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# **Perceptions of entrepreneurship in translation training**

This article examines the perceptions that students and teachers of translation, as well as professional translators, have of entrepreneurship education at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). Based on a case-study design, the study aims to describe the views of a group of students and a group of trainers on the Translation and Interpreting degree course at UAB, as well as those of a group of professional translators, on entrepreneurship and on the need to introduce entrepreneurship education into the degree course. Focus groups were used to collect the data. Our findings show that entrepreneurship education should be embedded in the curriculum of the Degree in Translation and Interpreting, although such content should not focus solely on translation and interpreting as professional tasks, but should also address the whole range of career opportunities that this degree offers. Nevertheless, all the groups agree that this should not lead to a decrease in the number of hours of translation and interpreting practice.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, translator and interpreter training, qualitative research, entrepreneurship education

## **1. Introduction**

This article presents the results of a study conducted with translation students, trainers and professionals aiming to identify and describe their perceptions of entrepreneurship and the need for inclusion of entrepreneurship education (EE) in the Degree in Translation and Interpreting at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB).

Entrepreneurship is understood as a transversal key competence applicable by individuals and groups across all spheres of life (Bacigalupo et al. 2016). It is defined as acting upon opportunities and ideas and transforming them into value for others, considering that the value that is created can be financial, cultural or social (FFE-YE 2011). This definition goes beyond economic value creation and includes intrapreneurship, that is value creation within an organisation, or social

entrepreneurship, which targets value creation for the society. Thus, it is assumed that entrepreneurship is an important factor in economic growth and employment generation, but it is also beneficial for the personal and professional development of individuals, who see their employability reinforced (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte 2016).

Since individuals exposed to entrepreneurship through friends, family or education are more likely to become entrepreneurs, the European Union has been trying for 20 years to foster entrepreneurship education to boost and streamline the European economy. Firstly, through the Europe 2020 strategy (European Commission 2010) and, later, through the Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2020 (European Commission 2013), which invited member states to ensure that the key competence of entrepreneurship was embedded into curricula at all educational levels. To facilitate the inclusion of EE, the European Commission designed EntreComp, a reference framework on entrepreneurial competence that can be used as a basis for curriculum development.

Entrepreneurship education (EE) is the application of enterprise behaviours, attributes and competencies into the creation of cultural, social or economic value, according to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA 2018). It allows students to identify potential career opportunities and to be more confident if they decide to start their own business or a social enterprise (QAA 2018).

In the translation industry, with globalisation, the spread of the Internet in the 1990s, and the tendency of businesses to downsize and outsource jobs to freelance translators, many professionals have become self-employed (Ho 2011, 73). Almost 20 years ago, Cronin (2003) found that over 88% of Irish professional translators worked at home. Concurring with this trend, 80% of translation companies in Barcelona outsourced their translation assignments to freelance translators in 2010 (Kuznik 2010).

A more recent study on the language industry in Europe (ELIA et al. 2019) shows that most European language service companies are small, with 60% reporting fewer than 10 employees, indicating that most companies outsource translation services to freelance translators. Moreover, 40% of companies state that they want to increase outsourcing still further.

This would suggest that our graduates will end up freelancing. However, a study with graduates from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Galán-Mañas 2019) shows that the percentage of self-employed graduates working in translation/interpreting-related jobs is below 20%. This study also shows that self-employed graduates work on tasks closely related to translation more often than those who work for third parties.

The fact that the number of self-employed graduates is not higher could well be due to the lack of entrepreneurship training during their degree. Considering the characteristics of the translation market, we might assume that entrepreneurship education is fully embedded in the curriculum of any translation course. However, this is not the case.

As a number of studies show, professional and entrepreneurial skills are not always included in undergraduate and master's courses (Álvarez-Álvarez and Arnáiz-Uzquiza 2017; Rodríguez de Céspedes 2017; Veiga 2020), not even in those including work placements (Olalla-Soler 2019). This, as Álvarez-Álvarez and Arnáiz-Uzquiza (2017) observe, leaves a gap between higher education and the needs of the market.

Hence, entrepreneurship education could have an impact not only on the number of graduates who will go on to become freelancers – and therefore respond to the needs of the market – but also on the time they would spend becoming freelancers, and the type of tasks they might end up doing.

With the aims, firstly, of describing the perception of entrepreneurship and, secondly, of evaluating a proposal for including EE in the curriculum for the Degree in Translation and Interpreting at UAB, we posed the following research questions:

- (1) How do a group of students of the Degree in Translation and Interpreting at UAB, a group of trainers of the same degree course and a group of professional translators perceive entrepreneurship?
- (2) What are the learning needs of the students regarding entrepreneurship?
- (3) Are the contents included in the proposal for including EE in this degree allocated to the appropriate academic years?
- (4) Are the contents included in the proposal considered to be appropriate as curricular or extra-curricular?

## **2. Entrepreneurship in translator training**

While a number of authors have addressed issues related to employability and professionalisation in the area of translation (Chouc and Calvo 2011; Álvarez-Álvarez and Arnáiz-Uzquiza 2017; Cuminatto et al. 2017; Schnell and Rodríguez 2017), studies on entrepreneurship are still scarce: a keyword-based search on abstracts indexed in the Bibliography of Interpreting and Translation (Franco Aixelá 2001-2020) provided a clear picture of the low number of publications devoted to employability, professionalisation and entrepreneurship in the last five years (2014-2019): 4 in 2014, 5 in 2015, 10 in 2016, 16 in 2017, 5 in 2018, and 6 in 2019. We will mention several publications most relevant for the present study.

In Klimkowski's (2015) study, students had to assess the importance of certain features of entrepreneurship, and found that 50% considered that the training they received only partially contributed to enhancing their entrepreneurial skills. The author

considers that entrepreneurship should be included as a crucial component of translator and interpreter education curricula.

Gieure (2016) examines the offer of EE for translators and interpreters in Spain, both for university students and professionals. She observes that both student and professional translators and interpreters consider that EE is necessary to start any business venture. In addition, she argues that training in business management is key to the survival of company businesses and that EE also helps enhance skills such as imagination, flexibility and adaptability.

Rodríguez de Céspedes (2017) evaluates a training proposal for employability carried out in the University of Portsmouth's Master's Degree in Translation Studies, a programme in which employability and enterprise skills are embedded. Her proposal consists of incorporating internships in companies and a module called 'Professional Aspects of Translation' in which students need to prepare a self-awareness SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), a CV and covering letter, and a business plan.

Galán-Mañas (2017) analyses the content of a training programme to improve the employability of translation and interpreting students at UAB, and presents a number of proposals to encourage entrepreneurship. According to her study, 35% of graduates in translation and interpreting create their own business within their first ten years of working, in most cases with no specific training in this area. For this reason, she claims that higher education institutions (HEI), especially in the Humanities, should include EE in their curricula.

More recently, Galán-Mañas (2018) published a proposal for the inclusion of EE in translation and interpreting courses. Her proposal includes a series of curricular and extra-curricular activities grouped into four levels of progression: 1) awareness; 2)

entrepreneurial mindset development; 3) entrepreneurial capacity development; and 4) entrepreneurial effectiveness enhancement, following the EntreComp framework. The proposal is described in section.

Olalla-Soler (2019) presents a mentoring programme for freelance translators and interpreters, during which students not only do translation and interpreting tasks, but also tasks related to invoicing, taxation, marketing, work ethics, etc. The findings show that students who participated in this programme feel prepared to face the labour market as freelancers.

Salo, Veivo and Salmi (2020) discuss the need for students to develop pre-professional identity, as it helps them to reflect on critical aspects for work readiness such as their understanding of the profession, the development of a sense of responsibility, accountability and ethical commitment, and the self-assessment of their own strengths and weaknesses when facing their professional career.

Van Egdom et al. (2020) observe that taking part in translation company simulations has a positive impact on students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

The scarcity of proposals in this area shows that so far, translation training has given little importance to the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, as illustrated by Veiga (2020). Her study shows that the competences envisaged in EntreComp are underrepresented in the degrees in translation and therefore the EU recommendations to include entrepreneurship as a transversal competence in all areas and at all educational levels are disregarded.

### ***2.1. Proposal for inclusion of EE in the Degree of Translation and Interpreting***

In Spain, translation training takes place especially in the form of four-year degrees and one-year masters. Given the characteristics of the market that we mentioned in the



Introduction, EE should be included in any course, whether a four-year or a three-year degree — or a one- or two-year master's degree. This type of training could perhaps reduce the percentage of overqualification that occurs in Spain — 63% of the graduates of the study mentioned above (Galán-Mañas 2019) had completed a master's degree after their degree — and could encourage graduates to enter the translation profession as freelancers or entrepreneurs right after graduation.

Galán-Mañas' (2018) proposal to embed EE in a four-year translation and interpreting course was used for this study. This proposal is based on her teaching experience and takes as its starting point the current curriculum of the Degree in Translation and Interpreting at UAB. Most activities are aimed at offering employability support, which has proved to be insufficient to foster graduates' entrepreneurship skills. Hence, the proposal goes one step further and includes entrepreneurship activities. It includes curricular and extra-curricular activities (Table 1) grouped into four levels of progression, following the EntreComp framework. The levels are defined by QAA (2018) as follows: 1) entrepreneurial awareness (developing knowledge and understanding of enterprising and entrepreneurial activities); 2) entrepreneurial mindset (developing self-awareness of their enterprising and entrepreneurial capabilities, as well as the motivation and self-discipline to apply these flexibly in different contexts to achieve desired results); 3) entrepreneurial capacity (developing a range of enterprising, practical, social and conceptual abilities, which can help to develop opportunities); and 4) entrepreneurial effectiveness (preparing for the transition into work, self-employment, further study, or other options). Each level of progression corresponds to one year of the degree. Nevertheless, the activities could be distributed over a three-year or a master's course. In fact, EntreComp is conceived as a flexible tool. However, according to the QAA (2018), for any approach of EE to be effective a coordinated

range of activities that build year on year is needed. Therefore, an undergraduate course could be ideal to consolidate learning.

[Table 1 near here]

### **3. Methods**

This study is part of a larger research project that consisted of an initial qualitative phase based on a case-study design and a subsequent quantitative phase. In this article only the results of the first phase are reported.

The qualitative phase of the study aimed at identifying how a group of students of the Degree in Translation and Interpreting at UAB, a group of trainers of the same degree and a group of professional translators perceive entrepreneurship. The data collected in this first phase would serve as an initial assessment of the training proposal, which would then be subjected to a second, quantitative phase that will aim at assessing the appropriateness of the contents (and the progression planned) outlined in the proposal presented in Table 1 in a large-scale survey with students and trainers.

Focus groups (Ravitch and Mittenfelner 2016) were used for the first stage. Five such groups were organised: one for each year except the second year, where it was not possible to find students willing to participate (first year: four students; third year: five students; fourth year: four students); one for trainers (six trainers); and one for professional translators and interpreters (four professionals). To recruit students, trainers of different translation courses for each of the four years were contacted, so that they could share information about the focus groups with their students. The goal was to have the primary three foreign languages offered in the degree (English, German and French) represented in each of the focus groups. To recruit trainers, the researchers contacted a number of translation trainers in the primary three foreign languages, aiming for the group to include tenured and associate lecturers who, due to their

professional experience, have first-hand contact with the working world of translation and interpreting. In the case of the professionals, four freelance translators/interpreters participated, from different professional fields. The five focus groups were held at the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting at UAB between April and May 2018, with each one lasting approximately one and a half hours. Participation in the study was not rewarded in any way.

At the beginning of each focus group, the students received two copies of an informed consent form, which stated the purpose of the study and the methods of processing of the data they were to provide. Once the document was read and signed, the researchers briefly explained how the focus group would work. Both researchers were present at each focus group and audio and video recordings were made. The role of the two researchers was to guide and facilitate the discussion without interrupting the participants' exchanges or taking a leading role in the development of the discussion (Ravitch and Mittenfelner 2016). The researchers used one set of questions across all the student and trainer focus groups, to collect comparable data across courses and to compare students' views with the trainers' opinions. In the case of the professionals, some of the questions were adapted to suit their professional reality (Table 2).

[Table 2 near here]

After asking these questions, each participant was given a copy of the proposal for discussion with the other participants in the focus group. Here, the researchers guided the discussion by asking how they felt about the content outlined for each of the four years and the mode of delivery (curricular or extra-curricular) of the contents.

To analyse the data, the researchers transcribed the content of the focus groups from the video and audio recordings, and translated it into English. To analyse the transcripts, RQDA (Huang 2018), a free, open-source programme for R, was used.

Content analysis, a “research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1278) was applied. We used directed content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005), which is based on generating codes derived from previous studies or theories (in our case, our proposal) to validate or expand them.

#### **4. Results**

The findings are grouped into three main areas, as identified in the focus groups. For each one, we provide the most relevant results and contrast the viewpoints of the different groups.

##### ***4.1. Importance of entrepreneurship in translation and interpreting***

One of the most salient issues observed in the focus groups is the students’ awareness of the need for entrepreneurship in translation and interpreting right from the first year:

STUD1 (year 1): Yes, because translation agencies are small. Most translators are freelancers, as far as I know. So, you need to know how to find your own job if you are not in a company, or you have to set up your own company. I don’t know, jobs don’t grow on trees!

This view, which is also repeated in the third- and fourth-year focus groups, is echoed by the professionals:

PROF2: Besides, that’s what the market requires of you. I know no one, or almost no one, who is in a company working as a translator, except in cases of companies, like what [PROF4] said, that have a translation department but work in other sectors.

PROF4: Right, and that model is already getting outdated according to what I’m hearing from other colleagues.

While the trainers shared the opinion expressed by the students and the professionals,

they added an important nuance to our proposal:

TRAINER3: I think it [entrepreneurship] is essential because that's what you were saying earlier: most of us work as freelancers. It is true that most students who complete their degree in translation will not end up working as translators or will not work exclusively as translators, but in any case, I believe that, in many of the careers they will be able to access, these positions do require a certain degree of autonomy, and this will be even stated in their contracts. I think it's essential. There are certain careers, and I go back to what I know about architect training, translator training seems to bring you into the profession, into the market, so you have to be familiar with it, you have to be able to handle all those aspects of dealing with clients, of knowing what your responsibility is or who to delegate it to.

While a discussion emerged on the possible proportion of students who became translators after completing their degree and whether this could be increased by providing training on entrepreneurship, the intervention reproduced above illustrated an essential aspect for our proposal: that EE would be useful for all career options available to students of the Degree in Translation and Interpreting and that it should not therefore focus exclusively on translation and interpreting:

TRAINER1: This got me thinking, and I'll say something that might be obvious, but maybe we [trainers] too have a narrow view of the tasks that we translators can do or that people who graduate with the knowledge they acquire in this faculty can do; I'm not even referring to the translator diploma, but to their knowledge.

While students, regardless of their academic year, are aware of the need for entrepreneurship in translation and interpreting, they acknowledge the difficulties involved in entrepreneurship. Often, this is the result of having had close friends or family who were entrepreneurs.

STUD2 (year 1): They [her uncles] are always telling me that, of course, it's great to be the boss, but she, my aunt, had to spend many more hours on it [her

own business] than any other worker, or employee. So, of course, this also throws you off when considering setting up a project of your own and running your own business or whatever. My aunt is the one who takes care of everything and, of course, she's the one who has to work shifts, sometimes for 12 hours or more. This does not apply to translation, because we are discussing completely different professions, but you have to ... work many hours, you have to work harder than anyone else, it's obvious.

Constant dedication is repeated in all academic years. In the more advanced years, probably due to their better knowledge of the professional situation of entrepreneurs, the students underline the loneliness of entrepreneurs when facing both bureaucratic and professional challenges:

STUD2 (year 3): Ah, yes, for me it's a double-edged sword. It has many good things, although obviously you are by yourself, practically on your own at the front; you do everything for yourself, you have little support, I don't know if the same happens in all countries, but I always hear that it doesn't, but here [in Spain] it seems that from minute one, when you haven't even started, cha-ching!, you are like a wallet with legs, always paying even when your business is going badly.

Another interesting feature, which is not a part of the students' understanding of entrepreneurship, is the monetisation of ideas, i.e. that entrepreneurship is not simply transforming an idea into a business, but making it profitable:

TRAINER3: I don't fully agree because ... I actually attended a workshop organised by the Catalan Women's Institute in collaboration with Barcelona Activa and we all have our own ideas, but the question is how to monetise them, and that's where the difference lies. And entrepreneurs are looking for ways to monetise these ideas, to turn them into jobs and social and economic benefits; so, it is difficult because, in fact, I joined that group of entrepreneurs with a translation project and I couldn't find a way to monetise it. Well, I thought, I'm like an NGO, I don't have the spirit of an entrepreneur.

Lastly, the professionals discussed what could be regarded as entrepreneurship, since

some of them did not consider themselves to be entrepreneurs solely by becoming freelancers to work as translators and interpreters:

PROF4: To be an entrepreneur is like setting up new initiatives too, isn't it? I just don't feel like an entrepreneur. I did start translating as a freelancer, but I haven't done much else.

PROF3: There are also some people who have set up their own agency.

PROF1: Yes, but they are only a few. I can only recall three or four people who have done this.

In summary, from the first year onwards, the students are aware of the importance of entrepreneurship in translation and interpreting given the characteristics of the market in this field. Furthermore, they are generally able to identify the positive and negative aspects of setting up their own professional project. The professional translators confirm the importance of entrepreneurship and highlight the need to see this profession as a freelance one.

#### ***4.2. Students' professional interests***

Probably because the students who agreed to participate in the focus groups intended to become professional translators or interpreters, the majority wanted to start their own business with a focus on such tasks. We could not, therefore, gather the opinions of those students who, as suggested by the trainers, studied the degree in translation but did not wish to become professional translators or interpreters.

Those students who did not wish to become self-employed were in their first year, and their reluctance was due not to a lack of interest, but rather to the feeling that they were not prepared or did not know how to start up such a project:

STUD3 (year 1): Obviously, once I finish my degree, I see myself working for publishers or other companies rather than for my own. And then, if I like it, in the

long run I might set up my own business. But that's something I can't even consider right now, because now I'm more worried about passing my exams, of course. [...]

STUD2 (year 1): Yes, indeed, it does motivate me, but I also believe that you need to be realistic. In that sense, maybe not. I don't know ... I guess there's a lack of information or a lack of determination, but perhaps now in the short term I see it as practically impossible and in the long term ... we should see.

As for the students who did want to start their own professional project, both in the third and fourth years there was a strong desire to become entrepreneurs, but the students observed that this was not their immediate plan after finishing their degree; instead, they would consider it after gaining experience in a company:

STUD3 (year 3): I'd like to, but to start with I'd look for a job in a company to get some experience.

STUD2 (year 4): That's something that feels very safe. Because when you graduate from university, you do have a lot of knowledge that could possibly be enough to work on your own on many projects, but maybe you are not sure that you are not overlooking something. If you first gain some experience, through work, then you have enough confidence to venture into your own business, because if not, you feel a little bit defenceless.

Some professionals also indicated that, since they wanted to become translators, they had no other choice but to become freelancers:

PROF1: Actually, I didn't ask myself what I wanted to be, whether I wanted to work for a company or be self-employed. I wanted to translate, and I realised that to do so I had to become a freelancer, so I did.

As mentioned in the previous section, the trainers discussed whether including some training in entrepreneurship in the degree would help students to initiate their own professional project related to translation and interpreting:



TRAINER3: I do believe that it must have some influence. I do. Because, if you finish your degree with that idea in mind, I'm simplifying a lot, that you want to set up something by yourself and you do what TRAINER1 has described, then I would see many ways to get those initial ideas. You need the tools to be able to do it, but if you don't have them, then what can you do? You just look for a job at a language school.

TRAINER4: It can also happen to avoid risks, because they need some initial capital. I don't know.

TRAINER3: Sure, but if you already have some background from college, you have already considered that option and, above all, you have been given the tools to be able to develop it, you know how to do it.

In summary, most of the students who participated in the focus groups would like to start their own professional project, although they emphasise that this is probably not an option they would take up immediately after finishing their degree. The trainers also noted that many students do not initiate a professional project related to translation and interpreting after finishing their degree, and stress that this is possibly due to a lack of training in entrepreneurship during the degree.

#### ***4.3. Inclusion of entrepreneurship education in the Degree in Translation and Interpreting at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona***

The students, trainers and professionals who participated in the focus groups highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship for working in translation and interpreting. In general, the participants stressed that EE should begin in the first or second year and should continue in more advanced years, up to the end of the degree.

As for the content of the first years, the students, regardless of the year they were in, believed that the second year was an appropriate time to initiate EE, since during the first year students are still becoming familiar with the world of translation,

although some consider that certain professional aspects could already be included in that first year (as is already in fact the case):

STUD3 (year 1): I like that in the first year there are tasks to raise awareness about entrepreneurship, that in this first year the tasks don't consist of developing an entrepreneurial mentality, but of being aware of what it is, what professional opportunities there are.

The participants commented that, in more advanced years, EE should include more advanced aspects of entrepreneurship, which also aligns with students' concerns regarding their professional career, as they will then be close to finishing their degree:

STUD4 (year 4): I think that the last years of the degree are the best ones to introduce things like this [business model], especially because you are already closer to the end of the degree. Something that would focus on issues such as taxation. And it should not only be for the ones who want to be self-employed, but also for people willing to work in a company. When you get into a job where you have to manage a project, you will also have to deal with these issues, or at least consider certain things; you cannot leave everything to your superior in the company.

Before the participants of each focus group read the proposal for the first time to discuss it with the group, they were asked whether there was a need to adapt existing teaching methodologies to include entrepreneurial aspects in the classroom (case studies, simulated and real assignments, etc.). The trainers agreed on the need to include these methodologies, and this view was shared by both the students and the professionals:

STUD3 (year 4): I really liked the idea of involving students in real translation projects because, at the end of the day, that's professional practice, it's the real world, they're projects that end up being published. Because it's also a motivation to know that this is not a simulation: it's not something that someone reads and then disappears, but that you're doing a job that is real and that ends up reaching someone.

In each focus group, the participants received a copy of the proposal and were given time to read it. They then discussed it, focusing on two aspects: 1) whether the content should be delivered by creating specific courses or incorporating it into existing ones, and 2) the adequacy of the content.

While the first-year students preferred creating a specific module that would include contents related to entrepreneurship, students in higher years considered that the content assigned in the proposal to the earlier years (codes of conduct, associations, career opportunities, CV and cover letter, basic taxation, etc.) could be incorporated into existing modules, while more advanced content could be included in a specific module in the third or fourth years.

STUD2 (year 4): I believe there should be a specific module, but the trainers themselves should also introduce their own professional experiences or teach us how to apply the knowledge we acquire to the workplace, because sometimes it seems that we are just working with the class materials and that's it, everything stops there.

The same view is shared by the majority of the trainers, who would introduce the subject in the third year:

TRAINER3: Perhaps a module at the end of the degree, when they are closer to the professional world, but bringing the professional reality into the classroom from the very beginning. In third year, they already know about translation, they are already more mature, and I think it would be adequate that the contents are in the third year. It is important that they learn about ethical issues, associations, etc., but, of course, we cannot give them all the knowledge they need from the very beginning because there is no room for everything.

Trainers, professionals and students agree that the proposal includes a large amount of content which, whether it is incorporated into existing modules or included in a new one, would probably necessitate that existing content relating to translation or to the

working languages be removed. All participant groups warned that content related to entrepreneurship should not replace other important content on how to translate and interpret:

STUD3 (year 4): I wouldn't like to suddenly change the whole curriculum and make it all about entrepreneurship; we're also here to learn the languages, the culture of each language and to eventually translate. That's what I'm a little afraid of.

TRAINER3: This is very important, but it's also very important or even more important that you learn to translate, to translate well and to deliver quality. Because they could have fantastic customer-finding skills, fantastic customer communication skills, but we know that quality and punctuality are essential.

PROF4: [about certain contents] if they have to reduce the number of hours of translation and interpreting training, I'm not so sure.

On the appropriate timing of the content, there was consensus in relation to that linked to the first and second academic years:

STUD3 (year 3): I went to a talk where they explained to us how to write a cover letter and the CV, and we were given different models of cover letters and asked: is this one suitable for this profile or is it too colloquial? I think it would be good to explain this during the second year.

STUD2 (year 3): I think this one [the content] related to job interviews is the best. These mock interviews. Because the first time I went to an interview I didn't know what to do, how to talk, or how to do anything. Nerves always betray you, but that's another thing.

With regards to the third-year content, the students focused their attention on the curricular work placements, especially because they could be made compulsory. The students' main concern was being able to combine their learning with a work placement, although they agreed that the placements were important as a way of getting closer to the world of work:

STUD2 (year 3): Yes, but I'm trying to figure out how to make it a compulsory module. Like, you have 100 hours to work in a translation company and you can complete them as you want ... I'm just suggesting it as a way to make it work, because when you can't do your placement, study nor work ...

The fourth year content caused greater difference of opinion between focus groups. On the one hand, professionals and trainers considered that the amount of content was too great and that the level was too advanced:

TRAINER3: I find that the business plan and so on are too much. Everything else seems pretty essential to me.

PROF1: I think that everything included in the fourth year is very specialised. I don't think that any of us know or have ever done a business model canvas. I guess this is more appropriate for people who want to set up a business.

PROF3: Yes, I was quite surprised to read that. Maybe it can be interesting for some people. If it can be included it's not bad, of course.

On the other hand, some of the students considered these tasks to be very relevant and necessary:

STUD1 (year 3): Business model canvas, yes, because otherwise when you start your business, you're like: I have this, I can offer this and I don't know how to put it all together to make it look good.

STUD3 (year 3): This is very good, point 4, the customer experience map. As far as I know, you have to educate the client a lot in the field of translation: they think you're Google Translate.

Lastly, an activity that attracted a lot of interest among the students was that of creating a junior enterprise managed by the degree students. They appreciated not only what they could learn and the opportunity to put their knowledge and skills into practice, but also that it could open doors for them at the end of their degree:

STUD3 (year 3): You are finishing and, that is, it can be like a springboard, because, even though you did an internship, it is like putting everything you have learned into practice, to be in a place where this person, also a student, will give you his or her experience and will explain to you how he or she has done things, and that is how you learn.

STUD2 (year 3): It could also be that ... I understand it is like bringing a series of people, of students, together and creating a business project ... Good ideas can come out of this, it is a means of working as a network and perhaps afterwards you may want to work together.

In summary, the students in all year groups emphasised the importance of including EE from the first stages of the degree and, in particular, from the second year. Some of the content could be included within existing modules (as occurs already in the degree) and it would be necessary to create a module in the final years for higher-level content.

Students and professionals agreed on the need to introduce teaching methodologies that reflect the professional reality. Despite the importance they gave to entrepreneurship-related content, all participants – students, trainers and professionals – opposed eliminating content directly related to translation and interpreting, such as translation and interpreting practice, working languages or cultures, in order to introduce entrepreneurship-related contents.

## **5. Concluding remarks**

This paper presents the views of translation students and trainers, as well as professional translators, on entrepreneurship education in training for translation and interpreting at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

The results show the importance given to EE by all groups of participants. However, the idea of entrepreneurship shared by the majority of participants relates primarily to the corporate sphere. The trainers also consider entrepreneurship to be not

only about transforming an idea into business, but also making it profitable. Even freelance translators do not consider themselves entrepreneurs simply because they are freelancers. This highlights the need to change the (negative) perception that European society generally has of entrepreneurship, as highlighted in the Entrepreneurship Action Plan, according to which entrepreneurship is usually seen exclusively in terms of liberalism and not as a super-competence, involving a whole set of soft skills.

The majority of the students see entrepreneurship as a career opportunity, but believe that they are underprepared and that they have to work in-house first to gain experience. Yet, according to the trainers, EE should not just focus on translation and interpreting, but should address all the career opportunities offered by the degree.

The fact that a large number of graduates are not self-employed could be explained by the lack of EE in the curriculum, as mentioned by some trainers. This could also explain why translation and interpreting graduates work in roles other than translation, such as teaching at a language school. As some professional translators observe, working on a freelance basis seems to be the only way to work as a translator.

All participants agree that including EE in the degree curriculum is an urgent need; all believe that it should be included from the first year and that the level of difficulty should increase up to the fourth year. However, this raises a concern. Both students and trainers agree that embedding entrepreneurship-related contents in the curriculum should not lead to a decrease in the number of hours of translation and interpreting practice. The most feasible way to introduce such content could be through the use of methodologies that reproduce authentic situations that students must address or by introducing entrepreneurship-related content into existing modules. Alternatively, it could be achieved by offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The clear need makes us question the suitability of the current training system, in which the

fragmentation of knowledge into subjects has little to do with the demands of the labour market, or those of entrepreneurship.

In the light of the results obtained in the study, we believe that Translation and Interpreting Degrees, and specifically that offered at UAB, should integrate entrepreneurship education. This would help graduates to set up their own professional projects, but also to acquire the soft skills that may be of great help in a fast-changing market.

Regarding the limitations of this study, we wish to acknowledge that the sample size is limited. The aim of case studies is not to quantify elements for subsequent generalisation to a population under study, but to describe a phenomenon as profoundly as possible from the perspective of a group of individuals (Creswell 2014). We have tried to avoid generalising our results to a hypothetical population of students, trainers or professional translators. This limitation could be solved by involving a larger sample of participants. Hence, the present study will be expanded with a second phase in which we will design a questionnaire based on the elements identified in the focus groups with students and trainers with the aim of assessing the appropriateness of the contents (and the progression planned) outlined in the proposal presented in Table 1. This will provide an instrument that will collect all the relevant aspects previously identified and, at the same time, will be easy to distribute to a large number of students and trainers in order to obtain a greater amount of data. This will allow generalisation to the population of students and trainers of the Degree in Translation and Interpreting of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

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Table 1. Curricular and extra-curricular activities

	Curricular activities	Extra-curricular activities
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Career opportunities</li> <li>▪ Code of conduct</li> <li>▪ Professional associations and portals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Talks by translators' associations</li> </ul>
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Competence test</li> <li>▪ Professional interests test</li> <li>▪ Cover letter</li> <li>▪ CV</li> <li>▪ Pricing</li> <li>▪ Professional portfolio</li> <li>▪ Interview</li> <li>▪ Active client search</li> <li>▪ Freelance translation</li> <li>▪ Basic taxation</li> <li>▪ Professional visibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Talks by recent graduates</li> <li>▪ Visits to translation agencies</li> <li>▪ Information sessions on the university's entrepreneurship support services.</li> </ul>
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Market niches</li> <li>▪ Work placements</li> <li>▪ Erasmus entrepreneurship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Workshops (how to become an entrepreneur, ideas generation, effective communication skills, from an idea to business)</li> <li>▪ Talks by translation companies and professionals</li> <li>▪ Extra-curricular work placements</li> <li>▪ Visits to entrepreneurship support services</li> </ul>
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Final degree project</li> <li>▪ Marketing plan</li> <li>▪ Business canvas</li> <li>▪ Empathy map</li> <li>▪ Customer experience map</li> <li>▪ Value proposal canvas</li> <li>▪ Business plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Junior enterprise</li> </ul>

Table 2. Questions used for the students' and trainers' (left) and professionals' (right) focus groups

Questions for the students' and trainers' focus groups	Questions for the professionals' focus group
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have you worked before or are you currently working? In which area? [for students] / Have you worked as a freelance translator or interpreter? And as an employee? [for trainers]</li> <li>2. What does entrepreneurship mean to you?</li> <li>3. How important is it for translation and interpreting?</li> <li>4. Do you plan to initiate an entrepreneurial project, or have you ever launched one?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When did you start freelancing? Have you ever worked as an employee before?</li> <li>2. Have you completed your EHEA-adapted or unadapted degree in translation and interpreting?</li> <li>3. What does entrepreneurship mean to you?</li> <li>4. How important is it for translation and interpreting?</li> <li>5. Was there an example (family, friends,</li> </ol>

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5. Is there an example (family, friends, acquaintances) in your life who is an entrepreneur?	acquaintances) in your life who was an entrepreneur?
6. How important is it to work on entrepreneurship in the degree? From which level?	6. How important is it to work on entrepreneurship in the degree? From which level?
7. Should it be included in the curriculum or should it be extra-curricularly? If you consider that it should be included in the curriculum, is it preferable to do it within existing modules or to create specific modules on professionalisation/entrepreneurship?	7. Should it be included in the curriculum or should it be extra-curricularly? If you consider that it should be included in the curriculum, is it preferable to do it within existing modules or to create specific modules on professionalisation/entrepreneurship?
8. Do you consider that teaching methodologies should be revised to promote entrepreneurship?	8. How do you think we should introduce entrepreneurship to students? What teaching methods should we use?

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