

Ruptures and continuities in the migrant's transnational media experience

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Abstract

The impacts brought about by the accelerated development of communication and transportation systems experienced in recent decades have already been the subject of interest in Media Studies for some time now. In audience studies, more specifically, research in tends to focus on how media technologies allow building and sustaining transnational networks and communities, and how the relationship with these media is linked to the cross-border belongings of individuals and groups (Smets, 2019). In this context, the debate regarding the extraordinary and the everyday of the migrant experience becomes relevant. On the one hand, there is an inclination of Media Studies to essentialize the migrant audience, treating it in terms of its particularities, for example, emphasizing its connections with the country of origin to the detriment of its other media practices. On the other, it is precisely the aspects proper to the cross-border condition that may allow research to question the centrality of the national as a category of analysis, as well as notions of identities linked to media consumption (Robins & Aksoy, 2005; Dhoest et al., 2013; Smets, 2013; Mattelart, 2017). Within the scope of those discussions lies this proposal: between the specificities of transnationality and the common life of migrant audiences. The study is part of a broader research, interested in understanding how the formation of the subject of reception along its life trajectory participates in the sense of national identification of people in migrant status. In this paper, however, the objective is to discuss the ruptures and continuities of the habits and preferences of media consumption of the subjects in question. For this purpose, we use a set of semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with first-generation Brazilian immigrants in Portugal during the second half of 2022 and the first months of 2023. The results suggest that reception practices, still oriented by habits constituted throughout the pre-migration experiences, especially the consumption of specific programs, are initially maintained, but lose strength over time, as these subjects settle in the host country. The preference for certain genres, however, tends to remain or adapt to new media or platforms. Brazilian immigrants in Portugal acquire new consumption habits over time, moving between specific Brazilian media content - which they access mainly through digital devices - and their preferred genres from traditional media, whether offered by Portuguese media or accessed through streaming platforms.

Keywords: migration, reception, uses, media

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