

COMPARISON OF THE NATIVE LANGUAGE CURRICULA IN THE BULGARIAN AND TURKISH SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Abstract. Curricula, which constitute an important part of contemporary education and training, lead individuals to gain knowledge, skills, and attitudes and to carry out the learning process in a planned manner. In this context, curricula have a structure that is shaped and constantly updated according to the requirements of the age. Reviewing the education systems and curricula of different countries is effective in the institutional development of education systems, in modern education, in the legal regulations of education, in curricula, and in arranging them according to modern standards. Benefiting from the programs of different countries is also important in this context, as they are available as an open source. This situation increases the quality of education by enabling teachers and students to follow the methods and techniques in different programs. This study aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation by comparing the convergent and divergent structural features, pedagogical approaches, distribution of learning outcomes, linguistic competencies, and grammar related achievements within the Middle School Mother Tongue Education Programs of Bulgaria and Turkey. The research employs document analysis as a qualitative research methodology to examine the contemporary middle school curricula of both nations. The findings indicate that the Turkish curriculum exhibits a more granular structure regarding implementation guides, workshop activities, instructional differentiation, and assessment frameworks. Conversely, the Bulgarian Language and Literature curriculum presents grammar related learning outcomes with greater clarity and explicitness. While the Turkish curriculum conceptualizes grammar as language structures and excludes it from formal assessment, it maintains a more balanced distribution of core language skills. In the Bulgarian Language and Literature curriculum, productive skills namely writing and speaking are prioritized, with a notable integration of literary texts emphasizing national values and national identity within the seventh grade program.

Keywords: curricula; Turkish; Bulgarian; comparative teaching programmes

1. Introduction

In the classical sense, education leads a process that shapes individuals and society, aiming to bring about desired behavioral changes in individuals, and is constantly undergoing change and development. In this context, it is necessary for the education systems implemented in countries to be designed to respond to the needs of individuals and society. In increasing the quality of education, the curriculum is effective in addressing what education is, why education is needed, and how education should be. For this reason, it is important to recognize the significance of the curriculum and to create inclusive programs. The curriculum requires a focus on what the content is, what potential it has, and how this potential can be unleashed in classrooms to develop human capabilities. The curriculum outlines both the knowledge to be included and the organization of that knowledge to achieve this goal. From this perspective, knowledge is evaluated as a process of selection, sequencing, and acceleration, taking into account the developmental stages of the students. On the other hand, curricula and the selection and sequencing of content within the program reflect how knowledge is organized and structured within academic disciplines, while also showing that they are open to change (Bernotaite, 2025).

Education policy is important not only for developing a clear understanding of goals aimed at success in curriculum, lessons, school, and classroom practices but also for making informed decisions regarding the most appropriate content and functional methods. Accordingly, it is possible to say that the curriculum is active in three areas. These include headings related to educational policy (educational visions, goals, and justifications), the programmatic area (school subjects, programs, curriculum frameworks, and guides), and the classroom area (teaching activities and tasks). It is important to conduct research and development in these three areas to create a curriculum rich in knowledge. In this context, the creation of school courses that can guide and support classroom practices aimed at the fundamental objectives of education, along with the development of national curriculum frameworks, ensures functionality and ease of implementation in the programs (Deng, 2025); (Tedesco et al., 2014).

At the classroom implementation stage of the curriculum, it is important to structure the curriculum frameworks and guides in a way that supports teachers in interpreting the curriculum professionally, and to provide environments that enable the development of tools and resources that can increase face-to-face interaction in the classroom and support implementation. In this context, the importance of teachers' active participation in the process of creating curricula and educational programs, as well as the necessity for teachers not to be deprived of the decision-making process and to have roles beyond self-defined ones, is emphasized in many academic studies (Voogt & Roblin, 2012); (Young, 2014).

Curricula constitute an important part of contemporary education and teaching. Nowadays, through educational programs, it is possible to follow methods and

techniques suitable for the current era, thereby training individuals who meet the needs of the age. It is important for programs, which serve as open resources, to benefit from programs of different countries. The sharing of contemporary programs from different countries, including the methods and techniques within those programs, enables teachers and students to follow modern methods, allowing for the use of up-to-date techniques in practice. Thus, innovations can be adapted to the programs of the countries. In this context, it serves as a guide that enhances the quality of education. In today's world, the curriculum plays a crucial role in the planned execution of the learning process, which has become more differentiated and complex. Continuity in learning, the production of knowledge, and making knowledge available when needed hold significant importance in educational institutions and teaching plans. The effectiveness of education lies in imparting the skills required by the times to students. In this context, effective education depends on the quality of functional curricula. Each program is shaped according to the needs of the era. Curricula lead individuals to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes. With programs determined to be suitable for the era, individuals develop creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, and this process is also effective in societal development. With the changing era, educational programs are continuously updated, providing individuals with digital and communicative competencies. The presence of planning and programs that encompass these skills makes learning effective in nurturing individuals with 21st-century skills such as analytical thinking, critical thinking, digital-media literacy, problem-solving, and communication skills. In the programs, it is observed that language competencies and communication skills are also highlighted alongside local and universal values. Thanks to the programs, individuals experience learning while also becoming open to innovation and change. Alongside their cultural identity, contemporary and innovative approaches lay the groundwork for permanent learning in individuals, while also being effective in motivating them. With teaching methods and techniques, lesson plans are made more functional and effective. The examination of programs and curricula from different countries in the development of national curriculum frameworks and guidelines also raises awareness about curriculum formation (Karakoç & Alyaprak, 2024); (Özdemir & Bastık, 2020).

The comparison of educational programs from different countries allows teachers and students to follow contemporary methods and use up-to-date techniques in their practices. Teaching is seen not only as the transfer of knowledge but also as the comparison of cultural elements through teachers. The most effective methods for creating a contemporary education framework include sending students abroad, calling in experts from abroad, sending experts abroad for various inspections, and conducting translation activities. From this perspective, examining the education systems and programs of different countries has been effective in the institutional development of education systems, modern education, physical elements in the

field of education (buildings, materials), legal regulations of education, and the organization of curricula according to modern standards. Thus, teachers can follow the national and global agenda, make various comparisons, and have a guiding reference (Aslan, 2021). On the other hand, at the end of the teaching process, while a world is opened for the student through programs and the teachers who implement them, the student is also opened to the world (Girgin, 2011); (Güçlü, 2014). In the later sections of the study, the expression “Türkiye Century Education Model Middle School Turkish Teaching Program” has been abbreviated as TCEMMSTTP by us.

2. Problem Situation

The comparison of mother tongue education programs in different countries leads to the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of their education systems and the development of educational policies. In this context, it is of great importance to compare how mother tongue education programs are structured in different countries and what types of achievements, approaches, and practices are included in the teaching of basic language skills. When examining the literature in this field;

In his study, Çavuşoğlu (2010) examined the education systems of Bulgaria and Türkiye and the 9th-grade mathematics curriculum, addressing the views of teachers and students on the mathematics program through surveys he conducted. In his study, he made suggestions for changing the negative views regarding the programs.

In Yılmaz’s (1996) study, the primary education science curricula in Türkiye, Bulgaria, and Azerbaijan were examined structurally, and the weekly lesson hours and textbooks created within the framework of the programs were compared. He addressed the similarities and differences in the programs of the three countries.

In their study, Doğan and Gülvodina (2020) evaluated and compared the Turkish language education in Bulgaria and the changes in middle school Turkish textbooks (1992 – 2019) in terms of content, language levels, and various approaches.

In their study, Sekin and Özel (2007) compared the contents of geography curricula taught at the middle school level in Türkiye and Bulgaria. In this context, they examined the similarities and differences between the geography curricula of the two countries based on grade levels.

So, in their study, Nurlu and Çelik (2015) addressed the issues encountered in teaching Turkish in Bulgaria within the framework of programs, teacher training, textbooks, and government policies. The establishment of Turkish libraries and the importance of current books were emphasized, and the insufficiency in the number of Turkish teachers was highlighted.

In their study, Yavuzkurt and Kırıl (2019) examined the similarities and differences in the education systems of Türkiye, Bulgaria, and Canada by

comparing teacher training programs and educational management and supervision systems.

Ilgar and İncedere (2016) in their study compared the enrollment rates in Bulgaria and Türkiye with elements related to the education system, such as the countries' educational history, educational expenditures, personnel, and resources.

In his 2023 study, Karasu addressed the difficulties faced by students whose native language is Turkish in learning Bulgarian and proposed solutions to these difficulties. It was criticized that the language of Bulgarian language textbooks is difficult, and it was stated that this situation makes language learning more challenging.

In his 2022 study, Canpolat highlighted the academic works related to mother tongue education of Turks in Bulgaria, including articles, master's and doctoral theses, books, and reports, drawing attention to the studies and gaps in the field. In the study, there were statements aimed at raising awareness of mother tongue consciousness and organizing curricula and lesson plans to develop the four basic language skills.

The limited and insufficient number of studies conducted in this area, along with the lack of comparisons of mother tongue teaching programs, has created a gap in analyzing the effectiveness of language teaching. This situation highlights the importance and necessity of comparative research on mother tongue education. Based on this, this study highlights the comparison of mother tongue education programs in Bulgaria and Türkiye and identifies the shareable aspects of the elements that are followed, adopted, and considered important in teaching basic language skills.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this study is to provide academic support to curriculum developers by identifying the shareable aspects of the elements that two countries' native language curricula follow, adopt, and consider important in teaching the fundamental skills of the native language.

4. Method

In this study, document analysis, a qualitative research method, has been used. This method involves the systematic analysis of printed and electronic materials related to the research topic, such as books, magazines, newspapers, images, radio programs, and recordings (Kıral, 2020). Although it is a systematic method for evaluating printed and electronic materials, it provides data from materials without researcher intervention and allows for interpretation. In document analysis, data such as curricula, curriculum guidelines, reports, and course contents are examined. Thus, meanings are derived and interpretations are made regarding educational processes, approaches, and practices (Bowen, 2009).

In this study, a comparison was made of the achievements, approaches, and practices adopted in the teaching of basic language skills in the Middle School Mother Tongue Education Programs of Bulgaria and Türkiye. In the Bulgarian education system, data related to the Bulgarian Language and Literature for the 5th, 6th, and 7th grades, which are considered the middle school level, and in Türkiye, data related to the Turkish Language Teaching Program for the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, which are considered the middle school level, have been examined according to categories focused on basic language skills.

5. The Problem and Sub-Problems of the Study

The main problem of the study: In the Bulgarian and Turkish native language curricula, which achievements, approaches, and, if any, implementation guidelines have been included to develop basic language skills?

Sub-problems

In the Bulgarian and Turkish middle school curriculum:

1. What are the main goals and approaches in mother tongue education?
2. What are the achievements, approaches, and practices in reading instruction?
3. What are the achievements, approaches, and practices in writing instruction?
4. What are the achievements, approaches, and practices in teaching speaking?
5. What are the achievements, approaches, and practices in listening instruction?
6. What are the achievements, approaches, and practices of basic grammar topics to support skills?

6. Findings and Comments:

6.1. Findings and comments related to the sub-problem: What are the main objectives and approaches of the Bulgarian and Turkish language curricula in teaching the mother tongue?

In the table of contents of the updated Middle School Turkish Course Curriculum within the scope of the Türkiye Century Education Model 2024; the first section includes the program's fundamental approach and specific objectives, the principles for implementing the program, tables of theme learning outcomes by number and duration, information on the number of forms in the textbook and book sizes, and information on the structure of the curriculum. In the second part, themes, learning outcomes, process components, and explanations related to grade levels are included, while the third part consists of appendices featuring examples of function-based language structures and vocabulary, production workshops, and examples of assessment and evaluation tools. In the Middle School Turkish Course Curriculum, one of the main objectives of the program is to develop students' Turkish language skills and enable them to use the language effectively. In this context, ensuring the development of students' reading, listening/viewing, speaking, and writing skills comes to the forefront. The objectives related to skills, implementation principles,

teaching strategies and methods, production workshops, measurement, evaluation, and differentiation practices, learning outcomes covering skill areas, and process components constitute the program's headings related to skills. Thus, it is observed that the four basic language skills are detailed in the program. Grammar is referred to as language structures in the curriculum, and separate emphasis is not placed on learning outcomes related to language structures. In the program, language structures, which are included as a tool rather than a goal, serve as a means to develop the four basic language skills (TCEMMSTTP, 2024).

When examining the Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum, it is noted that although Bulgarian Language and Literature is a single subject, the annual number of study hours is divided equally, with 50% allocated to the Bulgarian language and 50% to literature, as defined in the school's framework curriculum. In this context, separate curricula and planning for Bulgarian Language and Bulgarian Literature are included in the curriculum (https://www.mon.bg/nfs/2023/11/up_v_bge.pdf). The Bulgarian Language and Literature Middle School Curriculum includes a content section for Bulgarian Language; a brief introduction to the curriculum, expected learning outcomes at the end of the course (socio-cultural competencies, language competencies, and communicative competencies), learning content (topic, learning outcomes, and new concepts), allocated class hours for developing communicative competencies and learning outcomes related to communicative competencies, assessment and evaluation percentages, and activities aimed at acquiring basic competencies and interdisciplinary connections. In the context of Bulgarian Literature, the only difference is that the language competencies included in the learning outcomes are replaced by literary competencies in the literature curriculum. However, while separate headings for reading, listening, speaking, and writing are allocated in the communicative competencies section of the Bulgarian Language curriculum, such a distinction is not made in the Bulgarian Literature section. In the Bulgarian Language and Literature Course Curriculum, the four basic language skills – reading, listening, speaking, and writing—are included under the learning outcomes titled “Communicative Competencies Expected to be Achieved in the Bulgarian Language Curriculum.” In the Bulgarian Literature program, reading, listening, speaking, and writing are not listed as separate headings, but they are included within the learning outcomes (https://www.mon.bg/nfs/2023/11/up_vi_bge.pdf).

The aim of the Bulgarian Language and Literature Course Curriculum is to ensure mastery of the structure of the Bulgarian language, to develop students' communication skills, to place additional importance on the development of socio-cultural skills in speaking as a fundamental language skill, to master spelling and punctuation rules, and to develop communication skills by correctly using this knowledge. Additionally, it aims to develop the ability to apply speaking rules, make presentations, introduce oneself, understand a text in listening and reading

activities, create texts, and produce solutions appropriate to problem situations. The aim is to acquire basic knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to literature, to interpret mythological and folkloric concepts, Bulgarian literature, and literary works from world literature from different perspectives, to experience and evaluate the problems and conflicts of the age in their lives within the writer-text-reader relationship, to understand the situations in what they read and watch, to produce a new text, and to evaluate and present the ability to write this text. In the Bulgarian Literature course, the emphasis is on developing different perspectives in students through the works used. In this context, the texts included in the textbooks are selected from Bulgarian literature and world literature. In the 5th and 6th grades, there is an attempt to balance the number of texts from Bulgarian literature and world literature, but in the final grade, there is a differentiation. In the 7th grade, Bulgarian Literature is emphasized, and the selected texts include connections and texts that lead to discussions and require questioning. In this context, the perception of cultural diversity and heterogeneity is presented internally within the national culture (https://www.mon.bg/nfs/2023/11/up_vii_lit.pdf).

6.2. Findings and comments related to the sub-problem: What are the achievements, approaches, and practices of reading instruction?

In the Middle School Turkish Language Course Curriculum, the aim is to develop four basic language skills in students, use speaking and writing rules appropriately, understand and critically analyze what they read, listen to, and watch, and enrich their vocabulary. In this context, the implementation of the program emphasizes the development of students' Turkish language skills in the area of language proficiency. Being able to use the language effectively is possible through the development of the four basic language skills. Based on this, the development of students' listening, speaking, reading, viewing, and writing skills is one of the primary objectives of the program. When examining the implementation principles of reading skills in the Middle School Turkish Course, it is observed that the learning outcomes in the program are grouped into reading, listening/viewing, writing, and speaking language skills for each grade level. Within the scope of reading skills, the behavior aimed to be achieved in middle school students is to progress from being a fluent reader to reaching the level of a critical reader (TCEMMSTTP, 2024).

When examining the principles of implementation for teaching strategies and methods related to reading skills in the Middle School Turkish Course, it is noted that cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which the student should independently apply during the reading process, are included. Cognitive strategies encompass the mental processes and practices that ensure the successful completion of the reading process. Metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, refer to monitoring whether the action is being carried out to the desired extent and evaluating whether the goal has been achieved at the end of the process. While cognitive strategies are at the forefront in guiding students to achieve their goals, metacognitive strategies

are important in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of the reading process. In the methods and strategies to be taught for reading skills, the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model is taken as the basis. In this model, the teacher provides detailed information about the method and demonstrates an example application by thinking aloud. The process, which begins with teacher guidance, concludes when the student can independently apply the strategy. The level of students' reading skills is determined at the beginning of the academic year through diagnostic assessment, and the development of the process is monitored throughout the year. When evaluating the implementation principles of production workshops aimed at basic language skills in the Middle School Turkish Course Curriculum, it is observed that students are assigned 2 books to read each term in the reading workshop. One of the books read is evaluated in class, while the analyses of the other book are expected to be presented to the teacher in the form of a report. In this context, the aim is for educational activities in the workshops to be transformed into products. When the principles of assessment and evaluation practices in the Middle School Turkish Course Curriculum are examined, it is seen that process-based evaluation is at the forefront. In this context, diagnostic assessment is conducted at the beginning of the academic year, and the process is monitored throughout the year. Peer and self-assessment related to reading skills also enable the student to evaluate their reading process. The importance of providing timely and clear feedback to students during the process is emphasized in the program. When examining the principles of differentiation practices in the Middle School Turkish Language Course Curriculum, it is observed that there are sections for enrichment and support aimed at improving reading skills. Activities are planned taking into account the interests and needs of the students. In the enrichment phase, activities are planned that allow students to evaluate what they have read from a unique perspective, while in the support section, schematic organizers are used to create a purpose for reading before the activity, and it is possible to say that activities aimed at finding keywords related to the text read are included. When examining the learning outcomes and process components related to Reading Skills, it is observed that students achieving the learning outcomes constitutes the main objective of the program. For the skill subject of Turkish, a spiral structure is incorporated at the 5th to 8th grade levels. The program includes learning outcomes, process components, and learning experiences aimed at reading skills. In this context, it is observed that a total of 29 learning outcomes related to reading skills have been included (TCEMMSTTP, 2024).

When examining the Middle School Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum, it is observed that the program includes learning outcomes related to socio-cultural, language competencies, communicative competencies, and knowledge, skills, and attitudes in these areas. The four basic language skills—reading, listening/viewing, speaking, and writing—are included under the heading

of communicative competencies. The learning outcomes for reading skills at all grade levels include understanding the meaning of domestic and foreign texts based on what has been read, producing a plan for a text, extracting, selecting, and synthesizing information from an article. However, in the socio-cultural competencies section, it is observed that there are achievements related to managing reading choices; being able to make independent reading choices by considering elements such as the author, publisher, annotations, critical evaluation, peer recommendations, etc., and using various information sources (https://www.mon.bg/nfs/2023/11/up_vii_bge.pdf).

6.3. Findings and comments related to the sub-problem: What are the achievements, approaches, and practices of writing education?

When examining the principles of writing skill application in middle school Turkish lessons, it is aimed that students engage in writing activities in a planned and systematic manner to develop their writing skills. In this context, the process of planning, creating a draft of the text, reviewing the text (evaluating and editing), and sharing it constitutes the stages of writing. Considering the learning outcomes of writing skills, writing skills are categorized into two groups: written production and written interaction. In addition to traditional writing tools, the use of digital writing tools is also emphasized for writing skills. When examining the implementation principles of teaching writing strategies and methods in middle school Turkish courses, it is observed that cognitive and metacognitive strategies are expected to be applied by individuals in the development of writing skills. Since cognitive strategies are skill-based, they are taught in activities aimed at developing skills. The cognitive strategies used in the writing process that are effective, facilitate understanding and structuring, and enable the effective reflection of the intended message include planning, text (draft) creation, review (evaluation and editing), and sharing (TCEMMSTTP, 2024).

One of the main goals in the writing process is for the student to be able to use writing strategies independently and to turn this into a skill. In this context, the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model is used as the basis for teaching methods and strategies related to writing skills. For example, a teacher who wants to teach writing an introductory paragraph first provides detailed explanations and then conducts a sample application, thinking aloud about the writing process. In the next stage, a group work of 4 – 6 people is initially conducted. In the next stage, the writing process continues in groups of 2 – 3, with the teacher guiding the students during this process. In the final stage, there is an activity where students can individually apply the strategy, and the process concludes with the realization of learning. When evaluating the implementation principles of production workshops aimed at writing skills in the Middle School Turkish Course Curriculum, it is noted that at the end of each theme at the grade levels in the curriculum, separate speaking and writing workshop sessions are included. In this context, the learning

outcomes of the workshop consist of speaking and writing language skills. The learning outcomes included in the workshops consist of the planning, production, and evaluation stages. In the writing workshops, students are expected to use their creativity and the writing strategies they have learned to create original works and produce products. In the assessment of writing skills, evaluation methods that involve direct production are used. Writing by selecting from a pool of words and concepts, writing petitions, writing/completing stories, writing emails, and filling out forms are used for this purpose. When examining the principles of assessment and evaluation practices in the Middle School Turkish Language Curriculum, it is noted that assessment tasks directly involving production are included in the evaluation of writing skills. Story writing/completion, writing by selecting from a pool of words and concepts, filling out forms, and writing emails and petitions are used in measurement and evaluation. The checklist and rubric consist of analytical and holistic scoring rubrics. When the principles of differentiation practices in the Middle School Turkish Language Curriculum are examined, it is seen that enrichment and support activities are included in the curriculum aimed at developing writing skills. With enrichment, the application of what has been learned in writing skills is facilitated, while in the support section, activities make the process effective, and efforts are continued to address the parts that have not been learned. The program aimed at writing skills includes learning outcomes, process components, and learning experiences. In the program aimed at writing skills, a total of 22 learning outcomes are included (TCEMMSTTP, 2024).

When examining the Middle School Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum, the learning outcomes related to writing skills include planning, structuring, creating, and graphing the text to be produced, using learned literary language rules, developing writing habits in terms of frequently used words and terminological vocabulary, and editing and sharing the text. It is observed that the program includes a section on written production aimed at writing skills. In the written production section, the learning outcomes include creating a text for presentation purposes, planning the text, being able to respond to an experience-based, scientific question, including in an electronic environment, and creating a text for an advertisement and an invitation (https://www.mon.bg/nfs/2023/11/up_vi_bge.pdf).

In the Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum, the aim is to develop communicative competencies, and in this context, a separate time period is allocated in the program for this purpose. In the section on communicative competencies, it is observed that learning outcomes related to speaking and writing skills are included, and these skills are evaluated together. In this context, the learning outcomes included in the communicative competencies section are as follows: being able to apply appropriate speaking rules, participating in discussions and defending ideas, approaching different opinions with tolerance, creating a writing plan, producing

text, and developing the skill of sharing by organizing the text in terms of writing rules and narrative features, including in digital environments. Additionally, the program includes the ability to verbally describe artistic texts, to create written responses to literary questions, and to produce oral and written narratives based on experience (https://www.mon.bg/nfs/2023/11/up_vii_lit.pdf).

6.4. Findings and comments related to the sub-problem: What are the achievements, approaches, and practices of speech training?

When examining the principles of applying speaking skills in middle school Turkish lessons, the primary goal in speaking skills is to be able to speak fluently. Students need to correctly apply the pre-speech, during-speech, and post-speech rules regarding their speaking skills. The learning outcomes of speaking skills are categorized into two groups: “oral production and oral interaction.” The oral production part is aimed at individual speaking activities, while oral interaction is evaluated as reciprocal speaking activities. In order to evaluate the development of speaking skills, both face-to-face and digital environments are utilized. When examining the principles of teaching strategies and methods for speaking skills in the middle school Turkish course, while there are explanations regarding the cognitive and metacognitive strategies for reading, listening/viewing, and writing skills, such a situation does not exist for speaking skills. In the selection and implementation of methods and techniques to be used in the speaking skill, the form of speaking is determined as oral production and oral interaction, while the speaking varies according to whether it is prepared or unprepared (TCEMMSTTP, 2024).

When evaluating the implementation principles of production workshops aimed at speaking skills in the Middle School Turkish Course Curriculum, it is noted that there is a speaking workshop at the end of each theme. In the workshop, activities aimed at speaking skills, speaking methods, types, and techniques that take into account the student levels are included. Guided, participatory, critical, argumentative, free, and interactive types of speech are examples of these. The products created in the workshop with speaking skill learning outcomes are mutually inclusive. The studies consist of planning, production, and evaluation phases. In the process, a checklist, observation form, and a graded scoring key are used. It is emphasized in the program that the techniques used in the speech workshop are action-based. When examining the principles of assessment and evaluation practices in the Middle School Turkish Language Course Curriculum, it is noted that assessment tasks involving direct production are included in the evaluation of speaking skills. As checklists and scoring rubrics, the fluency checklist, the holistic scoring rubric for general speaking skills, the numerical grading scale for the discussion task, and the scoring rubric for evaluating the student’s presentation are among the scales used in speaking skills. When examining the principles of differentiation practices in the Middle School Turkish Language Curriculum, it is emphasized that in enrichment activities aimed at speaking skills, it is important to convey the content in a unique

style. In support activities aimed at developing speaking skills, the use of schematic organizers, visuals, tables, graphs, puppetry, and drama activities is emphasized to support and enhance speaking skills. The program aimed at speech skills includes learning outcomes, process components, and learning experiences. In this context, it is observed that a total of 26 learning outcomes related to speaking skills are included. In the program, speaking skills are included as oral production and oral interaction. In this context, the relevant learning outcome has been marked and identified in the program (TCEMMSTTP, 2024).

When examining the Middle School Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum, the learning outcomes related to speaking skills include paying attention to pronunciation rules, making logical stress according to communicative purposes, participating in discussions, being able to oppose different opinions, and showing tolerance and politeness in communication. In the program, under the section for developing oral expression skills related to speaking, it is observed that achievements such as being able to create a text to be presented, answering questions, and producing ready-to-present texts like advertisements and invitations are included. In the curriculum, it is observed that socio-cultural competencies and language competencies are also included in the learning outcomes for speaking skills. In the socio-cultural competencies section; it includes the characteristics of formal and informal communication, the importance of speaking etiquette in public communication, the ability to use linguistic tools appropriately in speaking situations, the ability to reason about and discuss a life-related topic, the ability to ask and answer questions on various subjects, and the ability to understand instructions in both school and out-of-school environments. In the learning outcomes of language competencies, it is specified that students should recognize different text types, be knowledgeable about linguistic tools related to phonetic, morphological, syntactic, and lexical phenomena and use them appropriately during speaking, recognize the characteristics of media and artistic texts, apply literary language rules, identify and correct language errors, and use communication appropriately for its purpose. In the program, learning outcomes include the ability to apply speaking rules and participate in discussions to develop communicative competencies, and a separate period is allocated for these achievements (https://www.mon.bg/nfs/2023/11/up_vii_bge.pdf).

6.5. Findings and comments on the sub-problem: What are the achievements, approaches, and practices of listening education?

When examining the implementation principles of the listening/viewing skill in middle school Turkish lessons, it is aimed to develop the student's comprehension ability with the learning outcomes of the listening/viewing skill, to provide the ability to self-evaluate by applying listening/viewing rules, and to support the development of vocabulary. When examining the principles of strategy and method instruction for the listening/viewing skills in middle school Turkish lessons,

the mental processes and activities that ensure the listening/viewing process is completed appropriately are considered within the scope of cognitive strategies. Metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, involve monitoring whether listening/viewing occurs at the desired level and evaluating the extent to which the goal has been achieved at the end of the process. When evaluating the implementation principles of production workshops aimed at listening skills in the Middle School Turkish Course Curriculum, a listening/viewing material is selected each term of the academic year, taking into account the students' interests, needs, and levels, as well as its connection to the themes. Throughout the year, the selected listening/viewing materials are watched, with one being analyzed in class and the other being watched and discussed with the student and their family. When the principles of assessment and evaluation practices in the Middle School Turkish Course Curriculum are examined, it can be seen that listening/viewing skills can be evaluated through indirect assessment tasks such as multiple-choice, free association, and summarization (TCEMMSTTP, 2024).

When examining the principles of differentiation practices in the Middle School Turkish Language Curriculum, it is noted that differentiation efforts are made considering the student's level, interests, and needs. In this context, it is important to be able to interpret using a unique perspective in the enrichment activities aimed at listening/viewing skills. To facilitate understanding in listening/viewing texts, schematic organizers, tables, and visuals are effective in creating objectives aimed at listening/viewing skills. The program aimed at listening/viewing skills includes learning outcomes and process components. In this context, it is observed that a total of 27 learning outcomes related to listening/viewing skills have been included. However, learning experiences related to the learning outcomes are also effective in the listening/viewing process (TCEMMSTTP, 2024). When examining the Middle School Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum, the learning outcomes related to listening skills are found in the section on communicative competencies. The common listening skill learning outcomes for each grade level include being able to listen to the other party's ideas in a discussion, comparing different perspectives, and understanding the meaning of domestic and foreign texts based on listening. It is observed that detailed learning outcomes related to listening skills are not included in other parts of the program (https://www.mon.bg/nfs/2023/11/up_v_bge.pdf).

6.6. Findings and comments related to the sub-problem: What are the achievements, approaches, and practices of basic grammar topics in supporting skills?

When examining the criteria for the use of language structure and vocabulary in the learning and teaching stages of the Middle School Turkish Course, it is observed that the program moves away from the traditional understanding by using the term "language structures" instead of "grammar." Learning outcomes

aimed at developing reading, listening/viewing, speaking, and writing skills do not include language structures. The absence of separate learning outcomes for language structures emphasizes that language structures are not the goal but the means in the program. In this context, it is aimed for students to better understand reading and listening, and to carry out quality speaking and writing activities in speaking and writing. In line with this goal, language structures are not included in the measurement and evaluation process. In the teaching of language structures for grades 5-8, a spiral and holistic process is being established, and a functional approach is being adopted. Language structures and vocabulary are determined based on the text covered in the comprehension section according to students' interests and needs, and students are encouraged to use them in their speaking skills (TCEMMSTTP, 2024).

When evaluating the grammar section of the Middle School Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum, the learning content includes topics, learning outcomes, and explanations of new concepts. The importance of expressive language, the impact of words on speaking skills, vocabulary, and the use of native and foreign words in digital texts to reinforce their meanings are also emphasized. Recognizing foreign and borrowed words, explaining inconsistencies between speaking and writing, and using and writing native and foreign words in accordance with pronunciation and spelling rules are of great importance. In the learning content section, the learning outcomes related to grammar are primarily included to be effectively used in speaking and writing skills. In the process of speaking and writing, being able to use verb conjugations appropriately for the purpose of communication and recognizing and using compound verbs within sentences come to the forefront. Learning outcomes related to grammar are observed in the relevant achievement and encompass the ability to communicate appropriately. For example, recognizing the conjugations of the present tense, being able to form them, observing their spelling and usage features, and being able to use them appropriately in communication situations serve as examples (https://www.mon.bg/nfs/2023/11/up_vii_bge.pdf).

Table 1. General findings in curriculum comparison

Comparison Element	Turkish Language Curriculum	Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum
Curriculum Structure	It includes a detailed structure encompassing application examples, workshops, differentiation, assessment and evaluation, learning outcomes, and process components. A skills-based and holistic approach is involved.	It is of a framework nature and includes general learning outcomes, content structure, concepts to be learned, communicative competencies, assessment and evaluation, and activities related to inter-curricular connections. A structured content approach is involved.
Distribution of Basic Language Skills in the Curriculum Reading, Listening, Speaking, Writing	The distribution of basic language skills is balanced. Reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills have been addressed under the following headings: Application Principles Teaching Strategies and Methods Workshop Practices Assessment and Evaluation Differentiation Practices Learning Outcomes Process Components. Number of Learning Outcomes Reading (29), Listening (27), Speaking (26), Writing (22).	The distribution of core linguistic competencies within the curriculum lacks proportional balance. Although the 'Communicative Competence' section encompasses listening, reading, speaking, and writing, the learning outcomes are not quantitatively defined. Furthermore, the program allocates dedicated instructional time specifically for the development of communicative competencies, with a disproportionate emphasis on productive achievements related to speaking and writing. This structural organization suggests a pedagogical prioritization of active language production over receptive skills.
Placement of Grammar Topics in the Curriculum	The term grammar has been conceptualized with the expression "Language Structures" and has been integrated into the overall structure with basic language skills. By not including learning outcomes in the program, it has been emphasized that language structures are not the goal but the means in teaching.	The learning outcomes related to grammar have been clearly and explicitly included. The content area of grammar has been established, and details regarding the subject and new concepts have been emphasized in the program.
Placement of Literary Texts in the Curriculum	In the Turkish curriculum, texts serve as tools that support learning outcomes. Texts that highlight national values are included in a balanced manner at every grade level.	In the 7th-grade curriculum, emphasis is placed on literary texts that highlight national values and national identity. This process, which shows a balanced distribution in other grade levels, changes in the 7th grade.

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7. Conclusion

In this study, the Middle School Mother Tongue Teaching Programs of Türkiye and Bulgaria have been compared within the framework of the achievements, approaches, and practices in the teaching of grammar, which is a supportive skill, as well as the content, scope, and basic language skills. As a result of the research, it has been determined that the achievements, approaches, and practices in language teaching differ in the mother tongue education programs of Türkiye and Bulgaria. Developing the four basic language skills is among the primary objectives of the Turkish Language Teaching Program. For this reason, the program includes all information related to the application principles, strategies and methods, production workshops, differentiation studies, and assessment and evaluation for the development of the four basic language skills. The learning outcomes related to reading, listening/viewing, speaking, and writing are evenly distributed in the program. In contrast, the Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum shows differences in the learning outcomes for the four basic language skills. The inclusion of writing and speaking skills in the communicative competencies section has highlighted the importance of speaking and writing skills. In this context, there is no balanced distribution among the skills. Grammar has been included in the Turkish Curriculum as a supportive tool for the four basic language skills, and learning outcomes related to grammar have not been included. It is stated in the program that language structures will not be included in assessment and evaluation. It has been observed that the Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum places emphasis on grammar instruction and provides detailed learning outcomes related to grammar. In the Bulgarian Language and Literature Curriculum, it has been observed that there is a balanced distribution of content related to Bulgarian literature and world literature in the 5th and 6th grades, while in the 7th grade, the content is predominantly focused on Bulgarian literature, with national concepts being emphasized in the program. The curricula of Turkish and Bulgarian Language and Literature diverge significantly in terms of structural design, core linguistic competencies, and morphosyntactic pedagogy. These discrepancies are primarily attributed to the respective national educational policies, underlying pedagogical philosophies, and instructional approaches. While the Turkish Language Teaching Program follows a centralized model that potentially limits pedagogical autonomy, the Bulgarian framework offers greater flexibility to practitioners. Furthermore, the Bulgarian curriculum adopts a structuralist foundation where grammar is categorized as a distinct learning domain. In contrast, the Turkish curriculum employs a functional-communicative approach, treating 'language structures' as auxiliary tools rather than primary objectives. Lastly, while the Turkish model maintains a balanced distribution across all four basic language skills, the Bulgarian curriculum prioritizes productive skills (speaking and writing), with a distinct emphasis on canonized literary works aimed at fostering national identity in the 7th-grade level.

8. Suggestion

This study has been limited to the Turkish and Bulgarian Language and Literature mother tongue curricula at the middle school level. In a significantly globalized world, it is important to emphasize the interaction of different language and culture programs so that individuals can share a common ground in communicative and cultural values and achieve language proficiency according to a common framework shaped by the four basic language skills.

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