Part of the course?
Open questions on teaching entrepreneurialism and business skills to trainee translators

Dr Catherine Slater
Centre for Translation Studies
c.slater@surrey.ac.uk

- What is meant by "business skills"?
- What industry/business training do translators / interpreters need, and why?
- What training provision is currently available?

  Drawing on:
  - ➢ Pros and cons of current training provision
  - ➢ Challenges involved in teaching business skills
  - ➢ Insights from MA student survey
  - ➢ Personal experiences as a freelance translator and translation tutor

- What can this tell us about integrating business skills into Masters programmes?
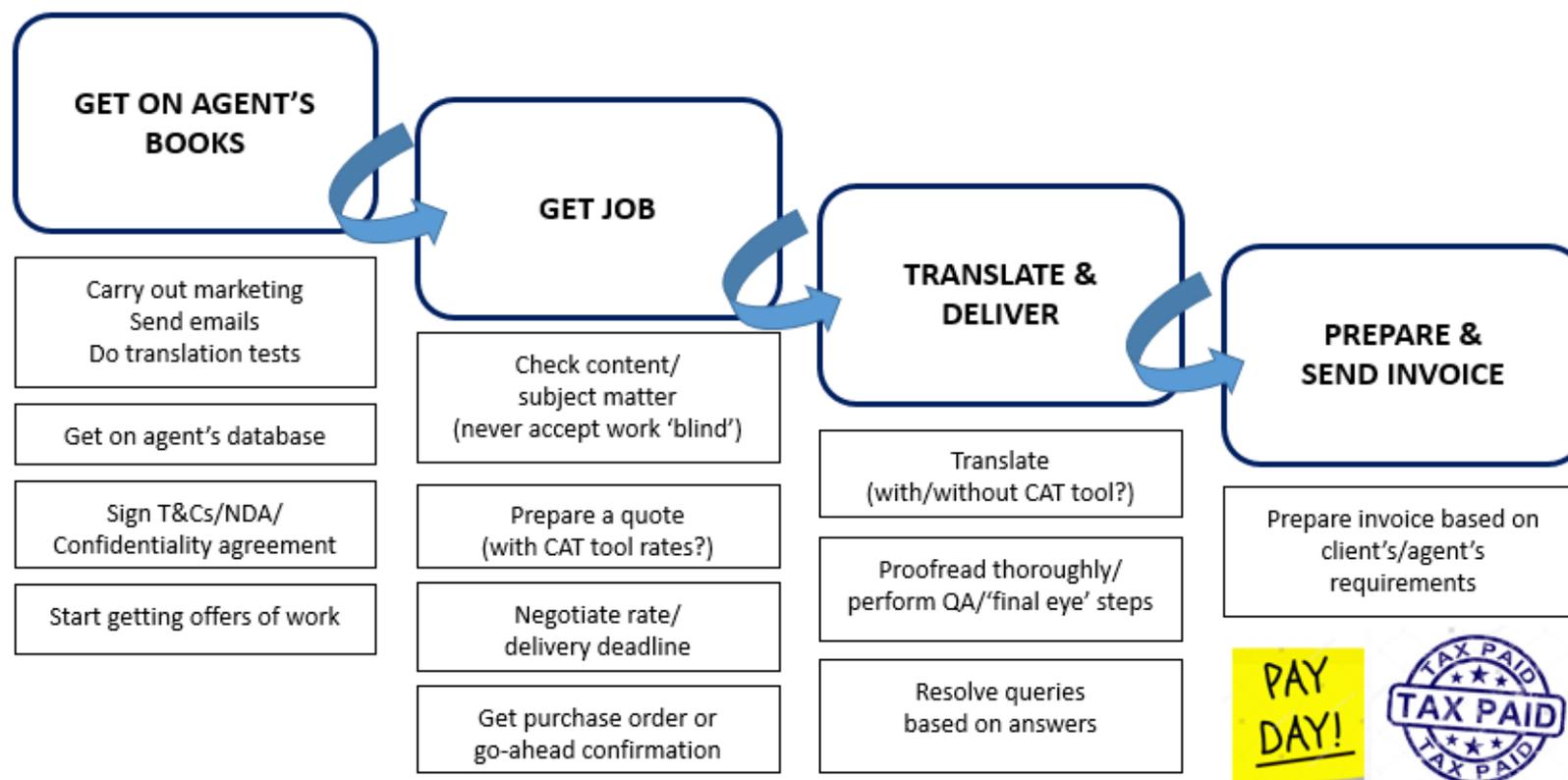
Business skills

("translation service provision competence")

Within the European Master's in Translation competence framework, the *translation service provision competence* has an *interpersonal dimension* which includes:
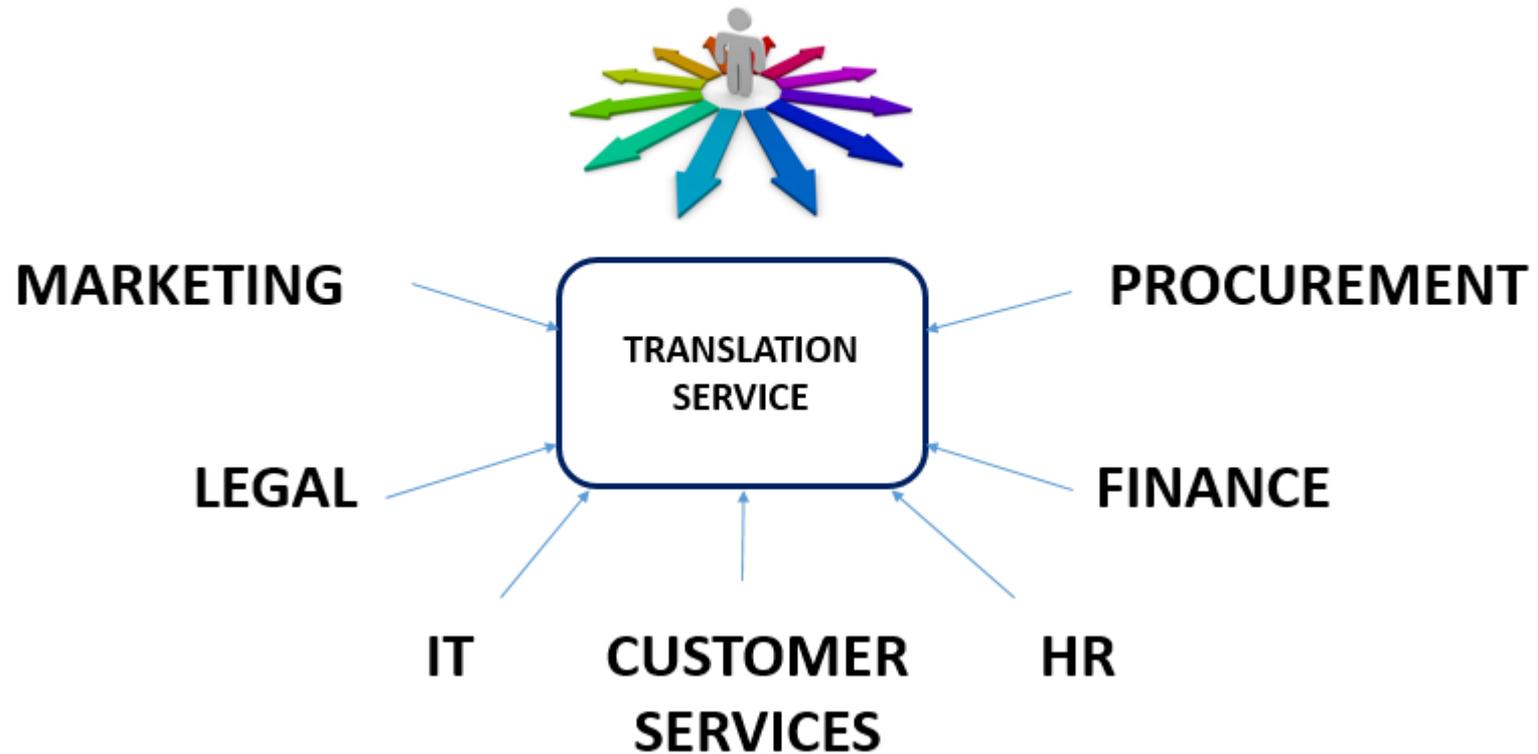
➢ Being aware of the social role of the translator

➢ Knowing how to follow market requirements and job profiles

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

➢ Knowing how to negotiate with the client (e.g. rates/deadlines)

➢ Knowing how to clarify the requirements, objectives and purposes of the client, recipients of the translation and other stakeholders

How it works (really)

GET ON AGENT'S BOOKS

Carry out marketing
Send emails
Do translation tests

Get on agent's database

Sign T&Cs/NDA/
Confidentiality agreement

Start getting offers of work

GET JOB

Check content/
subject matter
(never accept work 'blind')

Prepare a quote
(with CAT tool rates?)

Negotiate rate/
delivery deadline

Get purchase order or
go-ahead confirmation

TRANSLATE & DELIVER

Translate
(with/without CAT tool?)

Proofread thoroughly/
perform QA/'final eye' steps

Resolve queries
based on answers

PREPARE & SEND INVOICE

Prepare invoice based on
client's/agent's
requirements

PAY DAY!

TAX PAID
TAX PAID

Business skills

What and why?

- What industry/business training do trainee translators/ interpreters need?

  ➤ Industry knowledge vs business skills

- Why do trainee translators/interpreters need industry/ business training?

  ➤ To be able to start working in the industry immediately after graduating (or at least know where to start)

    ➤ So what should the content of the training focus on, and how can it best be taught?

Student survey: Working as a freelancer

FINDING WORK

When I finish the MA programme, I think I will know how to find translation/interpreting work
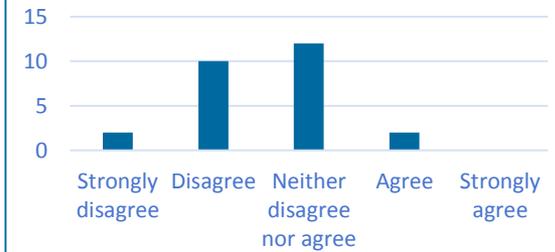

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
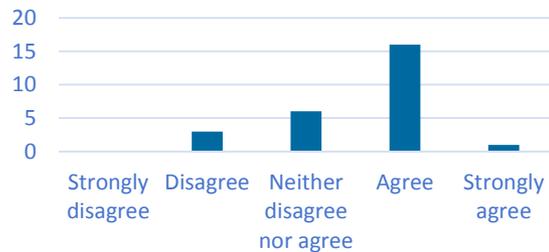
MARKETING

When I finish the MA programme, I think I will know how to market my translation/interpreting services

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
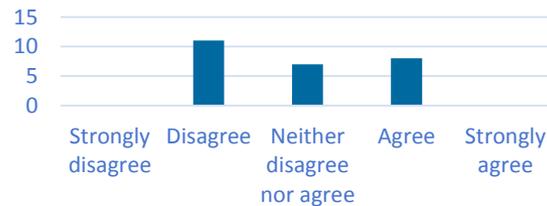
SETTING RATES

I know how to set and negotiate rates for my translation/interpreting services

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree

Business skills

Overview of current training provision

- A specific module on a Masters course (e.g. "Enterprise skills"; "Technology, Business and Industry Aspects of the Translation Profession"; "The Translation Profession")

- Within applied translation modules

- Individual seminars offered as part of Masters courses

- Post-qualification courses (universities/industry bodies/private companies)

- CPD sessions

- A specific module on a Masters course
  - ✓ Students report that they want Business Skills to be a part of their Masters course
  - ✓ Majority of students report they would take Business Skills module if offered
  - ✓ Transferable skill
  - ✓ Opportunities for project-based/ situated learning
  - ✓ Ensures consistency across student cohort
  - X May take time away from translation modules
  - ➢ Who teaches it (lecturers, translation tutors, business experts)?

- As part of applied translation classes
  - ✓ Students expect their tutors to include business skills in applied classes
  - ✓ Business skills are contextualised for translation purposes
  - X Takes time away from the actual business of learning to translate (reduced contact time)
  - X Experiences of translation tutors differ (difficult to ensure consistency across student cohort)
  - ➢ If it is part of a translation class, when should tutors start talking about the business side of freelancing (➔ scaffolding)?

Business skills: Current training provision (2/2)

- One-off seminar(s) as part of Masters course
  - ✓ Does not take time away from other modules/course content
  - ✓ Delivered by industry stakeholders (currency, relevance)
  - ✓ Networking opportunities
  - X May be too superficial/brief
  - X Can be difficult to make a seminar series coherent/logical (availability of speakers)
  - X Not practice-based
  - ➤ When should such seminars start?

- Post-qualification courses and CPD
  - ✓ Tailored to current industry needs
  - ✓ Delivered by industry stakeholders/experts
  - ✓ Opportunities for e-learning/ self-paced learning
  - ✓ Networking opportunities
  - X Cost
  - X May not be practice-based
  - ➤ How aware are students of such courses/opportunities?

I understand what CPD is

CPD is important for translators/interpreters
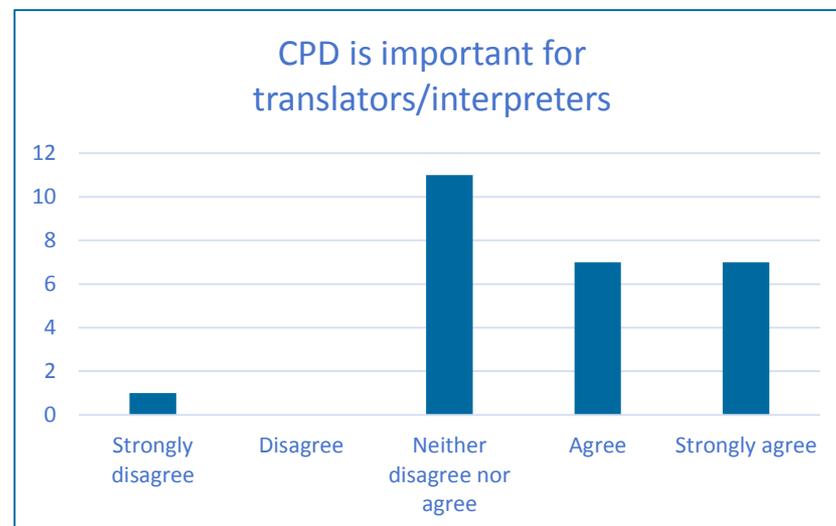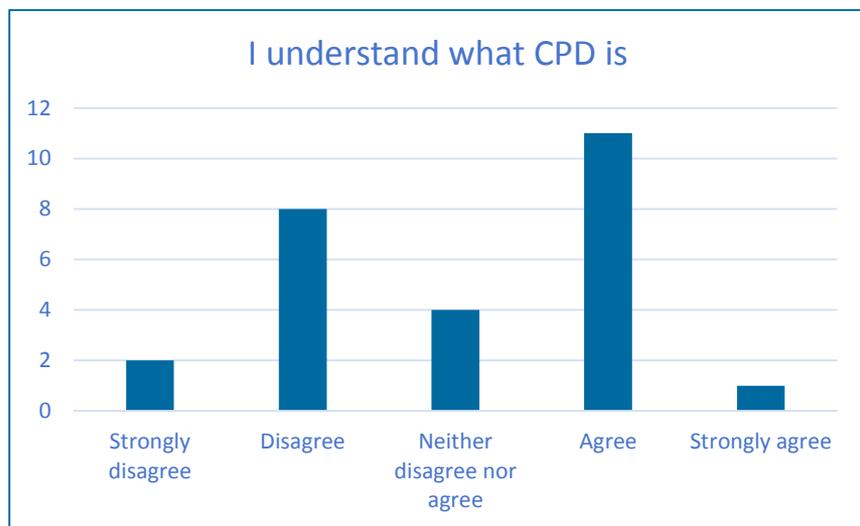
Concluding remarks

- Overlap between industry knowledge and business skills

- Trainee translators/interpreters want to have business skills training as part of their Masters courses; industry stakeholders are aware of and are responding to the need for business skills

- Some skills can be taught via traditional methods and project-based/situated learning opportunities…

- … but need to go beyond traditional forms of learning and situated learning for other skills?

- Need to look to more collaborative methods?