

Minutes of the 11th International CertiLingua Annual Conference

venue: Hotel Europaa, Tallinn / Estonia

DAY 1

Welcoming Words

Piret Kärtner, Head of the Language Policy Department of the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, welcomes the participants in Tallinn.

She expresses her pleasure to host this year's Annual Conference and stresses the importance of foreign language learning in the Estonian school system. In this respect, she underlines the importance of CertiLingua as an incentive for students to learn more than one foreign language on a high level and to use these in the context of international exchange programs. CertiLingua is a catalyst for these aspects and therefore plays an important role in the ministry's efforts to further strengthen language learning and international relations.

Dr. Beatrice Schmitz welcomes the participants as chairwoman of the International Steering Group and expresses her particular thanks to Pille Põiklik for hosting this year's conference in Tallinn. She outlines the conference design and explains the function of the Annual Conference as the only place for the Member States to agree on binding decisions for the network and to further shape and develop the CertiLingua Label of Excellence.

She also points out the role of the International Steering Group and welcomes its members: Belinda Steinhuber from Austria, Prof. Hartmut Ebke from Germany, Stefanie Palm from the German-speaking community in Belgium, Gisella Langé from Italy and Carine Chancelade from France.

Unfortunately, not all representatives of the CertiLingua Member States had the chance to come to Tallinn this year, but Dr. Schmitz is happy to personally welcome Dr. Marie Černíková from the Czech Republic, Pille Põiklik from Estonia, Alexandra Brodowy from Hesse, Jens Bolhöfer from Lower Saxony, Dr. Lothar Oebel from Rhineland Palatinate and Dr. Elke Ehrlich from Saxony.

Since the feedback for 2017 is still pending, Dr. Schmitz presents the recent developments of the label based on the data of 2016.

While number of schools has grown again and has reached 319 schools throughout Europe, the number of labels awarded has stagnated. This aspect should be analyzed in depth to successfully meet the challenges the label is facing. A further aspect is that 70 % of the award holders are female, which raises the question of how the label can be made more attractive for males, or the fact that only approximately 75 % of the CertiLingua Schools actually award labels each year. This means that the question of counseling seems to be a major issue to be addressed in order to further more regular and continuous certification of students.

Despite these challenges, CertiLingua can be seen as a catalyst for school development. It can be observed that CertiLingua Schools excel in offering

- a large number of foreign languages
- a large numbers of bilingual subjects
- a large number of working languages in bilingual classes

These developments need to be underlined, since the range of foreign languages and bilingual subjects offered at the networks' schools is unparalleled.

To evaluate these positive developments better and to further develop the Label of Excellence, the feedback procedures should be reconsidered.

A more manageable feedback procedure is of key importance also, because CertiLingua works without a budget and without a back office. Evaluating inconsistent or incomplete feedback does not provide sufficient insights as a basis for the label's further development.

As a first step into this direction a new format for the reports from the Member States has been developed for this year's conference that is intended to focus more on current successes and challenges in the Member States, as Tanja Rennecke explains after having welcomed the participants as well.

AUSTRIA (Belinda Steinhuber)

The need is felt to highlight the value of CertiLingua and set it apart from many other certificates available. The value for students and the value for schools needs to be explained better, in particular, since students and schools need to make an extra effort for CertiLingua. A third aspect to be targeted is the public recognition of the Label of Excellence.

Belinda Steinhuber stresses the fact that the success of CertiLingua hinges to a large degree on people's commitment and enthusiasm.

In Austria it has become more difficult to reach higher levels of language competences in a second foreign language due to changes in the national curriculum and this aspect needs to be tackled since a second foreign language is considered a vital competence in a united Europe. CertiLingua helps to accentuate this need and encourages students to continue their foreign language learning.

BELGIUM/ German-speaking community (Stephanie Palm)

There is one CertiLingua School in the German-speaking community in Belgium, but one more is likely to join. It is intended to win all eight potential schools for the label of excellence.

It is pointed out that the university of Maastricht accepts CertiLingua instead of compulsory language entry exams and planned to intensify the collaboration with Belgian universities.

CZECH REPUBLIC (Dr. Marie Černíková)

Due to national requirements lower than those of CertiLingua in the second foreign language - B1 instead of B2 of the CEFR -, the label is facing great challenges in the Czech Republic. It is suggested to reconsider this issue internationally.

Contacts have been established to universities and it is reported that some students have been able to use their CertiLingua Certificates when entering university.

ESTONIA (Pille Põiklik)

Following the discussion in Linz, it has become clear that the mandatory research paper students have to write is not compatible with the CertiLingua Project Documentation and schools have been encouraged to find other ways of combining mandatory course work with the Project Documentation in order not to decrease the

label's attractiveness by creating too big of an additional workload for CertiLingua students. More schools are to be recruited in the following years.

HESSE (Alexandra Brodowy)

One success in Hesse has been that there is an increased interest in CertiLingua from vocational and technical schools.

A challenge is seen in the additional work required for the Project Documentation and in the standards it aims at. Therefore, a conference is being planned for CertiLingua Tutors in Hesse to gain a common understanding of the Project Documentation and its requirements.

LOWER SAXONY (Jens Bolhöfer)

Due to a major school reform in Lower Saxony, CertiLingua has recently shifted out of focus to a certain degree. Nevertheless, an initiative has been begun to further qualify teachers in bilingual education and thus to further foster CLIL teaching in Lower Saxony. Headmasters are encouraged to send their staff to these courses. This, it is hoped, will also strengthen CertiLingua and enable more schools to participate in the long run.

A number of international companies and universities are members of the CertiLingua Supporters and it is planned to contact these once again in order to make sure that the label is still known there and award holders are acknowledged by them as well.

BREMEN (feedback handed in advance and presented by Tanja Rennecke)

Due to restructuring and financial cuts, it is extremely difficult to maintain the label in Bremen. Therefore it is regarded as a challenge to keep the label alive in Bremen.

Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (feedback handed in advance and presented by Tanja Rennecke) It is seen as a challenge to further improve networking between schools.

North Rhine-Westphalia (Tanja Rennecke)

Last year, the annual school convention in North Rhine-Westphalia focused on the Project Documentation, after this had been the focus at the Annual Conference 2016

in Linz. The idea and intention of the Project Documentation was further clarified and shaped there. Standards were discussed and uncertainties were reduced. The question of counseling students with their Project Documentation was touched as well and will be the main focus of the CertiLingua School Convention in 2017.

A challenge is seen in further strengthening the label in times where national baccalaureate regulations put a lot of requirements on students that are not always directly compatible with CertiLingua which means that students really need to be convinced “to go the extra mile” for the Label of Excellence.

RHINELAND PALATINATE (Dr. Lothar Oebel)

As pointed out by Dr. Lothar Oebel there are many challenges that could be named, such as the acceptance of CertiLingua at universities and the competition with other, better-known labels. It has also been observed that the number of students varies from year to year, so that counseling and the accentuation of the label’s importance seem to be important questions.

SAXONY (Rüdiger Möller)

Following the Annual Conference in Linz, meetings with CertiLingua coordinators were held to promote a common understanding of the CertiLingua Project Documentation.

It is pointed out that there is a variety of CertiLingua schools that focus on different languages. Schools close to the Czech or Polish border, for example, offer these neighboring languages respectively. The variety of languages and the number of 41 labels awarded at the 10 CertiLingua Schools in Saxony is regarded as a big success.

It is felt, though, that the label’s recognition by universities is still a major challenge to be faced.

THURINGIA (Anne Schulz)

Speaking as a teacher, Anne Schulz stresses the motivational benefits of meeting other CertiLingua coordinators in NRW or meeting other members of the CertiLingua Network at the Annual Conference. This really helps her to motivate her students as well.

The number of CertiLingua schools is not likely to increase in Thuringia, since very few schools provide the learning opportunities necessary to attain the label.

In Thuringia, CertiLingua competes with other qualifications such as the *Latinum*, a certificate of advanced Latin skills.

It is planned to further promote networking by contacting the Chambers of Commerce as well as other CertiLingua Supporters.

FRANCE (Carine Chancelade)

Lille is the main academy for CertiLingua in France. The diversity of languages taught there and the high levels of competence speak for themselves.

In addition to the 31 CertiLingua Schools 8 vocational schools were won. Not only English and German, but also Spanish and Italian are taught. A good balance of private and public schools has been reached, schools cooperate with each other and teamwork is seen as a vital key for the success of CertiLingua in France. Regular meetings are held and are felt to be very helpful. The participation in Erasmus⁺ programmes has also helped to safeguard quality.

The increased support of the national ministry of education has also supported the label's promotion in France. The label's visibility has been increased by its display on the national ministry's homepage as well.

ITALY (Gisella Langé)

A national CertiLingua conference of all Italian regions was held in Rome which really motivated all participants to keep the label alive. The shared experience sparked new enthusiasm to keep promoting the label at schools.

The high number of certificates is pointed out as a major success. English, Spanish, French and German are well established as foreign languages. However, the Project Documentation needs to be developed further and a challenge is seen in speeding up the certification process which is centralized - all Project Documentations are checked in Rome - and currently takes rather long.

School legislation has made it compulsory for all students in upper secondary to take a certain amount of bilingual classes, which has clearly helped CertiLingua.

In order to safeguard quality standards, international language certificates have been made a necessity for CertiLingua in Italy.

Another measure to improve and maintain standards in language and bilingual

education is teacher training, as well as early and consistent assessment of language competences with students starting in lower secondary. A standardized procedure (VERA) is to be used for that.

PERM (feedback handed in advance and presented by Tanja Rennecke)

The three schools in Perm face challenges in attaining B2 in the second foreign language. Another challenge is the realization and reflection of the international face-to-face projects.

SWEDEN (Karl-Heinz Schneider)

CertiLingua has led students to attain C1 and this is a real success with some of them now studying in Germany or France.

It is still a challenge to really implement CertiLingua nationwide in Sweden and an information campaign is planned for the future. Meeting all the formal criteria is still considered to be a challenge, though.

Dr. Beatrice Schmitz sums up that the challenges seem to be rather similar. Referring to the aspect of the label's public recognition, she points out that the new homepage provides space for the Member States to publish national documents and thus enables the Member States to further promote the label and increase its acceptance by the public.

The conference is then continued in the following three workshops:

Workshop 1: The Project Documentation – Video Combined Format

Beatrice Schmitz, Belinda Steinhuber and Carine Chancelade welcome the workshop participants. Beatrice Schmitz explains that the idea of a new format being added to the project documentation was introduced at one of the workshops in Linz. The idea has appealed to the Steering Group who, therefore, propose to establish a pilot phase. This new format will introduce oral communication as well as digital competencies to the CertiLingua label and is thus a step towards innovation. Beatrice Schmitz also stresses the possibility to attract more students to the label – especially

male students.

A lively discussion between the participants ensues that covers different aspects concerning the amount of language to be introduced, the length of the video/text, which part of the documentation can be substituted, the different formats possible (video diary, interview, silent parts in the video), the importance of an adequate topic and also questions concerning copyright and other legal issues.

The discussion leads to the following agreed recommendations:

The aim of the recommended pilot phase would be:

To find out what students would find attractive and would like to deal with!!!

- 1) All CertiLingua Standards are still valid – and not to be altered.
- 2) There has to be an adapted Checklist (to be agreed upon by the Steering Group).
- 3) There have to be guidelines that will set the frame for the piloting (to be agreed upon by the Steering Group).
- 4) The guidelines should be open and allow for diverse realizations of the new format.
- 5) Up to two parts of the documentation (motivation, realization, reflection) can be replaced by video
- 6) The written and video-version should contain enough “language-material” to demonstrate the B2 level! There should also be some text coherence and not only single sentences.
- 7) The video should not substitute text, but enhance the message concerning intercultural learning.
- 8) The documentation should be written/spoken in one language only.
- 9) There should be no separate assessment of the technical and the creative quality.

The workshop proposes the following vote to the Annual Conference 2017 in Tallinn:
“The International Conference agrees to pilot “project documentations with video-elements”.

Workshop 2: The CertiLingua Compendium

Hartmut Ebke, Gisella Langé, Stephanie Palm and Clemens Boppré welcome the workshop participants. In a general exchange on the question of public recognition of CertiLingua it is pointed out that the Label of Excellence is unique in its design, certifying language, European and international competences in an internationally recognised way.

Clemens Boppré briefly stresses the significance of the resolutions of the CertiLingua Annual Conference. They define the binding framework for all CertiLingua Member States and can only be put into force by a unanimous vote of all CertiLingua member state representatives at an Annual Conference. At present each resolution is a separate document, its resolution status is designated by an administrative number on the first page of the document, stating the year of the annual conference, on which it was passed, followed by a unique document number and optionally the document language (e.g. 2016-15 EN). The present structure can pose a challenge for those not yet familiar with the label's administrative structure. In order to make the documents more accessible the presentation of the documents on the CertiLingua homepage was revised following the Annual Conference 2015 in Düsseldorf. The homepage provides an addressee-oriented approach, facilitating quick and efficient access to the resolutions.

In the workshop it is proposed to develop the form of the resolutions, so that they are comprised in one document carrying the year of the last change within an Annual Conference as a comprehensive administrative number. The entire comprehensive document would have resolution status, making a unanimous vote of the CertiLingua Member Country Representatives prerequisite to any changes to the document. It is generally agreed that the development of the formal structure of the resolutions would simplify access and could be particularly useful for all involved in the administration of the label of excellence, be it in the ministries or in schools.

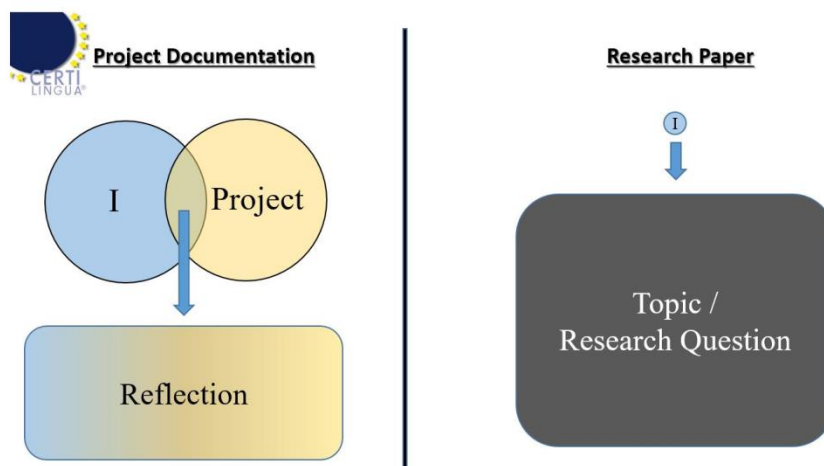
The structure of the compendium is discussed. It is agreed upon, that a topic-oriented approach should be taken to provide added value to the addressee-oriented approach, which can be found on the CertiLingua homepage.

A number of changes are proposed following the discussions of the Annual Conference 2016 in Linz:

1. Introductory passage to the *Guidelines for Project Documentations* (2012-18) and visualisation on the title page.

a. The CertiLingua Project Documentation provides proof of the development of intercultural competences in a face-to-face project. Central features of the documentation are the student's personal experiences in the face-to-face project and a personal reflection on his/her individual development. This clearly distinguishes the CertiLingua Project Documentation from any abstract research paper.

b.



c. Minor adaptation of the title: *Guidelines for Students on the CertiLingua Project Documentation*

2. Changes to the *Checklist for Project Documentations* (2013-20), i.e.

a. The wording of criterion 2.3 is adapted: The face-to-face encounter in the project is ~~regarded adequately~~ is covered sufficiently.

b. the following criteria are defined as exclusion criteria (grey background):

- i. The face-to-face encounter in the project is covered sufficiently.
 - ii. The origin and development of the project's idea are explained.
 - iii. The intercultural focus is linked to the realization of the project and is elaborated in the course of the project.
 - iv. The student explains to what extent the project has developed his/her European and international competences.
 - c. The order of the criteria is adapted so that the exclusion criteria are listed first in their respective categories.
 - d. Minor adaptation of the title: *Checklist for Assessing the CertiLingua Project Documentation*
3. The two documents *Statement of Independent Work* (2011-15) and *Permission for Publication* (2011-16) are made part of the *Guidelines for Project Documentations* (2012-18).
 4. A number of minor editorial changes are suggested to the Annual Conference that do not change the meaning of the documents.
 5. Illustrations: The drafts for a number of diagrams to illustrate the compendium are discussed, modified and agreed on.

The workshop proposes a vote on changes 1-4 at the Annual Conference 2017 in Tallinn and asks the Steering Group to place the illustrations (5) at appropriate positions in the document and prepare the new format/document to be voted on at the Annual Conference 2018 in Hanover.

Workshop 3: Questions and Answers

Tanja Rennecke and Martin Teuber welcome the workshop participants. The workshop members have the opportunity to name their points of interests. On the ground of these statements, the workshop centers around three main questions:

- a) Tutoring teachers in order to become good counselors for CertiLingua Students
- b) Proving the CEFR Level B2 in the second language if the national curriculum does not offer this level of reference
- c) Presenting CertiLingua at home and abroad, i.e. in the context of school meetings,

informing teachers, parents and students about the Label of Excellence, but also in the context of gaining new partners or new schools.

ad a)

The workshop members regard it as a challenge to tutor new teachers within the CertiLingua Network. In some countries there are only very few schools, in others teachers do not have the chance to meet each other, thus a constant and direct flow of information is rare. Often the only source of information is the CertiLingua website. To improve this situation the workshop members exchanged ideas of how to foster the quality of counseling and how to inform and guide teachers who have newly taken over the task of counseling CertiLingua Students.

The model of regional meetings in North-Rhine Westphalia and the Soest School Convention are recommended as examples of good practice. Teachers and officials from all CertiLingua Member States are invited to take part in the Soest School Convention. It offers a broad range of workshops and in particular offers workshops for CertiLingua newcomers. On top it allows to directly question members of the CertiLingua steering group.

Apart from that the workshop members recommend an option to be able to get into contact with people from CertiLingua directly. For this purpose a facebook site would be a good tool.

ad b)

In some European countries (e.g. Sweden) the standards in the national curricula for a second foreign language do not refer to reference level B2 of the CEFR. In such cases the students need to prove their B2 competence with the help of an internationally accredited language testing agency. The International Steering Group has agreed on a list of language testing agencies which considered reliable.

ad c)

The workshop members agree that it would be a great help to have a common CertiLingua PowerPoint presentation which allows all members to promote the Label of Excellence – be it in school, in official meetings or be it in the context of acquiring new partners. A first draft of such a PowerPoint is presented in the workshop and is regarded as a very suitable basis for further work. The group added some ideas of how to improve the presentation, such as highlighting even stronger the idea of

excellency and adding a slide which lists the benefits for teachers.

In the course of the workshop the members agreed to take the initiative and set up a facebook site which allows teachers from all CertiLingua Member States to join. The intention of the site is to inform each other about ideas of public recognition, upcoming events, and in particular to exchange ideas of how to help students to go abroad. The facebook site is not an official part of the CertiLingua Programme, but allows students and teachers to directly get into contact with each other.

The workshop members regard it as a great advantage that the site allows students to contact each other and find partner schools respectively partner students for an individual exchange – as this questions has come up at nearly every CertiLingua school.

Attachment: PowerPoint to be used for the promotion of the CertiLingua Label

DAY 2

Dr. Beatrice Schmitz welcomes the participants to the second day of the Annual Conference, thanks Pille Põiklik for the great evening and introduces Professor David Marsh as key note speaker.

Presentation by Professor Marsh

“Realizing Innovation: Stories from the Field”

Dr. Marsh underlines the importance of intercultural and linguistic competence as key factors in a globalized world. Research from different areas of science underlines the ability to act and think in more than one language as an empowerment and an important capacity in a globalized world. Therefore, CertiLingua and its aims are clearly in line with demands science and the language policy of the European Union regard as being absolutely significant.

Prof. Marsh also points out that digitalization can by now be regarded as a culture young people are immersed in worldwide and therefore it needs to be taken into account how this aspect can be duly represented in language learning and teaching and in the development of a label that aims at fostering such aspects.

In addition, he points out that young adults are very prone to “novelty-seeking, social engagement, emotional intensity & creative exploration”, aspects that feature prominently in the CertiLingua Project Documentation.

He sums up that CertiLingua thus really promotes such competences and fosters such capacities of young adults that are clearly indispensable in a globalized world.

Presentation of workshop results

Workshop 3 Q & A (Martin Teuber)

The idea has repeatedly been put forward to create a presentation that explains the programme and its advantages that can be used by all members of the CertiLingua Network in order to promote the label. A first draft of such a presentation is presented that focusses on

- the main idea of the label
- its compliance with European language policies
- its function as a catalyst for school development
- the network’s organization

The Steering Group is asked to further develop this idea on the basis of the workshop’s results.

Sanna Sopenen introduces the CertiLingua Teachers’ Network on Facebook as a new low profile platform to promote networking between colleagues, especially on the school level.

Workshop 1

Project Documentation with video elements (Belinda Steinhuber)

After a lively discussion an agreement was reached that there still needs to be a written part of the documentation, even if it contains video elements. However, it is seen as a major motivational benefit to open the format of the documentation to video elements. It is not to be disputed, though, that the quality demands of the CertiLingua Label of Excellence in general are to be thoroughly fulfilled by new formats of documentation.

In order to pilot this new format, some binding guidelines are needed that still leave enough room for students to explore it as well.

The question is to be discussed which aspect of the project documentation is best suited for the video part. It is also to be debated how level B2 can be duly represented in a video documentation. How long does the video part have to be? How much spoken output has to be produced? Which technical questions need to be addressed? How to make sure that technical expertise in editing does not replace the fundamental questions of content and language?

With all these questions in mind, counseling seems to attain an even more important role, since developing a suitable project is regarded as a key factor here in particular.

Workshop 2

Compendium of Documents (Hartmut Ebke & Clemens Boppré)

Hartmut Ebke reports that for many participants in the workshop motivating students is felt as a major challenge that needs to be dealt with.

He points out that CertiLingua does not guarantee automatic access to universities or international companies, but it is a label to be put to very good use in many situations in the world of work or study, for example when entering the Master Phase at university or when applying for internships at international companies.

Clemens Boppré presents the results on the work done on the Compendium of Documents.

He outlines the general idea of facilitating an understanding of the label of excellence on the one hand and of managing the network's documents on the other by providing a comprehensive version of all documents combined in one compendium.

He then goes on by suggesting a tripartite structure that focusses on three topics (general information on the label and its goals, the project documentation, and forms).

Moreover, examples of minor editorial changes are given.

Two editorial changes that also touch the documents' content are explained in detail.

The insertion of a short explanation and a diagram in the *Guidelines for Students' Project Documentations* are intended to make the idea of the project documentation clearer to students.

To stress the importance of certain aspects, changes in the *Checklist for Student's Project Documentations* are suggested as well.

Finally, Clemens Boppré provides an overview of some diagrams and illustrations that the workshop found useful in order to make the documents of the compendium and the label better understandable and that may be inserted at a later point.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE - Resolutions

Compendium of Documents

The idea of a first version of the compendium is unanimously accepted. A more elaborate version is to be presented at the next Annual Conference.

Feedback

PROPOSAL:

- A) *The International Steering Group proposes to collect the mandatory data every year to the International Conference. The optional data will be collected every 3 years from the Member States.*
- B) *The International Steering Group proposes to analyze and present only the mandatory data to the International Conference every year. The optional data will be attached to the minutes every 3 years.*
- C) *The due-date for the annual feedback from the Member States is 1st December of the corresponding year.*
- D) *For the in-depth evaluation in the year 2020 it is suggested to revise the Feedback Form for Member States.*

Proposal A accepted unanimously

Proposal B accepted unanimously

Proposal D accepted unanimously

Proposal C The due-date of the annual feedback is the end of the corresponding year.

Project Documentation vs. Abstract Research Paper

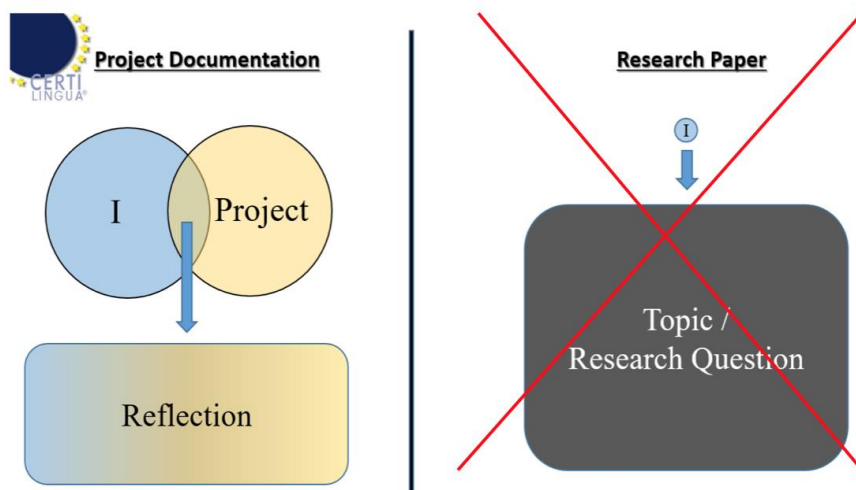
PROPOSAL:

The International Conference agrees on the draft resolutions for document 2012-18, 2011 – 15, and 2011 -16.

The insertion of the following text is accepted unanimously

The CertiLingua Project Documentation provides proof of the development of intercultural competences in a face-to-face project. Central features of the documentation are the student's personal experiences in the face-to-face project and a personal reflection on his/her individual development. This clearly distinguishes the CertiLingua Project Documentation from any abstract research paper.

The insertion of the following diagram is unanimously accepted.

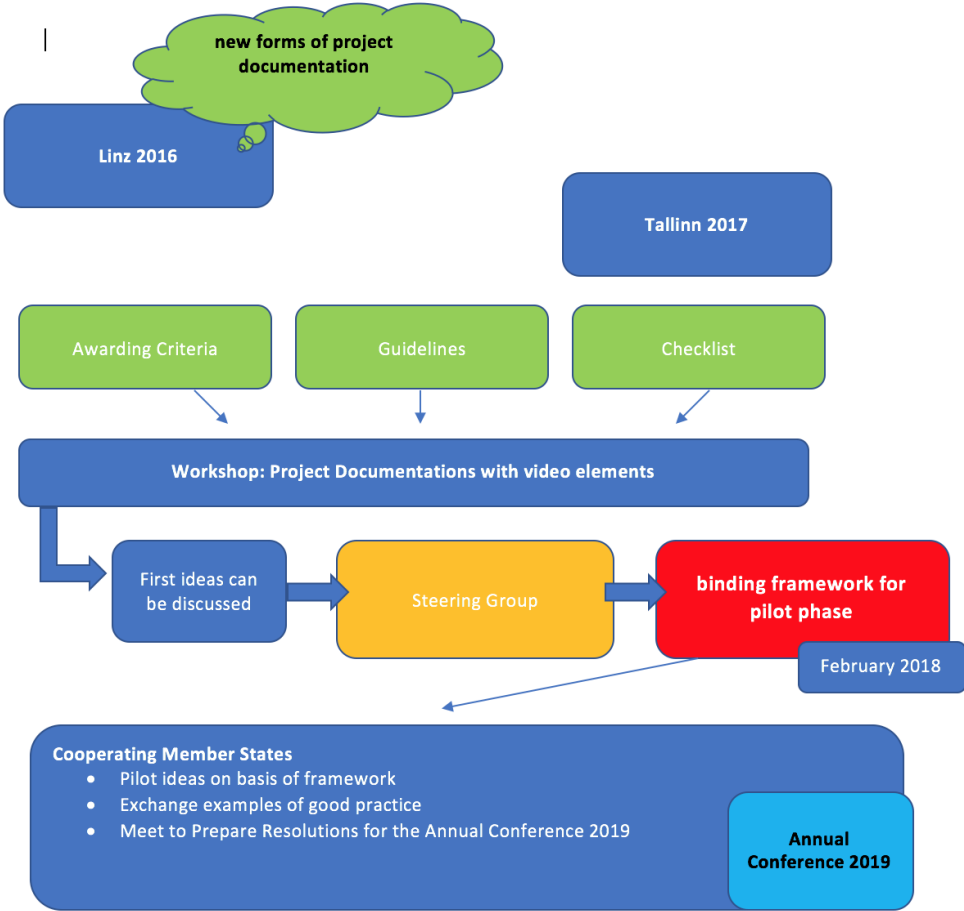


The deletion of documents 2011-15 & 2011-16 as single document is unanimously accepted. They remain part of Guidelines for Project Documentations.

Project Documentation with Video Elements

It is pointed out that the schools need to be contacted before signing up for the pilot phase and that the guidelines for such a phase should have been developed earlier. It is replied that this could not have been done without the consent of the Annual Conference and that signing up for the pilot phase entails no dangers, since Member States can still withdraw if they do not find any schools willing to participate.

The suggested procedure is accepted unanimously.



Checklist for the assessment of Project Documentations

The following changes are accepted unanimously.

- A) the suggested editorial changes (grey criteria),
- B) the positioning of the grey criteria at the top of each category,
- C) the change of “regarded adequately” into “covered sufficiently”,

Levels of CEFR on the CertiLingua Certificate

Jens Bolhöfer explains his idea of putting a description of the level C1 of the CEFR onto the CertiLingua Certificate, since not everyone in the world of work is familiar with the CEFR and many students reach the level C1, too.

Beatrice Schmitz explains the idea of deleting all description of the CEFR levels on the CertiLingua Certificate instead, since the CEFR is well-known and a reference to it might suffice.

It is pointed out that leaving out the CEFR descriptions would grant a more prominent position to “our own” standards, the CertiLingua Standards of Excellence in Intercultural Competences.

Pille Poiklik explains that the option is actually having no or three descriptions on the certificate, since, if people are unfamiliar with the CEFR, the levels B2, C1 and C2 would need to be provided.

No consensus can be reached and the CertiLingua Certificate is not to be changed.

End of the Annual Conference

Beatrice Schmitz closes this year’s annual conference. She thanks Pille Põiklik and her team for organizing a most hospitable event on behalf of the International Steering Group and all participants. She points out that once again the Annual Conference has turned out to be a place of lively debate and fruitful discussions. This year’s resolutions will surely help to steer the label into a successful future. As a label without any budget or official office the success of CertiLingua hinges on the efforts and the enthusiasm of all members of the CertiLingua family and the Annual Conference 2017 has once again provided proof of everybody’s commitment for the Label of Excellence. A spirit that will surely empower the network to tackle current and future challenges and to continue the success story of CertiLingua as a label that intends to connect people from different countries and cultures.

Annual Conference 2018

Jens Bolhöfer invites the participants to Hannover where the Annual Conference 2018 is going to convene from **13 to 14 September 2018**.