

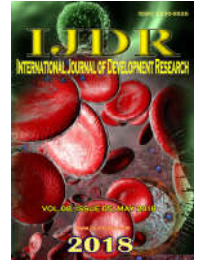


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## ENTREPRENEURIAL WOMEN: THE PURSUIT OF THE DISCURSIVE *ETHÉ*

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### ABSTRACT

The study is based on initial conceptions for a thesis and has, as a modal point, the widening of the understanding of how women, in the socio-professional context, become entrepreneurial, and in what way they launch themselves as protagonists in this process. The aim of the study is to analyze the identity of the entrepreneurial woman under the aspect of cultural dynamics, entrepreneurship and the discursive *ethos*. The analysis reveals that it is useful to cross-examine the themes in an interdisciplinary way to reflect on the discursive *ethos* constructed through scenarios on entrepreneurship, shown in the interdiscursivity of women's socio-professional practices, and to understand them.

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### INTRODUCTION

The 21st Century technological transformations have generated transformations in the economy and in industry all over the world. Technology, as it develops, breaks with labour organization, and economic frontiers widen in the pursuit of the development of nations. Entrepreneurship is, undoubtedly, one of the most studied phenomena in the world and there are countless researches that are based on the investigation of this theme. It is noted that entrepreneurship has been used as a mechanism of parity of rights for women and evokes their participation, as historical subjects, in economic growth in their regions. The research approaches preliminary propositions about female entrepreneurship, culture, identity, and the working environment. The study theme is delimited to the discourse analysis through scenarios, and the discursive *ethé*, shown in the interdiscursivity of the socio-professional practices of women entrepreneurs. The objective of the study is to propose discussions about the identity of the entrepreneurial woman, under the aspect of the cultural

dynamics of entrepreneurship and the discursive *ethos*. The research is linked to the Graduate Program in Processes and Cultural Manifestations and is inserted in the line of research: Language and Communication Processes. Matters regarding identity and culture are, here, supported by Hall (2006); Wagner (2010); Bourdieu (1994) and Woodward (2000). The arguments about entrepreneurship are made by Ahl (2002); Bruin, Brusck and Welter (2006); Dornelas (2012) and Filon (1999). On discursive *ethos*, the postulates of Maingueneau (1997, 2008a, 2008b) make the articulations of discourse analysis of the French line. It is an exploratory research, with bibliographical focus, intending to tension the proposed notions. The analysis reveals that it is profitable to cross-examine the themes in an interdisciplinary way to reflect on the discursive *ethos* constructed through scenarios on entrepreneurship, shown in the interdiscursivity of women's socio-professional practices and to understand them.

### Reflections on Entrepreneurship: Dialogues Between Culture, Identity and *Ethos*

The American anthropologist Geertz (2008), to a certain extent, emphasizes approach on culture that, from its point of

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view, can be understood as a system of conceptions revealed in a symbolic way that man uses to maintain and develop his knowledge to respect for life. Wagner (2012, 367) complements by saying that there are "two universally recognized domains of experience: the realm of the innate, or the" given, "of the inherent of things, and the realm of the subjects upon which human beings can exercise control and take responsibility." In this perspective, cultural and social phenomena are understood as a dialogical relationship between the two domains. Hall (2006) warns that global interdependence is leading to the collapse of all strong cultural identities, generating fragmentations of their codes and a multiplicity of styles, resulting in cultural pluralism. It should also be remembered that social identity is represented by what each group reveals of itself and by what it perceives of the other. Bourdieu (1994) formulates the concept of *habitus* as a source of representations that is the fruit of concrete circumstances. Thus *habitus* can be translated as an understanding of a society's way of thinking and its moral, political, and aesthetic judgments. An interest in the apprehension of questions about identity, nowadays, gains relevance with the purposes that link "the way identity enters the circle of culture as well as the way identity and difference relate to discourse and representation" (Woodward, p. 16, author translation).

It is important to remember that identity and difference – that is, the relational notion of identity – are in connection with power, which means that whoever has the power to represent has the power to determine identities. The dynamic movement of the world economy has favoured the insertion of entrepreneurial women in the Brazilian and international market. It is noteworthy that the perspective that they are the social actors who renew concepts, paradigms and generate wealth in a society (Dornelas, 2012) show the relevance of studies on women entrepreneurs. Thus, one must understand that entrepreneurship is described as being the quality or character of those who are entrepreneurs, and the individual who, on his own initiative, realizes or conceives new methods to improve and expand activities related to services, products and administrative activities. It is notorious, however, that the multifaceted characteristics of the concept generate divergences about their meaning. In spite of the diffusion of the concept of entrepreneur by means of writings in English line, the term is of French origin, of the noun *entrepreneur* that, in turn, is derived from the Latin *imprehendere*, or *prehendere*. (Dornelas, 2012).

The approaches to entrepreneurship are vast, and those of a psychological and anthropological character emphasize the personality characteristics of the entrepreneur. In the sociological approach, it is understood the entrepreneurial subject as the one that creates the organization, and the economic one understands the subject as an economic agent. (Julien, 2010). Accordingly, Filion (1999), in his research, shortens the various approaches by condensing them into two main areas: economic and behavioural, because there are economists who relate entrepreneurship "[...] to innovation and behaviorists who emphasize attitudinal aspects with creativity and intuition". (Zarpellon, 2010, p. 49, author translation). Among the main theorists of the economic approach are mentioned: Richard Cantillon, Jean Baptiste Say and Joseph Shumpeter. Theorists Max Weber and David McClelland stand out in the behavioral approach. (Dornelas, 2012). It is observed that the path taken by women in history and their

advances in work activities contributed to their attempt to detach themselves from the social ties that persist in the present. It is noticed that the studies on the woman in the entrepreneurship find space in academic conferences in 2003, in the United States. It is clear that, up to the 1990s, there was talk only about the entrepreneur, but with women starting to participate in these niches, it became necessary to highlight the research that gives voice to women in this area. (Bruin; Welter, 2006). In reality, the field of entrepreneurship that gives voice to women has often been related to feminist theories in which the phenomenon is analyzed by gender lenses. Based on the thinking of Beauvoir (2009), who understood gender as a social construct, Scott (1995), in a poststructuralist perspective, emphasizes the relational character of the genre, suggesting reflections on the identity roles of women and men in society. In this sense, it is in the symbolic universe that the perceptions about the distinctions between men and women are investigated, investigating their interpretative analytical competences. In this same line of reasoning, it is possible to say that an unequal relationship of power can lead to a dominated group submission, as Bourdieu (2010) suggests, when he speaks of male domination in society.

Therefore, the search for the establishment of a gender equality helps the social development of the nations (ALH, 2002) and allows the access of women to the various labour institutions. In this study, the assumptions of respect for equality between people and the principles of respect for the diversity of the human being are borne in mind, but it is important to remember that, in it, the point is the entrepreneurial woman and how this is revealed in the discourse. It is believed that it is profitable to dialogue with the issues of entrepreneurship, since it seeks to understand, in an interdisciplinary way, the complexity of the phenomenon and its interdiscursive implications in the socio-professional practices of women in technological parks. The perspective of the enunciative act pervades the reflection on the status of the enunciator and the addressee. According to Maingueneau (2008a, p. 87, author's quotes), "the various modes of enunciative subjectivity also depend on discursive competence, and each discourse defines the statute that the enunciator must attribute to his addressee to legitimize his saying". It can also be said that both the enunciator and the addressee seize a place and, in this space, the enunciator projects an image of himself in the discourse from which he legitimizes it. (Freitas, 2011).

In the work environment, through enunciation, the entrepreneur elaborates enunciative scenes that will determine the discursive *ethos*. Self-image allows the interpretation of the subject's identity and the cultural manifestations that emerge from these discourses. According to Freitas (2011), it is not possible to think of speech in a watertight way, but as a construct of several dimensions. When we think of discursive *ethos*, it is immediately linked to the idea of interaction of several factors: pre-discursive *ethos*, discursive *ethos* (*ethos* shown), but also "fragments of the text in which the enunciator evokes his own enunciation (*ethos*) - directly - "is a friend who speaks to him" or indirectly, by means of metaphors or allusions to other speech scenes, for example". (Maingueneau, in Amossy, 2008c, p. 18 author's quotes). Discourse is regarded as language in interaction, linked to constructions of meaning. Therefore, the formal aspects of language are of interest as they are determined by meaning, by the semantic directions that the particularized situations of language use render them.

According to Maingueneau (1997), from the enunciative scene, the personality of the enunciator, which constitutes the discursive *ethos*, is revealed. The exploration of these concepts allows to conceive the discourse endowed with dynamism and movement.

### Conclusion

The articulations with the discursive studies and the questions about culture, identity and entrepreneurship provide clues that help in the understanding of the scenographies of the entrepreneurial women. According to this theory, one can affirm that the discourses originate in a dialogical connection with the other in the space of exchanges between the different positions. It is understood in this study that interdiscursivity is a privileged place of mediation between language and ideology. It is a place of social practices and the constitution of subjects in language. It is in the discourse of entrepreneurship that reverberate the cultural and identity manifestations, fruits of the symbolic constructions of the human being. Thus, the discursive aspects also enables a greater understanding of the identity of the entrepreneurial woman, her values, her cultures, her ideologies, as well as her social relations.

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