

Truths established in the career path: an analysis of innovation professionals' discursive practices of self

Verdades estabelecidas na trajetória de carreiras: uma análise das práticas discursivas de si dos profissionais da inovação

Verdades establecidas en la trayectoria profesional: un análisis de las prácticas discursivas del yo de los profesionales de la innovación

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Based on Foucauldian Theory, the study analyzes how the career trajectories of innovation professionals reveal discursive practices of themselves. **Methodology:** Fourteen narrative interviews were conducted with creative economy and information and communication technology professionals from different locations in Brazil, scrutinized through the Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. **Originality/Relevance:** The research applies Foucauldian theory to analyze the construction of subjectivity among innovation professionals, highlighting subjective-labor discursive practices involved in their trajectory, immersed in a digital and media context. Thus, the research explores Foucauldian subjectivation within career theory, offering a critical and unprecedented perspective on the theme. **Main results:** The findings show two discursive formations: professional alethurgy and professional love. The first one explores the process of subjectivation marked by the adoption of career truths by the professional, elucidating a movement of capture and alignment between career and subject truths. Professional love, on the other hand, shows an economic, affective bond and a regime of practices for a "beautiful" execution of the profession. **Theoretical/methodological contributions:** The results applied the concepts of alethurgy and true love to the discursive practices present in the professional's trajectories, contributing to the theoretical advancement of Foucauldian concepts. Furthermore, methodologically, it contributes by exploring narratives as a tool for critical analysis, deepening the relationship between discourse, power, and the construction of subjectivities, truths, and ethics within the field of innovation. **Social/managerial contributions:** The results provide useful data for managers in formulating organizational strategies and developing public policies capable of adapting to market dynamics, as well as for the training and retention of professionals in this sector.

Keywords: Innovation professionals. Career. Truth. True love. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis.

RESUMO

Objetivo: Com base na Teoria Foucaultiana, o estudo analisa como as trajetórias de carreira dos profissionais da inovação revelam práticas discursivas de si. **Metodologia:** Foram realizadas catorze entrevistas narrativas com profissionais de economia criativa e de tecnologia de informação e comunicação de diferentes localidades do Brasil, escrutinadas por meio da Análise de Discurso Foucaultiana. **Originalidade/Relevância:** A pesquisa aplica a teoria foucaultiana para análise da construção da subjetividade dos profissionais da inovação, destacando práticas discursivas subjetiva-laborais envolvidas na trajetória, imersos em um contexto digital e midiático. Assim, a pesquisa trabalha a subjetivação foucaultiana na teoria de carreira, oferecendo olhar crítico e inédito na temática. **Principais resultados:** Os achados evidenciam duas formações discursivas: aleurgia profissional e o amor profissional. A primeira explora o processo de subjetivação marcado pela adoção das verdades da carreira pelo profissional, elucidando um movimento de captura e alinhamento entre verdades da carreira e do sujeito. Já o amor profissional evidencia um vínculo econômico, afetivo e um regime de práticas para uma execução "bela" da profissão. **Contribuições teóricas/metodológicas:** Os resultados aplicaram os conceitos de aleurgia e amor verdadeiro às práticas discursivas presentes na trajetória dos profissionais, contribuindo para o avanço teórico dos conceitos foucaultianos. Ademais, metodologicamente, contribui ao explorar narrativas como ferramenta de análise crítica, aprofundando a relação entre discurso, poder e construção das subjetividades, verdades e éticas dentro do campo da inovação. **Contribuições sociais/gerenciais:** Os resultados fornecem dados úteis para gestores na formulação de estratégias organizacionais e no desenvolvimento de políticas públicas capazes de se adaptar a dinâmica do mercado além da capacitação e retenção de profissionais nesse setor.

Palavras-Chave: Profissionais da inovação. Carreira. Verdade. Amor verdadeiro. Análise de Discurso Foucaultiana.

RESUMEN

Objetivos: Basado en la teoría foucaultiana, este estudio analiza como las trayectorias de carrera de los profesionales de la innovación revelan prácticas discursivas del yo. **Metodología:** Se realizaron catorce entrevistas narrativas a profesionales de la economía creativa y de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación de diferentes localidades de Brasil escudriñado a través de la Análisis Foucaultiana del Discurso. **Originalidad/Relevancia:** La investigación aplica la teoría foucaultiana para analizar la construcción de la subjetividad de los profesionales de la innovación, destacando las prácticas discursivas subjetivo-laborales involucradas en su trayectoria, inmersos en un contexto digital y mediático. Así, la investigación aborda la subjetivación foucaultiana en la teoría de la carrera, ofreciendo una mirada crítica e inédita sobre la temática. **Resultados principales:** Los resultados revelan dos formaciones discursivas: la aleurgia profesional y el amor profesional. La primera explora el proceso de subjetivación marcado por la adopción de verdades de carrera por parte del profesional, elucidando un movimiento de captura y alineamiento entre verdades de carrera y verdades de sujeto. El amor profesional, por su parte, pone de relieve un vínculo económico y afectivo y un régimen de prácticas para una "bella" ejecución de la profesión. **Contribuciones teóricas/metodológicas:** Los resultados aplicaron los conceptos de aleurgia y amor verdadero a las prácticas discursivas presentes en la trayectoria de los profesionales, contribuyendo al avance teórico de los conceptos foucaultianos. Además, metodológicamente, contribuye al explorar las narrativas como herramienta de análisis crítico, profundizando en la relación entre discurso, poder y la construcción de subjetividades, verdades y éticas dentro del campo de la innovación. **Contribuciones sociales/gerenciales:** Los resultados proporcionan datos útiles para los gestores en la formulación de estrategias organizacionales y en el desarrollo de políticas públicas capaces de adaptarse a la dinámica del mercado, además de la capacitación y retención de profesionales en este sector.

Palabras clave: Profesionales de la innovación. Carrera. Verdad. Amor verdadero. Análisis foucaultiano del discurso.

■ INTRODUCTION

Technological, cultural and social transformations change employment and career dynamics (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2018); therefore, career theories in compliance with these changes start from an organizational focus and become increasingly individual-centered to envision individuals' skills, features, trajectories and career self-management (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022; Calasans & Davel, 2020; Goulart, Liboni & Cezarino, 2022).

This social and technological transformation context mostly affects innovation professionals, mainly those working with both information and communication technologies (ICT), and creative economy (CE). These professionals' work context stands out for technological aspect of media (Peukert, 2018), since they produce in, and for, digital and media environments. Furthermore, they must adjust to professional profiles based on career self-management, including essential elements like autonomy, flexibility and creativity (Silva, Vieira, & Franco, 2019), besides developing managerial, digital and interpersonal skills (Goulart et al., 2022; Van et al, 2020).

This socio-historical-cultural scene also depicts professionals' subjectivities, rather than just affecting professional practices or career theories (Vallas & Hill, 2018; Kjærgård, 2020). Accordingly, career is understood as socio-historical construct that builds subjectivities (Goodlad, 2007; Vallas & Hill, 2018; Kjærgård, 2020). However, this bias is little explored in career studies, a fact that pinpoints a theoretical-analytical gap in the literature.

Foucault's theory (1998, 2005, 2004a, 2004b, 2016) is one possible way to analyze career subjectivity. According to Foucault (2016), subjectivity is understood as a set of historically constructed practices performed by individuals about themselves and the others.

These individuals' practices can be accessed through discourse practices (Freund, 2019), i.e., utterance production/construction. Thus, narratives are understood from their discourse nature (Santos & Davel, 2021). The study starts from understanding that professionals expose their own subjectivity practices by expressing themselves in their discourse practices and in describing their profession. Professionals elaborate their socially constructed truths when they talk about themselves.

Thus, the present study sought to understand **how innovation professionals career trajectories show their discourse practices about themselves** by taking into consideration both the growing career focus on the individual and on mediatized contexts.

In order to achieve such a goal, the Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) applied to an archive comprising 14 narrative interviews conducted with CE and ICT professionals from different locations in Brazil was carried out by taking into account the herein adopted theoretical-epistemological path. This process justifies the research, which is based on a discourse analysis of personal and work experiences. Experience and experience context are elements enabling better understanding professional trajectories (Kjærgård,

2020). Thus, professional experiences allow understanding how organizational, economic and career discourses shape professionals' subjectivities.

The aforementioned argument reinforces the current research's theoretical and practical contributions. From a theoretical perspective, connections between the construction of the Foucauldian individual and career perspectives lead to updates in these professionals' compliance. Interviewees have disclosed subjectivation practices linked to their work practices based on narratives about their respective professional trajectories, with emphasis on the subjective and ethical features of their activity when they are immersed in the socio-historical context of new ICTs. This theory mainly updates the concepts of alethurgy and true love applied to the current career context. In addition, the empirical focus heading towards a specific innovation working class is featured by lack of both consistent contours and its constant expansion (which impairs delineation). It strengthens the practical contributions of this study. The analyses applied to ICT and CE professionals allows understanding this group's needs and developing better methods to keep these workers in the organizations they work at (which account for high turnover rates) and to develop public policies focused on innovation (e.g. sustainable cities, among others).

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE: THE CREATIVE CLASS AND ICT PROFESSIONALS

The professional profile of individuals in the technology sector requires skills linked to constantly learning, to easy adapting and to join personal values to individuals' careers. These workers must develop new skills in their workplace (Goulart et al., 2022; Van et al, 2020). Digital transformations have significantly changed consumption and production relations, and they are easily observed in daily social practices.

On the one hand, social media, whether internal/corporate or not, can help improving employees' productivity in their work environment by exchanging information and experiences, as well as through networking, engagement and information sharing (Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014; Ewing, Men, & O'Neil, 2019; Wu et al., 2021; Pitafi et al., 2020; Pekkala & van Zoonen, 2022). On the other hand, entertainment and socialization practices used media focused on entertainment, whereas socialization can contribute to and influence professional trajectories (as seen in Brennan and Large, 2014 and Souza-Leão and Costa, 2018).

Thus, ICT and CE segments the adopted scope within the vast innovation field. According to Florida (2012), the creative class is not defined by workers who use creativity at work, but rather by those who are paid for their intellectual production, who solve complex problems at high 'human capital' levels, and who use cognitive and social aspects. This group includes entrepreneurs, engineers, computer scientists, and technical (e.g. economists, administrators) and art fields (e.g. musicians, writers).

Moura Júnior and Helal (2014) point out the hard time defining ICT professionals due to their multiple versions in the literature. Professionals were linked to occupations (as Moura and Helal, 2014) related to the ICT field

(OECD, 2004; EUROSTAT, OECD, 2019), including the emerging technologies (UNCTAD, 2021), in order to solve this problem.

However, the analyzed sectors have common activity fields. Furthermore, both the creative class (Florida, 2012; Silva et al., 2019) and ICT professionals (Tsakissiris & Grant-Smith, 2021; Gupta and Gomathi, 2022) are featured by behaviors that differentiate them at their individual practice level, since their practices are guided by value and subjective standards.

■ CAREER THEORIES

Career studies start from focusing the relationship between individual and organization; only then they focus the professional itself and how it develops its career (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022; Calasans & Davel, 2020). Therefore, careers present dual approach, one linked to organizational hierarchy and occupations associated with the organizational context, and the other one is linked to the individual, to its life story, which is interpreted as sequence of this individual's work (Greenhaus et al., 2018; Hall, 1987).

The traditional perspective is related to organizational hierarchy, to viewing careers as linear stages (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022). However, the modern perspective is marked by technological advancements and sociocultural changes (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022).

According to Baruch and Sullivan (2022), contemporary theories are divided into two generations. Career theories linked to these two generations are shown in Table 1. Career theories and perspectives follow social, structural, cultural, family and technological changes that have driven other career building possibilities and new ways of seeing the individual. Changes in demographics, technology, workforce, organizational structure, in the nature of work and in capitalism itself affect how careers are built and interpreted (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022; Greenhaus et al., 2018; Gunz, Lazarova & Mayrhofer, 2020).

Truths established in the career path: an analysis of innovation professionals' discursive practices of self**Table 1***Career Theories*

First Generation		
Hall (1996; 2004)	Protean Career	It highlights careers' self-guidance and self-management and comprises "oriented value" dimensions of both the individual and the organization/work environment.
Arthur (1994); Arthur e Rousseau (1996)	Career Without Borders	It is featured by independence from organizational links; the professional can have more than one employer.
Peiperl e Baruch (1997)	Postcorporate Careers	They stand out for transcending geographical issues and organizational limitations by "integrating" issues set between individual and company. They highlight the dynamism aspect for both professionals and organizations.
Arthur, Claman e DeFillippi (1995)	Smart Careers	They initially focus (a) individual motivation to enter the profession/lifestyle (know-why), (b) professional's knowledge, skills and experiences (know-how) and (c) relationship networks (know-who).
Second generation		
Savickas (2005)	Career Construction Theory	It is focused on adaptability and deals with career as process in constant construction based on a subjective process that relates work experiences to individuals' psychological processes.
Fugate (2006); Van der Heijde e Van Der Heijden (2006)	Employability	It views the career from a psychosocial perspective, which is focused on professionals' individual features. Thus, professionals with greater employability are those who better adapt to "environmental" demands given their need to remain employed amid unstable employment relationships.
De Vos, Van der Heijden e Akkermans (2020)	Career Sustainability	It refers to professionals' adaptability in managing their own careers. This theory is in its initial stages and has not been well defined, so far.
Bright, Pryor e Harpham (2005)	Casual Events and Career Shocks	They refer to career changes resulting from unpredictable and uncontrollable events. These events can change professionals' careers or make them rethink their trajectories (e.g. disability, serious injuries, pandemic).
Baruch (2015)	Career Ecosystem	It regards multiple perspectives and assesses how different actors (professionals, organizations and society) view aspects related to the labor market.

Note. Based on Baruch and Sullivan (2022), Andrade et al. (2011), Purohit and Jayswal (2022) and Akkermans, Richardson and Kraimer (2020)

■ FOUCAULT'S PERSPECTIVE ON CAREER SUBJECTIVITY

Career studies are increasingly focused on professionals, on how they work, manage and define their careers. The theoretical lens of Foucault is one way to glimpse professionals' subjectivity.

According to Foucault (2004b), subjectivity is a relational and historical construction. The individual, in its turn, is formed by its own practices (Foucault, 1998, 2005, 2004a), among them, one finds the subjectivation process, which forms discourse practices. Therefore, what is said and stated (spoken, written, said) discloses one's own subjectivity. Thus, discourse practices are one of the ways to capture subjectivity (Freund, 2019; Gubrium & Holstein, 2012).

Foucault intensely explores subjectivity in his work, besides making undeniable contributions to management (McKinley & Starkey, 1997). His productions and concepts reached career theory perspectives, which allow presenting discourse and archaeological analyses aimed at critically look-

ing at careers in general (Goodlad, 2007; Vallas & Hill, 2018; Kjærgård, 2020; Kamoche, Pang & Wong, 2011).

On the one hand, discourses on career and work (Kjærgård, 2020; Thiry-Cherques, 2023) comprise truths of a given activity field and change workers' subjectivity. However, the individual is set by both morality and its relationship with truth (Foucault, 2016). It is possible understanding that truth changes according to the prevailing discourse constructions (Foucault, 2004a). Foucault (2014) presents the concept of **alethurgy** to the process of manifesting these truths.

The association between truth and the individual in management studies has been addressed by authors such as Tomassini, Lamond and Burrai (2021), and Weiskopf and Willmott (2013). They assess the elaboration and emergence of truth, as well as subjectivity construction based on associating individual and truth. Unlike the present study, these authors point out the concept of parrhesia (which means "courage to tell the truth" in asymmetric power relationships).

METHODOLOGY

The Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (DFA), which corresponds to the path Foucault (2008) takes to analyze discourse production, was adopted because of its link to the aim of the current research. This method allows identifying knowledge and wisdom expressed through discourses, as well as listing the regularity observed in discourse formation (Foucault, 2008; Souza-Leão & Moura, 2018).

The archive (Foucault, 2008, 2014) was composed of narrative interviews (Kutsyuruba & Mendes, 2023) by understanding them based on their discursive nature (Santos & Davel, 2021). Thus, this methodological choice was based on understanding narrative as discourse production that reflects socio-historical-cultural contexts (De Fina, 2021). Therefore, narratives enable capturing discourse practices that disclose individuals' practices (Arribas-Ayllon; Walkerdine, 2017; Freund, 2019; Gubrium; Holstein, 2012; Fage-Butler, 2020).

Interviewees profile was defined based on the intersection between ICT and CE professionals by using Eurostat documents (ICT specialists (Eurostat, Oecd, 2019 and Eurostat, 2018) and the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) as reference. The overlap of segments resulted in Graphic and Multimedia Designers (code 2166), Web and Multimedia Developers (code 2513) and Broadcasting and Audio-visual Technicians (code 3521). Professionals who were working in these segments during the interviews, who also had digital experience since childhood were selected to the study. This procedure turned biographical traits as selection criterion.

The selection of these sources took place through straight communication by email with employees in managerial positions (e.g., businessmen, CEOs, human resources directors, among others) in companies listed in the national technology parks, which corresponded to the herein assessed segments. Many companies did not provide the detailed contacts of their employees, in compliance with the General Data Protection Law (LGPD); however, many managers who fit the profile were willing to be interviewed; they invited their coworkers to participate in the research, mainly by email

and WhatsApp. This willingness explained the selection criteria, the research aim, the main interview topics and the voluntary nature of participation. The snowball strategy went on after the first contacts with these managers were made (Parker, Scott & Geddes, 2019).

It is worth noticing that, although the research was not reviewed by any ethics committee, its operational and analytical methodological structure was based on strict ethical limits criteria and care. Before conducting the interviews, the researcher in charge of data collection provided participants with confidentiality guarantees, with the possibility of interrupting their participation at any time and reminded them of the voluntary nature of their participation. The researcher recorded the interview after participants' accepted it after a new confirmation; they made sure about formally recording interviewee's consent.

The interviews followed a semi-structured script (Wengraf, 2001; Kutsyruba & Mendes, 2023) on general topics about (a) interviewees' introduction (e.g. age, position, address) and specific topics. It was done to help better understanding professionals' trajectory and to find the "critical incidents" (e.g. how they became interested in this field, their relationship with technology, what changed, among others). The number of interviews was determined by representativeness (geographic and segmentation) and saturation (i.e. sufficient data amount for the analysis) criteria (Tight, 2023). Fourteen interviews were conducted through video calls on Google Meet or Microsoft Teams platforms between August 09, 2022 and November 15, 2022. They lasted 1 hour, on average. Table 2 shows interviewees' positions, segments and region.

Table 2

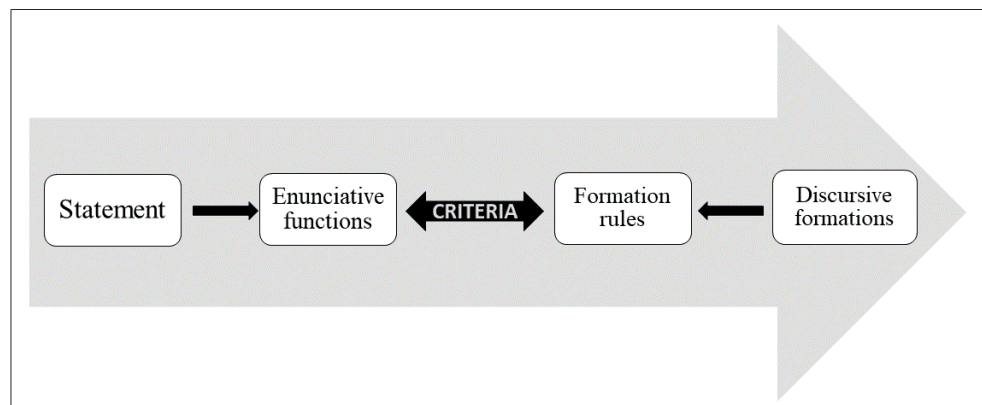
Interviewee Profile

Code	Position	Segment				Region			
		2166	2513	3521	N	NE	S	SE	CO
Ent1	Graphic Designer	✓				✓			
Ent2	Software developer (CEO)		✓			✓	✓	✓	
Ent3	Web developer		✓			✓			
Ent4	Sound capture			✓	✓				
Ent5	Production Assistant			✓		✓			
Ent6	Innovation manager and artist (podcast)			✓				✓	
Ent7	Consultant (Data Science, AI)	✓	✓				✓		
Ent8	Graphic Designer	✓						✓	
Ent9	Product Designer	✓					✓		
Ent10	Designer (Motion Design and Animation)	✓						✓	✓
Ent11	Software Engineer		✓			✓			
Ent12	Audiovisual producer (CEO)			✓					✓
Ent13	Graphic Designer	✓		✓					
Ent14	Game programmer and digital artist	✓	✓	✓					

Data analysis was carried out based on the Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, as described in Foucault's works (e.g. Foucault, 2008; 1999; 2005) and systematized by Souza-Leão and colleagues (Souza-Leão & Moura, 2018; Camargo et al., 2020; Souza Leão et al, 2022; Souza Leão et al., 2022; Moura & Souza Leão, 2022). The systematic approach was carried out by following the scheme available in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Process



Note. Based on Camargo, De Souza-Leão and Moura (2020)

Figure 1 provides the FDA, which starts from identifying utterances and ends up in discourse formation. There is a structured process between minimum/initial structure and final results based on analytical criteria determination. The systematic DF based on criteria set to detect discourse formation rules and enunciative functions is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Description of FDA Categories

Utterances			
Sentences bringing isolated discourse elements. According to Foucault (2008), they refer to an “elementary unit of discourse” (p. 90). They are “isolated acts” of discourse formation.			
Enunciative Functions			
They express utterances' operationalization. The “action” of an utterance. It is analyzed through four criteria:			
Reference	Associated field	Individual	Materiality
What the speech refers to.	The “place” the utterance emerges from. Field promoting possible circumstances for utterance emergence.	The individual or group of individuals capable of making such a statement. The condition of the individual who makes the statement.	How the statement is expressed, what “tone” it directs, how it manifests itself.
Formation rules			
They deal with regularity observed in discourse formations. These rules outline discourse formation and set the “standards” delimiting utterance emergence. These rules follow four criteria:			
Object	Concept	Modality	Strategy
Sets the meaning given to the reference.	It concerns how dependencies, coexistence and successions take in associated fields.	It refers to the way the individual makes statements given its location.	It defines the statement's based on materiality.
Discourse formation			
It deals with discourse outlines resulting from grouping processes featured by rules and operating goals.			

Note. Based on De Souza-Leão and Moura (2018); Camargo, De Souza-Leão and Moura (2020) and Foucault (2008).

RESULTS DESCRIPTION

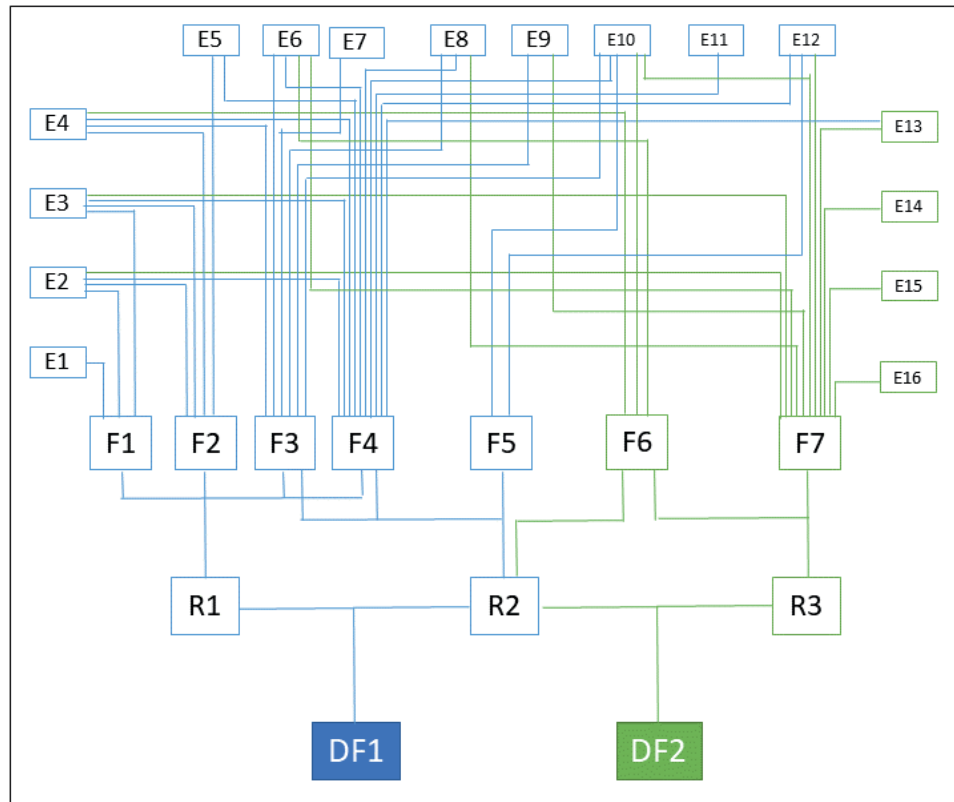
Result analysis has allowed identifying 16 utterances (E), 7 enunciative functions (F), 3 rules (R) and 2 discourse formations (FD). The interviews were “coded” into utterances that, in their turn, were “classified” through criteria established to move them to functions and rules. Subsequently, these rules highlighted the observed discourse formations. This “path”, which comprised all these elements (E, F, R and FD), is shown in Figure 2 and captioned in Table 4.

According to Figure 2 and Table 4, professional alethurgy (FD1) comprises the ambition (R1) and professional identity (R2) rules, which work with elements interviewees feel represented by. Furthermore, they describe professional practices they see themselves in as individuals and reveal their own identities. Rules differ from each other because R1 explores professional's search and desire for fulfillment and R2 deals with self-practices forming professional knowledge.

Professional love (FD2) is related to the professional identity (R2) and pride (R3) rules. Both these rules act in self-identification and professional trajectory (objects), in addition to share aspects of political ideologies' positioning and appreciation (concept and modality). The shared criteria express how love for a profession reflects the desire for a field and individuals' identification with their work. In this case, they also show their esteem for the field's progressive aspects.

Figure 2

Analytical Map of Discourse Formations



Source: Elaborated by the authors (2023)

The rules are mainly differentiated by the rule criterion related to strategy. It is so, because identity (R2) acts in self-affirmation. Pride (R3), in its turn, explores self-worth. The distinctive criteria explain how self-worth is differentiated as professional belonging to a beloved field. It happens because the third rule (R3) exposes pride in the field's practices, whereas the second one (R2) deals with possibly stating one's truths based on such a love; in this case, it is reflected by self-affirmation as progressive.

Table 4

Analytical Map Legend

Code	Title	Code	Title
E01	The digital environment is the necessary form to me to be who I am	E14	Sociability is useful in my career
E02	Digital experience has always been present in my career	E15	Sociability is part of my profile
E03	My digital experience made me professional	E16	My profession requires specific knowledge.
E04	My convictions shape my professional trajectory	F01	Valuing digital experiences
E05	Having a target is important for professional choices	F02	Extol inspirations
E06	My expertise transformed me	F03	Identify itself with the function
E07	Profession affects my mental health	F04	Express interest in a profession
E08	In this job I do what I like	F05	Demonstrate professional aspiration
E09	This job gives me stability	F05	Awakening of the social individual
E10	My professional choice represents me	F06	Score political position
E11	In this job I must manage my own career	R1	Ambition
E12	The digital environment provides opportunities for my performance	R2	Professional identity
E13	Creativity is part of who I am	R3	Pride

Source: Elaborated by the author (2023)

Professional alethurgy

This formation comprises strategies (rule criterion) linked to self-affirmation and praise in both rules (R1 and R2). Professionals' ambition (R1) reflects interest in digital and innovative spaces. Individuals praise what they experience because they are motivated by their desires and it exposes their fascination for the field they work in. The professional choice (and access to technological devices) is made effective by professionals' interest and search for innovation. This rule is associated with praise (strategy) and brings reports to value digital experiences (F1), to praise inspirations (F2), to self-identification with the function (F3) and to express interest in a given profession (F4).

The function of **valuing digital experiences (F1)** highlights enthusiasm to narrate experiences related to the digital universe. It regards how the digital environment is part of oneself and form one's daily practices and the individual, itself. It fulfills the function of expressing appreciation for the digital environment.

This function is related to utterances: the digital environment is necessary for me to be who I am (E01), the digital experience has always been present in my trajectory (E02) and my digital experience has made me a professional (E03). According to these reports, professionals, as experts and fascinated (modalities) people, praise and affirm themselves (strategies) by addressing their identification with the digital universe (objects), based on their digital experiences in a mediatized society (concepts). Figure 3 exemplifies the cited criteria and statements.

Figure 3*Function 1 based on an excerpt of interview 11*

[...] it is not my physical self and my digital self that get intertwined, but current times [...] the very sense of working as ... the doing, you know? Among human actions, nowadays are also quite entangled. I have many friends, so, my work team, I met them once in my life, face to face (Ent 11)

The interviewee discloses the concept of mediatization that extrapolates the work itself. These spaces are mixed not only between personal and professional spheres, but also in associations between the digital experiences themselves, which occur simultaneously.

Utterances related to experience and professionalization - with and through ICT (E02 and E03 respectively) - also act in extolling inspirations (F2). This function concerns extolling (strategy) the elements working as reference to guide interviewees to follow their professional trajectories. Interviewees talk about identifying themselves with access to digital devices (objects) based on digital experiences (concept) and on a fascinated tone (modality), as observed in the previous function. Figure 4 refers to the utterances and criteria listed above.

Figure 4*Function 2 based on an excerpt from Interview 2*

[...] the game, somehow, forged my interest in architecture I believe, due to creation, design, computing, because, somehow, when you start, you leave the analog and get into the digital, it is a new world that opens possibilities, then, it makes any child look out... with much interest, you know, it falls in love with this universe right there, digital, [...] the game was just a big teasing for this whole generation that works with IT [...] I always say that I started as an architect on The Sims. How many houses have I built on The Sims? I didn't play The Sims, I was building houses. (Ent 2)

The interviewee categorically states that he started his professional journey at his experience with games. His trajectory and interest in the virtual environment influenced the choice for his professional trajectory.

The function of extolling inspirations (F2) also encompasses convictions (E04) and directions (E05) in a given career. Interviewees go beyond the work itself and highlight intrinsic aspects linked to morality when they present how convictions shape career management (E04). These professionals express their identification (object) and fascination (modality) through their statements, based on practices related to the participatory culture (concept). Figure 5 exemplifies this concept.

Figure 5*Function 2 based on an excerpt from interview 5*

Then, well, inside [indigenous] lands, for instance, relationship with technology is very important, because this is how we report what is happen, because many times authorities are not aware of, they are often not interest in investigating, so this is also our way of asking for help, so there is, this link to technology is my job, but also a way to ask for help, for survival, you know? (Ent 5)

The excerpt shows how the media can be useful as tool to help protecting social minorities. This statement highlights online and professional behaviors that reflect beliefs.

Utterances that deal with the relevance of guidance (E05) highlight family as inspiring element. Professionals relate family experiences to technology by addressing their connection and identification with technologies (objects) based on their digital experience (concept) through a fascinated perspective (modality). The herein presented excerpts highlight statements in which interviewees address family's guiding role in their initial interest or effective choice for a given career. The aim of the function to identify itself with the work (F3) is to expose the connection individuals have with what they do and with acknowledging their appreciation for carrying out some professional activities. This function is related to the following statements: 'my expertise transformed me' (E06), 'the profession affects my mental health' (E07) and 'in this work I do what I like' (E08). The aforementioned statements related addressed identification and professional trajectory (objects) based on interviewees' self-knowledge (concepts) as fascinated and expert individuals (modalities). Therefore, work also means the space where interviewees can express themselves, feel represented and complete.

The function of expressing interest in the profession (F4) includes statements about praise (strategy) and deals with interest in elements related to work, such as technology and innovation. Statements E02, E04, E05 and E08 address self-identification with digital technologies (objects) based on digital experience and coexistence in innovation environments (concepts) supported by a fascination tone (modality). Overall, excerpts disclosing such features show how professionals sought innovation spaces and report "creative effervescence" with fascination. Interviewees sought spaces for collective creation to develop their ideas and to do what they identify themselves with by seeking to create technologies that would have some impact on the world.

According to the function of expressing interest in the profession (F4), speeches E03, E06 and E10 address professional trajectory and self-identification with digital devices (objects) stated in experts' condition (concepts). It starts from understanding digital experience, mediatized universe and professional skills (concepts).

According to the reports, immersion in work practices leads professionals to perceive everything around through professional eyes, through a critical and technical view of audiovisual works and technological products. This features highlight how digital expertise, in addition to constant contact with audiovisual media at work and in everyday life, provides a keen eye for contents.

E10 is also evidenced by self-image (concept) and it addresses its trajectory (object) from the viewpoint of an expert (modality). This perspective envisions the work, or rather, the creation process related to professionals' existential level. In other words, "creating" can be understood by interviewees, since they point out to be creative since childhood as essential activity, as "physiological need" (Ent4).

Professional identity (R2) portrays individuals' self-affirmation (strategy) about what they like, seek and get identified with. Based on this rule, individuals "affirm themselves", politically position themselves (see F6) and express their identification with the activities they develop in the professional context (affirming themselves as artists, geeks). This discourse formation is linked to functions of expressing identification with work (F3), expressing interest in the profession (F4) and revealing the social-individual formation (F5).

Identifying with the work (F3) relates to statements (E04), (E09) and (E10). E04 and E10 statements deal with identification and professional trajectory (objects); individuals state position knowledge and fascination (modalities) holders based on understanding what they desire (concept). It is worth noticing that, by providing these criteria, statement E10 is observed in expressing involvement with work (F3), in relating to the expert modality and in showing the social-individual formation (F5) by linking it to the fascinated modality.

The speech in excerpt in Figure 6 describes how personal features guide the career and explores all aspects mentioned above, namely: statements, criteria and functions.

Figure 6

Function 3 based on an excerpt from interview 5

[...] within my indigenous people, that I'm part of, the Guajajara, there is a lot of videomakers, photographers and artists [...] I didn't grow up in the territory, but I have this artistic skill that was influenced by the family I grew up in. I use to say that "no, it was my indigenous side that took me to this field" right? [...] whether I like it or not, it is in my DNA *laughter* right? (Ent 5)

The speech excerpt shows how features understood by professionals as innate influence their professional choices. This excerpt highlights an individual who confirms his convictions and sees his work as extension of himself.

Yet, with respect to the function of identifying oneself with the work (F3), the work allowing stability (E09) within this rule expresses interviewees' understanding that they could be paid for performing activities they would make for pleasure. The statements address their professional trajectories (object) based on understanding what brings them fulfillment (concept). Briefly, based on excerpts in this selection, interviewees report the time when they figure out they could be paid for something they already knew how to do. At this point, practices about themselves in the field get aligned.

According to this rule, expressing interest in the profession (F4) relates to statements E10, E11, E12 and E13, which deal with profession representativeness (E10). Career self-management (E11) addresses self-identification and professional trajectory (objects) from the perspective of an expert (modality) based on understanding the management of itsr own career (concept). These criteria and statements basically address the personal/professional life inseparability.

The statement dealing with how the digital environment favors interviewees (E12) refers to experts (modality) who address their experience in digital communities (object) and the skills they acquired (concept) over this process. Figure 7 highlights the statement related to such criteria.

Figure 7

Function 4 based on an excerpt from interview 11

[...] mainly when it comes to development, there is a forum named Stack Overflow which is a forum focused on questions about development, someone sends in a question about something and people can answer [...] [in this forum] you are scored all the time you answer a relevant question [...] then, some specific vacancies in some specific selection process, I have already seen your score on Stack Overflow, your profile [...] solution engineers are people who have technical knowledge, but who are experts in teaching, in debugging, in helping, you know? [...] then, that is why some companies ask for your account on Stack Overflow, for example, because they can see some of your skills in an asynchronous way to answer someone and make such person understand what must be done [...] (Ent 11)

According to the report above, the interviewee highlights the skills developed in social networks, mainly by developers sought by companies for a desired position (solution engineer). Asynchronous communication skills developed in social networks help professionals in their professional activities.

With respect to the role of expressing interest in the profession (F4), the statement referring to creativity as interviewees' feature (E13) also deals with experts (modality) who approach their creations (object) by understanding them as the expression of themselves (concept). This idea is made clear in excerpts where interviewees talk about "putting part of themselves" into their inventions, projects and products, and about how the creative aspect contributes to work performance. Such work forms these individuals and, simultaneously, as "reverse" movement, creation arising from them represent parts of themselves.

In addition to the statement only explored by (E10), **the social-individual formation (F5)** is related to "The digital environment provides opportunities for my performance" (E12). E12, encompassed an interactive individual (modality) who addresses digital communities (object) based on the understanding of network (concept), in the present function. Accordingly, interviewees present their online professional relationships with social media (e.g. portfolios on Behance, Instagram; interaction with other professionals on Reddit, X, among others) as an obvious and natural thing.

Professional Love

Professional identity (R2) in this discourse formation mainly regards the function of expressing political positioning (F6) about how interviewees see themselves as political agents in and/or outside the work. This function relates to statements that deal with how convictions change the way workers drive their careers (E04), how expertise has changed professionals themselves (E06) and how the profession itself represents them (E10). The herein addressed statements point towards self-identification and professional trajectory (objects) of individuals who assert themselves (strategy) as progressive (modality) based on their theoretical knowledge about politics (concept). The statements expressed in Figure 8 disclosed this way of thinking.

Figure 8

Function 6 based on an excerpt from interviews 5 and 12

It changed me a lot, indeed, I was another person [...] I came from a school where moral principles are also questionable [...] it wasn't as libtary, in a way of speaking, right? [...] when I started working with audiovisual, it was when I got to understand what scenic arts represents for society, and what music does [...] then I think the audiovisual changed me in the sense of looking at society to understand myself in it and where I can collaborate to it, right? [...] audiovisual, journalism school and audiovisual drove a quite radical change in me, for example, **it made me understand myself as a leftist person** [...] It changed me deeply in this sense, I suppose I'm somehow a fruit of it, nowadays, right? It comes from college and from working with audiovisual. [...] my choice has had some impact on me, it has really changed me into somebody else, into a person who is more sympatic to the others, who can understand the processes faced by people, who can understand the sides of others, that there is another story, and it has impact on me and turns me into a person capable of participating in society in a different way (Ent 12)

[...] I'm an indigenous person, so, in the movies, we see many indigenous narratives found by the eyes of the white, right? Then, it was something that I was interested in. Gee, I'll have the opportunity to tell my own narratives and those of other indigenous people. [...] you, when you work with cinema, you also have to learn to take political positions because it is inherently a political tool for excellence. (Ent 5)

Note. Emphasis by the authors.

The archive excerpts portray how ethical political nature issues affect professionals' journey, choices and positions towards their professional practices.

The function of taking a political stance (F6) can also be expressed as self-worth (strategy). It is linked to **professional pride (R3)**, which concerns vanity, pride in oneself. Therefore, this function herein deals with love for belonging to a field that allows one to express its progressive bias (modality and concept). This perspective is seen in the statement that expresses how convictions shape the way interviewees manage their careers (E10) and address their professional trajectory (object). This idea is explored in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Function 6 based on an excerpt from interviews 6 and 11

[...] technology companies have some **progressive advancements** in comparison to other careers. As we **support diversity**, I currently have the chance to work with trans people in my team, with black people, I have leader women, not just in my current team, but at C**** also, my first manager was a woman. Nevertheless, my current manager is a woman, the foundations director is a woman, we have some advantages over other more consolidated careers whose entire managerial team is formed by white men mocking around, whatever. (Ent 11)

I'm pretty much concerned with the context where half of the people, for example, in Brazil, have access to their own personal device with access to the internet [...] it is unquestionable, in my opinion, that internet has changed my life and the worldview after it lies on **helping to make web3 and this future of the internet might also change the lives of other people in a more accessible way, you know?** [...] Anyhow, when I think about this place my profession brings to me, I think that this place has changed my life, and so on. I feel very easy because **my role is like if it was to help awakening people** for this movement after the shock, the denial to life's technological change and to the careers ahead of it, and to make it more accessible and less shocking, to make it less distant from them. (Ent 6)

Note. Emphasis by the authors.

Professionals are proud to contribute to social improvement because they participate in a work field that represents it. Their respective work is part of

a social transformation process that meets their ethical positions, according to which, they see the possibility of achieving inclusion and of having positive impact on people's lives through innovation.

Professional pride (R3) is also associated with the function of extolling success (F7), which aims at portraying professional environment aspects they achieve with excellence. Similar to the previous one, F7 highlights self-worth (strategy) through statements that deal with professional trajectory (object). The proximity between F6 and F7 took place because both functions deal with professionals' pride for their activities over their professional trajectory. However, they differ in other criteria, since F7 expresses its esteem for social, digital, innovative and creative practices associated with work.

The function of extolling success (F7) is related to statements E02, E03, E06, E10, E08, E13, E12, E14, E15, E09 and E16, which address how digital experience has always been observed in their trajectory (E02) and how it has professionalized them (E03). Expert professionals (modality) explore skills' development (concept) since they identify themselves with this environment (objects). Figure 10 summarizes this understanding.

Figure 10

Function 7 based on an excerpt from interview 9

[...] It means that the tool changes too much, but since childhood I have been using tools that I still use [...] [game] it was the entrance door to me [...] because games demand, you must, I don't know, to install a copycat game, you must hack a business, you must open a text file, you have to understand the hardware, must understand the software, sometimes we changed the game, you could use photoshop to change a given face of a given person, you would end up understanding it, right, the functioning of a computer and getting in contact with several software just because of it, right (Ent 09)

It is also possible observing how careers represent these professionals (E10). By directly involving the academic and professional trajectories (object), these professionals point out how this experience changed them (E06), and it can be seen in Figure 11.

Figure 11

Function 7 based on an excerpt from interview 1

[...] I attended technical school for design when I was 14 [...] [professional exercise] made more attentive to things, mainly when I'm watching a movie or when I see a picture and such. I started to pay closer attention to details [...] I can recognize when I see something that has been edited, it is easy to recognize it, those who work in this field can easily see it (Ent 1)

Professionals show how they developed their skills through the digital environment in Figures 10 and 11. Constant participation in the media, whether as consumers or "professional producers", helps these professionals to develop useful skills for their professional practices. Therefore, there is a two-pronged pathway. On the one hand, they become better professionals through digital consumption as their skills improve (see statement Ent9). On the other hand, digital production makes consumers "more specialized" (see statement Ent1).

Profession as oneself representation (E10) is also addressed in the creative aspect (concept). Therefore, professionals speak with a fascinated tone (modality) about self-identification with their creations (objects). This

aspect also encompasses creativity as feature (E13) and professional practice as something that brings pleasure (E08).

The excerpts linked to these criteria often show professionals' fascination towards their creations. The virtual environment allows multiple possibilities of creation seen by professionals as attractive and dazzling. Digital creation is part of their job and surprising at the same time; it is worthy the interviewees' love.

The digital environment is an object of fascination (modality) and interest for interviewees. This space can also benefit professionals (E12) since, through online communities (object), they access development skills and activate a network of contacts (concepts). Interviewees who embody an interactive and expert role (modalities) actively participate in online communities (concept) during their professional careers (object).

Statements related to these criteria also regard sociability as these professionals' feature (E15), and it is valued in their career (E14) and in transformations deriving from these experiences (E06). This understanding is summarized in Figure 12.

Figure 12

Function 7 based on an excerpt from interview 2

When I started working in this field we had a software [...] at that time there was a software forum and it was **where I learned most of the things I know nowadays, in this forum**. When I joined this group there were 400 users, of these 400 there was, I don't know [...] there were few (laughter) and they, somehow, knew each other and when we had the first meeting in this field [...] everybody was there. So, we met each other, everybody in Brazil, in this field, we were all at the same place and from this moment onwards we set bonds and attended lectures, we attended events together and currently we follow each other, we see what each one is doing, and so on, worldwide. But, that's it! It was basically on the internet the beginning when we created this network (Ent 2).

Note. Emphasis by the authors.

Interviewee 02, as shown in the excerpt above, is proud of his ability to connect other professionals in a field that is still rising. He also highlights the construction from knowledge and collective encounters allowed by socialization in digital environment (software forums).

This constant process to seek knowledge also happens because these professional segments require specific knowledge (E16). E16 brings up the debate on the need for academic training on professional practices. Figure 13 reports on both viewpoints. These excerpts show professionals talking about their trajectories (objects) towards developing professional skills (concept).

Figure 13

Function 7 based on an excerpt from interview 2

[...] I'm don't have any diploma, [...] within this technology place, I didn't need, in the past, for example, to attend a communication science course to do what I'm doing now, I didn't need to necessarily learn code, seat and talk about natural language, etc, and, for example, if I knew how to program it would be a differential, it would be like, good to have it, **but it is not a barrier today**, after all my experience, to be talking at some technical level with people in order to understand what the structure is, what framework is, what is the model used by people to develop a code, think of programing language, and where all hese people, developers, they are a bunch of digital handy men (Ent6).

[...] I think I took a lot from the master's degree, I also think communication [undergraduate] helped me a lot in interpreting a brief, understanding needs, and delivering what the brief asks for. And when it comes to what you want, separating more the part about systematizing, I think that was the more master's-level part, and then also in the practical aspect. (Ent9)

Note. Emphasis by the authors.

Professionals need, and are able to master, the tools they use and demand to perform their activity. However, opinions regarding how to acquire such knowledge change among interviewees.

Finally, love for the profession aimed at extolling success (F7) point out stability achieved through the career itself (E09). Based on E09, professionals adjust (modality) to transformations in their professional trajectories (object) because they understand that they must manage their own careers (concept).

Overall, excerpts linked to this selection highlight financial achievements deriving from a career.

■ RESULTS DISCUSSION

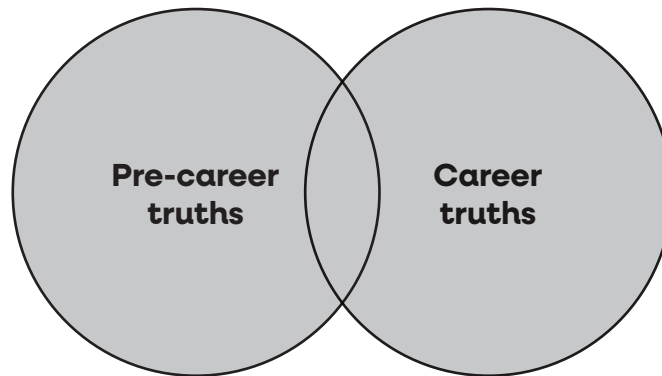
Discourses about activity field express a game of truth. Professionals insert themselves into the game and fully or partially adopt the truths of such a field when they start working. Accordingly, findings show professionals who comply with their activity field's demands and truths, which, in their turn, are disclosed in discourse practices of the self through discourse formation about alethurgy (FD1) and professional love (FD2).

Discourse formations express a subjectivation process lived by individuals through their insertion in their careers. Utterances making up such formations point out changes in discourse practices of the self during career trajectories. There are exclusive utterances (restricted to DF) and shared statements, as expressed in Table 5. Statements exclusive to professional alethurgy (FD1) express "requirements", in other words, notions for career insertion, whereas those limited to professional love (FD2) explore networking and self-teaching aspects that evidence a "full insertion". The shared statements unveil conditions of the professional individual, which is a professional "mold" elaborated by constitution practices of the professional individual (E03, E06, E10 and E12) who finds satisfaction (E08, E09) and "oneself" (E02, E04 and E13).

Table 5*Exclusive and Shared DF Statements*

Exclusive to DF1	
E01	The digital environment is necessary for me to be who I am
E05	Having a direction is important for professional choices
E07	The profession affects my mental health
E11	In this job I must manage my own career
Exclusive to DF2	
E14	Sociability is useful in my career
E15	Sociability is part of my character
E16	My profession requires specific knowledge.
Present in both DF	
E02	Digital experience has always been observed in my career
E03	My digital experience made me professional
E04	My convictions shape my professional trajectory
E06	My expertise transformed me
E08	In this job I do what I like
E09	This job gives me stability
E10	My professional choice represents me
E12	The digital environment provides opportunities for my performance
E13	Creativity is part of who we are

These practices of the self changes expressed by the selected utterances suggest the concept of “pre-career” and career truths, as shown in Figure 3. According to this concept, some career practices and truths were already observed in professionals’ experiences before their professional choice (“pre-career” moment). Other truths were included in it as individuals actually entered their activity field (“career” moment). This dynamic is expressed in Figure 14.

Figure 14*Professional Subjectivation Process*

The “pre-career” moment expresses career practices and truths inserted in professional’s daily life and subjectivity (e.g. digital experiences, artistic activities, programming, management of online groups). Love is also observed, it is expressed as desire and interest materialized as fascination for technology and innovation. This is made crystal clear by E01, E02 and E13, for example, according to whom, a practice belonging to their career was appropriated by individuals before their professional choice. These truths make up individuals’ “pre-career” ethical constitution practices featured as the individuals’ alethurgy.

Once inserted in workers’ professional condition, this alethurgy is expressed as professional alethurgy (DF1) and love expanded for oneself, which is being pointed out as oneself pride for the well-executed practice. Career truths are appropriated by individuals, and it transforms them. These professional subjectivation processes are clear in E04, E06 and E10, for example. Love expansion for oneself is expressed by appreciation for one’s social capacities and professional expertise, which are exclusively perceived by DF2 statements. The additions to this dynamic are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6*Individuals’ truth before and over their careers*

	Pre-career	Career
Individual's truth	Alethurgy of the individual	Professional alethurgy
	Love for the technological/innovative field	Love for your career and for yourself

These professionals’ careers are guided by subjective aspects related to their social practices and to their own selves. This aspect is seen in their “pre-career” practices (identification and constant use of technologies) and in their career practices (professional subjectivity). Individuals’ identification with their work (Tsakissiris & Grant-Smith, 2021), as well as ethical positioning towards social inclusion (Gupta & Gomathi, 2022) are essential to their trajectory, choice and permanence in their profession. Since equity and inclusion are a discourse observed in innovation (UNCTAD, 2021), adopting this field’s

technologies and truths allows these professionals to form themselves in these spaces (Foucault, 2005).

Constant experience with technology is joined to individuals themselves within a unique process where the individual forms itself in association with a process of digital technologies of the self (Gabriels & Coeckelbergh, 2019; Assunção and Mendonça Jorge, 2014). Thus, online expressions (Cavalcanti et al, 2021) and professional practices (Vallas & Hill, 2018) are part of the subjectivation process professionals express themselves in.

This aspect, in association with career individualization in the neoliberal logic (and entrepreneurs' understanding of themselves) and in the mediated world, expresses the portfolio construction at digital sphere and turns professionals into brands that need publicity and promotion (self-branding) (Scolere, 2019). Family also stand out as psychological and social experience generator in childhood and adolescence, and it influences individuals' skills development and their own identity (Tsakissiris & Grant-Smith, 2021; Sáinz & Müller, 2018).

Discourses characteristic of careers, such as need for constant knowledge and the very sense of employability and flexibility, carry mechanisms that shape professionals (Kamoche, Pang & Wong, 2011). Professionals present features such as career individualization, need for individual motivation, knowledge and relationships for professional advancement, independence from organizational ties, appreciation for autonomy and freedom, continuous learning and personal satisfaction, in compliance with these truths. These elements are seen in contemporary first-generation theories (see section 3).

Aspects of the second generation are also seen in the present findings. Professionals show a constant self-construction process through work (Career Construction Theory). They seek to ensure sustainability and a high degree of employability in their trajectories within an ecosystem featured by the "constant human-capital flow" (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022, p. 141), spiral learning and constant changes. However, they were surprised and redirected by personal and social events, such as the pandemic, whether through family members or even from individual emotional aspects. Thus, they encompass the features of all second generation theories.

■ FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Professional subjectivity disclosed by discourse practices shows a "professional subjectivity" construction process. The present findings have shown a subjectivation process to build the professional individual expressed through true accounts about itself. It means that discourse formations disclose the individuals' truths in its condition as professional. The professional field truth adoption reflects on the process to build a position (individual's condition) formed by articulating their personal and professional practices. Professional subjectivity construction was expressed in the present findings by two discourse formations related to professional truths, namely: professional alethurgy and professional love.

Professional alethurgy (FD1) deals with the professional individual expressing its truths in the process to become a professional. This formation

explored ambition (R1) and professional identity (R2), and showed the professional individual construction formed from its search for its own identification with the chosen career. These regularities shine light on a discourse formation that outlines these professionals' desire for fulfillment, as well as for self-construction practices. Interviewees' statements highlight the exaltation of digital practices and of elements involving media, and digital and innovation landscapes by linking their own truths to the truths of their careers throughout their trajectories. These truths also regard appreciation for inspiration, whether coming from the individual's ethical and political perspectives or related to those who helped driving their careers. Thus, the first discourse formation explores professional's identification with and interest in the work (Tsakissiris & Grant-Smith, 2021), and the exaltation of what is linked to the innovation and technology field.

Professional love (FD2) discloses self-affirmation and appreciation for professional skill, love for the beautiful performance of professional practices. This formation works in the concept of true love, which highlights the individual's relationship with the morality of pleasures and their relationship with truth (Foucault, 1998). This true love was empirically evidenced through professional identity (R2) and pride (R3), which explored individuals' self-identification with their profession, in connection to their political and ideological positions. Professionals' identification with their work (R2), which is expressed by true love, was delimited by the constitution of themselves as progressive throughout their careers. Pride (R3), on the other hand, was marked by pride in the practices and truths of the field they work in.

Discourse formations share the connection to the game of truth established in the professional subjectivation process. Individuals' practices comply with "useful" practices for their careers even before they enter the profession. Accordingly, the discussion of results introduces the "pre-career" and "in-career" truths, which are adopted by these professionals. Interviewees' features, such as sociability, connectivity, creativity and interest in technology, are attributes associated with the subjectivity of individuals outside (before) their professional condition. Connection with the activity itself and career insertion in the career means adopting new practices and truths to find professional fulfillment and completeness (financial, emotional and ethical satisfaction).

Theoretically, the present study contributes to address the construction of the Foucauldian individual from the career perspective. Unlike other relevant studies (e.g. Tomassini et al., 2021; Weiskopf & Willmott, 2013), this research explores alethurgic discourse practices and shines light on professional love linked to innovation professionals. This perspective helps to understand careers based on individual trajectories and narratives by seen careers from a socio-historical perspective linked to subjectivation practices.

In practical terms, this study helps highlighting professionals' subjectivization processes within the adopted empirical framework. Thus, it is possible understanding the changes in these professionals' profile and it increasingly involves subjective and ethical features.

The present study's limitations lie on an empirical scope that limits the innovation field to ICT and CE professionals, although it is a much broader field. This limitation emerges as outcome of the adopted methodological choices. The number of interviews is another concern. It is worth noticing

that the number of interviews was determined by the representativeness and “saturation” criteria described in the methodology.

Future research to look closer to professional truths associated with subjection modes are recommended, since abdication is expected to favor affection. It is worth noticing these segments' romanticization process (Malhã & Damo, 2022) and the precariousness of work itself in this field (Garcia, Pereira & Rossi, 2022), which is associated with the self-entrepreneurship process. By bearing in mind that true love can lead to deeper romanticization and by understanding that it involves self-practices recognition, it is worth observing that these discourse formations should be analyzed with caution.



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Publisher

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Publishers

- Rosalia Aldraci Barbosa Lavarda
- Leandro Dorneles dos Santos

History

Received:	10-01-2024
Approved:	26-03-2025
Published:	11-09-2025