

Comparison of speaking activities in 8th-grade coursebooks of Turkish lesson

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to compare the speaking activities in the 8th-grade Turkish coursebooks with respect to their reflection of the achievements and methods and techniques in the program, their association with the subject of the text, the number of activities according to text types, and the instructions explaining the activities. The study was conducted with document analysis, one of the qualitative research methods. The coursebooks belonging to the MEB and Ferman Pub., which were decided to be taught in the 8th grade in the 2023-2024 academic year, were taken as a sample. Data were collected from post-text speaking activities and analyzed by descriptive and content analysis. The evaluations made for 64 activities in total were compared by two field experts, and the reliability was found to be 85.3%. As a result, it was observed that the speaking activities in the Ferman Pub. covered all the achievements in the Turkish Language Teaching Program in a balanced manner numerically with clear and explicit statements in the instructions, but in the MEB Pub., not all the achievements were included, and the instructions were implicit and ambiguous to meet the achievements. In both coursebooks, the guided speaking strategy was used the most. In the Ferman Pub., speaking strategies, methods, and techniques to be used in speaking activities are explained in detail, and there is diversity in terms of methods and techniques (such as creative, critical, empathizing, persuasion, and discussion). In the MEB Pub., there is no explanation on how to apply strategies, and although the variety of methods and techniques is limited, the expressions about using strategies are implicit. In both coursebooks, there are examples of activities related to evaluating speaking, using voice, and dramatizing the text, but there are no achievements that meet these activities in the new Turkish Curriculum.

Introduction

Speaking is the most basic skill used to communicate in all kinds of environments. Through speech, emotions and thoughts are transferred verbally through a process in which cognitive, social, physical, and psychological states and characteristics are also processed (İşcan, 2013). Hence, speaking is not a simple interactional process, but rather a complex process in which many

skills are processed rapidly. In this process, information that goes through mental processes such as remembering, recalling information, sorting, classifying, establishing relationships, matching, criticizing, interpreting, analyzing, and synthesizing, and evaluating is transferred with appropriate voice, mimics, and gestures, taking into account the environment.

Speaking is one of the basic language skills that develop together with listening skills. The easiest way for an individual to express himself/herself fully and accurately in order to continue his/her daily life can be achieved by being an effective and understandable speaker (Kurudayioğlu, 2019). The Turkish Teaching Program emphasizes the development of speaking skills. This is because speaking methods and techniques need to be taught for effective and meaningful speaking, even though speaking skills -in normal individuals- develop naturally with the influence of the environment (Akyol, 2019). Güneş (2014) stated that by teaching speaking skills, students can gain various skills such as cooperation, respecting others, evaluating different ideas, and defending their own ideas.

In the Turkish Curriculum (Ministry of National Education, 2006), it is aimed at developing speaking skills that:

“... Students will be able to express themselves correctly and comfortably by reaching the aesthetic pleasure of Turkish and benefiting from its rich vocabulary; they will be able to solve the problems they will encounter in social life by speaking, interpreting and evaluating them, communicating with their environment, cooperating and making joint decisions.”

In the revised Turkish curriculum, eight basic competence frameworks have been identified for students to gain personal, social, academic, and professional competence in accordance with the requirements of the 21st century. The first of these is communication in the mother tongue. With the development of communication skills in the mother tongue (MEB, 2019), students' ability to express themselves both verbally and in writing by entering into linguistic interaction in all kinds of environments is emphasized.

In the Turkish Curriculum (MEB, 2019, p. 8), it is aimed for students to acquire the following skills by developing speaking skills:

- *Developing listening/watching, speaking, reading, and writing skills,*
- *Ensuring that they use Turkish consciously, accurately, and carefully in accordance with the rules of speaking and writing,*
- *Ensuring that they reach a taste and awareness of language by enriching their vocabulary based on what they read, listen to/watch, and developing their worlds of emotion, thought, and imagination.*
- *Expressing his/her feelings and thoughts and his/her opinions or thesis on a subject orally and in writing in an effective and comprehensible manner.*

Speaking achievements are included in the program to realize the above objectives. Speaking achievements did not change at the grade level, but the explanations related to the relevant achievements changed at each grade level. Grade 8 speaking achievements are as follows (MEB, 2019, p. 47):

- *Makes a prepared speech.*
- *Makes an unprepared speech.*
- *Applies speaking strategies.*
- *Uses body language effectively in their speeches.*
- *Uses words according to their meanings.*

- *Uses Turkish equivalents of words borrowed from foreign languages that have not yet entered our language.*
- *Uses appropriate transition and connection expressions in their speeches.*

The constructivist approach was adopted as the approach with the amendment made in the Turkish Teaching Program in 2005. Through this approach, an activity-based approach was adopted in the development of skills by putting the student at the center. In the Turkish Curriculum prepared in 2006, activities, explanations, and speaking methods and techniques (persuasion, critical speaking, participatory speaking, discussion, speaking with empathy, guided speaking, speaking by selecting from the word and concept pool, free speaking, memorization technique, creative speaking) that meet the achievements for the development of speaking skills were explained (MEB, 2006, pp. 64-65) and sample lesson presentations were included in detail. The 2019 updated curriculum also includes strategies, methods, and techniques to improve speaking skills. It is aimed at organizing the speaking activities in the coursebooks in line with these developments.

Examining the literature, it is generally stated that the studies on the development of speaking skills are insufficient (Demir & Gül-Özdil, 2019; Gündoğdu, 2012; Temizyürek et al. 2016). In the course book-specific studies, it was stated that the speaking activities in the coursebooks were insufficient in various subjects to meet the objectives and achievements specified in the curriculum. Yıldırım (2021) stated in his study that the least common activity/skill area in secondary school Turkish coursebooks is speaking. In Tunçer and Kamçı's (2024) study, it was seen that the 8th grade Turkish coursebooks included the least speaking (7%) achievements. The main problem with speaking activities in coursebooks is that speaking achievements, strategies, methods, types, and techniques are not evenly distributed at increasing grade levels (Kavruk & Yıldırım, 2021) and/or in different coursebooks (Aktaş & Bayram, 2020; Şimşek & Demirel, 2020). It has also been stated in various studies that some achievements, strategies, methods, and techniques are dominant in the coursebooks, and the instructions are not clear (Benzer & Ünsal, 2019; Doğan & Sinan, 2024a).

Coşkun and Nariñç (2018) stated that speaking methods and techniques and speaking achievements in the 5th grade Turkish coursebook are concentrated in certain achievements (applies speaking strategies, makes prepared speech, makes unprepared speech). In Eyüp and Kansızoglu's (2021) study, different coursebooks prepared for the 6th grade were compared, and it was stated that the speaking achievements, strategies, types, methods, and techniques in the coursebook of a private publishing house were more diverse, balanced, explanatory, and related to the text in the coursebook compared to the book prepared by the Ministry of National Education. In the study conducted by Killioğlu and Temizkan (2022), it was observed that speaking activities in secondary school Turkish coursebooks did not exhibit a balanced distribution in terms of achievements, methods/techniques, and types.

Achievements were determined at each grade level for the realization of the stated aims and objectives related to speaking skills. The studies carried out to realize these achievements are generally carried out in the classroom environment through the coursebook (Ülper, 2011). As Turkish lessons are text-oriented, basic language skills are developed on an activity-based basis in connection with the text covered in the lesson. This situation shows that the coursebook has a dominant place in Turkish lessons (Aksu & Uyar, 2020; Benzer & Ünsal, 2019; Kemiksiz, 2017). Doğan (2015) also stated that the activities in the coursebook are effective in realizing the achievements in the program in terms of both quality and quantity. In this regard, it is important to determine whether the activities/practices in Turkish coursebooks meet the achievements, strategies, methods and techniques specified in the curriculum within a plan and system.

Tomlinson (2015) states that most language teachers use the activities in the coursebooks to develop skills, so to get the most out of the coursebook, the activities in it should be organized according to the needs of the students. The Board of Education updates the coursebooks used in education every five years. In this process, some coursebooks may remain the same while others change. Considering that coursebooks are an important tool for realizing the goals and achievements in the curriculum (Batur & Özdemir, 2021; Özdoğan et al., 2019), studies examining coursebooks are important in terms of identifying the aspects that work, fail, and need to be developed in coursebooks.

The aim of this study is to compare the speaking activities in the 8th grade Turkish coursebooks in terms of their reflection of the speaking achievements and methods and techniques in the Turkish Language Teaching Program, their relationship with the text, the number of activities according to the text type, and the instructions explaining the activities. The 8th grade Turkish coursebooks were chosen as the object of study because, considering the sequential and spiral structure of the Turkish Curriculum, the speaking activities at the 8th grade level, which is the last level, cover the other grade levels, and therefore the most comprehensive answers to the research questions can be obtained. However, a review of the literature reveals that there is no study that examines 8th grade Turkish coursebooks as comprehensively as the current study. The studies are limited to a single aspect such as achievement, method or technique. Therefore, this study differs from other studies in that it deals with the activities in 8th grade Turkish coursebooks in a comparative and multidimensional way.

In this study, speaking activities in the Turkish coursebooks of MEB and Ferman Publishing Houses, which were decided to be taught in schools in the 2023-2024 academic year, were examined and answers to the following questions were searched:

1. How are the speaking activities in the 8th grade Turkish coursebooks of MEB and Ferman Publishing House distributed according to the learning achievements in the 2019 Turkish Language Teaching Program?
2. How is the distribution of speaking activities in the 8th grade Turkish coursebooks of MEB and Ferman Publishing House according to the speaking methods and techniques used?
3. What are the instructions used in the speaking activities in the 8th grade Turkish coursebooks of MEB and Ferman Publishing House?
4. How is the distribution of speaking activities in 8th grade Turkish coursebooks of MEB and Ferman Publishing House according to text type?
5. How are the speaking activities in the 8th grade Turkish coursebooks of the MEB and Ferman Publishing House related to the subject of the text in which they take place?

Method

Document analysis, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in this study. Document review involves the analysis of written materials that contain information about the phenomenon or phenomena targeted to be investigated. Document analysis can be used both as a data collection technique and as a qualitative research design (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

Study object

The object of the study is the speaking activities in the Turkish coursebooks of MEB and Ferman Publishing House, which were decided to be taught in the 8th grade of secondary school in the 2023-2024 academic year. The 8th grade coursebooks were decided to be the object of analysis in order to provide the most comprehensive data on speaking activities due to the sequential and spiral structure of the curriculum (MEB, 2019, p. 3), as the 8th grade is the last step of the

secondary school level. There are eight themes in both books, each theme has four texts, one of which is a listening text. After each text, there are various activities aimed at developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills and instructions explaining these activities.

Data collection and analysis

The data were obtained from the activities designed as post-text speaking activities in the coursebooks. While analyzing the speaking activities, five basic steps of document analysis were carried out. First of all, the PDF files of the coursebooks that were decided to be taught in the 8th-grade (MEB, 2023) were accessed, and it was checked which of these coursebooks were actively being taught. Then, which activities would be considered as speaking activities were determined. The data from the determined activities were analyzed according to the titles created, and finally, the analyses were checked three times by the researcher and an expert Turkish teacher.

Descriptive analysis and content analysis were used to analyze the data. Speaking activities were compared in terms of their reflection of the achievements and methods/techniques in the Turkish Language Teaching Program, their relationship with the text and theme, the number of activities according to the text type, and the instructions explaining the activities, and the results obtained were reported. In categories created for achievements and methods/techniques, it was firstly stuck to the items specified in the Turkish Language Teaching Program (MEB, 2006, pp. 64-65; MEB, 2019, p. 39), and for the different ones, the literature was used. The most appropriate expressions for the instructions were itemized, and the appropriate activities were classified according to these items. Whether or not they were related to the text/theme was decided after reading the texts containing the activity.

Validity and reliability

Consequently, the evaluations of 64 activities were compared by the researcher and an expert Turkish teacher, and the reliability was found to be 85.3%. Each activity was evaluated individually for five different research questions. Accordingly, the number of evaluations is $64 \times 5 = 320$. Then, the consistency coefficient was calculated by comparing those with and without consensus (Miles & Huberman, 1994 [reliability = $273 / (273 + 47) \times 100$]). During this process, we consulted two experts in the field. The validity was ensured by the researcher and the evaluator being in constant communication. Referring to the opinions of different experts in qualitative studies is an effective process for validity (Merriam, 2018). While creating the result tables, the items with disagreement were recorded in the category deemed appropriate with a joint decision.

Results

The distribution of speaking activities according to the achievements, methods/techniques, instructions, text type and the relationship with the subject of the text in the order of the research questions are given below.

Table 1 shows the distribution according to the learning achievements.

Table 1 Distribution of speaking events according to achievements

8th-grade Achievements	MEB f	Ferman f
T.8.2.1. Makes a prepared speech.	11	15
T.8.2.2. Makes an unprepared speech.	17	18
T.8.2.3. Applies speaking strategies.	2	19
T.8.2.4. Uses body language effectively in his/her speeches	2	5

T.8.2.5. Uses words according to their meanings.	0	4
T.8.2.6. Uses Turkish equivalents of words borrowed from foreign languages that have not yet entered our language.	0	5
T.8.2.7. Uses appropriate transition and connection expressions in their speeches.	2	6
Total	40	62

Considering Table 1, it is seen that the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House (f=62) includes more learning achievements than MEB Publishing House (f=40). In both coursebooks, the learning achievement of making an unprepared speech was the most common. In the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House, all achievements in the 8th grade are included. Nevertheless, in the coursebook of MEB Publishing House, the achievements "*Uses words in accordance with their meaning*" and "*Uses the Turkish versions of words taken from foreign languages and not yet settled in our language*" were not included at all.

Table 2 includes the instructions in the coursebooks. For this purpose, after analyzing the explanations in the activities, a common expression suitable for both coursebooks was determined.

Table 2 Directives in the speaking activities in the coursebooks of MEB and Ferman publishing house

Instructions	MEB	Ferman
	f	f
1. Speak by drawing attention to the importance of a certain subject by using visuals, etc.	10	1
2. Describe an event, situation or phenomenon that you have read/lived/watched.	2	1
3. Please explain ... by paying attention to the oral presentation rules on the form.	1	0
4. Evaluate the conversation/discussion according to the rules/items in the form.	4	6
5. Express what you understand from....	2	3
6. Before making a presentation, plan your presentation and fill in the planning table.	2	0
7. Use appropriate transitions and connections in your speech.	2	6
8. Defend your ideas against the other person/group according to the specified criteria.	2	0
9. Describe your feelings/thoughts about	6	10
10. Share your research about with your friend in the classroom.	5	7
11. Put yourself in someone else's shoes and express your feelings and thoughts.	2	2
12. Use body language effectively in your speech.	0	4
13. Utilise speaking strategies in your speech.	2	15
14. In your speech, give examples from daily life, your experiences and observations.	1	2
15. Discuss your views about ... with your friends.	4	2
16. Make a persuasive speech about	1	3
17. Perform your play by distributing appropriate roles.	1	2
18. Make a solution-producing speech about the subject.	1	0
19. Take care to use the Turkish versions of words in your speech.	0	4
20. Pay attention to using words according to their meanings.	0	4
21. Ask your friends to evaluate your speech.	0	2

22. Brainstorm before the speech.	0	2
23. Listen carefully to your friend who speaks before you.	0	5
24. Based on what your friends tell you, make them look at the subject from a different point of view.	0	4
25. Follow the rules of discussion during the discussion (being respectful, not going off topic, not interrupting, etc.)	0	3
26. Utilize resources to ensure that your ideas are accepted.	0	3
27. Evaluate what you explain in your speech from an objective point of view and offer solutions.	0	3
28. Use visual, audio, etc. materials to support your thoughts with logical integrity in your presentation.	0	6
29. Rehearse your presentation for a forum, panel, symposium, etc. organized at school.	1	5
Total	49	105

Analyzing Table 2, it is seen that the number (n=29) and frequency of use (f=105) of the instructions in the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House are higher. On the other hand, the number (n=18) and frequency of use (f=49) of the instructions in the coursebook of MEB Publishing House are almost half of the other one. This situation suggests that the instructions used in the coursebook of the MEB Publishing House are similar in the activities belonging to different themes and that the instructions are not expressed clearly enough. One of the noteworthy issues in the coursebook of the MEB Publishing House is that although the expression 'Applies speaking strategies.' is included in the learning achievements, it is included in the instructions only f=2 times. The most frequently used instructions in the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House are *"Tell your feelings/thoughts about..."* (f=10)/ *"Make use of speaking strategies in your speeches."* (f=15). The most frequently used instruction in the coursebook of MEB Publishing House is the statement *"Speak by drawing attention to the importance of a certain subject by making use of visuals etc."* (f=10). Comparing the two coursebooks, it is clear that the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House draws attention to the use of strategy in speeches. However, it is seen that the instructions of MEB Publishing House do not draw attention to the use of strategy in conversations (f=2).

Table 3 illustrates the speaking method techniques in Turkish coursebooks.

Table 3 Methods and techniques in speaking activities in coursebooks of MEB and Ferman publishing house

Method and Technique	MEB f	Ferman f
Guided Conversation	11	15
Critical Conversation	0	3
Speaking by Selecting from the Word Pool	0	0
Participatory Conversation	0	0
Persuasive Conversation	1	3
Free Conversation	6	1
Creative Conversation	0	4
Discussion	6	3
Empathising	2	3
Keeping in mind	0	0
Enactment	1	2
Total	27	34

Analyzing Table 3, it is seen that Ferman Publishing House's coursebook includes more methods and techniques ($f=34$). In both coursebooks, it is seen that guided speaking is included the most (Ferman, $f=15$; MEB, $f=11$). In both coursebooks, speaking by selecting from the word pool ($f=0$) and participatory conversation ($f=0$) methods and techniques were not included at all. Although it was not included in the speaking achievements and methods/techniques in both coursebooks, the technique of enactment ($f=1$) was included under the speaking activity. In the book of Ferman Publishing House, methods and techniques such as critical speaking ($f=3$), creative speaking ($f=4$) and persuasion ($f=3$) were included at the 8th grade level. In the book belonging to MEB Publishing House, it was observed that these methods were not included at all or very limited.

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of speaking activities according to text type.

Table 4 Distribution of speaking activities according to text type

Text Type	MEB		Ferman	
	Number of texts	Number of activities	Number of texts	Number of activities
Narrative	14	14	12	13
Informative	12	8	11	11
Poem	6	7	9	9

It can be said that there is no difference in the distribution of speaking activities according to text types. In both coursebooks, the number of narrative text types and the number of activities related to these texts is higher than the other text types and the number of activities.

Table 5 illustrates the relationship between the speaking activities and the subject of the text.

Table 5 Relation of speaking activities to the subject of the text

Relationship Status	MEB	Ferman
	f	f
Related	16	29
Partially Related	8	4
Unrelated	7	0

According to Table 5, almost half of the activities in the book of MEB Publishing House are related to the subject of the text ($f=16$). On the other hand, almost all of the texts in the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House are directly related to the subject of the text ($f=29$).

Conclusion and discussion

Consequently, it was seen that the speaking activities in the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House met all achievements in the Turkish Language Teaching Program in a balanced manner numerically with clear and explicit statements in the instructions, whereas not all achievements were included in the coursebook of MEB Publishing House, and the instructions were prepared in an implicit and ambiguous manner to meet the achievements. In the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House, there is at least one speaking activity in each text and speaking activities are related to the subject of the text. On the other hand, there are no speaking activities in the three texts in the coursebook of MEB Publishing House. However, almost half of the speaking activities are partially related or unrelated to the subject of the text. The distribution of activities according to text types is balanced in both coursebooks.

With regard to previous studies examining speaking activities in coursebooks, Doğan and Sinan (2024a) reviewed the 5th grade Koza Publishing House coursebook and found it sufficient that speaking activities had diversities in terms of achievements, methods and techniques. However,

they stated that having an accumulation of some types, outcomes, methods and techniques was an inadequacy of the coursebook. In the study examining 6th grade Turkish coursebooks, the books of MEB and EKOYAY Publishing Houses were examined, and it was concluded that the speaking achievements, activity methods and techniques in the books of EKOYAY Publishing House were more compatible with the objectives of the Turkish Language Teaching Program (Eyüp & Kansızoğlu, 2020). In a study comparing 7th grade Turkish coursebooks in terms of narrative-based activities (Şimşek & Demirel, 2020), it was stated that there were no activities that met all of the speaking and writing achievements and that the strategies were limited. In the study of Batur and Özdemir (2021), the overlap of the activities in the 7th grade Turkish coursebook with the achievements was examined and it was stated that some of the achievements were not met in the coursebook, and it was stated that attention should be paid to the preparation of activities appropriate to the achievement and the use of visuals suitable for these activities. The results obtained from this study are similar to previous studies in the sense that the activities in the coursebooks do not fully meet the objectives, different strategies, methods and techniques are not included, and the instructions are not clearly expressed.

There are two noteworthy points in the question of how the learning outcomes and strategies included in the research questions in both textbooks are reflected in the textbooks:

1. The most commonly used learning outcome in both textbooks is " Makes an unprepared speech." However, there is no explanation about speaking without preparation in the textbooks.
2. The most commonly used speaking method in both textbooks is guided speaking. The speaking methods and types recommended for 8th grades (persuasive, emphatic, critical, creative, discussion etc.) are given little or no place. These two striking results were examined as a result of the research.

The most common achievement in both coursebooks is "T.8.2.2. Makes an unprepared speech". However, while the program includes explanations about prepared conversation, in other words, while the framework of prepared conversation is drawn, there is no explanation about unprepared conversation. This makes it unclear what the program is trying to achieve with the achievement of "making an unprepared speech".

Unprepared speaking may include different objectives according to the intended use. Enkvist (1982) states that impromptu speaking can be defined in different ways in terms of situational context, linguistic features, and real-time processing. The main characteristic of unprepared speech is that the abstract discourse created in the mind is instantly processed and expressed in a real time period. Hence, the discourse that emerges is a daily and face-to-face interaction that reflects the basic features of one's mother tongue but is prototypically personalized. In the unprepared speaking process, it is necessary to focus on the interactional and cognitive aspects that affect performance in this process together with the product that emerges (Enkvist, 1982; Ostman, 1982). As in prepared speaking, students should be taught how to make an unprepared speech. For this purpose, unprepared speaking situations reflecting real life should be included in the classroom, and which strategies to use and how to behave while speaking unprepared on a certain topic should be taught to students.

Besides, there are activities in both coursebooks that do not meet the achievements. An analysis of the previous programs reveals that the achievements that meet these activities are included in the 2006 and 2015 programs. At the 8th grade level, there are forty-two achievements related to speaking in the 2006 Turkish curriculum, sixteen achievements under the title of oral communication skills in the 2015 curriculum, and seven achievements in the 2019 curriculum. The achievements in the previous programs were criticized for being too many in number,

including achievements that are not suitable for measurement and evaluation, expressing the achievements in an intertwined manner, not being sequential, and including ambiguous expressions (Ari, 2016; Güzel & Karadağ, 2013). In the newly prepared program, these issues have been taken into consideration, but the fact that only seven achievements are specified for speaking (MEB, 2019) and the explanations for these achievements are missing has caused the speaking achievements in the 2019 program to be criticized both in terms of quantity and quality (Güneş, 2020; Kurudayıoğlu & Kiraz, 2020). One of the purposes of the activities in Turkish coursebooks is to achieve the achievements in the curriculum. The study by Tarakçı et al. (2021) with coursebook writers stated that activities and achievements were incompatible. Considering the results obtained from this study, it is seen that there are activities that do not meet the achievements in both coursebooks. Examining these activities, it is clear that they were included as achievement statements in previous programs. In both coursebooks, there are animation and poetry reading activities as speaking activities, so these include evaluating speaking, using voice, and body language effectively. Yet, there is no achievement that meets these in the 2019 Turkish Teaching Program. Whereas in the programs prepared in 2006 and 2015, there are the achievements related to evaluating speaking and using voice, and body language effectively. The statements in these activities are as follows:

"Read the poem below. Make a speech explaining your thoughts about the subject and main emotion of the poem you read." (Eselioğlu et al., 2021, p. 72)

"Act out the text you have listened to by distributing roles as your teacher deems appropriate." (Listening text/ Maiden's Tower)/(Eselioğlu et al. 2021, p. 201).

"Form groups with as many students as the number of entities in the text you listened to. Act out the text you listened to by distributing roles among the students in your group." (Listening text/Wolf and Dog)/(Saygi, 2022, p. 185)

Animation and poetry activities are those that require the effective use of both voice and body language. The achievements that meet the above statements in the 2006 and 2015 curricula are as follows:

2. Using voice and body language effectively (MEB, 2006, p. 21)

5. Makes emphasis, intonation and pause in appropriate places.

8. Uses his/her voice in animations in a way to evoke beings and heroes.

In the 2015 (MEB) program, it is as follows:

39. Dramatises different types of texts.

41.3 Speaks fluently and clearly by paying attention to intonation and emphasis.

As explained above, Grade 8 Turkish coursebooks include activities, texts, and instructions on using not only body language but also voice and body language effectively. Therefore, the acquisition of "T.8.2.4. Uses body language effectively in speech." in the 2019 Turkish Teaching Program (p. 47) is insufficient to meet these achievements. It would be appropriate to add achievements related to the effective use of voice to the program.

Also, in the Turkish coursebooks analyzed, there are activities involving the evaluation of speaking. However, there is no achievement that meets them. There are seven activities/instructions related to evaluating speaking in the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House and 4 activities/instructions related to evaluating speaking in the coursebook of MEB Publishing House. Some of these activities are as follows:

- a) *Describe your favourite of the fable examples you have researched, paying attention to the following items.*
- b) *Evaluate your friend's oral presentation performance according to the items given in the form below.* (Eselioğlu et al., 2021, p. 38)

While there were achievements for evaluating speaking in the previous programs (2006, 2015), there is no achievement for evaluating speaking in the current program (2019), so an achievement for evaluating speaking can be added to the 2019 program.

In both coursebooks, the guided conversation strategy is given more space as a conversation strategy. In terms of other strategies, in the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House, speaking strategies, methods and techniques to be used in speaking activities are explained in detail and there is diversity in terms of methods and techniques (such as creative, critical, empathizing, persuasion and discussion). In the MEB Publishing House, there is no explanation on how to apply strategies, and although the variety of methods and techniques is limited and few, the expressions about using strategies are implicit. For example, the expression 'applies speaking strategies' is present in only two activities. There is no explanation about how to apply which speaking strategy, method or technique in any activity.

In the study carried out by Erden (2021), it was stated that one of the most frequently used methods by Turkish teachers to improve students' speaking skills is the guided conversation strategy. In the study of Doğan and Sinan (2024b), it was stated that the guided speaking strategy is the most used in Turkish textbooks (6, 7, 8th-grade). In the Turkish Language Teaching Curriculum, the definition of guided conversation and how to do it are explained (MEB, 2006):

The method/technique of guided conversation is employed to develop students' ability to effectively convey their feelings, thoughts and knowledge on a particular topic. In the guided conversation method/technique, the topic is selected by the teacher and the selected topic is brought to the class agenda. Students are informed about the topic brought to the class agenda. Then, students are encouraged to brainstorm about the topic. At the end of the process, a few selected students are asked to share their thoughts, feelings and dreams about the subject with the class within two minutes.

One of the most important benefits of guided conversation is that it allows students to use various meanings and uses of language naturally and to interact with peers (Apple & Kikuchi, 2006). Nevertheless, it is also stated that guided conversation is mostly used to improve the speaking skills of lower and intermediate level language users (Farabi et al., 2017). Guided conversation strategy is included in the Turkish Language Teaching Program in grades 5-8. It appears in the explanations under the achievement of "*applies speaking strategies*" in grades 5-8 in the Turkish Language Teaching Program. Looking at the explanations of speaking strategies, it is seen that there is gradualism in the application of strategies according to the grade level. For example, methods and techniques such as critical conversation, persuasion, discussion, empathizing, creative conversation are not available in grades 5 and 6. Regarding the methods and techniques expected to be taught to students in Grade 8 (MEB, 2019, p. 47): "*It is ensured that methods and techniques such as creative, guided, empathizing, discussion, persuasion and critical conversation are used.*" This statement illustrates that the methods and techniques used aim to bring 8th grade students speaking skills to an advanced level. However, the methods and techniques in the activities in the coursebooks are far from this goal. In the coursebook of MEB Publishing House, critical speaking and creative speaking techniques are not included at all. Persuasive conversation is included only once. The fact that "*guided conversation*" strategy is mostly used in the speaking activities in the coursebooks contradicts with the goal of acquiring advanced speaking skills expected to be gained by the students.

To sum up: Comparing the books of two different publishing houses, it is seen that speaking achievements, instructions and strategies/methods/techniques in the coursebook of Ferman Publishing House are more suitable for achieving the objectives of the program than the coursebook of MEB Publishing House. As the coursebook is one of the most basic materials for transferring the learning outcomes, the quality of the activities to be selected for the coursebooks is important when developing basic language skills. When the objectives in the curriculum are compared with the activities prepared, the main problem in the coursebooks examined is that there are deficiencies in terms of quality and quantity in the objectives and that there is an accumulation in certain types and methods.

Recommendations

It may be suggested to the authors of the coursebooks and the committees selecting the coursebooks that the texts, activities and studies in the coursebooks should be compatible with the curriculum of the current grade level, that they should meet the learning outcomes, that the instructions should be clear and understandable, and that the activities should be compatible with the text. For this purpose, an evaluation tool that is compatible with the curriculum can be developed before selecting a coursebook. The inclusion of the physical and mental aspects of speech and speech disorders, which are often overlooked in speech training, in the curriculum and therefore in the speaking exercises in textbooks, can help improve speaking fluency.

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Ethics statements

This study does not contain any studies with human participants and/or animals performed by any of the authors. Ethics committee approval is not required for this study.

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