



## A Comparison of Secondary Education English Curricula of Türkiye and Germany in the Context of Inclusive Education

### *Türkiye ve Almanya Ortaöğretim İngilizce Öğretim Programlarının Kapsayıcı Eğitim Bağlamında Karşılaştırılması*

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**Abstract:** Sustainable peace and social harmony can be achieved if education systems become inclusive and include individuals with different needs equally and fairly. In inclusive education, the compatibility of curricula with an inclusive structure is an important issue. This research aims to analyze and compare the Turkish and German secondary education English curricula in the context of inclusive education. The study was designed as a qualitative case study. During data collection, document analysis was applied. The data were analyzed by using descriptive and content analyses. The results show that 8.1% of the learning outcomes in the Turkish curriculum are related to inclusive education, while in the German curriculum, this figure is 17.9%. Moreover, in the Turkish curriculum, among the learning outcomes related to inclusion, the most outcomes are related to recognition of differences, and the fewest outcomes are related to the dimension of interaction. In the German curriculum, the most outcomes are in the dimension of interaction and the fewest in the dimension of recognition. Furthermore, the Turkish curriculum includes sub-dimensions of inclusive education but lacks a certain depth. On the other hand, the German curriculum includes only some sub-dimensions of inclusive education, but these are covered in depth.

**Keywords:** *Inclusive education, secondary education, English curriculum, Türkiye, Germany*

**Özet:** Eğitim sistemleri, farklı özelliklere sahip bireylerin eşit ve adil bir şekilde yer aldığı kapsayıcı bir yapıya dönüşmeden, sürdürülebilir bir barış ve toplumsal uyum sağlanması mümkün değildir. Kapsayıcı eğitimde, özellikle öğretim programlarının kapsayıcı yapıya uygunluğu önemli hususlardan biridir. Bu çalışma ile Türkiye ve Almanya'nın ortaöğretim İngilizce dersi öğretim programlarının kapsayıcı eğitim bağlamında incelenmesi ve karşılaştırılması amaçlanmıştır. Bu nitel çalışmada durum çalışması deseni kullanılmıştır. Verilerin toplanması sürecinde doküman analizinden yararlanılmıştır. Veriler ise betimsel ve içerik analizi ile incelenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda kapsayıcılık açısından Türkiye'deki programda yer alan kazanımların %8,1'inin kapsayıcı eğitimle ilişkili iken, Almanya'daki programda kazanımların %17,9'unun kapsayıcılığa yönelik olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Türkiye'deki programda yer alan kapsayıcılık ile ilgili kazanımlar içerisinde en çok farklılıkları tanımaya, en az farklılıklarla etkileşim boyutuna yönelik kazanımların olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Almanya programında ise tam tersi en çok farklılıklarla etkileşim boyutuna yönelik, en az ise farklılıkları tanıma boyutuna yönelik kapsayıcılık ile ilgili kazanımların olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bununla birlikte Türkiye'deki programda kapsayıcı eğitimin alt boyutlarına yer verildiği ancak belirli bir derinlikten yoksun olduğu; Almanya'daki programda ise kapsayıcı eğitimin sadece bazı alt boyutlarına yer verildiği ancak bunun derinlemesine işlendiği görülmüştür.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Kapsayıcı eğitim, ortaöğretim, İngilizce öğretim programı, Türkiye, Almanya*

## 1. Introduction

Wars; migrations; and social, cultural, political, economic, scientific, and technological changes and developments in the world make the diversity in the demographic and cultural structures of societies increasingly visible every day. Nowadays, there is an increasing need for individuals with different characteristics, needs, and requirements to live in peace and harmony in society. The necessary adjustments must be made, with individual differences being seen as an

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Received:

Revised:

Accepted:

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11/12/2025

24/04/2026

30/04/2026



advantage rather than as a disadvantage. Changes and developments in all areas of society require an inclusive approach to education. The opportunities and advantages provided by diversity are as remarkable as the new challenges it brings. Especially in the field of education, the concept of “inclusive education” comes to the fore as one of the most effective ways to cope with these challenges, and many countries are trying to accept and implement it in their educational environments.

Inclusive education, which tries to include all individuals in society in the education system, was proposed as a new educational approach in education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Kadan & Aral, 2020). This type of education came to the fore first with applications for individuals with disabilities, and it has since been expanded to include all other disadvantaged individuals (for example, individuals with differences such as disability, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender, age, social class, and ethnicity; cultural minorities; and immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers). The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2009) defines inclusive education as the process of enhancing the education system’s capacity to include every student. An inclusive perspective refers to all aspects of human diversity, such as different abilities, gender roles, ethnicities, nationalities, first languages, skin color, social milieus, religions, sexual preferences, physical conditions, political and philosophical orientations, and other aspects. It is not the “characteristics” per se that are important but the social meanings with which they are associated and through which the individuals are in danger of disappearing behind a dominant, negatively (or positively) valued, ascribed characteristic (Hinz, 2014). Inclusion attempts to encompass all facets of heterogeneity (e.g., origin, religion, worldview, and abilities) and take them for granted (Böttinger, 2016). Manifestations of heterogeneity are accepted as dimensions of diversity, recognized as enriching, and valued as an everyday part of living together. Inclusion is a concept that aims to overcome disadvantage and discrimination in the education system by focusing on the resources of each child (Nuding & Stanislawski, 2013). Inclusive education concerns the well-being of all students, and schools should be welcoming institutions (Barton, 2003).

Thus far, many steps and measures have been implemented to ensure that every individual receives quality education. The first international agreement emphasizing equal opportunities in education was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 (UN, 1948). In the subsequent years, international agreements such as the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989), the 1994 Salamanca Declaration on the Rights of Children with Special Needs (UNESCO, 1994), and the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006) were made to support the development of inclusive education. However, the extent to which inclusive education can be implemented today remains unclear. Şimşek (2023) presented a framework for effective and successful inclusive education and stated that there is a need for regulation and implementation in five areas for inclusive education. These areas/dimensions are the inclusiveness of the education system, of school management, of the curriculum, of teaching practices, and of support services (Şimşek, 2023). The problem of this study is based on the inclusiveness of the curriculum.

To ensure equal opportunities and justice in education, educational programs, learning environments, methods, and materials should be adapted to the individual characteristics, needs, and interests of all students. In inclusive education, the suitability of curricula to the inclusive structure is a particularly important issue. The chief aim of an inclusive curriculum should be to provide students with development and learning opportunities within a curriculum that makes them realize their interests and talents, develop critical and creative thinking skills, prioritize values education, and identify goals that meet the needs and expectations of society (Tuzcuoğlu Bülbül & Sakız, 2020). Tuzcuoğlu Bülbül and Sakız (2020) underlined that preparing a curriculum with a flexible perspective is an important criterion for inclusive

education to design curriculum elements efficiently. Polat (2020) described inclusive education by conducting research in Türkiye and determined that there is a need for an inclusive curriculum as a result of the studies in which the opinions of school administrators and teachers were evaluated. Smucker (2022) stated the principles of an inclusive curriculum as follows: it combats discrimination by eliminating barriers to student participation and learning; addresses the needs of every student by ensuring fairness and equal chances; covers content, learning situations, and evaluation methods; allows students to be co-designers of the curriculum; emphasizes the learning process rather than products or achievement; and integrates content by emphasizing interdisciplinary concepts and themes. Similarly, Paavizhi and Saravanakumar (2018) also used the concept of a curriculum for “all” in the context of inclusive education in their studies and stated that the curriculum needs to be child (student) centered, flexible, participatory, and in partnership with parents.

Tuzcuoğlu Bülbül and Sakız (2020) emphasized that a foreign language is a tool that allows students to accept that there are other languages other than their own, reflects different cultures other than their own, and enables students to establish intercultural communication. That English stands out as a common communication tool in many fields brings it to the forefront in students’ communication with different cultures (Palabıyık & Sakız, 2021). These features provided by learning a foreign language overlap with the aims of inclusive education. According to Palabıyık and Sakız (2021), an inclusive English curriculum should strengthen the interest and motivation of all students in English lessons; address their needs by doing, experiencing, and responding to their needs; and aim to provide them with communication skills.

In national and international literature, although there are studies examining English curricula in the context of inclusive education (Gültekin Talayhan & Sakız, 2022; Koçyiğit & Şimşek, 2019; Palabıyık & Sakız, 2021; Şimşek et al., 2019), there are very few studies examining secondary education English curricula in the context of inclusive education (Koçyiğit & Şimşek, 2019; Palabıyık & Sakız, 2021). One study (Karahan Üzülmöz & Karakuş, 2018) examines English curricula in the context of multiculturalism, which is considered one of the sub-dimensions of inclusive education. There is no research in the national and international literature that examines and compares the secondary English curricula of Türkiye and Germany in the context of inclusive education. According to Türkoğlu (2015), the comparative education studies discipline helps to identify the similarities and differences of education systems in diverse countries and cultures, explains seemingly similar phenomena, and provides helpful suggestions for educating people. The main reason why Türkiye is compared to Germany is that Germany is one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse countries in the world due to its immigrants.

This study aims to examine and compare the secondary education English curricula of Türkiye and Germany in the context of inclusive education. This study is significant for updating the curricula in this direction and especially supporting the practitioners in inclusive education. Moreover, the research will help to realize the importance of inclusive education in foreign language education, and contribute to its further support through foreign language curricula. In line with the stated purpose, the study intends to answer the following questions:

- How do the secondary education English curricula of Türkiye and Germany look in general and in terms of inclusion?
- What are the similarities and differences between the two countries?

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Research Design

The research followed a qualitative design. The research was carried out within the framework of the qualitative case study design. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2018), a case study involves analyzing one or more situations holistically within their own boundaries. Furthermore, Creswell (2013) defined a case study as an approach where the researcher gathers in-depth information about real-life, a present situation within clear limits, or situations in a certain period through observations, interviews, surveys, documents, or audiovisual materials, and then describes a situation. This research aims to examine and compare the secondary English curricula of Türkiye and Germany in the context of inclusive education.

### 2.2. Research Sources

A sample was used in the study and determined using the criterion sampling method. Criterion sampling is the selection of sample units following a set of criteria predefined by the researcher (Patton, 2002). In this study, secondary education level and English course were selected as the criteria. The reason for this selection is that most studies on this topic in the literature refer to primary schools, and studies on inclusive education at the secondary level are limited. Moreover, based on the idea that richer data on inclusion in foreign language teaching curricula would be obtained, secondary education English curricula, which are widely used in both countries, were selected in this study. The documents selected for review consisted of the secondary education English course curriculum prepared by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MEB, 2018) and the core curriculum for Gymnasium, the second stage of secondary education (MSB NRW, 2014) prepared in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, which has the highest population density in Germany. The curricula were obtained from the official electronic websites of the ministries of education of the countries. The secondary school/high school level in Türkiye is equivalent to the second stage of secondary education in Germany.

### 2.3. Data Collection Process

The data collection process used document analysis, which is defined as the meticulous and systematic examination of the content of all documents, including physical and digital materials (Wach, 2013). Document analysis includes the investigation of all written materials containing details about the phenomena and facts being investigated. The data for this study were obtained and examined by following the five characteristic phases of this method, namely accessing the documents, checking their originality, understanding the documents, analyzing data, and using data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). The theoretical frameworks, themes, and learning outcomes of secondary education curricula were examined and compared in the context of inclusive education through the following steps:

- Secondary English curricula were obtained from the official electronic websites of the ministries of education of the countries, and their originality was verified.
- The relevant sections of the theoretical frameworks, themes, and learning outcomes in secondary education English curricula were accessed and understood.
- The concepts, definitions, characteristics, and principles of inclusive education in the literature were utilized while determining themes and learning outcomes.

- The theoretical frameworks, themes, and learning outcomes indicating inclusive education in secondary English curricula were determined by the researcher.
- The degree to which the determined themes and learning outcomes are related to inclusiveness was evaluated following another expert opinion, and the themes and outcomes related to inclusiveness were clarified according to the evaluation results.
- The obtained data were described, and the findings were written and interpreted by referring them to relevant research and providing suggestions.

## 2.4. Data Analysis

The obtained data were analyzed using descriptive and content analysis. According to Walcott (1994), descriptive analysis is the transfer of the obtained data to the report with direct quotes, as is, in its original form. Descriptive analysis aims to present the collected data to the reader in a structured and explained way. Data are classified, summarized, and interpreted according to previously determined themes (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). In contrast, the core of content analysis is to bring together similar data under specific concepts and themes and to organize and interpret them in a way that is clear and accessible to the reader (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). In this study, secondary English curricula in Türkiye and Germany were comparatively examined and analyzed in the context of inclusive education. In line with the findings obtained, similarities and differences were identified and interpreted. Care was taken to ensure that the data obtained from the documents were original and actual. Moreover, a second expert, other than the researcher, was asked to independently compare and analyze the relevant sections of the secondary education English curricula. Agreement and disagreement were determined based on the opinions of the two experts. The points on which the researcher and the expert agreed remained unchanged, while the points on which there was disagreement were reviewed and rearranged. Furthermore, reliability was increased by using direct quotes from the curricula in the findings.

## 3. Results

The results regarding the general similarities and differences between the secondary education English curricula in Türkiye and Germany are presented below.

**Table 1**

*Similarities and Differences Between Secondary Education English Curricula in Türkiye and Germany*

	Türkiye	Germany
<b>Similarities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The curricula are designed following the principles of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).</li> <li>➤ The curricula underline that English is an international and common language.</li> <li>➤ The secondary education English course is based on the expansion and continuation of the competencies acquired in the previous level.</li> <li>➤ The importance of language learning motivation is emphasized.</li> <li>➤ The curricula adopt the spiral programming approach as the content organization approach.</li> </ul>	
<b>Differences</b>	<p>Secondary education (high school) covers the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades.</p> <p>The education system is under the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education in line with the principle of central management. Therefore, a central curriculum</p>	<p>Secondary education (Abitur) covers Grades 11, 12, and 13 (in some states and schools, it covers Grades 10, 11, and 12).</p> <p>Responsibility for the education system is divided between the Federation and the States (Bundesländer). For this reason, curricula vary from state to state.</p>

has been organized, and the curriculum is common to all secondary education institutions.

There are different types of secondary (high) schools in Türkiye, such as open education high schools, Anatolian high schools, evening high schools, multi-program Anatolian high schools, science high schools, fine arts high schools, imam hatip high schools, vocational open education high schools, vocational and technical Anatolian high schools, social sciences high schools, and sports high schools. However, different curricula and goals have not been developed for these different secondary education institutions.

There are different types of secondary (high) schools in Germany, such as primary school (Hauptschule), secondary school (Sekundarschule), middle school (Realschule), comprehensive/comprehensive/mixed school (Gesamtschule), and upper secondary school (Gymnasium [advanced secondary school]). Different curricula and goals have been developed for these different secondary schools.

The curriculum is designed to focus on the four basic language skills, pronunciation, and the student.

The curriculum has been developed in a way that is suitable for the four basic language skills and is student-centered, but it has defined different competence areas in addition to the four language skills.

The curriculum is designed to be more detailed and broader. It leaves less room for action and decision (no flexibility).

The curriculum is not detailed but indicates the general framework; thus, it is designed to leave a wide space for action and decision.

An examination of the similarities between the secondary education English curricula of Türkiye and Germany emphasizes that both curricula view English as a common and international language used in today's global world. The curricula of both countries are designed following the principles of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Moreover, both curricula state that the secondary education English course is based on the expansion and continuation of the competencies acquired in the previous level. The level reached at the end of secondary school is taken as the basis, and foreign language skills are developed and deepened in English lessons in high school. Both countries follow the spiral programming approach to content organization. In this way, students and teachers are provided with the opportunity to address, repeat, and reinforce the same subject at different times. Furthermore, both curricula mention the importance of language learning motivation.

In Türkiye, secondary education (high school) covers the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. In Germany, secondary education (Abitur) covers the 11th, 12th, and 13th grades (in some states and schools, it covers the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades). Examining the differences in the secondary education English curricula in Türkiye and Germany shows that the central curriculum is organized, and the secondary education English curriculum applied is common to all secondary education institutions in Türkiye. In today's Federal Republic of Germany, the responsibility for the education system is divided between the Federation and the States (Bundesländer). For this reason, the curricula vary from state to state.

In Türkiye, there are different types of secondary schools such as open education high school, Anatolian high school, evening high school, multi-program Anatolian high school, science high school, fine arts high school, Imam Hatip high school, vocational open education high school, vocational and technical Anatolian high school, social sciences high school, and sports high school. However, different curricula and goals have not been developed for these different secondary schools. On the other hand, Germany has different types of secondary schools, such as basic education school (Hauptschule), middle school (Realschule/Mittelschule), high school (Gymnasium), and multi-purpose integrated schools (Gesamtschule), for which different curricula and goals have been developed.

Moreover, the curriculum in Türkiye organizes the gains in four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), pronunciation, and student-centeredness. The curriculum in Germany is also developed following the four

basic language skills and is student-centered, and in addition to the four language skills, different competence areas (functional communication competence, intercultural communication competence, text and media competence, language learning competence, and language awareness) have been defined.

The curriculum in Türkiye is designed in a more detailed and broader way. Therefore, it leaves schools and teachers less room for action and decision making (no flexibility) in content production and selection. While the curriculum in Germany is not detailed, it is designed to leave teachers and schools wide room for action and decision-making by specifying the general framework. Curricula can be created in line with the decisions to be taken by school administration and teachers, considering regional and school characteristics. It can be said that the flexibility of the curriculum in Germany and the significant room for action given to teachers align with the principles of inclusive education.

Findings regarding the theoretical frameworks/approaches of the secondary English curricula in Türkiye and Germany in terms of inclusion are presented in the section below.

**Table 2**

*Theoretical Frameworks of Secondary English Curricula in Türkiye and Germany in Terms of Inclusion*

	<b>Türkiye</b>	<b>Germany</b>
<b>Similarities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A communication-focused language learning approach (real-life; interaction) is followed.</li> <li>➤ Cultural differences are appreciated.</li> <li>➤ Values education is included.</li> </ul>	
<b>Differences</b>	<p>An action-oriented language learning approach (more emphasis on daily use) and an eclectic approach are followed.</p> <p>Principles such as collaboration, learner autonomy, and self-assessment are underlined.</p>	<p>Intercultural action skills are encouraged (emphasis is placed on their use in both personal and professional life [work, career]).</p> <p>Different skills and values such as gender equality, critical thinking on cultural stereotypes, empathy, solidarity, cooperation, and individual support are underlined.</p>

An examination of the secondary education English curricula in both countries reveals that the theoretical framework sections are generally consistent with the principles of inclusive education. Both curricula adopt a communicative language learning approach. This approach encourages students to interact with others and use language authentically in an interactive context, that is, in activities requiring real-world communication. Furthermore, both curricula emphasize the principle of valuing cultural differences and values education. While values education is included in the German curriculum, the Turkish curriculum places particular importance on values education.

The Turkish curriculum emphasizes that students should use English actively, productively, and communicatively to share their ideas and cultures with others from different cultures and countries. English is viewed as a necessary tool for communication, and the curriculum is designed within the framework of an action-oriented language learning approach. An eclectic approach is adopted in the design of the curriculum. Furthermore, the Turkish curriculum emphasizes principles such as learner autonomy, self-assessment, and collaboration. The Turkish curriculum offers a wide range of recommended materials, tasks, and sample usage examples to appeal to students of different levels and abilities, making it adaptable to inclusive education. Principles such as diversity, cultural sensitivity, neutrality toward the cultures/gender of learners/others, and multisensory responsiveness are highlighted as important principles to be adopted in material selection and presentation. Based on all these statements, it can be said that inclusive education is considered in the preparation of the curriculum.

In Germany, the curriculum places particular emphasis on intercultural action skills and is geared toward developing these skills. The curriculum aims to develop linguistic, communicative, and intercultural skills, which are essential prerequisites for effective and successful action in both personal and professional contexts. Intercultural action skills aim to competently engage with the culture and reality of life in English-speaking countries, particularly social phenomena, structures, discourses, literature, and the media. Engaging with other realities of life fosters students' willingness to self-reflect and provides them with the opportunity to distance themselves from their own perspectives and attitudes; understand culturally shaped realities of life, norms, and values; and appropriately consider these factors in their intercultural activities. In Germany, the curriculum emphasizes the importance of individualized support for English courses in secondary education. Furthermore, the curriculum states that among the cross-sectional tasks that all courses must fulfill, English courses, in particular, contribute to cultural participation in critical thinking on gender and cultural stereotypes, values education, empathy, and solidarity; build social responsibility; create a democratic society; secure the natural foundations of life; and ensure sustainable development for future generations. All of these statements are consistent with the principles of inclusive education.

The table below shows the ratios of themes and learning outcomes related to inclusive education in the secondary English curricula of both countries to the total themes and learning outcomes.

**Table 3**

*The Ratios of Themes and Learning Outcomes Related to Inclusive Education in the Secondary English Curricula in Türkiye and Germany to the Total Themes and Learning Outcomes*

Country	Grade	Total number of themes	Number of themes related to inclusion	%	Total number of learning outcomes	Number of learning outcomes related to inclusion	%
Türkiye	9	10	3	30	88	7	8
	10	10	3	30	79	8	10.1
	11	10	1	10	68	4	5.9
	12	10	2	20	87	7	8.1
<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>8.1</b>
Germany	11	3	3	100	58	10	17.2
	12, 13	6	6	100	59	11	18.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17.9</b>

As can be seen from the table, while separate outcomes are presented for each grade level in Türkiye, in Germany, themes and outcomes are presented separately for the 11th grade and combined for the 12th and 13th grades. The 9th–12th grade secondary English curriculum in Türkiye includes a total of 322 outcomes. A total of 10 themes are covered for each grade. In the 9th grade, there are 88 outcomes under 10 themes; in the 10th grade, there are 79 outcomes under 10 themes; in the 11th grade, there are 68 outcomes under 10 themes; and in the 12th grade, there are 87 outcomes under 10 themes. In Germany, the 11th–13th grade secondary English curriculum includes a total of 117 outcomes. In the 11th grade, three topic examples and 58 outcomes are included across three themes. In the 12th–13th grades, six different topic examples and 59 outcomes are included across the same three themes. While 26 of the 322 (8.1%) outcomes in the Turkish secondary education English curriculum are related to inclusive education, in the German curriculum, 21 of the 117 outcomes (17.9%) are related to inclusive education. An examination of the themes reveals that nine of the 40 (22.5%) themes in the Turkish secondary English curriculum are related to inclusive education,

while in the German curriculum, all nine themes (100%) are related to inclusive education. Furthermore, in Germany, all themes (topics) are organized within a sociocultural context, and content selection is aimed at developing a deeper sociocultural understanding in students. Therefore, the German curriculum is markedly more sensitive to inclusive education.

The table below provides detailed information on the themes and learning outcomes related to inclusive education in the secondary English curricula in Türkiye and Germany.

**Table 4**

*Themes and Learning Outcomes Related to Inclusion in Secondary Education English Curricula in Türkiye and Germany*

<b>Türkiye:</b>	<b>Germany:</b>
<b>Themes and learning outcomes related to inclusion</b>	<b>Themes and learning outcomes related to inclusion</b>
<b>9th grade</b>	<b>11th grade</b>
<p><b>Theme 1: Studying abroad</b></p> <p><b>Listening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to detect specific information about jobs/countries/nationalities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to find specific information in a simple text about jobs/nationalities/countries.</li> </ul> <p><b>Theme 6: Bridging cultures</b></p> <p><b>Speaking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to talk about some basic cultural differences of places they have visited.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to scan short texts describing some famous cities in the world for specific information.</li> <li>Students will be able to get the main points of the informative texts related to intercultural differences.</li> </ul> <p><b>Theme 7: World heritage</b></p> <p><b>Speaking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to give a short simple presentation about an ancient civilization they have searched before.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to ask and answer the questions about a text related to the world heritage.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intercultural communicative competence</b></p> <p><b>a) Sociocultural orientation knowledge</b> Students draw on their basic orientation knowledge of the following topics of Anglophone reference cultures:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Young adults' daily realities and future perspectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Language) learning, living and working in English-speaking countries</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Political, social and cultural realities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living together, communication and identity formation in the digital age</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Global challenges and future visions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value orientation and future plans in the "global village"</li> </ul> <p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independently consolidate and expand their basic sociocultural orientation knowledge by connecting their existing knowledge and acquiring new knowledge from English-language sources, and</li> <li>Question their basic sociocultural orientation knowledge, considering the respective cultural perspective.</li> </ul> <p><b>b) Intercultural attitudes and awareness</b> Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become aware of cultural diversity and the associated opportunities and challenges, as well as approach new experiences with foreign cultures with an open mind and willingness to learn,</li> <li>Become aware of foreign cultural values, norms, and behaviors that differ from their own ideas and show tolerance, as long as basic principles of peaceful and respectful coexistence are not violated, and</li> <li>Become aware of their own culturally influenced perceptions and attitudes and question them, including from a gender perspective.</li> </ul> <p><b>c) Intercultural understanding and action</b> Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand culture-specific values, attitudes, and lifestyles when dealing with the politically, socially, and culturally shaped living conditions of people from Anglophone reference cultures and compare them with their own ideas,</li> <li>Actively empathize with the ways of thinking and behaving of people from other cultures (perspective change) and, from the specific experience of differences, develop understanding and—if applicable—critical distance or empathy for others,</li> <li>Generally observe typical culture-specific conventions and peculiarities in both formal and informal intercultural encounters,</li> <li>Generally overcome possible language- and culture-related misunderstandings and conflicts, and</li> <li>Exchange ideas with English-speaking communication partners about cultural similarities and differences.</li> </ul>
<b>10th grade</b>	
<p><b>Theme 4: Traditions</b></p> <p><b>Speaking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to deliver a short speech using visuals on traditions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to answer the questions about short texts on social, educational, and technological lives of people in the past around the world.</li> </ul> <p><b>Writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to write a short paragraph of comparing traditions around the world.</li> </ul> <p><b>Theme 7: Food and festivals</b></p> <p><b>Speaking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to take part in a dialogue about introducing national and international festivals.</li> <li>Students will be able to describe the steps of a process related to national and international festivals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to evaluate a text to classify various cuisines around the world.</li> </ul>	
	<b>12th–13th grades</b>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intercultural communicative competence</b></p> <p><b>a) Sociocultural orientation knowledge</b> Students draw on their <u>expanded</u> orientation knowledge on the following topics of Anglophone reference cultures:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Young adults' daily realities and future perspectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life plans, higher education, training, international profession - English as a lingua franca</li> </ul>

- Students will be able to diagrammatize a text about different festivals all around the world.

**Theme 10: Shopping**

**Reading**

- Students will be able to answer comprehension questions of a text on clothing in different cultures.

**11th grade**

**Theme 10: Values and norms**

**Speaking**

- Students will be able to make comments about moral values and norms in different cultures.

**Reading**

- Students will be able to distinguish the main idea from supporting details in a text about the effects of values on societies.

**Writing**

- Students will be able to write an essay about the importance and effects of values and norms in society.
- Students will be able to write slogans about spiritual, moral and social values.

**12th grade**

**Theme 3: Human rights**

**Speaking**

- Students will be able to make suggestions about improving human rights.
- Students will be able to discuss the problems/difficulties of the disadvantaged people in the world.

**Reading**

- Students will be able to find the supporting ideas in a text about good practices on human rights around the world.
- Students will be able to match the paragraphs with the correct phrases/visuals (children rights/gender equality/animal rights/the rights of disadvantaged people, etc.).

**Writing**

- Students will be able to write mottos/slogans about human rights.
- Students will be able to write an argumentative essay including solutions for disadvantaged people's problems.

**Theme 10: Manners**

**Speaking**

- Students will be able to discuss manners in different cultures.

**Political, social and cultural realities:**

- The United Kingdom in the 21st century – Self-image between tradition and change
- The American Dream - Visions and realities of life in the USA
- Postcolonialism - Realities of life in another Anglophone cultural area
- Media and its significance for the individual and society

**Global challenges and future visions:**

- Opportunities and risks of globalization

Students can:

- Independently consolidate and expand their expanded sociocultural orientation knowledge as needed by networking their existing knowledge and acquiring new knowledge from English-language sources, and
- Critically reflect on their expanded sociocultural orientation knowledge, accounting for the respective cultural, ideological, and historical perspectives.

**b) Intercultural attitudes and awareness**

Students can:

- Become aware of cultural and linguistic diversity and the associated opportunities and challenges and approach new experiences with foreign cultures and linguistically challenging situations with an open mind and a willingness to learn,
- Become aware of foreign cultural values, norms, and behaviors that differ from their own ideas and treat them with tolerance, provided that basic principles of peaceful and respectful coexistence are not violated,
- Classify foreign and their own values, attitudes, and beliefs concerning internationally valid conventions, and
- Become aware of their own culturally influenced perceptions and attitudes, question them from a gender perspective, and, if necessary, relativize or revise them.

**c) Intercultural understanding and action**

Students can:

- Understand culture-specific values, attitudes, and lifestyles when dealing with the historically, politically, socially, and culturally shaped living conditions of people from Anglophone reference cultures, compare them with their own and others' ideas, and respond appropriately communicatively,
- Actively and reflectively empathize with the ways of thinking and behaving of people from other cultures (perspective change) and, from the specific experience of difference, develop understanding and—if applicable—critical distance (also to their own culture) or empathy for others,
- In formal and informal intercultural encounters—possibly also with lingua franca speakers—sensitively observe culture-specific conventions and peculiarities and interact appropriately,
- Clarify and overcome possible linguistically and culturally based misunderstandings and conflicts, and
- Sensitively engage in (possibly also controversial) intercultural discourse with English-speaking communication partners about similarities, differences, and backgrounds of culturally influenced attitudes, as well as opportunities and challenges of cultural encounters.

In the Turkish secondary education (9th–12th grades) English curriculum, there are 40 themes in total (10 themes are covered for each grade), of which nine themes are related to inclusion. Three out of 10 themes in the 9th grade, three out of 10 themes in the 10th grade, one out of 10 themes in the 11th grade, and two out of 10 themes in the 12th grade are related to inclusive education. In the German secondary (11th–13th grades) English curriculum, three themes and three topic examples are related to inclusive education in the 11th grade. In the 12th–13th grades, the same three themes exist but with six different topic examples. Furthermore, while the themes in the Turkish curriculum are expressed more precisely and concretely, the German curriculum is characterized by more general, deeper, and more abstract expressions. The two curricula have an equal number of topics related to inclusive education, but the content of the German curriculum is broader.

A comparison of the Turkish and German English curricula in terms of learning outcomes reveals a distinct approach. In the Turkish secondary English curriculum, learning outcomes are determined by grade (9, 10, 11, 12), theme number (1–10), four different language skills, and pronunciation. As the table indicates, the content in the German curriculum is shaped around “intercultural communicative competence,” and examples of identified themes and topics are addressed under the sociocultural orientation knowledge heading. Furthermore, outcomes related to inclusive education are addressed within the scope of “intercultural communication competence,” unlike the Turkish curriculum. Intercultural communication competence is divided into the sub-areas of “sociocultural orientation knowledge,” “intercultural attitudes and awareness,” and “intercultural understanding and action.” The outcomes are listed under these sub-areas. In terms of inclusion, the Turkish secondary curriculum includes more numerical outcomes than the German curriculum. However, an examination of the total outcomes reveals that 8.1% of the outcomes in the Turkish curriculum are related to inclusive education, while 17.9% of the outcomes in the German curriculum are related to inclusion. The difference in the number of outcomes is due to the more detailed presentation of outcomes in the Turkish curriculum, while in the German curriculum, some outcomes are combined into a single outcome. An outcome statement in the German curriculum is expressed with two or three different outcome statements in the Turkish curriculum. Generally, the outcomes in the Turkish curriculum are more precise, concise, and concrete, while in the German curriculum, they are expressed in a more general, deeper, and more abstract manner. Thus, there are fewer outcomes related to inclusive education in the German curriculum, but their content is broader.

The outcomes of both curricula appear to address issues related to cultural differences, as well as elements such as social cohesion, gender equality, values, and norms. However, while the German curriculum emphasizes multiculturalism, interculturalism, and gender equality, which are sub-dimensions of inclusion, other dimensions of inclusion, such as children with disabilities, children with special needs, and human rights, are not addressed. In the Turkish curriculum, themes and outcomes such as human rights (gender equality, children’s rights, the rights of disadvantaged groups, etc.) are included, albeit sparingly. Furthermore, while the themes and outcomes of the German curriculum include statements about target cultures, the Turkish curriculum addresses target cultures with a general approach, and makes no references to target cultures in the themes and outcomes.

In this study, the learning outcomes related to inclusion in the secondary English curriculum of the two countries were also examined in terms of “recognition of differences,” “appreciation,” and “interaction” (Koçyiğit & Şimşek, 2019).

**Table 5**

*Frequency Distributions and Rates of Inclusiveness-Related Outcomes in Secondary Education English Curricula According to the Themes of “Recognition of differences,” “Appreciation,” and “Interaction”*

Theme	Türkiye (f)	Türkiye (%)	Germany (f)	Germany (%)
<i>Recognition of differences</i>	13	50	4	19.1
<i>Appreciation</i>	7	26.9	7	33.3
<i>Interaction</i>	6	23.1	10	47.6
<b>Total</b>	26	100	21	100

The findings in the table show that of the 26 inclusiveness-related learning outcomes in the English secondary education curriculum in Türkiye, 13 outcomes are mostly focused on the recognition of differences (50%). There are seven outcomes in the dimension of appreciation (26.9%) and six in the dimension of interaction (23.1%). Moreover, only four

of the 21 outcomes in the English secondary education curriculum in Germany focus on recognition of differences (19.1%). The most numerous outcomes are in the dimension of interaction (47.6%), with 10 outcomes, and seven in the dimension of appreciation (33.3%). The table indicates that the Turkish curriculum is more focused on the recognition of differences (50%). On the other hand, the German curriculum is more focused on interaction with differences (47.6%).

#### **4. Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations**

The secondary education English curricula of the two countries were examined and compared within the context of inclusive education, and the comparison revealed similarities and differences.

First, the general similarities and differences between the Turkish and German secondary education English curricula were examined and compared. The analysis showed that both curricula view English as a common and international language used in today's global world. Moreover, both countries' curricula were designed following the principles of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Furthermore, they emphasize that the secondary education English course is built on the expansion and continuation of competencies acquired at the previous level. They also utilize a spiral approach to content organization, providing students and teachers with the opportunity to address, review, and reinforce the same topic at different times. Although not explicitly stated, the examined curricula appear to embrace a constructivist philosophy. Constructivism recognizes that learners construct knowledge individually and socially. It is a view that combines theories such as generative learning, discovery learning, and situational learning. In other words, this view is not about teaching but about the nature of knowledge and learning (Teyfur & Teyfur, 2012). Furthermore, in the constructivist approach, curricula are student-centered and can be flexible according to students' interests, desires, and needs (Gelen (n.d.)). It is clearly seen that the examined curricula are also student-centered.

The general differences between the two countries' English curricula are that in Türkiye, a centralized curriculum is established and applied to all secondary education institutions. In the Federal Republic of Germany, responsibility for the education system is divided between the Federation and the federal states (Bundesländer). Therefore, curricula vary from state to state. Furthermore, while secondary education (high school) in Türkiye covers Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12, in Germany, secondary education (Abitur) generally covers Grades 11, 12, and 13 (in some states and schools, it covers Grades 10, 11, and 12). An examination of various studies in the literature reveals similarities with the results found in this study. In a study comparing the education systems of European Union countries with the Turkish Education System, İnandı (2005) found that the structure of education in European Union countries is organized in three different ways: centralized, local, and both centralized and local. He stated that most European Union countries have begun to move away from centralized education systems and have begun providing education at the local and regional levels. However, he noted that both the organizational and administrative structures in Türkiye are centralized (İnandı, 2005). Similarly, Gülsoy Kerimoğlu (2019) emphasized that problem-solving, monitoring, and development efforts are easier in institutions where centralization and bureaucracy are reduced. Balcı (2000) also described the "decentralized" organization of the Turkish National Education System as logical and contemporary.

Other findings from the present study indicated that the outcomes in the Turkish curriculum are structured around the four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), pronunciation, and student-centered learning. The German curriculum was also developed to align with the four basic language skills and to focus on the student, but it additionally defines different competence areas, such as functional communicative competence, intercultural

communicative competence, text and media competence, language learning competence, and language awareness. Moreover, the study showed that the Turkish curriculum is designed to be more detailed and broader. Therefore, it can be argued that it leaves schools and teachers with less free space and flexibility in content creation and selection. The German curriculum, on the other hand, is not as detailed; instead, it is designed to provide teachers and schools with more leeway and greater decision-making capacity by specifying the general framework. Therefore, it can be concluded that teacher autonomy is higher in Germany. A review of the literature identifies some studies whose results align with these findings. First, Özbek (2021), in her master's thesis comparing the secondary English curricula of Türkiye, Germany, and the UK in general, concluded that the Turkish curriculum is more detailed than those in Germany and the UK. Furthermore, Paavizhi and Saravanakumar (2018) argued that, within the context of inclusive education, the curriculum for "all" should be student-centered and flexible. According to researchers, a flexible curriculum and teaching-learning strategies are crucial for the inclusion of students with special needs in education (Paavizhi & Saravanakumar, 2018). In her study outlining the characteristics of an inclusive curriculum, Smucker (2022) emphasized the principle of flexibility within its features and stated that the curriculum should be flexible enough to adapt to student characteristics, experiences, and needs.

Generally, the theoretical frameworks of the secondary English curricula in both countries are consistent with the principles of inclusive education. Koçyiğit and Şimşek (2019) also concluded that secondary education curricula in Türkiye include a certain degree of inclusiveness in terms of its philosophy, objectives, and principles, and inclusivity is emphasized in the core values on which the curriculum is based. The current study found that both countries' curricula adopt a communicative language learning approach, which involves students interacting with others and using language authentically in interactive, real-life contexts. Furthermore, both curricula highlight the principle of valuing cultural differences and values education. While values education is included in the German curriculum, the Turkish curriculum places particular emphasis on it. Moreover, while the Turkish curriculum adopts an action-oriented language learning approach, the German curriculum stresses the ability to engage in intercultural action and aims to develop this competence. According to Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002), developing the intercultural dimension in language teaching requires recognizing several goals. These include providing students with intercultural competence in addition to linguistic proficiency; preparing them to interact with people from other cultures; ensuring they understand and accept people from other cultures as individuals with different perspectives, values, and behaviors; and helping them see that this interaction is an enriching experience (Byram et al., 2002).

An examination of the findings regarding the themes and learning outcomes related to inclusion in the Turkish and German secondary English curriculum reveals that nine out of 40 themes (22.5%) in the Turkish curriculum are related to inclusive education, while in the German curriculum all nine themes (100%) do so. Moreover, all themes in the German curriculum are organized within a sociocultural context, and the content selection is aimed at developing a deeper sociocultural understanding in students. Therefore, it can be said that the German curriculum exhibits greater sensitivity to inclusion. Furthermore, while the themes in the Turkish curriculum are more precise and concrete, the German curriculum features more general, deeper, and more abstract expressions. Avcı (2018) also noted that the English curriculum in Türkiye is the most detailed, contains the most outcomes, and is most centrally structured compared to the curricula in Norway and Denmark. In addition, the study found that the Turkish curriculum is designed according to a theme-focused approach, and teachers lack flexibility in determining content (Avcı, 2018). The current study revealed that the Turkish and German curricula have different approaches. While the Turkish curriculum is

differentiated by grade, in Germany, learning outcomes are presented separately for the 11th grade and combined for the 12th and 13th grades. In the Turkish curriculum, learning outcomes are determined by grade (9, 10, 11, 12), theme number (1–10), four different language skills, and pronunciation. In the German curriculum, learning outcomes are shaped according to five different competency areas discussed earlier. In the German curriculum, unlike in Türkiye, intercultural communicative competence, text and media competence, language learning competence, and language awareness are included. However, unlike in Germany, the Turkish curriculum emphasizes pronunciation. Özbek (2021) similarly stated that in Türkiye, emphasis is placed on language skills in the objectives of the secondary education English curriculum, while in Germany, competency areas such as language awareness, language mediation, intercultural communication, and text and media competence are also included. The current research has observed that the German curriculum attaches great importance to “intercultural communicative competence” and language skills. This competence is divided into the sub-areas of sociocultural orientation knowledge, intercultural attitudes and awareness, and intercultural understanding and action. Outcomes associated with inclusive education are listed under these sub-areas, unlike the curriculum in Türkiye. The content in the German curriculum is shaped around this competence, and the determined themes and topic examples are addressed under the title of sociocultural orientation knowledge. According to Monfared, Mozaheb and Shahiditabar (2016), the fact that English is frequently used for intercultural communication indicates that the curriculum should be culturally sensitive, encouraging students to learn about other cultures as a way to reflect on their own values and beliefs. Thus, the primary goal is to learn not only about the culture of English-speaking countries but also about diverse cultures and different cultural values as a way to increase students’ sensitivity to intercultural differences (Monfared et al., 2016).

In terms of inclusion, the Turkish curriculum includes more numerical outcomes than the German curriculum. However, an examination of the rates of total outcomes revealed that while 26 of the 322 outcomes in the Turkish curriculum (8.1%) are related to inclusive education, 21 of the 117 outcomes in the German curriculum (17.9%) are related to inclusive education. The difference in the number of outcomes is due to the more detailed presentation of outcomes in the Turkish curriculum, while some outcomes are combined into a single outcome. An outcome statement in the German curriculum is expressed with two or three different outcome statements in the Turkish curriculum. Therefore, a qualitative rather than quantitative comparison of outcomes is appropriate. In general, outcomes in the Turkish curriculum are expressed more precisely, concisely, and concretely, while in the German curriculum, they are expressed in a more general, deeper, and more abstract manner. Thus, although the German curriculum has fewer outcomes related to inclusive education, its content is broader. Koçyiğit and Şimşek (2019) found that among all multiculturalism-related outcomes (75) in all secondary education curricula in Türkiye, the highest number of outcomes (19 outcomes) were included in the English curriculum. However, this study identified a total of 26 outcomes related to inclusion in the Turkish secondary English curriculum. This difference between the two studies can be explained by the fact that Koçyiğit and Şimşek (2019) explored the implications of multiculturalism within the context of inclusivity, while the current study considered all dimensions of inclusive education.

Overall, the outcomes of both curricula appear to address issues related to cultural differences, as well as elements such as social cohesion, gender equality, values, and norms. However, one key point of the research is the dominance of the multicultural/intercultural dimension in the German curriculum, while other dimensions within the scope of inclusive education, such as children with disabilities, children with special needs, and human rights, are not addressed. In the Turkish curriculum, the study found that topics and outcomes such as human rights (gender equality, children’s rights,

the rights of disadvantaged groups, etc.) are addressed, albeit sparingly. Consequently, the Turkish curriculum includes sub-dimensions of inclusive education, but lacks depth. The German curriculum, however, only includes some sub-dimensions of inclusive education, but these are addressed in depth. In the Federal Republic of Germany, responsibility for the education system is shared between the federal government and the federal states (Bundesländer), as previously mentioned. In the field of education policy, the federal states are free to determine the content of their own school legislation in accordance with the constitutional principle of educational federalism (Kultusministerkonferenz, 2025). However, the ministers and senators of the states responsible for education and training, higher education, research, and cultural affairs cooperate within the framework of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs. Through this platform, the states coordinate their responsibilities for the country as a whole. In matters of international importance, the necessary level of cooperation and standardization in education, science, and culture is ensured (Kultusministerkonferenz, 2025). The research findings indicate that the German secondary education English language curriculum is predominantly characterized by a multicultural/intercultural dimension. However, other dimensions of inclusive education, such as issues related to children with special educational needs, and children with disabilities, appear to receive limited attention. This situation may be explained by the fact that inclusive education and intercultural/multicultural education have generally been treated as distinct approaches in Germany. Inclusive education in Germany has traditionally focused on the integration of students with disabilities or special educational needs into mainstream schools. In contrast, the intercultural or multicultural education approach emphasizes the importance of all students, regardless of their immigrant background, learning together without exclusion. In Germany, particularly after the Second World War, migration movements and the increasing diversity of the population led to a rise in discrimination and racism. Owing to its long-standing experience with migration, Germany developed integration policies and intervention measures earlier than Türkiye. Türkiye has also experienced external migration over the last fifty years, and particularly during the last fifteen years, large numbers of immigrant students have entered the education system as a result of mass migration movements. This situation has increased the need for inclusive education in Türkiye and has made it necessary to develop policies aimed at integrating disadvantaged students into the education system. In this context, comparing the curricula of Türkiye and Germany provides an opportunity to evaluate the inclusive education policies and curricular approaches implemented in both countries. It should be emphasized here that inclusive education and multicultural education are closely interrelated. One of the key principles of inclusive education is the recognition and consideration of individual differences, including cultural diversity (Kozikoğlu & Yıldırımoğlu, 2021). Therefore, multiculturalism can be regarded as an important sub-dimension of inclusive education (Şimşek et al., 2019).

Furthermore, while the themes and outcomes of the German curriculum include statements about target cultures, the Turkish curriculum addresses target cultures with a general approach, and no references to target cultures are found in the themes and outcomes. In a study comparing the English language curriculum in Türkiye with curricula in other countries, Avcı (2018) found that the Turkish curriculum included the least emphasis on the culture of the target language. Alpar (2013) argued that teaching the culture of the target language in teaching a foreign language will enable students to learn the language better and also provide them with a worldview filtered through universal values.

The present study also examined the inclusiveness-related outcomes in the secondary English curriculum of two countries in terms of the dimensions of “recognition of differences,” “appreciation,” and “interaction.” It found that among the inclusiveness-related outcomes in the Turkish curriculum, the most outcomes were focused on the

recognition of differences and the fewest on interaction. Conversely, among the inclusiveness-related outcomes in the German curriculum, the most outcomes were focused on interaction and the fewest on recognition. Koçyiğit and Şimşek (2019) also concluded that a greater sensitivity to recognition of differences was present in all secondary education curricula in Türkiye, with a rate of 73.3%. Furthermore, Şimşek et al. (2019) stated that for curricula to be inclusive, they should be designed to emphasize interaction and incorporate higher-level learning outcomes.

This research has some limitations. As mentioned before, the study is limited to the secondary level and the English curricula. Furthermore, the secondary English curricula are limited to Türkiye's and Germany's secondary English curricula. However, considering the lack of sufficient research on the subject, this research is important and contributes to the literature.

Based on the above results, the following recommendations are made:

- This study found that the Turkish curriculum is designed in a more detailed and comprehensive manner. It was observed that this situation leaves schools and teachers with less free space in content production and selection. Therefore, the study recommends that curricula should be designed to provide a broad framework and allow teachers and schools ample leeway in decision-making.
- While the finding that curricula include elements and features related to inclusion is positive, it is important that future updates make inclusive education clearer. The results of the study show that the Turkish curriculum includes the sub-dimensions of inclusive education but lacks in-depth coverage. The German curriculum includes only some sub-dimensions of inclusive education but provides in-depth coverage. Therefore, future updates should include a balanced and comprehensive coverage of all sub-dimensions of inclusive education.
- Among the inclusiveness-related outcomes in English secondary curricula in Türkiye, the most focus is on recognition of differences, while the least focus is on the interaction dimension. Therefore, it is recommended that curricula be designed to emphasize interaction, particularly to become more inclusive.
- Future studies could also examine and compare the Turkish curriculum with preschool, primary school, and/or higher education programs or with the curricula of other countries within the context of inclusive education.

**Theoretical Contribution:** This study, as a comparative research, provided an opportunity to analyze how inclusive education policies and curricula are shaped within different education systems. A comparative approach allows for the identification of similarities and differences between the two countries, the discovery of best practices, and the development of suggestions on how these practices can be adapted to different contexts. The findings of the research reveal that in Türkiye, a centralized system is in place and the secondary English language curriculum implemented is common to all secondary schools. In contrast, in the Federal Republic of Germany, responsibility for the education system is shared between the Federation and the states. The differences in the structures of the education systems in both countries are reflected in their curricula. It has been observed that the secondary English language curriculum in Türkiye is designed to be more detailed and comprehensive compared to the curriculum in Germany. In the Turkish curriculum, schools and teachers are given less flexibility in terms of content production and selection. Although the general framework of the curricula in Germany is determined by the ministry, schools have considerable autonomy to determine their own pedagogical framework (concept). In this context, school curricula can be developed on the basis of the core curriculum by taking local needs and regional differences into account through decisions made by school

administrations and teachers. Consequently, it can be argued that a centralized structure may limit flexibility in practice and prevent local needs and regional differences from being adequately reflected in educational policies. However, it has been observed that the understanding of inclusive education in foreign language teaching curricula has evolved over time. Curricula that were previously designed primarily for a standard student profile now also take into account students with diverse characteristics and learning needs. This development is clearly influenced by the strengthening of the understanding of equality and equal opportunity in education, as well as the increased inclusion of students with special needs in general education settings. This research is expected to raise awareness about inclusive education, contribute to recognizing its importance in foreign language education, and help ensure greater support for it within foreign language curricula. Furthermore, the research is considered important for updating curricula in this direction and particularly for supporting teachers in implementing inclusive education.

## Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest in relation to this study.

## Declaration of Generative AI Use

No generative artificial intelligence tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot, etc.) were used in the preparation of this scientific study. All text, analysis and content were produced entirely by the authors without the assistance of AI-based generation tools.

## Ethical Statement

This study is based on document analysis and therefore does not fall within the scope of research requiring ethics committee approval. However, as the study was derived from a part of the first author's doctoral thesis, ethics committee approval for the entire thesis was obtained from the Kırşehir Ahi Evran University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee pursuant to the decision dated 15.02.2024 and numbered 2024/02/09. The ethics approval document has been uploaded to the system together with the manuscript.

## Additional Information

This research is based on a part of the first author's doctoral thesis titled "*A Comparison of Secondary Education English Curricula, Textbooks and Educational Practices of Turkey and Germany Within The Context of Inclusive Education*", which was defended in May 2025 under the supervision of the second author (Kırşehir Ahi Evran University, Graduate School of Social Sciences, Department of Educational Sciences, Curriculum and Instruction). A part of the thesis was presented at the 10th International EJER Congress (as an abstract paper/oral presentation), but the full text was not published.

## Author Contributions

As previously mentioned, this research is based on a part of the first author's doctoral thesis conducted under the supervision of the second author. The authors have decided to publish the research. Conceptualization and design of the study: (Yasemin Çiçek); (Hüseyin Şimşek); Literature review, theoretical framework: (Yasemin Çiçek); Method: (Yasemin Çiçek); (Hüseyin Şimşek); Data collection and analysis: (Yasemin Çiçek); Conclusion and Discussion: (Yasemin Çiçek); Reporting – original draft: (Yasemin Çiçek); Reporting – revision and editing: (Yasemin Çiçek); (Hüseyin Şimşek).

All sections of the manuscript were collaboratively reviewed and revised by all authors. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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