

ABSTRACTS

SOCIO-CULTURAL OVERADAPTATION OF IMMIGRATED EXPELLEES FROM EAST CENTRAL EUROPE

A Linguistic Reconstruction

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In academic literature on the socio-cultural integration of expellees in the host societies of the FRG and the GDR, there is repeated talk of “overadaptation” of immigrants to their new living environment. This “overadaptation” characterizes not only the adaptation behaviour of the affected immigrant generation but also of at least the first generation of their descendants, who among other things exhibit excessive willingness to perform and self-discipline. As plausible as such a tendency towards “overadaptation” or “hyperintegration” may seem with a view to the material and psychological distress of the displaced, it has hitherto not been possible to present solid empirical evidence for these forms of behaviour. The author studied the linguistic adaptation of immigrants in northern Mecklenburg over the course of several large-scale research projects. Based on these studies, the present article offers a precise structural-linguistic comparison of the speech of immigrants and long-established residents, which shows that overadaptation of immigrants can indeed be determined and precisely quantified at the linguistic level.