

## **Minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> International CertiLingua Annual Conference**

Online Meeting

20 & 21 September 2021

### **- DAY 1 -**

#### ***WELCOMING WORDS***

Silke Hinz, the chairwoman of the International Steering Group, welcomes the participants of this year's annual conference.

In her opening remarks she particularly stresses the fact that the label has continued to be successful, despite the Covid-pandemic and points out that

- the network responded quickly and adequately to this special situation,
- guidelines for temporarily necessary online encounters have helped schools to continue offering international projects,
- these guidelines are firmly based upon central CertiLingua goals, values and principles,
- the pandemic itself, as an international crisis, has underlined the central goal of the label to enable students to collaborate successfully with people from other cultures and languages.

She comments on how, with face-to-face encounters not being possible, digital tools have been used for international online projects, and points out the additional benefits that such tools, especially video-conferencing systems, can have when preparing, accompanying or evaluating future face-to-face projects. Whenever possible, face-to-face projects remain the gold standard, and a requirement, for CertiLingua and can only be replaced if international crises (like Covid-19) make them temporarily unfeasible.

Silke Hinz explicitly thanks the International Steering Group for their commitment to and ongoing support of the label without which these difficult times would not have been mastered so smoothly.

She also thanks the Representatives of the Member States for their efforts in their respective countries, which have also resulted in still relatively stable numbers that one might not have expected in view of the pandemic. It has to be taken into account, however, that many students who were awarded the label in the last year had already finished their projects by the onset of the Corona pandemic, so that a certain drop in numbers can be anticipated for the next two years.

## **REPORTS FROM THE MEMBER STATES**

A padlet was created to collect the main successes and main challenges the Member States are facing at the moment (cf. attached pdf-file).

While all Member States are suffering under Covid-19 conditions and while all Member States see it as an ongoing challenge to make CertiLingua better known among schools, universities and companies, the number of schools has remained mostly stable or even increased (Italy). Gisella Langé also reports that the network structures in Italy have been further improved and thanks to training courses and online meetings, a real CertiLingua community (national/ regional representatives and schools) has developed, leading to frequent and positive interactions in Italy, where the label's public recognition is promoted by awarding ceremonies with the participation of the label's partners, such as universities or companies.

Many member states also report that they **were able to further promote project documentations with audio-visual elements.**

### **FOSTERING CO-OPERATION WITHIN THE CERTILINGUA NETWORK BY THE EXAMPLE OF NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA (GERMANY) AND LOMBARDY (ITALY)**

Clelia Nebuloni (Liceo Galilei, Legnano/Milano) and Thomas Wegner (Wilhelm-Dörpfeld-Gymnasium, Wuppertal) report on an online webinar and an online project for schools that were conducted in spring 2021.

In February, an online webinar was organized by Gisella Langé and her team for the Italian schools that focused on project documentations with audio-visual elements. Martin Teuber and Thomas Wegner from North Rhine-Westphalia had been invited and were given an opportunity to speak at this webinar.

Since this international form of cooperation within the network was experienced as very invigorating by all participants and since all schools were suffering from the travel restrictions due to Covid-19, an online "partnership event" was launched between the region of Lombardy and schools under the supervision of the regional governments of Düsseldorf and Detmold in North Rhine-Westphalia.

Clelia Nebuloni, who accompanied and supported her students on the Italian side, provides a first-hand account of the success – and some minor challenges – of this project.

***(cf. presentation in the appendix)***

## **BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

Within smaller international breakout sessions, the chances and challenges of developing intercultural competences during Covid-19 are discussed and the workshop results are added to the *padlet* mentioned above.

In a plenary phase at the end, the idea is voiced, whether it would be possible to create a **separate CertiLingua space on the eTwinning platform** to further promote digital, and subsequent face-to-face, cooperation within the network.

It is also suggested to encourage **more vocational schools** to participate in the label.

The question is raised if the visibility of the participating schools on the website could be improved.

As for **fostering cooperation between CertiLingua schools**, it is mentioned that such cooperation is generally seen as very positive, since both partners seek cooperation with very **similar interests and a similar mindset**.

In this context, two basic approaches are discussed: an open-market-setting or a more regulated matching of schools.

## **- DAY 2 -**

The second day starts with a short video of one of Clelia Nebuloni's students briefly reporting on her international cooperation project which leads to the question addressed in this year's keynote talk:

### **KEYNOTE**

Catherine Jeanneau, head of the Language Learning Hub at the University of Limerick and a member of the ECML e-Lang project team gives a keynote speech with the title:

*"Learners as digital citizens, social actors and language users: Harnessing the possibilities of digital technology in the language classroom."*

After a short introduction to the ECML project "e-Lang" and the Erasmus+ project "Lingu@num", Catherine Jeanneau points to the connection between language learning and technology in view of the ubiquitous nature of technology amongst young people and the increased relevance it has been given as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. She discusses the two main concepts of "digital literacy" and "digital citizenship" and outlines their pedagogical implications with regard to real-world tasks and reflexive activities.

***(cf. attached pdf of Ms Jeanneau's talk)***

### ***Video elements in project documentations: Further experiences and results from the pilot phase***

In the ongoing pilot phase, several new videos were created by students in various member states. A short compilation of excerpts from videos whose creators had agreed to their use was shown to demonstrate the different approaches taken by the students.

Afterwards teachers from three member states reported on their experiences with advising students on doing a project documentation with audio-visual elements: Kati Bakradze (Tallinna Ühisgümnaasium, Tallin), Marjan Beckering (Gymnasium Fabritianum, Krefeld) and Brunella D'Ambra (I.I.S. "Pagano", Napoli). In the interviews conducted by Christian Balzer (Werner-Jaeger-Gymnasium, Nettetal) and Thomas Wegner (Wilhelm-Dörpfeld-Gymnasium, Wuppertal), they agreed that – while the individual experience naturally differed – project documentations with video elements are a worthwhile endeavour and an important contribution to the development of CertiLingua. This view was shared by the representatives of the member states who stressed the importance of seeing examples of videos and expressed their gratitude to the three teachers reporting.

### ***ANNUAL CONFERENCE – RESOLUTIONS***

The Representatives of the Members States not present had transferred their voting rights to the Chairwoman of the International Steering Group, Silke Hinz.

The Representatives of the Members States present take the following unanimous decisions:

#### **Election of the Steering Group (2021 – 2026)**

The following International Steering Group is elected:

<b>Member State</b>	<b>Representative</b>
<b>Austria</b>	<b>Belinda Steinhuber</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	<b>Ruth De Sy</b>
<b>Estonia</b>	<b>Pille Põiklik</b>
<b>France</b>	<b>Anna Pottier</b>
<b>Italy</b>	<b>Gisella Langé</b>
<b>North Rhine-Westphalia</b>	<b>Silke Hinz</b>

### **Project Documentations with audio-visual elements**

The Annual Conference agrees to extend the pilot phase for Project Documentations with audio-visual elements until 2023.

### **End of the Annual Conference 2021 and Annual Conference 2022**

Silke Hinz closes this year's Annual Conference by acknowledging the continued efforts of all participants.

It is hoped that a regular conference can convene in Strasbourg in September 2022.

It is suggested to find a date at the end of September.