

**MONITORING MOTIVATION AND THE EFFECTS OF
TRINITY CERTIFICATION IN STATE SCHOOLS:**

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Introduction

Following the Lingue 2000 Project external certification of results of the study of languages has become fully accepted as a part of the training offered by scholastic institutes.

Certification of language competence allows interested students to obtain credits which can also be used outside the school system for work in a European and international context where the worker moves from one country to another.

Today within the context of lifelong learning the educational system does not only provide training but also offers students opportunities for making use of experience, maintaining acquired skills and possibly perfecting them during the course of their studies.

Along with other external exam boards accredited in the UK by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, Trinity has from the start worked with schools and contributed to helping schools to avoid self-referencing and open up to external circumstances by offering external certification in addition to the obligatory internal assessment offered by class teachers.

Prof.ssa Nicoletta Biferale

Choices

Trinity has chosen to entrust the means of enquiry and interpretation of the data to completely external consultants, Prof.ssa Nicoletta Biferale and Marcella Binchi. This has provided us with a more objective collection and reading of data.

It was decided to submit questionnaires online and provide a limited amount of time for replying, while interviews were conducted on the phone and recorded with the permission of those being interviewed.

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

512 schools were invited to take part (more or less equally divided between middle and upper secondary schools), all with several years experience of Trinity exams.

Since we wanted to collect data also from students who had taken the exam during the current school year, and since most of all we wanted to analyse immediate impressions, the period chosen as being best for submitting questionnaires was the period from the 31st May to the 18th June.

The decision to submit questionnaires online was in our opinion a factor which determined the success of the initiative and allowed a large number of people to take part.

Since we were aware of the amount of work teachers have at the end of the school year they were asked to communicate the amount of time they could give us for both interviews and further enquiry. We were very surprised to find that the majority made themselves available and we are only sorry that we were unable to interview them all. The data collected shows that teachers, heads of schools and students appreciate being consulted and are very willing to contribute to research.

My heartfelt thanks to them all.

Claudia Beccheroni – Italy National Consultant – Trinity College London

Aims of the enquiry

To monitor the perception, impact and effectiveness of the introduction of Trinity certification into the secondary school system.

Instruments of the enquiry

Three questionnaires of a structured type to a sampling of school heads, teachers and pupils concerning motivation, changes in teaching practice and the impact in terms of quality on the institute.

A telephone interview with a semi-structured questionnaire to teachers in order to obtain an in-depth subjective response concerning quality.

References

Sampling by region and category

REGIONS	SCHOOL HEADS	TEACHERS	PUPILS
LAZIO	31	72	429
LOMBARDY	27	69	276
PUGLIA	34	62	272
SICILY	27	54	212
TOTAL	119	257	1189

Interviews – Distribution of samples of teachers by region

REGIONS	TEACHERS
LAZIO	7
LOMBARDY	14
PUGLIA	20
SICILY	17
TOTAL	58

The charts and brief comments that follow aim at highlighting certain key elements of the enquiry.

Chart 1

Over half the heads of schools say that the request for external certification has increased, despite the absence of financing.

Yes, it has increased	61	51.26%
Yes, it has decreased due to lack of financing from the Ministry	14	11.76%
Yes, It has decreased due to less interest from pupils/parents	4	3.36%
Yes, it has decreased for reasons linked to organisation within the school	3	2.52%
No, it is stable	37	31.10%

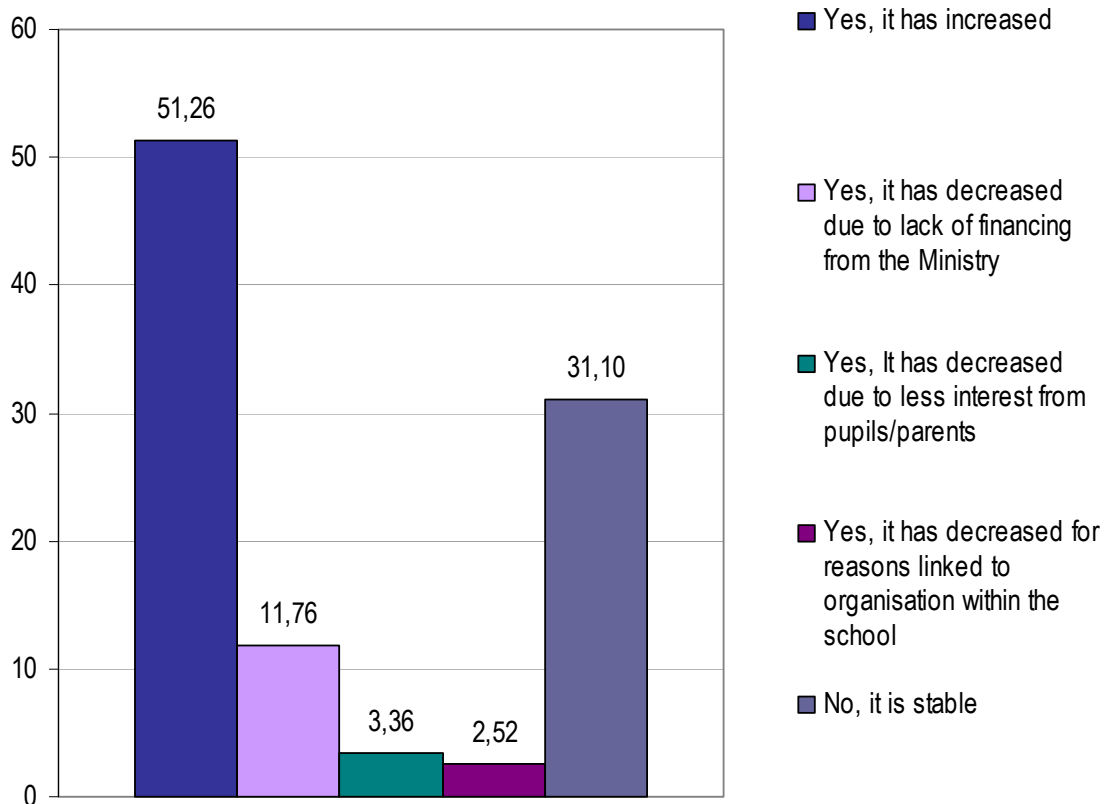


Chart 2

For almost all heads of schools external certification has been introduced to offer a quality service to users.

To offer a quality service	106	89.08%
Due to requests from pupils/families	22	18.49%
Due to requests from teachers	35	29.41%
Because it was promoted by the Ministry	12	10.08%

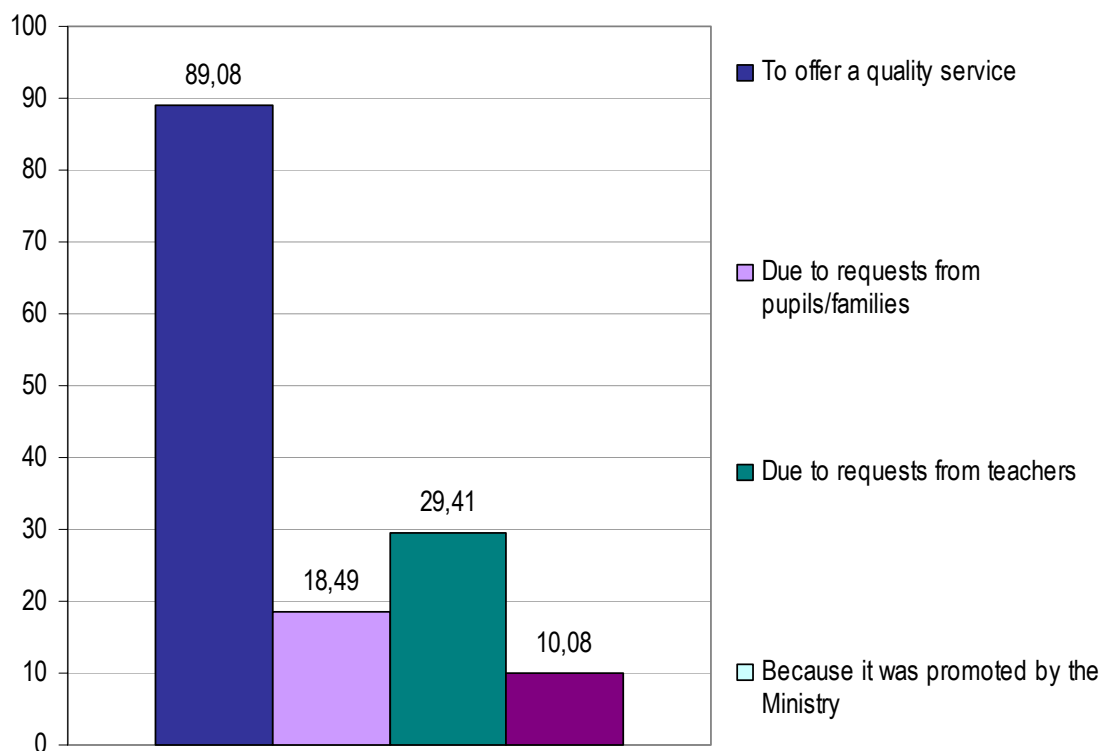
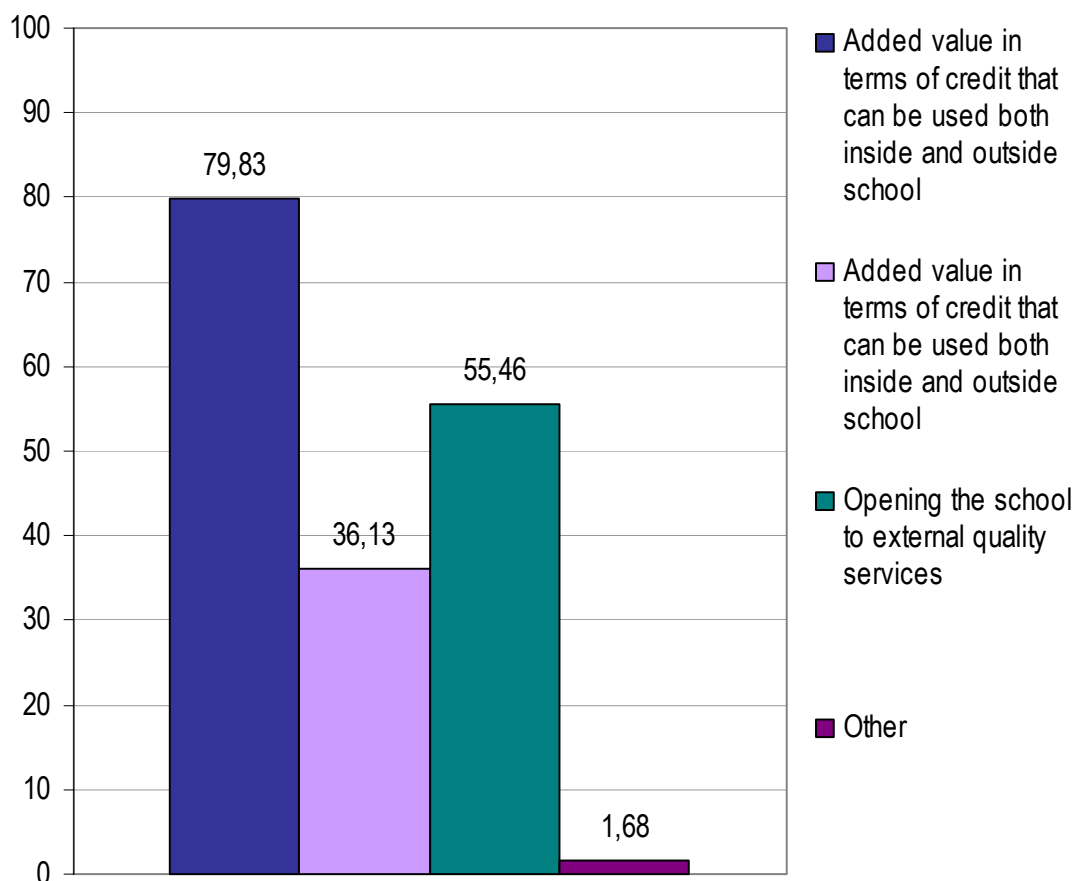


Chart 3

The majority of heads of schools maintain that the strength of external certification lies in the fact that it provides credits that can be used both within and outside the school system. Moreover, more than half the sample highlighted the value of opening the school to external quality services.

Added value in terms of credit that can be used both inside and outside school	95	79.83%
Acquisition of greater prestige and image for school in the eyes of teachers, pupils and parents	43	36.13%
Opening the school to external quality services	66	55.46%
Other	2	1.68%



Summary

The heads of schools are particularly sensitive to the fact that the school offers a quality service, even if many of them say that this involves an increased workload in terms of organisation.

They also believe that certification has spread over recent years despite the lack of state funding.

They particularly appreciate the value of credit that can be used by pupils both during their school career and in the world of work, and the added value that the school benefits from as a result of opening up to the outside world.

Chart 1

For almost all teachers the experience of certification has presented an opportunity for professional enrichment and in particular for reflection on the means of assessment.

Just more work	11	4.28%
An intrusion from outside into assessment	2	0.78%
An opportunity for professional enrichment	218	84.82%
An opportunity for reflecting upon means of assessment	169	65.76%

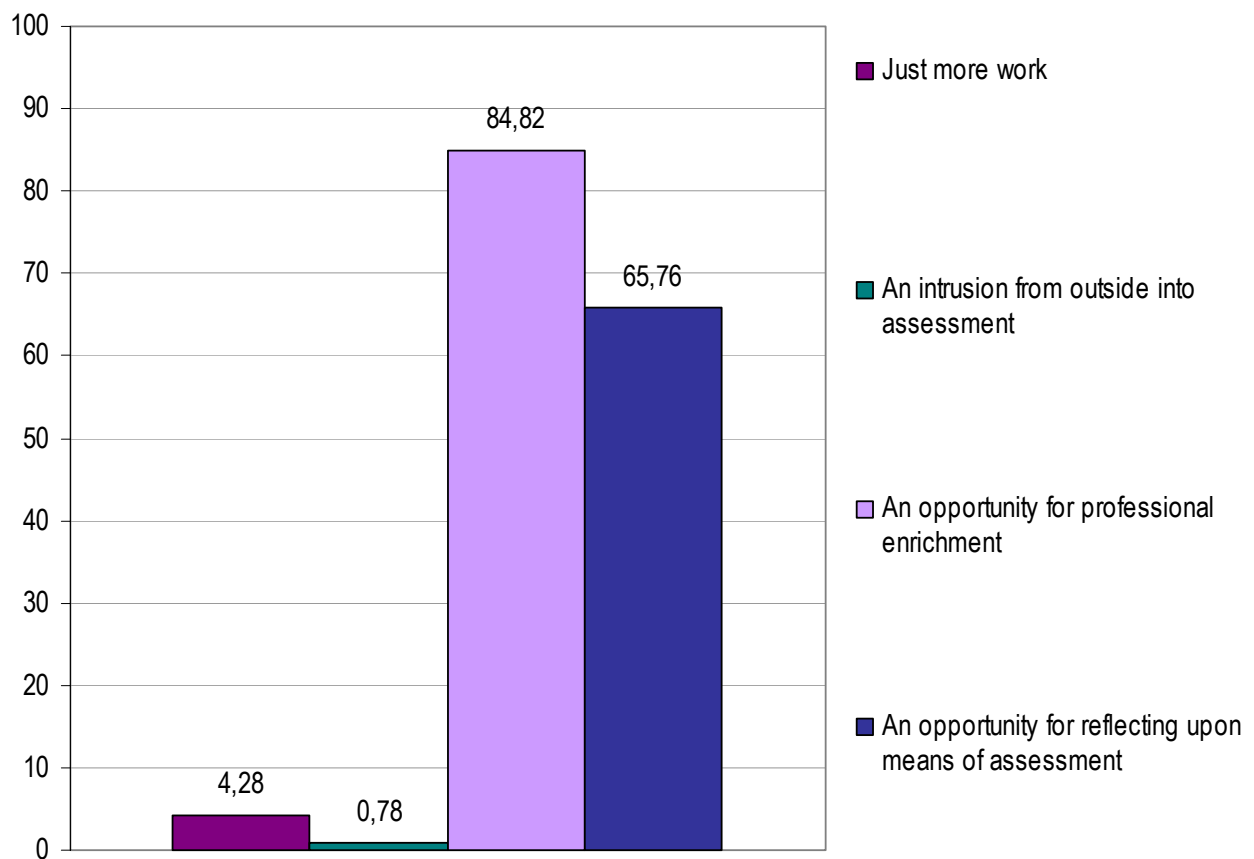


Chart 2

Most teachers say they have played a major part in deciding whether or not to introduce Trinity certification into their school.

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

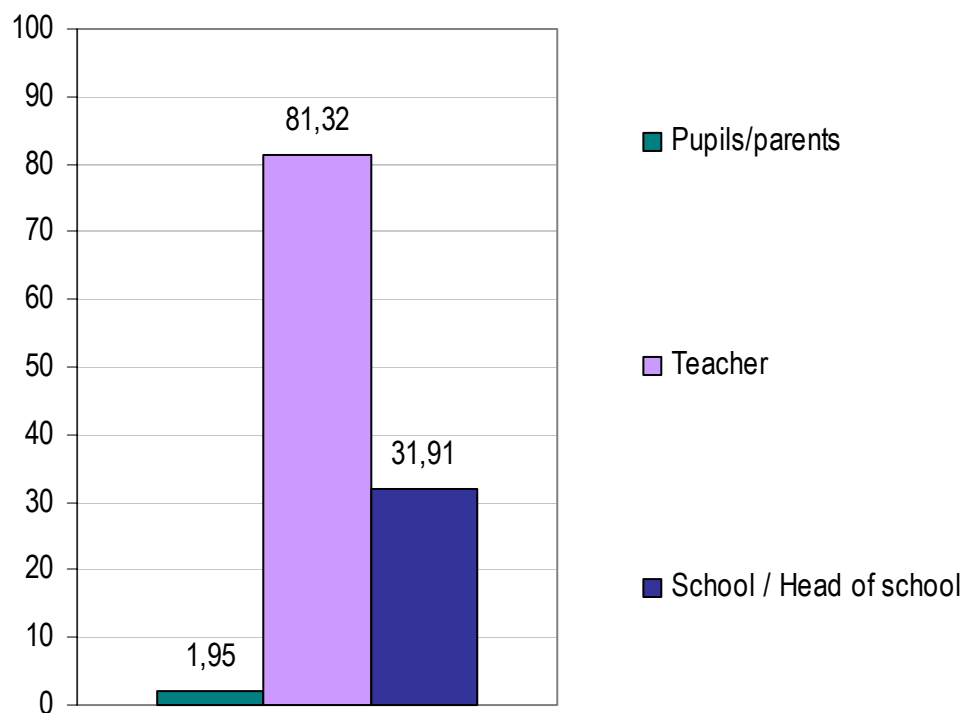
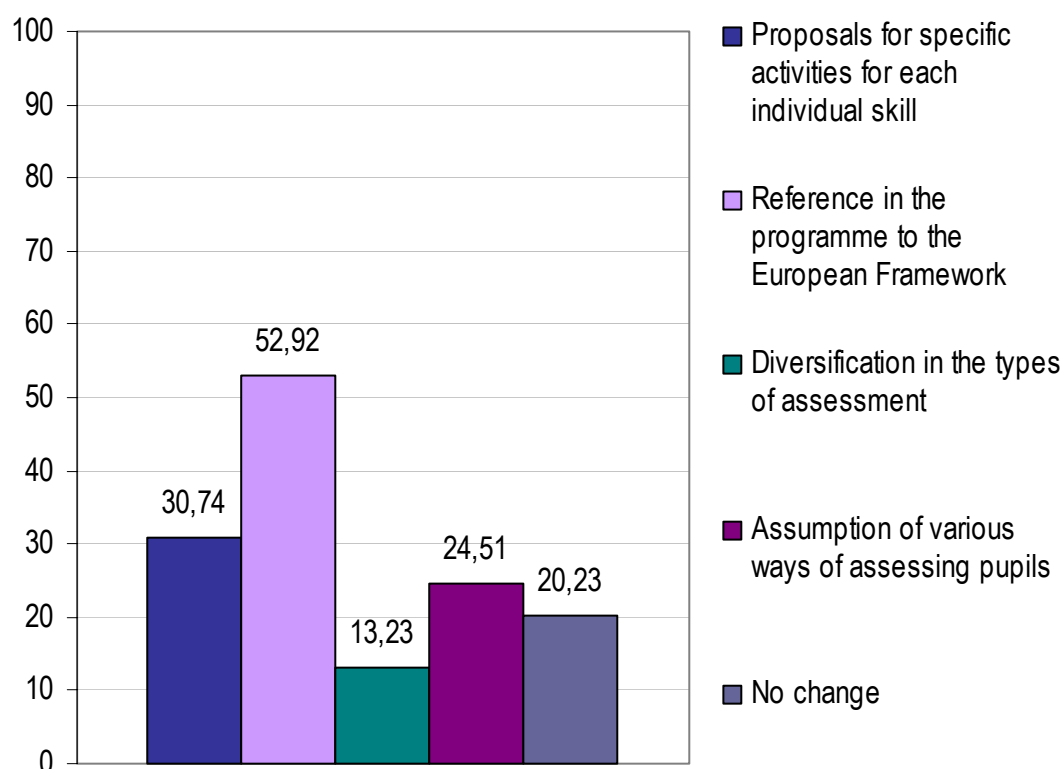


Chart 3

The experience of certification has brought about change in teachers' teaching practice, in particular through use of the Common European Framework and in further use of assessment in its various forms.

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



Summary

Teachers play the most important role in deciding to introduce certification and are gratified by the experience in terms of the professional enrichment derived from it and the motivation of pupils who benefit in terms of increased autonomy. They also say that one of the strong-points is the fact that credits are obtained from certification.

In general they say they would like to have more materials and/or training and would appreciate obtaining greater recognition for the work they do.

Chart 1

For pupils the use of certification is generally linked to the use they can make of it in their academic and professional career.

To continue studies	583	49.03%
As credit for state school exams	407	34.23%
As access to the world of work	596	50.13%
To have a certificate that clearly expresses your level of English	523	43.99%

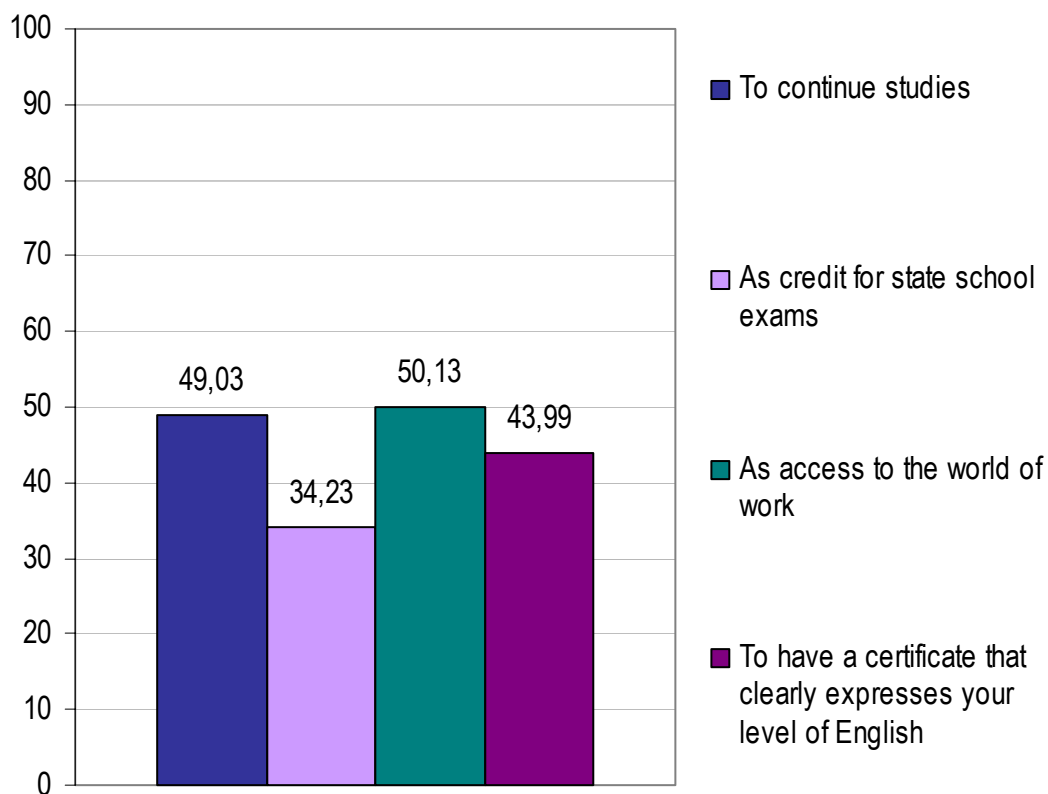


Chart 2

Following the introduction of certification the almost total majority of pupils has seen that their teachers place greater emphasis on speaking and listening. Almost of all of them see speaking as the target skill.

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

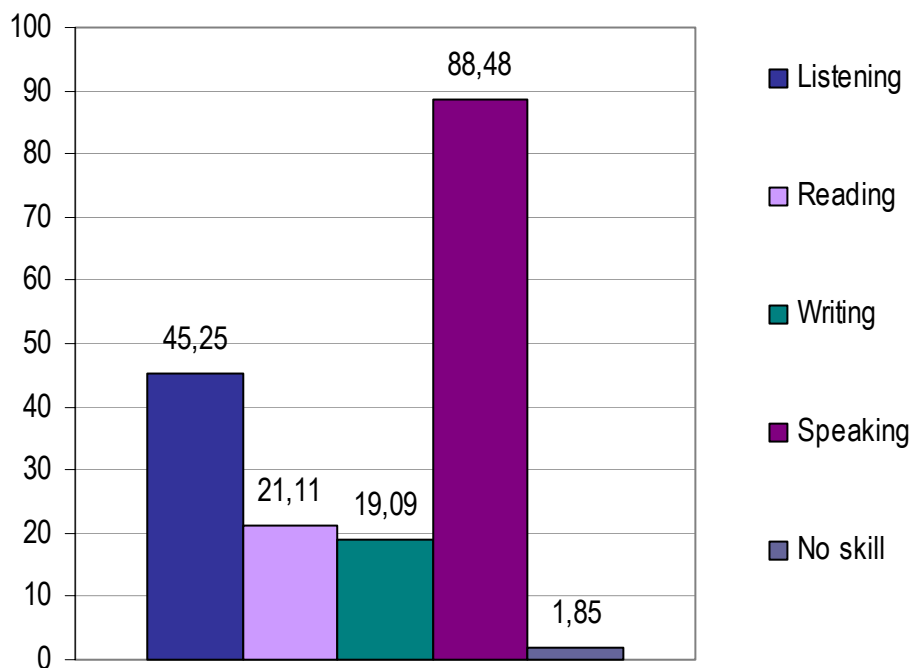
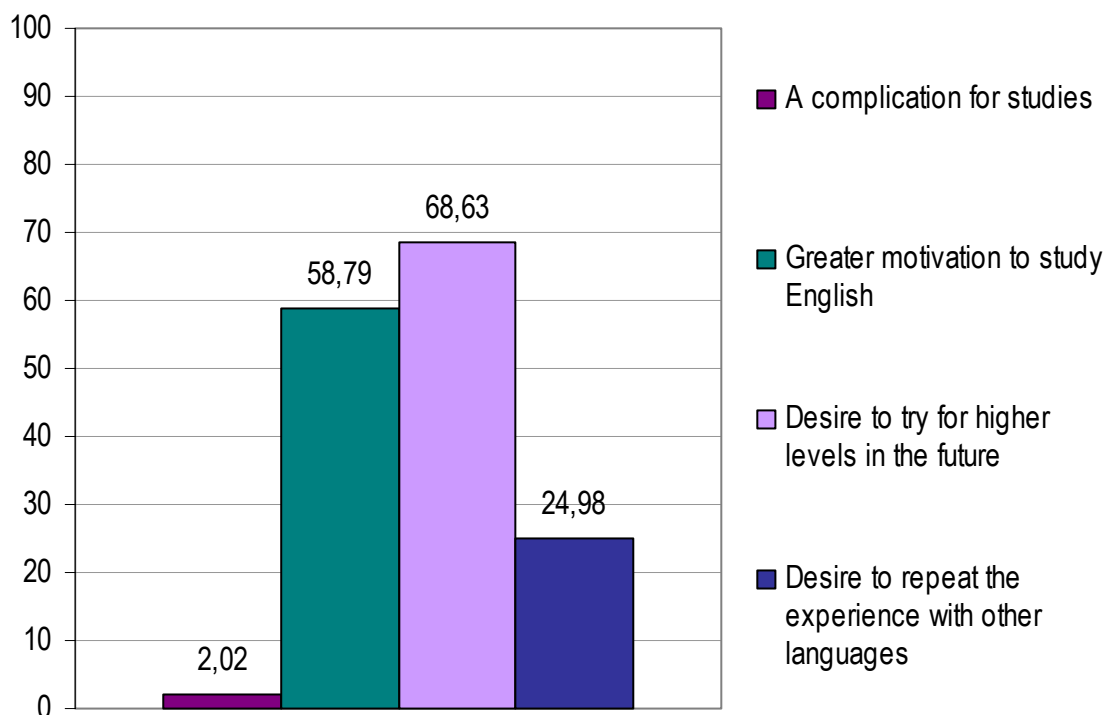


Chart 3

Knowing that they can get a certificate increases motivation to study English and the desire to try and obtain higher levels in the future.

A complication for studies	24	2.02%
Greater motivation to study English	699	58.79%
Desire to try for higher levels in the future	816	68.63%
Desire to repeat the experience with other languages	297	24.98%



Summary

Certification is useful because it is a credit that can be used in the pupil's career (study and work). Knowing that they have to take a Trinity exam increases their motivation to study English and preparing for the exam is not seen as amounting to an added complication to be dealt with. Certification offers the pupil an experience that s/he wants to repeat in the future in order to add to personal credits obtained. Pupils see that their teachers change their teaching practice as a function of the exam.

Interviews with teachers – here’s what they think

Satisfaction is.... “working with pupils who are motivated to study English and continue doing so”

(Primary and Middle School – Sicily)

In this experience “pupils give the best they can and work hard and realise just what they can do with the language”

(Primary and Middle School – Lombardy)

“We ought to be increasing the use of assessment, also because the state exam with external examiners has been eliminated. The exam board becomes for the school the equivalent of an opportunity for constructive comparison with the outside world”

(Secondary Technical School - Puglia)

... the last question in the interview: “would you personally be interested in taking a Trinity exam which certifies your language and communication skills?”

“I don’t know. Organising courses and preparing pupils is already a test...”

(Primary and Middle School – Lazio)

“Well, I’ve been thinking of doing so actually.”

(Secondary Professional School – Puglia)

“Yes. It would be a real challenge!”

(Middle School – Lombardy)

Summary

The experience of certification amounts to a satisfaction for both teachers and students because it is motivating for them. Teachers believe that pupils feel themselves placed in a real communicative context with a mother-tongue examiner, while the school benefits from the relationship with an external service both in terms of enrichment in training on offer and reflection on the means of assessment.

Many teachers would also like to take part in the exam. Many teachers interviewed, while expressing great appreciation of the undertaking as a whole would like to have more support academically and in terms of teaching materials on offer.

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