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Use of Informal Learning Environments in Turkish Language Teaching

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Abstract

Teaching is divided into two as formal and informal teaching. Formal education is based on the teaching of planned, programmed and predetermined contents. This type of education, training usually take place in educational institutions, which are called schools. In this respect, formal education is divided into primary, secondary, high school and higher education. Apart from the formal education carried out in planned, programmed environments, there are also informal learning and informal education environments that we can consider as lifelong learning. Outside of school, spontaneous learning without any plan, program, realization is defined as informal learning. Informal learning can take place in almost any environment. This type of learning is one whose place and time are not defined. Learning in informal settings is an important stage in the acquisition of mother tongue. A newly born baby learns to speak the language spoken in the family environment into which he was born. When he starts talking, his family and inner circle are his learning and growing environment. Until the school age, this environment shapes it in terms of language acquisition as well as in every field. Thus, the individual performs language acquisition as used in his immediate environment. Informal learning until the school age takes place in a formal way with the school. Our study is important in terms of showing how informal learning environments can be used to carry out an effective Turkish teaching. The method of the research is literature review. At the end of the study, visual and audio tools such as radio, television, cinema, social media; places such as schools, libraries, houses; It has been concluded that activities such as conferences, theater, poetry recitals and discussions are informal environments that can be used in Turkish teaching.

Keywords: Turkish Teaching, Informal Learning, Mother Tongue, Basic Language Skills

1. Introduction

"Informal learning", which is met with terms such as "street learning", "lifelong learning", "non-formal learning", "informal learning", "home education" in the literature, which we can define as lifelong learning and learning everywhere in our language, is a concept that is increasingly widely used in recent years and draws attention as a form of education and training. In Europe and America, some families prefer to teach their children at home instead of sending them to school for various reasons. These families either give their children direct education or try to educate their children with the help of trainers called tutors and mentors.

Formal learning is limited to time, to place. There are situations such as measuring formal learning knowledge and skills and eventually issuing certificates or documents. In informal learning, as in formal learning, there is no predetermined place, time and program for education, and there is always the opportunity and opportunity for education and training everywhere. During the school years, students spend 86.7% of their time outside the classroom. This shows us the importance of using environments other than the traditional classroom environment to support learning (Denson, Stallworth, Hailey and Householder, 2015, pp. 11). In order to make use of our free time in our daily lives, when we are with our family, when we work in the workplace, we do a wide variety of activities. These activities give us informal learning opportunities. For this reason, the flexibility provided by informal learning is expressed as "Anywhere, any time". Although there is a lot of research on formal learning, studies on informal learning have recently started to increase. (Kyyny, 2012, p. 27).

Babies begin to learn their mother tongue informally. Especially when we think in terms of Turkish education, mother tongue learning starts directly in informal ways. Children acquire language through their mothers, caregivers or those who take care of them from the immediate environment. Children who learn emotions, cultural elements, attitudes and behaviors through those who communicate with them learn cultural values and behaviors along with language. Thanks to close environment interactions, children not only learn the language, but also develop their mental skills and learn letters and numbers in a simple way. Apart from these, they acquire some emotions, game rules, some literary products, especially oral literature, and moral values in informal ways.

At the school age, the knowledge, achievements and experiences previously acquired in informal ways are combined with new ones and especially literacy; New knowledge such as mathematics and scientific subjects is gained through formal education. However, it is a known fact that schools and similar institutions alone cannot be enough. For this reason, even while students are receiving formal education in educational institutions, they continue to learn new information in informal ways and will continue after they finish school.

When we look at the subject in terms of mother tongue education or Turkish teaching, language acquisition that starts with listening and speaking continues with reading and writing. Although reading and writing skills are usually acquired through education in the school environment, there are a few families who do not send their children to school and teach them to read and write themselves. The knowledge and skills gained in school make listening, speaking and using written expression more effective.

Games and group discussions at school increase interaction and make learning permanent. However, in the context of the application and implementation of the learned knowledge, out-of-school learning environments should also be put to work and the learning should support each other. Informal language learning/teaching is a form of learning that can be an alternative to programmed in-school language teaching, but in general, language skills can be continuously supported according to the needs of daily life (Maden and Dincel, 2015, p. 33).

This is where informal learning environments come in. According to Wellington (1990), informal learning is sometimes more effective than formal learning in acquiring new behaviors and acquiring new behaviors to the individual. When we look at the studies on the use of informal learning environments in our country and the publications on this subject, we see that such learning is generally publications on science and nature lessons. In these studies, school trips to different places and the knowledge gained in these places are emphasized. These are the articles or project studies describing the visits to museums, visits to various archaeological sites for purposes or visits to factories or workshops in order to increase skills and knowledge in professional subjects and the positive effects of the observations and examinations made in these places on the learning of the students (Yavuz and Kıyıcı, 2012, p. 22). The curriculum that has changed in recent years also emphasizes the importance of out-of-school learning activities in courses that are intertwined with daily life such as science (Ay, Anagün and Melis, 2015, p. 108).

Apart from science and nature courses, we see that there are studies on the use of informal learning environments in the teaching of mathematics courses. These studies aim to increase the individual's mathematical knowledge as a result of the experiences that naturally arise in the life of the individual through informal learning environments and to increase the ability to bring solutions to the problems that the individual may encounter in his / her daily

life. In this context, we can give examples of "Pi day" activities as an example of informal mathematics education studies (Kurtuluş, 2015, p. 108).

Today, the boundaries of the informal learning environment have expanded to virtual spaces such as mass media, internet search, and social media. Learning environments attract the attention of students through informal environments, visual presentations and technology in terms of including social, cultural and physical environments (Özcan, 2021, p. 57).

1.1. Aim of the Study

The aim of our study is to indicate how informal learning environments can be used in terms of Turkish education and why they are important. What are the informal learning environments that can be used in Turkish language teaching and how these environments can be used in teaching the mother tongue. The answer to their questions is the purpose of our work.

2. Method

The method of the research is literature review. In the literature review as a research model, previously published books, articles, theses, conference proceedings, historical records and reports related to the research subject are searched, found, examined and thus information that will contribute to the study is tried to be obtained. The purpose of literature review can be briefly stated as obtaining the information needed for research (Demirci, 2014, p. 74). In this study, the studies on informal learning in different disciplines will be examined and how informal learning paths can be used in which language skills areas in teaching Turkish will be discussed.

3. Discussion

In this section, it will be discussed where the out-of-school informal learning environments that can be used in Turkish language teaching are and what kind of contributions these environments can make to students in the acquisition of their mother tongue.

Informal educational environments that can be used in Turkish language teaching:

3.1 Libraries

Libraries, are the places where students spend the most time outside of school. Or so it should be. After school lessons, it is necessary to direct students to libraries for different purposes such as studying and researching. Libraries are places that offer unique opportunities both in terms of acquiring the skills that should be possessed due to the learning areas within the Turkish course and the characteristics of these learning areas and seeing whether these skills are possessed or not.

Namely; The student who goes to the library to study should have the ability to read quietly. Apart from this, he should be able to speak in a way that he can explain his problem by using appropriate address sentences to get help from the officials in finding a book he is looking for. In addition, they should be able to take notes on the topics they consider important during the reading. For these reasons, we should remember the libraries that are not frequented by students today and we should give our students the habit of doing research and studying in the library.

Provide dates defining the periods of recruitment and follow-up and the primary sources of the potential subjects, where appropriate. If these dates differ by group, provide the values for each group.

3.2 Cinema, Theater, Concert, Conference and Similar Events

Venues such as cinema and theater and activities such as concerts and conferences have an important place in the development of students' listening skills. A student who goes to the cinema, theater or concert must have developed aesthetic listening skills. In such activities, it is possible to see whether students can apply these rules as well as knowing the listening rules. Such venues and activities benefit students in two ways. The first is the opportunity to transform what they learn in school into gains by having the opportunity to apply the techniques and strategies they have learned with listening skills. The second benefit is that by observing their surroundings, they see people around them who may or may not have the ability to listen effectively and understand why having good listening skills is an important achievement in society. Thus, they can motivate themselves on how to overcome their lack of listening skills.

Apart from cinema, theater and concerts, conferences, meetings and similar activities that we have mentioned not only provide the ability to listen to the effect, but also contribute to the development of students' ability to speak in front of the public and to take notes in terms of writing education. In other words, a student who attends a conference, panel, open session and forum as a listener will learn to take note of the points he considers important from the speeches and will develop his language skills positively by learning to ask questions and enter into discussions by speaking within the rules of courtesy when necessary. On the other hand, in such an event, those who do not listen to the speaker and speak among themselves; When he sees those who speak without speaking, those who interrupt the speaker improperly, he will have the opportunity to learn how important all these rules and practices are in communication between people by drawing positive conclusions from negative examples.

3.3 Places such as Home, Workplace, Hospital, Market, Street and Public Transport

Home and family environment are important informal learning environments. As we mentioned at the beginning of our study, our first learning begins informally in the family environment. The place where our students have the opportunity to show what they learn in school by transforming it into practice and behavior is primarily the family environment. Oral and written language skills and listening skills are both acquired and exhibited within the home. The language to be used in relations with family elders at home, learning to listen to each other within the framework of respect and kindness is very important in terms of Turkish learning and education and personality development. In this environment, grandparents, especially parents, are role models of children. Mutual communication and interaction affect language skills positively or negatively. Apart from these, family activities such as the organization of book reading hours, conversations with family members, fairy tales and story tellings of adults will make positive contributions to the education of students. Again, the fact that a student who has just learned to read and write prepares a shopping list with his mother, notes a recipe, writes various reminder notes will support the development of freelance writing skills.

In addition to these, the speeches that the students will make in order to meet their needs in the places they are in for different reasons and needs, and listening to what is spoken will make positive contributions to their language skills. Asking for an address on the street, directions, asking for a change of money while shopping in the market, asking or telling the place to get off on public transport, being able to tell a doctor in the hospital about his illness or illness in full, all this is based on the use of language skills and putting into practice what is taught formally in school. For this reason, teachers should explain to their students that such activities are learnings and observe their students outdoors whenever they have the opportunity.

3.4 Written Tools such as Newspapers, Magazines, Posters, Advertisements, Graffiti

Media tools where information and news flow are present in daily life are also informal learning environments. The articles, comments and titles in such media organs affect the reading skills of the students and the articles, announcements and the language they use in these publications or in different places can be used as tools for the development of critical reading skills in the students.

Students can not only read media materials written in different types and for different purposes or the writings they see on workplace signs, flyers and boards around them, but also determine the spelling inaccuracies in such writings according to their characteristics, the language they use according to their writing purposes and style. By carrying such examples to the classroom environment, they can discuss among themselves how the wrongs they have identified should be true. Thus, by developing their reading, comprehension and writing skills practically, they have the opportunity to reinforce language skills such as critical reading and critical writing.

For this reason, teachers should encourage students to pay attention to the use of written language in places they see around them, such as posters, advertisements, announcements and workplace names, and to think about how the correct spelling should be by discussing the spelling and expression errors they detect in the classroom environment or among themselves. On the other hand, identifying the perspectives that differ from author to author and from newspaper to newspaper in the news and comments in newspapers and magazines contributes to both media literacy and critical reading education for students. In addition, the fact that there are different approaches and forms of expression allows a clear understanding of the approach and interpretation style that we call "style" in an article.

3.5 Video and Audio Media such as Television, Radio, Internet, Social Media

Apart from the printed media tools, audio and video media and information tools are the most actively used environments for informal learning today. According to Bilici (2017), media comes to mind first when it comes to informal learning, because media is the most effective and widespread informal learning tool. In addition to listening to, watching and speaking activities through television and radio channels, especially on the Internet and social media, students use social media and sharing sites as a means of preparing and publishing information through computers and the Internet. A different and special language is used in these media organs and environments. In this virtual environment where there are many users and information is constantly flowing, students do not respect every share, pay attention to the expressions and shares used in this social media where the language is used in different ways, and do not respect every information will improve students' critical thinking and critical reading.

In a study conducted in Romania, 92% of respondents stated that the shows on television have an informal content that presents false values (Cuc, 2014, p. 71). This result shows us the importance of media literacy and critical listening and reading in terms of Turkish language teaching. In addition, the positive use of social media and the internet will help students to share information through the groups they have established among themselves and to learn the subjects they cannot learn in the school environment. Apart from this, they will have the opportunity to meet people from different cultures and languages through social media and to improve themselves by finding an interactive learning acculturation environment and opportunity.

Apart from the Internet, computers and social media, television and radio are also informal learning environments for students. Research shows that activities such as social media communications, online games, media content have many positive effects and benefits in language learning and acquisition (e.g., Lai & Gong, 2015, Lee, 2019; Lee & Dressman, 2018; Rodgers & Webb, 2011; Sockett, 2014; Sundqvist&Wikstrom, 2015; quoted, Carraro, K. & Trinder, R. 2021, pp. 41).

Since television is a visual and auditory media tool, it will contribute to the development of listening and watching skills and radio will contribute to the development of listening skills. Education, cultural programs, news bulletins, discussion programs on different topics broadcast on television will contribute to the development of students' mental skills, and speakers who will be given examples of the beautiful use of Turkish will have a positive effect on the language development of students. On the other hand, it should be ensured that students develop an awareness in the face of negative situations such as different expressions used on television and radios and the use of Turkish outside the rules. By noting the speech mistakes they witness, they should be encouraged to discuss such uses with friends in a family setting or in class. Thus, how the right verbal communication should be can be taught practically. In addition, the subtitle mistakes made from time to time on televisions, the detection of speech errors made by the presenters or guests in live broadcasts will give students the opportunity to carry the theoretical

information they have learned through in-class activities out of school and will be useful in terms of transferring the information obtained to life.

4. Result

Learning, whether through formal or informal ways, leads to positive behavioral changes in the person and to have knowledge in various areas. Societies transfer their material and spiritual assets to new generations through educational tools. The diversity of educational tools and environments is important for the consolidation and permanence of learning. The diversity of educational tools and environments is important for the consolidation and permanence of learning. In this sense, the systematic teaching contents given in educational institutions should be supported by extracurricular activities, trips, observations and workshop activities. Extracurricular activities that can be applied in almost every field can also be done to contribute to Turkish learning. Informal learning environments are environments where students feel more comfortable than formal learning environments. Informal learning environments can provide different learning possibilities that are not available in traditional learning environments. The individual in informal learning environments can adapt to different learning styles, obtain information according to his own learning speed, and spend more time with objects that are of interest to him in the learning environment (Ertaş Kılıç and Şen, 2014, p. 14).

The field knowledge and achievements that are laid in formal education institutions should be carried to out-of-school / extracurricular learning environments and the transfer of information to life should be ensured. For this reason, it is very important to consider informal learning environments as learning environments in order to provide students especially at middle and high school levels with a love and awareness of Turkish and to ensure that they have a critical perspective. It should be ensured that students apply the information they learn in schools in life, use the knowledge they have previously acquired in the face of the events and situations they encounter, or reach the right information by comparing their achievements with the situations they encounter in life.

For this purpose, Turkish teachers should use every learning environment to transform the grammar rules from knowledge to skills, including the four basic language skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and the rules of the Turkish language. By doing so, they can enable students to transfer the information they have learned to everyday life and turn what they have learned into a lasting behavior. For this, parents should encourage students for extracurricular activities and direct them to activities where they can put their knowledge and skills into practice. Thus, the family and the environment, which are the stakeholders of education, can be included in the education process and an effective mother tongue teaching can be realized.

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