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While this report is the result of a working relationship between the authors and Trinity, its contents were coordinated by Prof.ssa Biferale, and the various individual sections as follows:

**Foreword** – International examinations in the Italian school system: Nicoletta Biferale; Reasons for monitoring Trinity examinations in Italy: Claudia Beccheroni.

**Aims of the study** – Nicoletta Biferale.

**Results of the study** – Heads of schools: Marcella Binchi; Teachers: Marcella Binchi; Pupils: Nicoletta Biferale; Telephone interviews with teachers: Marcella Binchi.

**Conclusions** - Nicoletta Biferale

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## I. FOREWARD

### I - 1. International examinations in the Italian school system

International examinations were introduced into the Italian school system with the *Lingue 2000* project, which started in 1998 when it was limited to the second year of middle schools, and was extended the following year to cover the entire school system from infants up to the last year of the secondary school system.

We have to remember that the main aim of this innovative project was to reorganise foreign language curricula as a function of indications contained in the Common European Framework (CEF) by means of a continuous training path organised into learning modules/units (with a description of the specific aims and skills to be achieved) and which ended with the external validation of results.

The second aim, equally as important as the first, was that of having pupils achieve communication skills which were transparent and certifiable in at least two foreign languages so as to facilitate movement within and between the worlds of school, academia and employment (the minimum levels of competence to be reached were B2 for the first language and B1 for the second language introduced in the second year of the middle school).

In terms of timing two stages of the project can be identified where an evolution in the use of examinations has taken place contemporaneously:

- The first was from 1998 to 2002 and is in our opinion the most important since the *Lingue 2000* project received financing at the national level both for the reorganisation of courses in schools, and so as to certify the final outcome reached by pupils.
- The second, which is still in force, is where the the project is carried out and recourse to external examination boards is part of the autonomous decision-making each scholastic institution takes in order to make use of the overall finances destined for didactic activities and training. In short, the school decides, thanks to the fact that it is able to organise its didactic activities autonomously, how to use the funds received, what to offer its pupils, and whether or not to use external quality services, such as examination boards for the foreign language sector.

This transformation, affected as it is by financial considerations, could lead one to imagine that there would be a lessening of the weight and value which the *Lingue 2000* project at the time gave to descriptive certification of results achieved. It is however interesting to see that many schools have not since then stopped offering their pupils extra foreign language activities and, in particular, have maintained by now consolidated relationships with international examination boards in order to continue offering its interested pupils qualifications which can be used in Europe and are recognised in the professions.

At the present time reform of the school system has taken place due to the passing of Law 53/03 and has introduced important innovations concerning in particular the English language, which is now an obligatory subject for all pupils from the first year of primary school and establishes for language learning a profile of skills acquired at the end of a pupil's scholastic career based on the reference scale of the CEF.

If we compare the number of Trinity examinations taken in Italian schools between the year 2002 (*Lingue 2000* Project), 2003 (termination of relative financing) and 2005 (start of school reform in the primary middle schools) we note that there has been an

increase in the number of examinations held<sup>1</sup> (as shown moreover by the information supplied by heads of schools in our questionnaire).

This increase is particularly noticeable in the primary school where the new reform is now being applied: this leads us to assume that the fact that the discipline is an obligatory element in the ordinary school curriculum does not reduce the value of an external certification; on the contrary, the two activities (the didactic activity and the certification) increases in a directly proportional manner.

It will be furthermore interesting to note the effects that an extension of the reform into the middle school may bring about, where the decision to make use of external examination boards (for both English and other foreign languages) also has an effect in terms of the use to which certificates can eventually be put after pupils leave school and enter the world of work.

In this picture Trinity, just like other international organisations, at first within the *Lingue 2000* Project and now within a working relationship with scholastic institutions, continues to offer a number of services which in the past were provided for in the letters of agreement signed by the Minister of Education and the examination boards linked to the 4 foreign languages most widely used in Italy (English, French, Spanish and German)<sup>2</sup>: information/training activities in preparation for the examination, fees reduced in comparison to market prices, assistance to schools and teachers wanting to take part in the undertaking.

We believe that these support activities need to be encouraged by the examination board itself and that it would be equally stimulating if training activities related to practical assessment were to be planned in synergy with institutions/universities/research organisations/agencies. As analysis of questionnaires and interviews do in fact reveal, many teachers feel isolated in the supplementary task involving the preparation of their pupils by means of 'ad hoc' activities.

<sup>1</sup> The following grid shows the number of pupils certified and divided up according to the type of school.

Type of school N° of candidates by year	2002	2003	2004	2005
Elmentary/primary school	4.347	4.613	5.150	7.088
Comprehensive schools (elementary/middle)	14.349	15.653	16.900	18.978
Middle schools	16.974	16.166	18.226	20.676
Comprehensive secondary schools (upper)	10.159	9.608	10.217	10.909
Art institutes	188	238	195	283
Training institutes	1.900	1.905	2.287	2.063
Technical institutes	9.247	7.758	7.810	8.909
High schools	11.400	11.311	11.450	12.392
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>68.564</b>	<b>67.252</b>	<b>72.235</b>	<b>81.298</b>

<sup>2</sup> In January 2000 a letter of agreement was signed between the Minister of Education and 7 examination boards for the 4 most widely used foreign languages which established an agreement concerning the administration of examinations in schools together with support services to heads of schools, teachers and pupils. A second letter of agreement was signed in 2002 and extended participation to other boards able to certify specific language skills (specialised language). At the present time interested schools establish direct agreements with organisations offering guarantees required by both the aims of school training programmes and pupils' needs.

What experience have schools had from external certification and the *Lingue 2000* project up to the present time? What significance has it taken on within the system of formal education, given its considerable importance to judge from the number of pupils certified who want to increase their credits in years to come, and shown by the numbers in the notes and answers supplied in questionnaires by pupils?

In the first place one has to underline the fact that recourse to external certification is written into the logic of the *Lingue 2000* project that introduced it, and which therefore amounts to added value that is able to bring the school out of a self-referencing context and open it up to quality services that respond to new educational needs on a national and international scale. These needs increasingly demand a clear, descriptive and legible certification of credits one has acquired so as to be able to capitalize on them and transfer them to other contexts, possibly beyond one's country of origin and the place where one has studied. In this picture the obtaining of a recognised certificate of competence in the English language does not amount to disowning the importance of internal assessment, which is an obligatory and essential part of any scholastic path, but completes the process of assessment by means of a certificate which leaves a 'trace' of what has been produced. An examination leading to certification issued by the examination board is in fact useful as it clearly shows results achieved by the pupil in the 'here and now' and explicitly demonstrates what that pupil 'can do' by means of the language. As an assessment of production, unlike internal assessment which keeps a check on a pupil's evolution and the difficulties encountered, it is directly linked to the subject's 'performance' - with what the subject 'can' do<sup>3</sup>.

At the same time the experience helps one to become more aware of one's own results, and this awareness places one in a position where one is able to self-assess one's own abilities and improve those abilities during the course of a lifetime.

It is also interesting to note how the results of this collected data highlight the fact that Trinity examinations are considered by both teachers and pupils to be one of the ways in which descriptive and objective assessment can assess what a subject is effectively able to accomplish in a real situation.

Alongside the need to proceed with internal assessment teachers who use Trinity examinations therefore feel the need - linked to the ways in which society and the world of work are evolving - to award credits that are clear and transferable thanks to shared referencing.

The scholastic institution which chooses to introduce certification of English language skills for its own pupils shows sensitivity to needs that have arisen both beyond its own national borders and within the community itself.

From the strategy of Lisbon to the Commission Communication of July 2003 *Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity: a plan of action for 2004-2006* the importance of moving towards shared indicators is again restated so that the free circulation of students and workers does not remain a dead letter. In the sector of language learning the Common European Framework offers the natural base for development of this strategy. Examination boards in any case already refer to the descriptors on the global scale and take into consideration the need for 'legibility' and transparency.

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<sup>3</sup> One needs to remember here the difference between the two types of assessment according to the Framework: internal assessment can be defined as assessment of 'knowledge' and 'continuous' assessment encourages an approach centred on the person who is learning and flexibility in the teacher's role so as to sustain the learning process. External assessment on the other hand here falls more under the definition of 'accurate' and 'objective' assessment of 'performance'. For further information see the different types of assessment in 'Assessment', Chapter 9 of the CEF.

The Communication itself highlights the importance of shared ‘legibility’ in the certification of results and specifies that “... effective mechanisms are now requested by examination boards in order to regulate their use of the Framework’s scales”.

A new assessment culture is therefore being developed based upon the awareness that the awarding of recognised credits that can be capitalized is one of the most effective means the learner has for getting closer to education and training.

Schools taking part in the survey show they have heads of schools and language teachers who are aware of the need to offer modern and effective services to their pupils.

## I-2. Reasons for monitoring Trinity examinations in Italy - ac.yr. 2004-05

Trinity is an organisation which has always paid a lot of attention in the construction of its examinations to the ‘washback’ effect they inevitably have upon the teaching and learning that come before the examination itself.

Trinity creates exams precisely so as to facilitate positive and effective washback based upon performance requirements in which the language is used in real contexts of communication. This is why the examinations are productive and directly test the skills being assessed.

In order to avoid examinations being separated from training processes Trinity has invested considerable resources into the training of school staff, especially since 1997.

The main reasons behind the decision to monitor the impact and the effectiveness of its examinations in the Italian school system arise from these premises. The aims of the research conducted were both to verify the existence of a positive impact and to reflect upon the effectiveness of the service and the training being offered so as to be able to plan events that respond increasingly to users’ real needs.

From the start it was decided to entrust the development of the study and the reading of data to external experts. This led to the inclusion of variables based on more wide-ranging areas of interest within the school system, and guaranteed greater objectivity in the interpretation of results.

The decision to wait until the academic year 2004-05 was not casual. It was important to conduct the monitoring ‘at a distance’ from the *Lingue 2000* Project for at least two reasons:

1. the interest Trinity had in investigating a sample not influenced by the availability of ad hoc financing and precise guidelines;
2. the importance of conducting a survey aimed at assessing the real force of impact which the introduction of external certification had on teaching practice and training on offer in schools 2 years after the formal conclusion of the *Lingue 2000* Project.

For this reason the enquiry was limited to a specific sample of both middle and upper secondary schools that had regularly conducted exams for at least 3 consecutive academic years, including 2004-05, and therefore from 2002-03 - the year in which many regions had ended ad hoc financing for certification.

Many of the schools selected however have regularly held Trinity examination sessions uninterrupted since the academic year 1999- 2000, the year when the *Lingue 2000* Project started.

Monitoring was carried out in 4 regions (Lombardy, Lazio, Puglia and Sicily) so as to obtain a representative sample of various geographical areas and eventually be able to compare data.

512 schools were invited to take part, more or less equally divided between secondary middle and upper schools.

Type of school	Lazio	Lombardy	Puglia	Sicily	Overall total
<i>Middle schools</i>					
Comprehensive schools (elementary/middle)	43	35	20	30	<b>128</b>
Middle schools	36	26	38	21	<b>121</b>
<i>Upper schools</i>					
Art Institutes		1		1	<b>2</b>
Training institutes	5	7	4	5	<b>21</b>
Technical institutes	10	21	23	25	<b>79</b>
Training institutes for elementary school teachers	2	2	1	5	<b>10</b>
High schools	20	7	23	34	<b>84</b>
Comprehensive secondary schools (upper)	18	13	10	26	<b>67</b>
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>512</b>

Of these 35 % (176) answered the questionnaire.

Type of school	Lazio	Lombardy	Puglia	Sicily	Overall total
<i>Middle schools</i>					
Comprehensive schools (elementary/middle)	20	14	5	12	<b>51</b>
Middle schools	10	9	22	3	<b>44</b>
<i>Upper schools</i>					
Art institutes				1	<b>1</b>
Training institutes	1		1	1	<b>3</b>
Technical institutes	7	10	8	4	<b>29</b>
Training institutes for elementary school teachers	1	1		3	<b>5</b>
High schools	7	4	7	5	<b>23</b>
Comprehensive secondary schools (upper)	5	4	3	8	<b>20</b>
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>176</b>

Schools in the regions of Lazio, Lombardy and Puglia responded overall in very similar percentages, about 38%, while a markedly lower percentage of schools in Sicily responded (25%). If we separate data obtained from middle and upper schools, we see that 38,30% of the original sample contacted were middle schools, while upper schools amounted to 30,68%, which means that 54% of the actual responses obtained were from middle schools.

One of the main aims was to collect impressions while still fresh in their minds both from students and teachers and heads of schools. To this end the period selected for the administration of the questionnaires was from the 31<sup>st</sup> May to the 18<sup>th</sup> June so as to make sure that the majority of the schools had completed their examination

sessions (the period for examination sessions most requested by state schools is from the 1<sup>st</sup> May to the 10<sup>th</sup> June) and that students had not already gone on holiday.

We think that administering the questionnaires online was a determining factor in the success of the undertaking since it also led to considerable participation from pupils, bearing in mind the period of intense activity for schools between state exams and the end of the school year.

Obviously there was also the possibility of sending in questionnaires on paper, but not many schools opted for this.

To our great surprise the majority of teachers who filled in the questionnaire (161 out of 257) also made themselves available for further questioning by means of a telephone interview, notwithstanding the imminent summer holiday.

The limited amount of time available however meant that only 20% of the possible number available were contacted.

This data shows that teachers, pupils and heads of schools were not only very willing to take part in the study, despite their many other commitments, but they also appreciated being contacted and consulted.

### I - 3. Table showing samples used in the study

HEADS OF SCHOOLS	Lazio	Lombardy	Puglia	Sicily	Overall total
State or state-aided middle school	8	8	21	4	<b>41</b>
State or state-aided high school	6	4	4	9	<b>23</b>
State or state-aided technical institute	6	5	5	3	<b>19</b>
State or state-aided training institute	1	0	2	2	<b>5</b>
Comprehensive school	10	10	2	9	<b>31</b>
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>119</b>

TEACHERS	Lazio	Lombardy	Puglia	Sicily	Overall total
State or state-aided middle school	25	26	27	4	<b>82</b>
State or state-aided high school	16	11	11	21	<b>59</b>
State or state-aided technical institute	11	12	15	11	<b>49</b>
State or state-aided training institute	3	2	4	3	<b>12</b>
Comprehensive school	17	18	5	15	<b>55</b>
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>257</b>

STUDENTS	Lazio	Lombardy	Puglia	Sicily	Overall total
State or state-aided middle school	249	163	128	47	<b>587</b>
State or state-aided high school	68	19	32	70	<b>189</b>
State or state-aided technical institute	32	73	81	20	<b>206</b>
State or state-aided training institute	6	6	17	0	<b>29</b>
Comprehensive school	74	15	14	75	<b>178</b>
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>1189</b>

## II. AIMS OF THE STUDY

### II - 1. Defining the aims and phases of the study

The aim of the research was to enquire into the impact and effectiveness of the introduction of Trinity examinations into Italian secondary schools. Following many years of working with schools, Trinity felt the need to collect information related to how schools had used certification and to what extent this experience, where it had been adopted for at least three years, had influenced users' approach to the English language, teaching practice and assessment of results, relations between schools external quality services. Besides data of a quantitative and qualitative nature, obtained by means of systematic enquiry within the three reference groups (heads of schools, teachers, pupils), at the same time a qualitative analysis was conducted by 'subject' - selecting individual teachers in order to examine their personal experience and thereby identify personal attitudes.

In the following paragraph we will explain why these procedures and relative measures were adopted.

#### The phases of the study

Three distinct phases were identified for the survey:

- a try-out phase for questionnaires administered to heads of schools, teachers and pupils in 18 schools in Lazio and Tuscany who use Trinity examinations but were not included in the representative sample;
- a second phase, of a quantitative nature, concerned the administration of questionnaires aimed at the three units of enquiry: heads of schools, teachers and pupils;
- a third phase involving a more in-depth, quality-based enquiry, was conducted by means of a telephone interview with a limited number of teachers taken from among those who by means of the structured questionnaire had indicated their willingness to take part in it. The interview was also preceded by a try-out phase conducted among a small number of teachers.

In order to speed up the collection of data the questionnaires were made available on the Italy Trinity site (<http://www.trinitycollege.it/questionari/>) and were compiled by the end of June 2005 directly on line, naturally preceded by formal invitation sent to the heads of schools of the schools selected.

A letter inviting them to take part was sent to the heads of the selected 512 schools, as well as introducing them, along with the teachers of English and pupils, to the enquiry.

The cut-off date for filling in the 3 questionnaires was fixed for the end of June. This did not constitute an obstacle for the return of the data, despite the fact that it was located at a difficult time - at the end of the school year - and it did mean that the survey took on greater relevance as this was when most external examinations took place.

The 58 telephone interviews to teachers were conducted by the end of July 2005.

For the effective number of heads of schools, teachers and pupils who sent back the questionnaires, see the data in the table above.

## II - 2. Synopsis of the methodology used in the study

PHASE	AIM	METHOD	TARGET
<b>TRY OUT CONDUCTED ON HEADS OF SCHOOL, TEACHERS, PUPILS</b>	Analysis of the understanding of the <i>item</i> , review of questionnaire based on feed-back	Structured paper-based questionnaire send by courier	Selected heads of schools, teachers of English and pupils in the secondary school system (middle and upper)
<b>EXTENSIVE PHASE CONDUCTED ON HEADS OF SCHOOLS</b>	Analysis of the effect of external certification upon the school; weak/strong points of the experience	Structured online questionnaire to be filled in	All the heads of schools in the complete sample of secondary schools (middle and upper)
<b>EXTENSIVE PHASE CONDUCTED ON TEACHERS OF ENGLISH</b>	Measurement of the effectiveness and analysis of the use of external certification; weak/strong points of the experience	Structured online questionnaire to be filled in	All the English teachers in the complete sample of secondary schools (middle and upper) who took part in and/or are taking part in the organisation of Trinity examination sessions
<b>EXTENSIVE PHASE CONDUCTED ON PUPILS</b>	Measurement of the degree of approval of the experience; perception of change in teaching practice and the value of external certification	Structured online questionnaire to be filled in	All the pupils in the complete sample of secondary schools (middle and upper) who took and/or are taking Trinity examinations
<b>IN-DEPTH ENQUIRY CONDUCTED ON SAMPLE OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH</b>	In-depth personal enquiry into the attitudes and the opinions related to their own individual participation in Trinity external certification as well as that of their pupils	Semi-structured interviews on the phone (preceded by a try out phase conducted on a limited number of teachers)	58 of all those teachers of English who in the structured questionnaire of the extensive phase explicitly agreed to being interviewed

## II - 3. Procedures and instruments used

### The three structured questionnaires based on closed format questions

The first instrument used in the survey was a structured questionnaire based on closed format questions: a battery of items with limited answers (some of which were multiple choice) constructed on the basis of identification of the major thematic areas for the purpose of the study, and aimed at obtaining standardised data to be used for statistical analysis.

It seemed interesting to us to identify and analyse a number of micro-areas related to how certification was introduced, how it is perceived and what success and effectiveness it has in terms of value added to the ordinary forms and means of internal assessment.

We therefore isolated the following indicators to be used in the construction of the three questionnaires to be administered to the three reference groups:

- the reasons for and the way in which external certification was introduced, and in particular Trinity examinations;
- to what extent this had an effect on teaching practice;
- changes to teaching methods employed in lessons;
- changes to methods of assessing and the ability to reflect on the various ways of assessing;
- approval rating and washback effect on the study of languages in general and English in particular;
- impact on the school of a quality external service operating within the school programme.

Based on these micro-areas three questionnaires were drawn up with detailed variables to be investigated with heads of schools, teachers of English and pupils.

- **We asked heads of schools:**

who decided on external certification and Trinity; how the pupils and classes taking part were identified; the amount of take-up and any changes in numbers following the end of state financing; the strong/weak points of the experience; value added in terms of service offered to users.

- **We asked teachers:**

how long they had been teaching and their age range; who decided on external certification and Trinity; how the pupils and classes taking part were identified; what training in assessment and certification they had received; if they had received any professional enhancement by participating in Trinity examination sessions; any change that had taken place in their way of teaching; any stand-alone effect on ways of assessing; the strong points and/or weak points encountered during this experience.

- **We asked pupils:**

to provide: information concerning their age, sex and class; a linguistic biography; reasons for and method of choice; motivational range; any perception of change in their teachers' teaching practice; approval rate and follow up.

Identification of fields of enquiry common to the three reference groups meant that replies could be cross-referenced in order to obtain shared opinions and/or differences concerning some of the more important areas of the study (for example who decided to take part, any increase in motivation, changes in methodology and teaching practice...). Finally, the standardised closed format questions in all three questionnaires not only provided areas for comparative study but also supplied an important context for organising and investigating further the analysis of opinions identified by means of the telephone interviews.

### **The semi-structured questionnaire for interviews**

The telephone interview as an instrument was developed with the aim of obtaining more detailed subjective information from teachers through personal responses stimulated by means of non-standardised input. The interview also allowed us to carry out comparisons and checks on systematic data collected by means of the questionnaires.

The decision to use this means of conducting a quality analysis was taken for the following reasons:

- the relatively low costs involved;
- the speed with which it was conducted and the immediacy of results obtained;
- the possibility of keeping a check on the interviewer's work (Trinity representative) by means of an administration code and the recording of phone calls;
- the interviewing time was limited in order to avoid both a drop in the interviewed person's attention span and an excess of possible alternative replies (i.e. in attempting to know a lot by the end one knows nothing).

The outline and the semi-structured questionnaire used to conduct the interview provided for alternation in open and closed format questions so as to first lead the interviewed person to focus on the theme (structured question) and then leave enough time after to be able to justify and enlarge on the answer in an open format (see appendix 2 with administration code, outline and interview questions).

On the basis of the administration code and semi-structured questionnaire the selected Trinity interviewers formulated the questions and recorded the answers following the teacher's agreement to be both interviewed and recorded (see administration code in Appendix 2). The taped interviews were then sent to the authors of the study who then transcribed their contents, organised opinions with the help of grids for the classification of the answers, and added a final comment. Some of the open format answers considered more significant because they summed up most of the interviewed teachers' comments were reported in full in the section related to the results of the study (see the commented interviews of teachers on page 55).

The micro-areas of the enquiry in this part of the study, taking leave from the structured questionnaire to teachers, are as follows:

- personal opinion of the experience, highlighting strongpoints and critical aspects;
- pupils' motivation;
- support received for information and training;
- impact on the family;
- willingness of the teachers themselves to be certified.

### III. RESULTS OF THE STUDY: GRAPHS AND COMMENTS

#### III-2. Heads of schools

The study carried out on heads of schools aimed at identifying the reasons for the decision to introduce certification into the school, and in particular why the choice of Trinity was made, as well as criteria used for the selection of classes and pupils, questions concerning costs for families, level of acceptance by users, the weak points and strongpoints of the experience and, finally, personal approval. The questionnaire consisted of five groups of questions referring to the above-mentioned fields of enquiry. Replies were received from 119 heads of schools distributed as follows: 31 from Lazio, 27 from Lombardy, 34 from Puglia, 27 from Sicily.

#### Summary of results

*For heads of schools the decision to introduce certification was motivated most of all by the desire to offer a quality service, considering also the fact that a third of the replies indicated requests by pupils and/or families as an important factor. Trinity is selected as the preferred examination board mainly because of the type of exam offered and because it responds to learning aims: this is a very important item of data because it shows that certification is connected to a learning path that includes the various abilities and skills.*

*Candidates are selected mainly on the basis of their specific interest and requests made by families, but also for other reasons (in the following order: because they took part in extra-curricular language courses, because they were in their final year of school, and because they offered most guarantees of passing the examination).*

*More than half the heads of schools said that the cost is today totally covered by pupils' families, while 30% said that families made a contribution towards the cost: this however does not appear to have had a demotivating effect as more than half of the heads of schools who replied say that the number of examinations is growing, while for 30% the number is stable.*

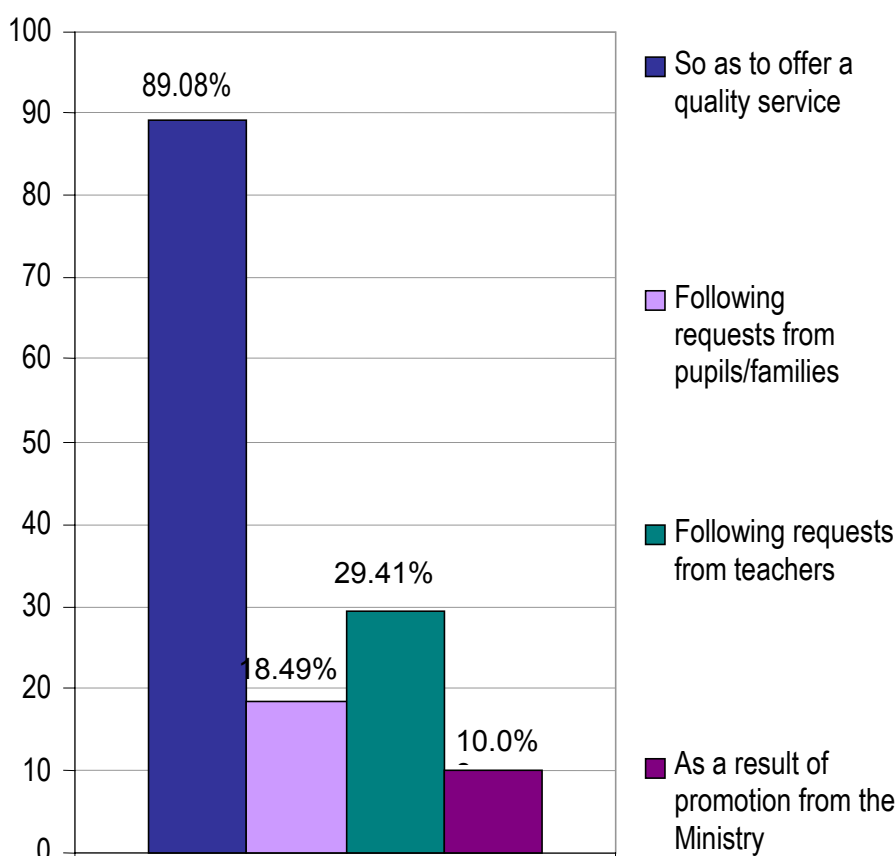
*Almost all replies highlight the satisfaction demonstrated by families. Even though the extra work is singled by heads of schools out as being a critical aspect of the experience (63%), the added value and the opening up of the school to the outside world is appreciated.*

*These last two points highlight the interest shown by schools in quality experiences even if they do involve greater commitment of resources. This is shown to be even more true if one cross-references replies from heads of schools with those from teachers. All of them would willingly repeat the experience and almost two thirds would be favourable to the introduction of language certification for teachers.*

## How external examinations were introduced into the school

Graph 1 - What were the reasons for introducing external examinations?  
Heads of schools - multiple choice items

So as to offer a quality service	106	89.08%
Following requests from pupils/families	22	18.49%
Following requests from teachers	35	29.41%
As a result of promotion from the Ministry	12	10.08%

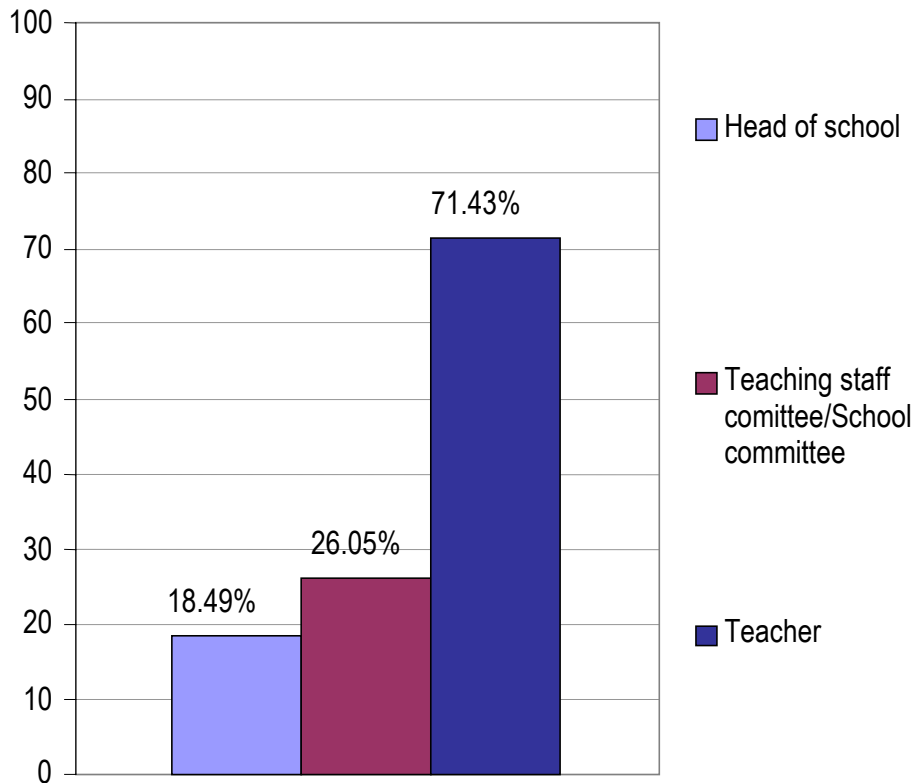


Certification was introduced into schools essentially so as to offer a quality service to pupils (89,08%); the second reason was requests from teachers (29.4%); it therefore appears that the initiative takes its leave - as is natural - very much from the school itself; requests from families and pupils are the third reason, closer to the bottom of the scale.

The ways in which pupils perceive the introduction of certification vary, probably because they were in any case personally involved.

**Graph 2 - Who decided on Trinity?**  
Heads of schools - multiple choice items

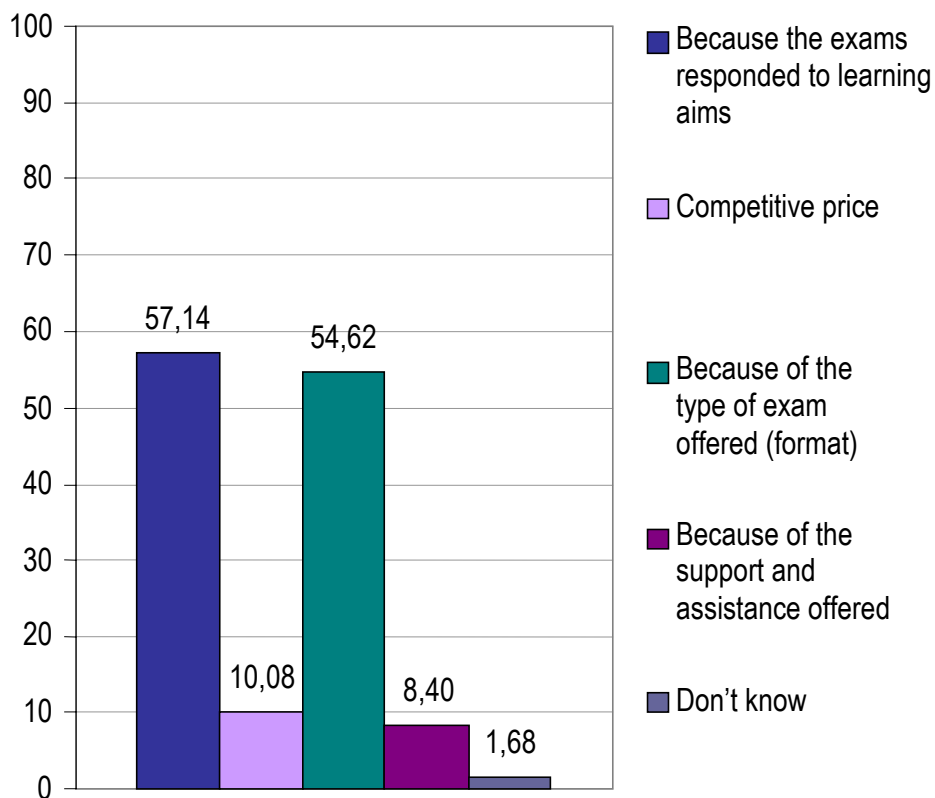
Head of school	22	18.49%
Teaching staff committee/School committee	31	26.05%
Teacher	85	71.43%



Both heads of schools and teachers are in agreement that the choice of examination board was made mainly by English teachers and the reasons for this are revealed in answers to item 3 (Graph 3).

**Graph 3 - Why was Trinity selected?**  
Heads of schools - multiple choice items

Because the exams responded to learning aims	68	57.14%
Competitive price	12	10.08%
Because of the type of exam offered (format)	65	54.62%
Because of the support and assistance offered	10	8.4%
Don't know	2	1.68%



Trinity was selected on the basis of coherence with the teacher’s teaching aims and because the examinations respond to learning aims (57,1 %) and also due to the format of the exam itself (54.62%).

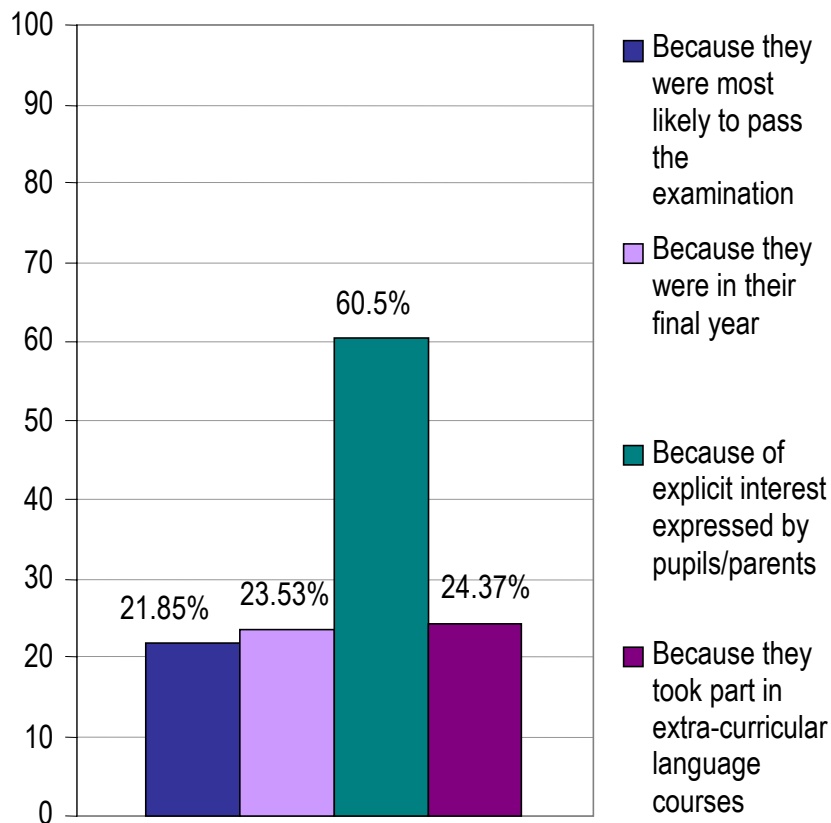
These were the answers most selected. Confirmation therefore that the introduction of certification contributed to the introduction of elements of innovation and quality in school practice.

### Selection of classes and pupils

**Graph 4 - What criteria were used to select classes and/or pupils for the examinations and certification?**

Heads of schools - multiple choice items

Because they were most likely to pass the examination	26	21.85%
Because they were in their final year	28	23.53%
Because of explicit interest expressed by pupils/parents	72	60.5%
Because they took part in extra-curricular language courses	29	24.37%



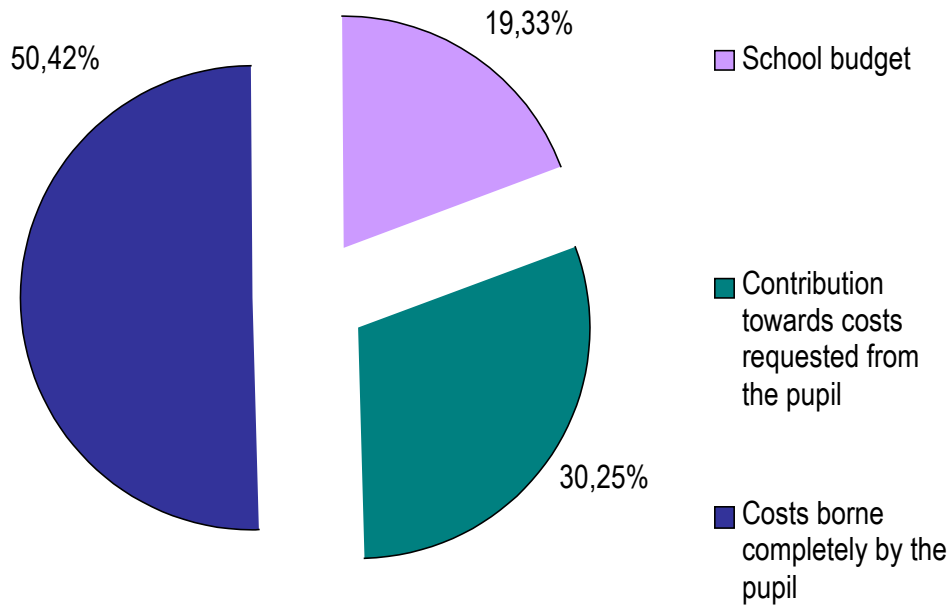
Criteria used to select pupils as candidates for the examinations: first, the interest expressed explicitly by pupils/parents then, although much less so, attendance at extra-curricular courses, along with the fact that pupils were in their last year at school, and that they were most likely to pass the examination.

It is interesting to note that in answer to this question (n° 5) teachers also indicated as their first choice “interest expressed explicitly by pupils and parents” (71,6%) and then “pupils who were most likely to pass the examination”.

### Costs and users' approval rating

Graph 5 - How were the costs of certification met?  
Heads of schools - open answer item

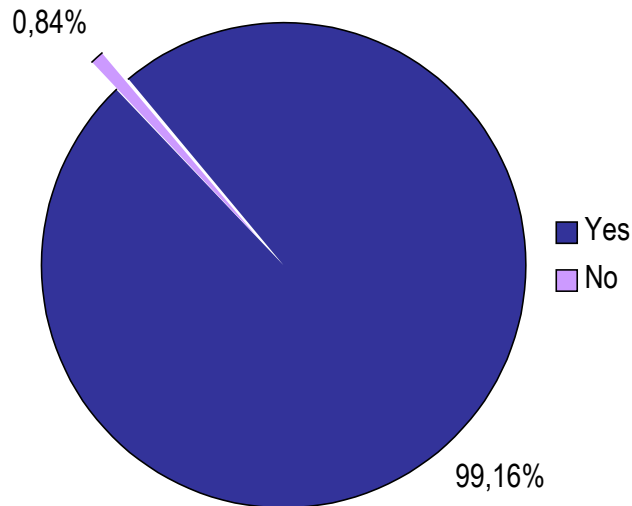
School budget	23	19.33%
Contribution towards costs requested from the pupil	36	30.25%
Costs borne completely by the pupil	60	50.42%



At the present time, following the end of state financing in the *Lingue 2000* project, only about 20% of schools manage to meet the costs of certification from the school budget, while half of the schools devolved the costs onto the families, and 30% requested a contribution towards costs from the families.

**Graph 6 - Did parents express satisfaction with the undertaking?**  
Heads of schools - open answer item

Yes	118	99.16%
No	1	0.84%

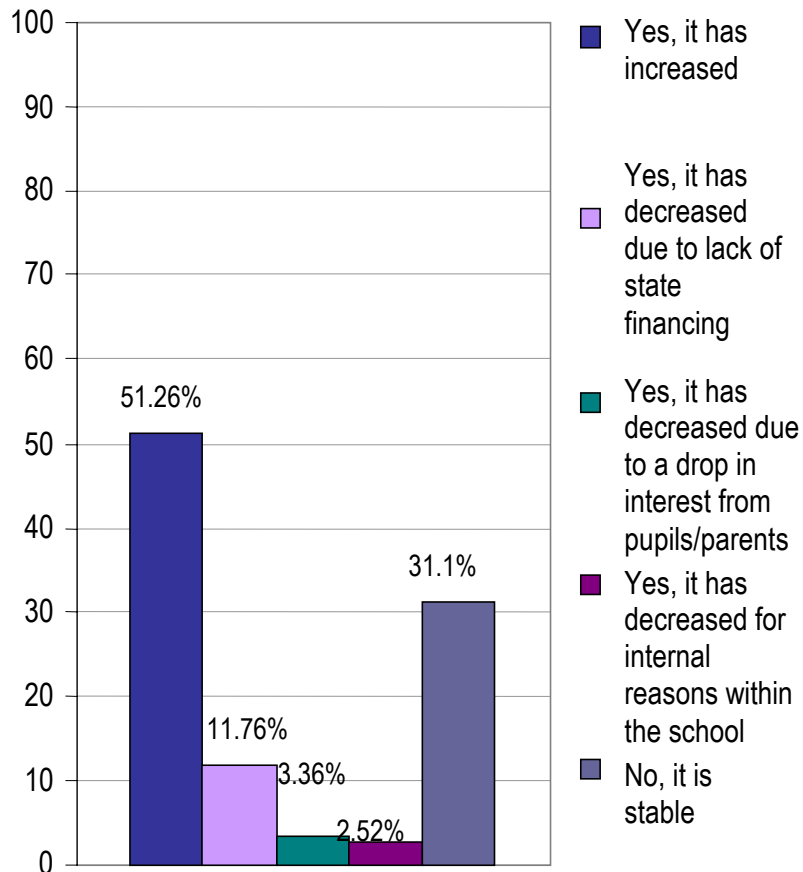


There was almost total satisfaction expressed by parents. The approval rate was therefore almost total everywhere.

Teachers interviewed however provided further and more varied elements to this picture of the attitude families had towards certification: there is mention of initial lack of interest and a certain amount of detachment shown by families towards the school, while others showed signs of progressive involvement.

**Graph 7 - Have you noticed any change in the request for certification over time?**  
Heads of schools - multiple choice item

Yes, it has increased	61	51.26%
Yes, it has decreased due to lack of state financing	14	11.76%
Yes, it has decreased due to a drop in interest from pupils/parents	4	3.36%
Yes, it has decreased for internal reasons within the school	3	2.52%
No, it is stable	37	31.09%



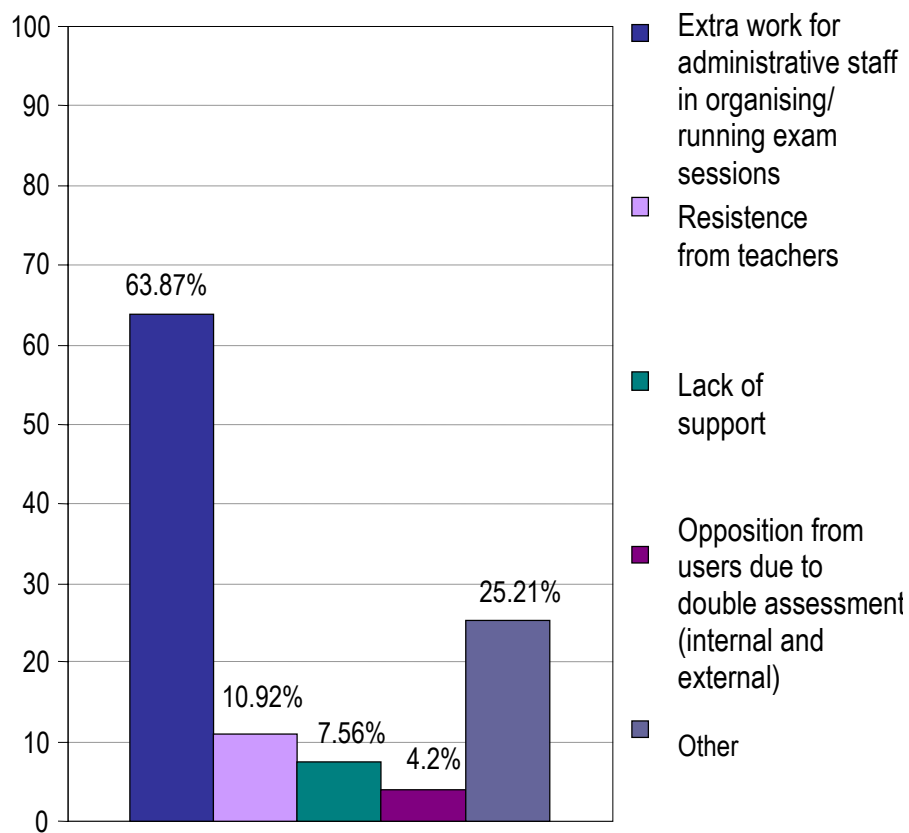
Lack of financing has not however, according to heads of schools, affected the spread of certification since more than half of them say that the request has increased, and about a third say it is stable.

There is a more in-depth view of this phenomenon expressed in comments made by teachers during their interviews.

### Strong points and weak points of certification

**Graph 8 - Indicate the weak points encountered in certification**  
Heads of schools - multiple choice item

Extra work for administrative staff in organising/running exam sessions	76	63.87%
Resistance from teachers	13	10.92%
Lack of support	9	7.56%
Opposition from users due to double assessment (internal and external)	5	4.2%
Other	30	25.21%

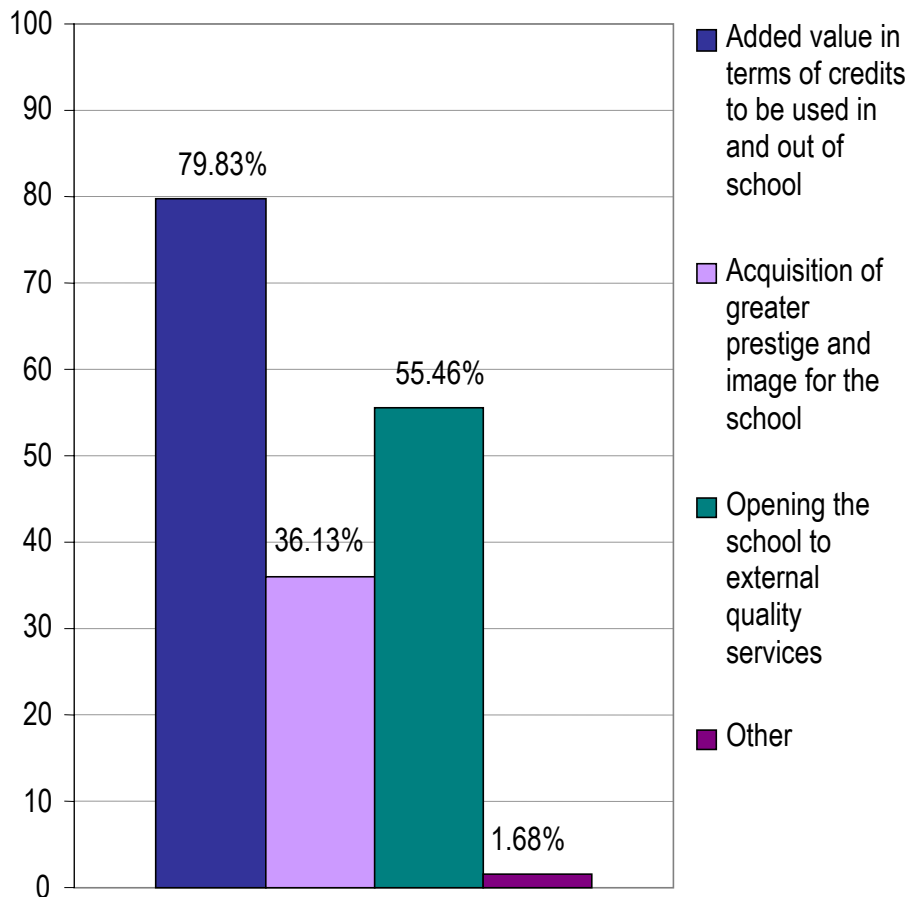


For over 60% of heads of schools the weak point in the undertaking is the increase in the workload, while they say that cooperation from teachers is high (only 10.9 % of head teachers indicate resistance of teachers to the undertaking).

25% say that there are other weak points which however it is only possible to identify through interviews with teachers. Given the consistency of this area it would be interesting to investigate what lies behind this 'other'.

**Graph 9 - Indicate the strong points encountered in certification**  
Heads of schools - multiple choice item

Added value in terms of credits to be used in and out of school	95	79.83%
Acquisition of greater prestige and image for the school	43	36.13%
Opening the school to external quality services	66	55.46%
Other	2	1.68%

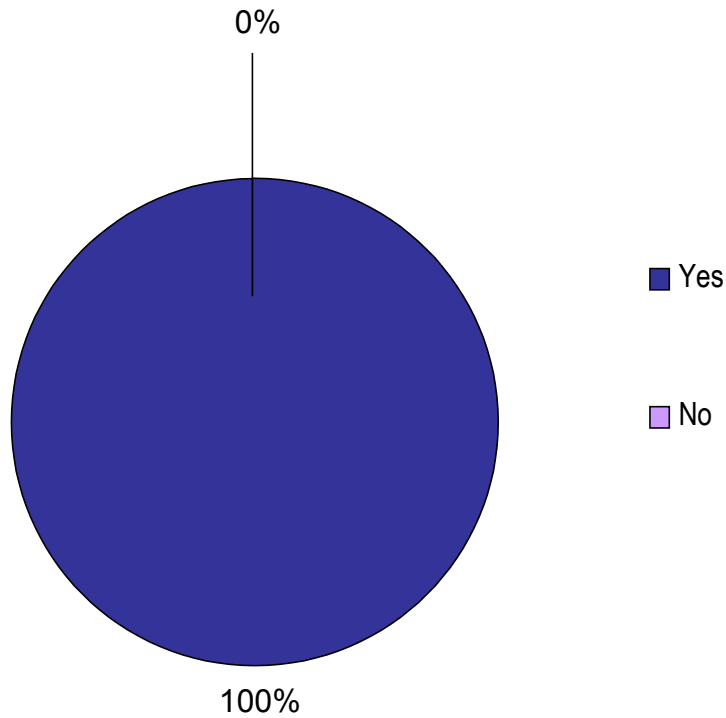


For about 80% of heads of schools the value of certification lies first of all in the later use that can be made of the certificate, and for more than half of them the opening of the school to external quality services; the prestige and image of the school were indicated by a little over a third. It has to be again said here that heads of schools are above all interested in the quality aspect of certification and in the contribution this can provide in supplying a certification that can later be used by the bearer in her/his career.

For further information concerning the importance of internal/external recognition of Trinity certificates see in particular the analysis of interviews, and results of the analysis of the questionnaires returned by teachers and pupils where the use of the certificate as 'currency' as one of the motivating factors is confirmed, along with the overall quality of the experience.

**Graph 10 - Would you personally be willing to run external examination sessions again?**  
Heads of schools - Yes/No answer item

Yes	119	100%
No	0	0

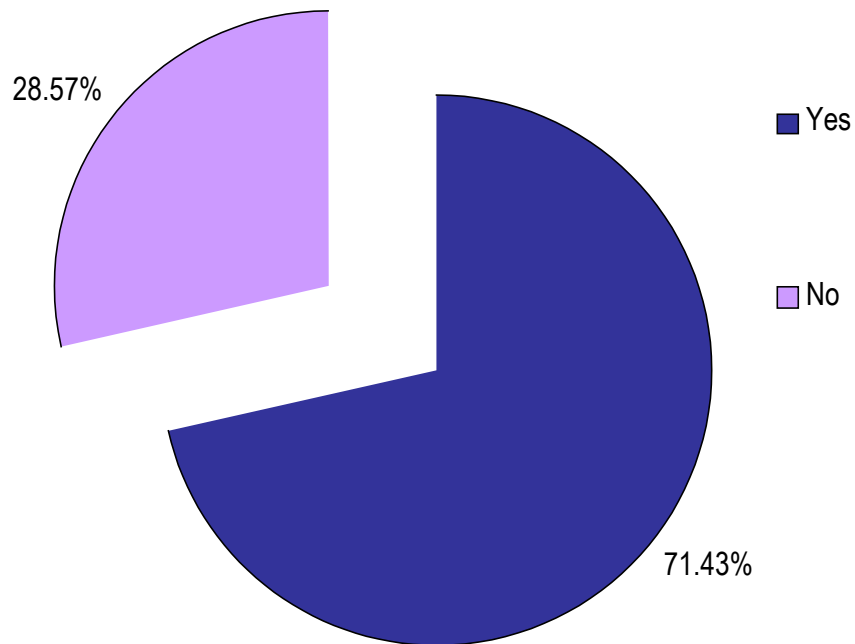


This graph leaves no doubt: 100% of those who answered the questionnaire would be willing to hold examination sessions again; there is no need of further comment.

The overall experience was much appreciated, as confirmed also by the answers supplied by teachers to the same question: approximately 97% would willingly repeat the experience.

**Graph 11 - Would it be useful for language teachers to have the opportunity of taking a language examination?**  
Heads of schools - Yes/No answer item

Yes	85	71.43%
No	34	28.57%



A little over 71% of heads of schools believe that a language examination would also be useful for teachers. There are slightly fewer teachers who believe this to be true: 64% of them would welcome this opportunity.

For further information see relative comments in the interviews with teachers.

## III-2. Teachers

The questionnaire for teachers aimed at identifying professional positions held, the reasons for deciding to introduce certification - and in particular the reasons for choosing Trinity - the criteria used for selecting classes and pupils, the training received, the significance of the experience, the stand-alone effect on teaching practice, and the strong points and weak points of certification.

The questionnaire was made up of seven groups of questions related to the fields of enquiry as indicated above.

257 teachers responded, distributed geographically as follows: 72 from Lazio, 69 from Lombardy, 62 from Puglia, 54 from Sicily.

### Summary of results

*Teachers play the most important part in deciding to introduce certification into the school and at times almost exclusively bear the burden of its organisation, both in terms of their professional relationships with colleagues who are less open to the undertaking, and in the task of raising awareness among pupils and their families.*

*For them the validity of certification lies in increasing the image of the school and in being able to use certificates as credits - an aspect which is highlighted also by heads of schools and pupils. Trinity is chosen as the examination board in particular because of the type of examination offered and because they correspond with teaching aims.*

*Pupils are selected mainly - actually, almost exclusively - from classes according to the interest and willingness to participate expressed by themselves and by their families. The examination board is initial supplier not only of information but also of training. Many teachers have also trained themselves. Training is judged to be adequate or positive by the majority of those who responded and the experience offered by certification was considered very satisfying in particular with regard to professional development.*

*With regard to reflection on teaching practice more than half the teachers are aware of the indicators in the Common European Framework, about a third employ specific activities for each skill, and about 40% have changed their teaching practice where it is related to assessment.*

*Certification has significantly influenced motivation and, as a result, pupils' achievements. It has also been of considerable value in documenting the learning path.*

*It is evident that teachers' judgement of the experience was very positive because they perceive the quality offered and the contribution made towards change in teaching practice, and also because they believe that pupils are strongly motivated to work more towards scholastic achievement.*

## Years of teaching and age range

Before illustrating the results obtained from an analysis of the questionnaires returned by teachers, there follows related basic data concerning their age range and number of years of teaching.

Half the teachers (130 out of 257) were aged between 40 and 50; 20% (50 teachers) were aged between 50 and 55; the rest were either younger or older (9 were under 30 and 30 over 55).

As far as the number of years teaching is concerned the data is more equally distributed, even if it is evident that most of the sample group (68%) consists of teachers with a more than average length of time in service:

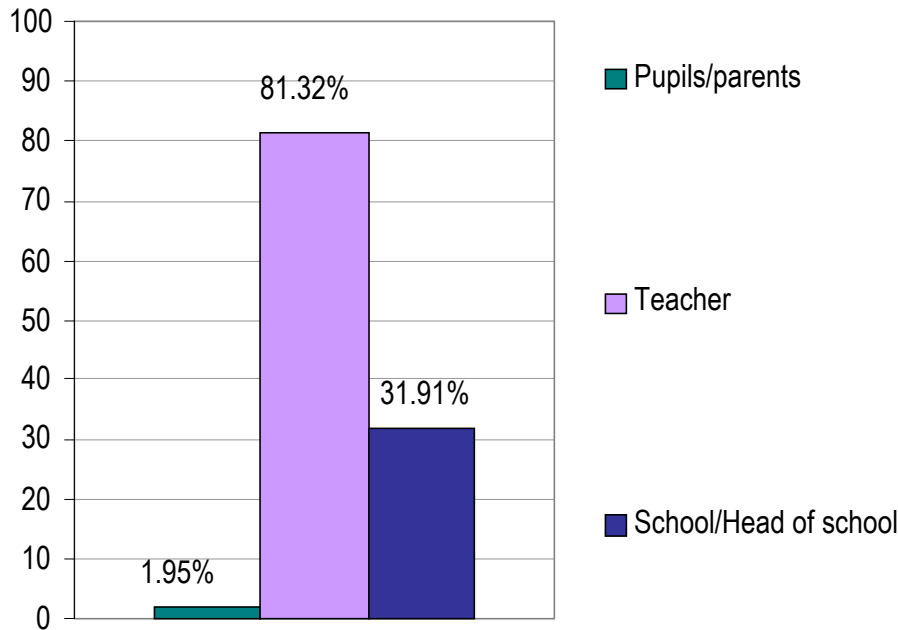
*less than 5 years:*     **41**  
*from 5 to 10 years:*   **43**  
*from 10 to 20 years:* **96**  
*over 20 years:*       **77**

This information leads one to believe that there are certain factors that may influence teachers' decisions to have their own pupils and/or classes take external examinations: it does in fact appear as if teachers who are relatively young or old are less interested in being involved. If on the other hand we look at the number of years in service it is clear that those involved in external examinations have accumulated a certain amount of professional experience; some (about 30%) have actually been in service for over 20 years. It is interesting to compare this data with some of the specific answers supplied by teachers (see in particular comments supplied as in Graphs 6 and 8 concerning training and professional development, as well as the answers supplied during the course of interviews).

### Choice of external examination board

Graph 1 - Who decided to introduce certification to pupils?  
Teachers - multiple choice item

Pupils/parents	5	1.95%
Teacher	209	81.32%
School/Head of school	82	31.91%



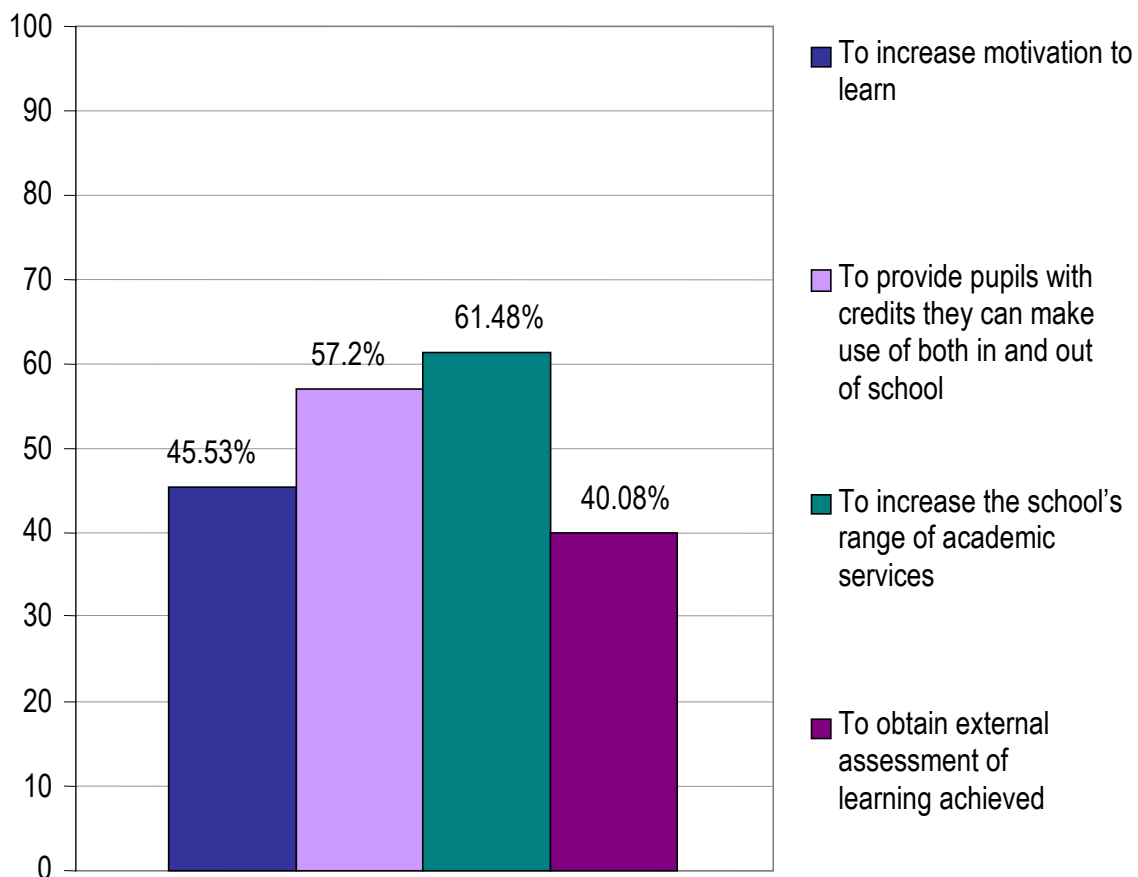
Teachers play the most important part in introducing external certification into the school. Over 80% say they themselves took the decision, while the part played by pupils and their families is minimal and confirms the fact that the teacher is mainly responsible for introducing innovation.

This is also confirmed in questionnaires returned by heads of schools, and is also reinforced in the interviews.

Pupils' perception is however different: they see themselves as being responsible for the decision (about 74% - see comment on Graph 6 regarding pupils' questionnaires). Families are perceived as having a small role in the decision-making process.

**Graph 2 - What was the reason for taking the decision?**  
Teachers - multiple choice item

To increase motivation to learn	117	45.53%
To provide pupils with credits they can make use of both in and out of school	147	57.2%
To increase the school's range of academic services	158	61.48%
To obtain external assessment of learning achieved	103	40.08%

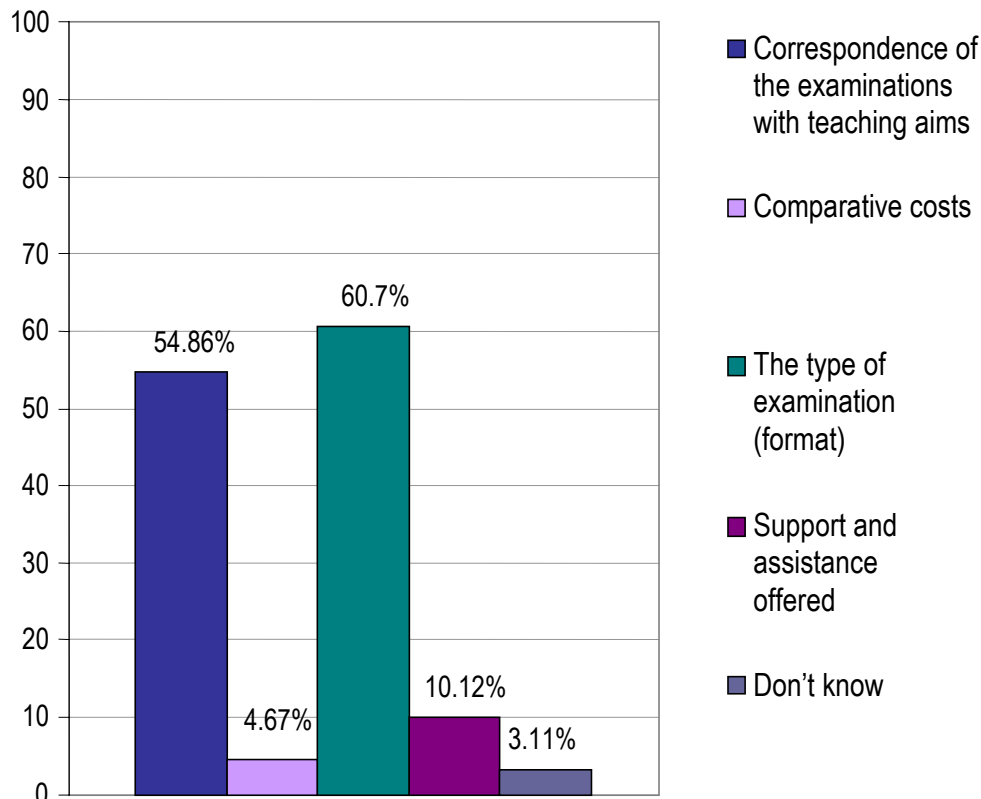


As far as the reasons for introducing certification into the school are concerned answers are distributed fairly equally over the four alternatives provided, with a certain amount of preference afforded to the school (increasing training on offer 61.4%) and the validity of credits to be used both in and out of school (57%).

The importance of credits that can be ‘spent’ by pupils is confirmed by head teachers, as we have seen, and by the pupils themselves, whether this is within the academic system or later in the world of work.

**Graph 3 - Why was Trinity chosen as the preferred examination board?**  
Teachers - multiple choice item

Correspondence of the examinations with teaching aims	141	54.86%
Comparative costs	12	4.67%
The type of examination (format)	156	60.7%
Support and assistance offered	26	10.12%
Don't know	8	3.11%



For both teachers and heads of schools Trinity was chosen for two important reasons that both carry with them notable didactic implications: the type of examination (more than 60%); correspondence with teaching aims (about 55%).

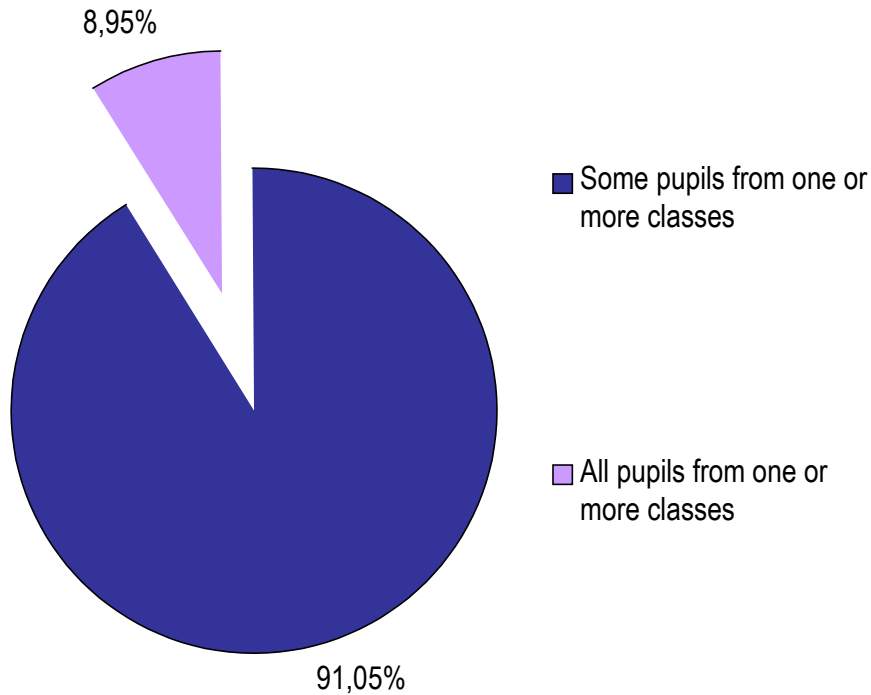
This leads one to assume that the conviction is widespread that oral skills are crucial for communication in a foreign language.

This is also confirmed by answers provided by pupils: over 65% of them say that the skills prioritised in class are speaking and listening (with regard to this see the comment in Graph 9, pupils' questionnaire).

### Choice of classes and pupils as candidates

Graph 4 - What candidates have been selected for the examinations?  
Teachers - open answer item

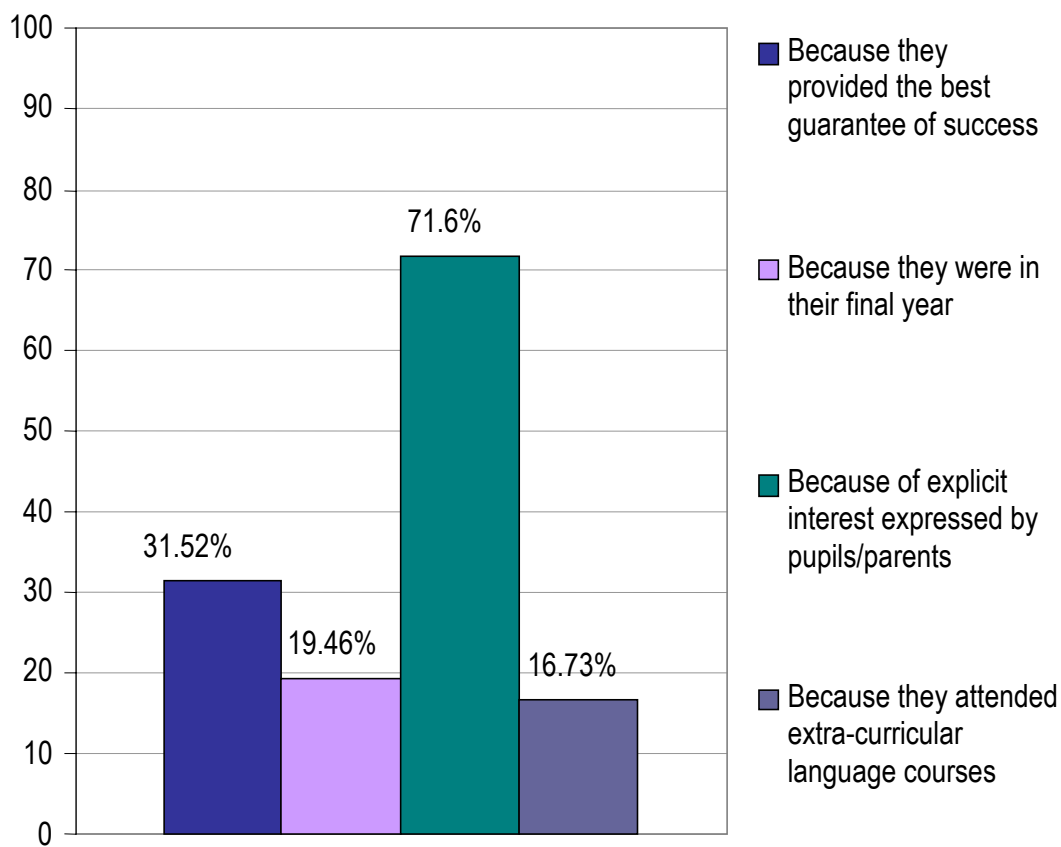
Some pupils from one or more classes	234	91.05%
All pupils from one or more classes	23	8.95%



In the choice of candidates for the examinations there is no hesitation: 91% say they have selected pupils from one or more classes to demonstrate that certification is experienced not as a fulfillment but as a strategic choice along a learning path where assessment is required. This consideration is also widely confirmed during the interviews.

**Graph 5 - What criteria were used to select classes and/or pupils for the examinations?**  
Teachers - multiple choice item

Because they provided the best guarantee of success	81	31.52%
Because they were in their final year	50	19.46%
Because of explicit interest expressed by pupils/parents	184	71.6%
Because they attended extra-curricular language courses	43	16.73%

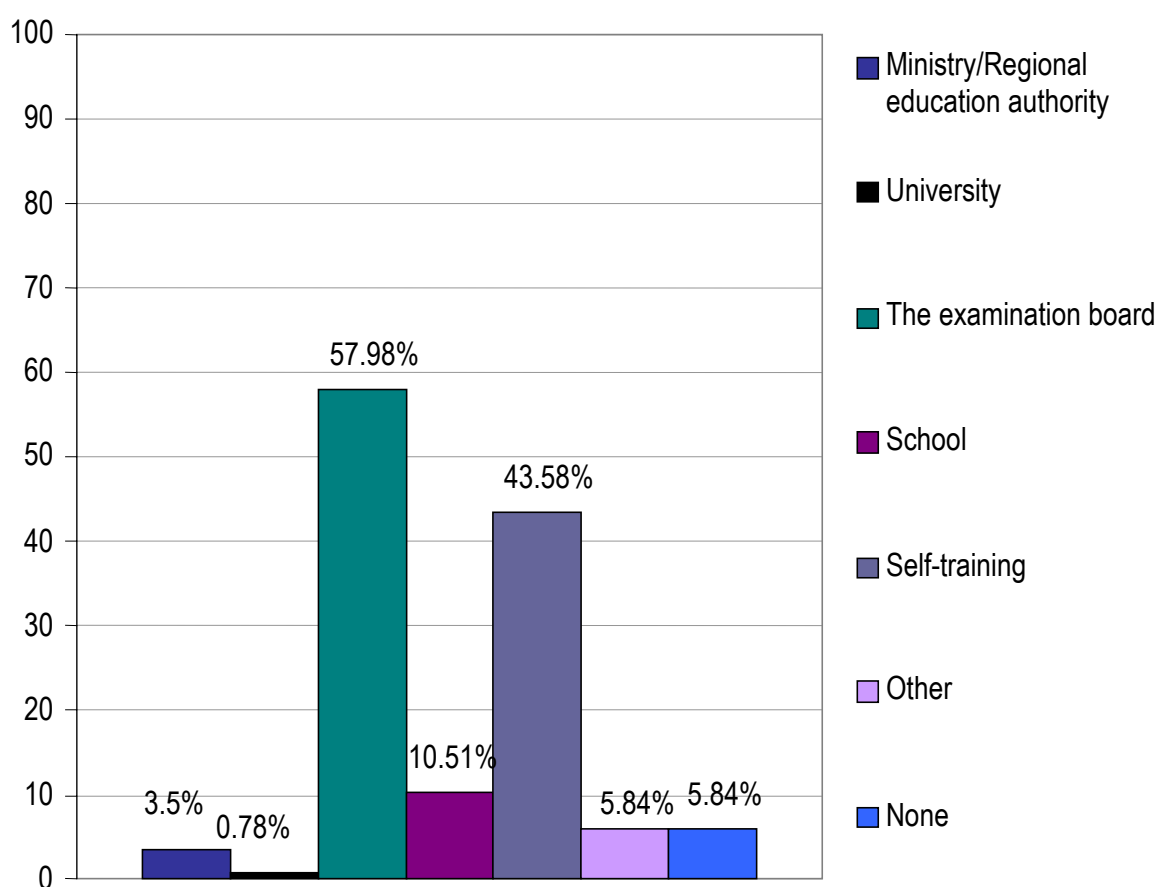


As far as choosing pupils to sit the examinations is concerned teachers' and pupils' answers are not very different and provide as the major reason the interest expressed by pupils and parents (71,6%). Teachers appear to be more sensitive to the possibilities of success, and this is the second reason expressed by about a third of them.

## Training in assessment and certification

**Graph 6 - Specific training in assessment was received by Teachers - multiple choice item**

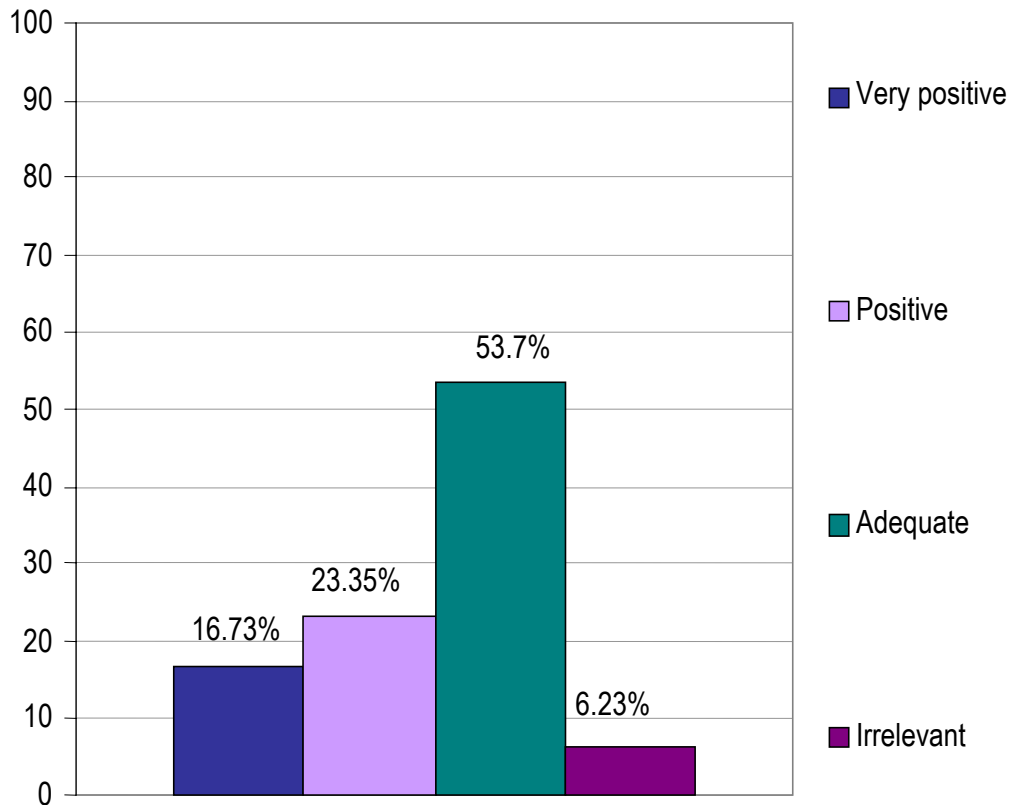
Ministry/Regional education authority	9	3.5%
University	2	0.78%
The examination board	149	57.98%
School	27	10.51%
Self-training	112	43.58%
Other	15	5.84%
None	15	5.84%



Trinity provided training to almost 60% of the sample, while a considerable percentage of the teachers trained themselves (more than 40%). It is significant that the University is almost completely absent, which confirms its distance from the school. However, local educational authorities also have had minimal input. During the interviews the role Trinity plays in informing and training teachers is confirmed and appreciated in almost all cases.

**Graph 7 - How do you rate the training received?**  
Teachers - multiple choice item

Very positive	43	16.73%
Adequate	138	53.7%
Irrelevant	16	6.23%
Positive	60	23.35%

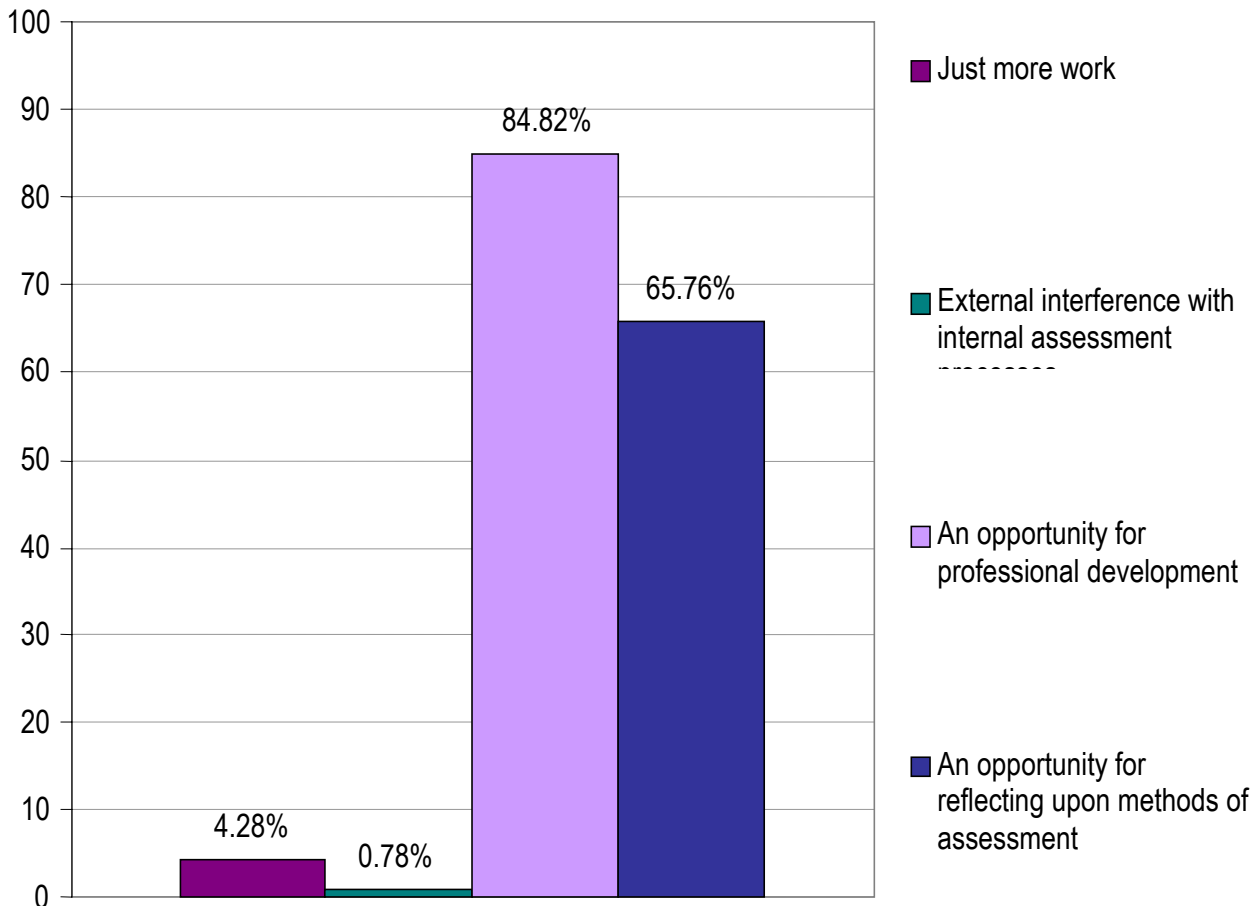


Graph N°7 shows that training received was judged to be either adequate or positive by the almost total majority of those interviewed. Negative appraisals were received from just 6.23%. A useful in-depth appraisal can be extracted from analysis of those interviewed.

## Professional development

**Graph 8 - Certification was an experience which can be described as**  
Teachers - multiple choice item

Just more work	11	4.28%
External interference with internal assessment processes	2	0.78%
An opportunity for professional development	218	84.82%
An opportunity for reflecting upon methods of assessment	169	65.76%

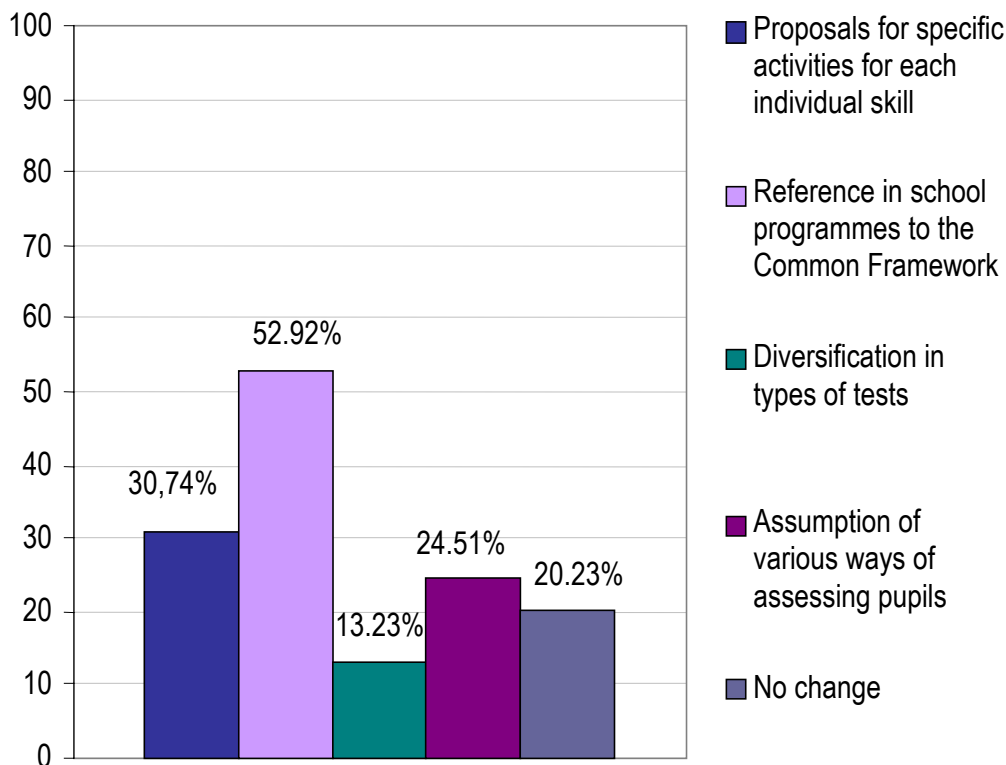


The experience offered by certification was judged as being very positive. This can be seen from the feedback concerning the extra work involved (only 2.75% of the sample selected this option). Evidently professional development derived from the experience, and concrete support in helping teachers to reflect on assessment, prevailed over difficulties which in any case accompany new experiences. This data also confirms teachers' curiosity and openness to innovation. This is also confirmed in interviews where criticism mainly focuses on organisational aspects or costs. Heads of schools however differ in their opinion by highlighting the extra work involved (see the comment to Graph 8 above - Heads of schools). Note also that teachers do not perceive external certification as amounting to interference; they rather appreciate it, and this shows that self-referencing within the school can be broken into by quality experiences that add value to teaching practices.

### Stand-alone effect upon teaching practice

Graph 9 - The introduction of certification has led to the following changes in teaching practice  
Teachers - multiple choice item

Proposals for specific activities for each individual skill	79	30.74%
Reference in school programmes to the Common Framework	136	52.92%
Diversification in types of tests	34	13.23%
Assumption of various ways of assessing pupils	63	24.51%
No change	52	20.23%

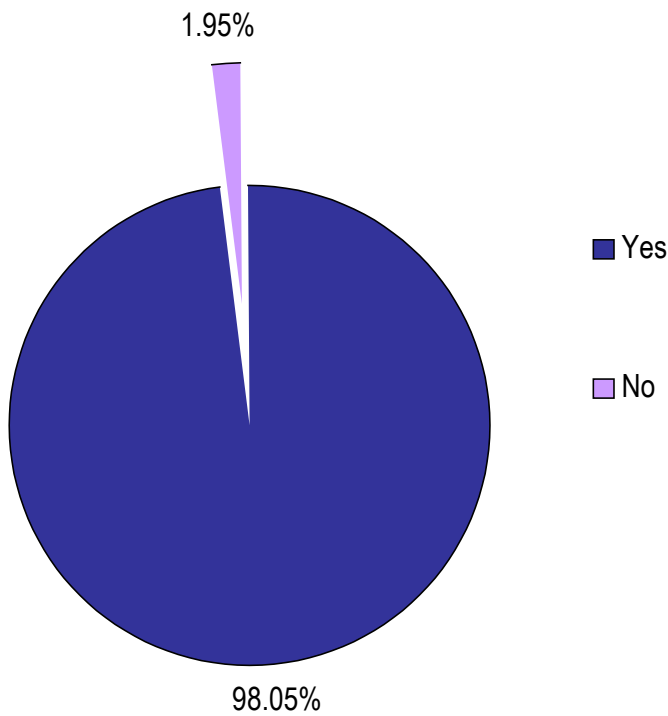


Replies concerning changes in teaching practice correlated to the introduction of certification show that approximately 53% of teachers make reference to the European Common Framework. The other replies are distributed in such a way that they do not reveal any significant change in diversification of activities related to individual skills or testing. A little over 20% of the teachers say they have not changed their teaching practice at all.

Cross-referencing this data with pupils' perception however shows that all together 60% of pupils believe there have been significant changes in methods of study, and this data is clearer.

**Graph 10 - Has the introduction of certification caused pupils to be more motivated in the study of English?**  
Teachers - Yes/No answer item

Yes	252	98.05%
No	5	1.95%



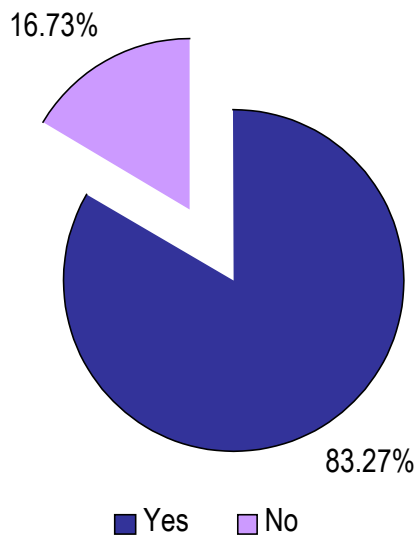
The experience provided by certification has generally led to an increase in motivation (98%) which has significantly influenced pupils to their profit, and provided them with greater autonomy (Graphs 11 and 12).

Moreover pupils approval rating, shown in replies to questions 13 and 14, confirms what their teachers say.

**Graph 11**  
Have pupils significantly profited from the introduction of certification?

Teachers - Yes/No answer item

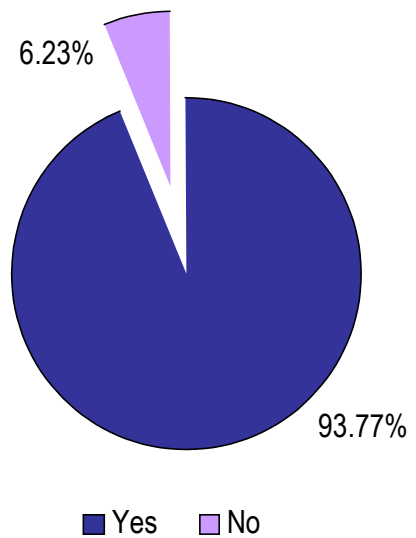
Yes	214	83.27%
No	43	16.73%



**Graph 12**  
Have pupils gained in personal awareness/autonomy from the introduction of certification?

Teachers - Yes/No answer item

Yes	241	93.77%
No	16	6.23%

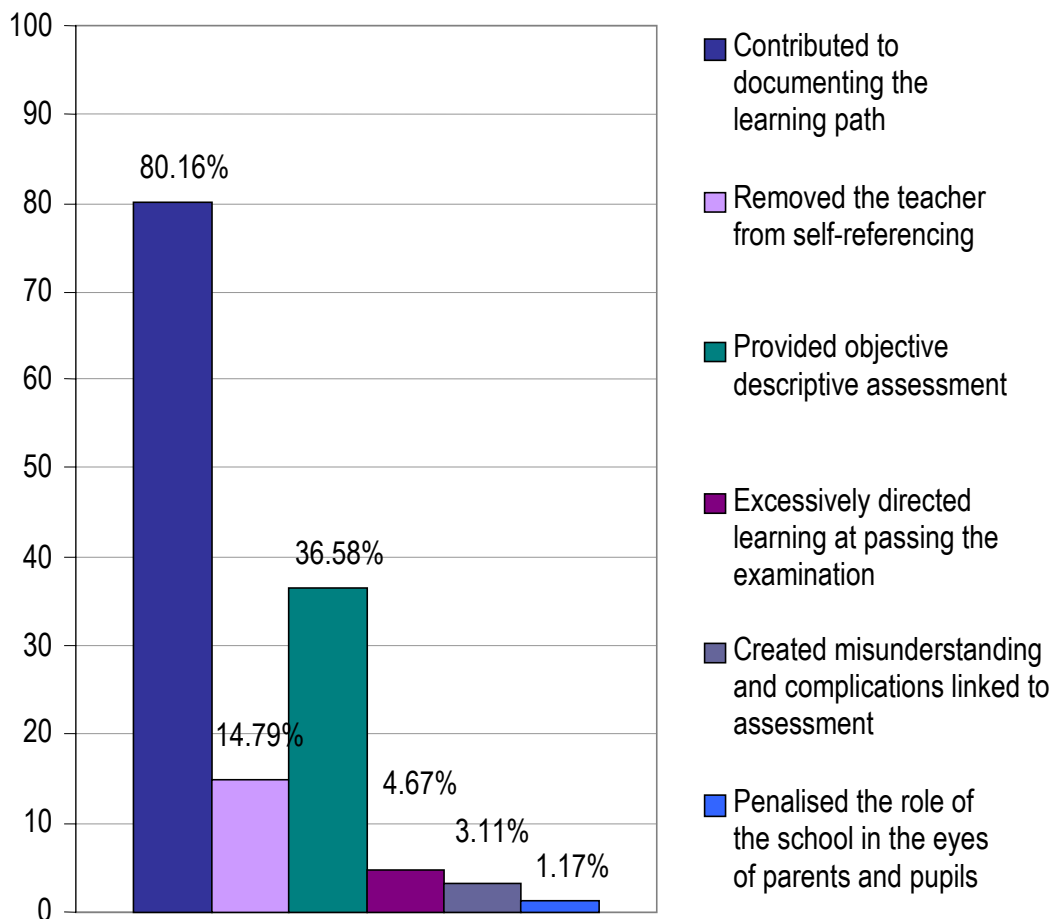


For 83,2% of those interviewed the introduction of certification has led to a significant increase in pupils' personal profit, presumably as a result of an increase in motivation and learning autonomy for almost 94%, as can be seen in replies to questions 10 and 12.

### Strong points and weak points of the undertaking

**Graph 13 - Overall the experience provided by certification has**  
Teachers - multiple choice item

Contributed to documenting the learning path	206	80.16%
Removed the teacher from self-referencing	38	14.79%
Provided objective descriptive assessment	94	36.58%
Excessively directed learning at passing the examination	12	4.67%
Created misunderstanding and complications linked to assessment	8	3.11%
Penalised the role of the school in the eyes of parents and pupils	3	1.17%



Certification was perceived as being a positive experience for 80% of the sample, in particular in relation to documenting the learning path, and for over a third because of the contribution it makes towards objective descriptive assessment.

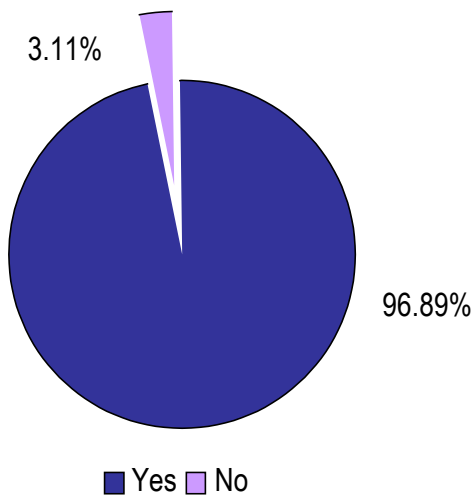
These two elements are very important because they are those which are normally most frequently absent from teaching and learning: this means that in this area certification introduces quality elements of relevance.

**Graph 14**

**Personally, would you be willing to organise further examination sessions?**

Teachers - Yes/No answer item

Yes	249	96.89%
No	8	3.11%

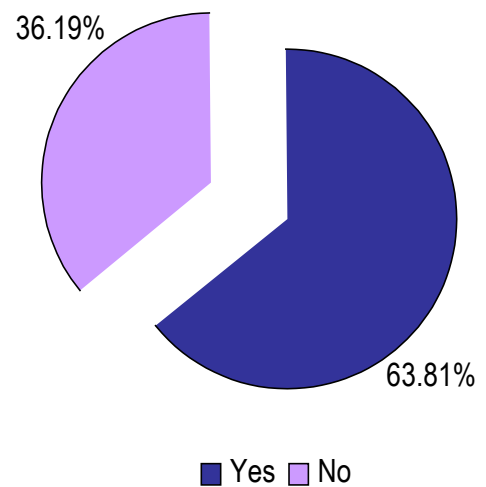


**Graph 15**

**Would it be useful if teachers were able to take language examinations leading to certification?**

Teachers - Yes/No answer item

Yes	164	63.81%
No	93	36.19%

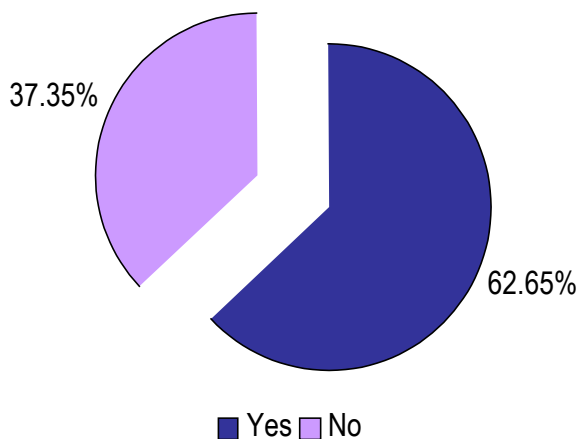


**Graph 16**

**Would you be willing to take part in a short telephone interview?**

Teachers - Yes/No answer item

Yes	161	62.65%
No	96	37.35%



Almost all the teachers (97%) would be willing to organise further examination sessions and about 64% of them would also be personally inclined to taking a language examination themselves.

Again it is clear that the experience is considered to be positive and important. Teachers react well to a relationship with external authorities even in areas which traditionally have been considered difficult.

This also leads to a willingness to be interviewed in order to gain greater in-depth understanding of the area, even if the interview were to take place at a time when the school term was ending, or already ended.

### III-3. Pupils

The pupils' questionnaire was aimed at summarising their linguistic biography, the reasons for deciding to take an external language examination, the effect this had on their studies and on the teaching/learning relationship, on motivation as well as identifying the level of approval.

The questionnaire is made up of four groups of questions relating to the fields of enquiry mentioned above.

1189 pupils responded from the four geographical regions as follows: 429 from Lazio, 276 from Lombardy, 272 from Puglia and 212 from Sicily.

#### Summary of results

*Over a period of time notable changes in the use of Trinity certificates, and demand for them, have become apparent in the Italian state school system: when certification was introduced and financed by the Ministry of Education (Progetto Lingue 2000 - 1999/2000), in most cases the certificate was used to assess pupils' language competence at the end of extra-curricular courses, while now it is seen as external assessment for pupils attending ordinary courses.*

*Most pupils (almost 80%) do not have the opportunity of studying abroad; it is formal teaching in school which therefore provides the only real contact with the English language. When schools improve the range of teaching/learning possibilities on offer, involving external quality services such as extra courses with external certification of language skills acquired, this can amount to added value in support of ordinary teaching activities.*

*For most of the pupils in the sample group the experience of taking an external examination leading to certification presents itself as a training opportunity which can increase motivation - the desire to learn the language in order to take the examination. Having said this, almost all pupils in the sample group say they like studying English and that they are responsible in first person for having decided to certify their language competence.*

*Candidates are aware of the utility of certification as something they can 'spend' during their scholastic and/or professional career. Taking the examination is not seen as an added complication to be dealt with but as something which increases the pleasure of studying English during the course of the year, which at the same time offers feed-back on progress at school since it provides a clear, transparent and descriptive result. For these reasons, connected as they are to the importance of the certificate obtained, and to feedback on personal skills and competence acquired during the school career, most of the pupils say they want to repeat the experience in future and to supplement their language credits in years to come.*

*Greater depth is provided in the commentary to telephone interviews conducted with teachers who highlight the enthusiastic participation of their pupils who feel gratified as they are able to demonstrate their communicative skills during the examination with a mother-tongue speaker and at the same time obtain a certificate which is clear and can be used as educational 'currency' which they can spend during their careers.*

*The perception the sample group has of any differences between internal and external assessment is also interesting. Most pupils do not perceive any substantial difference, nor are Trinity examinations experienced in isolation or divorced from the in-class teaching/learning experience.*

*The examinations are however perceived as being more effective in terms of recognition, also outside the formal school system, and in most cases are seen as responding better to individual needs.*

*Finally, while pupils from the sample group believe they do not change their way of studying much - or not at all - to prepare for the examination, almost all say that on the other hand their teachers do change their teaching methods as a function of the examination, introducing in particular activities linked to audio-oral skills and especially speaking.*

## Linguistic biography

### Sex and year of course

Before analysing responses with the aid of graphs it seems useful to point out some basic points of a purely quantitative nature.

The division between sexes in the sample group is as follows: 470 male and 719 female.

The course year for pupils in the middle school/comprehensive school were: first year 145, second year 155, third year 434.

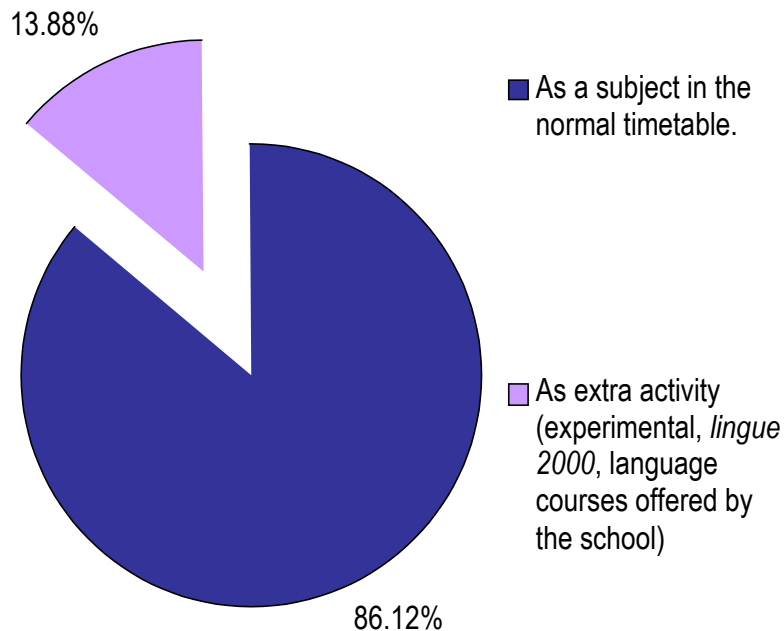
The course year for pupils in the upper secondary schools were: 86 first year, 79 second year, 125 third year, 75 fourth year, 89 fifth year.

It is interesting in the data above to note the prevalence of female candidates. This item of data could be correlated with possible further points of enquiry such as, for example, greater motivation to a study of languages in view of later choices made in academic studies, or further study, which in general women make (translators and interpreters...) or greater success at school obtained by female pupils over their male counterparts.

On the other hand as far as the course year during which certification is mainly prevalent is concerned, it is interesting to see that in upper secondary schools most of the candidates in the sample group are in the third year, which is the year following the formal conclusion of the more specifically linguistic courses (in the third year specialised language courses normally begin).

**Graph 1 - Do you study English**  
Pupils - Yes/No answer item

as a subject in the normal timetable?	1024	86.12%
as extra activity (experimental, <i>lingue 2000</i> , language courses offered by the school)?	165	13.88%



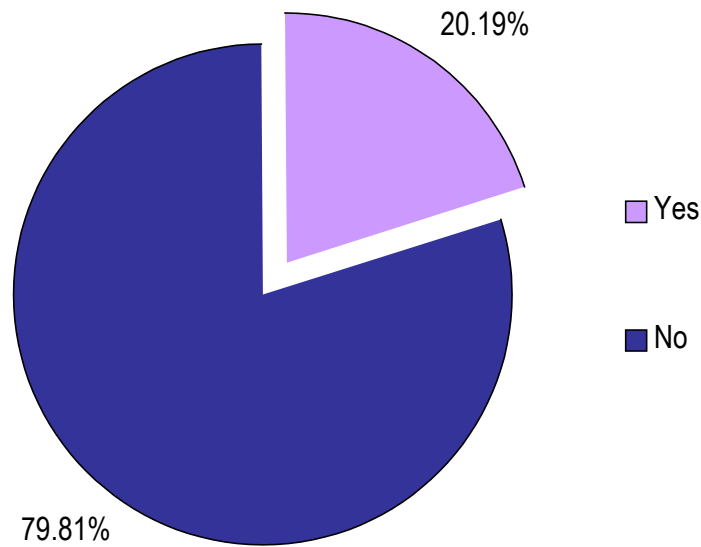
Most of the pupils who take Trinity examinations at present study English as one of the subjects included in the school curriculum (86%) and not as extra activities linked to extra-curricular projects or optional language courses offered by the school.

As a consequence, in most cases, external assessment amounts to value added to the necessary end of year internal assessment provided for in any discipline included in the obligatory timetable.

This item of data is very significant inasmuch as external certification introduced into extra-curricular activities (*Lingue 2000* Project) has become a normal means of supporting assessment of achievement obtained.

**Graph 2 - Have you attended a course or taken part in a study-stay in an English-speaking country?**  
Pupils - Yes/No answer item

Yes	240	20.19%
No	949	79.81%



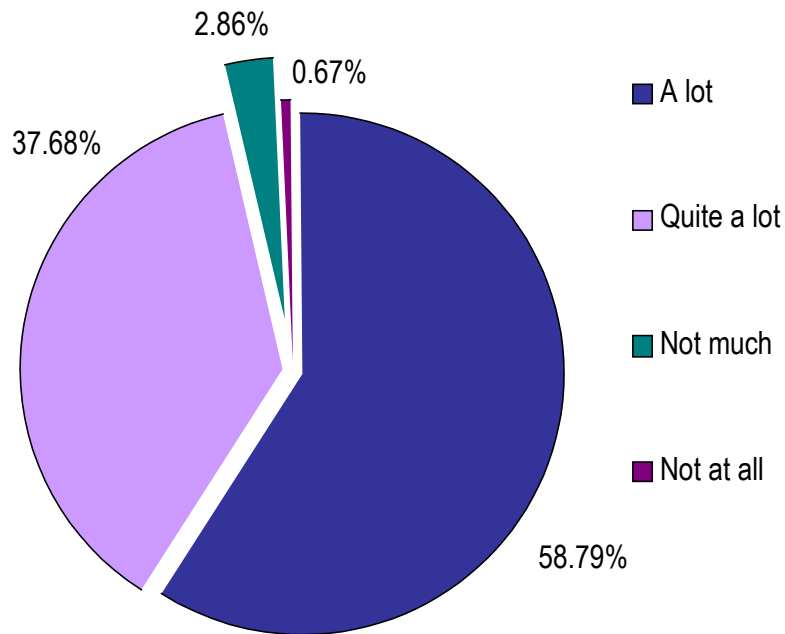
Item number 2 takes into consideration any significant extra-scholastic activities linked to the study of the English language undertaken by pupils.

The survey however highlights the fact that most pupils (almost 80%) do not have the possibility of studying abroad.

If we separate out results from pupils in middle schools and upper schools we naturally identify a more sustained mobility of pupils in upper schools (33% against 13% in the middle school).

**Graph 3 - Do you like studying English?**  
Pupils - Yes/No answer item

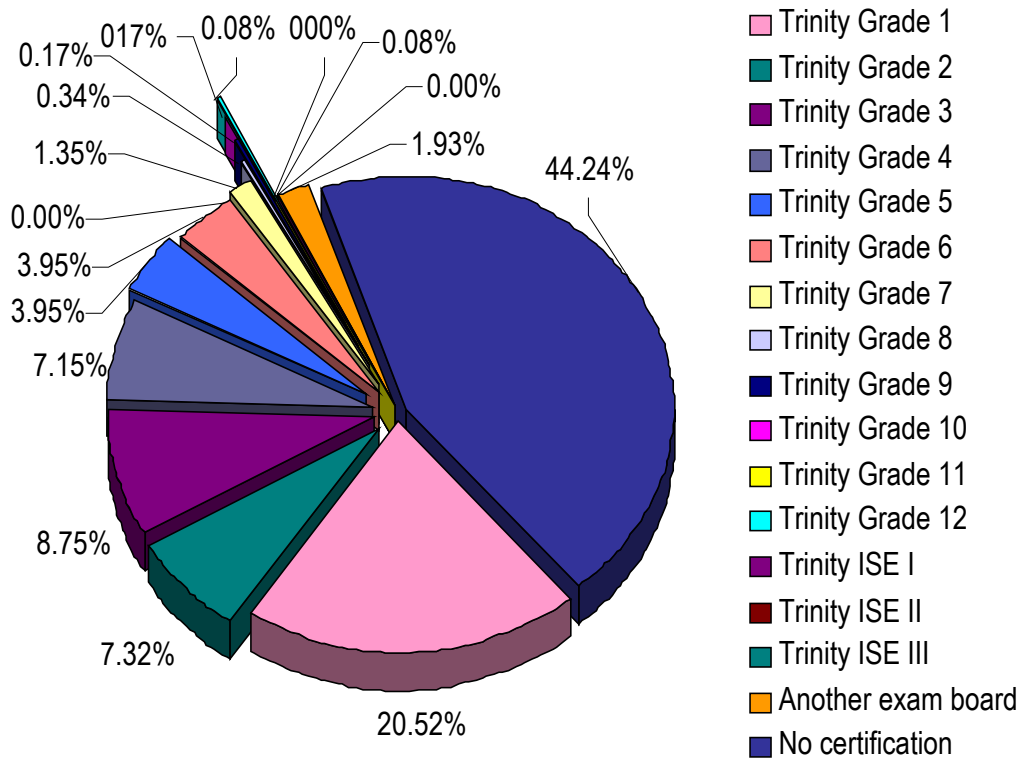
A lot	699	58.79%
Quite a lot	448	37.68%
Not much	34	2.86%
Not at all	8	0.67%



It is very interesting to note that almost all pupils in the sample study English with pleasure (59% say a lot, 38% say quite a lot and little more than 3% say not much or not at all).

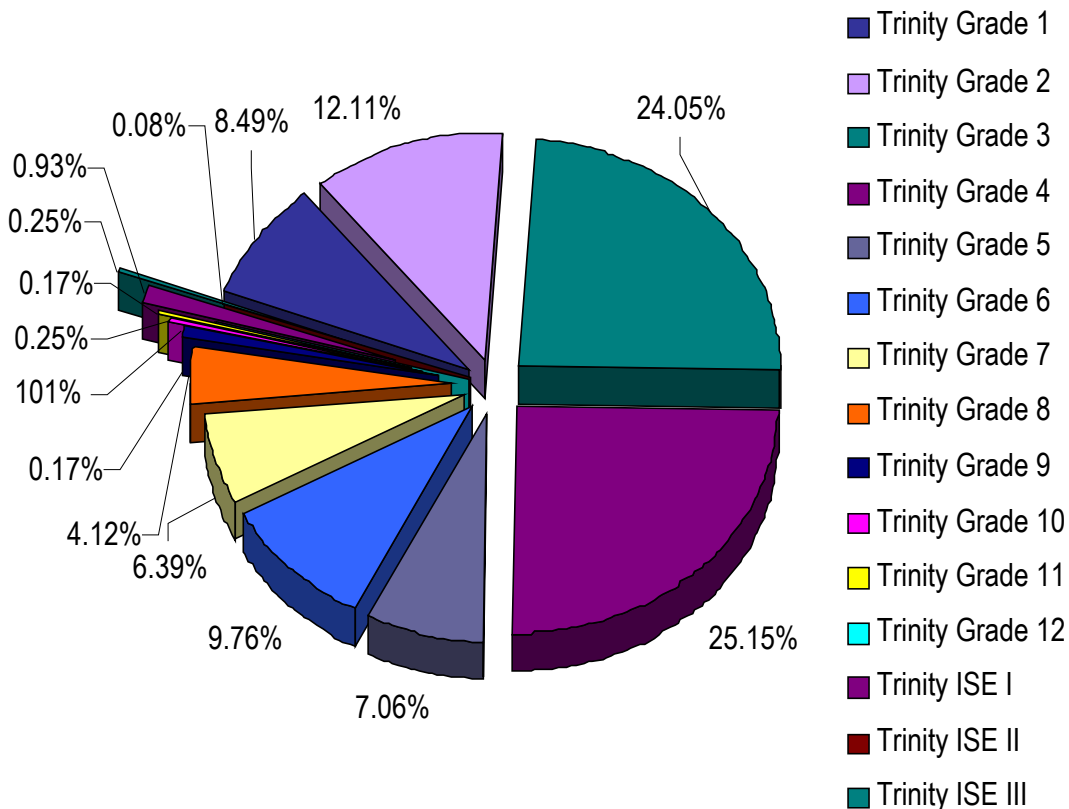
**Graph 4 - Did you already pass a graded English language examination in previous school years?**  
Pupils - Yes/No answer item

Trinity Grade 1	244	20.52%
Trinity Grade 2	87	7.32%
Trinity Grade 3	104	8.75%
Trinity Grade 4	85	7.15%
Trinity Grade 5	47	3.95%
Trinity Grade 6	47	3.95%
Trinity Grade 7	16	1.35%
Trinity Grade 8	4	0.34%
Trinity Grade 9	2	0.17%
Trinity Grade 10	2	0.17%
Trinity Grade 11	0	0
Trinity Grade 12	1	0.08%
Trinity ISE I	0	0
Trinity ISE II	1	0.08%
Trinity ISE III	0	0
Another examination board	23	1.93%
No certification	526	44.24%



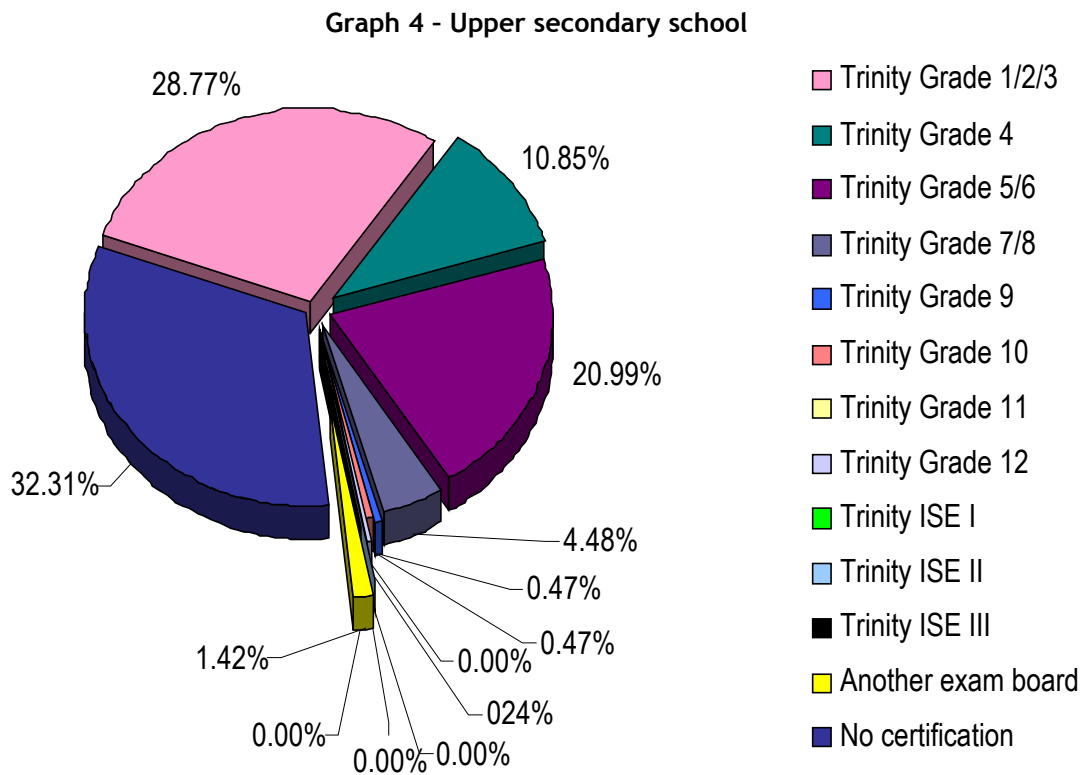
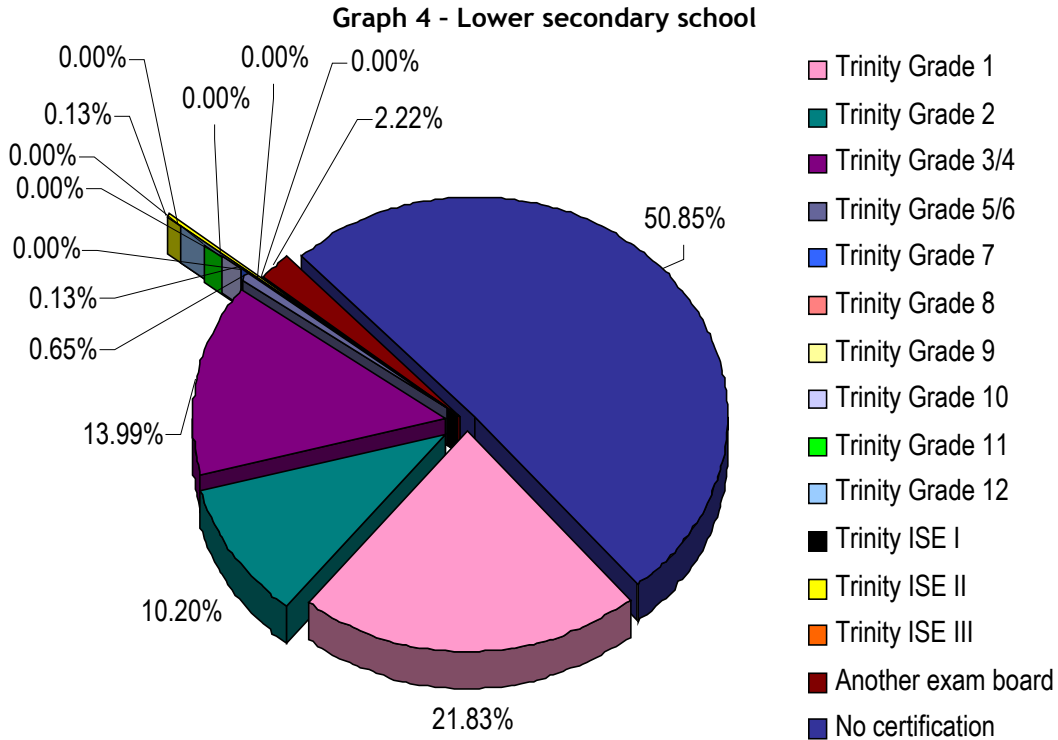
**Graph 5 - Are you taking/Have you taken a Trinity traded examination during the current school year?**  
Pupils - Yes/No answer item

Trinity Grade 1	101	8.49%
Trinity Grade 2	144	12.11%
Trinity Grade 3	286	24.05%
Trinity Grade 4	299	25.15%
Trinity Grade 5	84	7.06%
Trinity Grade 6	116	9.76%
Trinity Grade 7	76	6.39%
Trinity Grade 8	49	4.12%
Trinity Grade 9	12	1.01%
Trinity Grade 10	3	0.25%
Trinity Grade 11	2	0.17%
Trinity Grade 12	2	0.17%
Trinity ISE I	11	0.93%
Trinity ISE II	1	0.08%
Trinity ISE III	3	0.25%

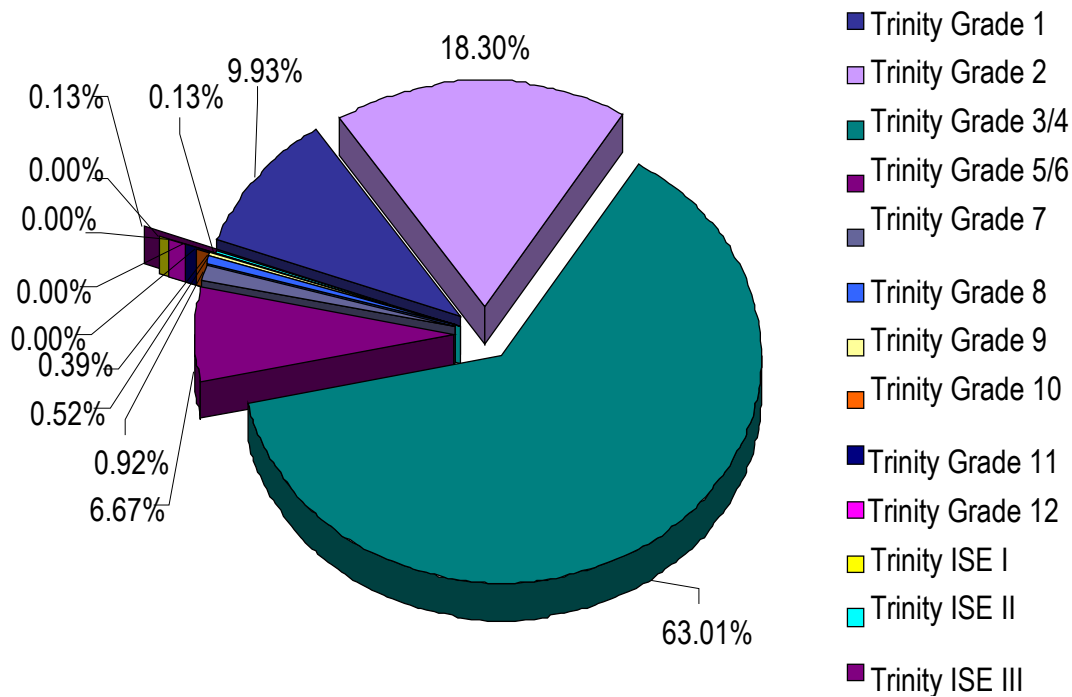


More than half the pupils interviewed (66% - see Graph 4) previously took an English language examination and in 2005 are taking a higher level.

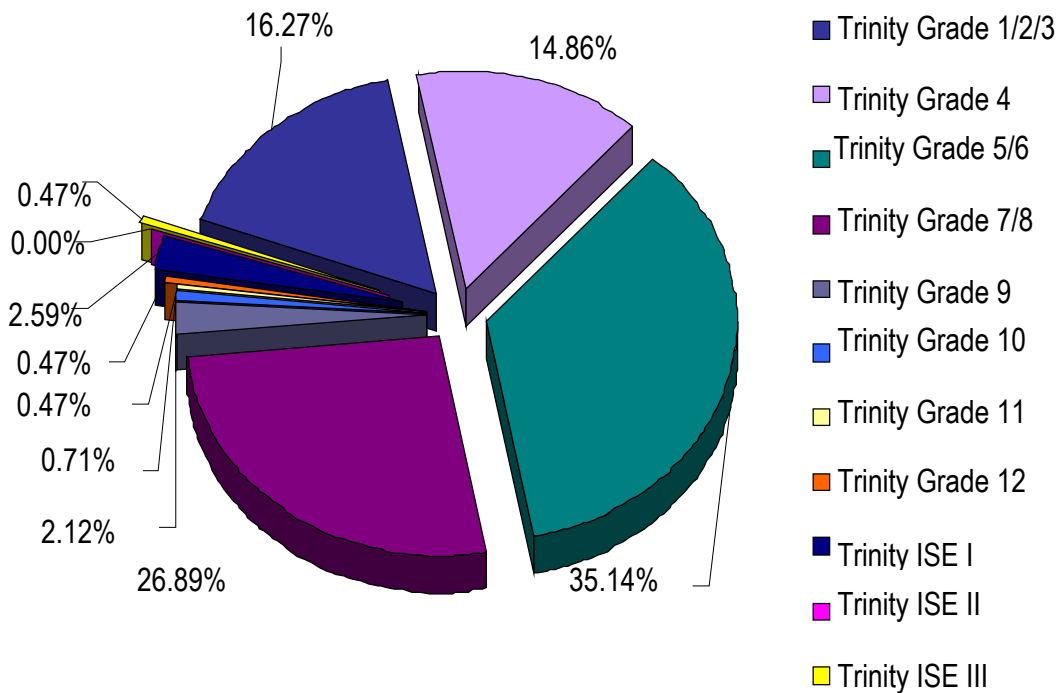
Overall, in comparing Graphs 4 and 5, there has been an increase in the request for certification at Grades 3 and 4 - level A2 - (49% against 16% the previous year) just as there have been significant increases in Grades 6, 7 and 8. It is interesting to see there has been an increase in candidates for ISE (integrated skills), taken by 19 candidates in the sample group in 2005 (only 1 candidate from the group in previous years).



**Graph 5 - Lower secondary school**



**Graph 5 - Upper secondary school**

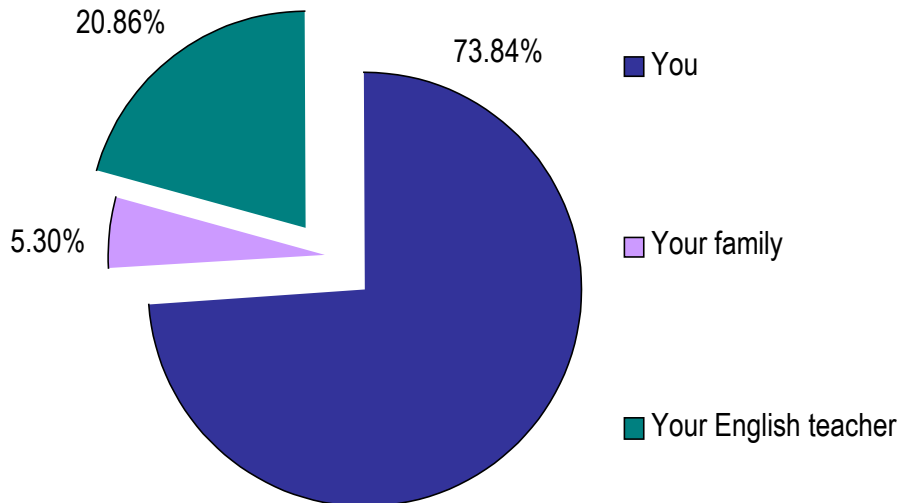


One notes that for pupils in the middles school there was a significant increase of candidates/examinations for Grades 3/4 (63% against 14% the previous year) and 5/6 (6,5 % against 0,5%); for pupils in the upper school on the other hand there was a drop in the 3 lower Grades 3 (16% at present against 29% precedingly) and a notable increase in Grades 5 to 8 (Grade 5/6 35% against 21%; Grade 7/8 27% against 4,5%).

### How and why the choice was made

Graph 6 - The decision to take a Trinity graded examination was made by  
Pupils - Yes/No answer item

You	878	73.84%
Your family	63	5.3%
Your English teacher	248	20.86%

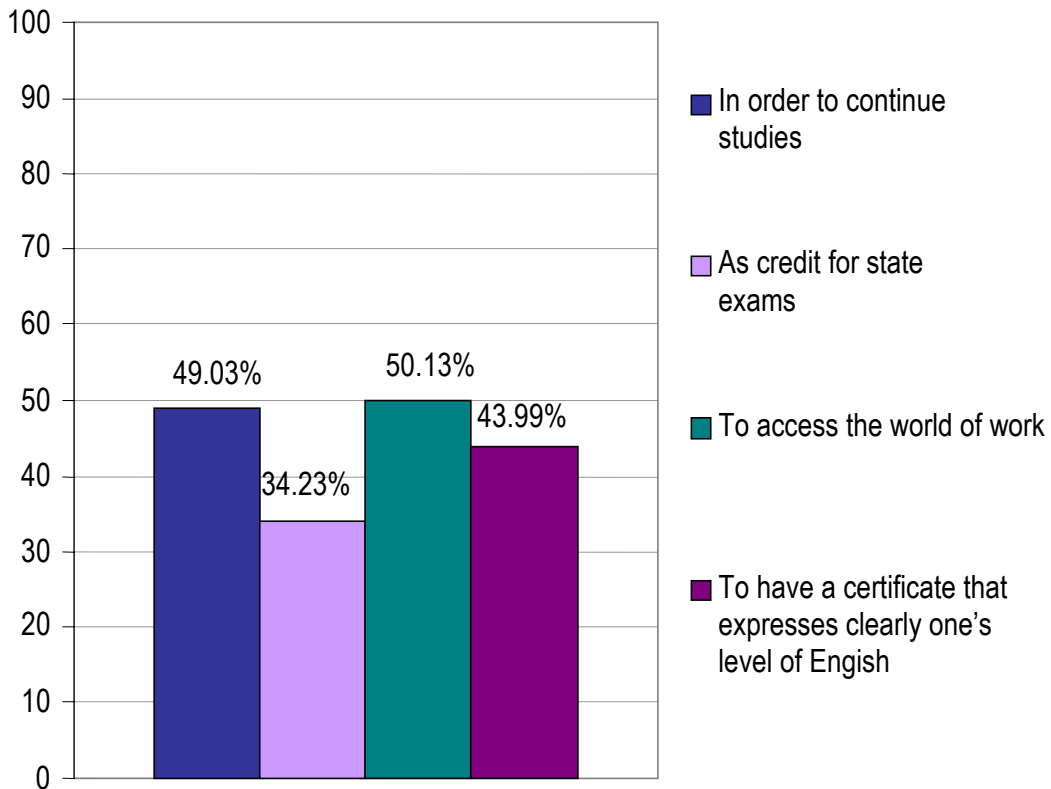


The survey throws light on how the pupil sees the importance of personally making the decision to take the exam (almost 74% said they made that decision). This item of data can also be correlated with the class-teacher's personal commitment to take part by preparing her/his pupils for the examination (see Graph 8).

Only 20% of those interviewed feel they were influenced in their decision by their teachers, and only 5% by their families. This item of data confirms the perception of teachers that the main principle used to select candidates was the explicit interest shown by pupils in taking the examination (see Graph 5 - Teachers).

**Graph 7 - Certification is useful**  
Pupils - multiple choice item

in order to continue studies	583	49.03%
as credit for state exams	407	34.23%
to access the world of work	596	50.13%
to have a certificate that expresses clearly one's level of English	523	43.99%

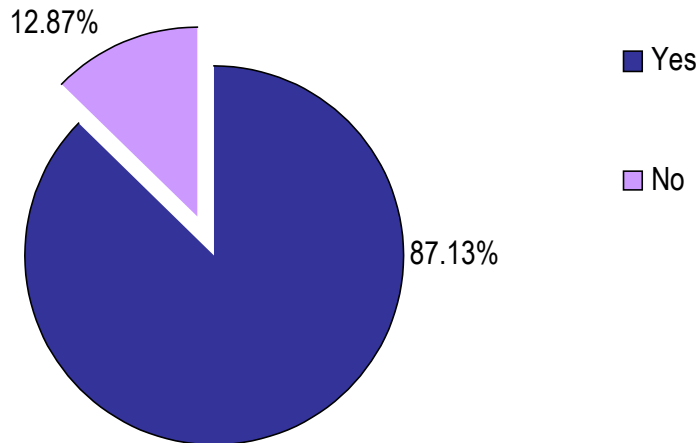


The perception of the utility of certifying language skills indicates the 4 possible responses in a reasonably balanced manner; however there is a slight propensity to view the validity of certification more as being useful for further study (almost 49% of the sample) and access to the world of work (more than 50% of the sample) rather than for ends located within the school system (such as training credit 34%; to have a certificate that expresses clearly one's level of English 44%).

### Effects on learning and teaching

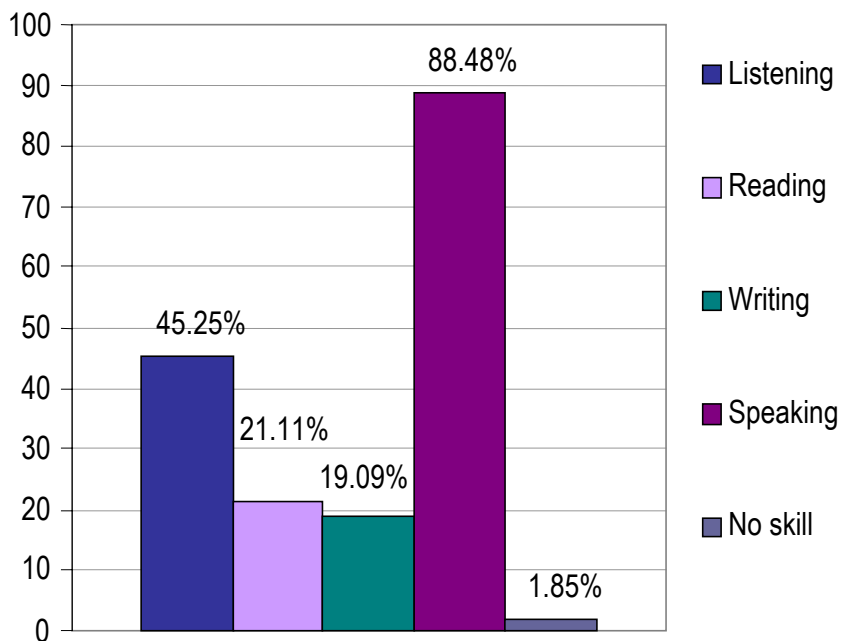
**Graph 8 - Have any activities been conducted in class during the year as preparation for the examinations?**  
Pupils - Yes/No answer item

Yes	1036	87.13%
No	153	12.48%



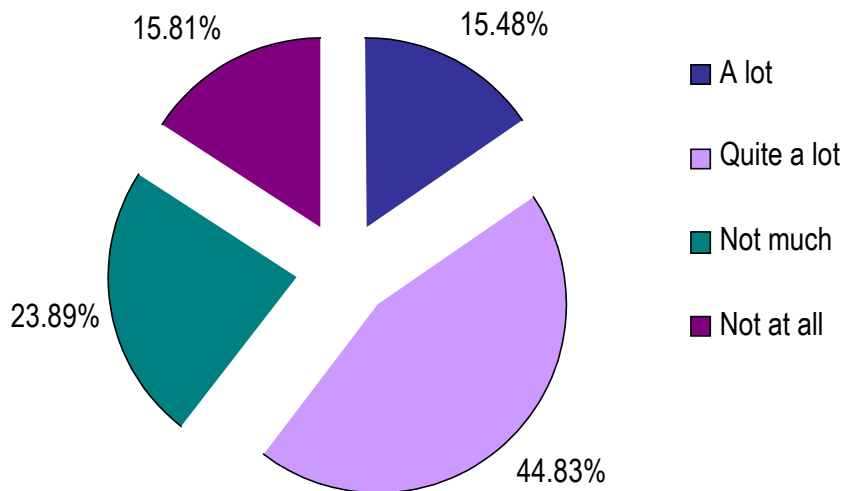
**Graph 9 - Which skills were focused on more during lessons?**  
Pupils - multiple choice item

Listening	538	45.25%
Reading	251	21.11%
Writing	227	19.09%
Speaking	1052	88.48%
No skill	22	1.85%



**Graph 10 - Has certification changed your way of studying?**  
Pupils - Yes/No answer item

A lot	184	15.48%
Quite a lot	533	44.83%
Not much	284	23.89%
Not at all	188	15.81%



More than 87% of pupils taking Trinity exams take part in preparatory activities in class. The perception pupils have concerning the impact of the introduction of certification upon the teacher's teaching practice is very interesting: emphasis is placed upon audio-oral skills (speaking and listening: indicated respectively 88.50% and 45% by pupils; writing and reading: respectively 19% and 21% of the pupils).

This last item of data is very interesting for three main reasons: in the first place because pupils appear to confirm the special attention placed by their teacher on language as a means of communication; in second place because it identifies the awareness pupils have of teaching activities conducted in class; finally because the question concerned skills which were given priority during lessons, and not during preparatory activities for the examination.

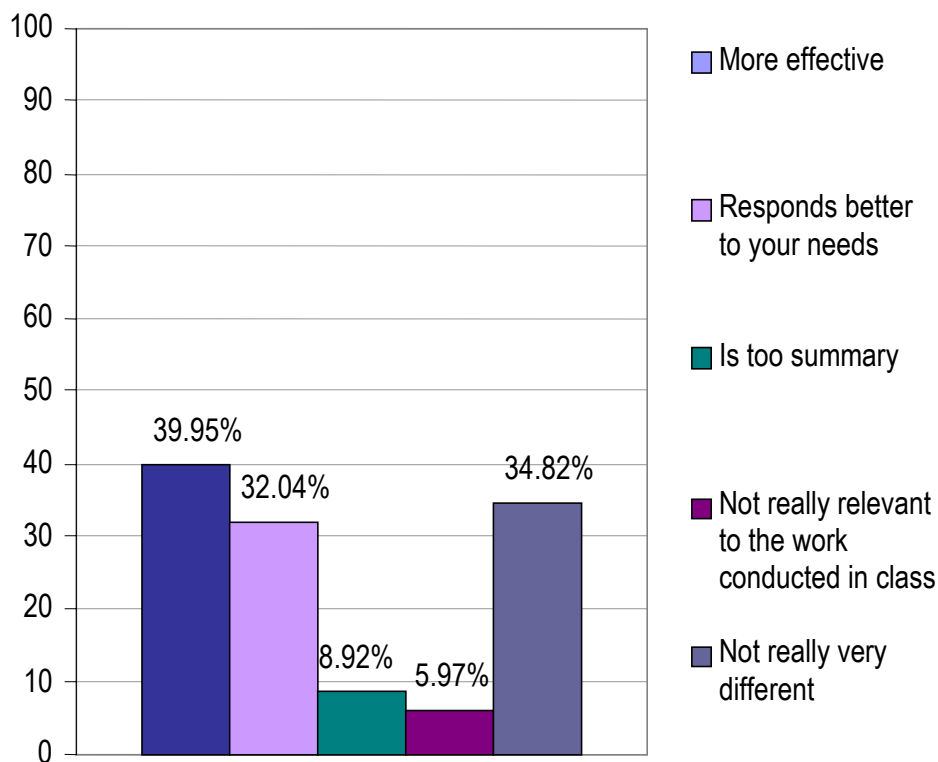
This shows how the teacher's teaching practice, according to responses from the sample group of pupils, is subject to a stand-alone effect also as an effect of participation in Trinity examination sessions, thereby creating a virtuous circle between the examinations and teaching programmes in general.

Pupils in the sample maintain that certification has had an average impact upon the way in which they study: an average position is in fact adopted by 69% of the pupils in the sample (45% say they changed not much and 24% quite a lot).

## Motivation and approval

Graph 11 - Compared with your teacher's assessment do you think external certification is  
Pupils - multiple choice item

More effective	475	39.95%
Responds better to your needs	381	32.04%
Is too summary	106	8.92%
Not really relevant to the work conducted in class	71	5.97%
Not really very different	414	34.82%

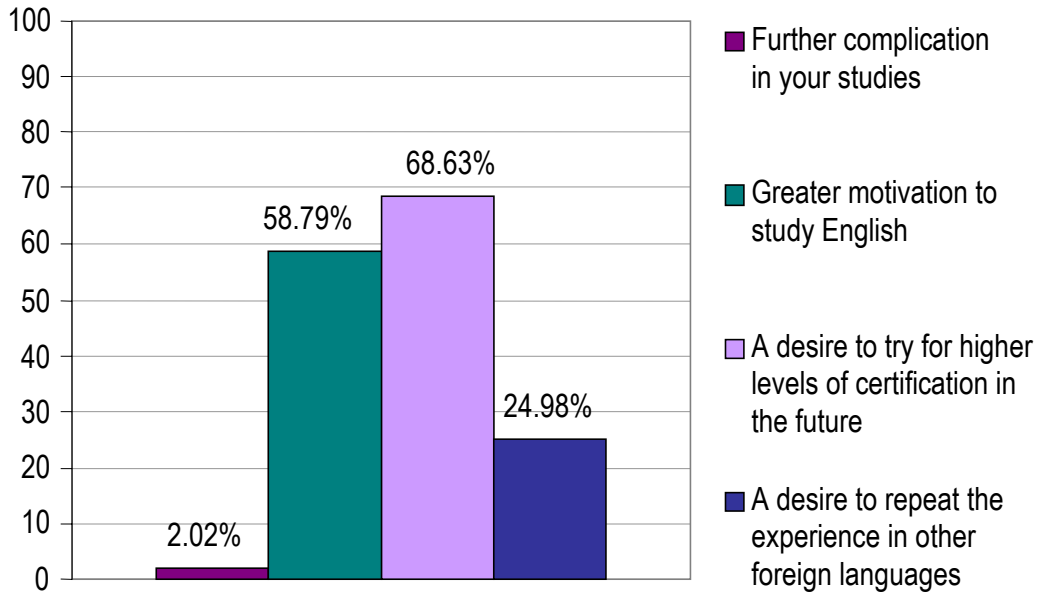


External certification, compared with obligatory internal assessment in the school, is perceived by 40% of the pupils as being more effective, and by 32% as responding more to personal needs.

At the same time 35% of the sample say that there are no substantial differences between the two forms of assessment.

**Graph 12 - Did/Does the knowledge that you were/are going to take an external examination bring with it**  
Pupils - multiple choice item

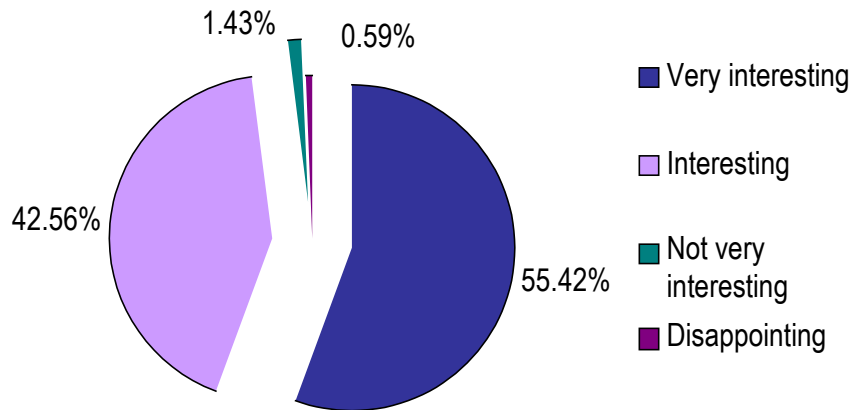
Further complication in your studies	24	2.02%
Greater motivation to study English	699	58.79%
A desire to try for higher levels of certification in the future	816	68.63%
A desire to repeat the experience in other foreign languages	297	24.98%



Pupils believe that the knowledge that they can obtain certification of their personal level of competence in the English language encourages them to continue in order to obtain certification at a higher level (69%) and motivates them to further study (59%). Certification is not experienced in any case as a further complication in their scholastic career.

**Graph 13 - Indicate your level of approval of this experience**  
Pupils - Yes/No answer item

Very interesting	659	55.42%
Interesting	506	42.56%
Not very interesting	17	1.43%
Disappointing	7	0.59%



The level of approval of the experience is without a doubt excellent (98% between very interesting and interesting). Only 7 pupils out of 1189 in the sample said it was disappointing.

### III-4. Telephone interviews with teachers

*Besides the questionnaires the enquiry provided for a certain number of telephone interviews with teachers who had made themselves available for this, so as to obtain a fuller in-depth subjective view to complete the picture supplied by the results of the questionnaire. Altogether 58 interviews were conducted, of which 7 in Lazio, 14 in Lombardy, 20 in Puglia and 17 in Sicily. Interviews were based on a semi-structured questionnaire which is reproduced below along with a summary of the answers collected.*

#### Question 1

---

- You have been involved now for some years in the organisation of Trinity examination sessions and have witnessed pupils' reactions. At this point, from a strictly personal but professional point of view, could you point out the aspect of greatest satisfaction provided by the undertaking?
- And what aspect would you criticise most?

##### 1.1

Most of those interviewed (40) say that the aspect of greatest satisfaction is the positive effect the examination had on pupils.

It appears, in short, that although the question was directed at the teacher's personal professional satisfaction, most of them answered with reference to the effect certification first had upon pupils, and then pointed out that their own personal satisfaction came directly from the fact that the experience had been positive for pupils.

Among the most frequent answers it is of interest to note the following:

- Pupils study English with more interest during the year, understand the value of learning languages and want to continue the experience;
- Pupils are satisfied by the experience because they obtain a clear and result that can be used as 'currency' and they are gratified by the success obtained when passing the exam;
- Pupils are gratified because they speak with a mother-tongue examiner and realise that they are able to 'communicate' in English.

However, some of the teachers interviewed highlighted some aspects of greater satisfaction more directly connected with their personal satisfaction, and in particular:

- Feedback and proof of positive work carried out in the classroom;
- In the preparatory course there is the satisfaction of being able to teach the living, situation-based language and focus on audio-oral abilities (this confirms what was stated in questionnaires from both teachers and pupils concerning changes in teaching practice).

##### 1.2

Of those interviewed 14 could not identify any negative or critical aspect to the experience. Most of those interviewed identified as critical aspects the low level of recognition within the school system of the work carried out by teachers in the preparation and organisation of examination sessions, little willingness to help or take part in the undertaking from their colleagues - as well as from the school itself - and bureaucratic problems related both to Trinity and the school.

Some teachers (13) pointed out some negative aspects concerning the way in which the examination is conducted; in particular:

- the fact that the class teacher is not allowed to sit in on the examination and in any case the lack of an external observer as a witness, should a controversy arise;
- some examiners seem to be too demanding, or penalise the candidate because of the short time available, place too much emphasis on faulty stress and intonation, the candidate's personal way of relating, etc.

## Question 2

**2.1 Have the pupils you entered for these examinations, whether they come from one or more classes, benefited from the experience in terms of an increase in their motivation to study English?**

**2.2 Can you briefly give reasons for your answer? For example: because they perceive certification as amounting to a credit that can be 'spent' and is useful in many situations, or for the personal satisfaction of obtaining a clear and transparent result; or is it instead perceived as a purely scholastic achievement? Or do you think there are other reasons?**

2.1

All those interviewed replied affirmatively to this question.

2.2

The importance of information received during these interviews was less than expected. Most of the teachers had in fact already highlighted pupils' increase in motivation when answering the previous question.

However some points were further qualified, such as:

taking part in the examination increases motivation to study English because:

- the examination is a formative experience inasmuch as you receive personal and didactic feedback from outside the school; it constitutes a stimulus to study and try again if you fail;
- pupils study and prepare enthusiastically because they have decided autonomously to participate in the experience; English is no longer just experienced as an obligatory school subject.

## Question 3

**3.1 From your experience of information and training support activities, as well as other additional services, do you feel you need further support?**

**3.2 If yes, where from (your school, Trinity, administration, ...) - and what?**

3.1

Of those interviewed 19 said they did not feel the need for further support activities and that those supplied by Trinity were more than sufficient.

3.2

Answers from the remaining number of teachers concerning what would be useful as further support are not very clear: generally speaking information received from Trinity is appreciated or very much appreciated. The only other support requested is of an organisational nature for teachers and pupils, while many teachers say however that more training and didactic support activities would be welcome. This request is however never seen as indispensable to the positive outcome of the undertaking.

In particular, with regard to Trinity seminars they say that:

- they are too far away;
- they take place on dates that don't correspond with needs;
- further meetings would be required as support for the training of teachers.

Concerning extra didactic support, those interviewed ask Trinity:

- for more paper-based materials that can be photo-copied, and audio-visual material.
- Finally, it appears that self-training and peer-to-peer training is widespread.

## Question 4

---

**4.1 In your opinion has the introduction of external certification into schools with ad hoc financing over a period of years contributed to the spreading of a ‘mentality’ of assessment and certification of achievement?**

**4.2 If yes, is there anything you would like to say about this?**

4.1

Of those interviewed all, except one, replied affirmatively to this question.

4.2

Replies to this question were of two types: the minority of teachers try to develop a complete awareness of the relationship with assessment-certification and become well-familiarised with these areas; most of them however raise as being most important the question of financing as influencing two aspects: the cost to families which is discouraging (see in particular replies from Sicily) and the lack of recognition of the work they undertake in preparing and organising examination sessions in their own school. All, however, say that the ‘mentality’ of certification is spreading.

Among the most significant replies we note:

- the experience is positive because more transparent assessment is a useful addition to scholastic assessment and helps teachers in their teaching practice;
- the benefit we obtain in human and didactic terms, and contrast with a form of external assessment, enrich the ways in which we assess.

As far as financing is concerned teachers underline the fact that:

- at times pupils do not take the exam because of the cost;
- without financing the more well-off classes take part;
- without dedicated financing, certification is only now conducted thanks to the commitment shown by teachers.

## Question 5

---

**5.1 Can you tell me in just a few words what impact the undertaking had on pupils’ families?**

**5.2 One last question: would you personally be willing to take a Trinity graded examination to certify your level of linguistic-communicative competence?**

5.1

Only 9 of the teachers interviewed found that there was little or no interest from the families; the rest of the teachers say the the impact was positive - in some cases excellent - and connected with the enthusiasm the children had in taking part, besides the usefulness of the certificate in terms of its being ‘currency’ that can later be ‘spent’.

5.2

It is interesting to see that there are three types of answers:

answers which are clearly positive (32) such as:

- yes, it’s a real challenge;
- yes, I’ve thought about it and suggested it to colleagues;

answers which are clearly negative (9) such as:

- no, there isn’t enough time and I don’t feel I need it as I often go to England;
- no, I don’t like the idea of taking an examination;

then there are answers which were not so clear (17), among which the majority were undecided and answered:

- yes, but I would need the time to study first;
- yes, I was giving the possibility some thought;
- yes, but I'd have some misgivings.

### Some examples of answers teachers gave during the telephone interviews

There follow some of the answers given by teachers which we think are among the most significant because they can be generalised from their content and the ideas expressed and, furthermore, because they are useful for developing and enriching the picture that emerged from an analysis of the structured questionnaires:

*“The assessment ‘mentality’ needs to be intensified - also because the state exam with external examiners has been eliminated. The external examination board presents an opportunity for constructive feedback from outside the school.”*

*“I’d like to be present at the exam so as to understand where the weaknesses are in the candidates’ preparation.”*

*“I’m satisfied by the experience and I want to repeat it because the students are motivated and I feel I am self-assessing myself. However, as in all exams, there’s always a subjective aspect in the person examining - and we teachers can’t be present at the exams.”*

*“Even if credit isn’t always recognised in terms of ‘currency’ the pupils involved in taking the examinations always study more. They actually like to be examined, and they see it as being a training experience.”*

*“Candidates are tested in speaking, which the school can’t easily do, and the language is alive, used in communicative situations.”*

*My pupils love the challenge involved in relating with a mother-tongue teacher.”*

*“The pupils think this is a great experience and they want to continue studying English and obtain further certification when they go to the upper school”.*

*“Pupils experience certification as if it were a prize, but we teachers note a lack of cooperation from colleagues and the school itself. Even the smallest jobs have to be done by the coordinator.”*

*“It would be important to make clearer to colleagues the aims and importance of certification.”*

*“There is strong demand from families, who get excited and involved in the experience.”*

*“Parents get involved. They’d like to take the exam too.”*

*“The school’s funds are limited so the number of candidates is limited too.”*

## IV - CONCLUSIONS

The results of the survey demonstrate the great success of certification expressed by the three sample groups in the 4 representative regions selected.

We can therefore sum up by briefly illustrating the most important reasons for this success.

Certification is satisfying for candidates, their teachers and the heads of schools because it is motivating.

Teachers play the most important role in the decision to introduce certification and are gratified by the experience because of the professional satisfaction they get from it.

The candidate feels put to the test in a real communicative situation with important positive consequences for her/his study of English and academic career.

The school is benefited by the relationship with an external service both in terms of enriching the academic training on offer and because it stimulates reflection on ways of assessing.

The opportunity provided by a certification of language competence allows any candidate to obtain credits that are transparent and can be 'spent' as educational 'currency' both within the school system and in the world of work, especially within the current dynamics of European and international mobility.

This last aspect is in our opinion particularly important because nowadays the educational system is in effect one of the environments in which, within the phenomenon of 'lifelong learning', not only do training processes take place but it is possible to offer experiences which the learner can capitalise on, where s(he) can maintain the skills acquired and possibly improve them continuously during the course of a career of academic study, as well as in the world of work.

Alongside the fact that the undertaking is clearly successful one has to however also consider the implications that the school has to deal with when accessing and managing its resources in such a way as to allow pupils to take part in this experience should they want to, and to have teachers feel supported both didactically and administratively.

In this way the experience offered by certification could become more generally widespread and become an integral part of a school's overall educational and training programme, especially in terms of practical assessment.

There are a number of possible fields of intervention for further study:

1. extend the enquiry to the other regions not yet involved, in particular where Trinity has fewer candidates, so as to enquire into the reasons why those who take the examination do so, as well as the difficulties that have arisen over the years. Should we want to compare further the reasons why some decide to take part in examination sessions (teachers and pupils) and who is on the contrary not interested in certification, it could be of interest to create a control group with those who do not take part in order to enquire into any differences existing in the motivation to study English, teachers' teaching practice, value attributed to the certificate, value attributed to external organisations working in the school;
2. enquire more deeply into the point of view of the mother-tongue examiners. In this case interesting opinions might be had from the persons directly involved in the examination itself as well as concerning the external assessment of the outcome. This enquiry could offer both the examination board and the school a means of managing and checking results at the most crucial moment in the entire operation, with feedback concerning the impact from the person who actually examines.
3. transfer the enquiry to other nations where Trinity is present so as to obtain, with the same instruments, a picture of the phenomenon elsewhere in such a way as to be able to then intervene in a targeted manner tailored to meet the specific needs that emerge.

## Appendix 1

### Structured questionnaires

#### MONITORING TRINITY EXAMINATIONS IN THE ITALIAN SECONDARY STATE SCHOOL SYSTEM - Academic Year 2004-05: Questionnaires

#### QUESTIONNAIRE TO HEADS OF SCHOOLS

Name: _____
Surname: _____
Province: _____
Region: _____
Type of school: _____
Trinity Centre Number: _____

#### How external examinations were introduced into the school

##### 1 - What were the reasons for introducing external examinations?

- So as to offer a quality service       Following requests from pupils/families  
 Following requests from teachers       As a result of promotion from the Ministry

##### 2 - Who decided on Trinity?

- Head of school       Teaching staff committee/School committee  
 Teacher

##### 3 - Why was Trinity selected?

- Because the exams responded to learning aims  
 Competitive price  
 Because of the type of exam offered (format)  
 Because of the support and assistance offered  
 Don't know

#### Selection of classes and pupils

##### 4 - What criteria were used to select classes and/or pupils for the examinations and certification? (you may select more than one answer)

- Because they were most likely to pass the examination  
 Because they were in their final year  
 Because of explicit interest expressed by pupils/parents  
 Because they took part in extra-curricular language courses

### Costs

**5 - How were the costs of certification met?**

- School budget
- Contribution towards costs requested from the pupil
- Costs borne completely by the pupil

### Approval

**6 - Did parents express satisfaction with the undertaking?**

- Yes
- No

**7 - Have you noticed any change in the request for certification over time?**

- Yes, it has increased
- Yes, it has decreased due to lack of state financing
- Yes, it has decreased due to a drop in interest from pupils/parents
- Yes, it has decreased for internal reasons within the school
- No, it is stable

### Strong points and weak points of certification

**8 - Indicate the weak points encountered in certification**

(multiple choice: do not indicate more than two)

- Extra work for administrative staff in organising/running exam sessions
- Resistance from teachers
- Lack of support
- Opposition from users due to double assessment (internal and external)
- Other

**9 - Indicate the strong points encountered in certification**

(multiple choice: do not indicate more than two)

- Added value in terms of credits to be used in and out of school
- Acquisition of greater prestige and image for the school
- Opening of the school to quality external services
- Other

**10 - Would you personally be willing to run external examination sessions again?**

- Yes
- No

**11 - Would it be useful for language teachers to have the opportunity of taking a language examination?**

- Yes
- No

## QUESTIONNAIRE TO TEACHERS

Name: _____
Surname: _____
Province: _____
Region: _____
Type of school: _____
Years of class teaching:
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 5 <input type="checkbox"/> from 5 to 10 <input type="checkbox"/> from 10 to 20
Years of teaching with tenure:
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 5 <input type="checkbox"/> from 5 to 10 <input type="checkbox"/> from 10 to 20 <input type="checkbox"/> over 20
Age: <input type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-55 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-or more
Trinity Centre Number: _____
Personal telephone number : _____

### Decision to introduce certification and the choice of board

#### 1 - Who decided to introduce certification to pupils?

- Pupils/parents                       Teacher
- School/Head of school

#### 2 - What was the reason for taking the decision?

- Motivation to study more
- To provide pupils with credit that could be 'spent' in and out of school
- To increase the range of training offered by the school
- To also have external assessment of learning

#### 3 - Why was Trinity chosen as the preferred examination board?

- Because it corresponded to learning aims
- Price
- The type of exam offered (format)
- The support and assistance offered
- Don't know

### Choice of class and pupils

#### 4 - What candidates have been selected for the examinations?

- Certain pupils from one/several classes     All the pupils of one/several classes

#### 5 - What criteria were used to select classes and/or pupils for the examinations?

(select one)

- Because they provided the best guarantee of success
- Because they were in their last year

- Because of explicit interest expressed by pupils/parents
- Because they attended extra-curricular language courses

### Training, assessment and certification

#### 6 - Specific training in assessment was received by

(select one)

- MIUR/Regional education office
- The examination board itself
- Self-training
- None
- University
- The school
- Other

#### 7 - How do you rate the training received?

- Very positive
- Adequate
- Irrelevant

### Professional enhancement

#### 8 - Certification was an experience which can be described as

(select no more than two):

- Just extra work
- External interference with internal assessment
- An opportunity for personal development
- An opportunity for reflecting upon types of assessment

### Stand alone effect upon teaching practice

#### 9 - The introduction of certification has led to the following changes in teaching practice (select no more than two):

- Proposals for specific activities linked to each individual skill
- Reference to the Common European Framework in the programme
- Diversification in types of tests
- Different ways of assessing pupils
- No change

#### 10 - Has the introduction of certification caused pupils to be more motivated in the study of English?

- Yes
- No

#### 11 - Have pupils significantly profited from the introduction of certification?

- Yes
- No

#### 12 - Have pupils gained in personal awareness/autonomy from the introduction of certification?

- Yes
- No

### Strong points and weak points of the undertaking

**13 - Over all the experience provided by certification has**

- Contributed to documenting the learning path
- Removed the teacher from self-referencing
- Provided objective descriptive assessment
- Excessively directed learning at passing the examination
- Created misunderstanding and complications linked to assessment
- Penalized the role of the school in the eyes of parents and pupils

**14 - Personally, would you be willing to organise further examination sessions?**

- Yes       No

**15 - Would it be useful if teachers were able to take language examinations leading to certification?**

- Yes       No

**16 - Would you be willing to take part in a short telephone interview?**

(please provide a telephone number if you are willing to be contacted)

- Yes       No

## QUESTIONNAIRE TO PUPILS

Name: _____
Surname: _____
Province: _____
Region: _____
Type of school: _____
Class: <input type="checkbox"/> I <input type="checkbox"/> II <input type="checkbox"/> III <input type="checkbox"/> IV <input type="checkbox"/> V
Age: <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> 13 <input type="checkbox"/> 14 <input type="checkbox"/> 15 <input type="checkbox"/> 16 <input type="checkbox"/> 17 <input type="checkbox"/> 18 <input type="checkbox"/> over 18
Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
How many years have you been studying English at school?
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> more than 5

### Linguistic biography

**1 - Do you study English**

- As a subject in the normal timetable?
- as extra activity? (experimental, *lingue 2000*, language courses offered by the school)

**2 - Have you attended a course or taken part in a study-stay in an English-speaking country?**

- Yes                     No

**3 - Do you like studying English?**

- A lot                     Quite a lot                     Not much                     Not at all

**4 - Did you already pass a graded English language examination in previous school years?**

- Trinity Grade 1     Trinity Grade 2     Trinity Grade 3     Trinity Grade 4
- Trinity Grade 5     Trinity Grade 6     Trinity Grade 7     Trinity Grade 8
- Trinity Grade 9     Trinity Grade 10     Trinity Grade 11     Trinity Grade 12
- Trinity ISE I             Trinity ISE II             Trinity ISE III
- Another examination board                     No examination

**5 - Are you taking/Have you taken a Trinity traded examination during the current school year?**

- Trinity Grade 1     Trinity Grade 2     Trinity Grade 3     Trinity Grade 4
- Trinity Grade 5     Trinity Grade 6     Trinity Grade 7     Trinity Grade 8
- Trinity Grade 9     Trinity Grade 10     Trinity Grade 11     Trinity Grade 12

### How and why the choice was made

**6 - The decision to take a Trinity graded examination was made by**

- You       Your family       Your English teacher

**7 - Certification is useful** (select no more than two):

- In order to continue studies  
 As credit for state exams  
 To access the world of work  
 to have a certificate that expresses clearly one's level of English

### Effects on learning and teaching

**8 - Have any activities been conducted in class during the year as preparation for the examinations?**

- Yes       No

**9 - Which skills were focused on more during lessons?** (select one)

- Listening     Reading     Writing     Speaking     No skill

**10 - Has certification changed your way of studying?**

- A lot       Quite a lot       Not much       Not at all

**11 - Compared with your teacher's assessment do you think external certification is** (select no more than two):

- More effective     Responds better to your needs  
 Is too summary     Not really relevant to the work conducted in class  
 Not really very different

### Motivation and approval

**12 - Did/Does the knowledge that you were/are going to take an external examination bring with it** (select no more than two):

- Further complication in your studies  
 Greater motivation to study English  
 A desire to try for higher levels of certification in the future  
 A desire to repeat the experience in other foreign languages

**13 - Indicate your level of approval of this experience**

- Very interesting       Interesting  
 Not very interesting     Disappointing

## Appendix 2

### Telephone interview: questionnaire and method of administration

#### MONITORING TRINITY EXAMINATIONS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM Academic Year 2004-05: THE INTERVIEW

#### QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____
Surname: _____
Province: _____
Region: _____
Type of school: _____
Years of class teaching:
<input type="checkbox"/> less than 5 <input type="checkbox"/> from 5 to 10 <input type="checkbox"/> from 10 to 20
Years of teaching with tenure:
<input type="checkbox"/> less than 5 <input type="checkbox"/> from 5 to 10 <input type="checkbox"/> from 10 to 20 <input type="checkbox"/> more than 20
Age: <input type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-55 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-or over
Trinity Centre Number: _____
Telephone number: _____

1. Indicate the aspect of greatest satisfaction provided by certification  
*You have been involved now for some years in the organisation of Trinity examination sessions and have witnessed pupils' reactions. At this point, from a strictly personal but professional point of view, could you point out the aspect of greatest satisfaction provided by the undertaking?*

2. Indicate the aspect of greatest dissatisfaction provided by certification  
*And what aspect would you criticise most?*

3. Have the pupils you entered for these examinations, whether they come from one or more classes, benefited from the experience in terms of an increase in their motivation to study English?  
 Yes     No

4. Can you briefly give reasons for your answer?

*For example:*

Because they perceive certification as amounting to a credit that can be 'spent' and is useful in many situations, or for the personal satisfaction of obtaining a clear and transparent result?

5. Why have pupils NOT had an increase in their motivation to study English?

For example

Is it instead perceived as a purely scholastic achievement?

6. From your experience of information and training support activities, as well as other additional services, do you feel you need further support?

Yes                       No

7. If yes, where from (your school, Trinity, administration, ...)

8. What kind of further support do you feel you need?

9. In your opinion

Has the introduction of external certification into schools with ad hoc financing over a period of years contributed to the spreading of a 'mentality' of assessment and certification of achievement?

Yes                       No

10. Is there anything in particular you want to point out concerning the spread of a 'mentality' of assessment and certification?

11. In just a few words

What impact has the undertaking had on pupils' families?

12 .

Would you personally be willing to take a Trinity graded examination to certify your level of linguistic-communicative competence?

Yes                       No

## GRID CLASSIFYING REPLIES TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

In order to gather data from the interviews we put together a grid to be filled in with answers when transcribing from cassettes. The construction of the grid was organised in such a way as to note the teacher's personal details (name, school, Trinity centre number and region) and the questions have been standardised so as to be able to summarise and classify the answers supplied.

### Question 1 - Experience with Trinity

Personal data	Max satisfaction	Max criticism
---------------	------------------	---------------

### Question 2 - Pupils motivation

Personal data	Increase Yes	Increase No	Reason why Yes	Reason why No
---------------	-----------------	----------------	-------------------	------------------

### Question 3 -Further information /training

Personal data	Yes	No	If yes, from who	If yes, what
---------------	-----	----	------------------	--------------

### Question 4 - Spread of a 'mentality' of assessment and certification

Personal data	Yes	No	If yes, what contribution on assessment and certification
---------------	-----	----	--

### Question 5 - Approval and willingness

Personal data	Impact on family	Willingness to take part
---------------	------------------	--------------------------

## How to conduct the interview

*Dear Interviewer,*

*Following preceding arrangements we are sending you the text and instructions as to how to conduct the telephone interview with the teachers in your region that we have identified.*

*The period in which you will need to conduct the interview is between the 1st and the 8th July (??)*

*Please remember that the aim of the enquiry, given its specific nature and the small sample of teachers interviewed (Lazio 7, Lombardy 15, Puglia 19, Sicily 15) (??) is to obtain subjective in-depth quality data which has no statistic relevance, but which supplies in-depth data to be cross-referenced with the quantity-based enquiry taking place.*

*We therefore are asking you to reserve for each telephone conversation a time of 15-20 minutes when making the appointment with the teacher, and after having explained to the teacher the sample enquiry being conducted by Trinity.*

*The selected teachers will need to answer a series of questions which you will record on an audio-cassette, some with Yes/No answers, others with an open answer (max. time established for these 3 mins.).*

### **Gas the interviewer you will need to:**

- first formally ask for permission to record;
- before proceeding with the interview, have the teacher state her/his name and the school where s(he) teaches - and record this data;
- explain to the interviewed person that s(he) will only need to answer Yes or No to some of the questions, while for those that require an open answer they will have about 3 minutes maximum to answer in;
- seif the teacher hesitates when answering your questions, please attempt to encourage interaction only after having waited for a minute at the very most;
- please label the cassette with the Trinity centre number where the interviewed teacher works;
- make sure the quality of the recording is good and then send the cassette to Trinity;
- there follows a summary of the overall structure of the enquiry (semi-structured questionnaire) with the strong/weak points we want to identify with each item, in such a way as to help you make sure the teacher answers suitably.

## STRUCTURE OF TELEPHONE ENQUIRY

- 1) open answer reflection on experience with Trinity, aimed at identifying:
  - 1.1 what was most satisfying
  - 1.2 what was most dissatisfying

For point 1 we expect to get information concerning the teacher's strictly personal experience from a professional point of view.

- 2) Relationship between students' motivation and the experience of certification
  - 2.1 Yes/No answer item
  - 2.2 Open answer to explain why

For point 2 we expect to get the teacher's view on her/his pupils' motivation (increased or diminished)

- 3) Support which is considered useful
  - 3.1 Yes/No answer item
  - 3.2 Open answer to explain why

For point 3 we expect to find out if there is any need for further support activities

- 4) Spread of the certification 'mentality'
  - 4.1 Yes/No answer item
  - 4.2 Open answer to explain why

For point 4 we expect to find out whether the teacher thinks s(he) has taken part in and contributed to a cultural process in which certification of the product (outcome) takes on special value within the school.

- 5) Two open answer questions concerning:
  - 5.1 Impact on families
  - 5.2 Willingness of the teacher to take a language examination

For point 5 we expect to obtain two short final perceptions of the impact of certification: the part played by families, if any, and the teacher's desire to obtain recognition of their professional activity through certification.

We are counting on your help in obtaining all the information required. Thank you for your cooperation!