

Euclides

NewsLetter 4

THE EXPERIMENTATION PHASE

THE CASES OF:

Bulgaria *Centre for Educational Initiatives Association, CEI;
Department of Information and In-Service Training of Teachers –
DIUU.*

Cyprus *IMCS Intercollege Ltd, University of Nicosia.*

Italy *Centro Studi e Formazione Villa Montesca; Province of
Perugia; University of Perugia, SSIS Umbria.*

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THE CASES OF BULGARIA

Centre for Educational Initiatives

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DIUU.

The experimentation phase of EUCLIDES project started in Mid-March 2009 in Bulgaria. Till the end of May 2009 four Bulgarian schools were involved in experimentation schedule: 62 students from Sofia (two schools), Brezovo and Karlovo and their teachers took part in experimentation activities. The age profile of the students covered the age between 13 and 18 years. Involved teachers were specialist in Biology (1), in Geography (3) and in ICT (4). The experimentation phase was organized by Bulgarian partners in EUCLIDES project Sofia University DIITT and CEI.

They supported the smooth organization of the experimentation through couple of workshops for participants and a lot of individual consultations with teachers. The main goal of these activities was to explain well the experimented methodology, project tools and organization of work.

EUCLIDES as a project operates with a number of key concepts, namely: learning team centred model, problem based learning model, collaborative method and constructivist method. These educational instruments are viewed as essential for the creation of new learning strategies in the field of Natural Sciences teaching. They are based on the collaborative method and the problem based learning model through the application of ICT. In combination with them, the learning team centred model has the potential for an effective open distance learning platform.

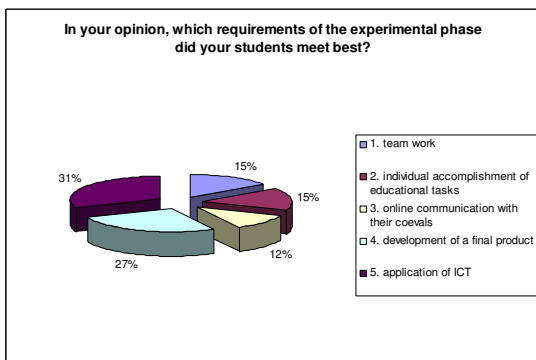
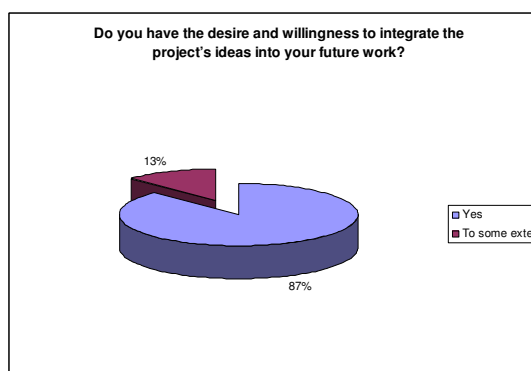
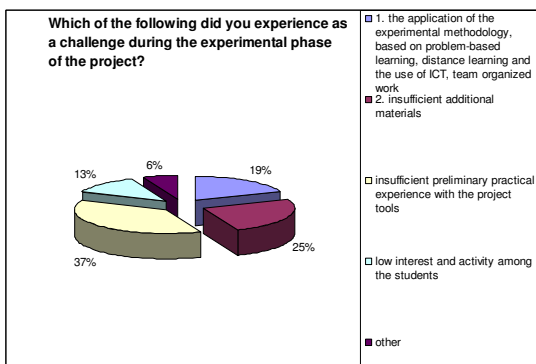
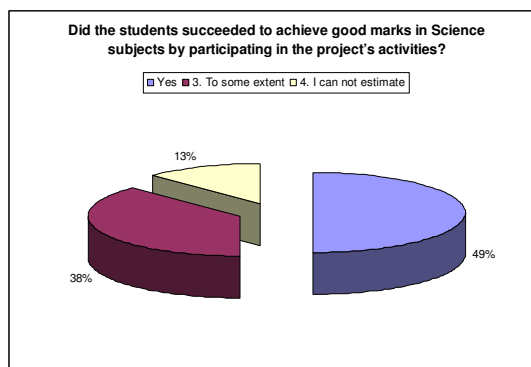
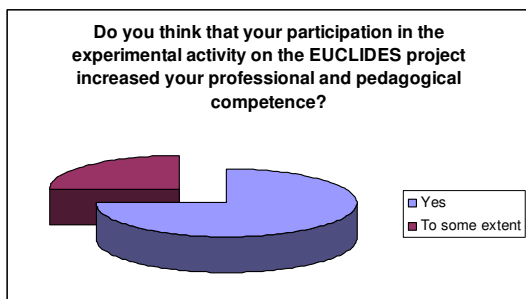
Inspired by this didactical methodology every school involved in the experimentation formed their teams and started to develop a group project related to specific topic in two huge areas: "Climate changes" and "Conservation of the natural resources". Teams choose different forms for their final products like Power Point Presentations, short movies (video clips) or web-site where students could share their research, conclusions and their care for the planet Earth.

Half of teachers expressed opinion that their students made good results in Sciences classes due to their participation in the experimentation work. 75% of teachers responded that their participation in the experimentation phase was positive experience and they increased their professional competences. For 25% this increase was "to some extent". According to their answers the main difficulties or challenges for them were:

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Results from survey with teachers



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THE EXPERIMENTATION PHASE THE CASES OF CYPRUS

IMCS Intercollege Ltd, University of Nicosia.

This newsletter briefly reports on the experimentation phase of the project Euclides carried out at Intercollege/University of Nicosia, Cyprus. Further details can be found in the National Report.

The experimentation phase at Intercollege/University of Nicosia and, in order to carry out it, we created a new class during the Summer session of Intercollege/University of Nicosia, namely Environment and the Society. The teacher was Ms Marilena Papastavrou. Twenty five students registered in the class and participated in the project experimentation during the months of June-July 2009. The teachers and the students were briefed about the project by Drs Pouyioutas and Solomou. Training sessions took place in the computer labs and students familiarized themselves with the available resources. Students produced their work. Students actively participated through the platform, during the month of June, in many discussion forums, chatting and other interactive activities.

Feedback regarding the didactic methodology and the platform was collected through focus groups with the teachers and the students, following the guidelines and documents supplied by the project coordinator. Furthermore, a discussion group was created soliciting student feedback. Details about the feedback can be found in the National Report. Herein we just highlight very briefly the fact that both students and teachers found the didactic methodology and the platform a pleasant, useful and interesting experience. The e-learning portal presented an innovative way of teaching/learning/interacting that was new to all. Both students and teachers enjoyed the experimentation process and expressed their interest in being engaged in similar projects and learn through similar platforms/environments.

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THE EXPERIMENTATION PHASE

THE CASES OF ITALY

*Centro Studi e Formazione Villa
Montesca;
Province of Perugia;
University of Perugia, SSIS
Umbria.*

The experimentation of the Euclides in Italy involved 5 schools, 9 classes for a total of 182 students e 12 teachers.

Several themes and their possible solutions were tackled and analysed through the PBL method at local, national and global level.

The students analysed themes such as: how to save water in my region, climate changes, kinematics. Many tackled bio-diversity: the disappearance of frogs, endangered flora, the extinction risk of bees, dangers for lakes, rivers and fish.

At the end of the school year the students presented their work and experience at the meeting "Gli studenti raccontano la scienza – l'esperienza del progetto europeo Euclides" held in Umbertide in June 9th, 2009.

During the meeting the project's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities were discussed:

Strengths:

Learning science can be fun and rewarding; The Euclides platform is very helpful for the application of the PBL method; through PBL students learn to investigate the same way as scientists, conducting real life science investigations.

Weakness:

The method is quite difficult to be implemented in class; Some teachers carried out experimental investigations more than PBL applications; Difficulties in the evaluation of the single students

Opportunities:

A new approach to teach and learn; Transfer the Euclides method to other disciplines; Groups can solve problems better than individuals.

