

Minutes of the International CertiLingua® Annual Conference

11 April – 12 April 2011 in Berlin

Robert-Jungk-Oberschule

Participants: see attachment 1

11 April 2011

Welcoming Words

Mrs Göttel-Dauber, the CertiLingua country representative of Berlin, officially opens the annual conference at the Robert-Jungk-Oberschule in Berlin.

Mr Knaack, the school's principal, welcomes the guests and provides a basic outline of the educational work of the Robert-Jungk-Oberschule. The school is an official European school with 2 classes per year group taught in German and Polish and the school's diplomas, either after year 10 or the A-levels, are mutually accepted in Poland and Germany.

Mr Czarnecki, the representative of the European Commission in Germany, welcomes the participants of the international conference and delivers his greetings on behalf of the European Commission. The European Commissioner for Multilingualism follows the activities of the CertiLingua network with great interest (full text of Mr Czarnecki's statement, cf. attachment 2).

Presentation of the international steering group

In the name of the international CertiLingua steering group Mrs Rönneper welcomes the conference participants, introduces the Czech Republic as a new partner country, before commencing her opening presentation.

At the moment 17 partner countries (the Czech Republic as a new member included) are part of the international CertiLingua network. Europe-wide 132 schools are accredited and 414 students were awarded the label in 2010.

Since the last annual conference 2010 in Eupen/ Belgium further advancements have been made:

- The label was presented to the European Commission in July 2010. They regard CertiLingua as being entirely in line with their multilingualism policy.

- Official letters were sent to the ministries of the partner countries thanking them for their contributions.
- In March letters of invitation were sent to the European countries not yet taking part in CertiLingua inviting them to the annual conference.
- Estonia followed this invitation. Mr Tender attended the conference as an official representative of the Ministry of Education and Science of Estonia.
- Additional countries declared their interest in the label and named their representatives in order to establish a closer cooperation
- CertiLingua was officially registered as a Community Trademark in February 2011.
- Several new partners (like the Universities of Cologne and Erfurt or L'Oréal) have been won with a total of 78 partners now.

Mrs Rönneper thanks the partner countries for having provided extensive feedback for the evaluation report 2010 and continues her presentation by giving an outline of the positive effects the label has on school development.

- CertiLingua helps to foster and consolidate language learning.
 - o The range of languages offered at schools has been broadened.
 - o The learning of languages is more often continued in upper secondary.
- CertiLingua helps to promote and diversify CLIL learning opportunities
 - o The range of subjects taught in a foreign language has been broadened, particularly with English as a working language.
 - o The range of languages used as a working language in CLIL courses has been broadened, with courses taking place in French, Spanish, Italian, Czech, Russian and German.
 - o CLIL learning opportunities have been made more sustainable with modules being turned into continuous courses.
- CertiLingua Schools report that
 - o Students regard the label as an incentive
 - o Students tend to use their school's learning opportunities more extensively

- The schools' European profile is strengthened in general

The Power Point used for the report of the international steering group can be found in the appendix (cf. attachment 3).

Reports from the Partner Countries

Austria

In Austria there are currently 6 CertiLingua schools with 115 candidates of which only 10-12% will finally receive the label.

Efforts are made to develop the profile of CertiLingua within the Austrian educational system and the letter from the Ministry of Education of North Rhine-Westphalia has helped to raise the awareness for the label in the Austrian ministry of education.

The Certilingua schools report about the following positive effects:

- CertiLingua provides motivation for students to perform well
- Candidates enjoy a high recognition
- Prestige is added to language departments
- Schools offer more bilingual courses
- Parents become increasingly aware of the label.

The following needs are named:

- Better recognition on a European scale should be achieved.
- School to school networking should be improved.
- School coordinators should be supported and an international school coordinator conference is suggested.

New partners have been won in Austria, the WKO, the University of Linz and the LCCI.

France

CertiLingua in France is a programme at 6 schools with a European profile. At these schools German and English are obligatory foreign languages.

The academies of Lille, Besançon, Nancy und Metz are involved in the programme. An evaluation is due in 2012, but the prospects for a continuation and expansion after 2012 are regarded as good.

German Länder

Berlin

In Berlin 6 schools are accredited CertiLingua schools. The first 16 labels were awarded in 2010.

The University of Berlin (*Freie Universität Berlin*) has been won as a new partner.

Brandenburg

In Brandenburg one school with a European profile serves as a role model and contact institution for future CertiLingua schools. Two students were awarded the label in 2010 underlining the high standards set by the label.

Hesse

Currently 21 schools are participating. Last year 80 students and this year 78 students (65 female/ 13 male) from 19 schools were awarded the label.

Particular attention is given to questions of quality control and project documentations are scrutinized in a peer evaluation process.

The positive effects named in the opening report can be confirmed by Hesse. Improvement is suggested as far as *brand recognition* is concerned.

Lower Saxony

In Lower-Saxony the letter from North Rhine-Westphalia has also helped to raise the awareness for the label in the ministry of education. The number of CertiLingua schools could be raised to 15 in contrast to 13 in 2010.

Tremendous efforts have been undertaken to win new partners with about 80 letters being written to institutions, companies and universities.

Mecklenburg Western Pomerania

The establishment of CertiLingua schools in Mecklenburg - Western Pomerania has long been hindered by questions of general school development.

In the last year 2 schools were accredited for the first time.

North Rhine-Westphalia

Currently 54 schools are accredited CertiLingua schools, among them 5 vocational schools. 192 labels were awarded in 2010.

The following measures are pointed out as they have been very helpful in securing the label's requirements and quality control:

- A system of peer evaluation for the project documentations. Under the supervision of the educational authorities the school coordinators present the project documentations of their students to a group of regional school coordinators.
- A high level of transparency, for example achieved by project documentations being displayed at the annual awarding ceremonies.
- An educational policy that facilitates the introduction of bilingual modules and courses also in the upper secondary level.

Rhineland - Palatinate

3 new schools were accredited, adding up to 10 schools on the whole.

Last year 90 students at 7 schools were awarded the label. Generally, about 5% of the students taking their A-levels at the respective schools receive the label which underlines the high standard and the outstanding overall competences of these students.

Saxony

The 7 CertiLingua schools in Saxony offer 5 different CLIL subjects. Among these schools 6 languages are on offer: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Czech and Russian.

Thuringia

There are 4 CertiLingua schools, 3 of which awarded a total of 37 labels last year.

An account is given about one of the CertiLingua schools which offers Chinese and Arabic in addition to many other modern foreign languages. Even at this outstanding school with a long tradition in language learning and CLIL, CertiLingua is regarded "as a plus".

German schools abroad - German school Helsinki

The school awarded the CertiLingua Label to 5 students in 2010. Several students of the school take part in the Model United Nations Program in order to fulfil the requirements for the CertiLingua project.

The school is explicitly looking for partner schools abroad. A first contact has been established with the German school in Paris. The German School Helsinki will host the next annual CertiLingua conference.

Italy - Region of Lombardy

Italy joined CertiLingua in 2009 with initially 2 schools. 8 were awarded in 2009, 4 in 2010. Due to changes in the school policy the number of CertiLingua schools could be increased to 17 in the year 2011.

It has become compulsory for students at the upper secondary level to learn at least one subject in a foreign language in their last year prior to the A-levels. For schools with a language focus two subjects for the last three years prior to the A-levels are compulsory.

An awarding ceremony for 2011 is planned at Milan.

After the reports from the partner countries the conference participants divide up into the following working groups:

Workshop 1 – Intercultural Competences – Project Documentation

(moderation: Franz Mittendorfer, Gisella Langé)

Workshop 2 – Public Recognition of the Label

(moderation: Henny Rönneper)

Workshop 3 – CertiLingua Junior / Feedback Process

(moderation: Hartmut Ebke, Chantal Junot)

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The second day of the conference starts with a presentation by Dr. Eike Thürmann on language sensitivity in bilingual education, stressing the idea of language learning across the curriculum.

The presentation is enclosed in the appendix (cf. attachment 4).

Presentation of results from the working groups and voting procedure

The working group moderators present the results of the working groups and votes are taken on the issues mentioned below.

Belgium (absent), the Netherlands (absent) and Finland (absent) have in advance transferred their voting rights to Henny Rönneper, chairwoman of the international steering group.

Working group 1 – European competences/ project documentations

The working group suggests making the declaration of independent work obligatory for the students' project documentations. The declaration, document 2011-15, can be found in the appendix (cf. attachment 5).

The proposal is accepted unanimously.

The working group further suggests to request the students to authorize the publication of their project documentation in order to make them available for scientific research and for the CertiLingua Network. The declaration, document 2011-16, can be found in the appendix (cf. attachment 6).

The proposal is accepted unanimously.

The working group recommends the following documents to schools and students as orientation for the assessment of the European/ international competences:

- European Language Portfolio (ELP)
- Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE)
- Framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures (FrePA) (French: CARAP, German: REPA)
- Common Framework of Europe Competences (CFEC)

This recommendation will be included into the official document 2011-04 "Measures of quality control: European and international competences". (cf. attachment 7)

The proposal is accepted unanimously.

It is pointed out that the question of assessing European / International Competences is an issue that requires further discussion and should therefore be made a key issue at the next annual conference.

The guidelines and question for the project documentation from North Rhine-Westphalia are suggested for further consideration in order to be discussed in Helsinki in more detail.

The report from Mr. Hoffmann from the CCLL project has been regarded beneficial by the working group. A further cooperation with the programme is advised.

Additional information can be found on: www.ccll-eu.de

Working group 2 – Public recognition

The working group stresses the common vision of a label of excellence. The group presents a list of ideas of how to improve and promote the label's public recognition. This list can be found in the appendix (cf. attachment 8).

It is underlined that enhancing public recognition is a process of many little steps that all members of the network are invited to contribute to.

The following votes are taken:

1. The working group suggests to add a text that stresses the international character and the ministerial authorization of the label to the certificate. The corresponding document 2011-10 can be found in the attachment (cf. attachment 9).

The proposal is accepted unanimously.

2. It is suggested to add the ministry's logo to the certificate if there are no legal objections in the partner countries.

The proposal is accepted unanimously.

It is noted that the school logo has always been on the CertiLingua certificate. This is not going to be changed. The Logo of the ministries serve as an additional feature.

3. LTS Ltd. (<http://www.de.etsglobal.org/germany/>) has been won as a new partner and has proposed to organize an international study and job fair for CertiLingua applicants. In order to make this fair easily accessible to all CertiLingua award holders and applicants throughout Europe it is suggested to be organized virtually on the internet.

The proposal is accepted unanimously.

Working group 3 – Junior CertiLingua

Prof. Ebke summarizes the difficulties the network has had in finding a common ground for the establishment of a Junior label.

In the name of the international steering group he will apply for a two-year project at the ECML in Graz in the context of which the details of such a label shall be discussed and its feasibility be scrutinized in more detail. France, Italy, Finland and Germany will cooperate in this project. All countries interested in a CertiLingua Junior Label are cordially welcome to contribute to the project.

The working group suggests several changes in the feedback forms for schools and countries (documents 2011-13 and 2011-14). The changes have been suggested by the International Steering group and are regarded necessary in order to synchronize the feedback forms and to record the number of CertiLingua award holders in various categories. The suggested changes can be traced in the respective documents in the appendix and are highlighted (cf. attachments 10 and 11).

All changes are accepted unanimously.

It is conceded that next year's feedback from the schools will be provided online, if the technical means will be available.

Report from a CertiLingua school

To get an authentic idea for the achievements of CertiLingua students, 6 students from a CertiLingua school, the Romain-Rolland Gymnasium Berlin, were invited by Mrs. Göttel-Dauber to the conference. Mrs. Nieschalk, the school's CertiLingua coordinator, reports on the benefits the CertiLingua Label has for students and the school likewise.

The students' presentations about their CertiLingua face-to-face project are delivered in Italian, French and English. They heavily underline both, the outstanding linguistic capacities of CertiLingua students and their ability to act internationally as well as their impressive personalities.

Mrs. Rönneper pays the students a tremendous compliment and thanks Mrs. Nieschalk for her rewarding work.

End of the conference

On behalf of the international steering group Mrs Rönneper thanks Mrs Göttel-Dauber for her hospitality and the smooth organization of the annual conference.

Mrs Kiel invites all participants to the next annual conference from **6 – 7 September 2012 in Helsinki.**