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**SOBREVIVÊNCIA DAS ORGANIZAÇÕES  
EM TEMPOS INCERTOS:**

O papel dos gestores e do ambiente externo  
no **sucesso** e no **fracasso** organizacional.

## **ENSINO E APRENDIZAGEM DO EMPREENDEDORISMO NAS INSTITUIÇÕES DE ENSINO SUPERIOR PORTUGUESAS: UMA ANÁLISE CRÍTICA DO DISCURSO**

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN PORTUGUESE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

**ÁREA TEMÁTICA: TEORIAS ORGANIZACIONAIS**

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#### **Resumo**

O presente estudo é de carácter preliminar e tem como principal objetivo realizar uma análise crítica do discurso do ensino do empreendedorismo em Portugal. Para este fim foi realizado um estudo piloto com parte dos dados coletados em um curso de empreendedorismo numa universidade portuguesa. Os dados foram coletados via entrevistas que duraram em média 40 min cada, onde professores e alunos podiam responder livremente. Como principais resultados parciais podemos afirmar que os discursos na educação empreendedora são fortemente ancorados na prática e possuem a noção de que o empreendedorismo é a melhor forma de se resolver problemas, sejam eles organizacionais, sociais ou mesmo pessoais. Há ainda idealização de um comportamento empreendedor, que por sua vez encontra resistência quanto a forma de adesão e internalização dos indivíduos.

**Palavras-chave:** Ensino do Empreendedorismo; Análise crítica do discurso; Portugal.

#### **Abstract**

The present study is of a preliminary nature and its main objective is to carry out a critical analysis of the discourse of entrepreneurship education in Portugal. For this purpose, a pilot study was carried out with part of the data collected in an entrepreneurship course at a Portuguese university. Data were collected via interviews that lasted an average of 40 min each, where teachers and students could respond freely. As main partial results we can say that the discourses in entrepreneurial education are strongly anchored in practice and have the notion that entrepreneurship is the best way to solve problems, whether organizational, social or even personal. There is also an idealization of entrepreneurial behavior, which in turn encounters resistance as to the form of adhesion and internalization of individuals

**Keywords:** *Teaching Entrepreneurship; Critical discourse analysis; Portugal.*

#### **1. INTRODUÇÃO**

In Portugal there are very few sources of data on entrepreneurship (Brás & Soukiazis, 2020), but, on the other hand, pressure is growing at international and national level for greater investments and incentives in entrepreneurship (Redford, 2006, 2008, 2013; Fernandes &

Afonso, 2015; Niwa, 2018). This pressure can be justified, according to authors such as Silva *et al* (2008), due to the fact that Portugal is considered a country with a low entrepreneurial profile and, therefore, with a culture of low risk tolerance. In order to respond to this demand for more entrepreneurship, several actions have already been taken at the government level in the country. Despite not having a unified national policy for entrepreneurship education (Eurydice, 2016), the field is already receiving attention through several initiatives, both public and private (Redford, 2008; Daniel *et al*, 2015; Gomes *et al*, 2018) with the aim of leveraging the “entrepreneurial intention of students”.

In this sense, this paper aims to contribute to the understanding of entrepreneurship teaching and learning in Portugal from a critical perspective. As a general objective, the study proposes to carry out a critical analysis of the discourse in higher level entrepreneurial education. As for specific objectives, it is intended to understand the meanings involved in entrepreneurial education for teachers and students, highlighting critical aspects and models of entrepreneurial action which are considered as ideal or a reference in the process. Additionally, the research will also seek to understand underlying models of who the entrepreneur is and what the perceptions about the functions of entrepreneurship are. Methodologically, the research involves a case study in Portuguese higher education institution(s), where the narratives of teachers and students are analyzed through Fairclough's (2001a) Critical Discourse Analysis. It is considered that this approach is the one that best suits the objectives of the study, as it allows analyzes at various levels, dynamically contemplating textual, discursive and social dimensions (Locke, 2004).

## **2. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION**

As stated by Fayolle (2013) people engaged in the area of entrepreneurship have been working hard and putting their emotions into this endeavor, which may at least partly explain the wide popularization of the topic among the most varied sectors. Authors such as Kuratko (2005) believe that entrepreneurship is a kind of dominant force that sets the tone for the new economic revolution of our times. This approach to entrepreneurship always reinforces that there is a certain kind of person with a relatively fixed behavioral profile who would be responsible for making entrepreneurship happen, so there are often descriptions that the entrepreneur is someone who is risk-prone, focused and capable to take off the paper and put into practice new business ideas. Over time and with the greater assimilation of the entrepreneurial perspective by the public we can say that there has been an almost unrestricted assimilation of the entrepreneurial profile, so it now seems reasonable to say that in both profitable or nonprofit organizational environments the Entrepreneurship approach has become a kind of “correct posture” to be adopted in the most varied market scenarios. According to a 2016 European Commission report entitled “EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework”, Europe's concern to develop entrepreneurial skills in its citizens is evident, as it considers beneficial to the individual and society that citizens are equipped with the entrepreneurial mindset (Bacigalupo, 2016).

Regarding the Portuguese reality Redford (2013) highlights the need to deepen educational initiatives that stimulate entrepreneurial culture at all levels, since it shares the conviction that entrepreneurship is the way to consolidate Portuguese economic development. Still on the

Portuguese context regarding entrepreneurship, the 2016 European Commission report entitled “Entrepreneurship Education in European Schools” points out that despite not having a well-defined national policy for entrepreneurship, Portugal leads the project “Youth Start - Entrepreneurial Challenges” which, together with six other European countries, seek to promote practical teaching activities in regular education. Another initiative that points to the centrality of entrepreneurship in Portugal is the “Strategic Program for Entrepreneurship and Innovation” which, according to the report, aims to promote entrepreneurship at all educational levels of Portugal. Entrepreneurial education thus seems to be the key that opens all doors. Individuals, companies, communities and even countries have applied entrepreneurial skills to achieve higher levels of success and competitiveness.

In this scenario Binks; Starkey and Mahon (2006) say that Entrepreneurial Education has a vital importance in seeking to integrate industry, society and community. It is also highlighted that entrepreneurial education is also of interest to large companies, which seek to be similar in the agility and adaptability of small businesses and individual entrepreneurs. In a certain way the idea that is passed through Entrepreneurial Education is to promote the independence and freedom of the individual. It is imagined that if a person has internalized the necessary entrepreneurial tools, he or she will be able to deal with all the adversities of life, even if such adversities come from the social environment in which it operates. According to Hytti and O’Gorman (2004); Van Gelderen (2010) apud Laalo and Heinonen (2016), Entrepreneurial Education is a call for greater autonomy and responsibility of individuals. Komulainen (2006) says that “as a national project Entrepreneurship Education (EE) includes and offers entrepreneurship as a path to employment for all of us”. That is the idea, once again, that mindset and entrepreneurial characteristics would be sufficient for a person to be successful.

Therefore, it can be said that today the imperative of the entrepreneurial ethos is such that even individuals are adopting criteria, procedures, goals and behaviors for themselves in order to become more attractive to the market. In other words, the company would be a matrix that brings together a series of other “micro companies”, individuals who, embodying entrepreneurial principles, increasingly seek a better fit to the labor market. The individual applying the entrepreneurial approach to himself, as a being, becomes a client and supplier of himself (Bröckling, 2005). In our view such logic, very common in the approach of Entrepreneurship Education, reinforces the point that success and failure are consequences of individual actions and it is at this point that we indicate to the need for a critical reflection on Entrepreneurship Education.

### **3. CRITICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION**

As previously demonstrated, Entrepreneurship Education has strived to promote a model suited to the demands of the market but on the other hand it seems to ignore its 10 weaknesses and contradictions. In this sense Critical Entrepreneurship Education studies have a role to play, that is to introduce questions and reflect on the basic assumptions of the area, in order to propose new paths and transformations in the established current practices. Critical studies in entrepreneurship should seek to redirect the theme, taking away from determinism and opening doors for the rearticulation of knowledge in the sense of freedom and emancipation of people and social production (Verduyn, Dey and Tedmanson, 2017). Therefore, this proposal aims to

question and theorize about the existing (or non-existent) space for the critical reframing of content in entrepreneurship courses, in our case in Portugal.

As has been said, among other things, we are interested in investigating whether and how students are encouraged to think critically about entrepreneurship. As stated by Hägg (2017), most of the pedagogical approaches in entrepreneurial education focus on action and “learning by doing”. Apparently, in Portugal studies such as the Portuguese Context Entrepreneurship Education Handbook (Redford, 2013) lead us to believe that the entrepreneurial approach practiced and desired in the country does not differ much from the one advocated by the more pragmatic lines. In short, the book and its articles discuss ways and directions for the implementation and expansion of the entrepreneurial approach in education, without however making further criticism or introducing fundamental questions. When they exist, the criticism is to improve the efficiency of the methods for employing entrepreneurial education, but the central concepts and the rationale behind them are never in doubt. Skoglund and Berglund (2018) confirm this view and claim that for the most part entrepreneurship studies aim to foster their understanding or improve execution.

## **4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 STUDY DESIGN**

The research we propose is of qualitative nature. According to Creswell (2014), researchers who choose this type of approach follow inductive reasoning with an emphasis on individual meaning and always take into account the complexity of the contexts in which the research object presents itself. From an ontological point of view, the study is based on Critical Realism (Fairclough, 2005). Data collection involves semi-structured interviews, and data analysis is carried out through the Critical Discourse Analysis method (Fairclough, 2001). In this section, the preliminary results of a pilot study are presented. Data has been collected and transcribed, but the conclusions presented here are still provisional.

### **4.2 The Critical Discourse Analysis of Fairclough**

Fairclough (2001b) draws on the understanding of social reality as being composed of a range of practices and that each of these practices has a semiotic dimension. Semiosis, in turn, is understood as any form of communication, whether visual, sound or gestural. The practice, in turn, is understood as the way things are usually done regularly. In this way it can be said that there are economic, political, cultural and practices.

According to Fairclough (2001b), CDA is the study of one of the dimensions of social practice, namely the discursive dimension. It takes as a principle that the meanings are not given, but rather need us to attribute the proper meaning through analysis. Obviously not all practices will have the same importance in their semiotic (discursive) dimension, that is, there are practices where discourse is more or less important. To the author discourse analysis does not focus only on discourse, but rather is interested in the relationship of discourse with non-discursive social aspects, so the CDA seeks to study how the mechanisms of change initiated by discursive

changes work. In short, the question is how discursive aspects can generate consequences in non-discursive spheres (Fairclough, 2005 p. 924).

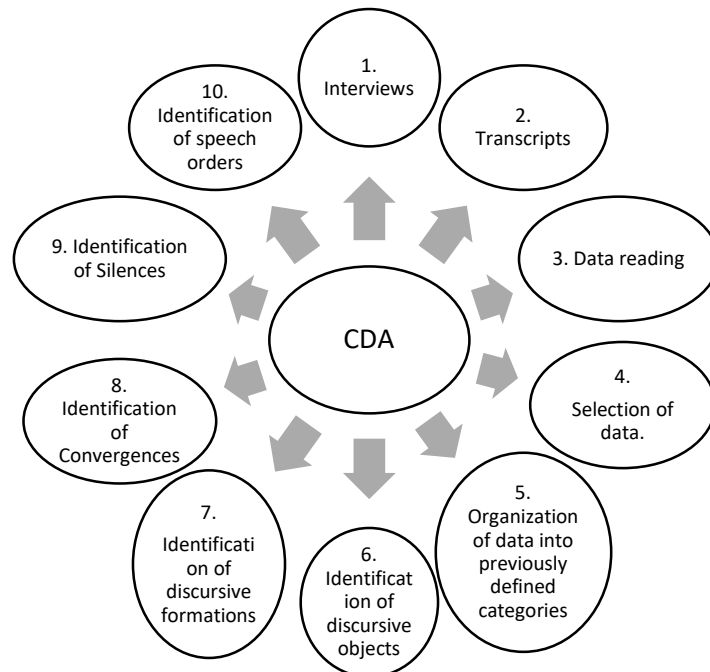
Fairclough (1993, 2001a) works the CDA in a three-dimensional approach, which contextualizes the discourses at different levels. In this way, at the center of the analysis, the text is the fundamental part; at a level above is the discursive practice; and at a more external level we have the so-called social practice.

At the textual level, we analyze the text itself, its construction, the words used, the language and grammar. The discursive practice, in turn, concerns the forms of production, distribution and consumption of those discourses. Finally, the level of social practice seeks to understand the ways in which the text dialogues with ideologies and structures of power. In short, the text and social practice are connected through discursive practices. In this way this triad remains with the constant exchange of influences from one to the other. For example, a text produced for a newspaper will bring clues about the reality in which it was produced, by whom and for whom. In this way the "discursive practice" is in tune with the text which in turn is also linked to the environment of the great ideas (social practice) that the text inevitably expresses, whether through direct or indirect references.

## **5 Pilot Study - Data Collection and Processing**

For this pilot study, several in-depth interviews were carried out with students and professors from a Portuguese University. The target audience are people who work or have worked with the subject of entrepreneurship, since the focus of the study is to approach the teaching of entrepreneurship as a discursive phenomenon. In order to preserve the identity of respondents and institutions, all names were omitted and/or modified. The interviews lasted for an average of 40 minutes, were based on a questionnaire with open questions and carried out in person or by videoconference, depending on the availability of the interviewees. The analyses were mostly based on the three-dimensional model of Fairclough (2001), but in addition, the analysis structuring models of da Costa and Silva Saraiva (2012; 2014) and Abdalla and Altaf (2018) were also used. Therefore, data collection and analysis were processed according to the following figure:

**Figure 2: Data processing scheme.**



**Source:** Elaborated by the author based on Fairclough (2001), Costa & Saraiva (2012; 2014) and Abdalla and Altaf (2018).

As Fairclough (2003b p. 10) points out, CDA is based on texts, but in the case of face-to-face conversations, the text is everything that is said between the participants in the dialogue, so that it is up to the researcher to carry out the transcriptions and analyze the meanings of communication as it occurs. Therefore, all interviews were recorded and later transcribed in order to be analyzed.

## 6 DATA ANALISYS

### a) Identification of Discursive Objects

The pilot study proposed here is a reflection of the current level of research development, therefore, the results presented here do not have a definitive character, considering that the process of collecting, transcribing and analyzing of the interviews is still in progress. As described in figure 2, after organizing the data, the most representative interviews were analyzed, which in turn resulted in 13 discursive objects: 1 Entrepreneurship as a generator of jobs; 2 Entrepreneur as a creator of innovation; 3 Entrepreneurship as problem solving; 4 Centrality of practice; 5 Teaching methods; 6 Entrepreneurial education; 7 Personal characteristics; 8 The entrepreneurial profile for the market; 9 Creating a better world; 10 Entrepreneurial look; 11 Model Entrepreneur, 12 Resistance; and 13 Critical Aspects.

## b) Identification of Discursive Formations

After analyzing and coding the discursive objects, the intertextuality between the items was verified. In this phase, the objects that were directly or indirectly related were grouped in the same discursive formation. The discursive formations identified were: 1 Sense and Functions of entrepreneurship; 2 Entrepreneurship in Education; 3 Entrepreneurial identity; 4 Beyond work and business; 5 To be or not to be, that's the question.

**Senses and Functions of Entrepreneurship (1):** this discursive formation brings together the most representative discursive objects regarding the meaning and usefulness of entrepreneurship for teachers and students. Respondents invariably demonstrated favorable attitudes towards entrepreneurship, although some also admitted not knowing in depth the actions taken by the government to promote entrepreneurial intention in individuals. Among the most outstanding social impacts, the discursive objects “Entrepreneurship as a generator of jobs” and “Entrepreneurship as a creator of innovation” are related to the sense of promoting economic and social development, thus dialoguing with the economic perspective of entrepreneurial theory.

“Therefore, I would say that the role ... the most important impacts of entrepreneurship is the creation of jobs and wealth in the country, and therefore this is undeniable, there is no way to deceive, right? [...] And... individually, I don't know... there is a role... the entrepreneur is typically an engine of innovation, and therefore, there are things that are built and that are developed because there is an entrepreneur, right?” (Interviewee No. 01)

The discursive object “Entrepreneurship as problem solving” in turn points to the interviewees' perception that entrepreneurship is the ideal tool to overcome challenges.

(entrepreneurship)... it is like a machine that keeps society moving forward all the time while we are looking for new solutions to our new problems. So, it's like the chicken and egg issue, we're always having new problems and when we solve these problems then we create more problems... (Interviewee No 2)

**Entrepreneurship in Education (2):** this discursive formation brings together the objects “Centrality of practice”, “Teaching method” and “Entrepreneurial education”. Such objects intertwine when interviewees report their experiences with teaching entrepreneurship. Education aimed at entrepreneurship is seen as a toolbox that through its “teaching methods” always walk towards the achievement of tasks. In this sense, entrepreneurial education is conceived as something aimed at the market, which is reflected in the pedagogical methods and techniques employed that are always trying to instigate students to innovate and prepare for the real world of business.

“Those who have entrepreneurship typically have already been able to go through this process of creating things and trying to take them to the market, and that's what we distinguish in our master's, is that we always do projects with real cases, although some subjects we have... or we do case studies, in some of them the case studies are with real companies and in the project disciplines they are with real business projects. It is supposed that [students] leave their comfort space and go talk to customers etc”. (Interviewee #1)

A counterpoint always present in the answers is the comparison of entrepreneurial education with regular education, the latter being pointed out as “old school” and very theoretical, as seen in the quotes:

Ah... I think entrepreneurial [education] is broader, more flexible... ah practical. When I did my degree it was more academic, old school, reading research, do you understand? That's how I think. (Interviewee #2)

Before taking the course I had done my bachelor's degree in economics and I know that was not quite what I wanted, it was quite theoretical and I was looking for something more practical. (Interviewee #3)

but there is one thing that is transversal, which is learning by doing. A strong component of doing are things that I not only see someone explain... I have to do to understand, to understand and to value the process to understand the process. (Interviewee #1)

It can be seen from the quotes that the interviewees basically expect a kind of more directed preparation from entrepreneurial education, with a focus on practice as a procedure or effective action and not as a socially contextualized practice as suggested by the practice-based approach. The focus is on “doing and learning by doing” while theory is seen as something less attractive or desirable.

**Entrepreneurial Identity (3):** this discursive formation is formed by the interdiscursiveness between the objects “Personal characteristics” and “Entrepreneurial profile for the market”. Both dialogue with the need for an entrepreneurial behavior linked to the formation of a specific type of personality.

I think that, in general, companies are looking for entrepreneurial people more at the level of being someone more autonomous and with initiative, I think this is very popular, I would even say that maybe this is the norm, except in older companies... (Interviewee # 3 )

The entrepreneurial identity would thus be an important and desirable component for entry into the labor market, while it is also advocated that it is an individual characteristic that is beneficial to other sectors of private and personal life. In this context, teaching entrepreneurship would serve to give the correct tools and enable the construction of an entrepreneurial persona more capable of transforming ideas into action.

[...] When I was younger, the word entrepreneurship was used less, or it wasn't, I don't remember hearing it but I heard a word that was initiative, so if you transport this to the present time, what training in entrepreneurship will be able to giving is: self-confidence in building projects, that is, I know how to handle things, I know how to organize them, I know how to validate them and, in this perspective, I have more self-confidence when I want to create a new project. From this perspective of having more self-confidence, this self-confidence is transferable to my private life and then, when transferring it to my private life, this can be done or not, in the exercise of citizenship, with involvement or leadership of social projects and other things, this has once again a component associated with entrepreneurship training. (Interviewee #1)

It is noteworthy, however, that even considering that entrepreneurship is something that can be taught, it is also not denied that there is something personal in entrepreneurial behavior. This statement refers us to behavioral approach theories and demonstrates that there is a perception that, in addition to the technical preparation provided by teaching, entrepreneurship is also due to some psychological traits and personal styles, as seen in the following quote:

[about entrepreneurship] there is always a part that is: the way each person thinks, thinks about their life and the world around them and there is nowhere to escape, I can do the whole training, if I am a pessimist and look always for the half-empty glass doesn't seem like it's going to do much. (Interviewee #1)



As for the influence of teaching entrepreneurship in the construction of an entrepreneurial identity, it is noted that respondents report adopting new, more entrepreneurial postures in their lives, starting to apply the knowledge acquired in everyday situations, extrapolating new uses and applications for learning.

[...] I feel the change in my life since I started studying things like design thinking at university. I see different things in my private life and my professional life... I think I pay more attention to little changes and little problems that I see every day and you know... when you see the same problem every day it becomes part of your life and you kind of ignore it, but now it happens otherwise (Interviewee #2).

“For me personally, it helped to contribute a lot in attitudes and skills” (Interviewee #3).

Thus, we see that the topic “Entrepreneurial identity” confirms the formation of a type of “entrepreneur self”, as suggested by the critical line of entrepreneurship. Such “I” is an individual who is more willing to adopt and apply business knowledge and who believes that entrepreneurial skills and competences provide benefits that are not limited to the world of work. Furthermore, what the interviewees say expose the adoption of an entrepreneurial behavior as something valued in the labor market, which, as a rule, can mean greater gains for people who adopt such behaviors, skills or attitudes. From this perspective, the search for knowledge in entrepreneurship dialogues with the idea of self-investment in their own “human capital” in order to obtain better “returns” in the form of possible higher returns.

**Beyond Work and Business (4):** “Creating a better world” and “Entrepreneurial look” are the discursive objects grouped in this formation. As the quotes raised point out, entrepreneurship, in addition to appearing as a creator of jobs and a generator of innovation, is also understood as a kind of possible way to overcome social problems. As an example, when asked what a possible contribution of entrepreneurship to social problems would be, we had the following answers:

Introducing innovation, I would say and... trying to show the way, in terms of improvements, how to make things better, but for me, mainly to raise sustainability, more ethical production and trying to do things more... in an innovative and better way for society [...] I think that being an entrepreneur gives us the freedom to think differently and to try to do things differently at an environmental and social level... (Interviewee #3)

(the role of entrepreneurship is) to solve problems and create a better life, better environment and better solutions for society. (Interviewee #2)

Thus, we emphasize that the “entrepreneurial look” is the element that allows people to take a new approach to old problems. Because in the same way that the entrepreneur uses their skills to generate value and innovation in the economy, it is understood that the same skills would also serve the purpose of generating beneficial changes in social reality. Therefore, “creating a better world” in this perspective becomes something possible through the application of the same principles and techniques applied to the business world.

**To be or not to be, that's the question (5):** As evidenced in the interviews, entrepreneurship is pointed out as something beneficial and desirable. At a personal level, it allows people to be more apt to the market and also more likely to innovate and create their own business, while at a broader level it is pointed out as a viable way of facing common social problems, which is why the teaching of entrepreneurship is pointed out as something positive and empowering for providing the right tools for the entrepreneur. However, the present discursive formation

consisting of the objects “Model Entrepreneur”, “Resistance” and “Critical Aspects” demonstrates that entrepreneurship also involves doubts, uncertainties and hesitations.

Although the “model entrepreneur” is appointed as someone who is bold, achiever, constant, persistent and generally considered a positive profile by the interviewees, some concerns were also noted with some questions. Initially, the definitions of being an entrepreneur and the benefits of entrepreneurship were undisputed:

(Being an entrepreneur) is having an idea, a vision and that you want to realize it and that you actually do it, that is, someone is positive and with ideas, not very risk averse, it takes some persistence and consistency. Someone who is future oriented, and who doesn't spend a lot of time thinking about what went wrong in the past and what he does... and tries to be better at every step. (Interviewee No 3).

Without a doubt, everyone can benefit [from an entrepreneurial attitude], those who are working in the area of innovation benefit more, let's say it is fundamental for their activity. (Interviewee No. 01)

When at another time asked about whether they were or considered themselves to be entrepreneurial or if they would be willing to change something in order to become a little more entrepreneurial, a certain “resistance” was noticed and some “Critical Aspects” and hesitation were raised. Such answers demonstrate that although the protagonism of entrepreneurship in the economy and its influence on the personal and educational aspect is recognized, a personal discomfort was perceived in having to adapt to the entrepreneurial form.

I don't think [I would change to be more entrepreneurial]. I'm fine with who I am and I believe in my own way and I wouldn't change my characteristics...but maybe I have to work on certain skills like speaking more clearly or expressing my wishes. (Interviewee No. 2)

We are all entrepreneurs in our life, aren't we? we do whatever we want to happen. In the strictest sense I would say... maybe not. It's hard to answer... maybe not, I'm not a text book entrepreneur but in my own way I think I'm trying to do new things and... In the most normal sense of the word maybe not, but... I didn't create any company, but it's not just that being an entrepreneur! But, for example, right now I'm in the first year of my Phd too..., ah I think you have to be an entrepreneur [...], in other words, in this sense: yes, I'm trying to be an entrepreneur. (Interviewee No 3).

[...] I think it would be a bad idea if everyone tried to be an entrepreneur. I think there are people who should be entrepreneurs, people who feel that and who want to and there are other people who, maybe, there are other roles that are also important and not necessarily everyone has to be an entrepreneur. (Interviewee No 3).

Based on these statements, we can say that there is some level of contradiction within the entrepreneurial discourse. At the same time that the centrality of entrepreneurship, its functions and utilities is affirmed, we have doubt, hesitation and even the critical connotation about "to be or not to be" an entrepreneur, which also demonstrate that in the field of discourse there is room for other considerations and interpretations about the topic. In short, there seems to be a limit to the level of entrepreneurship that someone should assimilate and put into practice. In other words, entrepreneurship is considered to be something positive, but reservations are maintained regarding the extent to which it is positive for someone to be an entrepreneur, or even if it would be something really desirable for all individuals.

### **c) Convergences**

As evidenced in the discursive formations, we can affirm that the great general convergences that guide all topics are the centrality of entrepreneurship as a process of generating wealth and solving problems and the entrepreneur as a model of behavior and attitudes to be imitated. Thus, entrepreneurship is pointed out as the main solver of social and economic problems in society while, in education, it is pointed out as responsible for providing the skills, abilities and attitudes so that students, trained in practical learning, are able to act in an entrepreneurial way turning ideas into action.

Another convergence is the implicit belief that entrepreneurial skills are also beneficial if applied to spheres of life other than the professional one. Such belief implies seeing oneself as an individual-company and, therefore, may suggest that personal issues can also be resolved using entrepreneurship tools.

Finally, it can be highlighted that entrepreneurship is also the target of resistance on the part of the interviewees. Such resistance suggests that even though entrepreneurial education presents entrepreneurship as something virtuous and beneficial at the individual level, people hesitate to consider themselves entrepreneurs, even if their attitudes fit their own definitions of what means to be an entrepreneur. This attitude suggests that despite the interviewees recognizing positive aspects in a more entrepreneurial attitude, there is distrust and a veiled criticality around the knowledge and applications of entrepreneurship.

### **d) Silences**

As Fairclough points out, silence is a fundamental part of discourse analysis because what is said in a text always starts from unspoken premises (Fairclough, 2003b). In the same vein Van Dijk (2001) states that as important as what is said is what is not said but is nevertheless perceived between the lines. In this analysis, there are two great silences highlighted. The first one is in relation to the “functions of entrepreneurial education beyond the practical sense”. When asked about the reasons and meanings of entrepreneurial education, the interviewees always highlighted its practical and action character, thus implying that a theoretical approach would have little to contribute to entrepreneurial training.

A second silence noted was the absence of structural criticisms about entrepreneurship itself. When asked about critical aspects of entrepreneurship, respondents reported not knowing negative aspects related to the topic. The criticisms, when they existed, were directed to what was considered a “misuse” of entrepreneurship, as in the case of false entrepreneurs, or businesses considered morally dubious, such as gambling sites.

### **e) Speech orders**

According to Salles & Dellagnelo (2019, p. 417) speech orders are the “discursive permissions and restrictions of a given social context”. So, based on the objects and discursive formations, in addition to the debate of convergences and silences, we identified the two main orders of discourse in the study, which are the “**Centrality of entrepreneurial action in teaching**” and the “**Assimilation of an ideal entrepreneurial behavior**”. About the speech orders it can be said that some are constituted as predominant forms of meanings and others are presented as minority speeches (Fairclough, 2003b). In our case the two orders of speech highlighted are the ones that give more representation to the speeches analyzed.

Regarding the “Centrality of entrepreneurial action in education” we can say that the whole idea of entrepreneurial education only makes sense because of a clear and well-established purpose. Students want to have practical experience in the market and the professors are committed to providing this in a variety of ways, such as simulation of the use of patents, group work and the preparation of business projects. Action and doing in this context go hand in hand with the notion of learning. On the other hand, thoughts or approaches that do not have an immediate practical utility are distanced. The speeches presented are typical of business jargon centered on efficiency, innovation and business feasibility. At a social level, the speeches are aligned with an entrepreneurship focused on consumption, although it is also recognized that it can also be used as a tool in non-marketing issues.

About the speech order "Assimilation of an ideal entrepreneurial behavior" it can be said that the ideal entrepreneur projected by the interviewees is an individual who has some characteristics such as being positive, flexible, willing to take risks and with a spirit of leadership. However, the interviewees' personal resistance to identifying themselves with such behaviors reveals that this may not be the model they consider the most suitable for them. This finding opens up space for conceptual debates about the term entrepreneur and its possible meanings, and about how comfortable the interviewees would be in becoming the entrepreneurs they describe and project.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

As the main (provisional) conclusions of this pilot study, we can say that for the field of entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurship, as taught in the classroom, is perceived as a means to an end. In other words, it is based on the assumption that being an entrepreneur is something good and desirable and that is why it is necessary to learn about the tools and techniques that facilitate the process of innovating and opening a business.

In general, entrepreneurship is seen as a solution to problems. At the economic level, it is understood as the process of creating economic value through the introduction of innovations in the market. However, at the social level, it is also believed that entrepreneurship can contribute positively to problems such as social inequality and the climate crisis, which suggests the belief that problems not necessarily linked to the market can also be overcome through the application of skills and competences. of entrepreneurship.

At a personal level, it can be concluded that entrepreneurial education contributes to the formation of an entrepreneurial identity which, in turn, is highly valued in the labor market. As shown, it is believed that entrepreneurial skills can also benefit individuals in other areas of life beyond the professional field, which suggests the possibility that problems of a personal nature can also be faced using entrepreneurial characteristics or techniques. It was also noted that although it is seen as something that can be learned, entrepreneurship is associated with innate personal characteristics of each person, which dialogues with McClelland's (1960) behavioral theories.

We can say that the speech orders “Centrality of entrepreneurial action in teaching” and “Assimilation of an ideal entrepreneurial behavior” form the limits and contours of the analyzed speeches. Regarding the first one, it can be concluded that practice leads the entire teaching process, always giving explicit meaning and purpose to everything that is taught, so that everything that is perceived as applicable to the market is seen as positive, while theoretical or reflexive aspects are left in the background. The second speech order, on the other hand, suggests the adoption of an “I” entrepreneur who is apt and willing to innovate in all sectors. It is noteworthy, however, that the assimilation of entrepreneurial behavior encounters some resistance on the part of respondents, who despite recognizing qualities in entrepreneurial behavior are hesitant about its application to themselves.

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