article also includes personal reflections and examples from the author's own learning experience. Key words: When the mother tongue dominates in class, students may feel that English is only for grammar tests, not for real-life use. According to Jeremy Harmer (2015, *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, p. 205), "The less English students hear, the less they are motivated to use it."

In my opinion, full immersion — even with simple phrases — builds more confidence. When I started listening and speaking only in English, my fluency improved much faster.

Mother tongue, English language, communication, motivation, translation, language teaching, language interference.

Introduction. In many educational systems, especially in Uzbekistan, English is taught as a foreign language. Teachers often find it easier to explain grammar and vocabulary in Uzbek, thinking it saves time and helps students understand better. However, this approach can cause serious long-term problems.

From my own experience as a learner, I have observed that the more we depend on our mother tongue in English classes, the more difficult it becomes to think and speak naturally in English. True language learning begins when we start thinking in English, not when we translate everything from Uzbekistan.

At the beginning stage, using the mother tongue may seem helpful, but it soon develops into a habit of translation. Students begin to rely on their native language for every new word or sentence. According to Harmer (2007, p.133), teachers should "encourage learners to think in English rather than constantly switch back to L1."

From my personal observation, when the teacher speaks too much Uzbek, students respond passively. They understand the lesson but do not practice English actively, which slows down progress. When students use both Uzbek and English frequently in one lesson, interference occurs. They transfer Uzbek grammar and sentence order into English. For example:

Uzbek: "Men uni juda yoqtiraman."

Wrong English: "I very like him." (instead of "I like him very much.")

As Brown (2000, p.68) explains, native language interference is one of the most common obstacles in learning a foreign language.

Using too much L1 decreases students' exposure to English. When English is rarely heard, it stops sounding natural. As Harmer (2015, p.205) writes, "The less English learners hear, the less motivated they become to use it."

In my opinion, even simple classroom phrases such as "Open your books," "Work in pairs," or "Well done" should always be said in English. When I started learning this way, I noticed a big improvement in my listening and speaking confidence. Teachers should know when and how to use the mother tongue effectively. For example, it can be helpful for explaining exam instructions or new difficult words. But it must never replace English communication. In my opinion, the best method is using L1 only when absolutely necessary — not as the main teaching tool.

In conclusion, using the mother tongue in the English classroom should be limited and purposeful. While it can help beginners understand, overuse can damage students' motivation and speaking ability.

Based on my experience, the most successful English classes are those where students hear, speak, and think in English most of the time. Teachers should guide learners to become independent users of English, not translators of it.

Therefore, I believe that the less we depend on our mother tongue, the more confidently we can express ourselves in English.

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