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**Universitat Autònoma
de Barcelona**

The Interinstitutional Doctorate of Educational Psychology (DIPE)

Faculty of Psychology

Department of Basic, Developmental, and Educational Psychology

PhD in Educational Psychology

Construction of Identity of Entrepreneur:

Implications for Training

Alina Valencia

Thesis supervisor: **Dr. Carles Monereo Font**

Barcelona, September 2019

Autonomous University of Barcelona

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Development as a Taste of Life

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Preface

Having more than fifteen years of experience in business consulting and psychological counseling for entrepreneurs, I see on practice that the effectiveness of the company or project depends very much on the psychological characteristics of its leader. Image, marketing and financial statement of business have a direct connection with the strategy chosen by an entrepreneur, and it is mostly based on his life and business concepts as well as on his way of thinking. I always say to my clients that each business is the “mirror” of its owner. Working as a psychologist, I can quickly see how emotions and feelings can inspire or ruin the companies. Thus, my professional focus was always on the identity of entrepreneurs, their concepts, values, and strategies of their actions.

My previous research experience lays in the field of acmeology or so-called psychology of professional development - modern integrated science dealing with human, natural, social, and technical sciences. It is studying the specific patterns of human mental development at the stage of the maturity: the progressive nature of the development, orientation to the highest levels of optimal professional and career development, reverse influence of personality on activities, the increase of personal integrity during the maturity stage. This science is focused on the role of “Acme” phenomenon as the highest level of professionalism, a multidimensional human mental state for the progressive development, creating ability of an adults to act in a changing and uncertain environment, the ability to maximize their individual resources and to create the impact to the society, enhancing the role of self-development for an adult (Bodalev, 2007; Derkach, 2013; Kuzmina, 2013). My meeting with Alexey Bodalev, the founder of acmeology, who was the follower of Lev Vygotsky (1978) deeply impressed me and encouraged me to follow the line of the psychology of education and personal development.

My approach to consulting is based on management by values and lifelong learning principles as well as on two psychological approaches - humanistic psychology (Rogers, 2011; Frankl, 2011) and constructivist psychology (Vygotsky, 1978; Leont’ev & Cole, 2009; Rogoff, 2003).

I worked a lot in the field of corporate training and adults’ education and was searching for a fundamental theory for the practical implementation in the sphere of educational psychology and effective methodology for achieving results for self-development in business. So, I found the works of Carles Monereo and IdentitiES research

group dedicated to the topic of construction of identity based on critical incidents and the dialogical perspective of the identity based on the concept of the Dialogical Self Theory (Hermans, Kempen & van Loon, 1992) and the theory of Dialogical Leadership as a part of DST (van Loon, 2010). This theory inspired me by its new scientific focus, and practical orientation adapted to the aspects of organizational psychology, entrepreneurship as a field of lifelong learning and education for the adults. However, most of all, I was impressed by people - the scientists leading this theory while attending the international conferences, being inspired by lectures of Hermans and van Loon. All these knowledge, experience, competences, and impressions helped me to come to the development of the topic of entrepreneurial identity and its practical application. I would be incredibly honored if this research would grant to the development of the scientific line as well as if it could be useful for professionals all over the world for applying it in practice.

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Abstract

Nowadays, the instability of the investment into material things becomes evident, and the attention is focused on human capital - people who create and develop business. This research assumes the profound study of the construction and changes in the identity of entrepreneurs based on the analysis of their personal and professional way and the influence of critical incidents according to the Dialogical Self Theory (Hermans, Kempen, & van Loon, 1992) leading to increasing the quality of life for entrepreneurs and effectiveness of their business.

We propose to use a methodology based on the profound study of entrepreneurs' identity discovering their I-positions based on their concepts and the strategies for facing different critical incidents with the high emotional impact. For this purpose, we created and expanded the questionnaire "Survey for Entrepreneurs based on Critical Incidents," which involved 430 participants, entrepreneurs from different EU countries. The design of the questionnaire includes quantitative and qualitative data. In our research, we focused on two types of critical incidents more typical for entrepreneurs: individual and collective cases. Situations proposed in the survey all mostly deal with the psychological aspect of entrepreneurial behavior. The research helped us to systematize existing knowledge of entrepreneurial types and to create a list of most common critical incidents in the entrepreneurship based on the expert evaluation. The main results confirm the high importance of critical incidents for the formation of entrepreneurial identity and existence of four identity I-positions ("leaders," "innovators," "fighters," "opportunists") which define the strategies of facing critical incidents according to these positions in a real business environment. Besides, study shows positive and negative correlations between different factors as gender, entrepreneurial experience, and educational level. It also shows the strategies of entrepreneurial behavior and emotional impact of the critical incidents on their professional life.

As the second step of the studying of the construction of the entrepreneurial identity, we made a profound case-study of four participants – the representatives of each I-position according to Study 1 – the entrepreneurs with less than one-year experience from different countries. The observation was held within six months and included applying such instruments as an interview, Mapping, Journey plot, Personal Position Repertoire, and

coaching. It showed the variety of scenarios of forming the entrepreneurial identity in most typical contexts, including family business or starting own business after working for the company or freelance. We can see that the implication of the set of the tools not only helped us to study the process of the construction of the entrepreneurial identity on the early professional stage but meanwhile to provide the participants with psychological support leading to the development of their flexibility in using I-positions for facing critical incidents on their professional way.

As a final stage of our research, we created a program “I-DEAL Me: The entrepreneur whom I want to become,” aimed at the formation of the balanced entrepreneurial identity. It is concentrated on the understanding oneself as an entrepreneur, his lifeway and the events leading to the choosing the profession of the entrepreneur, forming the entrepreneurial I-position and training to face most common critical incidents in business for the construction of the balanced entrepreneurial identity. The program was evaluated and highly appreciated by the experts for its streamlined approach, methodology, and practical use. Besides that, it has a high potential for developing and application for the different categories of entrepreneurs.

All three studies of the research present the holistic vision of the construction of the entrepreneurial identity, targeting not only for the academic research but for the practical use.

Resumen

Actualmente la inestabilidad de la inversión en cosas materiales se hace evidente, la atención ha pasado a centrarse en el capital humano - las personas que crean y desarrollan negocios. Esta investigación propone un estudio profundo de la construcción y cambios de identidad de los emprendedores en base al análisis de su perfil personal y profesional y la influencia de incidentes críticos, siguiendo la “Dialogical Self Theory” (Hermans, Kempen, & van Loon, 1992) lo que contribuirá a aumentar la calidad de vida de los empresarios y la eficacia en sus negocios. Con el objetivo de abordar esta temática, proponemos utilizar una metodología basada en el estudio profundo de la identidad de los empresarios identificando sus “I-positions” en función de sus conceptos y estrategias para enfrentar diferentes incidentes críticos con un alto impacto emocional. Para este propósito, creamos y ampliamos el cuestionario “Encuesta para emprendedores basada en incidentes críticos” que involucró a 430 participantes, empresarios de diferentes países de la UE. El diseño del cuestionario incluye datos cuantitativos y cualitativos. En nuestra investigación, nos centramos en los dos tipos de incidentes críticos más típicos para los empresarios: casos individuales y colectivos. Las situaciones propuestas en la encuesta se refieren principalmente al aspecto psicológico del comportamiento empresarial. La investigación nos ayudó a sistematizar el conocimiento existente sobre los distintos tipos de emprendedores y a crear una lista de los incidentes críticos más comunes en el área del emprendimiento basada en la evaluación experta. Los principales resultados confirman la gran importancia de los incidentes críticos para la formación de la identidad empresarial y la existencia de cuatro I-positions (“líderes,” “innovadores,” “luchadores,” “oportunistas”) que definen las estrategias para enfrentar incidentes críticos de acuerdo en un entorno empresarial real. Además, el estudio muestra correlaciones positivas y negativas entre diferentes variables como el género del empresario, la experiencia empresarial, su nivel educativo, y también muestra las estrategias de comportamiento empresarial más frecuentes y el impacto emocional de los incidentes críticos en su vida profesional.

Como un segundo paso complementario en el estudio de la construcción de la identidad empresarial, realizamos un estudio de caso en profundidad con cuatro participantes de distintos países, con menos de un año de experiencia, representantes de cada I-position según el estudio 1. Las observaciones se realizaron durante seis meses e incluyeron la aplicación de instrumentos tales como entrevistas individuales, Mapping,

Journey Plot, Personal Position Repertoire y Coaching. Se mostró la variedad de escenarios para formar la identidad empresarial en la mayoría de los contextos típicos, incluidos los negocios familiares o el comienzo de un negocio propio después de trabajar en una empresa. Podemos ver que la implicación del conjunto de herramientas no solo nos ayudó a estudiar el proceso de construcción de la identidad empresarial en la etapa profesional temprana, sino que, además, proporcionó a los participantes apoyo psicológico para desarrollar su flexibilidad en el uso de I-positions para enfrentar incidentes críticos en su forma profesional de acuerdo con los comentarios.

Como etapa final de nuestra investigación, creamos un programa llamado “I-DEAL Me: El emprendedor en el que quiero convertirme,” dirigido a la formación de una identidad empresarial equilibrada. Se orienta a favorecer entenderse a sí mismo como emprendedor, su forma de vida y los eventos que conducen a la elección de la profesión del emprendedor, formando las I-positions empresariales y capacitación para afrontar los incidentes críticos más comunes en los negocios para la construcción de identidad del emprendedor equilibrado. El programa fue evaluado y muy apreciado por los expertos por su enfoque actual, metodología y aplicación práctica. Además, consideraron que tiene un alto potencial de desarrollo y aplicación para las diferentes categorías de emprendedores.

Los tres estudios de la investigación presentan una visión holística de la construcción de la identidad empresarial dirigida, no solo a la investigación académica, sino también a su utilización práctica por parte de los empresarios.

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Chapter 1. Theoretical Background.

In today's reality, competition between companies is happening in the field of building talent management systems and the creation of the best conditions for the realization of human potential. Modern entrepreneurship is highly concentrated on the processes connected to the person — communication, networking, psychological and professional growth, and skills development. The business becomes more and more personalized; the attention of the customers, clients, and partners is focused on the person — an entrepreneur, making his business unique. This tendency increases the power of an entrepreneur as a leader, his¹ business, influencing the model of the whole business community. Moreover, the potential of an entrepreneur and his competences influence the competitiveness of the company (Tülüce & Yurtkur, 2015). No wonder that in times of crisis, there is an increased demand for business education and personal coaching programs. When the instability of investment in material things becomes obvious, attention becomes focused on people who create and develop business. Training programs, personal and group coaching online, and offline courses have got the character of long-term investments in entrepreneurship (Monroe, 2016; Scott, 2013).

Becoming an entrepreneur is always a life choice, more or less spontaneous or prepared (Obschonka, Silbereisen, & Schmitt-Rodermund, 2010). On his business way, an entrepreneur faces many challenges leading to failure or success. An outstanding businessman was always distinguished by the ability to be flexible and effective, to find the life balance and to bring an added value.

Our research thereby discovers the problem of construction of entrepreneurial identity based on critical incidents bringing together theoretical and methodological approaches for the implementation into practice.

As the essential elements of the study we have used following: the model of the entrepreneurial identity according to the Dialogical Self Theory (Hermans, 2006, 2008, 2018; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010; Hermans & Gieser, 2011; Hermans, Kempen & van Loon, 1992) and Dialogical Leadership (van Loon, 2010, 2018); importance of Critical Incidents for forming the identity (Monereo, 2015, 2019; Monereo & Monte, 2011).

¹ We will use the masculine to refer to women and men - entrepreneurs indifferently

According to the Dialogical Self Theory (DST), the entrepreneurial identity is understood as a complex multilevel structure, including a unique group of I-positions, proposing different concepts or roles, feelings about entrepreneurship, and strategies being constructed in the inner dialogue with other voices (Monereo, Weise, & Alvarez, 2013).

Various authors investigated the problem of the entrepreneurial identity in its connection to education and training from different angles – leaders' identity construction (DeRue & Ashford, 2010); founders' identity in entrepreneurship (Fauchart & Gruber, 2011); self-narrative of the entrepreneurial identity (Harmeling, 2011); the identity of postgraduate students (Hytti & Heinonen, 2013); entrepreneurship effectuation theory (Navis & Glynn, 2011); the entrepreneurial identity in connection with investors' judgments (Nielsen & Lassen, 2012); the transition of the social identity to entrepreneurship (Obschonka et al., 2012).

In the last decade, the research in the area of the young entrepreneurs' identity has been carried out in the following aspects: construction of entrepreneurial identity among youth focusing on the beliefs and values such as individualism, risk-taking, innovativeness, opportunity recognition and tolerance (Kirch & Tuisk, 2015); students' identity in the focus of cross-cultural learning (Kubberød & Pettersen, 2018); constructing entrepreneurial identity in entrepreneurial education (Donnellon et al., 2014); the ability of education to develop students' entrepreneurial identities through transformational learning (Harmeling, 2011); the entrepreneurial identity and how it interacts with both new value creation and entrepreneurial role expectations (Lundqvist, Middleton, & Nowell, 2015).

Despite this interest, no one, as far as we know, has studied the process of the construction of the entrepreneurial identity according to I-positioning and based on critical incidents. Moreover, some of those theories mention dialogism but do not use enough the theoretical background and the variety of practical tools of the Dialogical Self Theory. As Hermans (2016) highlights, "Dialogical Self Theory aims to create an interface for the construction of methods and practices that are both theory-based and valuable in their pragmatic implications" (p. xvi).

Our research has another practical purpose targeting implementation of the research results in the training program for entrepreneurs. Analyzing existing educational models (university programs, online courses, business accelerators, etc.) we discovered it as mostly separated knowledge on topics related to the professional activity (finance, investment,

marketing, networking and etc.), but, in the same time, the lack of integral programs concentrated on entrepreneurs' identity, on its constructing and development.

According to a complicated professional performance, entrepreneurs have to face many events which have a high impact on their business success, so-called critical incidents. The implications of the research on the entrepreneurial identity into the practice of business training based on Critical Incidents (CI) was earlier investigated by Cope & Watts (2000) - entrepreneurial learning connected to CI, and Heinrichs (2016) - entrepreneurship education course dealing with CI.

As a company which has a clear vision and business strategy has more chances to be effective in the market, the entrepreneur who has a correct understanding of his personal and professional identity, his competencies and is able to choose the right strategy for facing different types of critical incidents, has more chances to be a success. Therefore, training focused on entrepreneurial identity can become a powerful identity workspace, where through real-life practice; the participants make sense of who they can be as entrepreneurs and to involve themselves in entrepreneurial activity by adapting to the context of the entrepreneurship (Kubberød & Pettersen, 2018). It assists in personalizing the observations of the entrepreneurs who participate in such a type of educational program; they experiment with new entrepreneurial models and understand their matching to different kind of practical situations in entrepreneurial performance. Such approach can become a clue to increasing the quality of life for entrepreneurs and the effectiveness of their businesses.

For the reason of the systematic view on the problems mentioned above and realizing the research objectives, this paper is divided into five sections. The first section gives a brief overview of the theoretical background of the Dialogical Self Theory approach and critical incidents and its role in the forming of the entrepreneurial identity. The second section presents the results of Study 1, including the overview of general entrepreneurial I-positions and the proper strategies of facing critical incidents. This part is providing the results of the survey research on the construction of the entrepreneurial identity of entrepreneurs with various professional experiences. In the third section, four case studies of forming an entrepreneurial identity by representatives of different I-positions are presented and analyzed along with a wide range of evaluating and forming methods applied. The final program for forming the entrepreneurial identity is presented in the fourth section.

It assumes the authors methodic and practical implication of the earlier obtained research results. Our conclusions are drawn in the final section.

1.1. Model of entrepreneurial identity according to Dialogical Self Theory.

This part of our research is dedicated to the approach to the understanding of entrepreneurial identity due to the Dialogical Self Theory.

This modern psychological theory was developed by Hermans, Kempen and van Loon (1992) as a psychological concept describing the mind's ability to imagine the different positions of participants in an internal dialogue, in close connection with external dialogue. The psychological background is the theory of self-proposed by W. James as a classical distinction between I and me. James said that the Me as a "self-as-known" consists of the empirical elements which belong to oneself, so people and things belong to the self as they are felt as "mine." The other background of the Dialogical Self Theory is the concept "polyphonic novel," the dialogical approach of Bakhtin, "which allows for a multiplicity of positions among which dialogical relationships may emerge" (Hermans, 2002, p. 147).

Based on these two approaches, Hermans and Kempen defined that "I" has a variety of proper positions related in a dialogical way, each of these positions proposes its characteristic and its own experience exchanging as dialogical voices resulting in a complex and narratively structured self (Hermans, 2002). According to Hermans (2016), dialogical relationships exist within self and "allow the construction of new and empowering meanings – they serve as an interface between self and society" (p. xiii). One of the essential theoretical basements directly connected to the topic of our research is that context, self, and society can directly influence each other in mutually enriching ways.

The dialogical self can be described as a mental model of oneself and a "dynamic multiplicity of I-positions in the inner space of the self" (Hermans, 2016, p. xvi). Therefore, the self is considered as a micro-society of I-positions (Hermans, 2002). "I-position" is composed by three factors. First is a "self-concept" in relation to the I-position of the entrepreneur, perception of his role as a professional, for example, for entrepreneur, "me as a head of the company," "me — as an expert," "me as a manager" (Monereo, 2016). Such theoretical construction creates direct avenues between the self and society and back again.

It allows people to create productive connections between their position in a group or organization, in the case of our research “I as an entrepreneur” with positions in the self, e.g., “I as creative,” “I as systematic” (Hermans, 2016). Another factor is a strategy — in relation to a business area, entrepreneurs can choose a strategy of avoidance of risks or risk management strategy, which will project their further steps and self-perception and the perception of the external environment. Moreover, the third one is the sensual, emotional aspect; it is about how we feel ourselves in these I-positions.

I-positions become more actively implemented in developing context as we have more abilities to reflect ourselves as a person and professional, in the light of significant others. We observe ourselves through internal dialogue and reflection, analyze, create awareness of own professional identity of an entrepreneur which is formed by different I-positions, for example, “team leader,” “innovator,” owner.” Thus, the I-position always includes a way of interpreting reality, for example, of the past event, the ways to influence the situation, the emotional perception of the situation (Monereo, 2015). Therefore, I-professional position - is a unique group of concepts, strategies, and feelings/sensations, expressed in terms of the voice in the dialogue with other voices (Monereo, Weise, & Alvarez, 2013).

Another concept based on the DST is that the positions receive voices provoking dialogical exchanges. The voices become involved in the questioning and answering, agreement and disagreement, conflicts or negotiations and cooperation (Hermans, 2016). This phenomenon is called as “multivoicesness of self.” Each of these positions interprets what happens, takes the decisions on how to act and is expressed by its proper voice (Monereo, 2019a). As Hermans (2008) notes, “individual voices are deeply penetrated by the culture of institutions, groups, and communities in which they participate, including their power differences” (p. 192). The self, conceptualized as multivoiced, other-inclusive, and embedded in social relations of power, is both relatively stable and continuously changed through the process of dialogue (Hermans, 2008). The voices with which we talk are crucial for the quality of our knowledge (Monereo, 2019a).

Thus, self is reflected on different levels: first, in the inner dialogue with own values, motivations and competences, with the dialogues about values, projects, personality or behavior with another people; next level, is the level of “others-in-me” as it also has its values and vision, another level, is the society and culture (van Loon, 2010). Using such structure, we can understand that interaction on these levels can be quite contradictory and

cause a situation of conflicts or self-conflicts. For example, ambitions of entrepreneur or his values can be contradictory to the values or vision of the company if there are other owners included into business modeling, that mostly causes psychological problems of identity for entrepreneur or/and ineffectiveness of his business.

As another example, we can use the changes in the concepts when entrepreneur changes his values (mostly in the circumstances of critical incidents), and it influences his I-position as a leader or manager. As we talk about changes in the professional identity, we define it as changes in one or more I-positions that a professional has, and which are quite stable over time and well delimited in terms of their content.

Being included in the external dialogues (as a base for uniting or in some cases disintegrating professionals in different areas can serve as a discussion platform), or joining in modeling a future situation in the form of business game when, for example, the student tries on the role of the future specialist, it expands the boundaries of perception, he can see the possible model of acting and learn the experience of senior and experienced professionals, learning to respond flexibly to changes in the environment, change their own “I-position” in accordance with the requirements of the environment, possible challenges and to solve problematic situations, which allows in conditions of joint activity to form professional communities and accumulate intellectual capital. According to Hermans (2018), I-positions can play various roles becoming promoter - “a position that organizes and gives direction to the development of other positions in the repertoire and is able to generate new ones” or shining - “a position that radiates a positive and inspiring energy to other positions”, some of them are shadow - “a disowned position that is rejected as unacceptable” (p. 400).

The greatest stage of the I-positions is defined as a meta-position, “superordinate position that allows a helicopter view of other positions and their patterning and offers a long-term and cross-situational perspective” (Hermans, 2018, p. 400). In this case it is imperative to mention that the phenomenon of I-positions is dramatically different from the concept of “roles” as we got accustomed knowing them in the entrepreneurship (my role as a manager, my role as a business owner) as the I-position includes both social positions or roles (e.g., I as an entrepreneur) and personal positions (e.g., “I as a motivator,” “I as an optimist”) (Hermans, 2016), moreover the I-position in comparison with the static features of “role” is characterized by dynamism and adaptation.

1.1.1. Entrepreneurial identity.

An entrepreneur is defined as a person who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk (“Online Business Dictionary - BusinessDictionary.com,” 2019). However, nowadays, there is a significant change in the approach to the concept of an entrepreneur. The focus has moved from the products or services to the person who creates them. Despite the importance of the psychological approach in business and leading role of entrepreneurial identity for the success of the business activity, there are few studies dedicated to entrepreneurial identity construction, due to a gap in a theoretical understanding of what it takes to become an entrepreneur (Donnellon et al., 2014).

Focusing on identity of an entrepreneur, we consider it as a professional identity having its unique characteristics. According to the Dialogical Self Theory, self-representation of multiple identities in focus of entrepreneur can be seen on three levels:

- Representations about the proper professional role — formation, experience (e.g., “me as a manager,” “me as a leader,” “me as an owner”).
- Representations about “others-in-me” are the connections with “meaning others” who can influence our self-representations (“me as entrepreneur” according to my perception of myself as a representation caused by the interactions with my team, my family, my business partners).
- Representations about social and cultural context — “institutional” level (e.g., “me as an entrepreneur” as a representative of small business, client-oriented company, learning organization, industrial or service company, my business community).

The identity of an entrepreneur is tightly connected to the tasks and problems that he has to solve in his everyday activities. Various approaches to the categorization of the entrepreneurs have been proposed in the scientific literature, from those we have extracted and systematized those connected to the entrepreneurial identity:

- by belonging to the proper type of social identity: identified three different social identities; Darwinian, to start a business is for their economic assurance, they aim at earning money and creating a comfortable living, Communitarian – targeting to create their communities and to improve that creating new products and this development is

based on the feedback from the clients and Missionary – creating their company as the example for the improvement of the society (Fauchart & Gruber, 2011);

- by different strategic concepts: Ricardian identity, characterized by focusing on being efficient and cost leadership advantage (Lim et al., 2012), Schumpeterian based on seeking for differentiation, through exploring the environment for innovations (Lim et al., 2012) and Sustainable Entrepreneurship Organization identity based on the tending to develop a product or service that reduces social and sustainable impacts, and being value-added (Stubbs, 2016);

- characterized by his professional activity: starting the new business (Gartner, 1985), starting a new organization or revitalizes existing organization (Onuoha, 2007), organizing and managing any enterprise (“Online Business Dictionary - BusinessDictionary.com”, 2019);

- by innovations and opportunities: entrepreneur searches for opportunities and new niches using technical or organizational innovations (Schumpeter, 1965), creates and innovates for recognized values based on founded opportunities (Bolton & Thompson, 2000), develops new niches and strategy to satisfy the needs (Garfield, 1986);

- by skills and competencies promotes leadership, demonstrates creative and initiative thinking (Hisrich, 1990), usually with considerable initiative and risks (Drucker, 1970);

- by project approach: entrepreneurship as a life project, authoring oneself as an entrepreneur mobilized by presentation or participation in order to take his place in a community of entrepreneurs (Gherardi, 2015);

- by past and future: the continuity between one’s construal of past entrepreneurial experience and one’s future aspirations concerning entrepreneurship (Kirch & Tuisk, 2015);

- by definition: self-identity by definition of who is an entrepreneur as “who I am and what I do” (Mills & Pawson, 2015);

- by cultural aspects: as entrepreneurs reflect the dominant values of their national culture and are formed by this culture (Thomas & Mueller, 2000);

- by dialogue – as a Dialogical Leader managing both the “society of mind” and the “society of members,” creating the fruitful space for the dialogical relationships (van Loon, 2018).

Therefore, the entrepreneurial identity can be seen as a complex structure with its construction shaped by different levels. It can be seen as a chain of structures, including functions, social mediation, and knowledge-based on practice and skills. Through metacognition — as “knowing about knowing” which includes knowledge about when and how to use concrete strategies for learning and solving of problems, we come to strategies and specific contexts which cause these strategies.

Here we can see the difference of the approach and also that all these definitions present themselves as a real variety of I-positions represented by Dialogical Self Theory. Mostly all of them are characterized and categorized by activities or actions, connected to a different sphere of entrepreneurial performance in which critical incidents occur. In this light, the construction of entrepreneurial identity is seen as important as skills and knowledge development, especially in practice aspect (Donnellon et al., 2014).

1.2. Importance of Critical Incidents in construction of entrepreneurial identity.

The new profile of an entrepreneur demands a set of flexible competencies that allow the entrepreneur to successfully face many doubts and problems that will appear in his professional performance. The range of demanded skills for providing strategic business success is quite vast, including the ability to lead the team, stress management, creativity, and flexibility. Hermans (2016) highlights that the modern world faces two challenges: individual development and adaptation to the social environment as a complicated process. Following the Dialogical Self Theory, we note that the construction of the identity of an entrepreneur is happening in interaction with itself and meaning others through I-positions and their construction and development. “I” can move from one position to the other in the situation and time” (Hermans, 2016, p. xvii). According to Leijen & Kullasepp (2013), “becoming professional always occurs within a socio-cultural context” (p. 68).

In such context the relationships become “inter-dependent” in our relationship with “significant others, groups, teams, organizations and cultures” and “can only be realized in close cooperation with others, or at least with the support of others, who create the conditions to feed and stimulate the self but also have the power to frustrate it and even let it fail” (Hermans, 2016, p. xiii).

Significantly, I-positions stay in the dialogue with each other. In the conditions of such high demands, the entrepreneur should be able to adopt a certain I-position, actually to “position” himself in front of each new situation of challenge or conflict, using the proper strategy for finding an efficient solution and taking actions. For becoming an effective leader, the entrepreneur needs to be moving flexibility between roles, styles and sources and “think out of his box” what is guaranteed by the flexibility of using I-positions in proper situations (van Loon, 2010).

Such situations caused by internal psychological factors are called incidents, and some of them can become critical if having a high emotional impact on the person. As an incident is defined as any event which can produce changes in the determined activity of the person and cause negative or positive effects on a participant and in this context, it constitutes an event or unfinished landmark. As a critical incident, we assume any incident significant to a person and having a high impact on his personal or professional life because it puts a person into the crisis (Monereo, 2015).

To the characteristics of critical incident we refer: a) unexpected and challenging situation with a possible presence of the latent conflict in the situation, it can be the conflict with the others or inner conflict; b) the event that can be firstly destabilizing and afterwards, become motivating for reaction, having a high impact on the participant but not always on included others (Monereo & Monte, 2011); c) when the incident exceeds a certain emotional threshold that can put in crisis or destabilize the own identity (Monereo, 2019a).

Considered as highly significant on personal or professional life way critical incidents prove the possibility for change and transformation. As Hermans (2018, p. 119) says, “The crisis situation asks for I-positions that enable leaders to act on the basis of their extensive experience, intuition, and gut feelings.”

The critical incidents occur from time to time on the personal and professional life way. Having a high emotional impact, they become fundamental elements of changes in the sphere of identity. These changes are provoked by “multivoicedness” caused by being involved in such incidents and participation in each critical incident personal “self” and

“meaning others”. Facing the critical incident, the person acts from one of his I-position activating the proper strategy for facing it. In different context, different I-positions are activated.

To overcome the critical incident and to use the proper strategy of it facing the person needs to use psychological mechanisms of cognitive restructuring that configure new versions of himself (Contreras, Monereo & Badia, 2010). The strategies follow from the ability of using various I-positions to face different types of critical incidents significant to a person and having a high impact on his personal or professional life (Monereo, 2015; Scartezini & Monereo, 2017).

For providing constant productivity, the entrepreneur needs to be moving flexibly between the roles, styles and strategies and think “out of the box” which is guaranteed by the possibility of using different I-positions in proper situations and for solving problems (van Loon, 2017). As these problems can be very different, they can even put the entrepreneur into crisis, acting as critical incidents. For facing the critical incidents, entrepreneurs can use a variety of I-positions which they can adopt in different cases. Some I-positions become more patent in the self and dominating in the identity, playing the main role, they are so-called core I-positions (Hermans, 2018) and their needs, wishes and values become prior in the range of other positions (Hermans, 2016). The previous researchers covering the topic of critical incidents in the entrepreneurial performance highlight the complexity of the concept of “critical incident” and show that entrepreneurs in their professional activity face continuous traumatic critical episodes of the emotionally laden nature (Cope & Watts, 2000).

In the case of an adequate strategy used for acting in a critical incident we can say about the positive effect, and it can bring the person positive changes to the formation of his identity. Such domination of I-position is provoked by the features of the identity obtained by inner and outer circumstances, personal experience, or other people examples. Using just one type of I-position for reacting on the critical incidents can lead a person to the stagnation and inefficiency. So, according to this fact, the range of I-positions presented in the identity of the entrepreneur should be multiple for providing the ability to activate one or another strategy depending on each circumstance. To solve these incidents often means “versioning” oneself and adopting distinct I-positions (Monereo, 2019a).

The profound analysis of each incident and skills of coping with critical incidents can provide an educational contribution as well as the effect of personal and professional development. The first level of analysis considers the concepts about the critical incident, second, feelings associated with the critical incident and third, strategies which a person chooses to affront critical incident. Extensive description of any incident can give a vision of personal psychological attitude and a contribution of this critical incident to forming of identity and personal and professional life of the person in total, as well as understanding of groups (e.g., entrepreneurs) as a study of most common incidents that can occur and context of changes that can be caused by them. Such description of a critical incident and its impact on identity is done on different levels including a description of the context of the situation in which happens critical incident, description of a critical incident, participants of a critical incident, intervention, and follow-up of a critical incident. In the part of an intervention, we need to analyze and answer the following questions: on what to intervene, how to intervene, which are the indicators of changing.

As critical incidents always have a rather high emotional impact on the person, the methods of its analysis are based not only on the profound description of its levels but on psychological methods based on action, i.e., dramatization which involves actors for the reconstruction of real incident and actions of participants. This educational method has a parallel with a psychotherapeutic method of psychodrama as a spontaneous dramatization, role-playing, and dramatic self-presentation for investigation and gaining insights. So, a critical incident can be considered as an instrument for changes of identity by means of detection and subsequent reflection upon critical incident within the professional practice (Monereo, 2013). Initial and permanent professional training focused on identity is realized according to the guideline for analysis of critical incidents, with its Spanish acronym known as PANIC (Monereo, 2010).

Training aiming to change the professional identity based on critical incidents directs to the conceptions, strategies, and feelings of the professional. In the case of talking about changes of identity, we should mention resistance to the changes that often take place in the training process. It is caused mostly by three main factors: feelings of uncertainty, vulnerability, and insecurity. With the purpose to avoid these factors, any training program dealing with changing of identity should be characterized by an atmosphere of trust, security, and emotional support. Another requirement for training based on critical incidents is that the analysis of these critical incidents should always be carried out together with

others, within a community of professionals, where can be offered professional help and support (Monereo, 2010).

As business education is mostly based on a case study, a psychological approach in its turn reflects critical incidents as a basement for understanding and construction of the entrepreneur's identity. Critical incidents, as we mentioned earlier, have high emotional impact and play a basic role in the construction of identity. So, entrepreneur during his specific way in entrepreneurship faces multiple critical incidents which have a high impact on his future vision, his self-recognition, and self-image. Using as an example definition of critical incident related the teacher's identity (Monereo, 2013) the critical incident in the area of entrepreneurship can be defined as a time-bound and unexpected event within the entrepreneurial practice which creates an emotional response from the entrepreneur placing them entrepreneurs position themselves.

In the light of the modern approach to entrepreneurial education aiming to provide practical methodology we can mention following citation by Hermans (2018), which shows the valuable content for the training in the field of identity "intuition can be described as a form of positioning that takes into account large banks of implicit background positions and their patterns, both internal and external ones, generated by previous and present person-environment exchanges that occur between environmental input and the individual's personal experience." (p. 184).

According to the explanation of the role of critical incidents for educational purposes (Monereo & Monte, 2011), we can extract the following roles of the critical incidents for the training of the entrepreneurs:

- explaining genuine problems in the area of entrepreneurship, which often remain latent until getting the real experience, helping to represent externally the problems that occur in entrepreneurial performance including beliefs, conceptions, attitudes, feelings, and actions involved;
- as a starting point for interpersonal discussion in which different aspects of professional practice of the entrepreneur;
- development of the competencies for the resolution of authentic problems and decision-making in entrepreneurship;

- rescuing the professional knowledge from practice (reflective approach), recognizing knowledge in the experience of the entrepreneurial activities in an individual and collective form.

The professional is competent when he can solve the prototypical incidents and merits of his profession, applying a proper strategy for solving such incidents. Therefore, we see the high importance of the attention to the psychological aspect of entrepreneurship and our research is dedicated to the problem of the construction of the entrepreneurial identity based critical incidents and adapting different I-positions for the relevant situations.

Completing the theoretical part, we would like to use the phrase of van Loon (2017): “Effective leaders are able to adapt their approach and style to reflect changing circumstances—without betraying their principles or losing their sense of personal identity” (p. 43).

1.3. Main objectives.

In our research, we assume to hold three types of empirical analysis and formation. Based on Dialogical Self Theory, the research is targeting to examine how entrepreneurs construct their identity on different levels and to apply this knowledge to the design of a training program based on critical incidents. The first is a Survey dedicated to common incidents and incidents of the identity of entrepreneurs, including their concepts, strategies, and feelings. The second one is considering the identity of the entrepreneur in its forming and which impact has the use of critical incidents on the training of entrepreneurs. The third one is a design and expert evaluation of training the training program based on critical incidents.

General targets of the research include the following:

- 1. Elaborate a coherent conceptualization of the identity of the entrepreneur from a dialogical perspective.**

There are very few studies that address the concept of identity of the entrepreneur from a dialogical perspective. By this research we intended to contribute in this regard, trying to establish a frame of reference, both from the literature and especially from the studies, even in the minority, embedded in the Dialogical Self Theory.

2. Identify and analyze most frequent Critical Incidents in the professional performance of an entrepreneur.

In the first study, we intended to know better the conceptions, strategies, and feelings of the entrepreneurs towards their work and to identify what types of incidents were the most frequent in entrepreneurship, what types were the most impacting and destabilizing and how entrepreneurs managed to deal with such situations. We wanted to establish a priority of incidents that allowed us to see the variety of strategies used by entrepreneurs for facing critical incidents and to analyze the emotional impact of such incidents. We also wanted to see if there were significant relationships between some variables such as gender, entrepreneurial experience, age, and the types of I-positions used by entrepreneurs for facing critical incidents.

3. Describe the process of construction of the identity of entrepreneurs.

In the second study, and after selecting representative cases according to the conceptions expressed in the survey research (particular constellation of the I-positions), we were targeting to know better how the identity of the entrepreneur was built in the day to day and how facing critical incidents influenced its construction.

4. To create and evaluate the program for the formation of a balanced entrepreneurial identity.

The program is based on previous studies and targets systematizing all previously obtained data. This third and final study attempted to analyze a variety of programs dedicated to the entrepreneurial education for searching for the content of the courses connected to the psychological approach to the personal and professional development of the entrepreneur. Then the full description of the program based on the dramatization of critical incidents was proposed and evaluated by the experts. It includes the unique combination of various methods and tools from the sphere of psychology, and strategical management applied to the psychological context and Dialogical Self Theory.

Chapter 2. Study 1. Concept of entrepreneurial identity and identification of incidents in the professional performance of an entrepreneur.

2.1. Study context.

The first study is dedicated to the understanding of the entrepreneurial identity according to Dialogical Self Theory, the importance of Critical Incidents for the professional and personal life of an entrepreneur and the identity of the entrepreneur as a micro-society of I-positions.

In the theoretical part of our research, we observed various approaches to the entrepreneurial identity, which is seen as a complex multilevel structure, including different I-positions, proposing different concepts, feelings about entrepreneurship and strategies for facing critical incidents.

In this case, we find very important to add a meaningful, practical example of an experienced entrepreneur which shows high importance of identity for the entrepreneurs and using various I-positions for taking the decisions in the situations of critical incidents. As a part of the expert interview dedicated to the topic of entrepreneurial identity and types of entrepreneurial I-positions, we also analyzed the example of the video-interview of a successful entrepreneur Igor Rybakov as a representative entrepreneurial society. Igor Rybakov is a Russian entrepreneur, Forbes 2018 world's wealthiest people list member with the financial condition at 1.2 Billion US dollars, co-owner of the international Technicol corporation and co-founder of Rybakov Fund. As Igor says, his secret of success is his "multi-identity." His identity includes four types of I-positions (according to our terminology):

- "hacker of the reality," the part of the identity that is scared but is always ready to destroy his fears, always ready to go forward, helping to survive in business and to increase financial capital. We see the analog of the type of the "fighter" I-position in this description;
- "lucky man," the part of the identity which prefers social creativity, philanthropy, targeting to the world innovations and creating the society which improves the world. We see the analog of the type of the "innovator" I-position in this description;

- “collector of the feelings,” the part of the identity, which is more philosophical, creative, searching for the meaning of life and studies life in different situations and conditions;
- “Me” as a central point of the identity.

Igor says that when he needs to make a difficult choice, these three «heroes» appear in his mind and start arguing. “Me” is watching them, and then it chooses one of the strategies depending on what it needs in the very moment.

This opinion shows us the understanding of the importance of the role of the identity from the point of view of the person who achieved a lot in business. His philosophy is of great interest to our research as it shows the value of the I-positions and inner voices in the success of the entrepreneur.

In this study, we try to identify the main I-positions that entrepreneurs present while facing frequent critical incidents in their professional development, as well as to analyze the main correlations that occur between these I-positions and different variables of a social and personal nature. Based on theoretical research and professional experience, we propose our gradation of the general I-positions and strategies which are most common in entrepreneurship.

Therefore, we divided the possible I-positions into four most common types by different approaches: by innovations – I-position of “innovator,” by socialization and collectivity – I-position of “leader focused on his team,” by opportunities – I-position of “opportunist” and by individualism – I-position of “fighter.” Those approaches, together with the revision of authors and characteristics of these I-positions, including the strategies of facing critical incidents, are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Most common types of entrepreneurial I-positions.*

| Type | Approach | Authors | Characteristics |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Type A | by innovations | Schumpeter, 1939; Garfield, 1986; Hytti, 2005; Jones & Spicer, 2005. | “Innovator” is characterized by innovative thinking, the creation of innovative products. Measures success by the impact of his products or services on the development of humanity. Always tends to invent and design. According to his passion for all new (methods, decisions, products), Innovator is good at short distances but can have problems in long strategies, so needs the talented managers to lead his started ideas to success. |
| Type B | by socialization and collectivity | Hermans, 2002; Hytti, 2005; Clarke, 2011; Wry, Lounsbury, & Glynn, 2011; Obschonka, Goethner, Silbereisen, Cantner, 2012; Rigg & O’Dwyer, 2012; Lackéus, Lundqvist, & Middleton, 2016. | “The leader focused on his team.” The inspirer, the creator, and implementer of vision and strategy focused on leading and the needs of his team. The team player. Leader prefers the role of the coach or tutor in his company. He inspires and enjoys teamwork. His decisions are mostly based and measured by the opinion of his team members. |

| | | | |
|--------|------------------|---|---|
| Type C | by opportunities | Schumpeter, 1965; Garfield, 1986. | “Opportunist” is a constant resource finder, the “seller.” Always looks for new opportunities in the market. Decision making is focused on the market and customers’ opinion. He uses tactics of active sales (often, participates in sales himself), uses opportunities, and constantly searches for new resources for his business in different spheres. Highly values and has excellent networking skills. Measures success in terms of income and influence by the market or by “feedback” from the customers. |
| Type D | by individualism | Bolton & Thompson, 2000; Jones & Spicer, 2005; Gherardi, 2015; Kirch & Tuisk, 2015; Mills & Pawson, 2015. | “Fighter” trusts only himself and presents himself as a general part of his company. Constantly struggles to survive in a competitive market. He is scared to lose control and prefers to use the strategies of building a strong hierarchy. Ready to take risk and responsibilities. Sees the world as an aggressive environment and according to that fact sometimes chooses aggressive tactics himself. In situations of high risks/external threats and lack of resources, such type of entrepreneur can show better results. |

This list of entrepreneurial positions became the basement of the survey design presented in the current research.

2.2. Specific objectives.

The general target of the study is to investigate the variety of I-positions that an entrepreneur can adapt while facing critical incidents in his professional way in entrepreneurship.

The objectives of the study are the following:

- Systematization of the knowledge and extracting the main entrepreneurial I-positions and critical incidents in entrepreneurial performance;
- Creation and implementation of the Survey for Entrepreneurs on Critical Incidents;
- Conducting the survey research for understanding the I-positions and strategies of facing critical incidents by entrepreneurs;
- Analyzation of obtained data aiming to find out the characteristics of the group of the participants;
- Conducting the correlational analysis of the data aiming the understanding of the relationship of the variables for understanding the connections between different types of I-positions and strategies of facing critical incidents.

2.3. Empirical design.

For the first study, we use the form of survey research. Survey research is a quantitative approach using statistics often combined with the qualitative methods and analysis that features the use of self-report measures on carefully selected samples. The respondents are asked to share their thoughts, feelings, previous experience, or behavior. It is used to describe single variables and also to assess statistical relationships between variables (Price, Jhangiani, & Chiang, 2019).

On this stage of the study, we created and used a questionnaire “Survey for Entrepreneurs on Critical Incidents” (SECI) which was designed on the theoretical basement of DST in which I-position is presented as a combination of concepts, strategies, and feelings of a person. Different I-positions, in this case, are connected to different concepts of entrepreneur, his understanding of business and his psychological and professional role in

the process of ownership and management. Based on critical incidents that mostly occur to entrepreneurs during their professional activity, the Survey is aiming to understand their types of reactions on typical incidents and strategies that they choose for coping with such situations as well as the emotional impact of these situations.

For providing validity and reliability of the research, we propose the following stages of the Survey design:

1. Analysis of literature and structuring the personal business experience of the author (presented in Part 2.1. of the current research).
2. Description of the I-positions of entrepreneurs, including their concepts, feelings, and strategies of entrepreneurs. Preparing the questions which will be useful for understanding these characteristics.
3. Organizing the expert interviews for the discussion of the Survey.
4. Analysis of the results of the expert interviews. Improving the Survey using the results of the expert interviews.
5. Sending the Survey to the participants of the expert interviews asking to show possibilities for improving according to their experience.
6. Discussion of the Survey with professional methodologist. Improvement of the Survey according to their expert opinion.
7. Uploading the online version of the Survey and forwarding it to the respondents.

2.3.1. Results of the expert interview.

Next stage we held the specially organized set of the expert interviews with the group of experienced entrepreneurs from different counties and different business spheres for discussion and analyzing of their own psychological experience in a role of entrepreneur with the goal of the future design of the Survey.

For the formation of the group of participants of the expert interview, we took into account that there should be a representation of different countries, years of experience, business areas, size and type of business and gender. The main requirement for the participants was more than five years of experience as an entrepreneur. Table 2 shows the main characteristics of these participants.

Dates of expert interviews: February 15-16, 2017.

Instruments: audio-recording and transcript, personal meeting, and connection by Skype-service.

Table 2. *Characteristics of experts for evaluation of Study 1.*

| Title, Name, Surname | Country | Sphere of business | Type of business | Experience in business |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. TK | The Netherlands | Consulting, tourism | Small, B2B | 36 years |
| 2. AK | Scotland/Russia | Production, industry | Big (a group of companies), B2B | 31 years |
| 3. JK | Germany | IT, big data | Small, B2B, B2C | 6 years |
| 4. VK | Russia | Agriculture, services | Middle (a group of companies) | 26 years |
| 5. IK | Russia | Fashion, service | Small, B2C | 34 years |

The participants were invited to discuss and analyze their own psychological experience in the role of entrepreneur. The main questions of the discussion included following questions: “what is entrepreneurship for you,” “your roles as an entrepreneur,” “most common incidents you have experienced during your professional activity,” “strategies you have been choosing to act in such incidents.”

Hereby we present the results of the interviews, which added value to the theoretical background of the research and laid into the basement of the survey design.

According to the issue of entrepreneurial identity, the experts made the following conclusions:

An entrepreneur as an independent and self-reliant person in the area of decision-making and his world vision:

- has a high level of responsibility (all participants);
- has highly developed communication skills, ability to deal with different types of people, have excellent networking skills (Participants 1,3,4,5);
- is eager to change his life and the life of people around (all participants);
- should have self-organization as an essential skill (Participants 1,4,5);
- has a spirit of adventurism and a tendency to risk-taking (Participants 2,4,5);
- entrepreneur as an “unusual” person who takes such risks that nobody around can take according to his specific identity and existence of accentuations in his identity (Participant 5).

Remarks: all participants marked that it is vital to discuss the identity of the entrepreneur as entrepreneurs themselves very often stay in the shadow of their business and do not dedicate enough attention and time to their own identity. In this light, more we understand our entrepreneurial identity better we see which strategies and approaches we use in our business and how we (should) behave in different situations.

According to the issue of entrepreneurial roles, the experts made the following conclusions:

At the first stage, the participants were proposed to write down all possible I-positions they ever used in their professional life. At the second stage, the participants were discussing the I-positions proposed for the Survey.

I-positions that participants proposed:

- top manager/leader, working with a team, working as a CEO of the company or controlling the CEO, including control and dealing with a team (Participants 3,4,5);
- “creating future,” “leading to the future,” working with creation and realization of a company’s vision and strategy (Participants 1,3,4);
- “risk-taker” or “decision-maker,” not just operates a business but is responsible for complicate decisions mostly connected with high risks, in the same time tries to make the level of risks lower (Participants 2,4,5);
- creator of resources, finds the new “niches” on the market, organizes business processes to create the possibility to work and get money to all members of his team,

often becomes an innovator in his sphere and thanks to that gets business opportunities (Participants 2,3,4);

- “networker,” communicates, creates useful nets of suppliers, partners, and customers, creates communities (all participants)
- coach and supervisor, involves into the problems of the team, motivates, creates “corporate spirit” (Participants 1,2,4);
- trainee/student, as a concept of lifelong learning studies regularly from books, mentors, his team or competitors, studies on practice (Participants 3,4,5);
- owner, “takes care of the property,” has to deal with a competitive market, manages resources, and takes decisions according to the position of ownership (Participants 2,5). In the same time, such position affords the freedom, allows the entrepreneur to realize any other roles (Participants 4,5).

Discussion of the I-positions proposed for the Survey:

- Types of profiles 1, 2, 3, and 4.

All participants supported such division of I-positions and noted that all mentioned earlier characteristics could be included inside them. As a discussion of characteristics and strategies within mentioned roles, participants were referring themselves to mentioned roles.

All participants noticed that one person cannot be strictly referred just to one I-position as it always proposed a combination of those. The experts proposed to include the final characteristic of a respondent as a diagram with percentage, a ratio of possible I-positions showing most preferable roles and strategies and prevailing ones.

Critical incidents and their impact:

All participants noticed that critical incidents related to the psychological sphere and dealing with their surroundings have a very high impact on an entrepreneur’s identity and his future strategy as a businessman.

Participants were provided with four different cases that could take place during their professional career. These incidents were connected to the topics of talent management, customer service, and stress management. All cases were proved by participants as “real” and “possible in everyday life of an entrepreneur” (all participants). As the highest level of emotional impact, the participants have chosen the following incidents:

- the situation of an exhausted entrepreneur having a high level of stress after getting a new contract (Participants 2,3,4,5);
- the talented member of the team who started breaking the rules of the companies after success with his clients (Participants 2,4,5).

Also, during the discussion following types of critical incidents were proposed as most common and having a high emotional impact:

- Critical incidents connected to dealing with family members (Participants 4,5);
- Critical incidents connected to business partners (Participant 1,2,3,4);
- Critical incidents connected to competition created by ex-team members (Participants 2,4,5);
- Critical incidents connected to the behavior of entrepreneurs during economic or local (industry) crisis (all participants).

Strategies chosen by entrepreneurs:

The experts found the proposed strategies of behavior as a satisfying business practice. Also, participants noticed that in reality, some neglecting reactions could also take part: emotions instead of actions (such as anger, anxiety, distraction, etc.) and even refusing of the entrepreneur role (to put the responsibility on others, to escape from situation, ignorance, etc.). As additional feedback, the experts noticed they would like to have such training before they started entrepreneurship.

Final expert recommendations:

- Data analysis: it was proposed not to separate entrepreneurs experience into categories but to have the data about experience in exact dates that would allow to transform it into ranges then; — information about country will allow presenting results in the form of maps and tendencies; - company size should be measured by the number of people involved into the business, not only by employees;
- Every question which proposes the strategies as one of four types of answers should also include the graph “other_____” to provide a wider range of possibilities for respondents and to make the Survey more valid as it can show a variety of strategies and possibly to add types of I-positions (Participant 5).

2.3.2. Improvement Iterations.

According to the results of the expert interview, the current version of the Survey was revised, and the following additions were made:

- Corrections in Block 1 of the Survey (the exact number of age of experience of entrepreneurs);
- Characteristics of the I-positions were added in the following way: coach/tutor and trainee as a person focused on constant self-development and “creator of the future” or “leading to the future” were included as characteristics of “Leader,” networker can be included into the category “Opportunist,” risk-taking and ownership as a constant fight for the market can be involved into the category “Fighter;”
- We added the description of critical incidents connected to the topics of dealing with business partners, family members, competition with ex-members of the company, and behavior during an economic or local crisis;
- The information about a variety of strategies for facing common critical incidents was added with the graph “other” after proposed strategies.

As a final note, the experts assumed that the Survey could become the first step of the training program based on critical incidents. The experts mentioned the high value of such survey for the practical implication in the sphere of business education.

2.3.3. Survey for Entrepreneurs on Critical Incidents (SECI).

The “Survey for Entrepreneurs on Critical Incidents” includes 36 questions and the description of most typical incidents that can occur in the professional life of an entrepreneur. The Survey is aiming to verify the variety of entrepreneurial I-positions used by the respondent for facing the critical incidents and to identify core entrepreneurial I-position dominating in the situation of CI.

The data about self-perception of participants as entrepreneurs was obtained by including into the questionnaire some open questions dedicated to their attitudes, the meaning of entrepreneurship for them and their roles and positions during professional

activity. In the questionnaire, there are the questions which involve the respondent into the understanding of his role as an entrepreneur, his vision, and actions which led him to the current level of his professional career, including common critical incidents that could occur to him as an entrepreneur and their emotional impact on his entrepreneurial identity.

The structure of the questionnaire consists of five sections:

- Section 1 – Email address of the participant for recognition of the participants who have sent us the responses;
- Section 2 - General questions:
 - a) country (in this case we don't divide entrepreneurs by the nationality, we ask them about the place where they live and have their business as this fact is more valuable for our research, so we allow people of any nationality to take part in it), b) gender, c) age category (<20, 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, >60), d) level of complete education (graduated from school, graduated from college, bachelor, master, doctorate degree, MBA or DBA, others, e) size of the company according to the number of employees (micro <10, small <50, middle <250, large >250), experience in entrepreneurship in years (open question).

- Section 3 – Entrepreneurial Identity

This section consists of three general questions which help us to identify the entrepreneurial concept and the core I-position.

1. What is for you to be an entrepreneur? (open question)
2. With which roles do you identify yourself?
3. What helped you to reach today's level?

- Section 4 - Critical Incidents

This section includes questions and description of the most typical incidents which can occur in the professional life of an entrepreneur. Their choice was based on the analysis of the literature and the results of expert interviews. Preparing the design of this questionnaire, we made a table with a wide variety of aspects and spheres of professional activity in entrepreneurship including financial issues, marketing and product placement, strategy and vision, management, teamwork, and psychological issues. Analyzing this variety of possible problematic zones which could provoke critical incidents, we elected some of them which seemed to be most related to psychological aspects of entrepreneurship

and tightly connected to the identity of an entrepreneur. Those are the aspects of management of an organization, team building, self-management of the entrepreneur, and psychological issues.

In our research, we were focused on two types of critical incidents more common for entrepreneurs - individual and collective cases. Situations proposed in the Survey all mostly deal psychological aspect of entrepreneurial behavior. In Table 3, the division of individual and collective psychological cases is presented.

Table 3

Types of Critical Incidents in entrepreneurship and corresponding questions of the Survey

| Category of the CI | Type of problem | Question/ Critical Incident |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Individual | Stress management | You've got a new contract! You were dreaming about it for a few months and was working hard to achieve this goal. The members of your team start congratulating you, but you don't look happy — you feel tired, exhausted, and don't feel any satisfaction. What would you do with that? |
| | Personal actions in situation of crisis | There is an economic crisis in your sector that affects you. What would be your attitude? |
| | Future vision | Imagine that your company is already sufficiently consolidated. What would be your plans for entrepreneurship? |
| | Team management | You get a young but a very professional member of your team who is very effective in the beginning after feeling his/her success he/she starts to make his/her own rules, becomes "capricious" in realizing tasks, asks higher salary. However, clients prefer dealing with this specialist. How would you act in this case? |

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| Collective | | |
| | Dealing with more competent people | After trying hard to involve in your new project team some professionals of an international level, you finally find a very successful specialist (international experts with a great experience). He/she is more qualified than you, but he/she seems to be very helpful in improving your business. Now you need to manage him/her. How would you act? |
| | Psychological aspects of competition | Within five years, you have been working with a very talented manager. You have invested many resources in him/her during this time; he/she was shaped as a professional and learned a lot from you. Suddenly you find that he/she decided to leave your company and create his/her own business in a competitive field. What could be your reaction? |
| | Dealing with customers, flexibility | You have the new line of products which you start proposing to your frequent customers. During the weekly meeting your sales manager reports that no one is interested in it, people refuse to buy as they prefer the previous version of this product. What could be your action? |
| | Partnership | Your business partner refuses to continue your joint project just before you have to sign an important contract, in which he/she should have been involved. What could be your reaction? |
| | Relations with family members | One of the close family members does not support the idea of your entrepreneurship. How to deal with it? |

Each question was followed by four types of answers describing the strategy of facing mentioned critical incidents. The respondents had to choose one answer, which was most corresponding to their behavior, tactics, or actions according to their previous experience, professional habits, or the image of their strategy in the hypothetical case. It was followed by the additional category called “Other” for allowing the respondents to add their own versions of acting in such situation. This information was useful to provide us with the additional strategies of facing critical incidents.

Each type of questions was followed by the question “Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally in the scale where 1- is a very low emotional/personal impact to 5 - which is very high emotional/personal impact.” It was used for the evaluation of the emotional impact of the incident and understanding the critical incidents with the highest emotional impact in the entrepreneurial performance. For this reason, the five-point scale was used as such scale is considered as the most common type of scale for measuring event-impact.

- Section 4 – Personal Experience of Critical Incidents.

This section consists of open questions dedicated to the previous experience of respondents in facing critical incidents in entrepreneurship.

Please describe the case (negative, a situation of conflict, or contradiction) that happened to you during the professional career that influenced you most in your success as an entrepreneur.

The question is followed by the additional open questions targeting to understand the strategy of facing critical incidents more deeply:

- “How did you act in this case (your behavior, strategy, tactics...)?”
- “How did this case finish?”

The same questions were following the experience of the respondent during the positive critical incidents (positive, a situation of success and achievements, happy feelings).

2.4. Participants.

To obtain valid results, we were tending to use a probability sampling with the predicted probability of each type of entrepreneurial society would be included in the sample. More specifically, we were targeting to use a stratified random sampling (not exactly satisfying all

the criteria but tending to make the sample adequate to the objectives of the research according to the fact that in current conditions, our research aims much more a profound psychological study of entrepreneurial I-positions and strategies than just a statistical data).

For that purpose we divided the entrepreneurs in different known categories according to different parameters (e.g., the size of business - micro, small, middle, large, the quantity of the years of the entrepreneurial experience, the educational level of the entrepreneur) and then a random sample is taken from each “stratum.” Adequate size of the sample for the survey research is from about 100 to about 1000 (Price, Jhangiani & Chiang, 2019). For this reason, we have sent the survey to 1000 respondents, and in the end, we got 430 answers which we used for our research.

The audience of the questionnaire is 430 European entrepreneurs of different age, gender, and business type, representatives of different European countries all having not less than one year of experience as an entrepreneur.

Among the characteristics of the participants, we can distinguish the following:

- Entrepreneurs from different European countries: United Kingdom, Russia, Spain, Portugal. From them, 212 were female, and 218 were male gender.
- Different educational level as the study was targeting searching for the correlation between the level of education and the type of I-position and strategies of entrepreneurs. Figure 1 shows all the variety of the most common levels of entrepreneurial education, starting from the school and college graduation, followed by a bachelor, or master degree, then – Ph.D. and MBA or DBA as the highest educational levels.

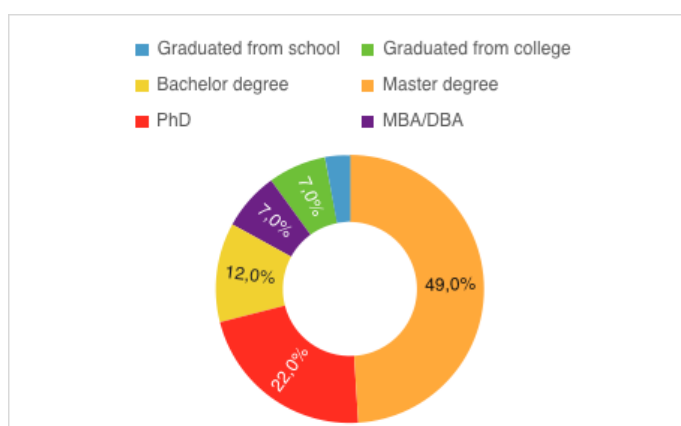


Figure 1. The distribution of the educational level of respondents.

- We had representatives of different age categories starting from category “less than 20 years old” up to the category “more than 60 years old;”
- The diapason of the experience of the respondents in the entrepreneurship varied from one to fifty years;
- Also, different categories of the companies according to such characteristics as business size were presented (see Figure 2).

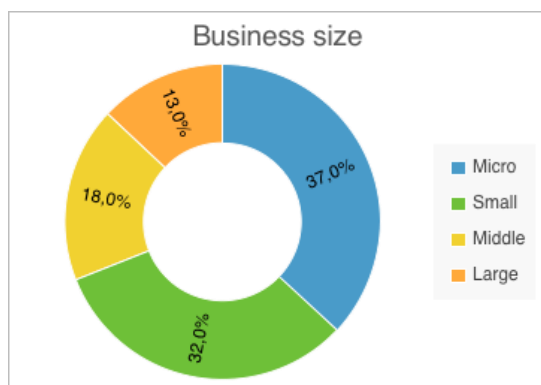


Figure 2. The distribution of the size of the companies among respondents

The next section will be dedicated to the description of the procedure of the SECI Survey.

2.5. Procedure.

The Survey was held online using Google Forms (“Survey for Entrepreneurs on Critical Incidents (“SECI,” 2017), (Appendix A).

We were contacting the participants by sending the emails with the link to the Survey. The participants had up to one week to fill in the form. The answers were collected and saved online using Google forms. The additional instructions were provided to the participants on request (connected to the issues of filling the forms, technical, or organizational questions). We had to fill in several surveys in the form of personal interviews or telephone interviews due to the participants’ requests.

2.6. Data analysis and results of Study 1.

The design of the survey allowed us to make a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the obtained data. Thus, we decided to use mixed-method design which is widely used in the psychological research (Bryman, 2006; Creswell, 2013; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007; O’Cathain, Murphy, & Nicholl, 2010; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006; Teddlie, & Tashakkori, 2003) successfully benefiting from both qualitative and quantitative methods (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007).

Due to the testing of the emergent theory, we used the sequential exploratory design on the data integration phase (Hughes, 2019). The mixed-method research is chosen to provide in-depth research and provide a meaningful interpretation of the data (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). Also, this type of method provided us reasonable dynamics between qualitative and quantitative methods because the methodology could benefit from various types of research (Hughes, 2019).

Among the top-research questions there we have chosen the following:

- What are preferable types of I-positions of the entrepreneurs?
- Which critical incidents are considered to have a more emotional impact on the entrepreneurs?
- Are there any correlations between different characteristics of participants (age, level of education, experience, gender) and the different types of I-positions (including the correlation between those I-positions)?

For answering these research questions, we have performed quantitative analysis using and qualitative data analysis.

As the next step of the analysis, the answers of the participants on the closed type of questions were evaluated according to the table for the answer interpretation (Table 4) specially created for this survey based on the previous literature analysis and expert interview results.

Table 4

The interpretation of the answers of the Survey according to the type of I-positions

| With which of these roles do you identify yourself? | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| The most important for me is always to improve my business, create innovational ideas, and implement them into practice. | The most important for me is to inspire my team, to lead my company to the results according to our vision and strategy. | The most important for me is a high impact on the market, being competitive and increasing the sales constantly. | The most important for me is surviving of my company on the business market, I got accustomed to getting what I need, and I think that strict rules and discipline have a high impact on business success. |
| What helped you to reach your today's level? | | | |
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| I was always ready to propose fresh ideas and new vision, that helped me a lot to create a unique business, and I was always searching for the way to find new ways of acting and improving products and processes. | I always felt that people want to follow me; I included them into the creation of future vision and always tried to inspire and motivate everyone. | I always have been focused on the market, I'm a good seller, and I teach my team to deal with customers and sell as well. Being orientated to clients' needs and marketing trends, you always achieve a lot in business. | I had to survive in an aggressive and competitive business market. Fighting for the success of my business was not that easy. I achieved these results thanks to my high discipline and strong will. |
| You get a young but a very professional member of your team who is very effective in the beginning but after feeling his/her success he/she starts to make his/her own rules, becomes "capricious" in completing tasks and asks higher salary. However, clients prefer dealing with this specialist. | | | |
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| I will invent for him an interesting and challenging task (which requires an innovative solution) to show him that he still has a lot to improve as a professional or to get an extraordinary | I will talk with him/her in person to understand better the reason for his/her behavior and his/her actual goals and will try to explain what is important for being in | The opinion of my clients is the law for me; I will try to find effective instruments for satisfying his needs. | I will make a reunion with the team and discuss his/her behavior in front of the others — he/she shouldn't give a bad example to the team and I don't think this person can stay in my |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| result. | a team. | | company anymore... |
| <p>After trying hard to involve in your new project team some professionals of an international level, you finally find a very successful specialist (international experts with a great experience). He/she is more qualified than you, but he seems to be very helpful in improving your business. Now you need to manage him/her. How would you act?</p> | | | |
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| I don't think such specialists should get into job routine, so he/she is worth a special project as a new branch of company's activity that should be organized just for him/her. | I'll be evaluating his/her job with the help of other members of the team and clients. So, taking into consideration his/her actions and feedback from my team and customers, I will understand his level of productivity. | I will let him/her do his/her job freely; in the same time, I will try to provide the best level of corporate climate and respect him/her as I have high expectations on his/her results and influence on the results of all company. | For me doesn't matter too much his/her professional level - I will deal with him/her as with the others - I will organize strong hierarchy and subordination with strict KPIs and constant control of results. |
| <p>Within five years, you have been working with a very talented manager. You have invested a lot of resources in him/her during this time; he/she was shaped as a professional and learned a lot from you. Suddenly you find out that he/she decided to leave your company and create his/her own business in a competitive field. What could be your reaction?</p> | | | |
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| I will start to improve my business processes and will create a new product or service that will help me to avoid the competition with ex-member of the team. | I will make a lesson from it; I will let him/her leave my company, but in the same time, I'm going to review my motivation system in the team and will use this example to escape such cases in future. | I will propose him/her better to get a share in my business or to provide him/her a project as an "intrapreneur" (to create his/her business project within my company). | I will show him/her what is a real competition, I'm sure that he/she will not be able to compare with my company and I will try to prevent his/her getting to the market. |
| <p>You've got a new contract! You were dreaming about it for few months and were working hard to achieve this goal. The members of your team start congratulating you, but you don't look happy — you feel tired, exhausted, and don't feel any satisfaction. What would you do with that?</p> | | | |
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| I am sure that I am just tired of the routine, now it is the time for fresh ideas and more challenging | I think that it's time to make self-reflection - to understand more my role, to delegate... and to take few days | I will try to find the possibility to relax — I will do sports, will assist in stress-management training | I cannot afford even a small break in my job, I will progress anyway, the main thing that I have got this contract and other |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| projects. | of break to rest well. | or spa and massage. | things do not matter. |
| You have the new line of products which you start proposing to your frequent customers. During the weekly meeting your sales manager reports that no one is interested in it, people refuse to buy as they prefer the previous version of this product. What could be your action? | | | |
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| I will pay additionally to improve the new line of projects to innovation specialists. | I will lead the group of sales managers and involve myself in this job to try to understand more clearly the reasons, to choose the new sales strategy and take decision according to final results. | I will look for new sales channels and will try to find new customers who buy a new product. | I will change sales managers and draw in others, those who will be able to sort out the problem. |
| Your business partner refuses to continue your joint project just before you have to sign an important contract, in which he should have been involved. What could be your reaction? | | | |
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| I will find a new way to solve the problem by developing non-standard schemes of actions. | Instead of dealing with that partner, I will involve my team into solving the problem and will share roles and responsibility between them. | I will use this as an opportunity to find new, more effective, and reliable partners. | I will realize this contract myself and will do everything to bring it to the desired result. |
| One of the close family members does not support the idea of your entrepreneurship. How to deal with it? | | | |
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| I will create some new and interesting activity for this member of the family, in which he/she can get involved and understand my | I will try to show him/her the advantages and positive aspects of my entrepreneurial activity, which will benefit the whole | I will try to find an opportunity to devote more time to this family member in order to meet his/her needs and get out of conflict. | I will continue to do business despite of everything; my family should respect my choice. |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| situation better. | family and motivate him/her to support. | | |
| There is an economic crisis in your sector that affects you clearly. What would be your attitude? | | | |
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| It's time for creating new products and proposing innovative ideas. | It's time for personal and professional growth, and development of my team, time to reconsider the company's vision and strategy. | It's the time of new opportunities in the market, time to search for new resources, and new niches. | It's time to survive, work hard and try to keep your business and employees because they depend on me. |
| Imagine that your company is already sufficiently consolidated. What would be your plans for entrepreneurship? | | | |
| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
| Create new innovative products that can change the world. | Implement a strategy and vision to lead my team to better results and contribute to the development of my competencies, as well as the growth of my company. | Create new types of business and implement new projects in new spheres. | Become the best company on the market, to get the largest market share. |

Each detected I-position was counted as one, and in the end, all the scores obtained by each I-position were compared with the target to see the category with the highest point which was defined as a dominating “core-position.” Some answers of the respondents were proposing double positioning – one strategy included several strategies of the involved I-positions.

It is very important to notice that in the case of our survey we did not aim to invent the exact measuring tool with a strict scale of the numbers but for us was very important to extract all the repertoire of I-positions used for facing critical incidents creating individual

profile for each participant. For the participants who were interested in the results, we were sending back the characteristics of their positional repertoire with the dominating positions, and according to their feedback, this information was precious for them.

During the qualitative data analysis, the variety and preferred choices of concepts and strategies were structured and analyzed for the understanding of the whole picture of role and types of critical incidents in the construction of concepts and strategies of entrepreneurs. Some questions helped us to realize the difference between identity model of now and before which entrepreneurs use for self-identification in professional life. These questions helped us qualitatively analyze which roles and related to them strategies helped them to achieve the level where they were now. Also, the questionnaire assumes some open questions which are targeting to improve the base of research and to widen the specter of common critical incidents from the personal experience of the respondents. These situations proposed by respondents were analyzed and structured by categories of belonging to different types of problems occurring critical incidents mentioned before (team, self-perception, self-organization, management, etc.).

For the open questions (related to the definition of the entrepreneur and the last part of the survey – the description of the personal experience of critical incidents in entrepreneurship) we were using a qualitative approach based on the method of content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002) recognizing to which type of I-position each answer belongs.

One can see the keywords used for the recognition of each type of I-position in the answer for each category in Table 5.

Table 5

Examples of the keywords for recognizing the type of I-position according to the answer of the respondent

| Innovator | Leader | Opportunist | Fighter |
|--|---|---|--|
| Innovations, implementation, new, creation, creativity, novel, discover, avant-garde, ground-breaking, advanced, improvements, pioneer, trendsetter, | Team, lead, leader, inspire, vision, support, follow, cooperation, manage, teambuilding, coach, future, | Opportunity, possibility, resources, niche(s), clients, feedback, sales, market, occasion, outcome, | Reach, receive, competition, compete, competitive, hierarchy, order, achieve, prove, fight, challenge, not to give up, to rise again, battle, independent, |

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------|---|
| invent, design. | development. | networking. | (by) myself, work hard, own, ownership, responsibility. |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------|---|

As the examples of such recognition in the category of the definition of entrepreneurship, we start with the first category “Definition of what is to be an entrepreneur.

1. What is for you to be an entrepreneur?

Table 6

The example of detecting the various types of entrepreneurial I-position according to the given answer on the question “Definition of the entrepreneur”

| Example of the respondent’s answer | Keywords detected | Detected I-position |
|---|--|----------------------------|
| <p>“They only feasible way to change something that has to be changed and the chance to create.”</p> <p>“To realize the dream, to change the world.”</p> | Change, create. | Innovator |
| <p>“To manage people and to lead a business to success and profit.”</p> <p>“To be responsible for my team.”</p> | Lead (goal of profit is accessed by managing people), team. | Leader |
| <p>“Having a product that can help the world that currently doesn’t exist on the market. Sometimes it's continuing on and tweaking current research/businesses and other times it shows a big hole in these areas and feeling so passionate about it you need to fill it yourself.”</p> <p>“To research opportunistic holes in society, business, and otherwise market opportunity and filling with a business or creative strategy</p> | <p>Product, market.</p> <p>Seeing a big hole in areas (understanding - new market niches).</p> | Opportunist |

| | | |
|--|------------------------------------|---------|
| and/or be insane, think of something that should be in the world, and make it reality ...” | Opportunistic, opportunity. | |
| “To risk, to achieve and to realize the highest potential of yourself and your business.” “To face challenges that can appear every day.” “To foresee, to act, to be in the middle of the battle.” | Risk, achieve, challenges, battle. | Fighter |

Moreover, as the psychological study always assumes more profound and deep approach in some cases, we had to use the logical analysis of the content to connect it to the relevant I-positions even without detecting the words mentioned. On the figures below the distribution of the I-positions for each answer are presented.

The first question of the Survey was dedicated to the definition of an entrepreneur (see Figure 3).

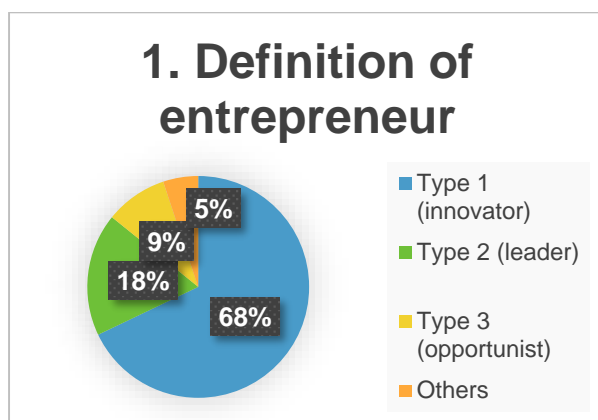


Figure 3. The distribution of the I-positions for the definition of an entrepreneur.

The figure shows us that most respondents have chosen the definitions connected to the I-position of “Innovator.” For example, for the question of the definition of entrepreneur one respondent answered: “For me to be an entrepreneur is always to create and bring my ideas to the world, but business is about money, so I have to be enough competitive and strong “player” to prove what my ideas cost.” Also, we had the mixed answers in combination of various I-positions. For example, “Innovator” and “Leader:” “creating the

new system and inspiring people around to follow your dreams”. Another example is the combination of the I-positions of “Fighter” and “Leader:” “Passion for the vision and perseverance to turn that into reality. I did not start out wanting to work/find a start-up but harder I worked and more my team grew together, more I became committed to doing whatever it takes to implement the vision to reality. Creating a team that sticks together is incredibly important and getting their feedback to make sure the vision/product is the best that it can be is extremely important” or another example of the mixed answer was: “A mixture of both inspiring my team, to lead the company to results according to our vision and strategy as well as surviving on the market, adhering to the strict rules surrounding the implementation of our product in the market.”

The next question was dedicated to the question “With which of these roles do you identify yourself?”

The results are shown on Figure 4 also approve the dominance of the I-position of “Innovator” in the answers of respondents.

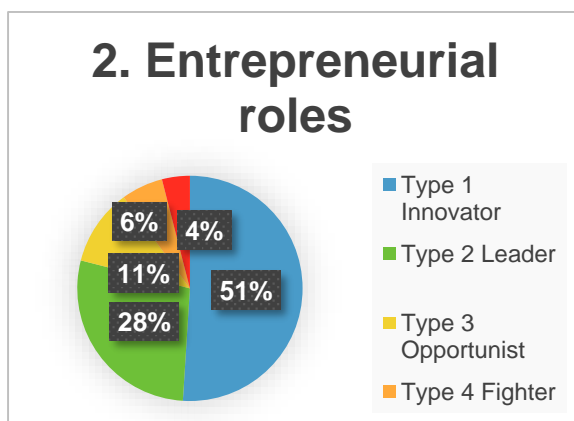


Figure 4. The distribution of the I-positions presenting the self-perception of entrepreneurial role.

The next question was “What helped you to reach your today’s level?”

Figure 5 proves that the bigger number of participants with dominating the strategy of I-position defined as “Innovator.”

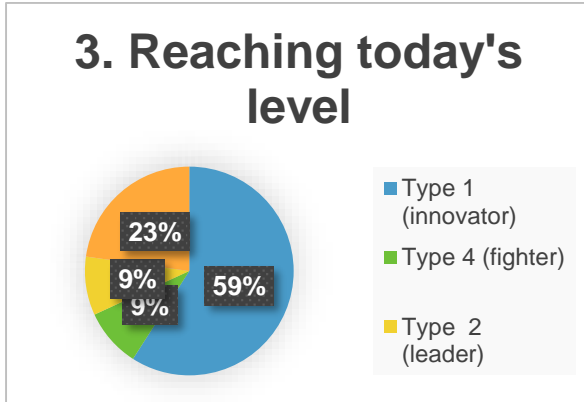


Figure 5. The distribution of the I-positions led to the actual professional level of the entrepreneur.

Other combinations proposed were “Opportunist” + “Leader” + “Fighter”, hereby is an example of the respondent’s answer: “A focus on the market and people it impacted helped me to get to where I am now in my business. I like to work as part of a team and to motivate each other to do a good job. I am determined to develop and grow a successful business and will work hard to deliver so. I may lack some visionary perspective but can develop pathways to get to this vision!”

Below the results of the Module “Critical incidents” are presented in Figures.

Critical Incident 4.1. You get a young but a very professional member of your team who is very effective in the beginning but after feeling his/her success he/she starts to make his/her own rules, becomes “capricious” in completing tasks and asks higher salary. However, clients prefer dealing with this specialist.

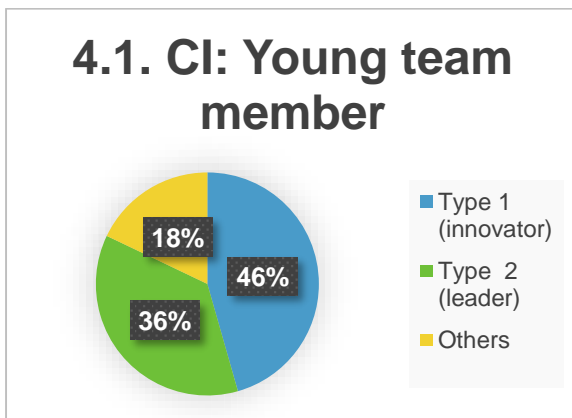


Figure 6. The distribution of the I-positions for facing Critical Incident “Young team member.”

The majority of the answers (46%) indicated the strategy of “Innovator,” another strategy was from I-position of “Leader,” some of the respondents have chosen the combination of the I-positions of “Leader” and “Innovator.”

Critical Incident 4.2.: After trying hard to involve in your new project team some professionals of an international level, you finally find a very successful specialist (an international expert with a great experience). Actually, he/she is more qualified than you, but he seems to be very helpful in improving your business. Now you need to manage him/her.

Figure 7 shows a clear trend of choosing the strategy of “Leader” for the majority of respondents as a reaction on critical incident dedicated to the dealing with the highly professional team members.

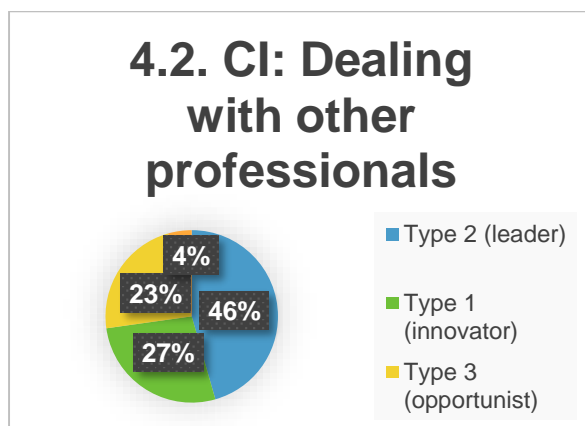


Figure 7. The distribution of the I-positions for facing Critical Incident “Dealing with other professionals.”

Critical Incident 4.3.: Within five years, you have been working with a very talented manager. You have invested many resources in him/her during this time; he/she was shaped as a professional and learned a lot from you. Suddenly you find that he/she decided to leave your company and create his/her own business in a competitive field.

Figure 8 demonstrates the privilege of the “Opportunist” strategy as the reaction on the critical incidents connected to the competition with the ex-team members.

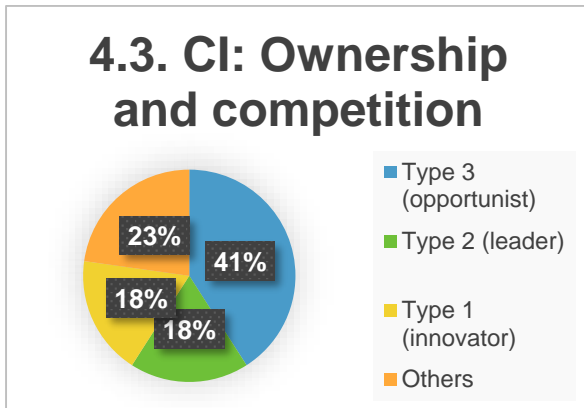


Figure 8. The distribution of the I-positions for facing Critical Incident “Ownership and competition.”

As an additional strategy, the participants proposed using the legal instruments for preventing the copyright of the business model. The mixed versions were presented as well. As an example of the mixed answers, we can show the following: “For me answer 1 (to propose getting a share in business) and 4 (starting business improvements and creating new products) are both relevant. I’ll try 1, and if negotiations fail, I’ll turn to 4”.

Critical Incident 4.4.: You’ve got a new contract! You were dreaming about it for a few months and were working hard to achieve this goal. The members of your team start congratulating you, but you don’t look happy — you feel tired, exhausted and don’t feel any satisfaction.

In the case of the dealing with the stress and “burnout,” most of the respondents have chosen the strategy of “Leader” connected to the self-analysis, self-reflection as a method of stress management (Figure 9).

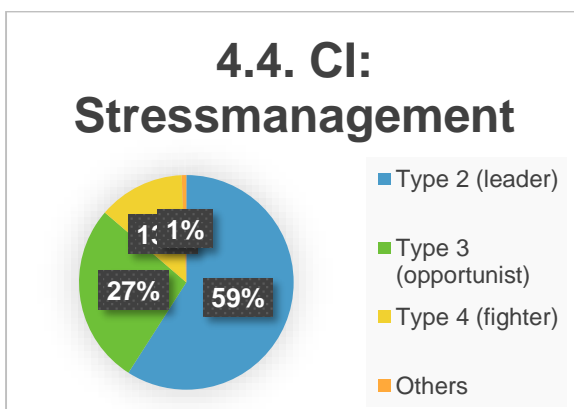


Figure 9. The distribution of the I-positions for facing Critical Incident “Stress management”

Additional combinations of the strategies were: “Innovator” + “Leader” and “Fighter” + “Leader.”

Critical Incident 4.5.: You have the new line of products which you start proposing to your frequent customers. During the weekly meeting your sales manager reports that no one is interested in it, people refuse to buy as they prefer the previous version of this product.

The majority of the respondents have chosen the strategy of the I-position of “Leader” (involvement of their team into the evaluation of the new product) for facing this CI.

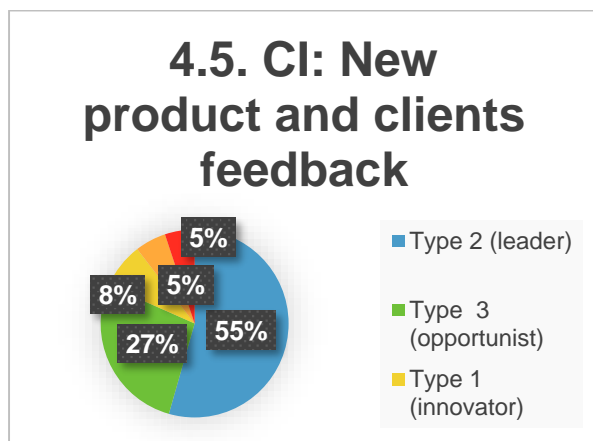


Figure 10. The distribution of the I-positions for facing Critical Incident “New product and clients’ feedback.”

Here is an interesting example of the additional answer in the category “Others” that could be added as a strategy of the “Opportunist” I-position: “It is essential to research the market demand first before you launch an alternative or improved product.”

Critical Incident 4.6.: Your business partner refuses to continue your joint project just before you have to sign an important contract, in which he should have been involved.

Figure 11 illustrates for dealing with business partners. Most respondents have chosen the strategy of “Leader.” Between the answers, we also could see the combinations such “Leader” + “Fighter,” e.g., “I would draw the team in but sign the contract and do everything to bring the desired result.”

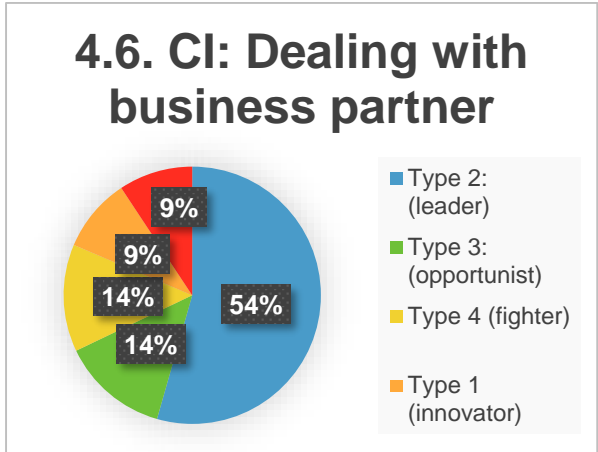


Figure 11. The distribution of the I-positions for facing Critical Incident “Dealing with business partners.”

Critical Incident 4.7.: One of the close family members does not support the idea of your entrepreneurship.

The graph below shows that the answers of respondents for the question connected to the family support of their entrepreneur status spread between categories of “Innovator” (would create an interesting task for involving my family member into my business activities” and “Fighter” (would progress in my business anyway”).

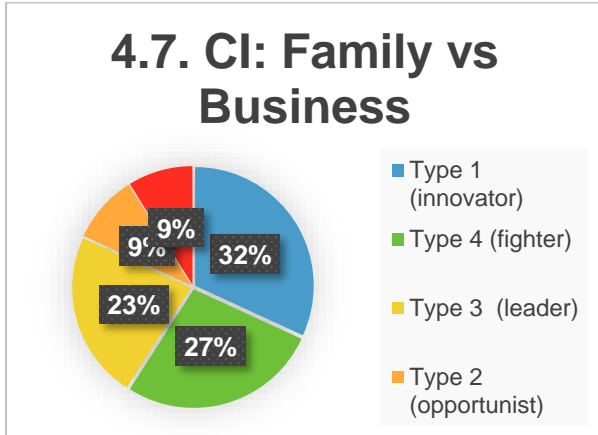


Figure 12. The distribution of the I-positions for facing Critical Incident “Family vs Business.”

The range of additional answers varied from “I cannot imagine such situation in my family” to vice a versa “This is pretty personal for me, as this was/is a reality for me. Start-ups are risky and it was pretty painful to communicate with someone that was close to me

and didn't believe in me or my dreams. But in the end, it doesn't matter what others think - I found other people to support me and keep pushing forward to be where I am today”.

Critical Incident 4.8.: There is an economic crisis in your sector that affects you clearly. What would be your attitude?

It is apparent from Figure 13 that majority of respondents would be in the I-positions of “Opportunist” to overcome the situation of economic crisis searching new opportunities for their business in the conditions of the lack of resources.

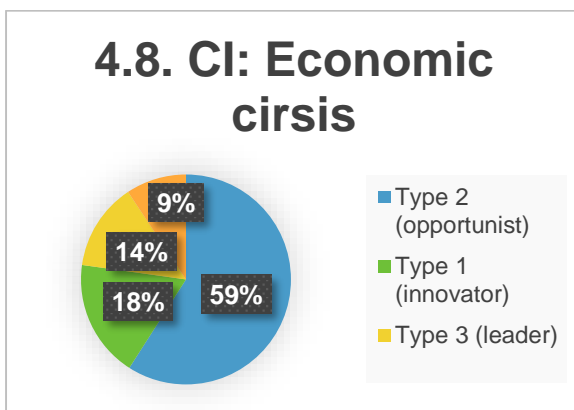


Figure 13. The distribution of the I-positions for facing Critical Incident “Economic crisis.”

Between the combinations in the section “Others” was also “Leader” and “Fighter” combination, e.g., “I will reflect on the company’s vision and strategy and then work hard to implement to ensure the company survives and is successful.”

Critical Incident 4.9.: Imagine that your company is already sufficiently consolidated. What would be your plans for entrepreneurship?

The proposed situation of success and fruitful period in the business activity provoked the respondents for choosing various strategies such as “Opportunist” for developing the new markets, “Innovator” for creating the products and services that could change the world for better or “Fighter” to get as much market share as possible.



Figure 14. The distribution of the I-positions for facing Critical Incident “Success.”

The respondents were evaluating the emotional and personal impact of each critical incident by the scale from one to five (see final results in Figure 15). Almost all the critical incidents included into the Survey showed quite high emotional impact, but among the most important critical incidents, we can extract the situation of competition with the ex-member of the team and the situations of dealing with the business partner.

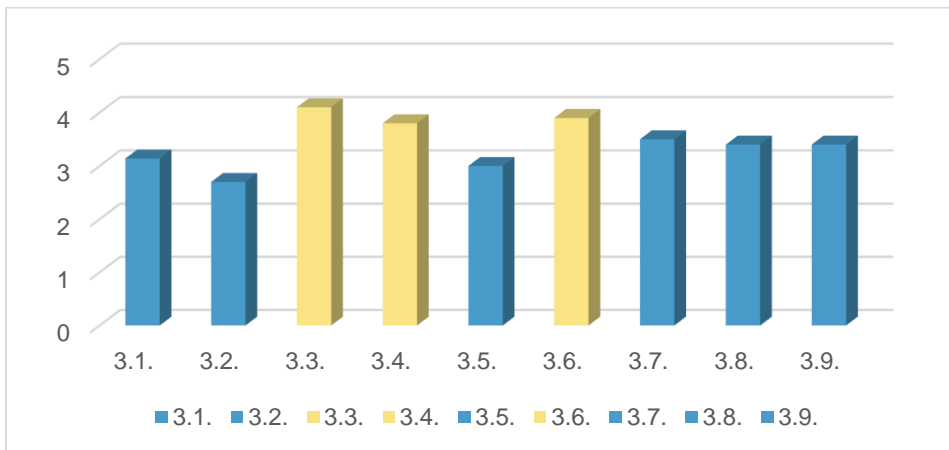


Figure 15. The emotional and personal impact of different types of Critical Incidents.

The last section was dedicated to their own experience of the respondents in facing critical incidents. Another type of open question appeared in this section. For such cases, the same method of content analysis was also applied (see Table 7).

Table 7

The example of detecting the various types of entrepreneurial I-positions for the Critical Incidents proposed by the respondents

| Critical incident and the strategy of its facing | Keywords detected | Detected I-position |
|---|---|----------------------------|
| <p>“After one business failed, I created and completely involved in the new innovative business which became a real success.”</p> | <p>Change, create</p> | <p>Innovator</p> |
| <p>“One of my team members caused a lot of problems to all the company but was a very good professional in what he did, and we couldn’t fire him. As a decision, I organized the teambuilding where he could realize himself in the group work. That helped a lot, and the problem was solved.”</p> | <p>Teambuilding</p> | <p>Leader</p> |
| <p>“We couldn’t close the agreement about licensing our technology, spending more than one year of negotiation.”</p> <p>“We made a deep market analysis and proposed our product as a new business instead of licensing within a project. So, it worked.”</p> | <p>Market, product</p> <p>Solution of finding opportunities instead of “fighting”</p> | <p>Opportunist</p> |
| <p>“The failure of the business concept ending with the bankruptcy.”</p> <p>“I cleaned up the mess, I didn’t give up, I looked forward and started from the very beginning. The “downs” taught me the most in surviving as entrepreneur.”</p> | <p>Don’t give up, surviving.</p> | <p>Fighter</p> |

In the case, if we could recognize several I-position in each answer, we were adding one score to each of the categories. Here is an example of mixed I-positions in one critical incident description: *“I felt pride for my projects and my team, when I created the best supermarket concept on the site not proposed for this at all, I was happy to get the international appreciation of the best professional team, though we started in the field with no professional resources in the region. My best success started with my doubts if I would manage a new challenge.”*

We want to mention that the decision of the belonging to the I-position was made according to the quantitative data (Table 4); the qualitative content analysis with the detection of the core I-position was used additionally for the research purposes and was not crucial for the result of the respondent. Future developing and improving this method along with using the special instruments, e.g., Atlas ti, could bring more results and make this method more valid.

As a qualitative part of processing the data, we were targeting to get the additional cases for the negative and positive incidents and to enrich our research model with more practical cases.

Among those, we would like to mention:

The case (negative, the situation of conflict, or contradiction) that happened to you during the professional career that influenced you most in your success as an entrepreneur:

1. Problems/conflicts with the co-founder - partly covered by one of our questions.
2. Lack of sales, finance - not directly connected to psychological issues (can be connected, and some psychological issues could lead to such situations, but it needs much more-in-depth research to prove such correlation).
3. Failure of the business concept/idea/strategy - could be added to the typology of incidents.
4. Competition inside the organization between team members - could be added to the typology of incidents.
5. Gender factor (especially for women-entrepreneurs) - could be added to the typology of incidents.

Types of strategies:

- positive attitude, optimism - another layer of a category (more connected to emotional factors);
- loose of control, frustration, pessimism, emotionality - another layer of a category (more connected to emotional factors).

How the case finished: two general directions:

- failure and starting from the beginning;
- growth after understanding the reasons.

The emotional impact of different negative incidents: 4,3

The case (positive, a situation of success and achievements, happy feelings) that happened to you during the professional career that influenced you most in your success as an entrepreneur:

- positive feedback from customers/clients as a highly valued emotional event;
- networking, getting more connections/ finding partners/ experts/ advisors who can help to develop business - could be added to our categories;
- new (philosophical) life thought that helped to change the personal concept of entrepreneurship - could be added to our categories.

Actions:

- emotional reactions (happiness, satisfaction, inspiration, etc.);
- leadership/delegation;
- new contracts/new possibilities;
- learning/self-development/personal growth.

How did the case finish?

- positive emotions;
- growth and development.

The emotional impact of different positive incidents: 4,1

As we can see, the emotional impact of the negative incidents is slowly higher (0.2 points) than the positive one.

The assumed results of this part of the analysis are shown in Figure 16.

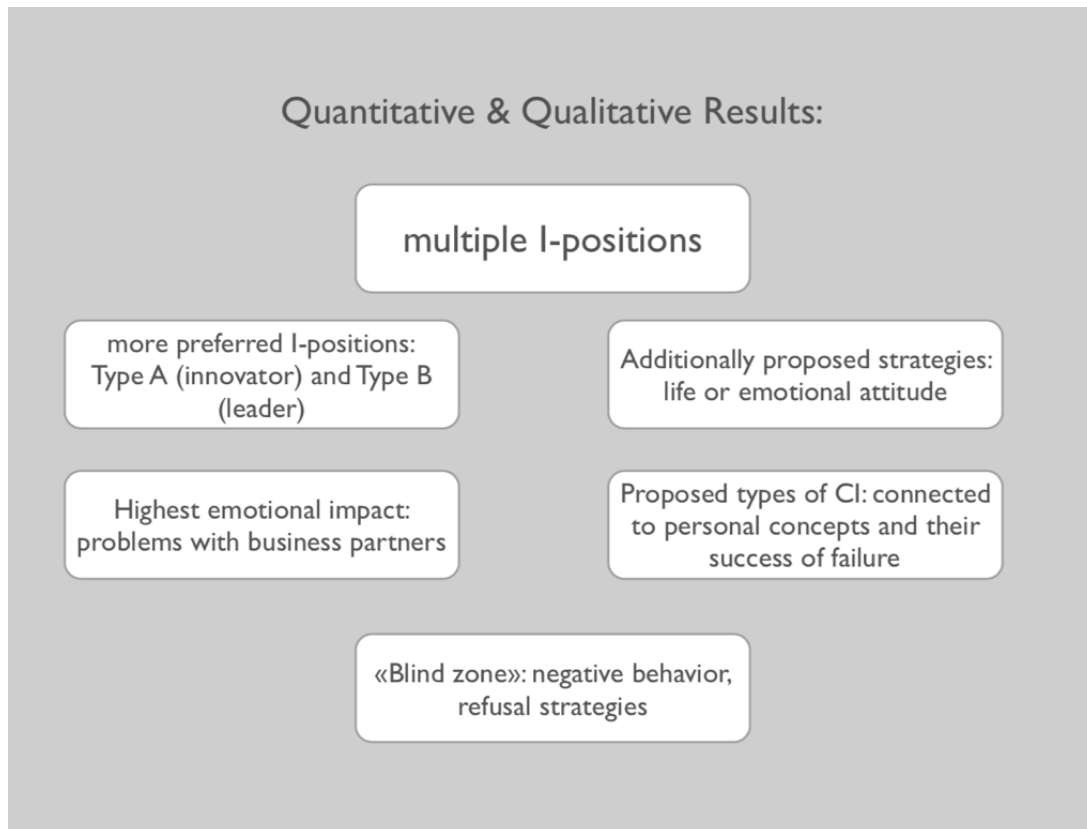


Figure 16. The main quantitative and qualitative results of Study 1.

In the next step, we were targeting to answer the research question: “Are there any correlations between different characteristics of participants (age, level of education, experience, gender) and the different types of I-positions (including the correlation between those I-positions)?”

To answer to this question, we pointed out our zone of interest (Table 8) for the correlation analysis. With a symbol “x” we mark the peers which were out of our interest and with the symbol “V” we mark those peers that where we were targeting to find a positive or negative correlation between the categories.

Table 8

Zone of the interest for the correlation analysis between the peers of categories

| | Gender | Age | Country | Education | Concept* | CORE-Position | CI |
|--|---------------|------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Gender (men/women) | x | x | x | x | V | V | V |
| Age (categories) | x | x | x | x | V | V | V |
| Country | x | x | x | x | V | V | V |
| Level of education (categories) | x | x | x | x | V | V | V |
| Size of company (SML) | x | x | x | x | V | V | V |
| Experience 3 categories | x | x | x | x | V | V | V |
| Innovator | V | V | V | V | V | x | V |
| Leader | V | V | V | V | V | x | V |
| Opportunist | V | V | V | V | V | x | V |
| Fighter | V | V | V | V | V | x | V |

Along with the presented Table, we would like to mention that further not all these peers showed a positive or negative correlation, thus that could be a potential zone for future investigations.

Then, the obtained results for each participant were coded using a coding scheme, based on the table of the interpretation results (Table 4) and the results of the content analysis for the standardization of the obtained data into the system suitable for the analysis (Abedinnia, Glock & Schneider, 2017).

program, I presented at the Women club on campus. I talked about my company's work as well as my experience as a women-engineer/women in STEM. It was more of a personal talk than I expected. Afterward a lot of people told me that it was inspiring at that I was a role model. This sounds like a good thing, but it made me feel much pressured to succeed and like if I didn't succeed, I was letting my gender down. It gave me a lot of self-confidence issues because my company sort of started accidentally and I didn't feel like I had a right to be where I was. For a while, I honestly freaked out and was paralyzed as a leader. I felt like everything I was doing was the wrong choice and that I wasn't good enough to really be CEO of a tech company. I put on a mask for a while, going through the motions of meetings but fighting off anxiety and depression at the same time. I reached out to friends and family to help get my confidence back. They were very sweet and supportive and showed me that I was loved and valued not only for my business but as a person. I realized eventually that, although creating my business was unexpected, all my hard work that followed was a testimony to my skills, leadership, and team. I would never know how far we could take my company without trying."

This case highlights the common gender problems in business, and we can see how the business identity of the woman-entrepreneur is formed by the need to prove herself in business. The gender issues were not included in the targets of our research, but such results could not be ignored as adding to the topic of entrepreneurial identity. Anyway, we suppose that this topic can provide much inspiration for the researchers for further investigations on the topic of gender and identity in business.

b) The positive correlation between the age (0.37, low level of correlation), experience (0.36, low level of correlation) and educational level (0.41, moderate level of correlation) of the participant using the I-position of type A "innovator." So, we can see that older and more experienced entrepreneurs become, more knowledge they get, more tendency to the innovational behavior (e.g., using non-evidential strategies of the facing of critical incidents) they have. In contrary to the prevailing opinion that with age the entrepreneurs become more experienced and rigid in their reactions neglecting innovations, the results show us that modern entrepreneurs start evaluating the meaning of innovations much higher.

Between negative correlations we can see the following: if type B I-position, “leader focused on his team” dominates, it leads to less use of type A “innovator: strategies (0.60, a strong level of correlation).

Also, the study shows that more educational level the entrepreneur gets, more he focuses on the strategy and the market than on his team and their opinion (0.44, moderate level of correlation).

Another interesting result that the type B “leader focused on his team” less use the I-position C “opportunist” (0.49, moderate level of correlation). The same negative correlation was noticed for the I-position of “fighter” (0.35, a low level of correlation). It can be explained as opportunist is mostly focused on the finding external resources and getting possibilities where other people do not see them but the leader’s position (focus on people) and fighter’s position with its focus on survival and high competition do not allow to have a broad look around for searching such possibilities.

The correlations are showed in Figure 17.

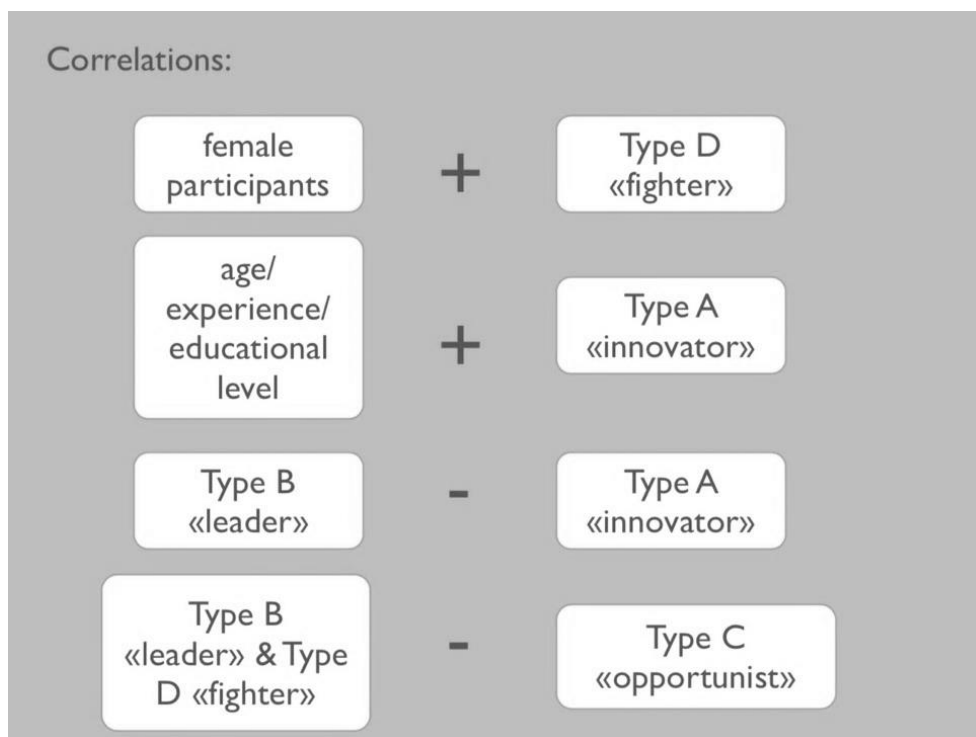


Figure 17. The final results of the correlations between the categories.

Also, results of this part of the research were used in the second study as the basic model of analyzing critical incidents as an impact on the training of entrepreneurs as well they will be used in the third part of the study as the basement for the training program for construction of the identity of an entrepreneur.

The results show that all four types of entrepreneurial I-positions extracted during the theoretical research are used by the respondents for facing the critical incidents in different situations of their entrepreneurial activity.

2.7. Discussion.

As the results for this part of the empirical research, we consider a profound description of typical I-positions of the entrepreneurs provoked by the critical incidents in the entrepreneurship. Also, the research provides us with more types of critical incidents and strategies of front-facing of such critical incidents provided by the real experience of entrepreneurs. All the participants got detailed characteristic of their I-position components, including their preferred strategies and professional recommendations for their self-development.

The study shows that there a more or less effective ways of dealing with critical situations, so there is a right/wrong in the sense of effective/non-effective. One person can have multiple I-positions and not just present only one I-position, but the tendency shows that there are core I-positions (dominating positions which are more frequently used while facing critical incidents). We can say that the entrepreneur is characterized by the variety of I-positions, and they can influence his productivity and understanding of his role in business. The research showed us some gender problems as the women's roles taken to prove their rights in business. Also, we could find out some essential tendencies in the role of the experience and education level in taking the proper I-positions and the contradictory of other I-positions in one person. The research provided us with more types of the critical incidents and strategies of facing of the critical incidents provided by the real experience of the entrepreneurs.

Between most popular I-positions used by the entrepreneurs for facing critical incidents, we see the I-position of the type A (described as “innovator”) and the I-position of

the type B (“leader focused on his vision and team”). Situations that the participants marked as critical incidents with the highest emotional impact are the relationships with business partners (for example, as a negative critical incidents the respondents mention as situation of a betray of the business partner or conflicts with partners connected the future vision of the organizational strategy, as positive critical incidents- joint achievements and mutual-support with their business partners).

In the last section of the Survey, we proposed to the participants to describe their experience about the types of critical incidents they had to face during their career. So, the participants additionally proposed (to our categories) the types of critical incidents connected to their business concept (or business philosophy) and its influence on their success or failure. Moreover, they proposed the strategies connected to the emotional attitudes or life attitude (e.g., to accept the situation as it is and to move forward, to find good in bad). As a blind zone of our survey (not covering the range of some answers), we can see the situations connected to the negative behavior, refusal strategies, giving up the challenges because initially, our survey did not suppose such types of reactions as not productive.

Chapter 3. Study 2. Construction of entrepreneurial identity: Case study.

The second part of the empirical investigation assumes the profound research of the construction of the identity of entrepreneur based on the analysis of their personal and professional way and the influence of critical incidents on its forming. We target to realize this block not just as an empirical part but as a start of the training and valuable time of self-development for the participants.

As the essential elements of the study, we can highlight following: the model of the entrepreneurial identity according to Dialogical Self Theory; the importance of Critical Incidents for developing of the identity as well as the professional and personal life of an entrepreneur; and the mind of an entrepreneur as a micro-society of I-positions.

The purpose of our research is to understand an entrepreneurial identity on the basis of the Dialogical Self Theory. According to the theory, self is reflected on different levels, and the entrepreneurial identity is constructed in the inner dialogue with own values, motivations and competencies on the level of “others-in-me” with their values and vision, and on the level of the society and culture (van Loon, 2017). Taking that into consideration we designed all the research process as a longitude research based on coaching and deep self-reflection of the participants assisting not only to achieve the goals of our research but to help them to understand better as a person and a professional involved into business and to improve their psychological and professional condition of accepting themselves in their activities.

3.1. Framework.

As the essential elements of the study we can highlight following: the model of the entrepreneurial identity according to the Dialogical Self Theory (Hermans, 2006; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010; Hermans & Gieser, 2012; Hermans, Kempen, & van

Loon, 1992) and Dialogical Leadership (van Loon, 2010); importance of Critical Incidents for forming the identity (Monereo, 2015). According to this scientific approach, the entrepreneurial identity is understood as a complex multilevel structure, including a unique group of I-positions, proposing different concepts or roles, feelings about entrepreneurship and strategies and it is constructed in the inner dialogue with other voices (Monereo, Weise, & Alvarez, 2013). We can say that no people are using just one I-position, it's effective to adapt the I-positions according to the situation, place and time but the study shows that the entrepreneurs mostly have one dominating I-position which is used as a strategy or reaction on critical incidents or during their everyday professional life. As Hermans (2016) says, "some positions are, temporarily or more structurally, more powerful in the self than other ones and their needs, wishes and values receive priority over those of other positions" (p.xvii). According to the DST, it is called "core position," which becomes a central position on which other positions depend (Hermans, 2018). These I-positions are "dominant and overpowering, whereas others are quieter and more subdued" (Nir, 2016, p.2).

To provide constant productivity, the entrepreneur needs to be moving flexibly between different I-positions in proper situations and for solving problems. As these problems can be very different, they can even put the entrepreneur into crisis, acting as critical incidents.

3.2. Specific subject revision.

The study is based on profound case analysis. We have chosen four representatives of different types of entrepreneurial I-positions according to the data obtained within the previous study (Valencia & Monereo, 2019). Earlier, we have created and expanded the questionnaire "Survey for Entrepreneurs on Critical Incidents," which involved 430 participants, entrepreneurs from different EU countries. All critical incidents included in the Survey reflect the psychological aspects of entrepreneurial life. The main results confirm the high importance of critical incidents for the formation of entrepreneurial identity and existence of four identity profiles which lead to different types of I-positions that entrepreneurs choose and acting strategies according to these positions in a real business

environment. Using the results of the previous research, we highlighted four main entrepreneurial I-positions:

- “Leader,” focused on his team, the inspirer, the creator, and the implementer of vision and strategy.
- “Innovator,” characterized by innovative thinking, the creation of innovative products, measuring success by the impact of their products or services on the development of mankind. Always tends to invent and design.
- “Fighter” trusts only in himself and presents himself as a general part of his company. Constantly struggling to survive in a competitive market, scared to lose control and prefer to use the strategies of building the strong hierarchy.
- “Opportunist,” a constant resource finder, the “seller,” always looks for new opportunities in the market and constantly searching for new resources for their business in different spheres. Decision making is focused on the market and customers’ opinion.

The characteristics of these I-positions will be fully described on the examples of the case study for each participant. For our research the case study was chosen as the most valuable instrument proposing a comparison and reflection, helping the researcher not only to study the object but also to see the formation of the object (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). All four cases represent different contexts of forming the entrepreneurial identity leading to understanding the variety of frequently seen backgrounds of becoming an entrepreneur.

3.3. Specific objectives.

The general target of the research is to study the construction of the identity of young entrepreneurs based on the analysis of their personal and professional way, and the influence of critical incidents on its forming.

The specific objectives of Study 2 are concentrated on the prefunded research of the different aspects of the forming entrepreneurial I-positions, logically following the objectives of Study 1 and based on using appropriate methods:

- To study the identity of young entrepreneurs based on their type of entrepreneurial I-position and its manifestation in professional activity.
- To study the personal and professional life way of young entrepreneurs as a way of forming I-positions according to self-reflection and facing critical incidents within six months of the research.
- To find out the points of personal and professional growth according to the intrapersonal conflicts and crisis causing points caused by the critical incidents and their emotional impact by comparing actual and missing/desired I-positions.
- To study the variety of inner voices leading to the forming of the entrepreneurial identity and their influence on I-position.
- To study the changing of I-positions during the forming of the identity of young entrepreneurs.

3.4. Empirical design.

The second study was dedicated to the construction of the identity of entrepreneurs and the use of critical incidents. It was focused on the first steps and basic construction of self-identification of the entrepreneur in the early stage of his professional career in his own business. We studied four cases of construction of entrepreneurial identity with participants who had less than one-year experience in business. The research included profound work with each participant targeting to complete research of the personal way to entrepreneurship.

The study helped us to see the process of shaping the I-positions of young entrepreneurs including concepts about themselves as entrepreneurs, strategies of facing critical incidents in everyday life and feelings and emotional impact caused by these critical incidents.

For each participant, we obtained the complete profile applying the chosen tools, such as structured interview report, generalized I-position mapping, and personal position repertoire matrix, journey plot scheme with major incidents (negative or positive events) which could lead the participant for becoming an entrepreneur.

The use of the tools helped us to understand, widely describe and to see the main tendencies of the targeting group

The methodology of this study includes the following instruments:

- **Interview:**

The study started with the interview dedicated to the participants' vision of entrepreneurship, their business concept, role, and mission in the profession. Also, interviewing helped us to discuss properly critical incidents and life events that were meaningful for choosing entrepreneurship as their professional career. This interview aimed to discover their professional self and the factors influencing the construction of their identity such as the personal meaning of entrepreneurship, critical incidents, which led them to their choices and feelings they had during and after such events, and inner voices that influenced their professional strategies.

- **Mapping:**

The mapping was used as a tool for visualizing the complex construction of identity as a combination of I-positions. In our research, we used mapping for the representation of the lifeline of the participants that led to the moment of forming their identity as the entrepreneur. This involved a graphical representation of the critical stages or periods in the persons' life (both positive and negative but influencing their decision to become the entrepreneur) through a sinuous line, with distinct curves (Burnard, 2012; Monereo, 2017; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013).

Moreover, this instrument is of high importance for the basic structuring of the self-perception of a participant in the beginning of his entrepreneur's career. According to our practical experience, it is a precious tool not only for the researcher but for the participant. The mapping was used for the understanding of the milestones in their lives which led to the decision to start their own business.

- **Journey plot:**

The Journey Plot is a technique which helps to represent the intensity or emotional impact of events analyzing the temporal duration of each contingency, its rhythm, frequency and emotional intensity (Monereo, 2017; Shaw et al., 2008). The progressive Journey plot in our study represents the participant's trajectory within six months of the study. One scale shows the timeline, and another shows the emotional impact of the events which the participant found as the critical incidents during the corresponding

month. The emotional impact scale has the gradation from -2, most negative event to +2, most positive event and is measured by each participant for each particular case.

- **Personal Position Repertoire (PPR):**

The metaphor of a stage in the theatre is often applied to describe the method of PPR. The main idea is the interaction of external and internal positions of the person. The PPR method is one of the modern methods in practical psychology which was extensively described by Hermans (2001a, 2016). For each participant, the list of internal and external positions is provided; the participants are invited to add other positions as relevant to their lives. As a result, we see a matrix of internal positions and external positions, with the prominence ratings in the entries. As Kluger says in his research using the PPR method: “In contrast to generalized traits, positions are specific, situation-dependent ways of placing oneself toward another person and oneself, and they receive their meaning as part of a broader associative and organized network of I-positions” (Kluger et al., 2008). PPR is used as a research and counselling method helping clients to analyze and articulate their problems, to understand the identity much deeper and to see the influence the internal and external positions on the forming of the identity. This effect is because the positions are already formulated for the client by the specialist according to the previous research of his identity.

According to our methodology, the initial repertoire of positions is divided into three blocks: internal, external, and exterior I-positions of the identity. Internal positions are the positions of I, for example, “I as an innovator,” “I as unconfident.” External positions are characterized by “others in me”, for example “I as a family member,” “I as a director,” “I as an alumnus.” Exterior positions are provided by the community, for example, the social institutions, our parents or professional societies. So, the researcher can observe the evolution of the leading identity positions through conflictive and non-conflictive relationships, promoted by some relevant incidents (Monereo, 2017).

In our research PPR is used as an assessment instrument for the investigation of the content and organization of position repertoire of young entrepreneurs presented in the form of individual repertoire matrix of each participant. It shows the prominence of a range of

internal positions in relation to a range of external positions. We have modified and adapted this method according to the goals of our research including only qualitative part of the method, so we do not use the classic version of PPR, but we use the main idea of the instrument which helps us to make our research profound and systematic.

- **Coaching:**

Elements of coaching were included in the interaction with each participant. According to the approach of the Dialogical Leadership (R. van Loon and T. van den Berg, 2016), we applied the main principles of dialogue during each coaching session: listening, respecting, suspending judgment and voicing. Among the competencies that are highlighted by the Dialogical Leadership approach are: being flexible in your behavior and thinking, being able to create conditions and a trustful atmosphere for emerging new meanings, dealing with conflicts, openness towards the future and enable the integration of a potential variety of I-positions (Hermans, 2016).

The coaching approach in our research was used with the target to reach a close relationship and atmosphere of trust and comfort as the research proposes a profound study of the personal way involving emotional sphere and biographical data. The work with each of the participants was individual and confidential.

3.5. Participants.

We studied four cases of participants who had less than one year of experience in the business. All of them were entrepreneurs of different European countries (representatives of Spain, Portugal, Ireland, and Russia) under forty years old of both male and female genders with different background, level of knowledge and professional experience.

In general, the characteristics of participants are different age and gender ; they are representatives of different European countries. The primary condition for the participation was less than one year of experience in entrepreneurship.

Each of them was a representative of each I-position according to the data obtained within Study 1 (“Innovator,” “Leader,” “Opportunist,” and “Fighter”). As mentioned in Study 1 there are no people using just one I-position, it’s effective to adapt the I-positions according to the situation, place and time but the study shows that the entrepreneurs mostly have one dominating I-position which is used as a strategy or reaction on critical incidents or during their everyday professional life. The general characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

General characteristics of the participants of Study 2

| № | Participant | Country | Gender | Age category | Type of business | DEIP* |
|----------|--------------------|---|---------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | L | Russia | Female | 25-30 | Agriculture, services | Leader |
| | Case | L is involved in family business and trying to find herself as an entrepreneur and to find her place in her parent’s company. | | | | |
| 2 | J | Ireland | Male | 35-40 | Biotech | Innovator |
| | Case | Firstly, J was working for the company, but after participating and winning some business contests started his own business and got the investment. Main goal – a creation of a large international innovational company. | | | | |
| 3 | H | Portugal | Male | 30-35 | IT | Fighter |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|--------|-------|-------------------|-------------|
| | Case | H started the company to be independent and to prove to himself and his family, he can achieve a lot. At the beginning of his business experience he had some challenges, so now his goal is to develop his entrepreneurial skills. | | | | |
| 4 | N | Spain | Female | 30-35 | Personal services | Opportunist |
| | Case | N just started her business and wants to develop her business ideas, to realize them on practice and find herself as an entrepreneur. | | | | |

*DEIP – dominating entrepreneurial I-position

3.6. Procedure.

We had six months of observations and coach sessions in the form of individual work and private meetings with each participant including all the methodological instruments for the data obtaining including finalizing coaching module with the feed-back for each participant and consultancy on a future vision of his self-development in entrepreneurship.

The first stage, **interview** (Appendix B), consisted of a variety of questions aiming to get different data:

1. Do you consider yourself as an entrepreneur by vocation? Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur?
2. What is your main mission / goal as an entrepreneur? What are your main values in doing business?
3. Do you consider yourself as a good entrepreneur? Why?
4. What are your strong and weak sides as an entrepreneur?
5. What do you like most and less in being an entrepreneur?
6. Who influenced you most of all in your model of entrepreneurial behavior? Which model of the entrepreneurship influenced you?

7. What are the main things that influence your effectiveness in business? What do you do to make your business effective?
8. What are the methods/instruments that you use to manage your business? Would you like to change any of those? Which things would you like to change and how?
9. What would you like to change in your business management, but you didn't change yet? Why didn't you change it earlier?
10. How do you feel as an entrepreneur? In which situations do you feel more comfortable? And in which less comfortable? Why?
11. What did happen to you during your professional experience that you can consider as a Critical Incident? How did you act? Do you think that you faced it well? How would you act in such case in the future?
12. Are there any inner voices that influence your decision making? How would you characterize them?

These questions were chosen for two main types of goals, firstly, as a research goal helping to study the process of forming entrepreneurial identity including the I-positions, concepts about entrepreneurship, the emotional impact of the critical incidents that led to the choices of starting own business and the strategies used for facing critical incidents. From the other hand, as a part of the program useful for the participant, more precisely, applying coaching methods of questioning that lead to the easier self-understanding and basement for forming entrepreneurial I-position for the participants.

Among these goals we can see the following:

- to help the person quickly to adapt to the program focusing on himself not on the procedures;
- to start understanding the identity and the level of personal and professional matureness of the participant;
- to start discovering the variety of personal position repertoire;
- to fix the primary level of I-positions to check later changes during the time of research and to be able to fix the possible results of transpositioning in the final study;
- to discover the inner voices that influence the development of the entrepreneurial identity of the participant;
- to see which critical incidents played the main role in shaping the entrepreneurial identity of the participant on this stage.

The second stage was **Mapping** (Appendix C). The mapping instrument is targeting to discover the personal life way of the participant up to the moment of the research. The example of the mapping of one of the participants is presented bellowed (Figure 18). The timeline includes the ages and the short description of critical incidents that occurred with the participant and had a strong emotional impact and influence on his decision to become an entrepreneur. Above the line, the positive critical incidents are situated. Underlined there is a place for the critical incidents which the participant sees as negatives. The star shows the most important/crucial critical incident on forming of the entrepreneurial identity according to the opinion of the participant. The participants were provided with the instruction from the researcher; the rest part of it was done individually.

As the example, the map of the Participant J is presented in Figure 18. J assumed that his idea of becoming the entrepreneur was inspired by the cartoons “Top cat” and “Batman,” which showed him the qualities needed for the entrepreneur and motivated for future achievement. Much later, in 2010 he was selected for the Novartis Biocamp in Boston. By this time, he was already involved in the specific sphere of the research and dealing with the world top pharmaceutical company inspired him to start thinking of his own business in this area. The next crucial point happened after successful application the “One Start” contest where he became the semi-finalist and got a lot of specific competences and experience. Later we can see the negative critical incident which occurred in 2016, as the participant was denied the position in the company. It is quite common between the entrepreneurs to start their own business after being fired or denied the position in the company. Another participant on the question: “Why did you decide to become an entrepreneur” during the interview: “Because it is very challenging to find a good job and much easier to create my own system then to try to get involved into another.” Then in 2017, we can see the most crucial critical incident (marked with the star) which indicates starting the company and getting the investment. The participant told us that his participation in the special investor program helped to start his own business very fast and smoothly, having much support of professionals.

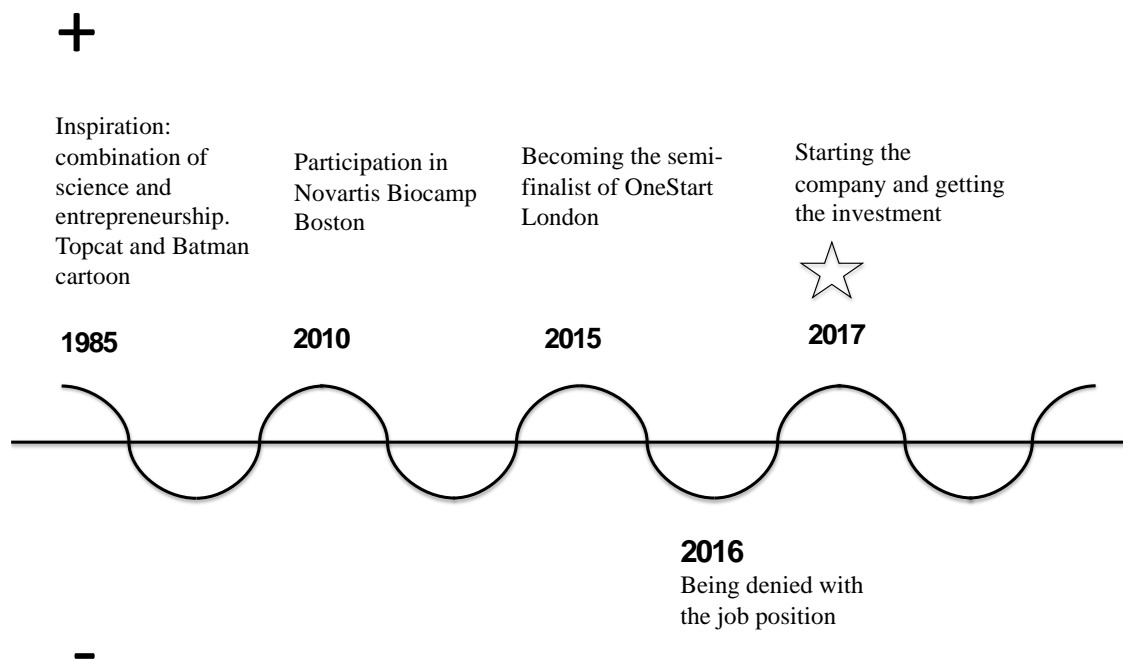


Figure 18. Example of Mapping, Participant J.

The next stage included using the **Journey Plot** (Appendix E).

The process consisted of two steps – weekly individual work of the participant – at the end of each week the participant got the survey using Google forms (Appendix D) with the questions according to his experience during the past week including any special/important or critical incidents that happened during this period. Then each participant was evaluating their emotional impact of mentioned critical incidents using with the scale from +2 (positive) to -2 (negative). The second step was the monthly meeting when we met with each participant to discuss the results of the months using the same system. The idea of weekly meetings had two purposes: to help the participant to develop his self-reflection skills and to help them not to miss any special occasion or event during this period.

As the example, we can see the Journey Plot of Participant L (Figure 19). It shows the results of the participant for the period analyzed (November 2017-May 2018).

As the main result of the month, the participant chose the “new motivation which gave her the drive: to buy the new car.” It could be considered as a critical incident as it had a very high impact on the person and showed the psychological aspect of her professional

motivation – the inspiration of the bigger goal to achieve. Next month the critical incident included self-reflection of the changing identity – a new understanding of the I-position as “me as an entrepreneur” and “me as a woman” in combination. So, the process included the discussion and pointing the results on the graphics which each participant could see in the end of the study.

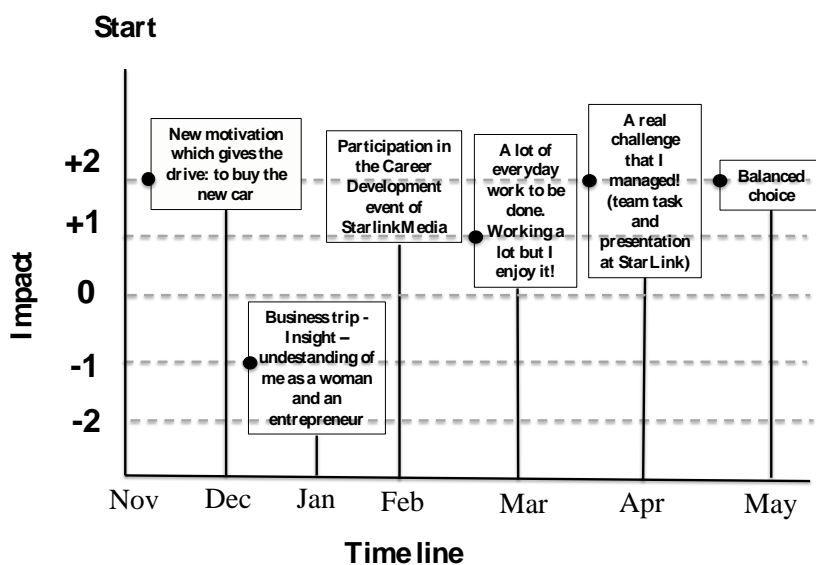


Figure 19. Example of Journey Plot, Participant L.

Journey plot helped us to fix the main critical incidents leading the way of forming the entrepreneurial I-position; this event was characterized by feelings and emotional impact of each critical incident. During this process, we were discussing the inner voices interacting in each stage and the I-positions revealed by these events. This information allowed us to develop the **Personal Position Repertoire (PPR)** profile (Appendix F, Appendix G) in which the identity positions of the Participant L were identified.

Personal Position Repertoire instrument was changed from the original one and adapted to our qualitative research so that we used some characteristics of the tool which we found most suiting to the target of our research. At the beginning of the procedure, a list of internal and external I-positions was presented to the participant. Those I-positions were systematized according to the data obtained during the application of previous methods. We made the cards which showed the variety of personal repertoire of the participant related to the entrepreneurial identity and the dominating I-position. Then L chose those of them which she found belonging to her identity and more relative to her self-perception. You can

see the example of the variety of personal positions and inner voices of Participant L in Figure 20. The lines show the evolution of the understanding of the personal positions by the participants including their conclusions and outputs.

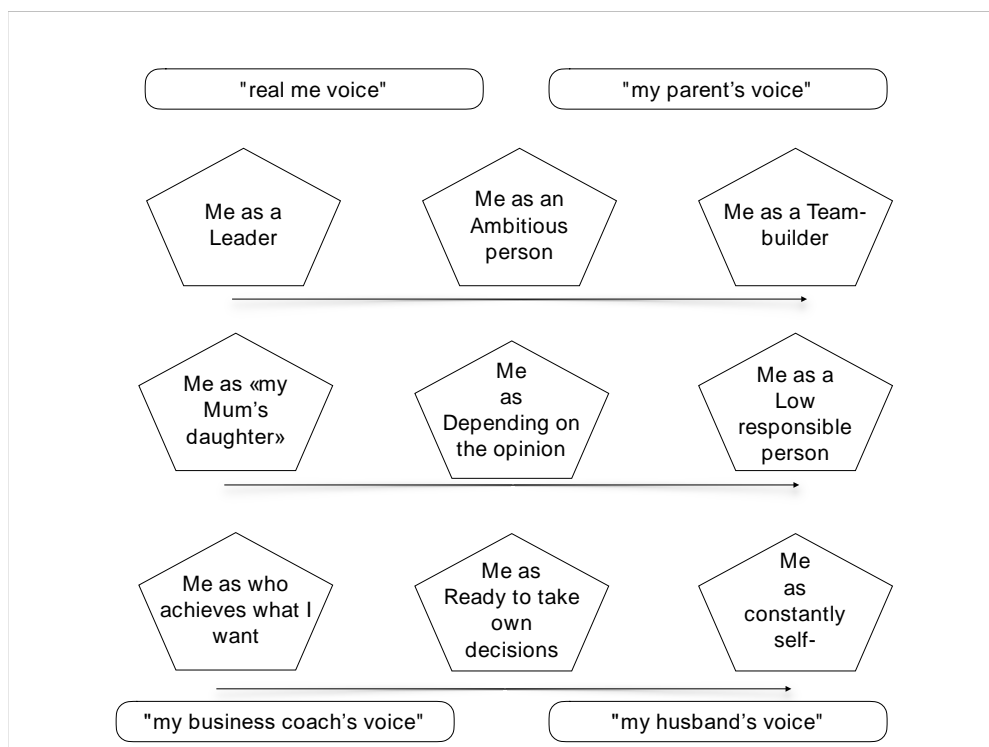


Figure 20. The example of a variety of personal positions and inner voices, Participant L.

After that we were able to discuss the relationship between these I-positions which we characterized as non-conflictive (for example, the internal position defined as “achiever” and the external (“others in me” - “my business coach”) and conflictive (for example, the internal position of “leader” and the external position “my parents”).

This information allowed us to develop the PPR profile (see Figure 21) in which the identity positions of the Participant L were identified:

After showing the cards with the variety of I-position repertoire, we were discussing the self-perception of the participants of each of these positions and its influence on their identity and reflection in everyday life.

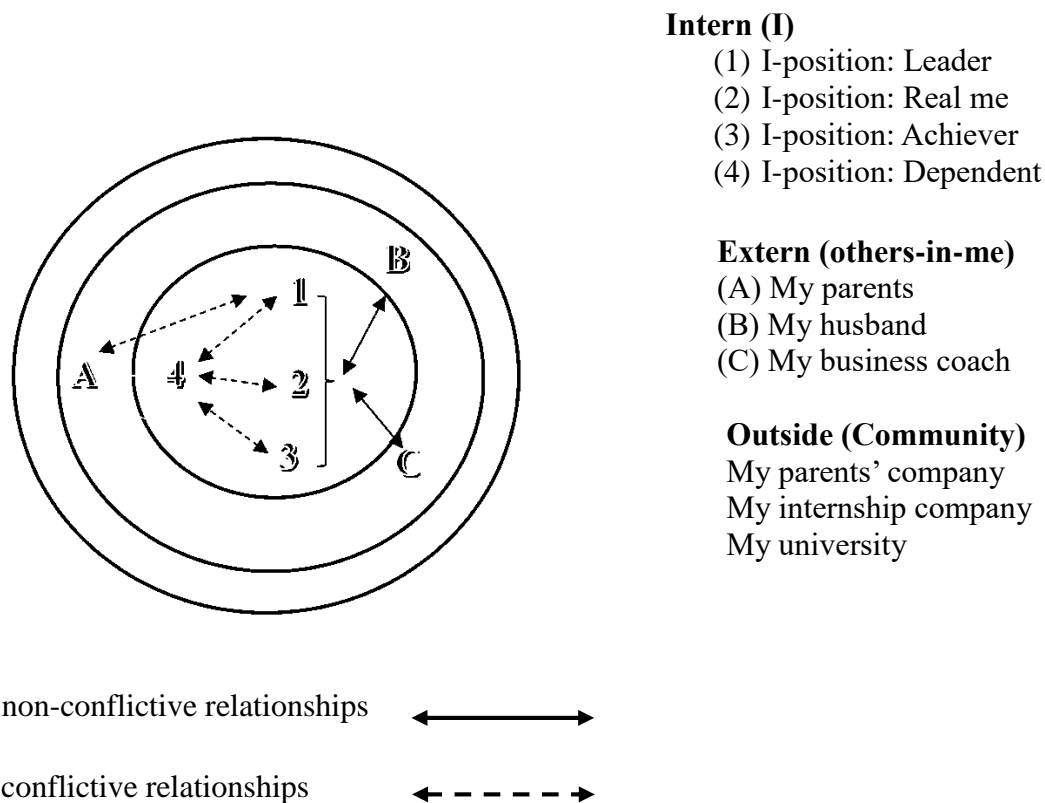


Figure 21. Example of Personal Position Repertoire, Participant L.

Results regarding the PPR (see Figure 4) show that L has the variety the Intern (I), Extern (others-in-me) and Outside (Communities) positions. The arrows on the figure show non-conflictive relationships in I-positions (for example, that I-position of the support of L’s business coach and husband helps her to develop her “real-me” I-position). These connections helped us to find the points of growth and identity development. In the same time some characteristics are contradictory to each other and tagged as the “conflictive relationships” (for example the category “my parents” is connected to I-position of “dependent”) and helped us to find the crisis causing points and points of further growth. The outer side of the circle shows us the factors that influenced the construction of I-positions (e.g., “My internship company” or “My university”).

The final individual coaching session with each participant continued one and half of an hour had the target to finish the research and make it useful not only for the research but also for the participants. It contained assuming of the final results, the feedback, the conclusions of the participants about their progress and changes in their entrepreneurial identity that the program brought into their personal and professional life and discussion of their new goals.

In Figure 22 the whole process of the research procedure is shown.

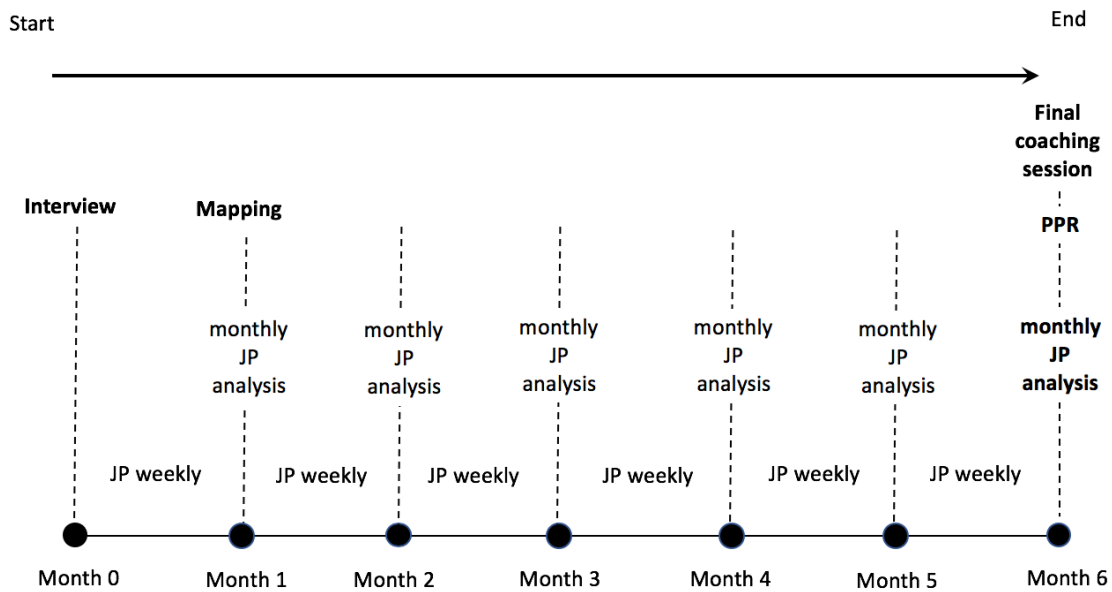


Figure 22. The process of the research procedure. Study 2.

The next section is dedicated to the description of the data analysis.

3.7. Data analysis.

All mentioned tools were used for getting the complete profile of each participant and the profound case description. This research was mostly qualitative; however, some quantitative methods were also applied for the PPR method. Using qualitative methods for data analysis helped us a detailed understanding of the participants' experience. For this reason, we used the classical grounded in analysis divided into the stages of a) identifying ideas repeated throughout the data, b) organizing ideas into broader themes, c) proposing an interpretation of the data according to the method described by Price (2019).

For the analysing data obtained during the interview, we used the method of the content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002). We had to adapt the method to the goals and needs of the

current research, so we structured each answer into the table containing each category used for the final profile of the participant.

Applying the mapping instrument, we have extracted the main critical incident using the o see the whole picture of the previous critical incidents, including the main critical incident leading to the decision to become the entrepreneur.

The journey plot instrument also helped us to collect data connected to the critical incidents of the participants, but in this case, we were fixing the situations which were connected to the process of the entrepreneurial identity within the research and participation in the program.

For the PPR method we used the mixed technique of data obtaining, we analysed the positional repertoire (this process was widely described before) and the correlations between the I-positions using the table of data helping to extract the range of the positions for each participant.

All data obtained during the research helped us to create final matrix for each participant and to reveal following categories: context of forming entrepreneurial identity, core I-position, missed and desired I-position, inner voices that influence forming the entrepreneurial identity, main critical incident which influenced forming of the entrepreneurial identity during the Study and the Crisis causing point, the point of growth and final results.

3.8. Results.

Based on the obtained results, we were able to check all crucial points of the construction of the identity of young entrepreneurs and to understand more deeply the use of critical incidents for the design of future training. For the analysis of the research the qualitative methods were used, it helped to have a profound analysis of each case and the focus on each participant applying the methods of the Dialogical Self theory and conventional psychological instruments for understanding the changes in the identity and forming entrepreneurial I-position of the participants. One of the most essential approaches was inviting for the participation of four entrepreneurs as the representatives of four types of entrepreneurial I-positions. For each participant, we obtained the complete profile applying the chosen tools, such as structured interview report, generalized I-position mapping and

repertoire matrix, journey plot scheme with major incidents (negative or positive events) which could lead the participant for becoming an entrepreneur.

The use of the tools helped us to understand, widely describe and to see the main tendencies of the targeting group (the group with mentioned I-position or/and personal or professional conditions of becoming the entrepreneur), including such characteristics as:

- the context of the forming of entrepreneurial identity – the life circumstances in which the person was situated before and while starting his business (e.g., family business, freelance, etc.);
- the core I-position as a “central position on which the functioning of many other positions depends” (Hermans, 2018, p. 339), in our research we obtained the data about the core-position from the Study 1, and that core-position of the participant was proved by the methods and tools used in Study 2;
- the missing or desired I-position – the position which is less of all presented in the identity profile of the participant (according to the results of Study 1 proved by the tools and methods applied in Study 2) but seems to be promising for the participant affording achieving more effective results for facing critical incidents in the entrepreneurial performance;
- the main critical incident which led to the forming of the entrepreneurial identity and forming of the core I-position (according to the results of Study 1 proved by the tools and methods applied in Study 2);
- the crisis causing point which led to the critical incident and forming of the entrepreneurial identity;
- the inner voices and their influence on forming the entrepreneurial identity and dominating I-position.

Based on these results and using the results of the previous studying we will be able to see all critical points very closely on the construction of the identity of young entrepreneurs and to understand more deeply the use of critical incidents for the design of future training.

Received results also will be used for the third study dedicated to the creation of the program for training the entrepreneurs based on critical incidents.

Now we would like to pay attention to the final profile of each participant as it shows crucial stages and highlighting the general processes of the forming of the entrepreneurial

identity. The profiles of each participant show the variety of contexts which are typical for the entrepreneurs and explain the variety of I-positions using the data obtained the Study 1.

Results for Participant L.

The context of the forming the entrepreneurial identity for Participant L is “growing inside the family business case.” L is a young entrepreneur who was involved in her parents’ business. The sphere of her business is agriculture; the company provides the machines and instruments for the agricultural companies in three regions. The company grows fast, and the parents of L want her to be involved in the business as an owner. Since she was a child, L always was helping her parents and was involved in all the activities of the company. Here is a fragment of the first interview demonstrating her context: *“As long I remember myself, I’m involved in the parents’ business. When my sister and I were little, our parents were always taking us to their office and showed everything connected to the business. We were always helping them with everything we could. Later, at the university, I chose economics and marketing as my main specialization to help my parents with fresh ideas for developing our business”*. Now as she finished the university, she has plenty of possibilities – such as becoming involved into her parents’ business or starting her own company or as an additional option, starting the career in a big company with the perspective of becoming the part of their top-management.

Core I-position, according to Study 1: Leader.

L. is characterized as an active and motivated person, and she likes to be involved into the team activities, believes that the shared vision can lead the company to better results and join people for achieving big goals. The results of the survey showed Leader focused on his team as a core-position for L. This result was later confirmed by the future studied as L. was highlighting the situations where she had an opportunity to present herself as a leader describing them as an event with a higher impact. For example, in November 2018 during one of the monthly meetings, she described the critical incident with the higher emotional impact: *“I was preparing to defend the project during my internship, they have chosen me as a team leader, I was incredibly excited! Great responsibility and great opportunities, I feel both challenged and happy, I feel I even can’t fall asleep at night thinking of that – it’s how I am excited! There was no competition; no one hesitated to vote for me as a team*

leader, I was quite impressed. This internship is a real practice for future business achievement as this company can make great input into my career, so I can't lose this chance..." We can notice that this situation was psychologically valuable for L and the role of the Leader is both exciting and challenging her.

Missed and desired I-position: Fighter.

Being in I-position of Leader was always easy for L when she had the resources provided by her family. She could use the unlimited budgets and lead the team of people believing she got it herself. For her entrepreneurship was not about earning money or surviving in the competitive market – that was always provided by her parents. Also, her parents did not provide her enough freedom of choice or let her make own mistakes as they always knew they would do everything smarter thanks to their great entrepreneurial experience. That is why I-position of the Fighter was blocked entirely. During the process of the study, we found out with L that this was not only her missed position but also her desired I-position. *"For now, I find just 10% of entrepreneurship in myself. I cannot measure by selling and getting, achieving what I want, and I need, I'd rather give up and ask for help from my parents... I just can give out and don't care what I get back what I understand is unbelievable in real business. But sometimes I become so goal-oriented to get what I need (save money, get a discount for my business, etc.) so I feel that skills in myself and I feel I should develop that hidden part of me."* Analysing her Mapping, she understood that she was always more satisfied with herself, she achieved something despite the circumstances. As we pointed that out, L started self-reflection and made herself the challenges where she could act independently without the influence of her parents' opinion.

Inner voices that influence forming of the entrepreneurial identity.

We found out four different inner voices influencing L: the first one was "her parents' voice," this voice was always saying her that they love her no matter what happens, but she is not ready for taking her own decisions. This voice brought her nice feeling of coziness and calmness in her life but frustrated her with the idea of not being able to become a real entrepreneur and to take the responsibility of making her own mistakes: *"Wherever I go I'm thinking – what my mum would say about that, how would she act or in the professional situations I always think of my dad's example. The funny thing about it is that I phone them every time I need to take the decision."* Another voice was "her husband's"

voice which told her she should try to start her own career in a big company and separate from parents' business. *"My husband is always trying to prove me that I'm already a "big girl" able to make my own decisions, he has a lovely relationship with my family, but he is insisting that I should be more confident in myself; thus every time I need to make a decision the image of weights comes to my mind, and I have to feel inside myself which one has more weight in each concrete situation"*. This voice was challenging, but she enjoyed that part of herself as it gave her the hopes, she is strong enough to do that. During the Study period, we noticed different stages of voice's influence and in some stages, L was entirely sure she will start her career, in other situations, she said, *"I never can leave my parents' business as they need me very much."* In this case, we see two more voices helping to achieve the balance and very closely related in this angle – the voice of her business coach and her voice of "real me" as L called it herself. L says: *"My business coach always exists in my head in a very positive way, it's never annoying or taking anyone's side, it's just always saying me 'be yourself', that inspires me a lot and gives me much energy to feel what 'real me' wants in every situation."* These voices were not contradictory for her as L highlighted that the voice of her business coach was always telling her she is unique and can manage any challenge using her skills and talents. Her real voice always told her she could achieve anything she wants, as L said during one of the meetings: *"In the inspiring circumstances, when I'm inspired but something and full of hopes I say to myself, go, girl, prove the world what you can, and you will be honoured... In entrepreneurship most of all, I like the possibility to be myself."* The voice of "real me" is an ambitious voice for L.

The main critical incident which influenced forming of the entrepreneurial identity during the Study and the Crisis causing point.

During these six months she participated in the contest for the vacancy for the big company where she could make the career of top-manager and progress professional development outside her parent's company. That was contradictory to "her parents" voice. But L decided to try to participate in the contest (here we see other three voices influence: her husband's voice, her business coach voice and her "real me voice"). We can see that the crisis causing point was in the field of high ambitions and the lack of responsibility, practical skills, and experience in the entrepreneurship. But, during the contest in the big company, L managed to show her leaders skills, had a variety of challenges that were driving her entrepreneurial spirit, she was acting outside of the situation of her family business and was free to act as wanted. As a result, she was chosen for the position in the

company but finally denied it (parents' voice influence). However this critical incident became a very positive for her in different aspects: first, her parents were very impressed by her success and changed her point of view on her status in the company and proposed her to manage the marketing department in their family business with the perspective of managing the whole company in future, second, for L decision finally became very easy to take, she understood how difficult was for her parents to build the successful business but one of the most crucial conclusions for her was that she saw hired people in a big company acting as entrepreneurs, believing entirely in business they are working for. It completely changed her understanding of her entrepreneurial I-position and role in her own company, including the level of responsibilities she took.

Feedback from the participant.

L highlights that participating in the study became crucial for her. At the beginning of the process, she found herself as “lost” and not able to make the right decision in her life. She noticed that the whole process of using different psychological tools made her stronger, helped her to understand her needs and to make the decision that is right for her. The process of understanding inner voices helped her to “into the shelves of her mind” all information she gets from outside and to find her own voice which shows her targets and real needs. During the whole process she noticed that she and her mum managed to understand and accept each other better, it changed the whole process of dealing during the job and from the I-position of “her mum’s daughter” she moved to the I-position of a leader of her own life and career. L said that she understands that the forming of her mature entrepreneurial identity is still a long way, but she is delighted with her self-perception now and sees exactly her possible way of professional development.

Point of growth and final results.

As the result for Participant L we consider further points: We could see the result of using different psychological tools that led to: understanding actual I-position and working on missing I-position strategies, separating of the inner voices and their meanings and training to listen and find the “real me” voice, working on facing the critical incident which became positive and a point of growth instead of perception of negative and disruptive. Through the self-reflection and going passing the critical incident, L came to a better understanding of herself as a young entrepreneur. “I am drifting now, and I want to

change everything in my behavior regarding management and my life in general. How I plan to change: First. Do not be afraid of anything, but take and do, without inventing any excuses; second - Give more time to work and your results in management; third - I will build up a clear time management system in order to have time for everything and not to postpone anything”. This case can become a practical example of a forming the entrepreneurial identity of the person growing within a family business. The final profile of the Participant L, including the main identity characteristics according to the obtained data is presented in Table 11.

Table 11.

The final profile of Participant L.

| Variable | Characterization |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Context</i> | Growing within family |
| <i>Core- I-position</i> | Leader |
| <i>Missing I-position</i> | Fighter |
| <i>Critical Incident</i> | Opportunity to grow personally and professionally outside the family business |
| <i>Voices</i> | “Family” voice vs “inner me” voice |

Results for Participant J.

The context of the forming the entrepreneurial identity for Participant J is creation of the high-technological business using investment money after getting business experience in the pharmaceutical company. J is moving from the working within the company to the creation of his own high-technological business. He was always dreaming of becoming an entrepreneur, during the interview he characterized himself as a person “*permanently creating new ideas which could improve the world.*” His business area is biopharmaceutics and biomedicine; this is a high technological innovational business. As he was dealing with big pharmaceutical companies during his previous experience, he knows how things work “from inside.” That inspired him to create his own business. After a few trials, he got the

investment from a very famous venture capital company which became a starting point for the functioning of his business.

Core I-position according to Study 1: Innovator.

It is characterized by innovative thinking, the creation of innovative products. As he mentioned during the first interview *“For me is very important that my business model has no analogues on the market as I am targeting to change people’s lives with my products and to create the new solutions for “making the world a better place to live.”*

Missed and desired I-position: Fighter.

Being an innovator J enjoys his kind of activities, focuses on his success, and tries to escape the challenges. He shows himself an excellent businessman for the extended strategical plans, but he actually cannot cope with the real problems which he faces in everyday life of the entrepreneur. So, the lack of strong will in sorting out the real-time situations causes him the problems and does not provide enough productivity. During the coaching sessions, we found out that problems that are typical for any business make him feel deconcentrated, loose the interest to the job and giving up some projects he was aiming to finish. As an example, we can see the small part of one of the coaching session monologues according to the critical incident that occurred during one of the months of observations: *“This month I was challenged by a lot of things. I feel tired of them... I had to apply to the next funding stage, and it is not that easy. I missed some deadlines for applying for the contexts as I was firstly sure it going to be easy, but the forms were too complicated, and I was too busy doing another type of job to be on time.”* These personal characteristics could be the result of the long period of working as a hired person where he did not need to take the responsibility on himself for the whole business and its stable position on the market. J would like to be more effective in achieving the short-term goals which would provide him and his business more stability and would allow concentrating on future innovation ideas.

Inner voices that influence forming of the entrepreneurial identity:

Between the inner voices for J, we can see the voices of his family members whom he characterizes as more influencing his business way of thinking and the voices of another dimension which we decided to call as “voices of the illusions” and “voices of the reality”.

Describing the voices of his family members he says: “*My mother’s voice always tells me to do the proper things as my wife’s voice says to do the things properly.*” *And I don’t find it contradictory, I feel that both ways of thinking helping me to get to better me and to see my business in more holistic way.*” We found out that this combination of the voices is quite logical for his identity and helps him to be productive in solving the problems. On the other hand, the voices of reality and illusions are quite contradictory and lead to a personal crisis very often. This illusion voice shows future as a non-problematic field full of opportunities and great achievements, but the reality voice (which J tries to escape as much as possible) says that the everyday efforts are not enough for the productivity.

The main critical incident which influenced forming of the entrepreneurial identity and the crisis causing point:

The main critical incident for participant J was his participation in the world-famous acceleration program for the high-tech innovational business. That became a starting point for forming his identity as an entrepreneur and brought many challenges. As he said during one of the coach sessions: “*This event became crucial for me, I was always dreaming of developing my idea and becoming a businessman, but when it happened it brought not just the joy but too much stress and worries too.*” During the coaching sessions, we found out that this success made him very sure in himself but at the same time put too much pressure. Actually, he didn’t know how to be the real businessman, but the speed of the program and the requests of the investor were so high that he hardly was managing with all the tasks, felt himself exhausted as he didn’t get accustomed to such life rhythm, but he couldn’t show that to the members of his team or the investor. More in-depth research showed that he was concentrated on the process more than on the result and led not only to the problems in the fast-growing business but also influenced his psychological state. Besides, he successfully finished the program, and this critical incident became a start of his understanding and forming his entrepreneurial identity targeting to focus on the results and providing a wider variety of personal techniques for facing the challenges.

Feedback from the participant.

J notices that participation in the program was not that easy for him from the beginning. During the first step – the interview – he actually could not concentrate on describing himself as an entrepreneur, could not get the idea of the specific characteristics of

his identity or behavior. From the other point of view, his entrepreneurial profile turned out to be very mature, and his life way of becoming an entrepreneur has already shaped his identity. For J, the Journey plot became the most exciting part of the program process as it revealed his childish dreams and made him positive connections of his life way to what he achieved now.

The most challenging part was the discussion about his “illusional voice,” he never recognized it as a crisis and was accepting his numerous achievements as a motivation for further progress. J highlighted that the program helped him to systematize the self-perceptions of his identity and the inner voice that influence him: *“The program is very interesting but challenging in the same way. To be honest, I was always reflecting the events in my thoughts but never analysed them from the point of getting the result, and it was always just the natural process of reflection... I was very excited with the idea what led me to my choice to become an entrepreneur as no one of my family members are, so I never had such example but was always full of ideas and was dreaming of serving for helping people but to do it in a special, innovative way. Most of all I like the idea of analysing critical incidents, it showed me a lot of new about entrepreneurship.”*

Point of growth and final results.

As a result for the Participant J we consider further points: We could see the process of revealing and understanding the entrepreneurial identity which was actually shaped during the previous years of creating his idea and the process was speedup by the critical incident which became the crucial line between being “me as a person with innovational ideas” and “me as a person leading my own business” for the participant. Also, we consider this case as a very interesting from the point of view of adding new type of entrepreneurial voices that can be quite typical for the young entrepreneurs – the voices of the reality versus voices of illusions which young entrepreneurs have to start their business and having the impression that the business world is just the world of success and ample opportunities. The fact of participation in the business accelerator was an excellent success for starting the business, but it showed real lack of psychological support and revealed the problem that the unformed identity of a young entrepreneur can influence the productivity of his business.

This case can become a practical example of a forming the entrepreneurial identity of the person who started his own company after working as a hired person and running his

own business after participation in the accelerator or business incubator or any other kind of such type of programs.

This case represents one of the most typical contexts of starting entrepreneurial activity as the majority of entrepreneurs intend to start their own business after being employed in established organizations (Nanda & Sørensen, 2010). The final profile of the Participant J, including the main identity characteristics according to the obtained data is presented in Table 12.

Table 12

The final profile of Participant J

| Variable | Characterization |
|---------------------------|---|
| Context | From hired person to the own high-tech business |
| Core- I-position | Innovator |
| Missing I-position | Fighter |
| Critical Incident | Getting the investment and participation in VC acceleration program |
| Voices | “Reality” voice vs “Illusional” |

Results for Participant H.

The context of the forming the entrepreneurial identity for Participant H is creating the company with co-founders starting from the project job.

H is the co-founder of the company working in the area of Big Data. Before starting his business, H was into multiple projects in which he was training his professional skills. H has international experience, highly qualified as a professional and a project manager. The company is founded by three team members of one of the projects which now have to deal with each other and work much harder. H works hard out of regular working hours (which is typical for the startups) and tries to get stronger business positions on the competitive market, in the same time he is going through difficulties dealing with his partners (sharing

responsibility zones, financial negotiations, etc.). During the interview, H highlighted that he does not find enough effectiveness in his management style, and he is not completely satisfied with his way of being an entrepreneur.

Core I-position according to Study 1: Fighter.

H showed himself as a fighter focused on surviving in the competitive business world, during the interview H said: *“The crisis happens, again and again, more I am fighting for my place on the business market more exhausted I feel.”* Since his childhood, he saw his parents working hard to provide a satisfactory level of life for his family. This model was trained during these years. For him being highly competitive is very important. He says he can only count on himself and trust only himself. Although being a very experienced professional with a flexible mind as an entrepreneur, he shows himself as a conservative, focused on competition and surviving on the business market.

Missed and desired I-position: Opportunist.

Conservative model of business connected to the dominating I-position of the Fighter does not allow H to be flexible enough to achieve his big goal – becoming the local market leader in his area. During the coach sessions step by step we were going from external position of claiming, e.g., “my business is not productive at all” we came through the internal position *“I’m not productive as a businessman,” “I can’t do it anymore, I’m so exhausted,” “I’m so tired doing my business.”* So, the focus was changed to the entrepreneurial identity of H where we found out that his position of fighter exhausted him, and he would like to see his business as a world of opportunities and self-development. This idea helped H to focus on the idea of the rebranding of his business and changing his own tactics and he realized that during the whole six months of the research.

Inner voices that influence forming of the entrepreneurial identity.

We found out that H has two leading inner voices and, in his case, in comparison with other participants these voices are not connected to the family members or any people (this fact could be connected to the dominating position of fighter). During the interview, we saw an exact difference between self-perception of being “myself” and “being a good entrepreneur.” During one of the coach sessions, H says: *“If I use your terminology and call it “voices” I would say that the voice of “myself” is always claiming on feeling stressed and*

tired and being not satisfied by his way of managing business.” On the other hand, H is conducted by the voice by the real entrepreneur aiming to lead his business to the top position and productivity working hard to be able to provide his family and his team good financial results. The voice of “myself” was always claiming on feeling stressed and tired and being not satisfied by his way of managing business on the other hand H is conducted by the voice by the real entrepreneur aiming to lead his business to the top position and productivity working hard to be able to provide his family and his team good financial results. These voices look quite contradictory to each other and show a lack of harmony in the identity profile of the entrepreneur.

The main critical incident which influenced forming of the entrepreneurial identity and the crisis causing point.

During six months of the study session to session, we tried to focus H on his identity more than just on business productivity aiming to help him to realize his own needs and wishes and lead to the broader vision of his business which could help to change his business model. In one of the stages of our research H came to the conclusion that this way of managing business is just bringing him constant stress and tension: *“I understood that despite the fact that I work more than sixty hours a week over the last five years, from the first of May, I was not considered a worker. So, the whole theory of labor division does not apply anymore and the capital (intellectual) does not belong to me, it is on employees’ heads. To be an entrepreneur, you have to accept this challenge deeply in your heart.”*

In the meantime, one of the partners proposed him to change the business model and add some more services that need fewer efforts and could bring more financial results. This decision was significant to H and led to stopping cooperation with one of the co-founders. That was a tough decision for H, but as he mentioned himself *“the situation couldn’t be worse.”* During this time, he got very sick, and that was the time for re-thinking and reflecting the situation. The need of the fast and changing decision in the line of his business became crucial and caused to the crisis causing point made by two inner voices of “me as a person” and “me as an entrepreneur” get together and understand the priority of each role.

Feedback from the participant.

H says that participation in the program provided a tremendous psychological support for him. He highlights that he cannot imagine how would manage with the reality if

he did not have to make each week self-reflection and each week coaching session. He says the practice of reflection of critical incidents became a real skill for him. The most important part for him was to know that he is not the only person dealing with such problems. Also, he says that while being sick, he finally understood that it is “business for the person” but not the “person for the business.” From this point of view, he found that stopping the “poisonous relationships” with one of his partners and changing the general line of his business services helped a lot in putting in harmony his two inner voices.

Point of growth and final results.

As a result, for the Participant H we consider contradictory nature of two voices typical for young entrepreneur - “me as a person” and “me as an entrepreneur” caused by a high level of rhythm, stress, and tension of responsibility. It was also very vital to find out how critical incidents could become a real psychosomatic factor leading to sickness. Re-thinking and re-understand of the situation, overcoming the challenges oppositely can become a very important point of growth. We can see that the psychological support for the participant played a crucial role in shaping the identity of an entrepreneur.

This case shows existence of a strong relationship between the entrepreneurial identity and business model and can become a practical example of a forming the entrepreneurial identity for the startup entrepreneurs dealing with a high level of stress and tension. It also clearly demonstrates how focusing on the person, and deeper understanding of his entrepreneurial identity helps to improve the business strategies and influence on the productivity of the whole business. The final profile of the Participant H, including the main identity characteristics according to the obtained data is presented in Table 13.

Table 13

The final profile of Participant H

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Context | From multiple projects to starting business with the partners |
| Core I-position | Fighter |
| Missing/desired I-position | Opportunist |
| Critical Incident | Changing the business model to help business to survive |
| Voices | “Me as an entrepreneur” vs “Me as a person” |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Crisis causing point | Stress and tension in business leading to worse health |
|----------------------|--|

Results for Participant N.

The context of the forming the entrepreneurial identity for participant N is moving from the position of the freelance to creating her own business.

N started from freelance as a consultant and moved to the idea of her own business in the consulting area. Her main intention in this period of life is to find and understand herself as an entrepreneur, to shape her identity on practice while realizing her talents, potential, and way of entrepreneurial behavior. Her big inspiration is her family, and that is giving her energy for achieving new goals. The freelance job helped her to develop the set of professional skills such as responsibility and high client orientation, but N sees a lack of understanding herself in entrepreneurship and dealing with financial issues and building her own business team. Although N has a strong will to grow from the professional to a real businesswoman, this sphere is still very new for her and the set of psychological coaching sessions was the best way of self-understanding and strategical planning.

Core I-position, according to Study 1: Opportunist.

Shaping her professional identity as a freelancer N shows herself as a constant resource finder. N describes what is it be an entrepreneur in her opinion as to “*Design, initiate and develop a business idea, which can be more or less innovative, and apply all those necessary strategies (oriented to different levels: product, processes, human resources, company culture, etc.) to guarantee a progressive augment but sustainable of the quality of the product / services that you offer as the economic or social benefits it provides*”.

During the interview, N highlighted that starting her own business is the best way to build a successful career in actual economic conditions in comparison with the option of finding the proper job. She is oriented to the market needs and can easily see what is of high demand for the client. N is an excellent communicator and can easily feel the needs of her clients as well as building the networks and constructing long-term client relationships. Constant feedback from the clients, communications, and clients’ recommendations of her services from one to another are her most valuable factors in the creation of her own

business. An interesting fact is that N sees growing from freelance to her own business as a new opportunity for her personal life way.

Missed and desired I-position: Leader.

Working in the status of the freelancer shaped N as an excellent professional but isolated her from a team job and partnerships. She finds taking responsibility for other people (which is a part of any business) as a very stressful factor, “*I see that I’m not so good at working with a team of hired people and to take a responsibility for them...*” N is skilful in creating her life vision but is far from seeing a complete business model that would help her to move to another level. Leadership seems inspiring for her, but she feels she is not ready for that and still needs to develop a lot of personal and professional competences to complete her profile of psychological strategies as an entrepreneur.

Inner voices that influence forming of the entrepreneurial identity.

The leading inner voice for N is her brother’s voice, which is a source of her inspiration. This is a constructive voice helping her to believe that moving her I-position from the freelancer to an entrepreneur will be a success. Another interesting fact is that N has a voice of her friend who is quite skeptical about entrepreneurship and shows N the disadvantages of this career way as well as persuading her not to get too hard into the process: “*One of the voices is the voice of my friend – he is actually an anti-entrepreneur, and he says that I should focus on studying things and enjoying my life, so that also supports me in many moments.*”

Analyzing these two voices N didn’t find them contradictory as she was insisting that the voice of her friend is not a demotivating factor in this case but a reminder about complete and harmonic way of life (we could see the example of the lack of the life-job balance in the previous case of the Participant H).

The main critical incident which influenced forming of the entrepreneurial identity and the crisis causing point:

The critical incident of the higher impact for N during our study was the transformation of her idea of being “by herself” and starting to think like a real entrepreneur. In the beginning, she had a company started together with a partner who didn’t have the same vision as she. It led to the conflict, and the business model was not realized. This case

was connected to the financial part of doing business which N finds as the most stressful aspect of being an entrepreneur. That stops her from finish becoming a real entrepreneur and doesn't allow her to feel her identical profile as a complete one. *"I don't consider myself as a good entrepreneur because I didn't dedicate enough time to the development of my business right now. Also, I'm not that good in financial aspects,"* says N during her interview.

Feedback from the participant:

N found the coaching sessions as motivating and helping her to shape her entrepreneurial identity. She highlighted the importance of the first interview as a "changing her way of thinking." She says that the voice of the coach also became her inner voice after some time of the program has passed. The six-month way helped her to train herself of "feeling as an entrepreneur." She could realize her main fears in business and shape the new vision of her own company. That understanding was quite challenging, but in the same time this stress had a motivating nature as she *"got accustomed acting like a professional and not the real entrepreneur."* N realized that the chosen way of moving from the position of freelancer to the position of the entrepreneur is the best way of her personal and professional development.

Point of growth and final results:

In the case of N, we can see some points of growth: - understanding her weak sides as an entrepreneur (what is missing) and the high need of external motivation to get from one phase to another. This case is very representative in showing the harmonic nature of the family voice in shaping the entrepreneurial identity (here we can make the comparison with the case of Participant L whose family voice was acting as contradictory). It also highlights the importance of the responsibility as a challenging factor for young entrepreneurs. Here we can compare it with the case of Participant J – being an entrepreneur seems to be attractive until the real challenges start. However, in the case of N, we notice how lack of the leader strategies influences the readiness for starting the business. This case can become an example of moving from I-position of the professional/ freelancer to the I-position of an entrepreneur which is quite common for the way of starting own business. The final profile of Participant N, including the main identity characteristics according to the obtained data is presented in Table 14.

Table 14

The final profile of the Participant N

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Context | From freelance to starting business in the consulting area |
| Core I-position | Opportunist |
| Missing/desired I-position | Leader |
| Critical Incident | From dealing with business partners to own business |
| Voices | “Family” voice as an inspiring voice |
| Crisis causing point | “Being by myself” vs “taking responsibility” |

3.9. Discussion.

Study 2 shows the variety of the scenarios of the forming of entrepreneurial identity using four different types of entrepreneurial I-positions, strategies, and feelings of each participant according to the influence of inner voices and facing critical incidents during their everyday personal and professional life.

We consider that forming of entrepreneurial identity should include following aspects: understanding of the personal way and critical incidents that led the person to choosing the profession of entrepreneur, realizing their dominating I-position as well as missing and desired I-position for the balanced and flexible application in different kind of situations, ability of self-reflection and transforming negative critical incidents into the points for growth and getting to the harmonic identity of “me as an entrepreneur”.

In a practical way we can see “Me” as a complete and balanced when the following conditions are satisfied: the person has a wide range of I-position flexibly applying them according to the circumstances or problems, the dominating I-position becomes a strong side of the entrepreneurial identity, and the desired I-position leads to new challenges and targets, the inner voice can be understood, and the “real me” can be heard by the person able to find his independent solution for each situation.

The study showed a powerful connection between personal and professional life and self-perception of the entrepreneurs. The family and personal psychological aspects were tightly connected to the progress in business, helping or slowing down their

professional progress. So, the family's or friend's voices were understood as contradictory or encouraging voices and led to the crisis in some cases. Positive and negative critical incidents were leading to the crisis in the case when the person's identity was not formed yet besides while developing their entrepreneurial identity participants trained themselves to understand each critical incident as a point of growth. In each case, the self-reflection became a habit for the participants.

For every participant we could see the changing I-positions during the period of the study or even transpositioning while forming the identity and facing the personal and professional challenges. Also, we see that the coaching (not only research) process had a very high impact on the identity formation of each participant.

Applied tools (including mapping, journey plot, PPR and structured interview together with the coaching approach) showed a productive effect on the participants' identity-forming and could be used for the designing of the program of developing of entrepreneurial identity which will include such categories as working with inner voices, I-positions and personal strategies, critical incidents as crisis causing points and points of potential growth.

Chapter 4. Study 3. Training program for forming an entrepreneurial identity on the base of critical incidents.

*We must free ourselves of the hope that the sea will ever rest.
We must learn to sail in high winds.
Aristotle Onassis*

4.1. Study Context.

The market of the consulting and training is full of products for the entrepreneurs, and along with that the trend for the life-long learning leads to the increasing need in

specific business programs for the entrepreneurs. Most of these programs are dedicated to common business problems such as general management, strategy, team building missing out the forming the entrepreneurial identity. As the result the entrepreneurs do not have enough understanding of themselves in their role and do not see the whole range I-positions, not ready for the facing of most common critical incidents which can cause the big variety of problems such as personal (stress, depression, emotional burnout) as social (losing control on their own business, weak management, financial difficulties and etc.). Besides the role of the entrepreneur from the social and personal point of view is dramatically different from what most people are taught in schools where everyone is taught how to be a good employee. However, entrepreneurial behavior is promoted by other type of behavior, way of thinking and skills. Regarding that fact, the educational model for the young entrepreneurs should be completely different.

If entrepreneurship is seen as a possibility of risk of venturing into something, for some it may turn out to be an unknown adventure; it is necessary to look for elements that contribute to an entrepreneurial training program more in line with the human side of the students, which impact areas related to attitude and emotions (Durán, E., Arias, D. 2016).

Besides that, the definition of a young entrepreneur is commonly understood as a young age but not as a person with a few entrepreneurial experiences. So, the programs are created mostly for young people. However, we know examples of a magnificent business career of people of elder age started their business after fifty years old, among most significant examples we can see the founders of LinkedIn, KFC, Intel, and many others. “When it comes to launching a business, what a person may lack in youthful energy comes back multiplied in experience” (Clifford, 2019).

Targeting to solve this problem we propose to use methodology based on a profound study of entrepreneurs’ identity and application of the training program based on critical incidents related to psychological self-regulation, training, personal and professional development.

Nowadays, modern business training (business schools, some higher institutions, training programs) is based mostly on case studies. It is an important and useful instrument. Cases are based on the real practice of existing companies and help students to navigate in the world of entrepreneurship being ready to act in certain situations, to develop reflexivity, attention, and professional skills. As we see, it is a very widespread and effective instrument, but the experience of communication with entrepreneurs shows that that there is

a lack of attention to a person and his identity. Instead of focusing on the subject these training programs teach how to work with an object. The question of identity and self-perception, self-consciousness is mostly ignored. Many startups stop existing just after starting, and one of the clue reasons is that entrepreneurs are just not ready for new roles, social and psychological, responsibility, challenges, and even sometimes fast success. Family circumstances, personal level of stress-management, self-confidence, social and cultural environment — all that factors are of big influence on the entrepreneur and his business. Entrepreneurs being not ready for such challenges are not able to cope themselves and therefore bring destruction to the management of an organization. So, business training programs being mostly focused on financial, strategic, management, and marketing issues are not adapted to psychological aspects of entrepreneurs’ identity and its construction.

4.1.1. Approaches to psychological training of young entrepreneurs.

We studied a variety of programs dedicated to the entrepreneurial education for searching for the content of the courses connected to the psychological approach to the personal and professional development of the entrepreneur. Among the programs, we were checking the programs provided by business incubators and accelerators, MBA programs, academic programs, online and offline business courses. We have chosen five examples of different types of institutions which provide educational programs for the entrepreneurs presented in Table 15.

Table 15

The examples of the formation programs for the entrepreneurs

| | <i>The type of program</i> | <i>The name of the institution and the program</i> | <i>Main goals/concept description</i> |
|---|----------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Master program | London Graduate School of | “This program is designed for students who are seeking an outlet for their entrepreneurial instincts. It will provide the knowledge and |

| | | | |
|----|-----|--|--|
| | | Management Master of Entrepreneurial Management | skills necessary to understand the entrepreneurial process and encourage the development of entrepreneurial characteristics. The Master's program is based around the concepts and techniques of applying entrepreneurial skills within organizations. Subjects studied include: Problem Solving Skills, International Business, Strategy and Leadership, Change Management, Social Entrepreneurship, Business and Society, Entrepreneurship Project, Project Management, Entrepreneurial Marketing, Consultancy Skills, Corporate Entrepreneurship, Risk Management, Entrepreneurship and New Business, Analytical Skills, Innovation and Technology Transfer, Market Analysis, Finance and Accounting for Entrepreneurs" ("Master of Entrepreneurial Management, London, United Kingdom 2019", 2019). |
| 2. | MBA | | <p>"The world needs a new generation of business leaders. People with the courage to seek different paths to success. Disruptive thinkers who don't just adapt to change but drive it..." "Be a Creactivist - a creative activist with the curiosity to ask questions and the know-how to make an impact. Where you lead, others will follow.</p> <p>Our global business world is in constant flux. Next-generation leaders need flexibility, adaptability, and fluidity of thought. Not only to respond to change but to lead it.</p> <p>Welcome to a new ESADE MBA for a new generation of leaders. An innovative, disruptive, digitally enriched learning experience that will equip you to become a creative activist – a creativity – an entrepreneurial leader capable of breaking the mold, moving the parameters, transforming yourself and others.</p> <p>This is a next generation learning experience that will accelerate your collaborative</p> |

| | | | |
|----|-------------------------|--|---|
| | | | leadership, your creativity, your critical thinking and your communication skills” (“A New MBA for a New Generation,” 2019). The program aids developing four critical competencies: critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaborative leadership, communication. |
| 3. | Online business course | Online course in Business & Management. Uncovering Your Entrepreneurial Potential | “Explore what makes a good entrepreneur and how applying an entrepreneurial approach can create economic and social value. This course will challenge your ideas about entrepreneurship and innovation and demonstrate how you can adopt an entrepreneurial mindset to benefit yourself and others. You will explore different ways to approach innovation and entrepreneurship in the workplace. You will also identify your own entrepreneurial strengths and consider how you can apply them to create economic and social value” (“Becoming an Entrepreneur - Online Course,” 2019). |
| 4. | Offline business course | PowerPlay Young Entrepreneurs | «PowerPlay Young Entrepreneurs is an educational program that helps students in grades 4 through 8 develop an entrepreneurial mindset. Students have fun gaining real-life career experience by exploring the world of business. As they build their independent business ventures, they set, and achieve goals, acquire confidence and develop practical life skills. They put their plans into action at the Young Entrepreneur Show, a dynamic event where they interact with customers and earn money. By donating a portion of their profits to charity, they also discover the impact of giving” (“Program Overview — PowerPlay,” 2019). |
| 5. | Acceleration program | Startup Bootcamp Berlin | “We help ambitious founders shake up industries” ... “Our accelerator programs have one key focus: to help ambitious early-stage tech founders shake-up industries. We do this through an intense 3-month program |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | that has been fine-tuned since 2010 to efficiently tap into an international network of over 2000 alumni founders, corporate partners, and investors” (“How Startupbootcamp works,” 2019). |
|--|--|--|--|

Uniting the main points of the presented programs we can see the definitions connected to the psychological side of entrepreneurship but within our research, we could not manage to find any programs with training focused on the identity of entrepreneur and based on the critical incidents. Besides that, we can see a correlation of some directions presented in mentioned approaches with the design of our training program and according to Dialogical Self theory.

Between those we extracted the following categories:

1. **Identifying entrepreneurial strengths:** according to Study 1, each entrepreneurial I-position contains strong and weak sides (e.g., the I-position of a “fighter” gives opportunities for the successful overcoming of difficulties and success in the crisis causing situations but limits a person in the demonstration of his flexibility and adaptation in the entrepreneurial behavior). During our program, we are targeting to train the participants to recognize and realize strong and weak sides of their core I-position in particular and all existing I-positions, in general, to be able to adapt the needed skill or characteristic for facing of critical incidents.
2. **Entrepreneurial potential:** on the example of the cases in Study 2 we could see that for every participant we were extracting (along with many others) a principle characteristic of point of growth where we characterized the potential possibilities of self-development according to the strong sides of the core I-position and facing critical incident in the context of forming of entrepreneurial identity.
3. **Flexibility, adaptability, and fluidity of thought, creativity:** one of the significant characteristics of our approach is the focus on adapting the appropriate I-position according to the situation as a general characteristic of competence. The set of

entrepreneurial skills in our approach includes that characteristics and targets to train them as a part of the proper I-position (e.g., I-position of “innovator” using his creativity for improving the market or the I-position of “opportunist” tending to use his fluidity of thought for finding the new opportunities on the business market).

4. **Not only to respond to change but to lead it, transforming yourself and others:** in our research, we discover the strategies of facing critical incidents leading the entrepreneur to the success in the case of the adaptation of proper I-position and having balanced identity structure in the situations of the changing environment and unstable circumstances. That will become the basis of training for the developed program and will show the entrepreneurs a variety of scenarios. Besides that, we adapt to the program the phenomenon of “transpositioning” (van Loon, 2017) which helps to transfer the strong side of one I-position existing in self into other position which suffers of the lack of it benefiting one from each other. This approach will be widely used in the practical part of the designed program.
5. **What is to be a “good” entrepreneur:** a crucial issue of our program is an image of an ideal entrepreneur. We are aiming to focus participants on the psychological view on what is to be a good or successful entrepreneur in comparison with a nowadays vision of success - possession of material goods and external attributes of success. We focus the participants on the idea of the success as a complex structure much more depending on the inner world of the person and proposing constant forming the balanced entrepreneurial identity and development of the skills of adapting the strategies for facing critical incidents together with realization of personal mission, adding value to your business market, innovation and creation as well as life-long learning and self-development.
6. **A new generation of business leaders:** in our research, we strongly believe that the nowadays reality is a new time of novel approach to the understanding of leadership in business. According the Dialogical Self theory we can see the Dialogical leadership (van Loon, 2017) as a new form of leadership, “the future depends partly on leaders’ ability to find intelligent and imaginative solutions to complex and challenging issues

and create the conditions for dialogue in their context (organization, society, and team)” (van Loon, 2017, p. 43).

7. **Gaining real-life career experience by exploring the world of business:** one of the general instruments of the designed program is a dramatization of critical incidents followed by the PANIC guide analysis (Monereo, Weise, & Alvarez, 2013) as a tool of connecting the obtained knowledge. All set of critical incidents used in the program is based on the real-life experience. The data was obtained during the Study 1 (expert interviews, a database of the results of the survey research with 430 participants) and Study 2 (the profound study of four cases of the representatives of each entrepreneurial I-position). The program will allow us to widen our research with the variety of new critical incidents in the entrepreneurial performance provided by the participants.

Another interesting example of the tools known to be applied to the training programs for young entrepreneurs is a Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (LLC, 2019). It is a system which is used for evaluating and description of thinking preferences in people and teams (Herrmann & Herrmann-Nehdi, 2015) - applied to the commercial, educational programs. In the brain dominance model, Herrmann identified four different modes of thinking: analytical thinking, sequential thinking, interpersonal thinking, and imaginative thinking. This tool is used by the well-known top-five venture company in the sphere of biotechnologies called SOSV for its business acceleration program “Rebelbio” (“RebelBio,” 2019). The process is started with the filling in the questionnaire consisting from 120 questions, then the results are analyzed by the psychologist or HR-specialist and provided to the participants in the form of diagram in different colors with the description of the dominating model of each person of the team followed by a coaching session, analyzation of strong and weak sides of every model and further recommendations.

As the strong sides of the method, we can see its tight connection with the psychological characteristics of the person (in this case an entrepreneur from the startup) and the form of a coaching session with the attention to each member together with the recommendations given in individual format. On the other hand, there is a critiques of the method not enough reliable with a lack of agreement about terminology and principles

(Hodgkinson & Sadler-Smith, 2003) along with the feedback from the participants that had a somewhat critical tone presuming that the tool looked too standardized without possibility of adaptation to the concrete circumstances, the approach of further counseling was not enough systematized and the results quite often were bringing confusion and psychological instability into the team. Besides that, this method is more likely used to the complete teams than to individuals, therefore, is not able to provide enough productivity to the forming of entrepreneurial identity according to our approach.

Working on the consultancy and business education market, I was making several attempts of creating the program which would provide psychological support and knowledge connected to their personal and professional development in the same time contributing to the development of participants business. Between such effective programs, I could mention a program “The Manager of the XXI century” (A-line, 2019) which combined various methods starting from the understanding of psychological aspects of the entrepreneur as a manager, his managing roles and his role as a leader. Although the program was a great success, I felt the lack of a psychological approach to the forming of the entrepreneurial identity and its place in the whole process of creating a productive business. The combination of my experience with the up-to-date theoretical background, the Dialogical Self theory and the concept of Critical incidents helped to create the program as a novel approach for the solution in the sphere of business education.

4.2. Solution and specific objectives.

We created a specific program which is concentrated on the understanding oneself as an entrepreneur, his lifeway and the events leading to the choosing the profession of the entrepreneur, forming his entrepreneurial I-position and training to face most common critical incidents in business for the formation of the balanced entrepreneurial identity. We intend to promote the I-position of an entrepreneur which leads to the partial change of identity and forming the identity position as an entrepreneur.

Keywords: entrepreneur, identity, entrepreneurial I-positions, critical incidents.

4.3. Target group.

The program is dedicated to the broad group of entrepreneurs applying to 2 main conditions: to have their own business and to have from one to three years of business experience. We decided to make the target group with such characteristics because we were tending to make the program highly adapted to the needs of the proper entrepreneurial group, taking into consideration its features and characteristics, the challenges of the period and its opportunities. Using my business experience as an entrepreneur and a consultant, I can notice that the first difficulties in entrepreneurship start occurring between year one and three after the start.

The first year also can be challenging but its much more about expectations and hopes for the future business success. Along with that the entrepreneur still has a lot of energy for the progressing, and the business is understood as “start-up” where people always have the right for the mistake. From the first year, the problems start occurring provoked by different factors: one-year is considered enough time for having the experience of critical incidents causing stress and emotional burnout, previous expectations not converting to the business success cause tension and pressure. On the other hand during this time the entrepreneur is still flexible for the formation of his entrepreneurial skills and competences, ready to change, learn and open to the innovations which are quite important for the process of formation and training. After three years, entrepreneurs become much more adapted to the outside (market) and inside (psychological) and start representing another type of entrepreneurial behavior which could be the subject for future research.

4.4. Theoretical background and methodology.

Our training program is based on the following sources:

- the Dialogical Theory of the Self according to which dialogue, both public and private or mental, they are the basis of learning. In both of them dialogue with different voices, also in our mind, and from that negotiation or discrepancy, learning, and change in the identity of the people are born and its methods (Negotiating Self Method (NSM), The Self-Confrontation Method (SCM) Journey plot, mapping);

- PANIC – the method of the complete analysis of the critical incidents leading to the changes of the identity, including the description of the critical incident, concepts, feelings and strategies of each participant of the critical incident and the indicators of changes of the I-position;
- standard psychological methods: group interview, group-coaching, self-analysis and self-evaluation, dramatization;
- educational approaches: life-long learning and work-based learning;
- business consulting methods: life-long learning, learning based on practice, case analysis and business coaching, strategical modelling (for the creation of the map of “ideal” entrepreneur);
- the methodology is based on Study 1 of current research which described the variety of entrepreneurial I-positions (“leader,” “fighter,” “opportunist,” innovator,” and most common strategies of facing of these critical incidents) along with the results of Study 2 providing us the transparent step-by-step methodology of analysing the cases of the young entrepreneurs using the range of methods leading to understanding of the personal characteristic of the young entrepreneur, his/her crisis causing points and points of growth;
- also, the approaches and tools used for the program were based on the own business experience of the author in the creating and realizing programs for the formation of the entrepreneurs – multiply programs for the entrepreneurs helping the entrepreneurs to develop their competences and realize themselves as competent professionals (“The Manager of the XXI century,” Strategical management, “Super Me” program (A-line, 2019) and the variety of coaching sessions for the managers and entrepreneurs.

4.5. Program description.

“I-DEAL Me: The entrepreneur whom I want to become”. Formation of the balanced entrepreneurial identity.

The name of the program in its semantic meaning leads to the main goal for the participants – to realize and form their entrepreneurial identity creating the balance of

“myself as entrepreneur.” Meanwhile the game of the words “I-deal” creates the idea of business or deal and connects us to the sphere of entrepreneurial activities as well as to the strategies used by the entrepreneurs for facing the critical incidents as a general part of their entrepreneurial performance. It also combines the idea of the mixed method using the Dialogical Self Theory approach where “self” is conceptualized as “a dynamic multiplicity of relatively autonomous I-positions in the (extended) landscape of the mind” (van Loon, 2017, p. 8). In other words, self can be defined as a “microcosm” of society and the tools of business development adapted to the goals of the program.

Program structure:

The program consists of four different modules leading to the step-by-step forming of entrepreneurial identity systematizing knowledge and skills, developing the competencies according to the logic of the applied methodology. As a basic form of the program, we propose twenty-four hours length (four modules, six hours each) at the same time we provide the program with enough of flexibility to make it easy to be adapted to the specific needs in different contexts. Approximate quantity of participants – from seven to eight people in each group. Such amount of people will allow us to create needed psychological conditions and group atmosphere for participants as most adequate for achieving the program’s goals. The program can be modified according to the needs of the specific group (amount of the participants, content, particular aims, etc.).

The expected results for the participants: training of basic skills and competences for entrepreneurship, overcoming personal and professional difficulties, psychological training on critical incidents, new knowledge, emotional intelligence development, and networking.

Module 1:

My business story: all the roads lead to...Me!

The aim of the Module: This module will start the program helping the participants to focus on themselves and understand their entrepreneurial identity.

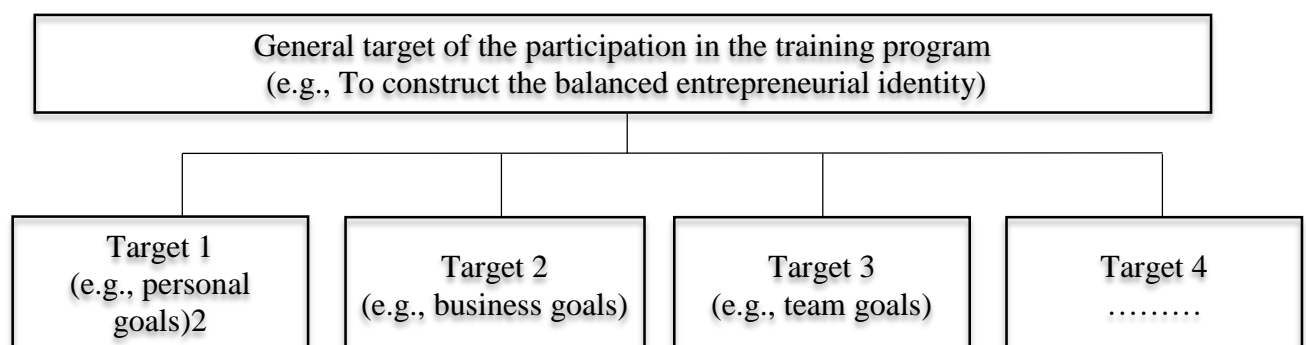
Part 1: Start of the program. Explaining program goals and specific features of the future program. Description of the program background, main terms, and goals.

In this part of the module, we will start with the explanation of the examples of how the success of the company is connected to the real person, his personal brand, his skills and self-positioning and that behind that is always psychological side. The main slogan of the module is “all roads lead to Me,” and in this very first step of the program, we will start with the question who the ideal entrepreneur for me is and who is Me. The guiding principle here is “if it’s about me – it’s with me” (Nir, 2016). Then we will explain the meaning of the main keywords of the program (“identity,” “I-position,” “critical incidents”).

The length of this part is forty minutes.

Part 2: Creation of the personal map of dynamic goals (example of the draft for the filling in the form by the participants is presented in Figure 23) for the participants (the map of goals will dynamic as it is created according to the life-long learning concept and allows participant to divide this personal and professional development into the periods of growth and increasing of their productivity. The map will allow putting in parallel the personal targets combined with the business targets, which will help the participant to realize the tight connection between their identity and their business results. As we mentioned before we would like to make the program effective not only for the personal development of the participants but also to help them to increase the productivity of their businesses (the core concept of our research is the idea of that any business success is tightly connected to its owner and his self-perception and fruitfulness of his entrepreneurial identity as well as flexibility in adaptation of I-positions for facing critical incidents. For this purpose, we insert some approaches from the strategical management, which we find as useful according to our experience.

One of such methods is a strategical “goal tree” which we adapted for the context of Module 1. This approach helps to structure and visualize the targets of the training.



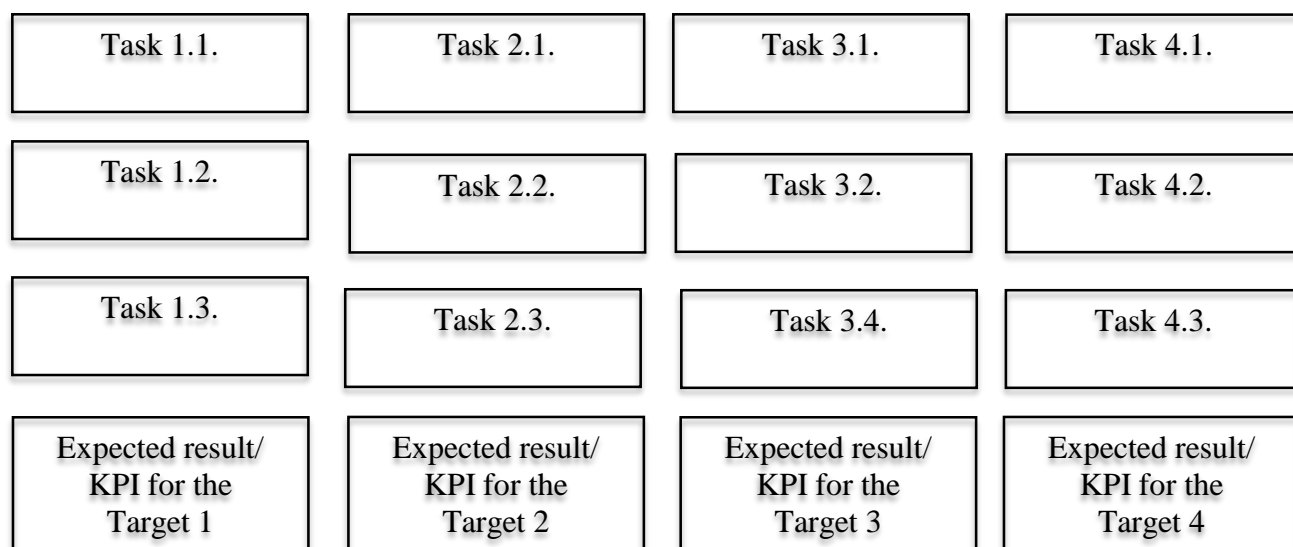


Figure 23. The “tree” of the personal objectives for the training program.

The scheme consists of the general targets, which can be common by all the participants (e.g., forming the balanced entrepreneurial identity) or can be modified by the participants according to their conditions. After that the general target is divided into specific groups which are named with the categories which indicate the potential zones of the development during the training programs, for example the participants can aim to achieve personal goals applying the knowledge and skills for the improvements of their self-confidence or training for the facing the critical incidents in their families, another category can be the business developments (the main topic of our program), another example is achieving the team goals, e.g., becoming a dialogical leader in their company, also, the participants can propose another categories. Then each target is followed by different smaller tasks which would help the participants to achieve the general objective. The end of each column is an expected result or so-called business category of KPI, key performance indicator ("What are key performance indicators (KPIs)? - Definition from WhatIs.com", 2019) which will help the participants to formulate the final image of what the tasks are leading to in every category. We assume that such structure will help the participants to increase their motivation for the training and to make the results of the training much more clarified and obtainable.

The length of this part is one hour and a half.

Part 3: group interview dedicated to the problems of the forming of the entrepreneurial identity, general problems, business concepts, inspiring examples, etc.

The length of this part is fifty minutes.

Part 4: mapping – the creation of the personal map showing the lifeway of the entrepreneur with the main events influencing the choice of his profession and leading to the starting of his/her own business. For this reason, the mapping instrument will be applied, the complete description of the method with the example was previously provided in Study 2 of the current research (3.4).

The length of this part is two and a half hours.

Part 5: group discussion and summarizing the results of Module.

The length of this part is thirty minutes.

The tools used in Module 1: the personal map of dynamic goals, formulation of the personal entrepreneurial concept, mapping

Expected results of Module for the participants: the expected results are divided into two parts: one, traditionally presented in any educational program, is the clear understanding of the personal motivation of educational program and the list of personal targets for the training, another – the model of the past experience leading to the decision of becoming entrepreneur and the current model concept helping to develop entrepreneurial skills.

Module 2:

Who I am as an entrepreneur? Our I-positions, feelings, and strategies to face the critical incidents that happen on the business way.

The main aim of the Module: to discuss and process the self-analysis of the participants about the concept of the entrepreneurial identity and their own identity as the entrepreneurs connected to their conceptions, strategies and feelings in their professional performance.

Part 1: Reminding the results of Module 1. Formulation of the goals and the background of the Module.

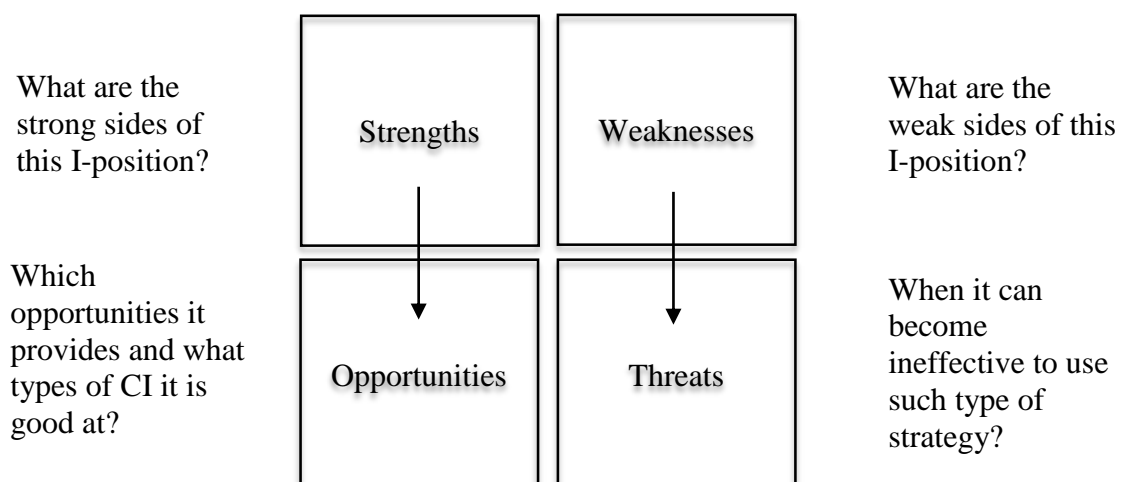
The length of this part is twenty minutes.

Part 2: The variety of entrepreneurial I-positions. Understanding of the core entrepreneurial I-position. Analysing the cases and the main characteristics of each one. Participants get the description of their core I-position and its characteristics that are filled in online before the program (the participants must fill in the survey before their participation in the program. The table with the description of each I-position was shown in Study 1 of the current research (2.1., Table 1).

After the short lecture dedicated to the description and characteristic of I-positions we propose the participants to analyse their core I-position using the method widely used in the strategical management and adapted to the psychological goals known as personal SWOT analysis and is undertaken by people to identify their strong and weak sides as well as their personal opportunities and threats. It conducts to self-awareness and seems to be an excellent example for the adaptation of the non-psychological methods for the goals of personal diagnostics and self-analysis in combination with the educational features. It helps to uncover hidden opportunities and to develop talents and abilities.

The personal SWOT-analysis is not only providing the clear image of the current personal condition but helps to make the goals reaching the full potential (Mo, 2016) What is a very much related to our topic of the research is that we need to mention not only the strong and week sides of the entrepreneurial I-position but to “highlight any potential opportunities and threats we may have to face” (Thomas, 2007, p. 46). So, we decided to adapt this instrument for the program aiming for the clearest and systematic description of each core position. Figure 24 shows the draft that will be provided for each participant for the creation of the personal SWOT-analysis for the core I-position according to the result obtained by applying the SECI survey method.

Figure 24. Personal SWOT-analysis of the core I-position.



Using this scheme, each participant will create own core-position profile. As an example, we can describe the entrepreneurial I-position of “fighter.” Among the Strengths of the I-position are: possibility to act in the situations of crisis, to accumulate the efforts and to get the result fast, the Weaknesses of this I-position is the tendency to the strong hierarchy, low adaptation and flexibility, according to these characteristics the opportunities of this I-position are high competitiveness in the situation of crisis or high tension, but among the threats are low competitiveness in the field of innovations and low possibility to create the modern type of company with low level of the hierarchy.

The length of this part is two hours.

Part 3: The participants study, discuss and analyse everyday performance of the entrepreneur with a variety of psychological factors caused by interaction. In this part we will use The Self-Confrontation Method (SCM) proposed by Visser based on the Dialogical Self Theory (Visser, 2016). The Self-Confrontation Method (SCM). This method was chosen to this part of the program as it ideally links the previous part of mapping which shows the previous paths on the way to the entrepreneurship, the following module of critical incidents analyzation and the group format of discussion in the form of storytelling. According to the description of SCM (Visser, 2016), we have extracted the following characteristics of the method which will be adapted to the program:

- “examine how they value experiences in everyday life and how basic motivations give direction to their behavior on a less visible (latent) level” (Visser, 2016, p.20);
- a self- investigation which leads to reflection of desired goals or changes, to see the strength and weaknesses;
- “by telling their experiences to another person and interpreting them in a new way events become particularly meaningful” (Visser, 2016, p.21);
- by asking people what they perceive as important and meaningful in their lives when they look at their past, present and expected future.

Thus, the final goal of this part of the program is to “re-create their self-narratives and develop life- and career perspectives in a more conscious way” (Visser, 2016, p.21).

The length of this part is two hours.

Part 4: Summarizing the results. Discussion and feedback from the participants.

The length of this part is forty minutes.

The tools used in Module 2: the table of the most common entrepreneurial I-positions and the Survey for the entrepreneurs based on Critical Incidents.

Expected results of Module for the participants: the participants will understand the type of their core I-position with its features and characteristics. This knowledge will help them to understand their strong and weak sides and their preferred tactics of facing critical incidents. Also, they will get acquainted with the whole spectre of I-positions and will be able to recognize them in their behaviour as well as in behaviour of other people which will help to increase their emotional intellect and the effectiveness of their business behaviour.

Module 3:

No panic! We study those to pre-see, understand the most common critical incidents, and to act correctly.

The aim of the Module: training of the participants for the effective choice of strategies of critical incidents which are standard in entrepreneurship. The whole module will look like a game using the dramatization of different critical incidents and analysis of I-positions and strategies which help to face them,

Part 1: Results of Module 2 and targets of Module 3.

The length of this part is thirty minutes.

Part 2: Video-training. We will use the video library of the most common types of critical incidents that entrepreneurs face in the professional way. Then each video-cased will be analysed and discussed by the mini-groups of participants. The video-cases will be designed according to the data obtained during Study 1 (2.3.3. Table 3). The form of the presenting the educational video-cases library of critical incidents applied to the teachers' identity is previously created by Monereo and his colleagues ("VÍdeos universidad | critic-edu", 2019), this form will be adapted to the needs of the current program and the features of the entrepreneurial context. The analysis of the Critical Incidents will be held according

to the PANIC instrument (Monereo, 2010, 2019). First, we will divide the participants into the micro-groups of two or three people, and then the video cases will be shown. Each group will have to analyse the incident using the following steps:

Step 1: analysis and planning. The participants have to analyse the previous possible problems or latent conflicts that could lead to the incident. Then the description of the incident should be provided, including answers to such questions as who is participating in the incident, where the incident is happening, why it is happening and so on.

Step 2: background and description. During the second step of the evaluation, the participants should provide the interpretation of the incident and to share the feelings associated with the incidents from the point of view of every actor (participant) of the incident. Within the micro-groups they can divide the roles for evaluation of each actor included in the incident.

Step 3: intervention and monitoring.

Each micro-group will get the document with the instruction and the set of incidents for presentation. According to that scheme, each incident will be analysed by every participant, but the final presentation will be held in a fast and effective way when one group is publicly presenting the analysis of the case, and other groups can add their comments, ask the question, etc.

The length of this part is two hours.

Part 3: Dramatization of critical incidents. This method is used as an educational instrument (Monereo, Weize, & Alvarez, 2013; Toivanen, Komulainen, & Ruismäki, 2011). The participants will choose some critical incidents from their own experience, and we will dramatize them with the group. Then each case will be discussed and analysed. Between the factors of success of such type of training activity there are following: a) establishing trust between the participants, b) helping the participants not to be afraid of failing during the process of the dramatization, c) unambiguous and non-judgemental atmosphere which promotes active participation (Toivanen, Antikainen, & Ruismäki, 2012).

For each dramatization, we will specify the contradictory voices acting within the critical incident. For example, the voice of “me as an owner” can become contradictory to

“me as a leader” in a situation of the high competition I need to make my business more productive, but the higher level of demands to my team is needed. Moreover, within the Study 2, we have found out that the contradictory I-positions as challenging situations for the participants. For example, for the Participant H the contradictory voices of “me as an entrepreneur” and “me as a person” caused stress and burnout and in the case of the participant L the contradictory voices of “me as my parents’ daughter” and “real me” put into the situation of the inner conflict and difficulties with the life choices. For this reason, we would like to apply the Negotiating Self Method (NSM) (Nir, 2016). This method proved itself as a powerful tool for managers and was designed to solve personal and professional conflicts and creation of so-called “win-win” situations as an answer to various demands of different stakeholders. The realization of NSM within this part of the program will be held according to the instructions given in the article “Becoming Leader of Your Decisions” (Nir, 2016) and will consist of the following steps:

- Step One - Framing the Conflict.

On this stage, every I-position involved into the critical incident should express its concerns and expectations in a systematic and calm way. The most important part of this step is that the participant should see the conflict from the point of view of all the I-positions not just one. The I-positions can be divided into two groups: the “for” and the “against” group presenting both sides of the decision process.

- Step Two – Mapping the Conflict Space.

This step is generalizing step one, so the participants are asked to create a map of all the I-positions relevant to the conflict during the critical incident. Inner conflicts typically contain a wide array of I-positions, each representing a unique perception and assessment of the situation at hand. The more I-positions are noticed by the participant, better for understanding themselves and the conflict space.

- Step Three – Revealing Underlying Interests and Needs of every I-position involved into the conflict.
- Step Four – Building an Integrative Win-Win Solution.

During this step, the participants need to get to the “win-win” situation where all the voices of the I-positions will be heard, and the optimal and adequate strategy of facing critical incident and solving the inner conflict will be chosen. As an example, during Study 2 of the current research, in the situation of inner conflict caused by the critical incident of L (when she was proposed the position in the big company instead of being

further involved into her parents business) during the coaching sessions L realized all the I-positions involved into the conflict (“she as a daughter,” “she as a leader,” etc.) underlying the features of each position, their value to her “real me” voice and understanding the perspective of each strategy of facing this critical incident. Such transparent and systematic analysis helped her to take the decision not to take the position in the company but continue with her family as a marketing consultant concentrating on the foundation of her own company.

In the case of the group training for the program for applying the method of NSM, we would like to use some tools of the psychodrama (Moreno, 1966). So, other participants can help the owner of the critical incident to see that range I-positions more clearly, moreover after dramatization of the situation of the critical incident on the next stage they can be acting as a various I-positions of the identity revealing their inner needs and motives, those that the participant cannot notice himself. We believe that this combination of the methods will not just bring the added value to the program but will make it unique and will have the therapeutic effect for the participants.

The length of this part is three hours.

Part 4: Summarizing the results of Module 3.

The length of this part is thirty minutes.

The tools used in Module 3: the video library of the most common types of critical incidents, dramatization of critical incidents, Negotiating Self Method.

Expected results of Module for the participants: becoming competent for positioning themselves in the situation of most common critical incidents in the entrepreneurial performance and using the proper strategies for facing such incidents.

Module 4:

Balancing. Learning to leave in harmony with ourselves and our business.

The aim of Module: to generalize the results of the training program designing the personal balanced identity image which the participants will be developing after completing the program. Referring to Sisson, we can formulate this goal for participants as becoming influential in changing and authoring their own entrepreneurial identity (Sisson, 2016). By the Dialogical Self theory approach, we can formulate the main target of the Module as

forming the meta-positioning (Hermans, 2018) through self-reflection and the creation of coalitions between different positions for the support the integration of personal and professional identity (Leijen and Kullasepp, 2013).

Part 1: Reminding the results of Module 3. Formulation the goals and tasks of Module 4.

The length of this part is twenty minutes.

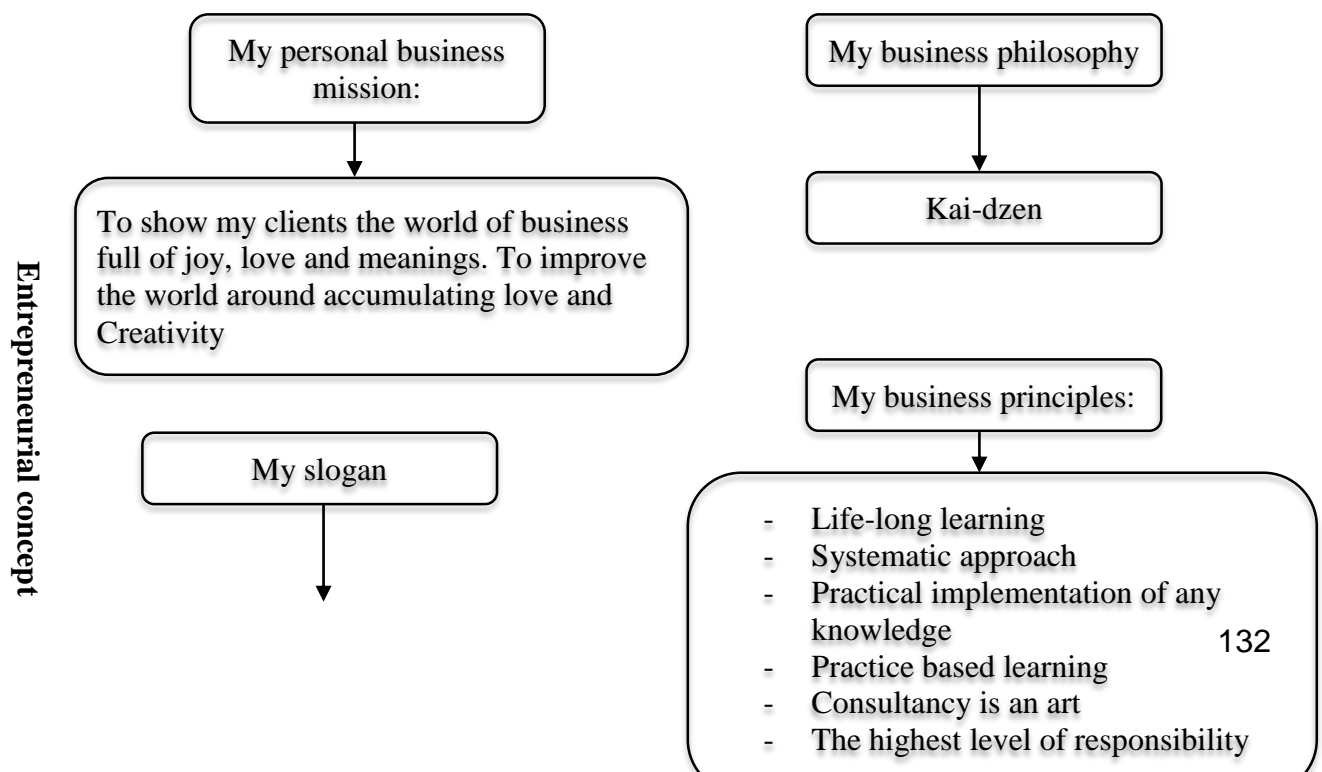
Part 2: According to the data provided during the previous Module the participants get the personalized profile based on the approach created in Study 2: the main characteristics of the dominating I-positions and strategies for the facing of critical incidents, crisis causing points, the points of growth. The complete description of the method with the example was previously provided in Study 2 (3.8., Tables 11, 12, 13, and 14).

The length of this part is three hours.

Module 3: Ideal is balanced! Balancing the entrepreneurial life.

The participants create their vision of the ideal entrepreneur they would like to become, drawing the main vectors and creating the main goals of the personal and professional development as the entrepreneur. Inspired by the example of personal authors I-position map in the book “Creating Organizational Value Through Dialogical Leadership” by van Loon where the development of his self “is used as a case of description and analysis” (van Loon, 2017, p. 37), I created my personal map of I-positions as a sample for the future participants of the program. It is based on my self-evaluation, self-analysis, combining my experience in psychology and entrepreneurship with the theoretical background, the data obtained within the previous study and the vision of the result that the participant would get after the participation in the current program.

Figures 25 and 26 show the example of the personal identity vision, which will become the sample for the participants and will get to the basement of the draft form for the filling in by the entrepreneurs.



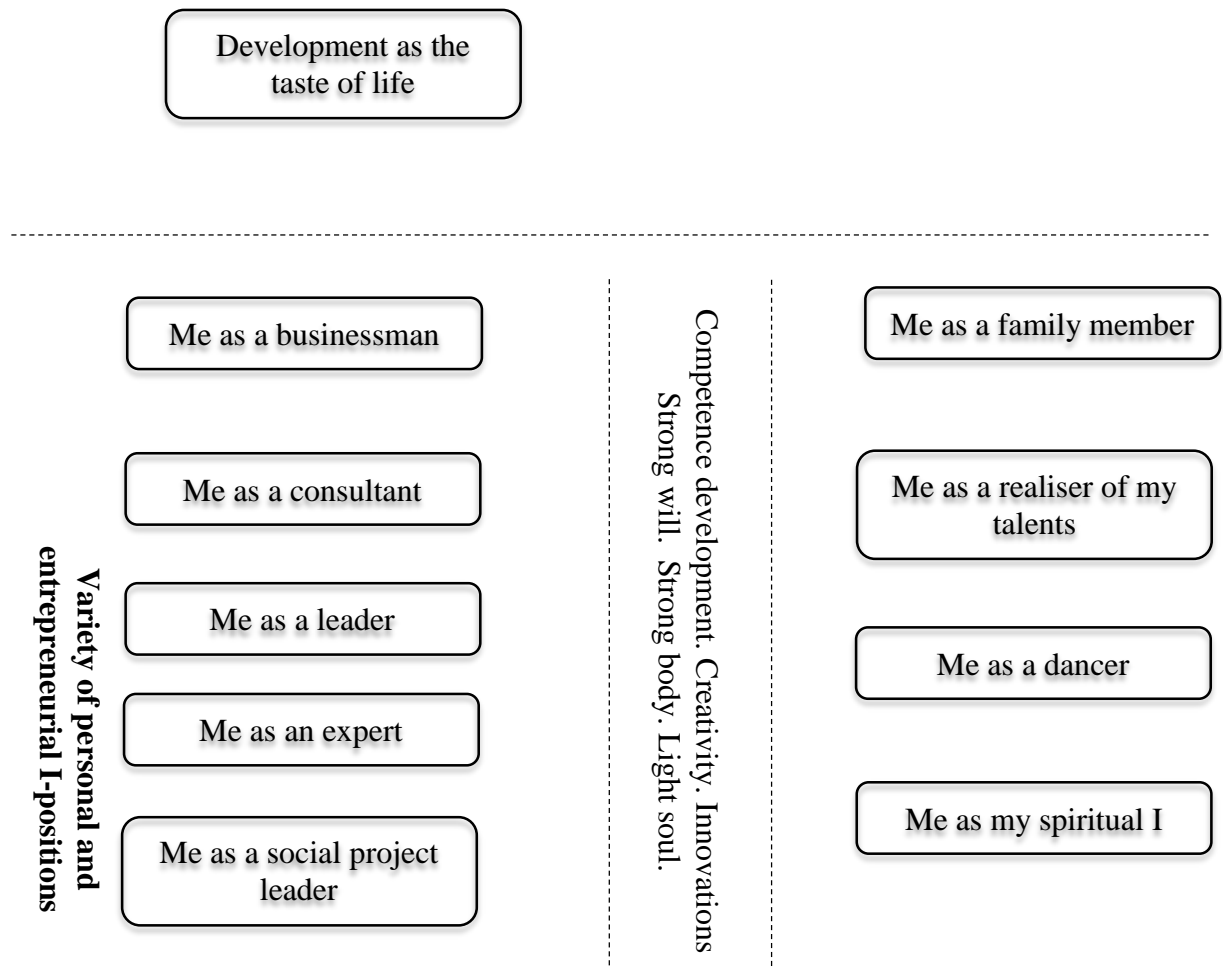
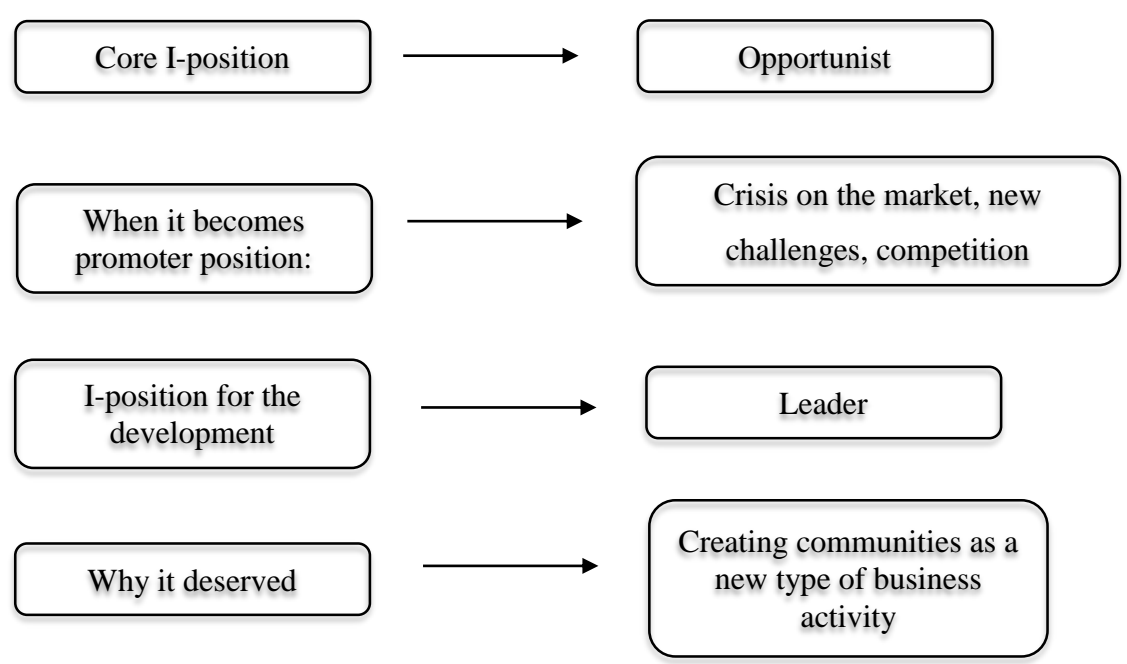


Figure 25. Ideal is balanced! The example of the personal identity model



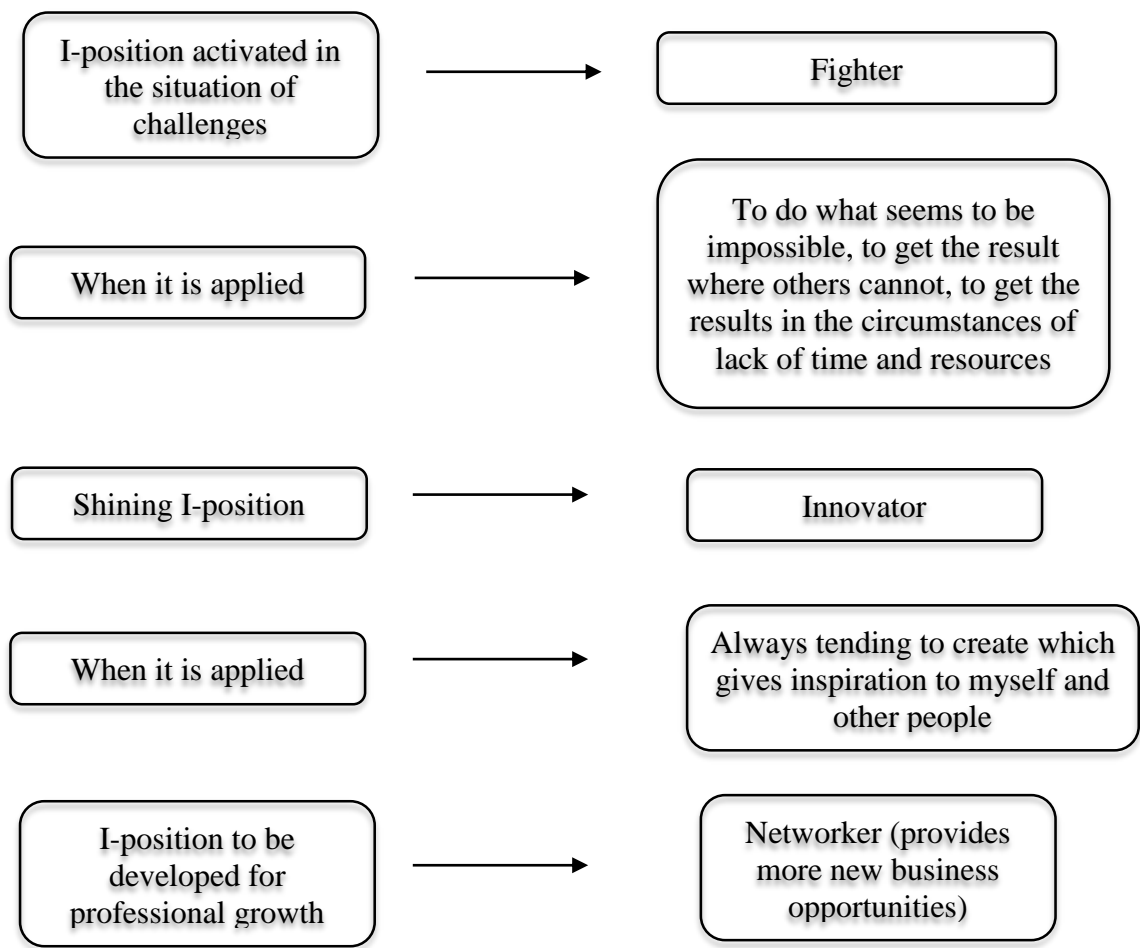


Figure 26. Ideal is balanced! The example of the I-positions used for the facing of critical incidents as a part of the personal identity map.

The personal map shown in Figures 25 and 26 represents the final vision of the systematized results of the participation in the program. The map consists of three parts shows the “I-DEAL” vision of entrepreneurial identity, representing the reflection of “Me” and “Deal” - his actions in interacting with the entrepreneurial environment: a) the entrepreneurial concept, b) the variety of entrepreneurial I-positions, c) the strategies of facing the critical incidents – this part will be shown and described later. On the first map, the one can see the details of the entrepreneurial concept representing his balanced identity important both for the personal development and effective business. It consists of two categories. First is a personal mission, as Covey, an educator, businessman, and a keynote speaker says, the personal mission focuses on “what you want to be and do,” “reaffirms who you are, puts your goals in focus, and puts your ideas into the real world” (Covey, 2008, p.

44). The second is a business philosophy, the example of known business approach or the individual philosophy of the person, e.g., Kaizen as a concept of constant improvement (“An Explanation of the Kaizen Principle”, 2019).

As well the categories “my business slogan” which can represent the saying or famous quotation reflecting the entrepreneurial identity of the person (e.g., “Development as a taste of life”), and the category “my business principles” which represent the actions toward the business processes describing the entrepreneur in his actions forward his clients, his team and his business partners (e.g., responsibility, systematic approach). For the participants who do not have those categories, it will become the zone of growth which will bring the contribution not only for forming the personal development but for their businesses.

The second part of the map represents the personal I-positional repertoire matrix divided into two parts: professional or entrepreneurial I-positions (e.g., “me as a team leader,” “me as consultant”) and personal I-positions (e.g., “me as a traveller,” “me as a dancer”). In some situations, the inner dialogue between “I as a person” and “I as a professional” is activated. This division and interaction of the I-positions is significant because contradictory relationships between this part of “me” can cause the entrepreneur psychological problems of dissatisfaction, burnout and stress (the example of such contradictory relationship was shown earlier in our Study 2 (3.8.) in the case of Participant H who had such type of entrepreneurial context and this factor became the crisis causing point in his case.

One of the most essential parts of our formation program is to show the participants that these I-positions should stay in balance and in the middle of the matrix one can see the principles or ideas, etc. As an example, the I-positions of “me as a person” and “me as an entrepreneur” are tightly connected. My example shows see that creativity and innovation are situated in the middle zone uniting both parts as both my activities as a person and entrepreneur allow me to realize my creativity and innovations. The example of the interaction of personal and entrepreneurial position is quite clearly showing the effective interaction of those personal and professional spheres. In the I-position of “me as entrepreneur” I can in the same time use the position of “me as a traveller” participating in the summits or conferences all around the world. The I-position of “me as a family member” is also combined with my business I-positions as we are all involved into the business activities of each other, always provide needed support and help and etc.

The map is dynamic; therefore, it is easily adapted for future examination and development. The participants are free to modify it and to add the new categories into the map.

Another part of the map (Figure 26) is showing the variety of entrepreneurial I-positions as an application of strategies used for facing critical incidents. Earlier in Module 2 of the program the participants were creating the personal SWOT analysis of their core I-position, which will be used as a result in this map with some modifications. First of all, the core position is mentioned according to the result got by SECI survey. In this map we turn the advantages and the strong sides of the core I-position into the situation when this core-positions gets to the role of promoter position, “a position that organizes and gives direction to the development of other positions in the repertoire and is able to generate new ones (Hermans, 2018, p. 400). For example, in my case, my core I-position of the “opportunist” perfectly works and allows me to be highly competitive in the situations of crisis finding new opportunities for me as an expert and my business in the new markets. Such promoting positions play various useful roles in the self, so according to Valsiner (2004) and Hermans (2016), they have the function of innovations and work as a compass navigating the self; they integrate existing positions for creation of adaptive and productive combinations, meanwhile allowing different I-position to express them and not allowing just one position to become dominating.

The next issue is the position which should be developed according to the results of the participation in the program. In my example, it is the position of “Leader,” which I would like to apply for the creation of the new communities.

After that we place two more I-positions according to our matrix of the I-positions using the data obtained in Study 1. Next I-position is the position named as a “I-position which is activated in the situation of challenges.” Extracting such position is of high importance for the entrepreneur, can provide the needed resources and help them to be productive. In the example, such position is a “Fighter” which helps me to activate all my hidden inner resources and achieve the results in the situations where other people would give up. The last but not least is a “shining position.” By the definition proposed by Hermans (2018, p. 400) the shining position is a position “that radiates a positive and inspiring energy to other positions.” Using my own experience in the entrepreneurship I would say that this type of I-position is significant in the professional performance of the entrepreneur and helps to create the added value to the business activity and to keep the

balance of the business activity, it's an inspiring resource which attracts people in to the team, partners and clients. In the example the shining position is presented with the I-position of the "Innovator," which helps me to create the ideas which inspire myself and people around.

This map will help to provide the complex matrix of the positional repertoire together with the personal business concept that will assist the goal of the continuous skills – the idea is that the participants will not only understand this parameter during the program but will be able to use this scheme in the future.

The length of this part is two hours.

Part 4: Summarizing the results, discussion, and final feedback from the participants.

The length of this part is forty minutes.

The tools used in Module 4: Personal Position Repertoire, the personalized profile of the entrepreneurial identity, the vision of an "ideal" entrepreneur as a balanced person

Expected results of Module for the participants: the participants are expected to get the clear vision of a) the concept of the training model b) their personal dynamic entrepreneurial map, c) the vision of themselves as an "ideal" entrepreneur (in terms of the forming balanced identity using the competences for effective facing of critical incidents).

In Table 16, the complete set of the training blocks with the main instruments used by the Dialogical Self theory approach of each module is shown.

Table 16. *I-DEAL Me Program modules with the general objectives of each module*

| Module | Name | General content and tools (by DST) |
|---------------|--|---|
| 1 | My business story: all the roads lead to...Me! | Personal goal map for the program and Mapping |
| 2 | Who am I as an entrepreneur? Our I-positions, feelings, and strategies to face the critical incidents that happen on the | Survey on Critical Incidents and Journey Plot |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | business way. | |
| 3 | No panic! We study those to pre-see, understand the most common critical incidents, and to act correctly. | Video-library of critical incidents. A dramatization of the critical incidents. Negotiating Self Method |
| 4 | Balancing. Learning to leave in harmony with ourselves and our business. | Personal Position Repertoire, the personalized profile of the entrepreneurial identity. The vision of the “ideal” entrepreneur |

One of the advantages of the designed program is that it can be easily adapted and modified according to the specific characteristic of the target group. All three modules have clear logic and are combined in a systematic way targeting to give the participants step-by-step technology of forming an entrepreneurial identity. Although all the modules can be transformed in the dimensions of time, targets for the participants, quantity, and category of participating entrepreneurs, the length of the modules and parts can be transformed according to the needs.

4.6. Expert evaluation of the program.

The program was evaluated by four experts for the purpose of future use in the practice of educational programs for the entrepreneurs. The experts had to satisfy following factors: not less than ten years of experience in the field of business (having their own business) and education (being a professor in any business education programs), high quality of methodological knowledge.

For the validation process, we considered the following aspects:

- validation of the construction and concept, the quality of the theoretical background of the program;
- empirical validation, the possibilities of the application of the program;
- consequential validation – effects and possible social and societal results, final results for the entrepreneurs.

The evaluation form consisted of the description of the program and the evaluation list (Appendix H).

The evaluation was held according to three questions:

1. **Actuality:** Do you find the program satisfying the needs of the modern entrepreneurs? If the program is up-to-date and competitive?
2. **Methodology:** Do you find the methods of the program satisfying its final goals? Are the methods and tools of the program chosen and applied correctly?
3. **Practical application:** Do you think the entrepreneurs will be eager to take part in the program? Do you think the module of this program will provide practical use and development of modern entrepreneurial skills?

Along with the open questions, we asked the experts to evaluate each factor using the scale from one to four where the score one was considered as “Not satisfying,” two – “Needs a lot of corrections,” three – “Needs few corrections,” four – “Excellent.” The experts were free to fill in the forms in their own manner and were suggested to add any additional comments.

4.7. Results.

As a result of Study 3 we see the evaluation of the program and the implication of the recommendations provided by the experts for the improvements of the programs for the further practical implementation. According to the criteria of choosing the experts for the evaluation process we considered them to have the combination of the experience and developed skills in both spheres of entrepreneurship and business education which could satisfy the needs of the objective evaluation of the program considering its theoretical, methodological and practical parts. The complete version of the evaluation lists is shown in Table 17.

Table 17

The results of the program evaluation by experts

| Evaluator | Final | Actuality |
|-----------|-------|-----------|
|-----------|-------|-----------|

| | point | |
|----------|--------------|---|
| T | 3 | To realize such a program is a good idea, and it can satisfy the needs of modern entrepreneurs. The content will be highly depending on the country and the region where the entrepreneur is situated (e.g., the Spanish entrepreneur is a different one than the Dutch given his/her cultural background), so I suggest to take into the consideration the cultural differences and to adapt the program to the needs of the country where it will be implemented. |
| A | 4 | The program is up-to-date and competitive, but I'd rather concentrate on the Schumpeterian definition of the entrepreneurship and following shaping of necessary competencies (as PANIC approach (Monereo, 2011) fits there properly). |
| S | 3 | <p>In my opinion, the idea and concept of the program are great, and its educational implementation is no less remarkable.</p> <p>Audience: for me, it is not clear why the main target audience should be with experience from one to three years in business. It seems that this course is more than useful and interesting for people who just plan to start their own business and just to make the first steps of the way of forming their entrepreneurial identity. As well as the entrepreneurs with experience of more than three years, but NOT happy with their business, this category is indicated for the further development, but it seems that this aspect can be worked out and covered from the very beginning.</p> <p>At the same time, training groups should be formed taking into account their experience in business in order to avoid situations when the content does not fit the level of the business experience of the participants, and it is not interesting.</p> |
| C | 4 | The approach and the methodology used for the program design |

| | | |
|--|--------------------|--|
| | | <p>seem to be creative and fresh. Having more than forty years of experience in the business education, I was always targeting to increase the number of the creative and innovative products on this market; thus the I-DEAL Me program seems to me as innovative and actual.</p> |
| Final score for the actuality | 3,5 from 4 | |
| Evaluator | Final point | Methodology |
| T | 3 | <p>I suggest elaborating the aims and goals of the whole program and each module a bit more specific. It is also important to specify clearly the entry level of the entrepreneurs you are targeting at in your program.</p> |
| A | 4 | <p>The level of the methodology presented in the program is satisfactory while in my personal opinion-shaping its concept following Schumpeterian approach to entrepreneurship can make it the one and the only (Schumpeterian monopoly in entrepreneurial education).</p> |
| S | 3 | <p>The methodology applied to the program seems to be correct, and the set of methods and tools look valid and trustable. On the other hand, methodically, I do not understand the connection and the difference between Module 1 and Module 4. According to that fact.</p> |
| C | 4 | <p>The methodology of the program is clear and systematic. The range of the tools applied seems to be novel and satisfying the goals of the program.</p> |
| The final score for the actuality | 3,5 from 4 | |

| Evaluator | | Practical application |
|--|-----------------|---|
| T | 4 | As already mentioned, if the program is adapted to the needs of the entrepreneurs and cultural aspects of different countries, the implication will be of great value. In my opinion, the entrepreneurs need such program, and there is no any similar product on the business training market now, but it should be taken into consideration that the motivation of the participation for the entrepreneurs should be very well thought and promoted. |
| A | 4 | Using my long experience in the entrepreneurship and business education I can confirm that the program is good enough for the practical implementation and it will work. For potential, I see this program among the best on the market. |
| S | 4 | In my opinion, the main competitive advantage and uniqueness of the course is the analysis of critical incidents. However, what is the difference between the critical incidents approach and the case studies method widely used in business education? The psychological approach in business is quite specific for the understanding of the entrepreneurs in this light I would suggest providing the participants with the clear explanations of the specific approach and to foresee it for future promotion of the program. |
| C | 4 | The program is ready for implementation, I suggest that the first round of the educational models will help to evaluate the program content and applied tools and to make improvements needed for the increasing of the future implementation. |
| The final score for the actuality | 4 from 4 | |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|--|
| The final evaluation score | 3,67 | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|--|

According to the final score of the evaluators, we got 3,67 points from four maximum for the practical application of the program. It can confirm the high level of the appreciation of the program by the experts. Also, they characterized the program as satisfying the needs of the modern entrepreneurs, up-to-date and competitive, as a great idea and the way of its implementation, the methodology is evaluated as clear and systematic and able to “work out” in the market, the analysis of the critical incidents is chosen as a main advantage and uniqueness of the program. Besides that, mostly all experts highlighted some factors that could be developed or described more carefully for the goal of the program development.

We took into consideration the following advices given by the experts; they will be considered for the implementation of the program:

- adaptation of the program to the specific features and needs of the different countries. According to this, we will prepare various steps for the adaptation of the program to each country where we decide to implement it: a) specific research of the entrepreneurial background in the country, b) benchmarking of the existing educational business programs for the entrepreneur, c) the focus-group with the local entrepreneurs, d) analysis of the results, e) upgrade of the program according to the received data, f) implementation of the program;
- using the Schumpeter theory for the developing the programs concept: as one of the experts highlighted, the strong side of the program is fundamental theoretical basement of the Dialogical Self theory and the approach of Critical Incidents, from this point of view he gave an advice that for the entrepreneurial concept of the program we should take into consideration and develop our ideas according to the Schumpeter theory “argued that entrepreneurs create innovations in the face of competition and thereby generate economic growth” (Tülüce & Yurtkur, 2015, p. 720), which he found as the most adequate to the targets of our program and suits the concept of the PANIC instrument for facing critical incidents (Monereo & Monte, 2011);

- the goals of the Modules 1 (setting goals) and Module 4 (finalization goals) were revised and correlated as one of the experts mentioned the double targeting in those models in the first version of the program, the aims of each module of the program were specified according to the given recommendations;
- the idea of the critical incidents as a general method of the program was specified and the comparison with the case study method was conducted, to support this upgrade we decided to provide the participants with the glossary of the main terms and definitions (e.g., identity, I-position, critical incident) explained in a clear simple way in the beginning of the program;
- future adaptation of the program to the entrepreneurs with different level of the business experience: a) people who are not entrepreneurs yet but intent to start their own business b) entrepreneurs with more than three years of the experience who is not satisfied with their business or would like to develop their entrepreneurial identity.

All mentioned suggestions and corrections were included in the final version of the program. In our opinion the program seems to be ready for the implementations, the further improvements will be made after the first practical trial.

4.8. Discussion.

The results for investigation: as a general result the third study we were targeting to unite the results of the previous studies which include the identity of an entrepreneur with its roles and positions and the idea of the construction of the identity of entrepreneur using methods of DST. As the main component in each part of the empirical investigation, we took into consideration the category of critical incidents. All the instruments applied in the program are aiming to form the entrepreneurial meta-position helping to see the whole range of the I-positions presented in the personal and professional identity of the entrepreneur.

The program design was based on the data obtained during the theoretical background and first two studies, for Study 1 – the list of the most common entrepreneurial I-positions with its characteristics and the Survey for the entrepreneurs based on critical incidents, including the knowledge about the correlations of different variable as

characteristics of the entrepreneurs, for the Study 2 – the set of tools for the forming of the entrepreneurial identity for the participants with a lack of entrepreneurial experience on the stage of startup business.

The program includes a wide variety of combined tools from the different spheres of knowledge – the methods of the Dialogical Self theory, standard psychological tools, adapted methods from the field of strategical management and authors methods which help us to make the program both valid and unique. The program uses a variety of easily applicable tools created on the edge of different approaches. The final structure of the balanced entrepreneurial identity, describing an entrepreneurial concept, variety of I-positions and strategies for facing critical incidents accumulates the previous knowledge, developed skills and experience and proposes as a structured vision for the participants as a broad base for the future studies.

The program was highly evaluated by the experts with a high level of expertise in entrepreneurship and business education; their participation helped us to bring improvements into the description of the program and the future lines of research.

Due to my own experience, the key to the success of any business training program is the combination of a strong theoretical background and methodology with the practical tools. I strongly believe that productive achievements and breakthrough innovations are only possible in the field of the intersection of scientific knowledge and experience in various fields of practice. Designing this program, we aimed to look at the problems of developing entrepreneurial identity from “inside” and “outside” what was provided by my experience in entrepreneurship (the view from inside) and experience in psychology, organizational consultancy, coaching and business education (view from outside) along with the combination of reliable scientific resources for the program design and various practical tools.

Chapter 5. Conclusions.

5.1. Conclusions according to research objectives.

Our study presented the systematic vision on the problem proposing the following steps as a result:

- a. Categorization and characterization of the entrepreneurial I-positions.
- b. Categorization and characterization of the most common critical incidents in entrepreneurial performance.
- c. Survey for Entrepreneurs based on Critical Incidents.
- d. Correlational analysis of variables of entrepreneurial identity formation based on survey research.
- e. The profound case-study of the construction of identity for the young entrepreneurs with the variety of analysis instruments.
- f. The training program for entrepreneurs targeting the formation of the balanced entrepreneurial identity.

This research aimed to identify the construction of entrepreneurial identity and its implications for training. Based on quantitative and qualitative analysis combined with the expert evaluation we have studied the types of entrepreneurial I-positions and the strategies of facing critical incidents as a part of the process of forming the identity of the entrepreneurs.

In this study, we elaborated a coherent conceptualization of the identity of the entrepreneur based on the Dialogical Self theory approach. These findings add to a growing body of literature on the topic of the dialogical self and develop our understanding of the construction of the entrepreneurial identity. The existing sources were analyzed, and we have categorized the definition of the entrepreneurs, which helped us to see the leading roles that entrepreneurs play in professional life. Based on that, we have created the characteristics of four entrepreneurial I-positions: a) innovator, b) leader focused on his team, c) opportunist, d) fighter. This description consists of the characteristic of the conceptions, strategies, and feelings of the entrepreneurs towards their work. Beside that we identified, categorized and analyzed the most common and frequent critical incidents (both

positive and negative) that have a high impact on the entrepreneurs and the way entrepreneurs manage to deal with such situations.

To sum up, we can say that we created a novel approach to the categorization of the entrepreneurial roles modifying them into four types of the I-positions that are characterized by dynamism and adaptation according to the context, place, and situation.

The research has highlighted the great interest of the entrepreneurs to the topic of the critical incidents and their influence on the entrepreneurial identity construction. It shows us the importance of the focus on the entrepreneur as a modern leader with the variety of his I-positions and strategies used for personal and business success. We also found the significant relationships between some variables such as gender, entrepreneurial experience, and the positive and negative correlations between various I-positions. The study shows no people are using just one I-position, it is sufficient to adapt the I-positions according to the situation, place, and time. So, some I-positions can be right or wrong in the sense of effectiveness/non-effectiveness for facing entrepreneurial incidents. The results of the research were used for the creation of the training program for the construction of the identity of the entrepreneurs based on critical incidents.

This research has investigated the process of the construction of the identity of entrepreneurs based on four profound cases descriptions of representatives of each core I-position according to the previous categorization. The process of the construction of the identity of the entrepreneurs with lack of experience was described in different contexts including family business, moving into own business after working for a big company, creating own company with the co-founders after the project job, starting a business after the freelance. The study provides a powerful methodology for the construction of the entrepreneurial identity of young entrepreneurs in their everyday life including such methods as an interview, mapping, journey plot, Personal Position Repertoire, and coaching.

We consider that the study was focused only on four representatives of different entrepreneurial I-positions. On the other hand, they showed the variety of cases and scenarios of forming the entrepreneurial identity in most typical contexts. The research showed a high interest and deep involvement of the participants as well as a lack of psychological support and a high need of young entrepreneurs in a profound discussion of their feelings, thoughts and critical incidents because of high demands in the business sphere which creates a continuous pressure to succeed.

Our research underlined the importance of the implication of the set of the tools used in the psychological practice and Dialogical Self Theory. It helped to make the process systematic, clear and multi-structured. The progress of the participants, their personal and professional achievements was measured in each part of the study. Forming the entrepreneurial identity is a crucial stage on the personal and professional way; otherwise, the business becomes meaningless and causes a psychological crisis to the entrepreneurs in the future. The participants of the study mentioned in the feedback that during the program they trained some of the most important skills – self-reflection and ability to recognize their inner voices, applying the proper I-position for facing critical incidents and developing flexibility in using I-positions. The ability to turn crisis causing points into the points of growth helped the participant to form their entrepreneurial identity and to create the new goals of personal and professional growth.

These cases became the basement of the program for the development of the identity of entrepreneurs based on critical incidents.

We designed the program for the entrepreneurs at an early stage of their business career for the formation of the balanced entrepreneurial identity based on previous studies and systematizing all previously obtained data. The program was highly evaluated by the experts, and the recommendations have been used for the adaptation and further improvements.

The program is concentrated on the understanding oneself as an entrepreneur, his lifeway and the events leading to the choosing the profession of the entrepreneur, forming his entrepreneurial meta-position which allows to realize and to apply correctly all specter of the I-positions presented in the personal and professional identity of the entrepreneur. It targets training to face most common critical incidents in business for the formation of the balanced entrepreneurial identity as well.

This research has investigated the process of the construction of entrepreneurial identity in the sum of tools and techniques based on the Dialogical Self Theory and Critical Incidents. The evidence from this study points towards the idea of systematic view on the formation of balanced entrepreneurial identity helping any entrepreneur flexibly adapt his I-positions to the concrete context and situation. The results of this study indicate the high importance of the attention to the psychological side of the business life of an entrepreneur and the leading role of entrepreneurial identity and the processes of self-identifying in a professional context as well as self-development of the entrepreneurial skills of facing

critical incidents in everyday life. These results suggest the step-by-step methodology of construction of entrepreneurial identity, which can be adapted to any category of entrepreneurs and used in the diagnostic or educational purposes. The so-called “library” of critical incidents occurring in the professional life of the entrepreneur was prepared. These materials could be used for helping the young entrepreneurs with the lack of experience be more prepared and adapted for the future business challenges by training to develop the flexibility in adapting their I-positions and strategies for facing various critical incidents in the entrepreneurial performance.

As the strong point and the most important benefit of our research, we suggest the systematic approach and practical application of all the studies developed during research, its precise application, step-by-step technologies and their easy practical implementation for the entrepreneurs of different categories.

5.2. Limitations.

Even though the research tends to show the systematic view of the problem and using valid study instruments, our work has some limitations.

The use of the methodological instruments was limited in several ways.

Study 1.

- In the present study we have only chosen four general types of I-positions, but we understand that there is a big variety of I-positions presented in the professional life of an entrepreneur. Another fact that should be taken into consideration is that no one has clear I-position but has core I-positions that can be flexibly changed within place and time.
- Targeting to get the most adequate for the survey research quantity of respondents (Price, Jhangiani, & Chiang, 2019) we realize that the number of respondents of study is the factor that influences the result. The quantity of participants that is mentioned in the research is chosen because we have sent the survey to one thousand respondents and 420 of them send us the filled-in the survey back.
- Aiming to satisfy the rules of the probability sampling (Price, Jhangiani, & Chiang, 2019) and to adapt cluster sampling to the entrepreneurship the participants were divided into the categories (genders, level of education, size of business, etc.) but the

amount of each category was not equal which could be considered as the limitation of study.

- Due to the fact of the absence of methods of testing and diagnostics of the entrepreneurial I-positions, we created a unique author Survey. The analysis of the data of the survey research had a complex structure. Aiming to get valid results, the Survey contained a wide variety of categories satisfying the needs of the data obtaining, however, the method still needs to be proved, developed, and adapted.
- The types of I-positions and the critical incidents of the survey were chosen and checked with the group of the experts so, like any other human factor, it influences the result, and if we have invited another group of experts there was a probability of seeing another variety of the categories. Despite that the fact that the evaluation based on the primary analysis and extraction of the categories from the academic literature dedicated to the topic of the entrepreneurial identity and the roles of entrepreneurs helped us to make the objectiveness of the evaluation.

Study 2.

- Since Study 2 was made in the form of coaching session, the “observer effect” or “Hawthorne effect” as a “tendency for subjects of research to change their behavior simply because they are being studied” (Frey, 2018). For six months, we had very close communication with the participants. Me as an observer was not only getting the data for the research, but the participants were sharing very personal information with me, their inner feelings and problems. On the other hand, this approach was used on purpose to guarantee the profound study of the inner world of participants which could not be achieved without organizing a trusting relationship.

Study 3.

- Finally, several potential limitations include the expert evaluation of the educational program designed for Study 3. Besides the fact that the criteria of the choosing of the experts were rigorous (a combination of the characteristics that could guarantee the exact evaluation process), the amount of four experts is applicable for the case of current research but should be wider for future studies.

Nevertheless, we believe our work could be the basis of the theoretical and practical combination of the construction of the entrepreneurial identity.

5.3. Possible applications and implications of the research.

This work has highlighted the importance of the focus on the construction of the identity for the entrepreneurs. It has also revealed the problem of the lack of the studies in the field on the forming the identity of the entrepreneurs with the little professional experience and absence of the educational or training programs for the entrepreneurs based on the critical incidents. The obtained scientific data helped us to systematize the previous knowledge and to design: a) the categories of the typical entrepreneurial I-positions and their characteristics, b) the typical critical incidents that occur during the professional life of the entrepreneurs, c) the procedure of the construction of the entrepreneurial identity for the entrepreneurs with the lack of experience, d) the training program for the entrepreneurs aiming the construction of psychological identity.

These results can be useful for the academic programs for the students of the universities with the specialization in organizational, educational psychology and human resources as well as for students studying entrepreneurship, management, and economics on the level of the bachelor, master and doctorate programs.

Our approach could be applied to the training programs for the business accelerators, business incubators and business schools (e.g., MBA or DBA programs) as well as a separate course as a systematic approach following the main program and adapted to the needs of the particular organization. The present findings might help to solve the problem of the lack of the attention to the psychological knowledge for the programs in the field of business and economics completing the vision of the entrepreneurial activity with the profound attention to the identity of an entrepreneur. Results so far have been auspicious in the field of the individual consultancy and coaching as well as psychological consulting, career consulting or early career orientation for the young entrepreneurs.

In our view, these results represent an excellent initial step toward the creation of the universal technique for the different categories of entrepreneurs with a different level of experience. Our research could help the psychologists, business coaches, and business trainers to improve their techniques of dealing with entrepreneurs. A further important implication is for the offline and online business courses that target fast development of the entrepreneurial skills and systematic approach. Specifically, we can notice that all the parts

of the studies are adapted for the online implementations (online survey for Study 1, online forms and skype coaching sessions for Study 2 and an easy adaptation of the program for the Study 3).

We are confident that our results may improve knowledge about the business life of entrepreneurs revealing the psychological side and the problems on the way of construction of the entrepreneurial identity, benefiting the traditional “case-study” instrument for the business education with the modern and practical approach of the critical incidents.

We think that our findings might be useful for the entrepreneurs themselves as we see that during the Studies 1 and 2 most of the participants noticed the significant improvements in their psychological conditions as well as in the level of their everyday life and the development of their business. We hope that our research will be useful and beneficial for the entrepreneurs willing to increase their personal and professional effectiveness and tending to self-development and life-long learning.

This approach has the potential to the implementation of the program and creating a unique product on the market of education for the adults and business training. Furthermore, we believe that the program is easy to adapt to the different categories of entrepreneurs and the institutions or organizations where it will be implemented.

5.4. Lines of perspective.

To further our research, we intend to adapt this program to the new categories of the entrepreneurs. Among those we can observe the features of forming the entrepreneurial identity of the highly experienced entrepreneurs who are targeting to the self-development and the improvement in their business, for those who do not feel satisfied with their current results in their business or for those who would like to change their business sphere. As a separate specific category, we can see the research in the field of the psychological counseling for the entrepreneurs suffering from the psychological problems provoked with the wrong understanding of their own entrepreneurial identity or with the high level of stress caused by their business activity.

Other categories that could be interesting for the specific study are the “intrapreneurs” - people who are applying their entrepreneurial skills, creativity, and

innovation within large established companies (Corbet, 2018) and project leaders. An important issue to resolve for future studies is the specific feature of the I-positions of the representatives of different type of business, such as services and products. More broadly, research is also needed to determine other types of critical incidents and the strategies of facing them.

The results of Study 1 are encouraging and should be validated by larger sample size. The same research could be spread from the European countries (as in current research) to other geographical zones to see the specific differences between the entrepreneurial identity profiles and most typical critical incidents and the strategies of their facing in different countries. Further experimental investigations and studies are needed to estimate the validation of the data analysis of the Survey for the Entrepreneurs based on Critical Incidents created for Study 1. We hope that additional studies will find more variable correlations of the characteristics of the representatives of every I-position and will prove our findings.

Future work based on the results of Study 2 will focus on the development of the technique of the formation of the identity and the creation of the individual training program based on the Dialogical Self theory methods and the theory of critical incidents. The program will be adapted for the individual coaching supervision of the different categories of the entrepreneurs. Further work needs to be carried out for the improvement and validation of the interpretation of the results of every method used for the construction identity of young entrepreneurs.

We are currently in the process of investigating the ways of the adapting and developing the program designed for the Study 3 with its possible implementation in different countries and different organizations (universities, business schools, business incubators, and accelerations, courses on entrepreneurship and business). The implementation of the program will challenge us for the next study of the effectiveness and the impact of the approach, the technique and psychological tools on the personal and professional development of the entrepreneurs and the productivity of their businesses. The prospect of being able to implement the program also opens us the new horizons of the research of the influence of the program on the psychological factors of the entrepreneurs. After that, the program will be adapted to other categories of entrepreneurs as entrepreneurs with no current business experience (those who just registered or intending to register their business).

Future work should concentrate on the creation of the online video library of critical incidents presenting a broad base for academic and educational needs. Each critical video case will be shown as a real-life example of the critical incidents and the variant of adapting different I-positions for facing a specific incident. This research will become a vital issue for future research and practical implementation of the obtained results.

5.5. Final reflection.

We are confident that our research will serve as a base for future studies on the topic of the construction of entrepreneurial identity and its practical implementation in training programs for the entrepreneurs. Our research outlines, in my opinion, the most powerful link between human potential and the business effectiveness. In the age of the potential of complete robotization and high-technological decisions, the problem of our identity in entrepreneurship becomes very actual. In the time of digital transformation in all spheres of our life including business the issue of our inner world of the entrepreneur comes on the stage. I strongly believe that the entrepreneurship starts with the questions “who I am” and “what can I give to this world” and the balanced identity and constant self-development is the main key to the personal and business success.

*“I wonder if I've been changed in the night. Let me think.
Was I the same when I got up this morning?
I almost think I can remember feeling a little different.
But if I'm not the same, the next question is 'Who in the world am I?'
Ah, that's the great puzzle!”
— Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland*

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Appendix A

Survey for Entrepreneurs on Critical Incidents (SECI) form

SURVEY FOR ENTREPRENEURS ON CRITICAL INCIDENTS (SECI)

08.09.2019, 19:27

SURVEY FOR ENTREPRENEURS ON CRITICAL INCIDENTS (SECI)

This Survey is dedicated to the problems of entrepreneurial identity and most typical cases which entrepreneur can or could face on his professional way. The results of the Survey indicate roles, strategies, and feelings of the entrepreneurs caused by critical incidents.

*Required

1. **Email address ***

General information

2. **In what country do you live? ***

5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?*Mark only one oval.*

- Graduated from school
- Graduated from college
- Bachelor
- Master
- Doctorate degree
- MBA/DBA
- Other: _____

6. What is the size of your company (according to the number of employees)?*Mark only one oval.*

- Micro (<10)
- Small (<50)
- Medium (<250)
- Large (>250)

3. What is your gender?*Mark only one oval.*

- Male
- Female

4. What is your age?*Mark only one oval.*

- <20
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- >60

9. With which of these roles do you identify yourself? (choose the most corresponding role): *

Mark only one oval.

- The most important for me is a high impact on the market, being competitive and increasing the sales constantly
- The most important for me is to inspire my team, to lead my company to the results according to our vision and strategy
- The most important for me is surviving of my company on business market, I got accustomed to get what I need, and I think that strict rules and discipline has a high impact on business success
- The most important for me is always to improve my business, create innovational ideas and implement them into practice
- Other: _____

7. Your experience in entrepreneurship (in years)

Entrepreneurial Identity

8. What is for you to be an entrepreneur? *

10. What helped you to reach today's level? (choose the most corresponding answer): *

Mark only one oval.

- I always have been focused on the market, I'm a good seller, and I teach my team to deal with customers and sell as well. Being orientated to clients' needs and marketing trends, you always achieve a lot in business
- I always felt that people want to follow me, I included them into the creation of future vision and always tried to inspire and motivate everyone
- I had to survive in an aggressive and competitive business market. Fighting for the success of my business was not that easy. I achieved these results thanks to my high discipline and strong will
- I was always ready to propose fresh ideas and new vision, that helped me a lot to create a unique business, and I was always searching for the way to find new ways of acting and improving products and processes
- Other: _____

Critical Incidents

Here are some typical cases with which you can or could ever face as an entrepreneur. Please choose the type of reaction you would use in these situations:

11. **You get a young but a very professional member of your team who is very effective in the beginning but after feeling his/her success he/she starts to make his/her own rules, becomes "capricious" in completing tasks and asks higher salary. However, clients prefer dealing with this specialist. How would you act in this case? ***

Mark only one oval.

- I will make a reunion with the team, and discuss his/her behavior in front of the others — he/she shouldn't give a bad example to the team and I don't think this person can stay in my company anymore. I think that respecting hierarchy and discipline makes companies more organized
- I will talk with him/her in person to understand better the reason for his/her behavior and his/her actual goals and will try to explain what is important for being in a team
- I will invent for him an interesting and challenging task (which requires an innovative solution) to show him that he still has a lot to improve as a professional or to get an extraordinary result
- The opinion of my clients is the law for me; I will try to find effective instruments for satisfying his needs
- Other: _____

12. **Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) ***

Mark only one oval.

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| very low | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | very high |

13. **After trying hard to involve in your new project team some professionals of an international level, you finally find a very successful specialist (international experts with a great experience). He/she is more qualified than you, but he seems to be very helpful in improving your business. Now you need to manage him/her. How would you act? ***

Mark only one oval.

- For me doesn't matter too much his/her professional level - I will deal with him/her as with the others - I will organize strong hierarchy and subordination with strict KPIs and constant control of results
- I'll be evaluating his/her job with the help of other members of the team and clients. So taking into consideration his/her actions and feedback from my team and customers I will understand his level of productivity
- I will let him/her do his/her job freely; in the same time I will try to provide the best level of corporate climate and respect him/her as I have high expectations on his/her results and influence on the results of all company
- I don't think such specialists should get into job routine, so he/she is worth a special project as a new branch of the company's activity that should be organized just for him/her
- Other: _____

14. **Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) ***

Mark only one oval.

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| very low | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | very high |

15. **Within 5 years, you have been working with a very talented manager. You have invested many resources in him/her during this time, he/she was shaped as a professional and learned a lot from you. Suddenly you find out that he/she decided to leave your company and create his/her own business in a competitive field. What could be your reaction? ***

Mark only one oval.

- I will propose him/her better to get a share in my business or to provide him/her a project as an "intrapreneur" (to create his/her business project within my company)
- I will make a lesson from it, I will let him/her leave my company, but in the same time I'm going to review my motivation system in the team and will use this example to escape such cases in future
- I will show him/her what a real competition is; I'm sure that he/she will not be able to compare with my company and I will try to prevent his/her getting to the market
- I will start to improve my business processes and will create the new product or service that will help me to avoid the competition with ex-member of the team
- Other: _____

16. **Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) ***

Mark only one oval.

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| very low | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | very high |

17. **You've got a new contract! You were dreaming about it for a few months and were working hard to achieve this goal. The members of your team start congratulating you, but you don't look happy — you feel tired, exhausted and don't feel any satisfaction. What would you do with that? ***

Mark only one oval.

- I will try to find the possibility to relax — I will do sports, will assist stress-management training or spa and massage
- I am sure that I am just tired of the routine, now it is the time for fresh ideas and more challenging projects
- I cannot afford even a small break in my job, I will progress anyway, the main thing that I have got this contract and other things do not really matter
- I think that it's time to make self-reflection - to understand more my personal role, to delegate some of my responsibilities between my team members and to take few days of break to rest well
- Other: _____

18. **Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) ***

Mark only one oval.

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| very low | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | very high |

19. **You have the new line of products which you start proposing to your frequent customers. During the weekly meeting your sales manager reports that no one is interested in it, people refuse to buy as they prefer the previous version of this product. What could be your action? ***

Mark only one oval.

- I will change sales managers and draw in others, those who will be able to sort out the problem
- I will look for new sales channels and will try to find new customers who buy a new product
- I will pay additionally to improve the new line of projects to innovation specialists
- I will lead the group of sales managers and involve myself in this job to try to understand more clearly the reasons, to choose the new sales strategy and take decision according to final results
- Other: _____

20. **Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) ***

Mark only one oval.

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| very low | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | very high |

21. **Your business partner refuses to continue your joint project just before you have to sign an important contract, in which he should have been involved. What could be your reaction? ***

Mark only one oval.

- I will use this as an opportunity to find new, more effective and reliable partners
- I will realize this contract myself and will do everything to bring it to the desired result
- I will find a new way to solve the problem by developing non-standard schemes of actions
- Instead of dealing with that partner I will involve my team into solving the problem and will share roles and responsibility between them
- Other: _____

22. **Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) ***

Mark only one oval.

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| very low | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | very high |

23. **One of the close family members does not support the idea of your entrepreneurship. How to deal with it? ***

Mark only one oval.

- I will try to show him/her the advantages and positive aspects of my entrepreneurial activity, which will benefit the whole family and motivate him/her to support
- I will create some new and interesting activity for this member of the family, in which he/she can get involved and understand my situation better
- I will continue to do business in spite of everything; my family should respect my choice
- I will try to find an opportunity to devote more time to this family member in order to meet his/her needs and get out of conflict
- Other: _____

24. **Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) ***

Mark only one oval.

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| very low | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | very high |

25. **There is an economic crisis in your sector that affects you. What would be your attitude? ***

Mark only one oval.

- It's time for personal and professional growth and development of my team, time to reconsider the company's vision and strategy
- It's time for creating new products and propose innovative ideas
- It's time to survive, work "hard" and try to keep your business and employees because they depend on me
- It's the time of new opportunities in the market, time to search new resources and new niches
- Other: _____

26. **Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) ***

Mark only one oval.

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| very low | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | very high |

27. **Imagine that your company is already sufficiently consolidated. What would be your plans for entrepreneurship? ***

Mark only one oval.

- Implement a strategy and vision to lead my team to better results and contribute to the development of my personal competencies, as well as the growth of my company
- Create new innovative products that can change the world
- Become the best company on the market, to get the largest market share
- Create new types of business and implement new projects in new spheres
- Other: _____

28. Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

very low very high

Personal Experience of Critical Incidents

29. Please describe the case (negative, the situation of conflict or contradiction) that happened to you during the professional career that influenced you most in your success as an entrepreneur *

30. How did you act in this case (your behavior, strategy, tactics...)?

31. How did the case finish?

32. Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

very low very high

33. **Please describe the case (positive, the situation of success and achievements, happy feelings) that happened to you during the professional career that influenced you most in your success as an entrepreneur ***

34. **How did you act in this case (your behavior, strategy, tactics...)?**

35. **How did the case finish?**

36. **Please choose on the scale how much this incident could affect you personally (where 1 is a very low emotional/personal impact, and 5 is a very high emotional/personal impact) ***

Mark only one oval.

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| very low | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | very high |



Appendix B

Study 2. Interviews with the participants.

Participant L.

Date of the interview: 03.11.2017.

Form of the interview: Personal meeting

1. Do you consider yourself as an entrepreneur by vocation? Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur?

To say no is not true. To say yes neither. For now, I find 10% of entrepreneurship in myself. I cannot measure by selling and getting. I just can give out and don't care what I get back. However, sometimes I become so goal-oriented to get what I need (save money, get a discount for my business, etc.) that I feel entrepreneurial skills in myself.

2. What is your main mission / goal as an entrepreneur? What are your main values in doing business?

My main goal as an entrepreneur is to be useful for a clients and partners, and due to this, to grow my business. My values are innovations, quality, smile, customer, team.

3. Do you consider yourself as a good entrepreneur? Why?

Unfortunately, not completely by now, although, I see the great potential in myself, I am learning fast.

4. What are your strong and weak sides as an entrepreneur?

My strengths: I am an optimist who knows how to set goals. I am ambitious in reaching the goals; I have a good knowledge of strategic management. My weaknesses: laziness, self-pity, lack of strength to achieve results, leadership, inability to take risks, flexibility, concentration, and harmony.

5. What do you like most and less in being an entrepreneur?

What I like most about entrepreneurship is the opportunity to be myself, and that all the results depend on me. I like entrepreneurship for everyone; I do not see any negative aspects.

6. Who influenced you most of all in your model of entrepreneurial behavior? Which model of the entrepreneurship influenced you?

I find it difficult to answer this question because I do not understand what my model of entrepreneurship is.

7. What are the main things that influence your effectiveness in business? What do you do to make your business effective?

At the moment, I am performing the standard set of entrepreneurial actions that our partners request. However, I am not satisfied with this level; I plan to develop a marketing strategy for 3 years to increase business efficiency.

8. *What are the methods/instruments that you use to manage your business? Would you like to change any of those? Which things would you like to change and how?*

I'm going with the flow now, and I want to change everything in my behavior regarding entrepreneurship, management and my life in general. How I plan to change: 1. Not to be afraid of anything, but to take and do without coming up with any excuses; 2. To devote more time to work and the results of the company; 3. I will build a transparent time management system to keep up with everything and not to postpone anything.

9. *What would you like to change in your business management, but you didn't change yet? Why didn't you change it earlier?*

I would like to analyze and make decisions based on financial performance. Before, and now too, my actions are more based on my intuition.

10. *How do you feel as an entrepreneur? In which situations do you feel more comfortable? And in which less comfortable? Why?*

I feel like an entrepreneur when I get benefits for my business. At the moment when I save money for my project, getting discounts and privileges, or I manage to negotiate favorable conditions for the company. I feel less comfortable when I delegate authority because I am not confident in myself.

11. *What did happen to you during your professional experience that you can consider as a Critical Incident? How did you act? Do you think that you faced it well? How would you act in such case in the future?*

Moving to Kaluga and becoming again involved in my parents' business. It's complicated, and I didn't do it very well at the very beginning. Now I have learned to interact with my parents and try to get high from work.

12. *Are there any inner voices that influence your decision making? How would you characterize them?*

The voices of my parents, my grandmother, the voice of my fiancé, the voice of my business coach.

Participant J.

Date of the interview: 12.11.2017.

Form of the interview: Personal meeting

1. Do you consider yourself as an entrepreneur by vocation? Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur?

I was first working for a company but couldn't realize myself there wholly. I was always dreaming of becoming an entrepreneur, and I think it's in my genes.

2. What is your main mission / goal as an entrepreneur? What are your main values in doing business?

For me is very important that my business model has no analogues on the market as I am targeting to change people's lives with my products and to create the new solutions for "making the world a better place to live.

3. Do you consider yourself as a good entrepreneur? Why?

Yes, because I have won many business competitions and have got an investment from one of the most world-famous venture companies.

4. What are your strong and weak sides as an entrepreneur?

My strong sides are creative, and I have a very futuristic vision. In the same time, I consider it as a weak side as my ideas not always find implementation as sometimes, they are too futuristic.

5. What do you like most and less in being an entrepreneur?

Most of all I like to learn new things and meet new people. Less I like the uncertainty.

6. Who influenced you most of all in your model of entrepreneurial behavior? Which model of the entrepreneurship influenced you?

Craig Venter - an entrepreneur combining life science and business. It's really great, and I think that's the best opportunity to influence the world.

7. What are the main things that influence your effectiveness in business? What do you do to make your business effective?

My wife is always helping me to improve my business; she helps me never stop developing and always to achieve the results. For now, I use checklists to control my productiveness in everyday life.

8. What are the methods/instruments that you use to manage your business? Would you like to change any of those? Which things would you like to change and how?

For now, most of my business is managed online. On the one hand, it's terrific and helps me to be flexible and dynamic. But from another side, my team doesn't feel as one, and I don't feel we have it as a real organization.

9. What would you like to change in your business management, but you didn't change yet? Why didn't you change it earlier?

I had some difficulties in management of my business, so I understood I need to develop more competencies in project management. So, I took the course called "PMP" and it really helped me a lot to progress with organizing my business activities.

10. How do you feel as an entrepreneur? In which situations do you feel more comfortable? And in which less comfortable? Why?

I enjoy a lot being an entrepreneur. Most of all, I like to progress with the innovational component of my business, to travel all over the world and meet experts from my field. I feel less comfortable when I have to manage with the deadlines or provide the financial or tax reports, which stresses me a lot.

11. What did happen to you during your professional experience that you can consider as a Critical Incident? How did you act? Do you think that you faced it well? How would you act in such case in the future?

The most incredible situation in my business happened when I was chosen as a participant in a world-known acceleration program. Within 4 months, I had to develop my business idea into real business real for investment. That was exciting and challenging at the same time. I suppose next time I could manage better as now I'm more trained for the standard entrepreneurial tasks.

12. Are there any inner voices that influence your decision making? How would you characterize them?

Yes, I surely understand my mum's voice which tell me "do the things properly," and my wife's voice which says, "do the proper things," that voice always reminds me about achieving results when I'm too excited about the process.

Participant H.

Date of the interview: 21.11.2017.

Form of the interview: Online/Skype meeting

1. Do you consider yourself as an entrepreneur by vocation? Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur?

Yes, I suppose I am, it's kind of my destiny, my treasure and my torture. My father is a shoemaker; he has his own shop since I was 10 years old. I saw how hard it for him is – to earn money. Then my parents divorced, and I started feeling more responsibility for taking care of them. I needed to provide money to my family, and I had the idea that business can open a wide opportunities for that.

2. What is your main mission / goal as an entrepreneur? What are your main values in doing business?

For me, the entrepreneurship is the only way to change something that has to be changed and the chance to create. I have a lot to propose to this world and doing business helps me to develop high technologies becoming a part of a global community implementing innovations.

3. Do you consider yourself as a good entrepreneur? Why?

Not good enough. I'm feeling too stressed and not effective enough, I had to sell the shares of my business to keep it alive, and this fact presses me a lot.

4. What are your strong and weak sides as an entrepreneur?

The strong sides are teamwork, good presentation skills, expertise in the big data. About the weak sides I'm not sure, my partners could say better or even more accurate feedback my clients could give because entrepreneur is characterized by the product he makes, and I hope the one we do is the best one on the market.

5. What do you like most and less in being an entrepreneur?

In entrepreneurship I enjoy getting the result. I have a German blood in my veins, and it helps me to be very accurate and organized. But some things are really making me feel mean is when I'm working so hard but don't get the expected result.

6. Who influenced you most of all in your model of entrepreneurial behavior? Which model of the entrepreneurship influenced you?

I cannot say about anyone specific from business sphere, but I was always inspired by those who overcome difficulties and bring innovations into this world.

7. What are the main things that influence your effectiveness in business? What do you do to make your business effective?

We use the most advanced technologies of business management and product improvement. I travel a lot to present my business and I always learn a lot as well as my business partners do.

8. *What are the methods/instruments that you use to manage your business? Would you like to change any of those? Which things would you like to change and how?*

I suppose I just answered it in the previous question. Just to add that my experience in project management influenced me in a very positive way and helped me to improve my business management style.

9. *What would you like to change in your business management, but you didn't change yet? Why didn't you change it earlier?*

I would like to change my attitude to business. I feel I'm working in so-called 24/7 schedule, but it doesn't bring me the results I expect. My wife claims I don't dedicate enough time to my family and my health becoming worse. I need to start delegating or really don't know what else could change the situation. That stresses me out a lot...

10. *How do you feel as an entrepreneur? In which situations do you feel more comfortable? And in which less comfortable? Why?*

For this period in my life I don't feel comfortable in the role of the entrepreneur as I feel that I gave up and didn't win refusing the part of the shares of my business. Now, dependent completely on investors, I don't feel good and don't understand how to change the situation. But time will show...

11. *What did happen to you during your professional experience that you can consider as a Critical Incident? How did you act? Do you think that you faced it well? How would you act in such case in future?*

One day (I exactly remember it was the first of May) I understood that on despite the fact that I work more than 60 hours a week over the last 5 years I am not productive at all. So, the whole theory of labor division does not apply anymore and the capital (intellectual) does not belong to me, it is in the employees' heads. To be an entrepreneur, you have to accept this challenge. Thus, I started developing my own theory and started to delegate more work to others, trying not to take things too personal. The idea came to me that life is above business.

12. *Are there any interior voices that influence your decision making? How would you characterize them?*

If I use your terminology and call it "voices" I would say that the voice of "myself" is constantly claiming on feeling stressed and tired and being not satisfied by his way of managing business.

Participant N.

Date of the interview: 28.11.2017.

Form of the interview: Personal meeting

1. *Do you consider yourself as an entrepreneur by vocation? Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur?*

Honestly, I decided to become an entrepreneur because there is lack of job positions in my country. My brother is an entrepreneur, and he always was involving me in his projects, inspired and influenced me in the decision to become an entrepreneur. I also wanted to create new models in my profession, so it is only possible when I do it as an entrepreneur freely.

2. *What is your main mission/goal as an entrepreneur? What are your main values in doing business?*

I'd like to add more values to my profession. I'd like to help my clients to take their decisions independently. Also, I'd like to make my services more affordable for various people who need them. My values are: quality, enthusiasm, and helping people.

3. *Do you consider yourself as a good entrepreneur? Why?*

No, because I didn't dedicate enough time to the development of my business by now. Also, I'm not that good in financial aspects. I see that I'm not so good at working with a team of hired people and to take a responsibility for them.

4. *What are your strong and weak sides as an entrepreneur?*

My weak sides: financial aspects and taking the responsibility for other people.

My strong sides: I like to study, I like to help people, I like to create new projects, I have a lot of knowledge of very high quality, I like and do the concept of the long-life-learning, I have an extensive networking.

5. *What do you like most and less in being an entrepreneur?*

What I like more is lifelong learning. To live life as an entrepreneur, it's like the park of amusement! It's much related to the world around, and we can influence it. I like very much thinking about that; it gives me many emotions.

What I like less is instability, and it can lead to the crisis, including financial and that is what I'm afraid of.

6. *Who influenced you most of all in your model of entrepreneurial behavior? Which model of the entrepreneurship influenced you?*

My whole family and specifically my brother who is the entrepreneur and their approach for doing things. Also, my mentors who were a good example for me.

7. *What are the main things that influence your effectiveness in business? What do you do to make your business effective?*

The first thing is not to provide any services for free to attract people. To compare important things with the team and with clients. Always to be in the competition, to adapt yourself to the situations and to change the conditions depending on the situations.

8. *What are the methods/instruments that you use to manage your business? Would you like to change any of those? Which things would you like to change and how?*

Step by step to change the things. And to make the professional diary constructing my business. To develop my portfolio and to develop my personal brand. To get more clients. To register everything and to write down, revise everything every day.

9. *Are there any inner voices that influence your decision making? How would you characterize them?*

The voice of my brother – tells me to innovate and think globally, of my mentors – you need to make an impact and to imply to the practice, the voice of my business coach - to believe in myself. The voices of my professional network from my specialization that influence me. Of my friend – he is actually an anti-entrepreneur, and he says that I should focus on studying things and enjoying my life, so that also supports me in a lot of moments.

Appendix C

Study 2. The results of the Mapping.

Participant L.

+

Entering university
with a very high
score. I was excited
to start the business
study!



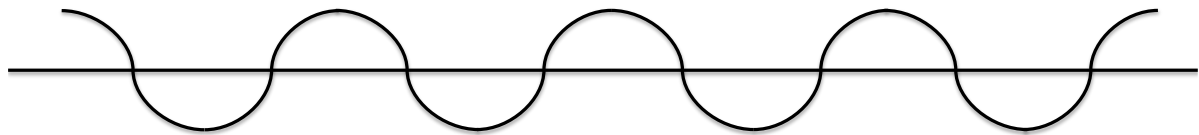
2014

Internship in the
company
"Directorium" –
New visiton and new
possibilities!

2016

Registering on of my
family's businesses
on my name – I
officially became an
entrepreneur

2017



2015

2016

-

First exams put
me into trouble,
that was really
tough!

After one case
I've got the
feeling it's
ashame to be rich
and it
dismotivated me

Participant J.

+

Inspiration:
combination of
science and
entrepreneurship.
Topcat and Batman
cartoon

Participation in
Novartis Biocamp
Boston

Becoming the semi-
finalist of OneStart
London

Starting the
company and getting
the investment

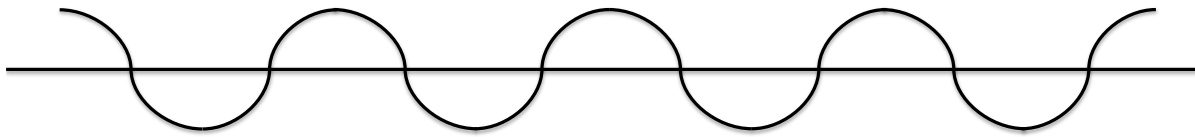


1985

2010

2015

2017



2016

Being denied with
the job position

-

Participant H.

+

My father took me to his workshop place and I could see him working with the clients. It impressed me a lot!

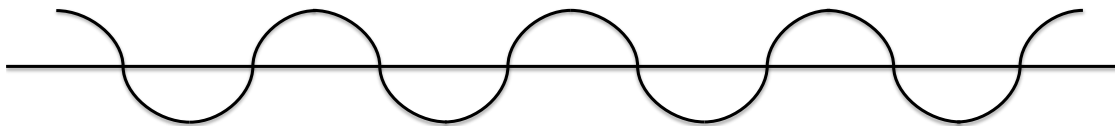
Business study in the Netherlands

Meeting my business partners

1995

2009

2016



2014

Personal crisis

2016

Business problems started

2017

I had to sell business shares to the investor on his conditions



-

Participant N.

+

Organizing the event
with my brother.
Being involved in
my first business
activity

Starting business
with the partner

Starting my
PhD

Creation of my new
business concept

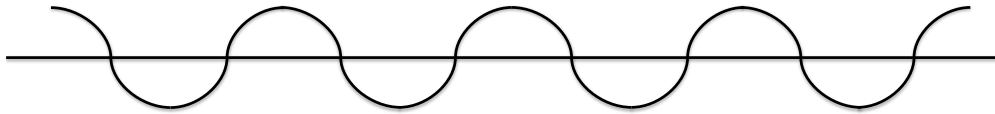


2010

2013

2015

2017



2014

Fail of the business
model

-

Appendix D

Study 2. The weekly form for the participants.

My business story

This form will help you to remember and analyze critical incidents that happened to you during the recent week. We will discuss them during our monthly interview.

*Required

1. Email address *

2. What has happened to you during this week? (business or personal event with a high emotional impact which was important for you) *

3. How did you feel during this situation? *

4. Which actions did you take to face this event? *

5. How did the case finish? *

6. How do you value the emotional impact of this event now?

Mark only one oval.

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| very low emotional impact | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | very high emotional impact |

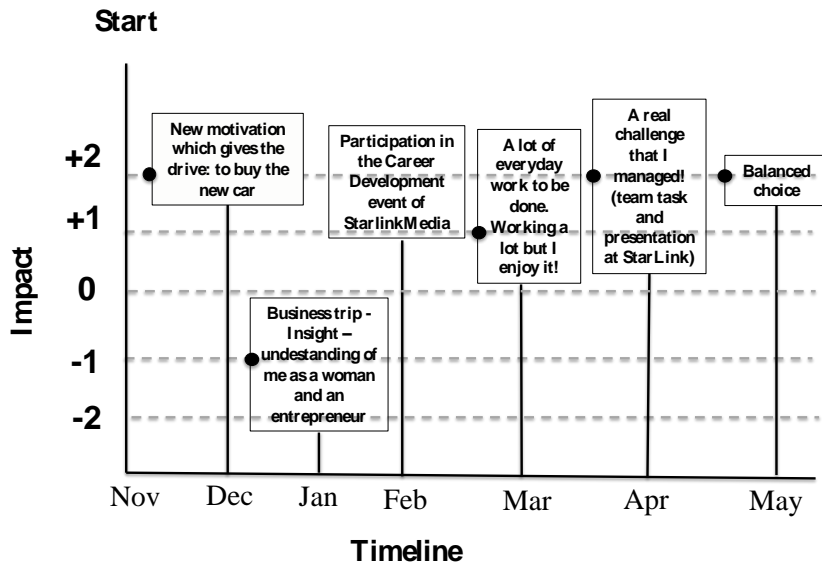
7. What did this event change in you/ your business?

8. How do you feel about this event now? Does it still worry you?

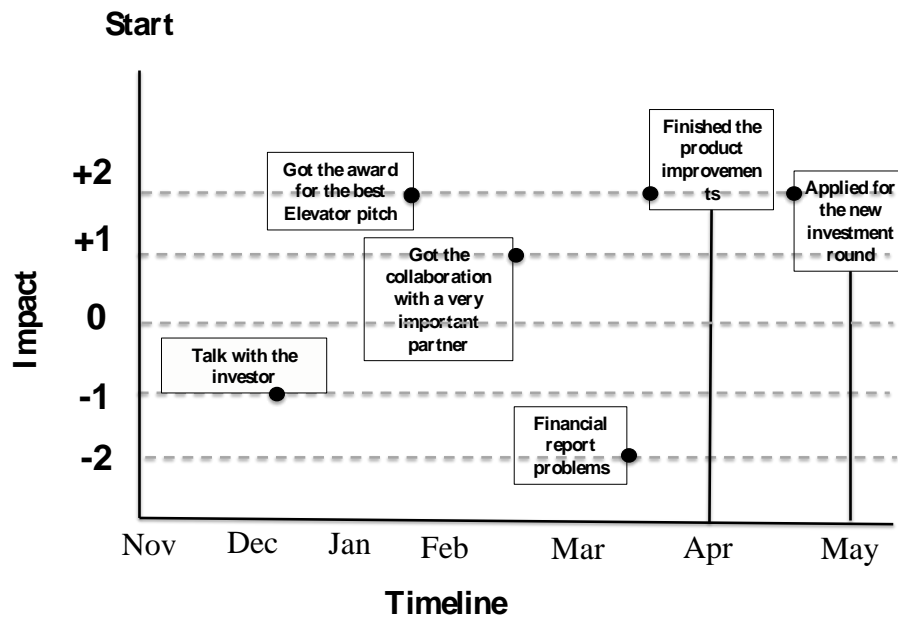
Appendix E

Journey plots

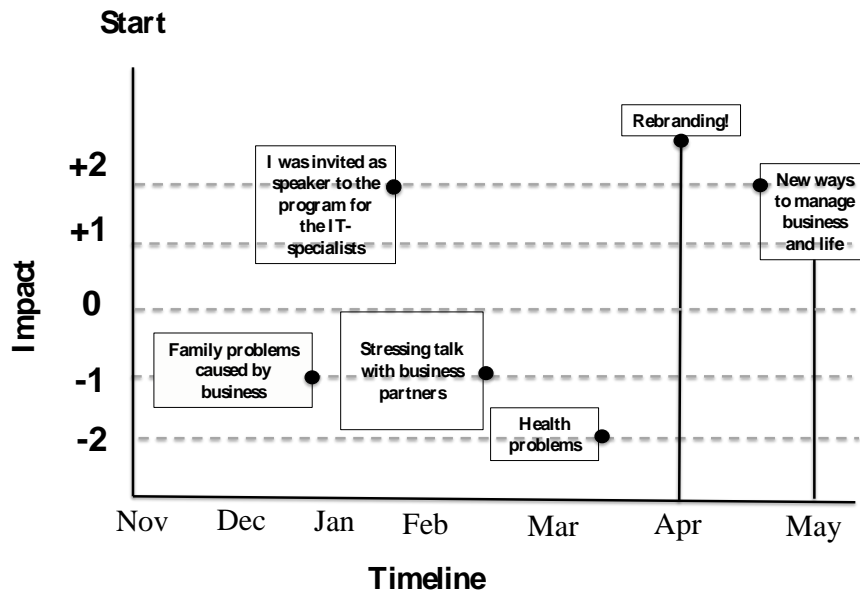
Participant L.



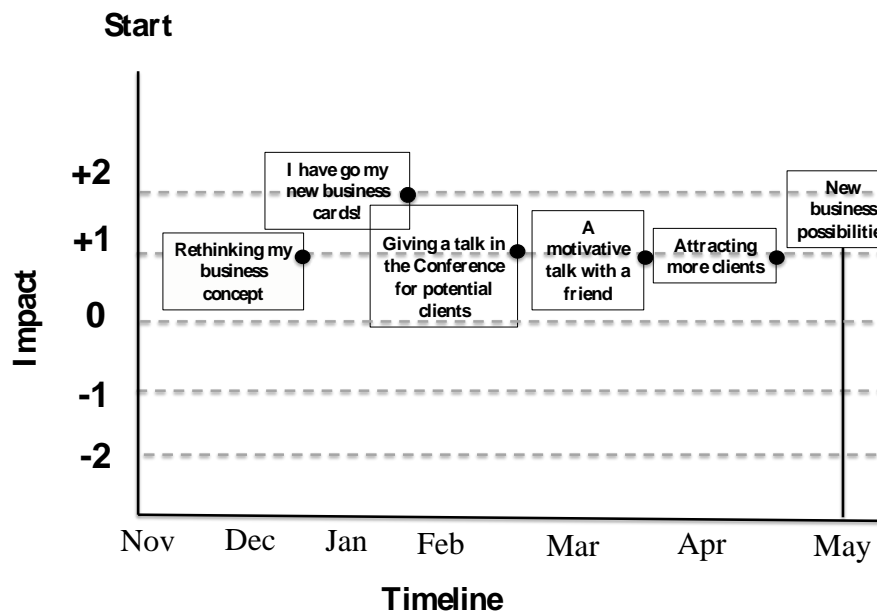
Participant J.



Participant H.



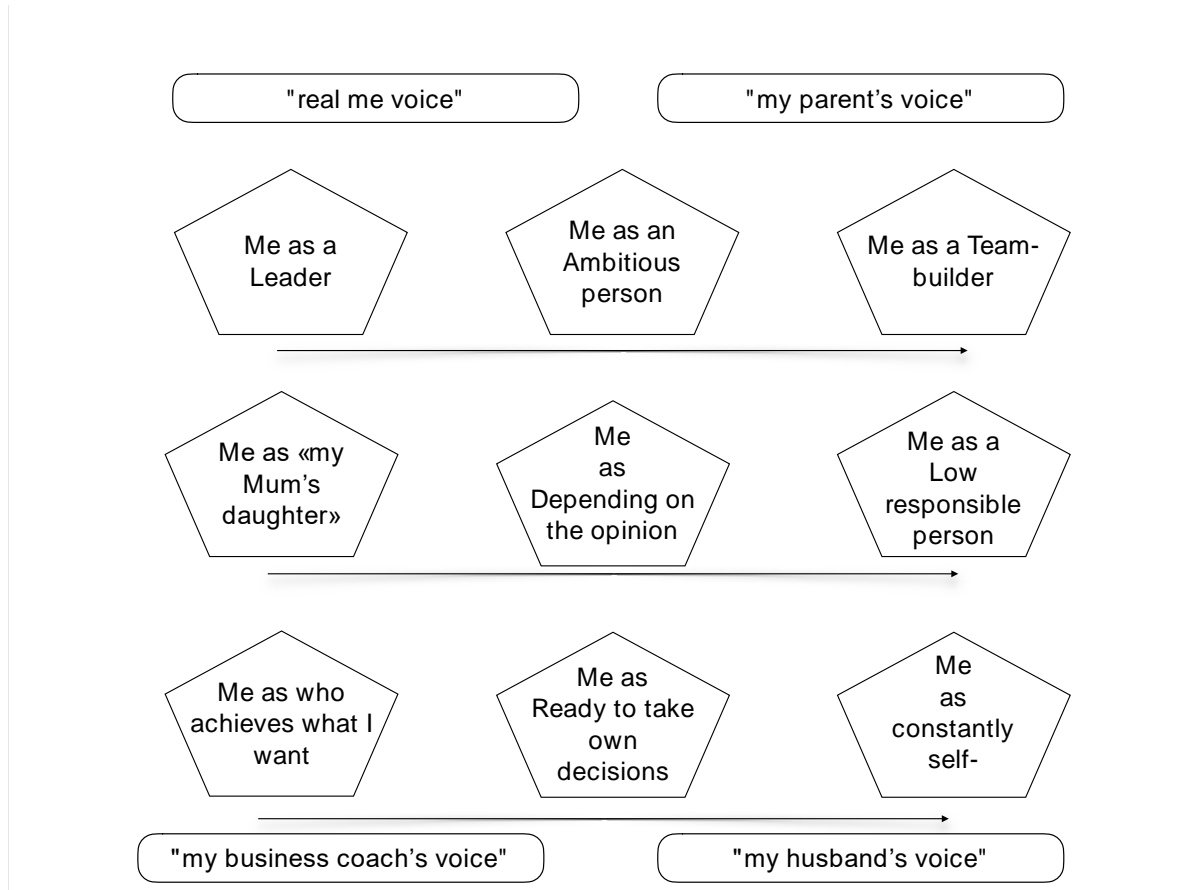
Participant N.



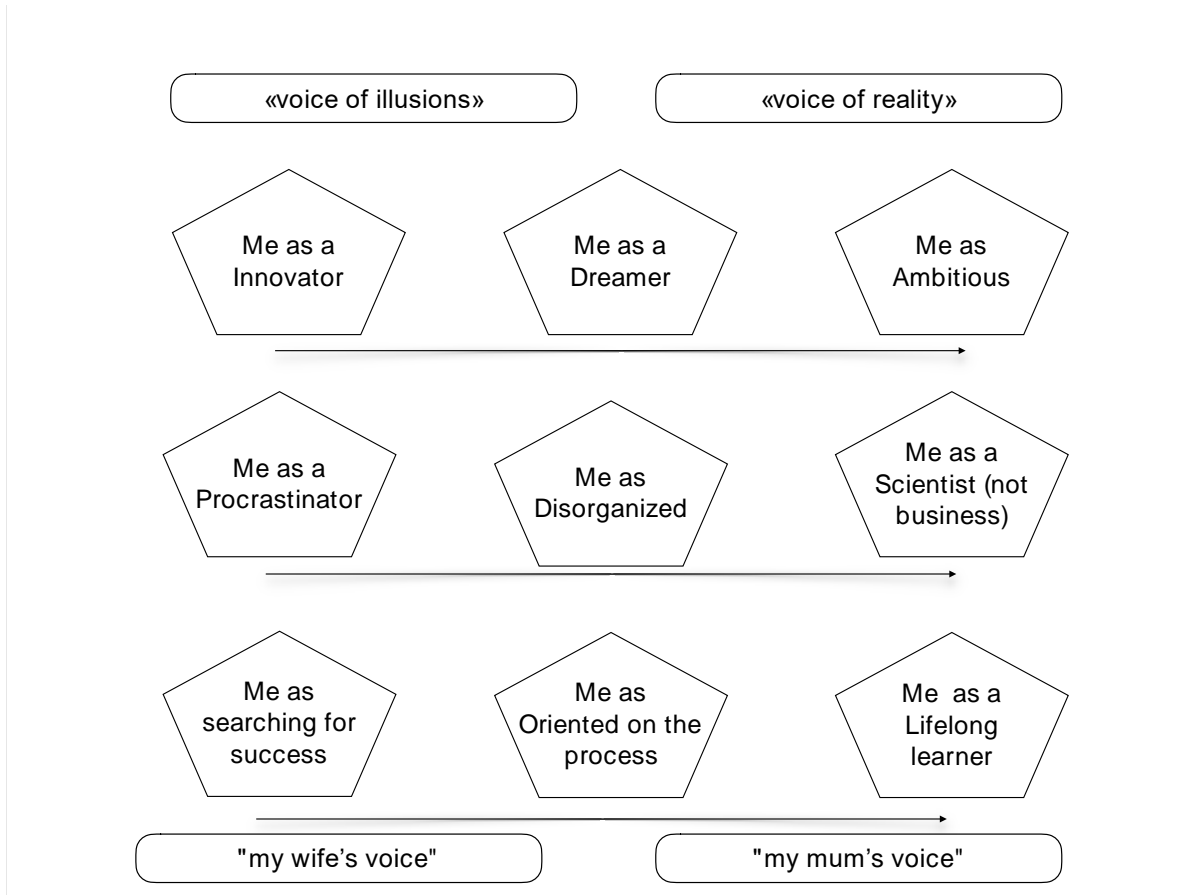
Appendix F

The I-positions for the PPR

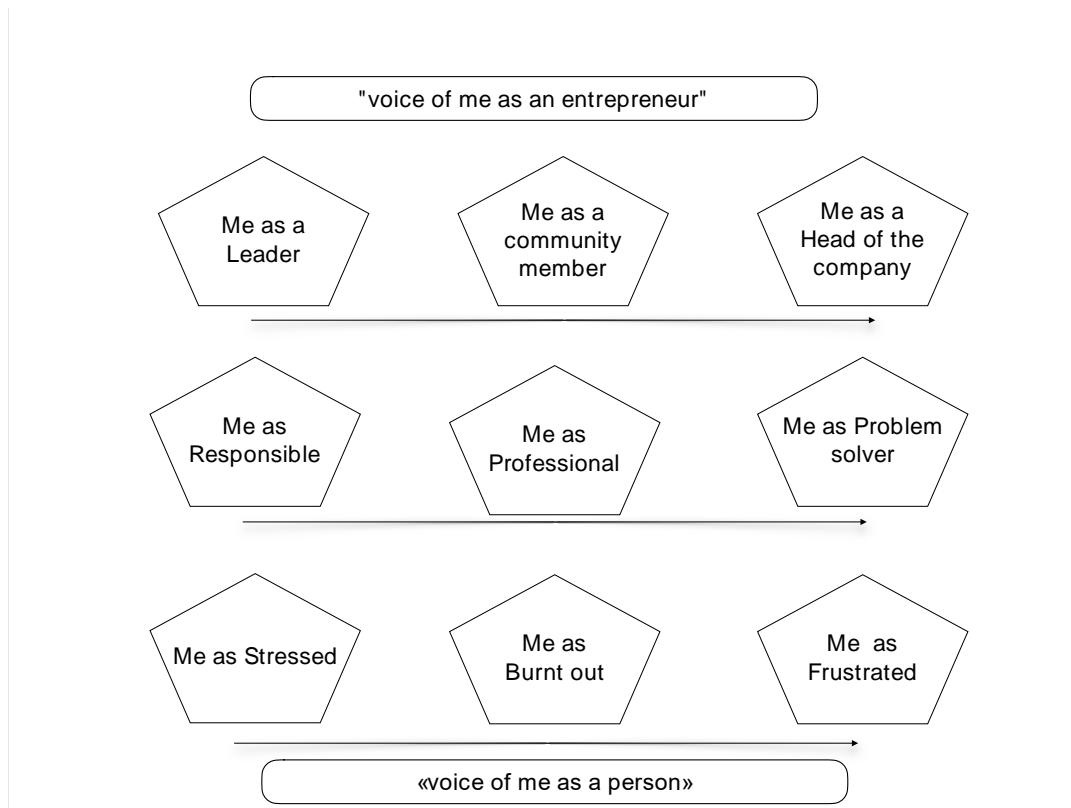
Participant L.



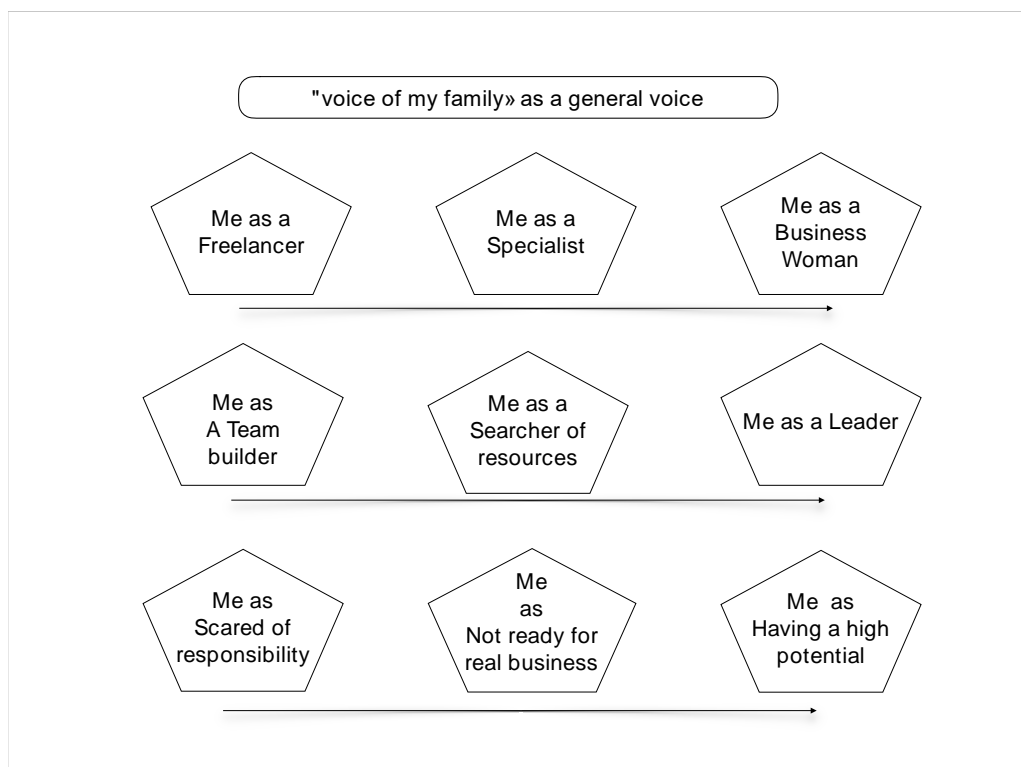
Participant J.



Participant H.



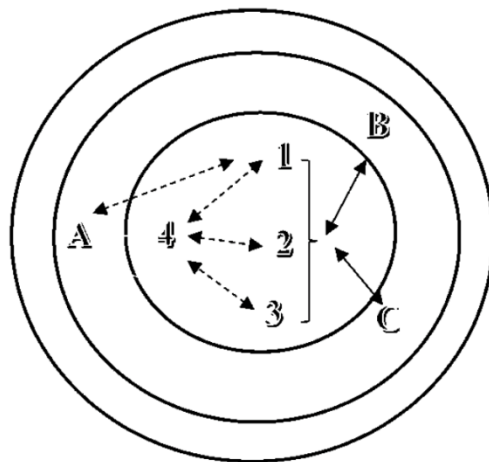
Participant N.



Appendix G

PPR

Participant L.



Intern (I)

- (1) I-position: Leader
- (2) I-position: Real me
- (3) I-position: Achiever
- (4) I-position: Dependent

Extern (others-in-me)

- (A) My parents
- (B) My husband
- (C) My business coach

Outside (Community)

- My parents' company
- My internship company
- My university

non-conflictive relationships \longleftrightarrow

conflictive relationships $\dashleftarrow \dashrightarrow$

Participant J.

Intern (I)

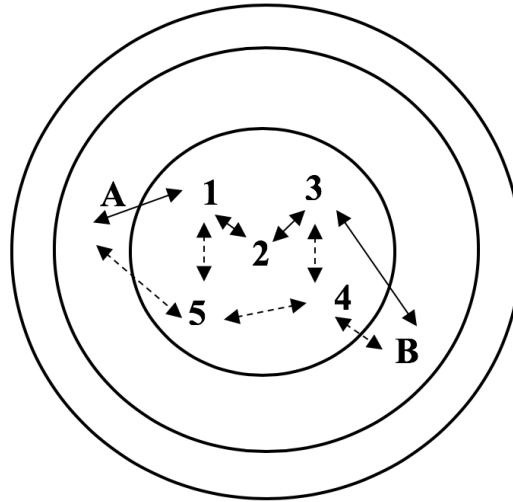
- (1) I-position: Innovator
- (2) I-position: Dreamer
- (3) I-position: Ambitious
- (4) I-position: Disorganized
- (5) I-position: Oriented on the process

Extern (others-in-me)

- (A) My wife
- (B) My mother

Outside (Community)

- My previous company
- My investor
- My alumni community



non-conflictive relationships \longleftrightarrow conflictive relationships $\dashleftarrow \dashrightarrow$

Participant H.

Intern (I)

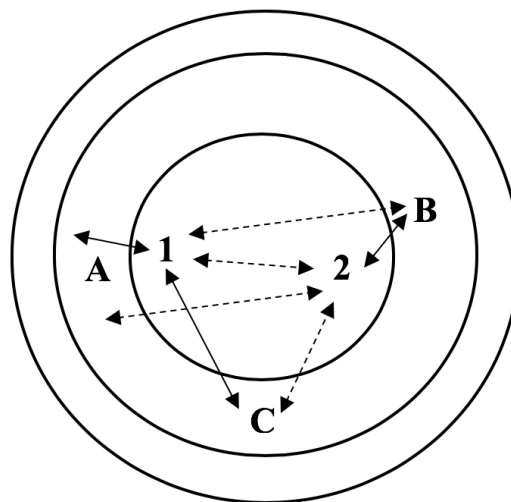
- (1) I-position: Entrepreneur
- (2) I-position: Person

Extern (others-in-me)

- (A) My business partners
- (B) My family
- (C) My investors

Outside (Community)

- My professional community
- Me as a representative of high-technological business



non-conflictive relationships \longleftrightarrow conflictive relationships $\dashleftarrow \dashrightarrow$

Participant N.

Intern (I)

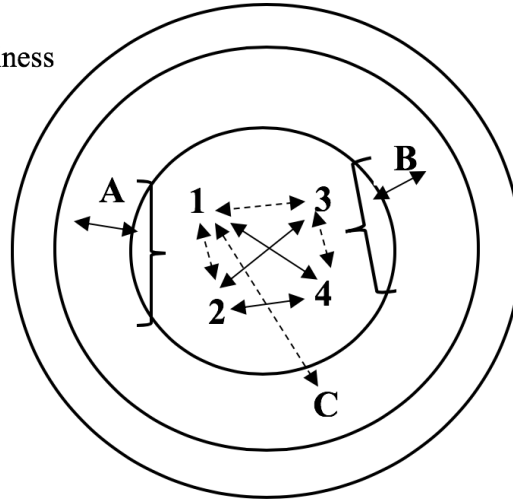
- (1) I-position: Entrepreneur
- (2) I-position: Freelancer
- (3) I-position: Not ready for the business
- (4) I-position: Searcher of resources

Extern (others-in-me)

- (A) My parents
- (B) My brother
- (C) My best friend

Outside (Community)

- My professional community
- My scientific group



non-conflictive relationships \longleftrightarrow conflictive relationships $\leftarrow - - - - \rightarrow$

Appendix H

Study 3. Evaluation list.

Name of the evaluator _____ Date of the evaluation _____

“I-DEAL Me: The entrepreneur whom I want to become”.

Formation of the balanced entrepreneurial identity.

1. **Actuality:** Do you find the program satisfying the needs of the modern entrepreneurs? If the program is up-to-date and competitive?

Please evaluate the level (point with the “V” sign in the square below):

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Not satisfying | Needs a lot of corrections | Needs few corrections | Excellent |

YOUR EXPLANATION:

.....

2. **Methodology:** Do you find the methods of the program satisfying its final goals? Are the methods and tools of the program chosen and applied correctly?

Please evaluate the level:

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Not satisfying | Needs a lot of corrections | Needs few corrections | Excellent |

YOUR EXPLANATION:

.....

3. **Practical application:** Do you think the entrepreneurs will be eager to take part in the program? Do you think the module of this program will provide practical use and development of modern entrepreneurial skills?

Please evaluate the level:

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Not satisfying | Needs a lot of corrections | Needs few corrections | Excellent |

YOUR EXPLANATION:

.....

4. Additional comments