The stakes of internship programs

ATTILA PIRÓTH

BOSTON, MAY 2017
Why is this a relevant topic?

No sustainability without succession

Succession mechanisms are restricted if hierarchies remain intact
Emancipation starts by questioning the opposition between watching and acting, and by understanding that the evidences that establish the relations of saying, seeing and doing are part of the structure of domination.

Jacques Rancière, Le spectateur émancipé
Typical career paths

- Translation studies > professional work
- Career in another profession > switching to TR

Is transition simple?
Typical status

- Freelancer / solo entrepreneur, working remotely
  - Often forced choice

- Provision of autonomous, professional service or Externalized / hired work force?
  - Employee without employees’ benefits?

- Aware of more general legal framework, e.g., labor laws?
  - Italian Labor Investigation: Mondadori/RCS Libri Must Hire “Project” Editors They Pretended Were Freelancers
  - Not only in the world of publishers
Transition

- University studies > internship / mentoring > TR professional work

- Career in another profession > internship / mentoring > professional TR work
Internship

Internship = job training for white-collar and professional careers

Internship = exchange of services for experience between the student and organization

Interns: college/university students, high school students, or post-graduate adults, etc.

Positions and are usually temporary, paid or unpaid
Remuneration

France:
- max. unpaid period: 2 months
- thereafter at least 450/month
- Detailed regulations to avoid exploitation

Netherlands:
- Companies not obliged to pay students
- Unpaid internships are the de facto standard
- If paid: EUR 300/month on average
United Nations

UN interns are not paid. All costs related to travel, insurance, accommodation, and living expenses must be borne by either the interns or their sponsoring institutions.

European Commission

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/workwithus/trainee/index_en.htm

Trainees receive a grant of ~ € 1,000 per month.
Benefits for interns

- May find out if a particular career is suitable for them
- May acquire new skills & experience (valuable for future)
- May work in surroundings that differ from school
- May establish a network of contacts
- Internship may lead to permanent job in the organization
- May receive references
FIT’s position paper

Benefits for organizations

- May find suitable candidates for permanent employment
  - These candidates need less on-the-job training
- Successful internship improves organization’s image and reputation
- May get fresh ideas
- May obtain better insight into academic curricula
Remuneration

• Is the internship an obligatory part of the course of study and rewarded with credit points?
• Does the intern need more or less constant, close supervision?
• Does the intern derive a much greater benefit from the internship than the employer?

3 × 'yes':
  internship considered as part of training/studies
  – no obligation to pay a minimum wage
Remuneration at nonprofits

- If all other members of the staff work on an unpaid basis: it is fair enough that the T/I intern is not paid either.
- If other staff members are paid for their work, then there is no reason not to remunerate the T/I intern.
Surveys on internships and mentoring

With the help of Catherine Howard and Maria Karra

- Interns/mentes: www.surveymonkey.com/r/TR-int-I
- Mentors: www.surveymonkey.com/r/TR-int-M
- Universities: www.surveymonkey.com/r/TR-int-U
- Organizations running internship programs: www.surveymonkey.com/r/TR-int-O
- Pro associations: www.surveymonkey.com/r/TR-int-A
University curricula

• Adequate preparation for business environment?

• Working knowledge of standard tools & protocols?
  ○ Under real-life conditions
    ✷ Or are tool trainings separated from all other courses

• Experience with real-life projects?

• Building a professional network?
Real-life project: Inventions

- Book translation for publisher
  - Target readers: teenagers
  - Reading level: easy
  - Specialized terminology: almost none
  - One page sections

- Collaborative workflow: translation + cross-revision
  - Plus revision by teacher
  - Final choice with translator
    - Negotiation
Real-life project: Inventions

• All names included
  ○ Get used to signing your work

• Payment: X copies for each participant
  ○ Concession: company store

• Usually strict rules/bans on paid work involving students
  ○ Should it be unpaid work?
    ▫ Should students subtitle TED videos?
    ▫ Or should university propose other projects?
      (E.g., subtitling videos of graduating film art students?)
Translation company at university

Existing scenario from Eastern Europe

- Translation company offers CAT course for free
- Teacher identifies most promising students
- Offers them internship at her company
  - Unpaid, then converted to an extended (low) paid internship or in-house position with entry-level salary
Translation company at university

• Student: living and studying in Eastern Europe
  ○ mother tongue: major Western European language
    ▪ valuable and rare language combination
  ○ hired for an entry-level office salary in EE
    ▪ does not know the value of his talent

• Conflict of business interests: company representative AND teacher

• Turned into a business model
How can it be avoided?

- **Strong conflict-of-interest policy at university**
  - Monitored by appropriate bodies, e.g. professional associations
  - Freelancers giving courses at university

- **Students have contacts with established, successful professionals**
  - Student membership in professional associations
Better employability?

Training at technical university to meet requirements of job market for better employability?

• Criteria of different companies do not fully overlap
• Criteria of one specific company fully met:
  ○ stronger competition among employee candidates,
  ○ increased price pressure
• **This is no priority for freelance careers**
• Getting into universities can have an excellent return on investment for companies
Internship at companies

- Feedback from several professionals
- Broader client base – more varied work
- Possibility of future work/employment

**BUT**

- Won’t necessarily learn business/admin skills/best practices necessary for a freelancer
- May be unaware of own work’s worth, unfavorable future employment
Practical courses outsourced to companies

- Company usually not compensated financially but:
  - Directly by the work of the intern
  - By university’s relational capital
  - Reputation (piggy-backing on university)

Low per-credit costs for university (for internship period)
Internship at freelancers

- One on one: great time commitment
  - Giving meaningful work for 2 month(s), 35-40 h/week
  - Usually no money involved
- Strict guidelines by universities
- Usual components:
  - Revision of intern’s translation
  - Admin tasks – correspondence, invoicing, negotiation
  - Learning new tools (e.g., CAT, alignment)
  - Registering one’s business
  - Learning negotiation techniques by watching
  - Acquiring clients, etc. through mentor’s network
Internship at freelancers

APTIC:

- Several mentors for one student
  - Reasonable time commitment
  - Feedback from multiple established pros

Real-life projects where intern is in charge?
Mentoring

- Mentoring = personal development relationship
- More experienced/knowledgeable person helps less experienced/knowledgeable person
- Less formal relationship than internship, with smaller time commitment
Mentoring

1 year, at least 1 or 2 hours per month
Mentorships are long-distance
Mentee sets goals and pace
Mentor and mentee negotiate how the relationship will play out
To apply: mentee statement worksheet
  ○ 30 mentees selected in competitive process
2007: team set up with double aim:

- Provide pro bono help to a humanitarian NGO, Solidarités International

- Create a networking environment where career (re)starters can work with experienced colleagues and learn new skills
  - Work on real-life projects
Should it really be pro bono?

To what extent should the translation for the disaster relief / international development sector be demonetized?


2009: Solidarités:

We set aside the budget for translation

How should it be used?
The Solidarités team

- Everyone paid according to volume?
- Certain projects paid, others not?
- Certain people paid, others not?

What would you choose?

Discussed with entire team
The Solidarités internship

- Two early-career translators get paid
  - EUR 1000
  - Part-time commitment for three months

- Rest of the team continues pro bono
  - Light and flexible commitment

- Ten 2-hour webinars, open to all team members
  - Since September 2009
The Solidarités internship

- **Education component – webinars**

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<th>Tools</th>
<th>Best practices</th>
<th>Business</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAT tools</td>
<td>Best practices in revision and quality assessment</td>
<td>Getting established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translator’s toolkit (alignment, Xbench, Audacity, etc.)</td>
<td>Terminology research and utilization</td>
<td>Business risk mitigation</td>
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<td>Word</td>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Working for publishers</td>
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<td>Excel</td>
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<td>Professional associations</td>
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<tr>
<td>LaTeX</td>
<td>Subtitling (hands-on workshop)</td>
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Attila Piróth, Internships and Mentoring

Boston, May 2017
Feedback from 10+ experienced translators
- To compensate that mentor is not native speaker
- Yolanda Broad’s appraisal – self-confidence boost

Best practice for revision:
direct contact between translator and editor

Feedback according to industry-standard assessment schemes (SAE J2450, ATA exam)

Translators’ name published in brochure and glossary

Video subtitling
The Solidarités internship

2015 WATER, HYGIENE AND SANITATION BAROMETER
An inventory of access to a vital resource #01 MARCH 2015
WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF FRANÇOIS GAILLARD | PHILIPPE GUETTIER | JACQUES OUDIN | GÉRARD PAYEN | RENAUD PARROUX | CLAUS SORENSEN

2015 WATER, HYGIENE & SANITATION BAROMETER FIRST EDITION,
THE STATE OF ACCESS TO A VITAL RESOURCE
A SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL publication
Managing editor Jean-Yves Troy | Editor-in-chief Renaud Douci | Editorial coordination
Tugdual de Dieuleveult with Alain Boinet | Editorial staff Alain Boinet, Tugdual de
Dieuleveult, Renaud Douci, Erwann Lacoste, Jean-Marc Leblanc, Julie Mayans, Camille
Niel, Jean-Yves Troy | Contributors Arnaud Courtecuisse, Franck Galland, Philippe
Guettier, Jacques Oudin, Gérard Payen, Renaud Parroux, Claus Sorensen | English
translation Dana Amarascu, Christopher Carver, Jenny Duthie, Delphine Hope, Fleur
Pettie, Shelagh Rothero | Photos SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL, Tugdual de Dieuleveult,
EU ECHO, Phovoir, Vincent Tremeau | Graphic design and illustration F. Javelaud
| Printing Le Réveil de la Marne | Thank you to Éditions Autrement and to David
Blanchon for the map of water-related tensions, taken from his Atlas Mondial de l’eau
(World Water Atlas).
The Solidarités internship

- Learn and get used to best practices
  - Best practices for freelancers

- Build your network

- Work on meaningful real-life projects

- Without destroying a market segment
## Solidarités interns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Will McNab</td>
<td>(New Zealand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dan Weston</td>
<td>(Hawaii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Emma-Jane Crozier</td>
<td>(France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phoebe Greene</td>
<td>(France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joanna Oseman</td>
<td>(UK, US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Debbi Steele</td>
<td>(UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Jane Proctor</td>
<td>(France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kelly Venz</td>
<td>(France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Delphine Hope</td>
<td>(UK, France, Canada)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fleur Pettie</td>
<td>(UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Dana Amarascu</td>
<td>(Canada)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Claire McNelly</td>
<td>(UK)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Solidarités interns

- 2016: call for applications sent to several universities in UK, US, Canada
- 35 applications
- 2 interns:
  - Sybil Gilchrist
  - Christine Gutman

Would other NGOs adopt the internship program?

- 2017: Internship program approved by Solidarités