

Narrative Construction in Social Studies Textbooks in Türkiye

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Abstract

This study critically examines Social Studies textbooks used in Grades 4–7 in Turkey during the 2025–2026 academic year, published by the Ministry of National Education, through a critical discourse analysis framework. Drawing on critical theories of ideology, power, and hegemony, the analysis focuses on three interrelated dimensions: the discursive construction of national identity, the representation of difference and (non-)inclusivity, and the silences embedded within state–citizen relations. By interrogating the linguistic, visual, and structural organization of a sample of four textbooks, the study explores how dominant narratives function to normalize particular forms of citizenship and belonging within this corpus. The findings reveal that citizenship is constructed predominantly through an obligation-centered discourse structured around duty, loyalty, and compliance, reflecting a state-centric understanding of the citizen subject in the texts analyzed. National identity is articulated as homogeneous and exclusionary, reproduced through selective invocations of shared memory, national symbols, and heroic narratives that privilege unity over plurality. Diversity—ethnic, cultural, and religious—is incorporated in a depoliticized and folklorized manner, reducing difference to symbolic recognition while obscuring structural inequalities. Within this framework, minorities and refugees are positioned as passive, temporary, and subordinated subjects rather than as rights-bearing citizens. Furthermore, the analysis demonstrates that state–citizen relations are discursively organized through

hierarchical and asymmetrical power relations, in which the state emerges as the primary agent of authority and legitimacy. Center–periphery narratives reinforce this hierarchy by constructing the center as active, rational, and normative, while marginalizing alternative voices. Given the limited sample size, these patterns should be read as indicative of tendencies within the analyzed textbooks rather than as evidence of a nationally generalized citizenship regime. By exposing the ideological work performed within this sample of Social Studies textbooks, this study contributes to critical debates on the reproduction of hegemonic citizenship discourse and calls for more inclusive, democratic, and emancipatory approaches to citizenship education.

Keywords: *Critical discourse analysis, hegemonic citizenship, national identity construction, ideological reproduction in education, state–citizen power relations*

Introduction

Identity construction is a fundamental component of nation-building and nation-state formation. It is explicitly structured within educational systems, turning schooling into a primary domain where social values are produced and political power is discursively reconstructed (Uğuz, 2025). Within this process, *Social Studies textbooks* constitute the ideological core of education. They serve as principal instruments establishing the relationship between official knowledge and pedagogical discourse, cultivating citizens who internalize national canons of identity, history, and society (Williams & Bokhorst-Heng, 2016). *In Türkiye, this mechanism is uniquely visible.* The state-centralized curriculum directly leverages Social Studies textbooks to navigate shifting political ideologies,

defining the parameters of national belonging and civic identity through centralized narrative controls.

Ethnic and cultural diversity represents an empirical reality of modern societies (Beaman, 2025). However, these diversities frequently give rise to complex social challenges, making identity-centered discussions a central, highly contested area of inquiry within the social sciences (Kim et al., 2018). Far from being a static entity, identity is a continuously evolving, fluid construct. It is constantly conditioned by the socio-political environments into which individuals are born (Ang, 2001; Hall & Gieben, 1991; Hamamura, 2017; Yazıcı, 2017). Sociologically, this fluid negotiation means identity is continually reshaped through lifelong learning experiences (Howard & Davies, 2013). Crucially, discursive studies acknowledge that *difference* constitutes a foundational component of identity (Bright, 2020; Hall, 1996). Identity is inherently formed through interaction with what it is *not*, positioning individuals within overlapping, sometimes contradictory social contexts.

Because individuals possess multiple, fluid identities—spanning religion, ethnicity, gender, and profession—modern coexistence remains a complex negotiation (Frings et al., 2022; Héliot et al., 2020). While various sociological models attempt to explain how diverse populations coexist, they often fail to capture contemporary identity structures. The increasing fluidity of modern societies complicates traditional notions of group membership and belonging (Laryea, 2024).

National identity narratives try to stabilize this fluidity by anchoring belonging to specific markers:

Territorial & Ideological Links: Relationships established with the homeland, citizenship definitions, shared political ideologies, and institutional legitimacy (İnaç & Ünal, 2013).

Cultural & Ancestral References: Religion, language, tradition, and ethnicity acting as narrative resources that delineate the boundaries of national belonging (Bokhorst-Heng, 2016).

Inclusivity Dynamics: Determining who is recognized as part of the national community, under what conditions, and highlighting the friction between integrative and pluralistic worldviews (Medvetskaya et al., 2025).

Analytical Framework: Core Conceptualizations

To analyze how these dynamics operate within official texts, this study establishes a critical analytical framework utilizing four interconnected concepts:

Identity: A dynamic, non-fixed discursive construct through which individuals and groups are positioned or position themselves within specific historical and cultural narratives.

Difference: The relational boundary-marking system that defines the "Self" in opposition to the "Other," establishing parameters of pluralism or exclusion within national boundaries.

Power: The systemic, asymmetric capacity—channeled through state mechanisms and official curricula—to legitimize certain forms of knowledge while marginalizing, silencing, or assimilating alternative discourses.

Narrative Construction: The deliberate linguistic, visual, and structural strategies used within textbooks to organize knowledge, sequence history, and frame reality to make specific ideological orientations appear natural and neutral. As Gelfman, Podstrigich, and Losinskaya (2004) note, textbooks do not merely support knowledge acquisition; they dictate its organization, foregrounding specific modes of thinking while policing epistemological boundaries. From a critical discourse perspective, textbook content is never neutral (Smith & Sheyholislami, 2022). It is a highly politicized arrangement where hegemonic forms of meaning-making are reproduced by selecting,

presenting, or omitting knowledge. Social Studies courses, in particular, are explicitly designed to transform individuals into ideological actors, placing citizenship at the center of systemic continuity and power relations (Gürel, 2025; NCSS, 2025). Analyzing these textbooks exposes the direct friction between educational continuity and political transformation (Archakis & Tsakona, 2012; Kurttaş & Ulukaya-Öteleş, 2021). This friction reflects a broader critical tradition concerned with fundamental questions of curricular power: what is included in or excluded from the curriculum, who holds the authority to make that determination, and whose social and political interests are ultimately served by these choices (Hill, 2022). Within this tradition, the curriculum is understood not as a neutral repository of content but as a contested ideological terrain, shaped by tensions between orientations toward conformity and civic compliance and orientations toward critical consciousness, social transformation, and the exposure of structural inequality. This critical curriculum perspective, closely associated with the work of Michael W. Apple, extends beyond its original Anglophone context, as evidenced by Apple's sustained engagement with Turkish critical educators and the reception of his scholarship within Turkish educational discourse—underscoring the broader international resonance of these theoretical concerns with the Turkish case examined in this study (School of Education, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2022).

The Turkish Context and Research Gap

An examination of the historical development of Social Studies curricula in Türkiye reveals a tension between localized socio-political dynamics and international educational philosophies—particularly those from the United States, which heavily influenced the field's institutionalization (Çiydem & Kaymakçı, 2021). Since its early integration into teacher training and formal schooling in the mid-20th century, the curriculum has undergone major

systemic revisions, most notably in 1953, 1968, 1998, 2005, 2018, and the highly recent *2024 curriculum overhaul* (Çiydem & Kaymakçı, 2021; Turan, Gedik, & Kutluay, 2025). These iterations reflect broader shifts in state priorities, swinging between secular-civic models and traditionalist paradigms. Currently, Turkish Social Studies curricula and textbooks are battlegrounds for competing narratives. On one hand, recent policy initiatives heavily emphasize narratives constructed around Turkish national identity, the Ottoman historical legacy, national traditions, and a distinct Turkish-Islamic perspective. On the other hand, critical educational evaluations argue that this focus has come at the expense of the diverse historical contributions related to the secular foundation of modern Türkiye and its pluralistic social transformations (Güven & Ayantaş, 2025).

The Research Gap

While existing textbook literature in Türkiye has extensively documented basic thematic contents, frequency distributions of national symbols, or general compliance with global pedagogical trends, *a significant research gap remains*. Previous studies have largely failed to address how recent radical curricular shifts (specifically leading into the mid-2020s) function as policy-driven tools of critical exclusion. There is a lack of deep, structural Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that connects micro-level textual silences and visual representations directly to macro-level state power maneuvers. Most critically, previous textbook studies in Türkiye have not sufficiently addressed the precise linguistic and visual strategies used to reconcile the friction between an increasingly diverse domestic demographic and a highly centralized, homogeneous state-sponsored identity narrative. This study directly fills that gap.

Current Study and Research Questions

This study evaluates the ideological mechanisms of the Ministry of National Education's current pedagogical outputs. Our primary objective is to deconstruct how national identity, social differences, and power relations are linguistically, visually, and structurally manufactured within late-primary and lower-secondary education.

To achieve this, the study addresses the following central research question:

How do current Turkish Social Studies textbooks construct and legitimize dominant socio-political narratives under recent educational policy transformations?

To guide this inquiry, the central problem is operationalized through three direct analytical focuses:

Strategies of National Alignment: Through which narrative strategies and visual-representational elements are national identity and neo-traditionalist historical narratives constructed in Social Studies textbooks?

Mechanisms of Alterity & Inclusion: Through which narrative strategies and visual-representational elements are social differences, minority discourses, and boundaries of inclusivity constructed or constrained?

Discursive Asymmetries and Omissions: Through which narrative strategies, structural hierarchies, and explicit textual silences are state power relations maintained and alternative historical accounts marginalized?

Method

Research Design

Due to its interdisciplinary nature, the Social Studies course constitutes a field of instruction in which social, political, and economic dynamics are intensely reflected. The influence of hegemonic relations at the global level on curriculum reforms inevitably extends to Social Studies, which aims to provide citizenship

education. In this study, in which the dataset consists of Social Studies textbooks published by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey in 2025, it is aimed to analyze social, political, and economic dynamics such as identity, difference, and power relations through a critical discourse analysis framework.

The study seeks to examine how identity construction and national narratives are structured in Social Studies textbooks used in Turkey, to what extent differences are represented in an inclusive manner, and how power relations are reproduced, by evaluating linguistic, visual, and structural elements together within a critical discourse analysis approach.

The fact that narrative emerges simultaneously with human history and constitutes a shared mode of meaning-making across all social groups renders narrative analysis a fundamental analytical tool for examining educational, cultural, and social experiences (Czarniawska, 2004). Within narrative structures, multimodal texts utilize linguistic, visual, and spatial resources together in order to inform, direct, or influence specific audiences. For this reason, textbooks are considered not only as instruments for transmitting knowledge but also as cultural texts that construct identity and values (Murray & Bakken, 2024).

Critical discourse analysis, by centering a political concern with the functioning of ideology and power relations in society, focuses on how language constructs, sustains, and renders these relations visible (Breeze, 2011). The fundamental assumptions of critical discourse analysis can be summarized as follows: there are imbalances in agency and power among social actors; discourses may influence these imbalances at different levels; and knowledge that is accepted as natural within society may be structured in ways that serve the interests of particular groups (Fairclough, 2010).

Data Sources

Textbooks constitute the primary educational texts to which students are exposed on a daily basis. In addition to transmitting knowledge, textbooks also produce and legitimize particular values, norms, and perspectives (O’Keeffe, 2013). From a didactic perspective, the textbook is a multi-component learning resource designed to organize teaching and learning activities and to support the development of students’ knowledge, skills, and competencies (Fuchs & Henne, 2018).

Despite the rapidly expanding resource pool of the digital world, textbooks continue to maintain their position as the principal reference within formal education systems (El Moudden & Said, 2025). Textbook research provides content in terms of values, knowledge, and subjective perspectives, depending on the focus of the researchers (Macgilchrist, 2017). Moreover, textbooks serve as a source for various fields, including the sociology of education, cultural policy studies, curriculum studies, ethnographic approaches to discourse, linguistics grounded in critical practice, and critical discourse analysis (Canale, 2022). For this reason, textbooks require examination not only in terms of pedagogical content but also in relation to their ideological and discursive structures. Critical discourse analysis aims to reveal which meanings are foregrounded in textbooks and which meanings are rendered invisible.

Sampling Strategy and Case Selection

To ensure methodological transparency and systemic rigor, this study utilizes *total population sampling*, also referred to as a complete coverage framework (Patton, 2015; Saunders et al., 2019). Rather than isolating individual chapters or employing restrictive sampling fragments, the dataset includes all official Social Studies textbooks approved and published by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) for Grades 4, 5, 6, and 7 currently in active circulation during the 2025–2026 academic year in Türkiye. By relying on this total

population approach, the study ensures that every case meeting the specific criteria is fully examined, thereby mitigating selection bias and allowing for a comprehensive, macro-level critical discourse analysis of the total state-sanctioned pedagogical output.

The 2024–2025 Curricular Shift and 2025–2026 Material Realities

A major systemic development occurred in Türkiye during the 2024–2025 academic year with the introduction of a sweeping, highly centralized curriculum reform. This reform radically restructured educational paradigms by prioritizing a localized cultural synthesis, traditional national values, and explicit socio-political frameworks of citizenship. Exploring the 2025–2026 textbooks is critical because these materials represent the *immediate operationalization and physical embodiment* of that 2024–2025 policy shift. Because the implementation of a new national curriculum in Türkiye occurs in phased, compounding intervals, the 2025–2026 textbook corpus catches the education system at a vital analytical crossroads:

The Reformed Tier: Materials directly designed under the new guidelines, reflecting the state's overt ideological turn toward traditionalism and specific national-identity narratives.

The Transitional Tier: Accompanying upper-grade textbooks that, while awaiting their scheduled structural rotation, have been strategically aligned or semiotically framed to bridge the gap between legacy civic models and the current political realities.

Analyzing the 2025–2026 textbook cohort provides a real-time critical policy evaluation. It shows exactly how the state's theoretical 2024–2025 curriculum blueprints have been translated into everyday pedagogical, visual, and discursive constraints for millions of Turkish students.

In line with this reform, efforts to update textbooks have also been carried out. The bibliographic details of the textbooks constituting the data source of this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Bibliographic Information of Social Studies Textbooks

Title of the Book	Authors	Editors
<i>Social Studies Grade 4 Textbook</i>	D. Kürekli, E. Özgören, F. Gülşen, K. Yılmaz, S. Altıparmak, O. Okumuş, Y. F. Şahin Savaş	F. Şahin
<i>Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Social Studies Grade 5 Textbook (Book 1 & Book 2)</i>	C. G. Ol, F. G. Yılmaz, H. Demirer, M. Polat, M. Akpınar, Ö. Evin, T. S. Çelebi, Y. Yabansu	F. Torun, İ. Turan, H. Kılıç
<i>Secondary School and Imam Hatip Secondary School Social Studies Grade 6 Textbook (Book 1 & Book 2)</i>	A. M. Özçelik, F. G. Yılmaz, G. Semiz, M. Akpınar, Ö. Evin, T. S. Çelebi, Y. Korkmaz	H. Akdağ, F. Torun
<i>Social Studies Grade 7 Textbook</i>	S. Altıparmak, E. Özgören, F. Gülşen, F. Şahin, K. Yılmaz, O. Okumuş, Y. Savaş	D. Kürekli

Data Analysis

Critical discourse analysis encompasses multiple theoretical approaches, including Foucault and Pêcheux's French discourse analysis, Hodge and Kress's social semiotics, Van Dijk's socio-cognitive studies, and Fairclough's dialectical-relational framework (Rogers, 2011). Van Dijk's (2013) foundational arguments regarding the nature of critical discourse analysis—specifically his assertion that it does not function as a rigid, monolithic method with rigidly reproducible and algorithmic procedures—reflect the adaptive and contextual nature of critical qualitative research. In essence, critical discourse analysis represents a strategic analytical lens that researchers adopt in accordance with their critical objectives, providing the opportunity to examine both the structural integrity of the macro-narratives presented in textbooks and the micro-discursive meanings produced within these structures simultaneously. Because textbooks reflect the dominant socio-political values of their time and context as

forms of cultural production, the visual and textual representations within them must be evaluated as active sites of ideological work (Şen, 2022).

Derivation of the Analytical Themes

The textbook corpus was analyzed across three primary themes: (1) *identity construction and national narratives*, (2) *the representation of differences and inclusivity*, and (3) *power relations and silences*. To ensure both theoretical alignment and contextual responsiveness, these themes were derived through a structured, iterative *hybrid approach* combining deductive and inductive reasoning:

Deductive Derivation (Literature & Research Questions): The overarching themes were structurally mapped directly from the study's central research questions and established critical curriculum policy literature. Critical education policy studies (e.g., Fairclough, Van Dijk) provided the initial conceptual parameters for *power relations and silences*, while regional textbook scholarship in Türkiye dictated the focus on *identity construction and national narratives* following recent state centralization.

Inductive Derivation (Close Reading): While the broad thematic boundaries were set a priori, the specific sub-themes, micro-discursive codes, and analytical categories within each theme were derived inductively. This occurred through an intensive, un-coded preliminary close reading of the 2025–2026 textbooks. For instance, the specific ways "Turkish-Islamic synthesis" or "secular-civic tradition" manifested as narrative elements were derived directly from actual patterns emerging from the newly revised curriculum text.

Procedural Implementation of the Analysis

Analyses based on documentary data sources typically employ content analysis, thematic analysis, and narrative analysis to unpack latent meanings (Silverman, 2018). In this study, the systematic evaluation of the textbook corpus was executed through a rigorous, four-stage procedural workflow:

Phase 1: Corpus Familiarization and Preliminary Scanning: The research team conducted an initial, comprehensive reading of all text blocks, visual layouts, unit introductions, and end-of-chapter evaluation questions across the Grades 4–7 Social Studies textbooks to establish context.

Phase 2: Development of the Analytical Instrument: To translate the critical discourse framework into operational steps, a specialized operational instrument—the *Scanning List (Checklist)* presented in Table 2—was developed based on the integrated literature. This checklist standardized the coding process by focusing on explicit linguistic choices (e.g., word frequencies, pronouns like "we" vs. "them"), visual-representational elements (e.g., imagery composition, historical placement), and structural choices (e.g., omission of certain historical events, curricular margins).

Phase 3: Systematic Dual Coding and Discursive Analysis: Using the Scanning List, the text and accompanying visuals were systematically coded. The text was analyzed at both the micro-level (sentence structures, semantic choices, and metaphors) and the macro-level (how entire historical chapters were sequenced to build national legitimacy). To ensure inter-coder reliability and qualitative validity, coding was cross-examined by multiple researchers.

Phase 4: Synthesis and Mapping of Silences: In the final step, the coded segments were synthesized to evaluate not just what was explicitly written or visualized, but what Van Dijk calls "discursive absences." The analysis mapped

out the strategic silences—identifying which minority perspectives, alternative historical actors, or counter-narratives were completely omitted from the state-sanctioned pedagogical discourse.

Table 2. Scanning List for Social Studies Textbooks

Themes	Analyzed Elements	Coding Balance and Counter-Discursive Search
Identity Construction and National Narratives	Citizenship Definitions	Citizenship duties and responsibilities, shared values, heroic narratives, references to common cultural elements, standardized expressions related to citizenship and the nation
	Shared Values	
	National Symbols	
Representation of Differences and Inclusivity	Collective Memory	
	Representation of Different Ethnic, Cultural, and Religious Groups	Expressions of diversity related to different cultures, visual representations, references to minorities and refugees, inclusive or exclusionary language patterns
	Depth of Diversity	
	Positioning of Minorities and Refugees	
Power Relations and Silences	State–Citizen Relations	Hierarchical positioning, glorification of central authority, norms of the majority, use of democratic concepts such as rights, freedoms, and participation
	Center–Periphery	
	Narratives	
	Democratic Values and Participation	

Continuation of Data Analysis

In the initial stage of the critical discourse analysis, the Social Studies textbooks were categorized within the MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software based on the three identified themes and corresponding codes, and support was obtained from artificial intelligence tools for language, expression, and editing. Coding was conducted by three researchers. To establish intercoder reliability, approximately 20% of the textbook corpus was independently coded by all three

researchers using the same coding scheme. Discrepancies in code application were identified and resolved through discussion, and a consensus coding protocol was applied to the remaining corpus, with disagreements adjudicated through joint review of the original text against the coding framework. Each text was evaluated within the context of its respective textbook and coding framework, and analyzed comparatively. The comparative approach provided important insights into how each textbook reproduces existing discourses or whether it introduces elements of questioning. During the reporting phase of the data, interpretations and evaluations were conducted in accordance with van Leeuwen's (2008) multimodal analysis framework, focusing on linguistic elements, visual elements, structural components, representations of social actors, and ideological orientations

Role of the Researchers

This study, which examines Social Studies textbooks through a critical discourse analysis framework across the themes of identity construction and national narratives, the representation of differences and inclusivity, and power relations and silences, was conducted by three researchers who are experts in the field of Social Studies education. The areas of expertise of the researchers are clustered around inclusive education, citizenship education, and qualitative research methods. In this study, the intersection of the researchers' roles enabled a multiplicity of perspectives in the analysis of representations corresponding to the examined themes, analytical elements, and the expressions sought within the documents. The diverse academic backgrounds of the three researchers who conducted and reported the study contributed to the completion of the research in a manner consistent with the multidimensional nature of Social Studies education.

Findings

In this section, the findings obtained from the critical discourse analysis of Social Studies textbooks used in Grades 4, 5, 6, and 7 in Turkey during the 2025–2026 academic year are presented under three main themes: Identity Construction and National Narratives, Representation of Differences and Inclusivity, and Power Relations and Silences. For each theme, prominent excerpts and corresponding analyses are presented in tables. In addition, a word cloud illustrating the analysis of the most salient codes identified in the textbooks is presented in Figure 1.

An examination of the relationships among the codes suggests that the state–citizen relationship is particularly associated with democratic values and participation; the representation of differences and inclusivity is linked to the depth of diversity; and identity construction and national narratives are closely connected with national symbols and shared values.

Overview of Appendix: Sample Evidence

To ensure the empirical validity, transparency, and methodological rigor required for critical policy and curriculum analysis, a comprehensive selection of original textual fragments, visual layouts, and specific unit exercises has been cataloged. These primary materials are positioned immediately following the reference list in the *Appendix: Sample Evidence* section of this manuscript. The appendix is structured to serve as an evidentiary repository that mirrors the three core themes analyzed in this study:

Theme 1 Evidence (Identity & National Narratives): Contains direct textbook passages demonstrating the linguistic shift toward the traditionalist Turkish-Islamic synthesis and the structural de-emphasis of secular civic milestones.

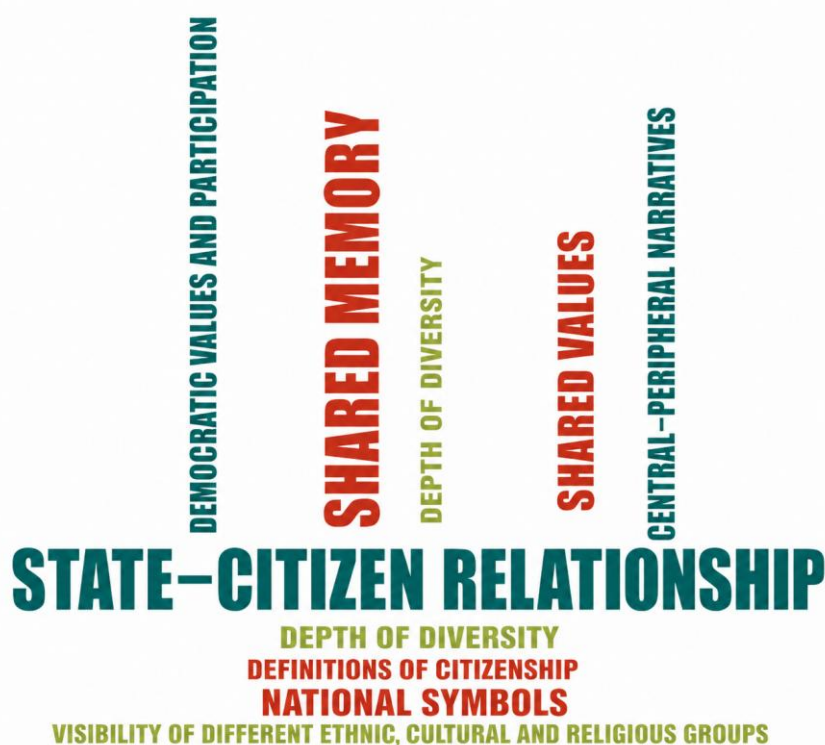
Theme 2 Evidence (Differences & Inclusivity): Catalogs specific visual representations and text frames that isolate how ethnic, cultural, or social diversities are folklorized and contained within strict state-centric boundaries.

Theme 3 Evidence (Power Relations & Silences): Documents explicit instances of curriculum-driven omissions, highlighting sections where socio-political frictions, minority historical narratives, and civic dissent are completely silenced in favor of a benevolent state construct.

Each entry in the appendix is coded by grade level, unit title, page number, and publishing house, allowing readers to cross-reference the theoretical interpretations discussed in the following sub-sections with the exact linguistic and semiotic data extracted from the 2025–2026 textbook corpus.

Figure 1. Word Cloud Analysis

Table 3 presents the themes and codes identified in the study. When the Social Studies textbooks from Grades 4 to 7 are evaluated collectively, it is observed that the narratives progressively concentrate around specific themes.



At the Grade 4 level, center–periphery narratives exhibit a relatively limited presence, while collective memory, national symbols, and the depth of diversity become more prominent. This framework expands in Grade 5, where state–citizen relations emerge as a central theme, and definitions of citizenship and the construction of collective memory are addressed in a more systematic manner. In Grade 6, center–periphery narratives and national symbols gain increasing prominence, whereas in Grade 7, these narratives develop into a more integrated structure, accompanied by a stronger emphasis on collective memory and shared values. In contrast, across all grade levels, the representation of differences and inclusivity remains limited. This pattern reinforces the continuity of dominant national narratives within the textbooks.

Table 3. Themes and Codes

Theme	Codes
Identity Construction and National Narratives	Collective Memory
	National Symbols
	Shared Values
	Citizenship Definitions
Representation of Differences and Inclusivity	Positioning of Minorities and Refugees
	Depth of Diversity
	Visibility of Different Ethnic, Cultural, and Religious Groups
Power Relations and Silences	Democratic Values and Participation
	State–Citizen Relations
	Center–Periphery Narratives

Theme 1: Identity Construction and National Narratives

In Social Studies textbooks, the theme of identity construction and national narratives becomes visible through a discursive structure clustered around citizenship definitions, shared values, national symbols, and collective memory

(see Table 4). In particular, traces of a state-centered and homogeneous understanding of identity are evident.

Citizenship is predominantly defined in terms of duties and responsibilities, while shared values are framed within a normative structure based on acceptance. It can be argued that acceptance is prioritized over a critical engagement with content. National ideals such as independence and unity, along with narratives of heroism and victory, constitute significant emphases that establish an emotional connection between the past and the present within the construction of collective memory.

While the state, symbols, and heroes are positioned as active agents, citizens are largely represented as passive actors who contribute to rituals. From an overall analytical perspective, identity construction is characterized by an understanding of belonging structured around loyalty, obedience, and national unity. At the visual level, citizenship is predominantly represented through the flag, ceremonies, and state symbols, emphasizing the construction of national identity through rituals and symbolic representations. In contrast, critical citizenship remains highly limited.

From an ideological standpoint, a framework centered on duty and loyalty is foregrounded. Shared values are idealized as elements that ensure social cohesion, while cultural values are reinforced through rituals and symbolic practices. National identity is constructed through an emphasis on traditional values and a discourse of “we” that promotes unity. National symbols occupy a central position in the construction of collective identity, with concepts such as independence, unity, and belonging being prominently emphasized. At the ideological level, national symbols are framed within a state-centered perspective.

Collective memory is constructed through narratives of victories, heroism, and martyrdom. Dramatic and emotional visualizations, along with rituals that

support the transmission of collective identity, reinforce a state-centered historical narrative grounded in national unity.

Theme 2: Representation of Differences and Inclusivity

In Social Studies textbooks, the representation of differences and inclusivity is predominantly addressed at a superficial and folkloric level (see Table 5). The presence of ethnic, cultural, and religious groups is presented without explicit identification. Differences are framed within a generalized, abstract, and nationally oriented discourse of inclusivity. This can be considered an example of the ideologically limited representation of social reality. Examples reflecting the equal participation of different groups in social life are highly limited, even when selectively included. In this regard, the representation of different ethnic and religious groups as passive, tolerated, or folkloric elements may be viewed as a limitation in terms of inclusivity.

The depth of diversity is reduced to folkloric elements such as traditional clothing, cuisine, and folk dances, and is evaluated primarily in terms of aesthetics and entertainment. In the textbooks, aestheticized and romanticized metaphors function to represent differences within power relations. Minorities and refugees are positioned as guests and as actors in need of assistance, resulting in a limited representation from the perspective of rights-based citizenship and democratic pluralism. Their representation is predominantly associated with temporary, passive, and secondary positions. Discourses of victimhood and dependency render narratives of genuine equality less visible. At the ideological level, the emphasis on state-centered inclusivity and the highlighting of cultural diversity can be described as a form of limited inclusivity, which may be conceptualized as symbolic inclusivity.

Table 4. Analytical Structure of Theme–Code Analysis: Identity Construction and National Narratives

Code	Sample Excerpt	Linguistic Elements	Visual Elements	Structural Elements	Social Actor Representations	Ideological Orientation
Citizenship Definitions	“Citizenship rights and responsibilities... Individuals should fulfill their responsibilities while exercising their rights.” (Grade 6, Book 2, p. 30, Visual 4.20)	Concepts of rights and responsibilities presented together	Image of a person filling out a form, reminding formal obligations to the state	Duties toward society and the state listed in detail; rights mentioned briefly	Citizen positioned as duty-bound and loyal to the state; state as order-setting and rights-defining	Citizenship defined more through responsibility and obedience than rights
Citizenship Definitions (Example News)	“The citizen who believed they were treated unjustly won their legal struggle.” (Grade 5, Book 2, p. 27)	Emphasis on “conscious and active citizen”; framed within justice and rights-seeking discourse	Representation of a rights-seeking individual	Framed through individual action	Individual as active agent; state as passive/subject to scrutiny	Rights framed within individual responsibility
Shared Values	“Through the National Tax Obligations (Tekâlif-i Millîye Orders), the people made great sacrifices to meet the needs of the army.” (Grade 4, p. 58, Visual 2.17)	Use of evaluative terms such as “sacrifice” and “great,” creating a glorifying and dramatic tone	Visual representation of a self-sacrificing public	Solidarity structured as a collective duty	People as self-sacrificing actors fulfilling their duties	National unity constructed through sacrifice, obedience, and shared values
Shared Values / Historical Continuity	“The tradition of solidarity and cultural heritage has continued from the Ottoman Empire to the present.” (Grade 7, p. 102, Visual 2.61)	Emphasis on continuity and heritage	Image of Bayezid II Complex (Küllîye), symbolizing historical continuity	Solidarity linked to religious and cultural spaces and framed as part of cultural heritage	Ottoman state as a source of social values	Solidarity linked to religious and historical continuity
National Symbols / Leadership	“Hero of Anafartalar,” “Founder of the Republic” (Grade 4, p. 50)	Emphasis on heroism, sacrifice, and leadership through dramatic language	Formal portrait emphasizing seriousness and authority	Atatürk positioned centrally as founding leader	Leader as central actor; public as followers	Nation-state ideology reinforced through leader cult
Collective Memory / Heroism	Biography of Ömer Halisdemir: “The hero who changed the course of July 15...” (Grade 4, p. 152)	Dramatic and glorifying rhetoric emphasizing sacrifice	Idealized heroic imagery	Contemporary event framed as continuation of national resistance	Individual as martyr-hero; public as collective audience	State continuity reinforced through sacrifice for national survival
Collective Memory / Religion	Text supported by sources and visuals from the Prophet Muhammad’s era (Grade 6, Book 1, p. 132)	Emphasis on unity, solidarity, and religious-cultural continuity	Image of Masjid al-Nabawi as symbol of unity and sacredness	Religious institutions positioned as part of cultural heritage	Religious actors representing moral foundation of society	Modern citizenship legitimized through Islamic historical roots
Collective Memory / Cultural Heritage	Ottoman cultural life (e.g., Ramadan, Karagöz, traditions) (Grade 7, p. 94, Visual 2.49)	Expressions emphasizing continuity such as “five centuries,” “historical heritage,”	Visuals of traditional Istanbul neighborhoods and practices	Cultural continuity between past and present emphasized	Ottoman society idealized as historical actors	Intergenerational transmission of cultural identity legitimized

Code	Sample Excerpt	Linguistic Elements	Visual Elements	Structural Elements	Social Actor Representations	Ideological Orientation
		“farewell with prayers”				
Collective Memory / Historical Continuity	Anatolian Civilizations timeline (Grade 5, Book 1, p. 130)	Emphasis on continuity and contribution to shared heritage	Timeline visuals highlighting Hittites, Lydians, Ionians	Chronological structuring of history	Ancient civilizations positioned as carriers of cultural heritage	Integration into modern national identity strengthens historical roots

Table 5. Analytical Structure of Theme–Code Analysis: Representation of Differences and Inclusivity

Code	Sample Excerpt	Linguistic Elements	Visual Elements	Structural Elements	Social Actor Representations	Ideological Orientation
Visibility of Different Ethnic, Cultural, and Religious Groups	Dutch tourist’s admiration for Kuşadası; Ghanaian student’s engagement with Black Sea culture; Syrian family sharing a meal with Turkish people (Grade 5, Book 1, p. 27, Visuals 1.18–1.20)	Expressions such as “admired,” “embraced,” “felt happiness” indicating positive and inclusive language	Images depicting tourists, migrants, local people, and traditional food	Multicultural coexistence constructed through everyday experiences	Foreigners (Dutch, Ghanaian, Syrian) positioned as “guests” or “accepted others”; Turks as “hosts”	Asymmetrical “host–guest” relationship constructed
Inclusivity Discourse (Global)	Text emphasizing “people from different cultures,” “we should empathize,” “we should avoid stereotypes” (Grade 7, p. 267, Visuals 7.16–7.17)	Universal expressions such as “every society,” “every human being”	Visuals showing people with diverse appearances (clothing, skin color, facial features)	Framed through a discourse of global inclusivity and human rights	Individuals represented as equal members of the “human family”	Inclusivity idealized as a universal value; internal differences within Turkey remain silenced
Depth of Diversity (Cultural Representation)	“Countries and cultures” presented through traditional cuisines (Grade 4, p. 184, Visual 7.19)	Terms such as “similarities,” “differences,” “solidarity,” and “unity”	Collage of food from different cultures	Cultural diversity explained through historical interactions and visualized through collage	Nations represented through culinary identity as cultural markers	Diversity positively framed but limited to surface-level cultural elements (e.g., food)
Metaphorical Representation of Diversity	“Fire ants... hold onto each other... act with a sense of ‘we’ rather than ‘I’” (Grade 6, Book 1, p. 38, Visual 1.44)	Abstract emphasis on unity through “we” discourse	Use of animals instead of human actors	Abstract narrative constructed through metaphor rather than real social contexts	Social actors replaced by symbolic representations (ants)	Real social differences rendered invisible; diversity addressed indirectly through metaphor
Positioning of Minorities and Refugees	Puppet play: Stefan’s migration from Austria to Turkey and school adaptation process (Grade 5, Book 1, p. 30, Visual 1.23)	Cultural diversity referenced without using terms such as “minority” or “refugee”	Puppet imagery symbolizing cultural difference	Structured as an activity-based “scenario” encouraging empathy	Foreign individuals represented as culturally different but non-problematic actors	Structural inequalities and real issues of refugees remain invisible; representation remains superficial

Theme 3: Power Relations and Silences

Power relations and silences are largely constructed through a state-centered and hierarchical narrative (see Table 6). It can be argued that state–citizen relations are structured through a formulation in which the citizen is represented as a passive actor who fulfills assigned duties, while the state is positioned as an active subject that is protective, regulatory, and supervisory. From a structural perspective, the state–citizen relationship is constructed primarily through obligations, with the state represented as a dominant and authoritative actor. Loyalty and obedience to central authority can be associated with a state-centered ideological form of belonging.

In terms of center–periphery narratives, state institutions are positioned as the focal point of development, whereas peripheral regions are constructed as dependent on the support of the center and assigned passive roles. This reflects a hierarchical structure in which the center is consistently represented as a provider, modernizing force, and inclusive authority, while the periphery is depicted as a recipient of aid and a dependent entity.

Democratic values and participation are primarily defined through participation in elections, voting, and adherence to rules, while a rights-based understanding of citizenship receives comparatively limited attention. At the visual level, democratic participation is associated with symbolic and ritualistic practices. Democratic values are thus conveyed within a framework centered on rules and compliance. A duty-oriented understanding of democracy, which reduces democracy to electoral participation and rule adherence, may be considered insufficient from the perspective of active citizenship.

Table 6. Analytical Structure of Theme–Code Analysis: Power Relations and Silences

Code	Sample Excerpt	Linguistic Elements	Visual Elements	Structural Elements	Social Actor Representations	Ideological Orientation
Democratic Values and Participation	“...identify the characteristics of democracy such as equality and pluralism...” (Grade 6, Book 2, p. 17, Visual 4.2)	Democratic values presented alongside national identity and traditions	Concept map suggesting a structured visual organization	Appears student-centered, yet positions the state as the overarching reference authority	State as norm-setting actor; citizen expected to internalize and reproduce values	Democratic concepts articulated within a national and state-centered ideological framework
State–Citizen Relations	“The fundamental aims and duties of the state are to protect the independence, unity, democracy... of the Turkish nation...” (Constitution, Article 5) (Grade 7, p. 238)	Terms such as “independence,” “unity,” “prosperity,” “peace” reinforce a state-centered discourse	Visuals emphasizing authority and official structures	Hierarchical structure foregrounded; rights mediated through the state	Citizen positioned as passive and dependent; state as guarantor of rights	Rights framed as contingent upon the existence and authority of the state
Representation of Social Issues (Europe Example)	“The number of homeless people is increasing in Europe... 271,000 in England...” (Grade 5, Book 2, p. 39)	Social issues framed through individual victimhood rather than structural causes	Map-centered visuals highlighting European countries with numerical indicators	Central countries made visible; peripheral regions excluded	States remain implicit; individuals represented as victims	Welfare state model implicitly questioned; inequalities in central countries made visible
Center–Periphery Narratives	“As Atatürk foresaw, the Soviet Union collapsed... independent Turkic republics were established...” (Grade 6, Book 1, p. 95)	Expressions such as “recognized,” “supported,” “cooperated” construct a center-oriented hierarchy	Limited visual space for alternative perspectives	Turkey positioned as active center; other states as dependent periphery	Turkey as active, supportive actor; Turkic republics as recipients	Regional hierarchy legitimized through national and foreign policy discourse
Democratic Participation (School Example)	“Every child has the right to participate... Selen was elected as class president...” (Grade 4, p. 146)	Terms such as “participation,” “voting,” “right to election” positively frame democratic processes	Classroom setting depicting symbolic election practices	Constitutional right followed by illustrative example	Students as compliant participants in democratic procedures	Democracy reduced to procedural participation (voting, compliance)

Conclusion and Discussion

This study provides a detailed critical discourse analysis of Social Studies textbooks for Grades 4, 5, 6, and 7, published by the Ministry of National Education and used in Turkey during the 2025–2026 academic year, with a particular focus on how concepts such as identity, difference, and power

relations are constructed within broader social, political, and economic dynamics. The findings of the study are organized around three main themes: identity construction and national narratives, the representation of differences and inclusivity, and power relations and silences.

Empirical Grounding of Identity, History, and Curriculum Shifts

Our empirical findings demonstrate that identity within the examined 2025–2026 textbooks encompasses elements of continuity, coherent integration, and differentiation. In relation to identity construction and national narratives, our close analysis of the text shows that national identity is primarily constructed through national history and the geography of the homeland. Furthermore, the theme of the national economy is directly incorporated into this identity discourse through explicit emphases on Turkey’s human and economic activities, sources of national income, and the cultivation of a qualified workforce. An examination of Social Studies curricula in Turkey since the 1968 curriculum indicates that the theme of national identity has consistently been more prominent than other thematic areas.

Our findings highlight a major shift in the ideological references used to build this official identity. While topics related to Atatürkism have been positioned as one of the fundamental ideological references for the construction of national identity in the Social Studies curricula of 1973, 1985, 1998, 2005, and 2015, our direct text block evaluations confirm that this emphasis becomes significantly less pronounced in the current cohort—compounding a trajectory that began with the 2018 curriculum overhaul (Doğu & Kuş, 2022).

These specific findings mirror global trends identified by Zajda (2017), who emphasizes that the teaching of history plays a crucial role in nation-building processes. Under the growing impact of globalization, contemporary education systems increasingly incorporate global history, multiculturalism, human rights, and international interconnectedness alongside legacy, nation-state-centered

narratives. As a result, textbooks assume a tense, hybrid function—both reproducing a centralized national identity and supporting global citizenship—which creates distinct structural transformations and frictions in how identity is presented within local educational environments.

Language, Narrative, and the Containment of Difference

Since identity takes the form of a narrative, language constitutes the primary object of its analysis. The analyzed 2025–2026 textbook corpus renders events intelligible by linking them within a series of relationships using specific actors and events organized as part of a coherent plot structure. These purposeful narrative structures provide meaning and order to events, thereby offering the stories through which students make sense of the world and of themselves (Ammerman, 2003; Somers, 1994; Tse, 2025).

Our text and layout evaluations indicate that this national narrative functions as a strict process of identity construction and value encoding for children at the primary and lower-secondary levels. Textbooks utilize their textual and visual language as systematic tools to construct both a historical-cultural identity and ideal forms of citizenship (Rezaei et al., 2022; Tamir, 1993).

However, our empirical findings reveal that citizenship education in Turkey remains deeply structured around a state-centric, authoritarian, and nationalist perspective. Positioned as a homogenizing norm, this approach acts as a structural barrier to the visibility of ethnic, cultural, and social differences on the basis of equal citizenship (Karakuş-Özdemirci, 2022). Although the 2025–2026 textbooks show minor discursive openings toward making ethnic, cultural, and social differences more visible in line with global trends, our analysis proves that these differences are consistently rearticulated and contained within a normative national framework, presenting a limited, non-political understanding of pluralism. This reflects broader critical literature showing that insufficient perspectives among educators, a lack of deep knowledge about

diverse communities, and the faulty perception of teaching as sociopolitically neutral continue to persist when materials do not explicitly unpack equity (McGraw et al., 2024; Mintos et al., 2019; Rubel, 2017).

Concluding Synthesis: The Triad of Identity, Difference, and Power/Silence

The ultimate contribution of this analysis lies in exposing how “*identity*”, “*difference*”, and “*power/silence*” interact within the 2025–2026 textbooks not as separate themes, but as a single, unified ideological mechanism:

Identity Construction via Distinction: The textbooks establish a cohesive national "Self" by prioritizing selective historical and spatial markers. This identity requires a clear boundary to separate what belongs to the national collective from what does not.

The Containment of Difference: Instead of allowing internal variations to exist independently, the narrative processes in the text act to subordinate diversity. Differences are stripped of their unique political or social status and are rearticulated to ensure they remain safely within the limits of the dominant national framework.

Power through Silence: This hierarchy is maintained through the exercise of discursive power. The state-centric perspective establishes its authority not only through what is explicitly written, but through deliberate, strategic silences—omitting complex historical friction, minority challenges, and robust civic participation. By rendering these social realities invisible, the textbooks use silence as a powerful tool to protect the status quo and maintain existing power structures.

Implications for Curriculum Development and Textbook Writing

To overcome these barriers and align Turkish educational materials with the critical, transformative standards expected in contemporary education policy studies, the following implications are presented:

For Curriculum Developers

Move Beyond Homogenizing Frameworks: There is an urgent need for a deeply rooted and transformative framework that reconsiders the goals of equality and inclusivity within citizenship education. Curriculum frameworks must move away from rigid, state-centric models that view diversity as a challenge to national cohesion.

Re-balance Localized and Global Orientations: Future curriculum updates should directly address the hybrid reality of modern social education by integrating genuine global citizenship, human rights standards, and multicultural connections rather than reducing them to peripheral topics.

For Textbook Authors

Incorporate Structural Rather than Tokenistic Diversity: Instead of rearticulating ethnic, cultural, and social differences inside a restrictive national container, authors must portray diversity as an active, independent asset of pluralistic democratic life.

Expose Ideological Silences through Critical Inquiry: Authors should reject the assumption that textbook content is sociopolitically neutral. Writing teams should replace strategic omissions with active, multi-perspective tasks, encouraging students to trace historical debates and navigate real-world challenges to build actual critical literacy.

Limitations

This study is subject to several limitations. First, the analysis is based on a purposive sample of four Social Studies textbooks used in Grades 4–7 during the 2025–2026 academic year; as such, the findings reflect discursive tendencies within this specific corpus and should not be generalized to the entirety of Turkey's national textbook production or educational system. Second, as a

textual analysis, the study examines the discursive and ideological construction of citizenship within the textbooks themselves and does not capture how these narratives are interpreted, mediated, or contested by teachers and students in actual classroom practice. Third, while critical discourse analysis enables in-depth interpretive engagement with ideology and power, it is inherently interpretive in nature; alternative analytical frameworks may yield complementary or divergent readings of the same material. Finally, the study focuses on a single academic year, precluding claims about discursive change or continuity across curricular revisions or textbook editions over time. Future research addressing these limitations—through larger samples, classroom-based reception studies, methodological triangulation, and longitudinal design—would help extend and test the generalizability of the patterns identified here.

Recommendations

The findings of this study offer several avenues for future research on Social Studies textbooks:

Comparative and Curricular Analyses: Comparative analyses of identity construction, the representation of differences, and power relations across different grade levels, newly published editions of textbooks, and updated curricula may contribute to a more detailed understanding of the dynamics of discursive continuity and transformation.

Reception and Practice Studies: Qualitative and mixed-method studies focusing on how the narratives presented in textbooks are interpreted by teachers in classroom practices and how they are understood by students may help to make visible the relationship between text and practice.

Targeted Inclusivity Inquiries: Within the context of the representation of differences and inclusivity, examining the potential effects of discourses related to minorities and refugees on students' attitudes, perceptions of citizenship, and value orientations constitutes an important area for further research.

Diversified Methodological Frameworks: The use of diverse analytical frameworks—such as multimodal analysis, the discourse-historical approach, and comparative international textbook studies, in addition to critical discourse analysis—may enable a more comprehensive evaluation of the ideological and pedagogical functions of Social Studies textbooks.

Implications for Educational Practice: Beyond these research directions, the findings carry practical implications for Social Studies education. For *curriculum design*, developers should consider embedding pluralist and rights-based framings of citizenship alongside duty-based content, treating diversity as a structural and political matter rather than a folkloric one. For *textbook writing*, authors and publishers may benefit from guidelines requiring the inclusion of minority and refugee perspectives as active, rights-bearing subjects, alongside editorial review sensitive to implicit hierarchies in visual and narrative representation. In *classroom teaching*, educators can supplement textbook content with critical reading activities that make dominant and silenced narratives visible to students. For *teacher education*, training programs should incorporate critical discourse awareness, equipping teachers to recognize and mediate ideological content rather than transmit it uncritically. At the level of *policy*, ministries of education may consider periodic critical review mechanisms for textbook content, involving independent academic input, to align stated curricular goals of democratic citizenship with their textual realization.

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Appendix. Sample evidence

1. Theme/Code: Identity Construction and National Narratives / Definitions of Citizenship – Grade 5, Book 2, p. 27



Aybüke Teacher assigned her students a research task on "the importance of active citizenship in social life." Necmettin and his friends have difficulty formulating assumptions related to the topic.

If you were in the place of Necmettin and his friends, what assumptions would you formulate on this topic? Explain.

Read the news items below and write the active-citizenship characteristics mentioned in them.

 A citizen who believed that he had suffered injustice won the legal struggles he pursued

"İbrahim Bey is known for his struggle against injustices that many consumers encounter but do not pursue. As a conscious and active citizen, he received positive outcomes from many applications submitted to the Consumer Arbitration Committee. Although a defective product had been sent to him, he ensured that thousands of liras unfairly charged to him were refunded."

(Retrieved from an online source.)

Visual 4.18

2. Theme/Code: Identity Construction and National Narratives / Shared Values – Grade 4, p. 58

CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Battles of Eskişehir and Kütahya were fought under the command of İsmet Pasha. In the face of the Greek offensive, and in order to avoid further losses, the Turkish Army withdrew to the east of the Sakarya River upon Mustafa Kemal's order. Following this development, the Grand National Assembly offered Mustafa Kemal command of the army. Accepting the Assembly's offer, Mustafa Kemal assumed command as "Commander-in-Chief." With the authority of commander-in-chief, Mustafa Kemal issued the Tekâlîf-i Milliye Orders, also known as the National Obligation Orders. Through these orders, the people sought to meet the needs of the army by making great sacrifices.

ÇALIŞTI (Görsel 2.17).



Visual 2.17. Through the Tekâlîf-i Milliye Orders, the people met the needs of the army.

Some articles of the Tekâlîf-i Milliye Orders were as follows:

1. A Tekâlîf-i Milliye Commission would be established in every district.
2. Each household would prepare one set of underwear, one pair of socks, and one pair of sandals and deliver them to the Tekâlîf-i Milliye Commission.
3. Forty percent of food and clothing supplies would be requisitioned, and the corresponding value would later be repaid to the people.

3. Theme/Code: Identity Construction and National Narratives / National Symbols – Grade 4, p. 50

PREPARATORY ACTIVITY

What comes to your mind when you hear the term “National Struggle”? Share your ideas with your classmates.

The period of the National Struggle, which has been the subject of epic narratives, is full of heroic stories that our nation has never forgotten. During this period, our country fought against occupying powers on three fronts. This struggle reached victory under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Let us now learn about our National Struggle and some of the heroes who contributed to it.

MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATÜRK (1881–1938)

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was born in Thessaloniki in 1881. His mother was Zübeyde Hanım and his father was Ali Rıza Efendi. At his mother's request, he first attended the neighbourhood school. Shortly afterwards, he enrolled in Şemsi Efendi School. He began secondary school at the Thessaloniki Civil Junior High School and later transferred to the Thessaloniki Military Junior High School. After completing high school at the Monastır Military High School, he attended the Military Academy in Istanbul. A successful student, Mustafa Kemal graduated from the Istanbul Military Staff College in 1905.



As a patriotic officer, Mustafa Kemal demonstrated outstanding success in various military assignments. Before the First World War, he served as a military attaché in Sofia. During the First World War, he served on the Gallipoli, Caucasus, and Syria–Palestine fronts. Due especially to his achievements on the Gallipoli Front, he became known among the Turkish people as the “Hero of Anafartalar.” He did not remain silent in the face of the occupation of the country; instead, he went to Samsun and initiated the National Struggle.

The Republic was proclaimed on 29 October 1923, and Mustafa Kemal was elected the first president. In 1934, following the Surname Law, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey granted Mustafa Kemal the surname “Atatürk.” Having made major contributions to the foundation and modernization of the country, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk passed away on 10 November 1938.

4. Theme/Code: Representation of Differences and Inclusivity / Visibility of Different Ethnic, Cultural, and Religious Groups – Grade 5, Book 1, p. 27

Read the news sources and answer the question.



(A) A Dutch tourist has been unable to break ties with Kuşadası for twenty-seven years

Jan Linkens, a Dutch software engineer, came to the Kuşadası district of Aydın for a holiday. He admired the natural environment of the area. When he returned the following year, he learned to swim and began scuba-diving training in order to observe the beauty of the underwater environment. Linkens, who has spent his holidays in Kuşadası for twenty-five years in order to dive and meet with his friends, stated that Turkey's underwater habitats and historical structures should be introduced to the whole world. He also participated in voluntary underwater cleaning activities with local institutions, emphasizing the need to protect Turkey's natural beauty. Linkens stated that he had formed strong friendships in Kuşadası. He also expressed surprise when he learned that tulips, one of the symbols of his country, had been taken from the Ottoman Empire to the Netherlands. He added that he planned to settle in Kuşadası in the future.

(Retrieved from an online source.)



Visual 1.18
Tulip field in the Netherlands



(B) A prospective Ghanaian physician introduces Black Sea culture

Yahaya Abdulai, from Ghana, came to Rize in 2018 to study medicine. After learning Turkish, Abdulai participated in various activities in order to learn the local culture. Having embraced and grown fond of Rize and Turkish culture, he decided to settle there. He introduced his own culture to local people and learned some regional folk songs and the horon dance. Abdulai became known to people from different cultures by teaching horon to foreign tourists visiting Rize and offering them authentic cultural experiences. The videos he shared on social media platforms reached more than one million views on some platforms. Abdulai stated that people even contacted him from abroad through social media. He also noted that people were surprised that someone from Africa had learned this culture, performed horon, and sang regional folk songs. Local residents stated that they had embraced Abdulai and accepted him as their spiritual son.

(Retrieved from an online source.)



Visual 1.19
Black Sea horon dance



(C) Turkish and Syrian families establish a table of friendship

The Fansa family sought refuge in Turkey because of the internal conflict in Syria. During an iftar dinner, they came together with their friends, the Arkan family. They served the Arkan family their traditional dish, known in Turkey as acuka. The Fansa family stated that they were happy to live together with Turkish people and said: "We are pleased to introduce our dishes to Turkish people. We love Turkish cuisine very much. We hope that they will also like our food. Our relationship with Turkish people is very good. We have many Turkish friends. During the difficult period we experienced, they helped us greatly." The Arkan family also stated that they were pleased to live together in harmony and to learn about each other's cultures.

(Retrieved from an online source.)



Visual 1.20
Acuka from Turkish cuisine

5. Theme/Code: Representation of Differences and Inclusivity / Depth of Diversity – Grade 6, Book 1, p. 38



SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Fire ants are organisms found almost everywhere in the world and have developed an effective solution against flooding. When their nests are submerged, many ants come together and form a floating raft with their bodies, thereby saving themselves from drowning. In this raft, half of the ants remain under water while the other half stay above water; they continuously change places so that no ant remains underwater for an extended period. Thanks to the fine hairs on their bodies, they are able to hold small air bubbles and breathe underwater.

Each ant holds tightly to its neighbour, creating a waterproof and flexible raft. Despite waves and difficult conditions, this raft can continue its journey for weeks. By acting with a sense of “we” rather than “I,” ants are able to overcome many adverse situations.

Engineers hope to design robots inspired by these ants that can similarly work in harmony. During natural disasters, such robots may save lives by constructing functional structures such as emergency aid bridges. Nature and the living beings within it still have much to teach humanity.

How do ants act when they encounter an adverse situation? Explain.

What can people learn from the behaviour of ants, and how can they apply what they learn to everyday life? Discuss.

Are there times when we, as a society, act in unity like ants? Explain.

Give examples of activities carried out to sustain our social unity.

6. Theme/Code: Power Relations and Silences / State–Citizen Relations – Grade 7, p. 328

**CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
TURKEY**

Fundamental aims and duties of the state

Article 5 – The fundamental aims and duties of the state are to safeguard the independence and integrity of the Turkish nation, the indivisibility of the country, the Republic, and democracy; to ensure the welfare, peace, and happiness of individuals and society; to strive to remove political, economic, and social obstacles that restrict the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals in a manner incompatible with the principles of the social state governed by the rule of law and justice; and to prepare the necessary conditions for the development of the material and spiritual existence of the human person.

7. Theme/Code: Power Relations and Silences / Center–Periphery Narratives – Grade 6, Book 1, p. 95

Based on Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's statements, what common characteristics may bring independent Turkic states closer to our country? Write your answer.

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As Mustafa Kemal Atatürk foresaw, Soviet Russia dissolved in 1991, and five independent Turkic republics sharing common ancestry, language, and religion were established. Our country became one of the first states to recognize the independence of these newly established Turkic republics. Turkey cooperated with and supported these Turkic states in many fields, including education, art, sport, and tourism. As a result of this cooperation, various institutions and organizations were established.

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