

High School Computer Clubs Project

Initial Phase: The Anatolian Tour

Interim Report



1 High School Computer Clubs Project

This project is a pilot run for a planned project to provide experimental extra-curricular education in problem analysis, problem solving and computer programming to high school and middle school students. It is hoped that this education will not only be useful in itself, but will also develop students' ability to respond creatively to the mainstream school curriculum.

2 The Pilot Project

The pilot project plan required us to establish links with 20 high schools of various types across Turkey and register around 400 students in a program that will run from February to May, culminating in a programming competition.

3 The Initial Phase

185 high schools were invited to participate and given only a week to respond. 43?? of them responded positively and 21 located in 6 different provinces were chosen to participate. The criteria for acceptance were

1. suitable facilities and availability of students for extra-curricular activities
2. geographical location close to other accepted schools.

The project team toured all the accepted schools (except one¹) in the week of 21-25 January. In each school a 1.5-2 hour seminar was followed by a 2 hour lab session with students who were planning to participate in the project.

4 Results of Initial Phase

All the seminars and lab sessions were carried out successfully. 1026 students attended the seminars along with 45 high school teachers. Both students and teachers were enthusiastic. 423 high school students have so far registered to take part in the project.

All of the project staff were delighted by the high intellectual level of the students we encountered. The material presented in the seminar and lab session is broadly similar to a first year course in our University. Students were often running ahead of the lecturers asking "what if?" questions that anticipated the next step in the presentation. One high point was the participation of some middle school students who managed to infiltrate one session and whose only complaint was that "they did not know yet what sine and cosine were", but managed to get a rough idea during the lab session and complete a project involving their use. We also remember fondly the enthusiastic participation of a group of "Snowdrop Girls" (Kardelen Kızları) ² at Private Akdeniz Palmiye High School.

¹Konya Doğan Hisar Anatolian High School had an all day power cut on the planned day of the seminar.

²Female students on scholarships granted to increase the numbers of girls in high schools

5 Next Phase

The project will now continue on-line with weekly problem sheets and regular video lessons, distributed via the web, web based guidance for teachers acting as contacts for the project, and a web site for collection of projects and interaction with the Istanbul base project team. The project will run for ten weeks and then the competition will take place. We will evaluate during this process whether or not further visits are required to these schools.

6 Personnel

The following Istanbul Bilgi University Staff took part in the initial tour.

- Chris Stephenson
- Pınar Hacıbeyoğlu
- Fatih Köksal
- Can Burak Çilingir
- Remzi Emre Başar
- Murat Mehmet
- Savaş Yıldırım
- Engin Hengirmen
- Aytek Debrelı
- Çağhan Özbek
- Çağıl Uluşahin

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