Since 1990 about 2.1 million ethnic Germans from post-Soviet states (so-called Aussiedler) migrated to the Federal Republic of Germany where they were granted citizenship due to the German law of return. In doing so they were crossing territorial borders as well as finding themselves confronted with social, cultural and linguistic borders in Germany. The aim of this paper is to discuss the role of such borders for identity construction of these Russian-German migrants in Germany. Drawing on data from a corpus of qualitative interviews with eight post-adolescent migrants living in a small town in East Germany my presentation focuses on two main questions: 1) which kinds of borders are considered significant by the informants and 2) how are those borders constructed and negotiated in the discourse. I start at the assumption that "borders are [...] identity-constitutive” (Popescu 2012: 22) and therefore significant in the process of identity construction work that comes along with transnational migration. In this paper narratives as a site for constructing identities are explored as "the purpose of narrating is precisely the creation of an autonomous, unique self in discourse” (Johnstone 1996: 56). For this purpose I will use the model of positioning as suggested by Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008) focussing especially on small stories the informants provide.


Keywords: Russian-Germans, Identity analysis, Small Stories.