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A Language Specialist as an Entrepreneur: An Educational Perspective

Abstract

This article is an attempt to prove the need for entrepreneurial education of the future specialists in translation.[1] It also tries to explain the role of the particular skills of translation service provision, as presented in EMT (2009). Finally, it aims to inspire students and teachers to train the skills by providing a selection of educational activities.

Keywords: translation studies, education in translation, the Translation Service Provision Competence, translation job profiles.

This article is divided into two main parts. In the first, we provide two ways of justifying our claim that the topic of entrepreneurial skills is worth incorporating into translator education curricula. The second part is devoted to our analysis and interpretation of a selection of entrepreneurial skills recommended for inclusion in translator education curricula by the group of experts behind the programme of the *European Master's in Translation*.[2] Each section of our discussion is followed by a small selection of suggested classroom activities that can help teachers and students introduce topics related to entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and performance into their translation classrooms.

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1   Although the main focus in this paper is on translators as entrepreneurs, the issues discussed here can also pertain to the education of all kinds of specialists in professional communication, such as interpreters, teachers of specialist languages or content managers (content creators, editors, reviewers, *etc.*).

2   We believe this programme is widely recognized by the researchers and practitioners of translator education, and thus we exempt ourselves from any further presentation of this project. For more information see, first of all EMT (2009), but also *e.g.* Pym (2009) for a critical appraisal. As the title *EMT* suggests, this project concentrates exclusively on translator training. Yet, in our opinion, the assumptions concerning entrepreneurial and service provision skills made by the EMT experts are equally valid for both translators and interpreters, as well as for other language service providers and communication specialists.

Justification for the workshop: the EMT experts' conception of a translator as an entrepreneur

We would like to present two sources of the justification for the claim that training entrepreneurial skills is a worthwhile initiative for a learning translator and his/her teacher. In fact, our ambition is to convince the reader that entrepreneurial education should be a regular component of a professionally-oriented course in translation.

The first reason for our promoting the idea of facilitating the growth of the entrepreneurial potential of the future translators relates to the document created by the above-mentioned experts engaged in the outlining the project known as the *European Master's in Translation* (EMT 2009). The crucial concept that organizes the content and argumentation in this document is that of *translation competence*. The way this notion is conceptualized in the document under analysis is in part similar to its other formulations found in the literature of the field,[3] yet in some aspects, it differs from them.

The main similarity that all the major current approaches to translation competence share is their reliance on the *multicomponential* nature of this competence (*cf.* Pym 2003). It means that translation competence is not conceived of as monolithic, but it is rather regarded as a system or a network of *subcompetences*.[4]

The distinctive feature of the EMT approach to translation competence is that its pivotal competence, around which the others are arranged, is the Translation Service Provision Competence. This distinctiveness is perhaps best visible when presented in the graphic form.
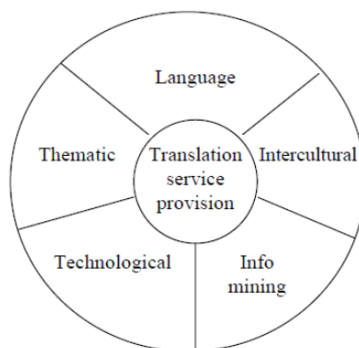

Figure 1. The EMT conception of translation competence (EMT 2009: 4)

The Translation Service Provision Competence (henceforth as TSP and TSP competence) is not a monolithic concept, either. In fact, to handle the complexity of what a translator needs to know to function as a service provider, the EMT experts developed a list (network) of skills that – in their view – explicate the nature of TSP. For the purposes of this article, we will assume that the list in EMT (2009) also represents the list of skills that constitute entrepreneurial traits that each language service provider should possess. Yet the list of skills in question is further subdivided by the EMT experts into two

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3   See *e.g.* PACTE (2003), Göpferich (2009), González Davies (2004) or Kelly (2005) to mention only the major proposals in this respect.

4   For the sake of simplicity, the notion of subcompetences is very often substituted with that of competences, without neglecting the fact that they all are part of translation competence. We also adopt this approach to the concepts at hand.

dimensions, which they name the *interpersonal* and the *production* dimension. The interpersonal skills describe the resources that a translator should develop as a person engaging into the whole spectrum of profession-related activities in their relational, interpersonal, communicative and managerial aspects. The production skills mostly relate to the conditions on delivering the service as such. The division suggested by the EMT experts should not be read in terms of discrepancies between the two sets of skills. The idea is – as we are ready to see it – to approach the complex system of skills necessary for successful TSP from two different perspectives in order to better illustrate their importance and to help curriculum designer find ways to handle the lists as part of translator education programmes.

In this article, we only focus on the interpersonal dimension of TSP, which is due to the limitations of this article. The list of the interpersonal skills that the translator is expected to develop – as suggested in EMT (2009: 4–5) – is presented in the table below.

Table 1. The list of skills with the interpersonal dimension of the Translation Service Provision Competence (EMT 2009: 4–5). Bold added – K. K.

INTERPERSONAL dimension
• Being aware of the social role of the translator
• **Knowing how to follow market requirements and job profiles (knowing how to remain aware of developments in demand)**
• **Knowing how to organise approaches to clients / potential clients (marketing)**
• **Knowing how to negotiate with the client (to define deadlines, tariffs/invoicing, working conditions, access to information, contract, rights, responsibilities, translation specifications, tender specifications, *etc.*)**
• Knowing how to clarify the requirements, objectives and purposes of the client, recipients of the translation and other stakeholders
• **Knowing how to plan and manage one's time, stress, work, budget and ongoing training (upgrading various competences)**
• **Knowing how to specify and calculate the services offered and their added value**
• Knowing how to comply with instructions, deadlines, commitments, interpersonal competences, team organisation
• Knowing the standards applicable to the provision of a translation service
• Knowing how to comply with professional ethics
• Knowing how to work under pressure and with other experts, with a project head (capabilities for making contacts, for cooperation and collaboration), including in a multilingual situation
• Knowing how to work in a team, including a virtual team
• **Knowing how to self-evaluate (questioning one's habits; being open to innovations; being concerned with quality; being ready to adapt to new situations/conditions) and take responsibility**

The list presented above is extremely comprehensive. As can be noticed, we highlighted some of the positions on the list (bold font). This is because we plan to concentrate only on these issues further in this article, which by no means implies that the remaining skills are in any way inferior or of lesser importance to the effective functioning of a professional, entrepreneurial service provider in the translation industry or related ones.

Empirical research: students' opinions on their own skills of TSP

Before we proceed to discuss the selected items on the list in EMT (2009) quoted above, we would like to present the other argument to justify our claim that entrepreneurship needs to be a regular part of the education of future translators and other language service providers. This second argument relates to the empirical research we have undertaken[5] to determine the opinions of a selection of Polish students of translation and interpreting on their own TSP skills. Since the space limits of this article render it impossible for us to exhibit in full the findings of this – still unfinished – research project, we only confine ourselves to showing a small selection of results that can give further grounds to our claim about the need for entrepreneurial education of the future language specialists.

In one of the research questions, 436 Polish students of translation and interpreting[6] were asked about their opinion concerning their own skills of creating an attractive service portfolio to be offered to their clients. The results are presented below.

Table 2. The researched students' opinion on their skills of creating an attractive service offer (source: Klimkowska, Klimkowski forthcoming)

Skill level	N	%
1) high	21	4.82
2) average	183	41.97
3) low	96	22.02
4) none	41	9.40
5) hard to say	95	21.79
Total	**436**	**100.00**

As can be inferred from the data, only 21 out of 436 students (4.82% of the group) felt highly competent in designing a portfolio of services that could win them clients. A large group of students opined that their skill level was average (183, slightly over 40%). Thus, taken together, the group of students who expressed a relatively positive opinion about their skills of creating an attractive service offer accounts for less than 50% of the whole research pool. That implies that the majority of the students in the research group believed their skills in question were not well developed. Worthy of a special mention is the group who admitted being unable to express their opinion on the matter at hand (answers *hard to say*: 95 students out of 436, that is over 1/5 of the research group) – a result that, in our view, needs special attention of educators.

Another question posed to the same group concerned their opinions on their own skills of negotiating with clients (and other stakeholders of the translation/interpreting service). The students' answers are presented below.

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5   In this research, we have extensively cooperated with Katarzyna Klimkowska. For more details see *e.g.* Klimkowska, Klimkowski (2009), Klimkowski, Klimkowska (2012) or Klimkowska, Klimkowski (forthcoming).

6   The research pool was composed of 436 students from all over Poland, specializing in translation and/or interpreting within full-time two-year MA courses. The research was conducted in 2012. For the full specification of the research group and methodology, see Klimkowska (2013) or Klimkowska, Klimkowski (2015).

Table 3. The researched students' opinion on their skills of negotiating with clients and other stakeholders (source: Klimkowska, Klimkowski forthcoming)

Skill level	N	%
1) high	32	7.34
2) average	164	37.61
3) low	105	24.08
4) none	55	12.61
5) hard to say	80	18.35
Total	**436**	**100.00**

The distribution of the data largely resembles that of the previous table. Only 7.34% of the students regarded themselves as skilful negotiators, while 37.61% evaluated their skill as average. Almost 1/4 of the respondents judged their skill as low, and the percentage of students who either thought they did not have the skills in question or they were unable to determine if they had them equals 30.96.

As can be observed the questions reported above correspond directly to the skills mentioned by the EMT experts as representative of the TSP competence. Even though the data presented above is only a fragmentary sample, we believe it can be used to support our claim in this paper that there is an observable need for intensifying educational efforts to make the future translators, interpreters and other language service providers competent in entrepreneurial skills.

This need can be inferred from the low percentage of students who found themselves highly skilled in creating their service offer or negotiating its conditions and details. It can also be deduced from an observable number of students who thought their skills were below standard. Finally, this need becomes perhaps most evident because of the students who admitted having problems in expressing their opinion on the two skill sets under analysis. Whether they do not find the skills important for their work or life, or they do not even realize that they have or do not have these skills, we interpret the results of this group as a convincing argument in favour of incorporating TSP skills in educational programmes as necessary for the future translators (and other language specialists) as service providers.

The interpersonal dimension of the TSP competence in a close-up

When presenting the list of skills in EMT (2009) above, we marked some of them for further discussion in this article. In what follows, we discuss them in the same order in which they were presented in EMT (2009: 4–5) and in Table 1 above. The discussion on each point is completed by a suggestion of (individual, peer or classroom) activities pertaining to a given skill or set of skills.

Knowing how to follow market requirements and job profiles (knowing how to remain aware of developments in demand)

The key concept in our interpretation of this skill is *demand*, since it touches upon the core of TSP: the need for the translator as a service provider to find clients attracted by his/her offer.

Apparently, the EMT experts argue that demand is a flexible factor, which calls for the constant vigilance on the part of the service provider. The list of the clients can change and it is the provider's business obligation to understand the changes and manage them. This means repetitive asking and answering the questions concerning the match between the provider's offer – which also needs to cater for his/her interests (values, profit expectations, developmental conditions, *etc.*) – and the expectations (demand) of his/her clients (values, cost expectations, trust, reliability, *etc.*). In a more general perspective, matching the demand also covers the choice of the provider's mode of interaction with the market: freelancing, in-housing or mixed. This choice should also be subject to strategic reflection.

The factor we would like to emphasize very strongly at that point is that for the service provider to be flexible in meeting the demand, he/she needs to define clearly the boundary parameters of that flexibility. Under our interpretation, the skill of following the market requirements cannot be reduced to submissive compliance and unconditional acceptance of "what is given." Instead, we believe that effective reacting to the changing demand requires that the service provider constantly engage in negotiating of interests with his/her business partners. In this sense, we talk about the negotiated match between the two axiologies, interests and expectations.

Suggested activities

1. Compose your CV, your covering letter and a scenario for your interview adopting the perspective of a person who negotiates his/her position, who is ready to give a lot to others, but has clear expectations of what he/she wants.

   - Before you start your texts, it is advisable that you answer an important question to yourself: "What is it that I want from my future career (and my life in general)?"

   - Do you think such questions are worth asking? Why, if yes, why, if not?

   - Assuming, you decide to answer the question above, be precise in answering it. It may be a good idea to note down the answers and then put them in a hierarchy.

   - Consider the fact that neither flexibility, hard work nor professional effectiveness are the ultimate points of reference for your work or life. To be authentically effective, you need to define your objectives first. To be flexible, you need to define what is and what is not negotiable in your functioning. Of course, you will also need constant reflecting and perhaps revising on these issues. The point is not to make these decisions once and for all, but to be aware of the need of making them.

2. Ask your teacher or some other "facilitator" to conduct an interview session based on the texts created for activity 1.

   - Focus on presenting the facts of your CV arranged as a professional strategy: with its objectives, methods and actions.

   - Present your educational background in terms of a strategy of learning the world, avoiding reference to exclusively extrinsic motivation to your actions. Instead of writing "I started learning English as it was the only subject where I scored tolerably well," try to construct your narrative more like "looking for my pathway in education, I decided to develop my command of English as an opportunity that could lead me to other domains of knowledge."

- Do you find the previous bit of advice controversial? Do you think what is suggested there is like lying to the employer or to yourself? Can you think of any other way of describing your educational background in a positive, constructive way which would be acceptable for you?
- Show your working experience in a strategic way – as a set of activities that have/had a purpose.
- Extracurricular activities are highly recommended for your CV. Help your potential employer understand in what significant activities you engage and for what purpose.
- Think about hobbies like "watching movies" or "playing games." Do you think that putting them in your CV sends your potential employer the message you would like them to get?

Knowing how to organise approaches to clients/potential clients (marketing)

The key concepts that we wish to highlight in this skill is *approaching the client* and *marketing*. The skill, as we interpret it, concerns a strategy of constructing and managing one's professional communication with the client (market). It certainly depends on the previously-mentioned strategy of defining one relation to the market (service offer and the mode of interaction). This skill is not only about letting the world know about the provider's service portfolio (as in the case of a brochure, a leaflet or a banner), even though this type of information can be sufficient for some of the clients and services. However, the communicative interaction related to language service provision can often be far more complex – particularly in the case when the provider is looking for a strategic client whom he/she wants to retain for long. Firstly, a service delivered for the strategic client relies on building a long-term relation between the partners. Secondly, the terms and conditions of the tasks provided by the strategic client are likely to change – depending on the changes in the client's business (needs). Let us illustrate our point by comparing two graphical representations of the two kinds of services discussed.
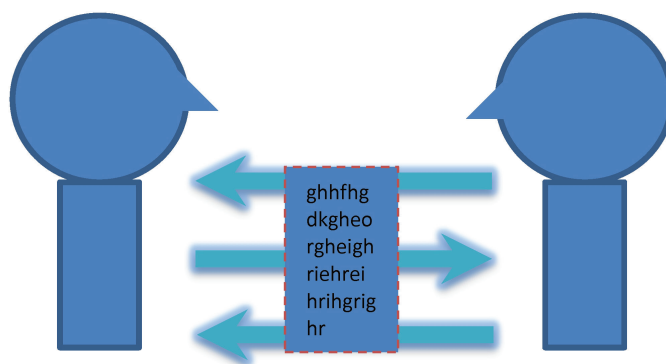

Figure 2. The simplex service

Figure 2 shows a graphic representation of a translation service that relies on a relatively spontaneous occurrence of the translator–client interaction. It takes the form of a linear process from commissioning the translation, through collecting the text, up to the moment of the translator being remunerated. Although it is an undeniably simple and effective model, it fails to give the provider or the client a chance to start a long-term cooperation.
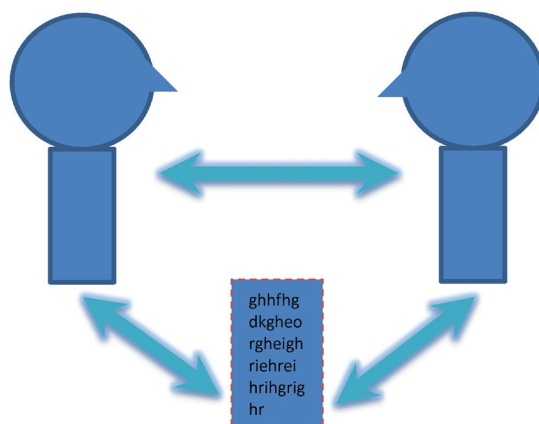
Figure 3. The relational, dynamic service

The graphic representation in Figure 3 shows a more complex version of the translation, in which the notion of relations and dynamics become paramount. The commission is negotiated between the provider and the client: task, terms, support, payment, deadlines, *etc.* In the simplex version the translation service, the business relationship between the partners concerned a limited number of factors: (i) quality of the original, (ii) quality of the target text, (iii) the deadline, (iv) the mutual communication, (v) the payment (invoicing). In the relational, dynamic approach, the list of factors grows into a more complex system of relations, including *e.g.* a chance for the provider to continue his/her business in the long-term perspective, owing to the trust of the client in the translator's ability to solve his/her business objectives. Thus, this type of approach to the translation service can offer more stability (long-term continuity of the provider's business), but at the same time more flexibility to all the stakeholders (changes in demand), on condition that their interests and axiologies have been defined and agreed on (negotiated).

Suggested activities

1. Plan the content (or content and design, if you like) of a website advertising your service(s).
   - Think about the services you want to offer. Be precise. Consider potential "service packages" for strategic clients (translation, interpreting, teaching, tuition, *etc.*).
   - Think about your potential strategic clients and the relations you would like to engage into.
   - Does your thinking about the communication strategy influence the way you see your service offer?
   - How can you take into account a possibility for your client to voice his/her needs as related to your offer?
2. Or maybe you just want to "stay informational" in your message to the potential clients (simplex model). Why?
   - Are there any drawbacks of the dynamic conception of the translation (language, communication) service that puts you off?
   - What would your advertising material(s) look like, then?

Knowing how to negotiate with the client (to define deadlines, tariffs/ invoicing, working conditions, access to information, contract, rights, responsibilities, translation specifications, tender specifications, *etc.*)

The notion of negotiating perhaps requires no further explanation after our discussion of the previous two skills. If the service provider adopts a dynamic approach to his/her interaction with the market, his/her service portfolio and a dynamic, relational concept of translation (or other kind of communication-related) service provision, he/she understands the role of negotiating the parameters listed in parentheses in the title of this section. If the provider plans to work for strategic rather than occasional clients, he/she needs to build relationships with them so as to evoke trust and secure continuity of service provision. Negotiation, rather than passive compliance to norms, standards and regulations, is a pathway to quality and accountability.

Yet, the observations made above rely on a positive view of negotiating, assuming that it is an effective tool of organizing (coordinating) human cooperation (*cf.* Żmudzki 2009). Nevertheless, the service provider must also be expected to negotiate in situations where the client or any other stakeholder refuses to take a win-win approach to the service. It perhaps becomes clear why the education of translators, interpreter and other language specialists could benefit from enhancing classroom communication and from teaching/learning communication skills in their practical application. The activities suggested below are simple examples of how negotiation-related communication can be trained.

Suggested activities

1. You have got an email from a new client. They ask if you could do a five-page text for tomorrow.
   - What is your response?
   - Determine the pros and cons of the offer.
   - Are there any pros that can diminish the cons? Do they require negotiating?
   - What does this activity tell you about the principles behind your response (the principles of your service offer and of your communication with the market/client)?

2. Imagine getting the following message: "Why should I pay you as much as an experienced translator? Work for us for a while, gain experience and we will pay you more then."
   - What is your response (assuming that you are interested in this client becoming your strategic client)?
   - Is there any space for negotiation here, or do you find this case an instance of "business terrorism," to which no one should yield?
   - If you believe this situation leaves some space for negotiation, what do you plan to win?

Knowing how to plan and manage one's time, stress, work, budget and ongoing training (upgrading various competences)

This skill – or set of skills, to be precise – can be interpreted in terms of managing one's intrapersonal resources and organizing one's business activities. Due to space limitations of this article, we only focus on time management as a vital component of the skill (set) at hand.

Let us start with an observation made above in this text, that neither effectiveness, flexibility or hard work are human objectives on their own. They are methods which are only likely to be helpful, if the service provider has developed a service profile (offer) and his/her strategy of communicating with the market.

In other words, time management is not an "exercise" in effectiveness for the sake of effectiveness alone, but a tool for becoming effective in defining, implementing and monitoring the implementation of actions taken with the view of realizing ones fundamental life objectives. Time management can only help people who have defined them and who are ready to redefine them, if in need.

Assuming that the provider builds his/her service provision strategy as dynamic and relational, they will be expected to negotiate time with their client. Negotiating time means negotiating chances of realizing one's own objectives. Hence, time management is another area where flexibility and negotiation skills meet with a need to develop one's own system of values (axiology) and strategic objectives.

Suggested activities

1. Do you use time management? If yes, do you use it for all the elements of your "calendar," or only some of them? Why?
   - Do you prefer noting meetings and tasks or remembering them?
   - Do you know (use) any tools for time and task management?

2. Do you find your methods and tools of time management satisfactory?
   - What are the advantages?
   - Do they translate onto your effectiveness in using time?
   - Does time management help you reduce stress? In which situations?

3. Does free time need planning?
   - Can we lose time during our free time?
   - Do we have to do "something constructive" to use our free time well?

4. Imagine someone saying: "This problem is important, but I really have no time to see to it."
   - What are the potential interpretations of this statement and the attitude of the speaker?
   - Can you remember when you last said "I have no time for it"? Can you remember why you said this (taking into account the actual circumstances)?

5. You promised your partner to take him/her to Barcelona next weekend. Yet, you get a tempting offer that is likely to keep you going in the translation business for another year. The snag is that you need to be at your client's next Saturday… and maybe the next… and so on… What do you do?
   - Resign from the trip? Why?
   - Refuse the offer? Why?
   - Negotiate? With whom? How? What do you plan to give and what do you plan to take?

Knowing how to specify and calculate the services offered and their added value

Although the problem of pricing and price negotiations has been addressed to a large extent in the point devoted to negotiation skills, the EMT expert devote a separate point on their list to highlight the role of

the skills of specifying and calculating the value of the translator's work. In our opinion, this is a reasonable decision, since prices and pricing is a specific and fundamental aspect of the service provider's functioning, which calls for a strategic approach of its own.

The notion of a strategic approach to pricing means that the provider needs to define his/her pricing strategy (strategies) as part of his/her service provision activities. Potential pricing strategies may strive towards the stability of the rates irrespective of business circumstances. The benefit of this approach consists in the increased predictability of the financial results of the provider's operational activities. Another approach to pricing may allow for a degree of negotiating the rates. Under this approach, the rates are set by the translator so as to meet his/her unnegotiable minimum, and the surplus over that minimum is subject to negotiation. The latter approach expresses the service provider's trust that the income which he/she resigns from by allowing rate negotiations will be made up for in the long run through the increase in the volume of cooperation (client retention).

One of the simplest examples of using pricing as a tool of building long-term service relationship is price discount in which reduced rates are correlated with the size of the translation commission. The provider can offer a discount dependent on the number of translated pages per period of time, for example: the rate for 1–50 pages per month is 13 EUR/page and the rate for 50–100 pages per month is 10 EUR.

We believe that this simple pricing mechanism requires no further explanation as for its mechanism and aims. Yet, even this simple example unveils the need for the translator to think such pricing strategies over in all their details and to make them as precise as possible. Let us observe that the hypothetical discount presented above can be interpreted in two ways. Under one reading, the client is expected to pay 650 EUR per the first batch of pages, while 500 for the other. That is the total value is 1150 EUR. Alternatively, the client can interpret the price reduction as pertinent to the whole document, since the quota for the discount has been met. In this latter case, the client would expect the provider to charge 10 EUR/page. Consequently, the translator's income would equal 1000 EUR.

One can easily imagine that the client is very likely to adopt the second way of interpreting the discount as more expedient. One can also claim that any further effort to renegotiate the rate in such circumstances – trying to explain the "misunderstanding" – is going to be extremely problematic.

It is recommendable that the service providers who opt for a negotiation approach to their pricing strategy (or strategies) develop some basic negotiation scenarios (narratives) to be used when the client pushes for potential discounts. The negotiation scenarios are to ensure financial and other than financial benefits from the negotiations with the client. The non-financial benefits could include: long-term cooperation conditions (operational stability of the translator's business in time), sources of (the client's) knowledge and expertise or expanding the (potential) client base. In other words, when the translator decides to enter negotiations, he/she must possess a portfolio of predefined potential benefits that could be subject to negotiation and exchange.

It is interesting to note that apart from the income aspect, the EMT experts also focus on the translator's ability to define and defend (negotiate) the added value of their service. Again, it is advisable – in our opinion – that the provider be ready to respond in negotiations with arguments concerning the added value of his/her service. This seems especially useful in justifying the price for the service. In a narrative of that kind, a translator could make reference to the relational benefits that the client obtains thanks to the cooperation with the translator. It is worthwhile to make the client realize that trust and reliance are values that are part of the service and the price.

Suggested activities

1. Do you have a pricing strategy? Do you think you (will) need one?
   - Do you use / Do you plan using various strategies for various clients?
   - Which seems more attractive to you: the fixed-rate approach or a negotiation approach to pricing?
   - Can you think of scenarios (narratives) that you could use in defending or negotiating your rates? Have you already tried out any of these?

2. How would you react to a proposal like the following, coming from a new client: "give us the discount since we are a big company and we need a lot of translations every month. Trust me, showing flexibility will pay you off."
   - Would you trust this offer unconditionally?
   - If not, what conditions would you make in negotiations?
   - How would you define your unnegotiable position in this case?

Knowing how to self-evaluate (questioning one's habits; being open to innovations; being concerned with quality; being ready to adapt to new situations/conditions) and take responsibility

Even though self-evaluation comes as the last skill on the list in EMT (2009), its role for the effective functioning of the translator as a service provider cannot be overestimated. The skills of self-evaluation is vital since they are a precondition for the emergence of all the previously-mentioned skills and strategies. Effective self-evaluation keeps the service provider in (relative, negotiated) control[7] of his/her actions.

Self-evaluation is part of the psychological mechanism which Moser-Mercer (2008) refers to as self-regulation. In brief, self-regulation is a mechanism of learning and functioning based on (1) planned decision-making, (2) implementation of the decisions, (3) an effort to monitor the results of the decisions and actions, and (4) the implementation of the potential solutions to the problems diagnosed through the monitoring (*cf.* Moser-Mercer 2008: 15).

In what follows in this section, we focus predominantly on this particular ability to transgress the mere recognition of the problem (3) and to direct one's actions towards working out a solution to it (4). In our view, recognizing a problem relating to the particular service can evoke (at least) two contrastive attitudes. In our interpretation of Moser-Mercer's (2008) proposal, a self-regulated service provider is likely to adopt a narrative that recognizes and names the encountered problem and then proceeds towards such a reconceptualization of that problem that helps him/her shift the focus from the problem itself to the (potential, suggested) solution to that problem (we henceforth refer to this narrative as *problem-to-solution*). This attitude and narrative can be contrasted with the one which mostly focuses on the problem, without an effort on the part of the provider to seek a pathway towards a potential solution. Under this latter approach, the provider can choose to refrain from the communication about the problem (ignore it), seek excuses for his/her impossibility (unwillingness) to complete the service

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7   The notion of control is used in its predominantly psychological sense, and is perhaps best related to the concept of *locus of control*, as proposed by Rotter (1966).

(passive defence) or to formulate more or less direct accusations (aggressive defence) towards the partner (henceforth as *problem-to-problem narrative*). Let us illustrate the contrast with an example.

Table 4. Two contrastive attitudes to problems in TSP

problem-to-solution narrative	problem-to-problem narrative
Dear John, As I have just been sent another text by your colleague, I am afraid I need to inform you that the deadline we established on Monday is unrealistic under the present circumstance. I will certainly need another 24h to complete the task, but to keep this new deadline, I need your confirmation that the texts I have got so far constitute the whole assignment and there will be no additions. Also, if you think it could help if I translate some of the texts before the others, please let me know.	Dear John, I am afraid I need to inform you that the deadline we established on Monday is unrealistic, since I have been sent another text by your colleague. It is impossible for me to work that fast, if the text is to keep its quality. Could you please make sure that no other texts are sent to me?

The two hypothetical translators reacted in different ways to the problem they encountered. In the problem-to-solution narrative, the translator informs the client about the problem (unrealistic deadline) but tries to share the responsibility for solving it to the extent he/she considers feasible. He/she suggests renegotiating the deadline, and makes an effort to confirm that his/her proposal is likely to work in the present circumstances (confirmation of the final size of the text). Also, he/she tries to check if the way he/she divides his/her work into stages can alleviate the problem of the deadline being postponed (task queuing).

On the other hand, the problem-to-problem narrative illustrated above focuses exclusively on the encountered problems and signals no effort on the part of the translator to share the responsibility for finding solutions. The problem and the solutions are shifted to the client entirely ("the fact that I cannot keep the deadline is your fault, and it is solely your responsibility to find the solution"). Hence, in this case, the recognition of the problem (a new portion of the text for translation that endangers the deadline) only serves the goal of putting the responsibility for potential solutions on the client (hence, problem-to-problem).

The problem-to-solution attitude is possible – among others – because the ability of the service provider to self-evaluate realistically his/her actions in the context of the actions taken by the client. Instead of adopting a resistant, defensive attitude, exhibited by the problem-to-problem narrative, the provider tries to help the client to minimize the impact of the emerging problems. The problem-to-solution narrative does not seek to determine the blame for the particular situation and to do justice to a perpetrator, but it expresses the provider's conceptualization of the problem and the service as a space of shared responsibility and of the service quality constructed together (*cf.* Klimkowski 2015).

It is perhaps evident the picture drawn above is an oversimplification that fails to cover the whole array of situations and circumstances in which the service provider and his/her clients meet. In other words, one can imagine a situation, where a translator refuses to take responsibility for the potential

solution and chooses to be passive or resist as a way of protest against the repetitive failure of the client to effectively manage the parameters of the commission. In such a case, the translator may rightly feel that new obligations are put on him/her without them being clearly stated as part of the commission. Thus, the problem-to-solution approach again leads us to the axiological aspect of the translator's market functioning and to the need of constant negotiating of the match between the translator's offer and the demand.

Notwithstanding the above and the extent to which the translator decides to share the responsibility for solving the crisis with the client, it is recommendable that the way he/she communicates with the client avoids overt or covert accusations, aggressiveness or other face-threatening messages.[8]

Suggested activities

1. What is your reaction to the contrast between the attitudes described above?
   - Do you think that translators should (always, unconditionally) adopt the problem-to-solution approach?
   - Can you think of the potential responses of the hypothetical client – the addressee of the e-mail in Table 4? How would you react to these potential responses?

2. Recall a situation when you were assessed by a client, colleague or a teacher over a task (translation or interpreting task would perhaps be most suitable for this activity, but you can also try with other cases of evaluation), and when you did not fully agree with the "verdict."
   - Can you separate what you agree with in the evaluative statement from what you disagree with?
   - Did the way the evaluation was communicated influence the way you felt/feel about it? If this is the case, does this feeling make it difficult for you to admit that you agree with the part of the assessment?

3. Choose a test or a marked work in a subject that you find significant to your education and analyse what you learn from the evaluation information.
   - Are you able to get more information on your performance than the statement that you "passed" or "failed"? Would you like to get more information? Why? Of what kind? Are you going to ask your teacher about it?
   - Do you „read" your tests and tasks this way on a regular basis? What benefits can such "reading" offer? Are you going to ask your teachers for feedback when in need?

Conclusions

This article aimed at convincing the reader that entrepreneurial skills, understood as skills that make up the Translation Service Provision Competence as defined by the EMT experts, are worth exploring and teaching. To attain our objective, we tried to provide justification for our claim and we discussed a selection of skills within the interpersonal dimension of the Translation Service Provision Competence, as proposed in EMT (2009). We also included a handful of suggestions as for how to introduce

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8   This observation relates to the notion of supportive climate in communication, developed by Gibbs (1964) and accepted in the literature of the field as a precondition of effective interpersonal communication (see *e.g.* Woods 2007: 207–208).

the concepts like entrepreneurship and service provision to the translation, the interpreting and other related classrooms. The activities can be used for educational and self-educational purposes.

The list of activities provided only serves as a suggestion and an outline of the possible directions for creating more complex narratives, scenarios and activities. We believe that the activities like the ones we proposed above can help translation teachers in introducing the topic under analysis to their teaching practices. One of the greatest benefits of our proposal is that such activities can help teachers employ their professional translation background for didactic purposes. This authentic engagement is crucial for the teachers' becoming role models in the situated training of entrepreneurial skills. Thanks to this conception of teaching entrepreneurship and service provision skills, the teachers do not have to convince the students of how important these skills are, but they let the students discover and experience this importance on their own.

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