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[pp. 209-227]

Promoting educational success and countering early school leaving. Effects of authentic learning tasks in upper secondary education

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Abstract

This paper presents the results of the second year of the “NoOut 2” project for the prevention of early school leaving, carried out in upper secondary school classes. In its second year, the project focused on authentic learning strategies, aimed at stimulating the students’ interest and at promoting their active participation. The hypothesis of the research is that through active and participatory learning, fostered by the use of authentic learning tasks, it is possible to increase motivation and a sense of self-efficacy, to develop competences, skills and study strategies and, consequently, to promote educational success, which is a crucial factor in decreasing the probability of dropping out. The test used to detect the possible effects of the interventions is AMOS (in its 8-15 version for first-year classes), which allows to assess meta-cognitive, strategic, emotional-motivational and cognitive factors.

Results in the experimental groups show a significant increase in both the strategic and motivational dimension related to studying, in both class levels; there is also an increase of the cognitive dimension (results of the study test) in first-year classes.

Keywords: School drop-out, Authentic tasks, Educational Success, Motivation, AMOS.