

IMAGE OF SOCIAL STUDIES AT GOOGLE

Prof. Dr. Cemil ÖZTÜRK Faculty of Education, Marmara University, Turkey cozturk@marmara.edu.tr

Dr. E. Özlem YİĞİT Faculty of Education, Abant İzzet Baysal University, Turkey ozlem1406@hotmail.com

Dr. Hıdır KARADUMAN Faculty of Education, Anadolu University, Turkey hidirkaraduman@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Social Studies Course is a lecture that ensures the students to recognize their society and the world, to involve into the social life actively towards the solution of the problems they have faced with in this respect. However, the researches indicate that this course is one of the least favorite courses by the students. Although there are various reasons for the fact that the status of social studies is low among the students, it is also important how the content of the course is reflected to them. It is a common knowledge that in 21st century, the students spend most of their time on computer and internet. As well as they explore the facts those are challenging and within their field of interest, the students also do their homework, which is asked from them, through internet. Therefore, the image of social studies, that is introduced them via internet, comes into prominence. When the permanence and effect of the images on the human memory is regarded, the said images gain more value. Also, the images of social studies over the internet are important with respect to reflect the point of view towards this course. In this respect, within the scope of document analysis in this research, by making restriction from the detailed search option of the Google search motor, 300 visual images those are involved under the headlines of "social studies" in United States of America and "social studies" in Turkey, have been subjected to analysis. As the result of the research, it has been recognized that mostly geographical aspects of the social studies are brought into prominence over the images, and subjects and interdisciplinary structures those are included in social studies have not been reflected so much.

INTRODUCTION

The "Social Studies" is a course that helps for developing the knowledge, skill, attitudes and values those are required for the students to participate into the public life within the society, nation and worldwide. Although some skills towards participating democratic society are also covered by other courses, the main objective of social studies is to develop skills and competencies with respect to citizenship (Wade, 1995; Berson, 1996; Banks and Banks, 1999; Shaver, 1992; Jones and et al, 2001; Martorella, 2001; Mindes, 2005). Social Studies have been identified in various ways by different people. For Example, Barth (1991) has defined the social studies as "Social Studies is the interdisciplinary integration of the concepts those are related to the social studies for the purpose of implementing the skills with respect to citizenship, on the basis of important social subjects". In this definition, the "citizenship" is being emphasized. This is because; the main objective of teaching social studies is to ensure the individual to become an active citizen in the society. Another emphasized concept is "integration". This is resulting from the fact that the social studies are a course that presents all data and concepts of social sciences together. The citizens approach to the social problems or facts as a whole rather then considering only their single aspect as a historian, sociologist or economist does (Barth, 1991).

The main logic of including social studies education at primary school education can be summaries within the frame of four articles:

- To get information regarding to the past, present and future experiences of the people,
- To develop the skills of thinking and gaining information,
- To develop the democratic values and attitudes,
- To enable social involvement (Chapin and Messick, 1999).



In 19th century, with the aim of generating a national society concept, the social studies course developed through the integration of the subjects of History, Geography and Citizenship Knowledge by USA National Education Council (Sözer, 1998, p.8) has been adopted also in Turkey, Japan and South Korean, following USA (Kaya, 2006). For training the citizens with the scientific idea required in respect to ensure the sustainability of the Republic regime and revolutions in Turkey, Science of Life and Social Studies courses, those have been involved in the program under different names until today, have been attached great importance (Akınoğlu, 2008). The expectations from social studies course are; to contribute to train active, productive, happy Turkish Republic citizens with the conscious of their rights and liabilities, who are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in the modern century, accepted the principles and revolutions of Ataturk, and are able to benefit from the concepts and methods with respect to social sciences. Therefore, it is tried to gain skills for the students to be utilized within real life, through this course. In the Social Studies Education Program, restructured in 2004, the requirement of gaining the knowledge, skill and attitudes those cause the students to become active, responsible and creative citizens, such as: having knowledge about different cultures and humans; being conscious about the rights and liabilities in the family, working life and generally in the society; working with collaboration and scientific consideration, have been emphasized (Akınoğlu, 2008).

The students go on a world trip through the course of social studies in one sense. It is possible to get information about the Capital cities, natural environment, cultures and their residents. However, despite all these should have attracted the interests of the children, in the conducted researches (Goodlad, 1985; Joyce, 1986; Lounsbury, 1988; Hope, 1996; Governale, 1997; Chiodo and Byford, 2004), we face with a surprising fact that the students' attitudes towards social studies course is in negative direction. Lounsbury (1988) and Hope (1996) have stated that the main reason for the fact that the students do not enjoy with social studies course, is that the teachers could not introduce them meaningful experiences, related to their real lives. With respect to this, Hope (1996); has stated that he could not understand why the students have negative attitudes towards a course that provides the opportunity of travelling the world even virtually, knowing different cultures and meeting with people who live in various regions of the world.

Goodlad (1985) has attributed the fact that the social studies have been one of the least favorite to the education methods and techniques. He has expressed that these teacher-centered method and techniques are far away from directing the students towards the course. In addition, the conducted researches (Shug and et al., 1984; Shaughnessy and Haladyna, 1985) have shown that the students could not make a correlation between the information gained from social studies and their real lives. In this respect, it is important how the social studies course have been introduced to them. Since the social studies course, that is perceived as teacher-centered and as a course in which various information about social sciences have been conveyed to the students through traditional methods, it is required to question the method-technique and materials those are employed in the course. Whereas, it is known that in 21st century, the young people have obtained the information mostly through digital technologies and have delivered their own messages also by this way (Berson and Berson, 2003). Therefore, the importance of utilizing from different technologies for gaining knowledge, skill and attitudes under the scope of social studies, and also integrating the materials into the process, those are frequently used in the daily lives of the students, have emerged. Among these technologies, it is clear that the most interesting is Internet. It is clear that integrating internet into the process, which has an important place in daily lives of the individuals, will dynamise the process. Furthermore, it is known that the students utilize from Internet frequently while performing their homework. In a study carried out by Karadağ, Yılmaz and Aktay (2006) with regard to that fact, it is mentioned that the students are expected to reach the information in the current education programs, adopted in primary schools as of 2005 and based on the constructivism, therefore internet use has become widespread.

Internet takes the attention of the student through its presenting visual items. The researches show that the people can remember 10% of what they see, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they both see and hear, 70% of what they say and 90% of what they do and say. The researches, which are conducted with regard to training, also show the effect of the visual descriptions (Seferoğlu, 2007). The images enable the complex facts and events to be understood more easily. The visual messages may include the side meanings those could not be recognized at the first sight (Akbaba, 2005). The visual items motivate the individuals by calling their attention, keep their attention alive, materialize the concepts, simplify the complex concepts (Seferoğlu, 2007), and so facilitate the learning. Therefore, it should be taken into consideration that the visuals used with respect to ant item should be selected carefully. In this respect, the importance of the visual, those are included in Internet, where the students use in their lives intensely, has been increasing. Because, the visual items, presented via internet, have a



great impact over the students. Although the importance of the technology and especially Internet has been recognized in 21st century, the researches made for what kinds of messages are being conveyed to the individuals through such kinds of instruments, are limited (Hobbs, 2004; Kösebalan, Taşköprülü and Süha, 2008; Bek and Binark, 2009). Beside this, the fact that how the social studies have been represented in the minds of either the educators or the students has not been considered in detail except for some studies (Adler and Goodman, 1983; Stodolsky, Salk and Glaessner, 1991; Yaşar and Gürdoğan Bayır, 2010). Therefore, it is aimed to examine the visuals those are included in the web sites regarding to social studies. It can be said that the research has an importance in terms of showing how the social studies have been reflected at web sites. In this respect, the aim of the research is to examine the images of social studies reflected in the visuals in Google. Depending on this main purpose, it is aimed to answer the following questions:

1) What are the social studies images those have been reflected at the visuals in Google?

2) Under which categories can the images of social studies those are reflected at the visuals in Google, be collected?

THE STUDY

Document review, that is one of the qualitative research methods, is applied for collecting search data. The research data is obtained by gathering the ones under the names of "social studies" and "sosyal bilgiler" among the visuals included in the Google search engine. In the meantime, it is provided to limit the visuals by USA-based ones, in the search regarding to the title of "social studies". The scans have been made between the dates of 07.08.2010-14.08.2010. In this respect, 975 visuals with the title of "social studies" and 897 visuals with the title of "socyal bilgiler" have been obtained. The visuals have been analyzed by every researcher and the common findings are reflected to the result.

Documents, those consist the data sources in the research, have been subjected to the content analysis. There are four phases in content analysis. These are: (1) selection sampling from the data subject to the analysis, (2) developing the categories, (3) determining the analysis unit, (4) digitization (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2008).

In line with the respective phases, the following steps have been taken in the search process. In the first phase of the analysis, the method of sample selection is employed and among the obtained visuals, a total of 300 visuals, 150 of which are "social studies" titled and 150 of which are "sosyal bilgiler" titled, those are considered as more convenient with the content of the social studies, have been examined. In the process of developing the categories, that consists the second phase of the analysis, three approaches have been taken as basis in social studies education, as "social studies as citizenship transfer", "social studies as social science" and social studies as reflecting analysis". In the third phase of the analysis, the items emphasized in the analyzed visuals have been selected as analysis unit and it is taken as the basis that which dimension of the social science do these items reflect and which of the social studies education approaches have been represented. At the last phase of the analysis, it has been preferred to apply for frequencies where digitization is deemed as required, however a presentation in prosaic type is preferred, in general.

FINDINGS

The findings obtained in line with the objectives of the research are listed as following.

Images for Social Studies, those are Reflected to the Visuals in Google

The primary aim of the research is the question of "what are the social studies images those have been reflected at the visuals in Google?" The data, obtained as the result of the scanning realized in this respect, is presented in Table-1.

	USA	Turkey	Total
	f	f	f
Globe	41	10	51
Earth	23	16	39
Country map	1	33	34
Historical figures	13	19	32
Student (studying with map and)	19	10	29

Table 1. Images and frequences that used about social studies at Google



World map	13	11	24
Book	19	4	23
Historical event	6	15	21
Geographical region	-	21	21
World and people (surrounding, holding, enclosing	18	5	23
etc.)			
Historical place	14	1	15
Geographical figure	-	13	13
Flag	6	5	11
Social studies class	4	2	6
Compass	3	2	5
Teacher (teaching on map or globe)	4	-	4
Historical image	3	1	4
Jobs	1	3	4
Money	2	1	3
Ship	1	2	3
Ceramic	2	-	2
School	2	-	2
Hourglass	2	-	2
Parliamentary	2	-	2
Plane	2	-	2
Sun	1	1	2
Eagle	2	-	2
Cup	1	-	1
Star	1	-	1
Family	1	-	1
Watch	1	-	1
Blood donation	-	1	1
Tape measure	1	-	1
Door	1	-	1
Mallet	1	-	1
Scales	1	-	1
Box	-	1	1
Total	213	177	390

When the pictures those are used with regard to the social studies in Google and included in Table 1, are analyzed, it can be seen that the most frequently used image with regard to the social studies in the web sites is "globe (51)". The "earth (39)", "country map (34)" and "historical figure (32)" are following the globe image, respectively. The respective image samples are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Samples that the most frequently used images with regard to the social studies at Google

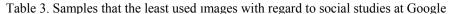
A state of the			
Globe	Earth	Country Map	Historical Figure
(Figure 1)	(Figure 2)	(Figure 3)	(Figure 4)

It is recognized that the least used images with regard to social studies are "box (1)", "scales (1)", "mallet (1)", door (1)" and "tape measure (1)". The respective image samples are provided in Table 3. It can be recognized that the



images used with respect to social studies are mostly related to geography and history disciplinary; therefore, social studies course is not correlated with the role of covering and integrating many fields.





Reflection of the Social Studies Images of the Visuals in Google to the Social Studies Education Approaches

The second aim of the research is the question of "Under which categories can the images of social studies those are reflected at the visuals in Google, be collected? In line with this aim, the respective visuals have been considered in three categories as "social studies as citizenship transfer", "social studies as social science" and social studies as reflecting analysis".

Social studies as citizenship transfer

The main purpose of social studies education is to train good citizens (Thornton, 1994). Although the educators have different opinions regarding what the social studies have been, the common point in these opinions is to focus on the fact of citizenship education (Adler and Goodman, 1983). When it is considered that it was aimed to adopt the concept of American citizenship through this course, which was started to be trained for the first time in USA in 1916, it is possible to say that the tradition of social studies education as the citizenship transfer, has been developed to actualize the main reason of educating such lesson in the primary education (Tay, 2010).

When the pictures with the theme of social studies on the internet sites, 7 pictures have been founded those are reflecting the social studies perspective as the citizenship transfer. 3 examples from these pictures and items exhibiting their relations with citizenship concept have been shown in Table 4.

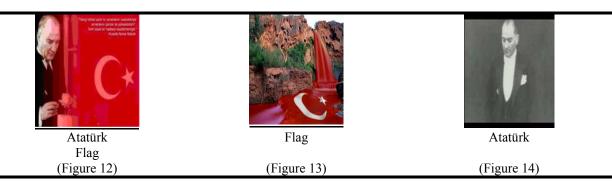
Table 4. Pictures representing	the tradition of social	studies education as the	e citizenship transfer in USA websites

SOCIAL STUDIES		
Flag	Flag	Flag Assembly
(Figure 9)	(Figure 10)	(Figure 11)

There are 16 pictures representing this perspective at the internet sites in Turkey. It can be seen that Ataturk has been included in almost all of these pictures (14 pictures). Another item that is frequently met in citizenship-themed pictures is Turkish flag (5 pictures). It has been recognized that the assembly image, that is included at USA sourced internet sites, has not been included at Turkey-sourced internet sites. The items to be shown as example for the said pictures can be seen in Table 5.

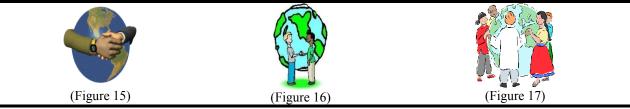
Table 5. Pictures representing the tradition of social studies education as the citizenship transfer in Turkish websites





When the beginning of the social studies education in USA is considered, it can be recognized that the main objective is to keep the individuals who have different cultures and are members of various nations under citizenship umbrella. This is exhibited in certain visuals those are included in USA sourced internet sites. When the persons who have been included in the visuals, are considered, it is remarkable that the blacks, whites and different cultures have been included all together. The examples regarding to these pictures are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Samples representing blacks and whites have been included all together



As can be seen in Table 7, similar pictures are presented in Turkey-sourced internet sites without emphasizing such kind of association.

Table 7. Samples representing	togetherness in Turkey
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Social Studies as Social Science

Social studies is a course, which is consisted from various disciplinary of social sciences. Also in the definition made by MNE (2005) for the social studies education program, the social studies is indicated as a course that; reflects the social sciences such as history, geography, economy, sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, political science and law and citizenship knowledge subjects for the purpose of supporting the individual to actualize his/her social existing; includes consolidation of the learning fields under a unit or a theme; where interaction of the human with his/her social and physical environment in terms of past, present and future; is developed from the point of collective education concept.

When USA and Turkey sourced internet sites are examined, it can be recognized that the most emphasized disciplinary is geography within the visual images those are involved in these internet sites. Among the 300 examined pictures, geography is emphasized in 114 of USA-sourced ones and 89 of Turkey-sourced ones. The distribution of the other disciplinary within the scope of social studies is included in Table 8.

Table 8. Frequencies of social science disciplines emphasized on visuals in websites

4	1 1		
Discipline	USA	Turkey	Total
		•	



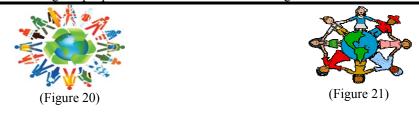
Geography	114	89	203
History	38	36	74
Economics	3	4	7
Sociology	1	2	3
Antropology	0	0	0
Psychology	1	0	1
Philosophy	0	0	0
Political Science	2	0	2
Law	2	0	2

With regard to the geographical aspect of the social studies, it can be recognized that sphere and child, examining the world over the sphere, world and country maps have been involved in the visuals. According to a research performed by Yazıcı (2006), it is stated that the most utilized visual materials in social studies course, that has an important role for the students in understanding the texts and in getting a criticizing perspective, are map-sphere, table and picture. Other objects following the sphere and map, those are included in the visuals at the internet sites are geographical shapes and locations together with boussole.

It is possible to emphasize the fact such that the children examining the world appear frequently in the visuals, since the social studies course is a lecture that enables the students to know the world. However, the fact that the children examine the world over a sphere in the said visuals, symbolizes the utilization of the sphere as a material within the consideration process of the subjects those are included within the content of social studies and related to the geography, and does not point out a meaning towards knowing different cultures and the people who live in different regions of the world by going beyond this.

It can be recognized that in the visuals those are involved at USA-sourced internet sites, the image of "people from different nations come together and surround the world" (9 pictures) is also included. It is possible to state that this image is correlated with the "Global Connections" learning field, which is included in social studies education programs both in USA and in Turkey. However, at Turkey-sourced internet sites, such kind of image has not been emphasized. The examples related to the said pictures are included in Table 9.

Table 9. Samples related to image of people form different nations come together and surround the world



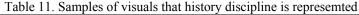
The visuals, in which the world is in the hands of the people (5 visuals at USA sourced sites, 2 visuals at Turkeysourced sites), have been included under the theme of social studies at the internet sites. It is possible to consider that such kinds of visuals reflect the aim of attaining the opportunity of knowing the world through social studies course. The examples related to the said visuals are included in Table 10.

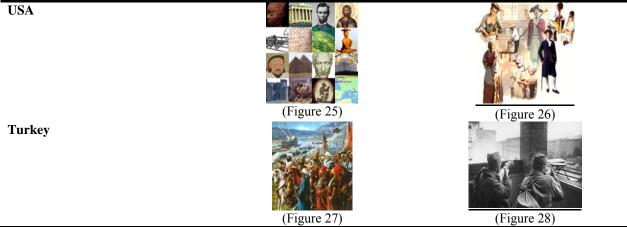
Table 10. Samples Related to Image of the World in the Hands of the people





When the visuals those are included at the internet sites, have been examined within the scope of the perspective of social studies as social sciences, it can be recognized that another disciplinary that has been put into fore in both countries is "history". In 38 visuals in USA, and in 36 visuals in Turkey, history disciplinary is represented. While the history disciplinary has been emphasized through the visuals of the persons who had important roles in the history, of the historical places and works of arts, at USA-sourced internet sites; at Turkey-sources internet sites, as well as historical personalities, generally, wars in historical facts have been exhibited. This situation can be recognized when the examples regarding to these visuals in Table 11 have been examined.





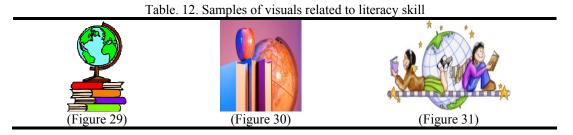
When the visuals are examined at the internet sites, within the frame of the perspective of social studies as social science, as it can be seen also in Table 6, disciplinary, other than geography and history, have been emphasized rather low or not considered any more. It is remarkable that the economy, existing at the third rank, is represented by money and professionals. It can bee seen that images, associating with the social solidarity such as blood donation have been in the visuals those are connected with sociology at Turkey-sourced sites, and mostly cultural items have been at USA-sourced sites. It is remarkable that while the political science is represented by the assembly visual at USA-sourced internet sites, GNAT has not been included at Turkey-sourced internet sites. This finding of the research can be deemed such that the social studies are still under the control of history and geography disciplinary and that integration with other disciplinary has not been succeeded sufficiently. When the impact of the visuals over the students is considered, it can be said that it should be taken into consideration to emphasize this connection between disciplinary in the visuals at the internet sites in order to understand the social studies concept and to reflect there over.

Social Studies as Reflecting Examination

The social studies course is a lecture that is developed over the interest and curiosities of the children towards the world. Not any other course is interested so much with the human and the relations among the humans. The information towards knowing the world and life skills are being gained for the students through this course (Chapin&Messick, 1999). The perspective of social studies as reflecting examination aims to identify the individual and social problems of the students and to develop the decision making processes. The standing out skills in this approach are reading-writing, use of information from different sources, determining and solving the problems, interpretation of the information, determining and solving the issues related to the values (Tay, 2010, p.15-16).



When the visuals, related to the social studies, included at USA-sourced and Turkey sourced internet sites, have been considered within the frame of social studies perspective as reflecting examination, the book image attract the attention. However there is no sign whether the books included in the pictures are course books, or source books of various disciplinary of social studies. The examples of the visuals, those can be associated with the reading-writing from the standing out skills in lien with the social studies perspective as reflecting examination, are included in Table 12.



When the visuals in Table 12 are examined, it is remarkable that the image of book is presented together with the image of sphere. In this respect, it can be said that the fact that the books towards knowing the world should be read, has been emphasized. So, this is assumed as supporting the emphasize towards the fact of knowing the world through social studies course.

Social Sciences are the course including the skills and abilities those shall ensure the individual to know his/her residing country, society and the world, beginning from him/herself and his/her family and to find solutions for the problems by analyzing them. However, when the visuals under the social studies theme at the internet sites are being examined, it can bee seen that this fact has been disregarded and that only and in one picture family concept has been reflected. This picture is at one of USA-sourced internet sites, and any such pictures could not be found at Turkey-sourced internet sites.

CONCLUSIONS

The Social Studies is a field that had been included into course programs towards the ends of nineteenth century, that is presented in United Stated of America, at all class levels from the preschool education up to twelve classes, in Turkey between the fourth class and seventh class of the primary school education and that main target is citizenship education.

There are opinions in most of the works related to social studies that the origin of this field has been depending on history education program. However, it is not possible to say that social studies have been developed on the base of history course. Although it shows parallelism in between them, social studies field has a unique improvement line (Saxe, 1991). Beside this, when the visuals at USA-based and Turkey-based internet sites, have been examined, it can be seen that geography disciplinary is involved in the visuals those are involved under the social studies theme, and that history ranks number two following the geography. There are important connections between the geography, which examines the connections between the human and the environment, and social studies. When the requirement of the individual, for geographical knowledge in order to find solution to national and global problems, has been considered (Meydan, 2010), this connection emerges automatically. Although the role and importance of the geography in social studies have been accepted; it is regarded that the excessive emphasize over the geography at internet sites is not convenient in respect of going beyond of regarding the social studies as a course, presented in chapters separate from history, geography and citizenship and presenting how the different disciplinary have integrated. Beside this, it is certain that also the individuals who try to know his/her residing environment, examine the country and the world, not only in respect of physical geography, but also by including other branches of the geography such as human and economical geography should be included in the visuals at the internet sites. Although this is taken into consideration in the visuals in Turkey, the said visuals should also be included at the home-work sites those include the subject explanation of the said visuals or at the sites including the test for SBS exams with respect of, either the quality of the internet sites in Turkey, or reflecting the meaning, assigned to the social studies in Turkey. It can be recognized that the USA sourced visuals are included at the Internet sites of the primary schools.



It is known that through social studies, the individual has obtained skill and abilities towards knowing him/her self, his/her residing country and the world. However, it can be seen that there are no images those reflect the works especially towards knowing his/her own identity of the individual. Besides this, the values such as humanitarianism, entreneurship, scientific, nature love, responsibility, aesthetic and diligence those are existing among the values to be presented in social studies education program and can be provided through connection with other disciplinary, included within the content of social studies, those have not been reflected in the visuals.

The citizenship transfer, as the main target of social studies education, has been represented by the "flag" image in both countries. While, an eagle and assembly items are included to the flag image in USA, mentioning about Ataturk frequently is highly remarkable. Therefore, at the reflection point of the perspective of citizenship transfer, it can be said that the visuals are sufficient and meet this purpose. Beside this, it is an important finding that the visuals reflecting the citizenship responsibilities such as voting have not been included in both countries' internet sites.

It is remarkable that the social studies concept has not been mentioned as a reflecting examination in the examined visuals. The individuals who are examining, questioning, looking for solutions for the problems, have not been included in the visuals. However, it an be recognized that the image of child reading book, has been included in both countries' internet site. It can be possible to correlate this image with the fact of reading-writing, which is included in the skills within the frame of social studies perspective as a reflecting examination.

One of the important subjects that the social studies course is focused on is how the new generations can adopt to the changing society. Especially, thanks to the impacts of information communication technologies, the shift of the citizens activities towards internet, cause the social studies course to be reevaluated towards training citizens who may involve this environment effectively. However, it can be regarded as an important deficiency that the integration of technology and social studies has not been included in the examined visuals.

Consequently, it can be said that the social studies are not included as interdisciplinary according to its definition at the internet sites as the result of the search of the Google visuals, and that sphere and world visuals have been highly included by emphasizing over a disciplinary in both countries. Especially, it is certain that the internet sites in Turkey should direct towards presenting the social studies according to the actuality, rather than existing homework, lecturing and SBS based.

It is possible to make the following recommendations from the finding of the research:

1. The internet sites, existing in Turkey and related with the social studies, can lead for preparation of internet sites those citing and reflecting the social studies in real terms, rather than existing in the status of homework, lecturing and SBS preparation.

2. There might be searches which exhibit which visuals have been used for reflecting the social studies at the internet sites other than USA and Turkey sources.

3. There might be searches, which shall reveal the status of the students' utilization and examination of these internet sites.

4. Ensuring the primary school students to examine these visuals, there might be searches in order to reveal what these visuals mean for them.

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