

THE INTERACTION BETWEEN IDENTITY PRESERVATION
AND LINGUISTIC INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS:
THE CASE STUDY OF ERITREANS IN SWITZERLAND

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my loving parents, without whom none of my accomplishments would have been possible.

My father and my best friend, the late Haile Melles, who always put my education and intellectual development first. He taught me the value of hard work and determination. His wisdom, his patriotism and devotion to Eritrea keep on inspiring me. His legacy lives on forever.

My mother, Nighisti Ogbazghi Melles, whose sacrifices and prayers have led me where I am today. For her endless support in all my endeavors. For being my rock at all times.

I would also like to dedicate this thesis to all the Eritreans all over the world. In the hope that this work may in some way contribute to their accomplishments.

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Abstract

This study investigates the interaction between identity preservation and linguistic integration of Eritrean immigrants in the French speaking part of Switzerland. The focus is put on Eritrean refugees and asylum seekers, who have been in Switzerland between six months to three years. This research is guided by three main research questions: a) what are their language use? b) what are their language attitudes? c) what factors play a role in language learning motivation? In terms of motivational factors special emphasis is put on political status. Data was collected via a triangulated approach with questionnaires, interviews and observational studies. A total number of 102 participants took part in the questionnaires and five French teachers were interviewed after having their classes observed.

The results show that Eritrean immigrants with recent migration background predominantly use Tigrinya in most of the domains. Even though, they develop favorable and positive attitudes towards French, they believe the maintenance of Tigrinya and the Eritrean culture is important, as they find themselves in a different sociocultural space. Thus, language and cultural preservation and transmission plays an even more important role outside Eritrea. The classroom domain is the only one where French is used. The participants argue that they lack language exposure and feel that they cannot be motivated to learn French if they are not given opportunities to use it (i.e. access to labor market). This is linked to their political status, which in the current political climate does not allow them to have access to full integration opportunities.

Declaration of Authenticity

I declare that “The Interaction Between Identity Preservation and Linguistic Integration of Immigrants: The Case Study of Eritreans in Switzerland” is my own work and that all the sources used or cited have been acknowledged accordingly with complete references. This thesis has not already been published in the present or in another version or in parts at the Technical University of Dortmund or any other university in connection with a State or academic examination.

Warsa Melles

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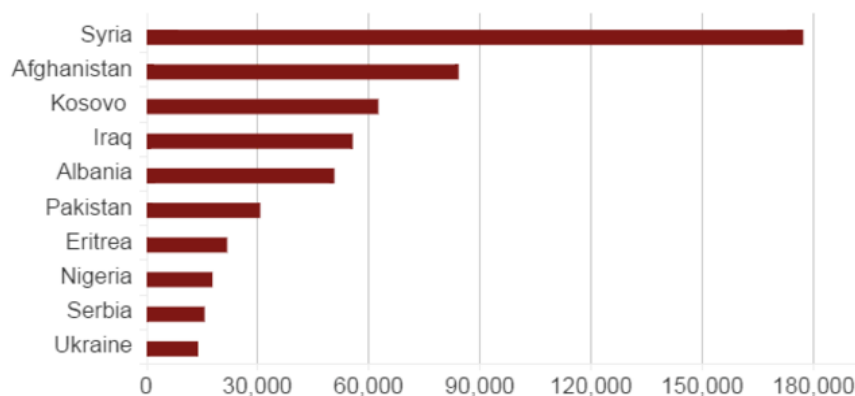
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1 Introduction

1.1 Framing the research: Three questions

In the past decade, Europe has faced massive waves of migration. More than a million immigrants crossed into Europe in 2015¹. As we can see in Figure 1, Eritrea is the seventh country among the top 10 origins of asylum seekers in Europe. Switzerland is among the five top countries (after Germany, Sweden, France and Italy) that grants asylum most frequently². In 2014, Syria and Eritrea were situated at the top of the list of nationalities whose asylum were granted³. Due to the current situation, one of the main concerns of Europe is the integration of these social groups into the different host countries they arrive at.

Figure 1: Top 10 origins of people applying for asylum in the EU (Jan.-Oct. 2015, first time applications)



Source: Eurostat



Available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34131911>. Accessed on 12/01/2021.

In Switzerland, Eritreans constitute the largest group of asylum seekers. As we can see in Figure 2, which represents the number of asylum applications submitted by Eritreans, Afghans and Syrians from 2013 to 2018, Eritrean nationals are the most numerous. The year of 2015 counted

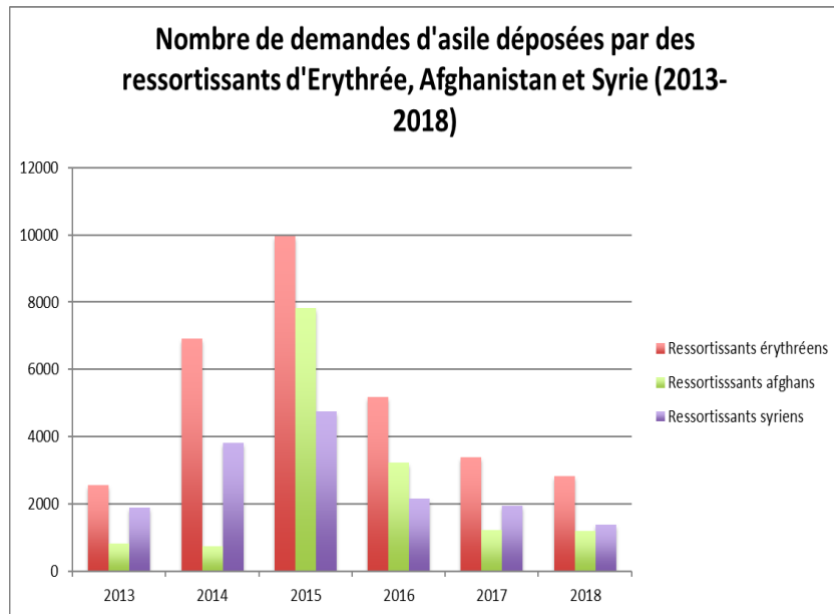
¹ Migrant crisis: Migration to Europe explained in Graphics. 28 January 2016. Available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34131911>. Accessed on 12/02/2021

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

around 10'000 Eritrean asylum seekers.

Figure 2: Number of asylum applications submitted by Eritreans, Afghans and Syrians (2013-2018)



Available at: <https://asil.ch/statistiques/suisse/>. Accessed on 12/02/2021

Although Eritrea has become the center of international and national news interest, there is a lack of studies regarding the Eritrean diaspora. The aim of this study is to investigate the interaction between identity preservation and linguistic integration which is an issue that many Eritrean immigrants face in the host country they find themselves in. On the one hand, they want to maintain and preserve their Eritrean identity, which includes language maintenance and on the other hand, they are willing to integrate into the host society and this is mainly achieved through linguistic integration. Thus, this includes exploring the reasons that impact the will to linguistically integrate or not. In this context, the relevance of the political status of the immigrants is emphasized. Three main sub-questions guide this research:

- a) What are the language uses and choices of Eritrean immigrants in different domains?
- b) What are the attitudes towards French?
- c) What factors play a role in language learning motivation?

The answers to these three sub-questions contribute to analyzing the interrelation between

identity preservation, on one hand, and integration, on the other hand.

For data collection, a triangulated approach with questionnaires, interviews and observational study has been carried out in a French language school for refugees and asylum seekers, in the city of Fribourg (western Switzerland), supervised by ORS (Organization for Refugee Services). In this school, the classes were predominantly composed of Eritreans, which reflects the high number of Eritrean asylum seekers in Switzerland. A total number of 102 Eritrean learners participated in the project. All of them are asylum seekers or have been granted the status of refugee. They responded to a questionnaire, which consisted of 55 questions divided into four main categories: personal data, language skills, language use/choice and identity/integration. In addition, five classes were observed and five of their teachers were interviewed to gather additional information on the learners' language practices as well as their personal insights and teaching methods.

This study is divided into four main parts. In the next sub-chapter, and as part of the introduction, the focus on identity and integration as the core elements of this research is more thoroughly defined. In the second part of the study, the theoretical background is explained. Previous research on language and identity on the one hand, and on linguistic integration, on the other hand, are presented to contextualize the research in relation to the scope of the research question, which refers to the interaction between identity preservation and integration. The third part of the study is dedicated to the methodology used. A more in-depth explanation of the data collection procedure and method design, as well as the participants is given. The fourth part consists of a discussion of the data. The findings are presented and discussed within the framework of the theories as well as the methods used. To end, a conclusion is drawn and further research desiderata are provided.

1.2 Focus on identity and linguistic integration

As previously stated, the aim of this research is to investigate the interaction between identity preservation and linguistic integration of Eritrean immigrants. Before we look into the different theoretical approaches, it is necessary that we clarify what is meant by the two terms “identity” and “integration”, within the scope of this study.

Within these heavy flows of migration, including refugees in particular, identity becomes a topical issue as individuals are leaving their country of origin often involuntarily to seek asylum in a host country. This, among other aspects, implies change on a number of social, cultural and linguistic levels. Identity is defined as the way in which an individual understands his or her relationship to the world and how that relationship is constructed across time and space (Norton 2013:45). Within this case study, it also refers to how the participants understand possibilities for the future. The phenomenon of identity is strongly related to a variety of “real world problems in which language is a central issue” (Brumfit 1995:27). Within this study, the question of identity and more specifically identity preservation is investigated through the participants’ insights into language maintenance. The dichotomy between language maintenance and language shift represents a common challenge for many immigrant groups and it has been comprehensively explored.

Scholars agree on three main factors influencing language maintenance or shift: the socioeconomic status of the language, the number of speakers and the institutional support towards the language (Giles, Bouris and Taylor 1977). All three factors determine ethnolinguistic vitality, which refers to what makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intergroup situations. Thus, in this study, identity preservation is analyzed through the use and maintenance of the Eritrean language and culture within the Swiss socio-cultural context encountered by the participants, as well as through the Eritrean immigrants’ membership in the communities present in the host country’s spaces (Badenhorst

and Makoni 2017) and the immigrants' language attitudes.

On the other hand, immigrants also face challenges linked with integration. In today's neoliberal economy, migrants are categorized according to their skills and according to the (in)voluntariness of their decision to leave their country of origin (Ottonelli and Torresi 2013; Vigouroux 2017). These have an impact on the political status that they are going to obtain in the host country, which consequently have an impact on the individuals' integration. The concept of integration and language learning is seen as a linear process in which language is a condition for social participation. In that sense, immigrants have to first acquire the host language in order to socially participate in society. However, this linearity only applies theoretically, as social participation and education success cannot be achieved on the basis of monolingual and assimilationist ideologies (Pulinx and Van Avermaet 2017). It is rather in the processes of social participation and building social networks that languages are acquired, through actual language use (Pulinx and Van Avermaet 2017). Thus, the lack of opportunities for language use and language exposure lead to difficulties in integrating into the host society. Moreover, attitudinal and motivational variables strongly impact language choice and intended efforts to study a new language (Dörnyei, Cziser and Nemeth 2006; Dörnyei 2001; 2014). In this study, integration is determined through language use domains, language attitudes and social participation.

Before we look into the theoretical background which frames this research more thoroughly, a background of Eritrea and the Eritrean diaspora in Switzerland is given.

2 Background of Eritrea

Before focusing on the Eritrean community in Switzerland, it is necessary to start by introducing Eritrea as a country underlining its history and more specifically, its language

policies in order to have a clearer idea of Eritrean immigrants' background before their arrival in Switzerland.

Located in the horn of Africa, Eritrea officially gained its independence from its neighbouring country, Ethiopia, in 1991. While the demography is composed of nine recognized ethnic groups with each their own languages (Afar, Bilen, Hidareb, Kunama, Nara, Rashaida, Saho, Tigre and Tigrinya)⁴, the country counts three official languages: Tigrinya, Arabic and English. Tigrinya is the dominant ethnic group of the country and almost the totality of the population understands the language. In terms of religion, Eritrea recognizes four main beliefs movements: Eritrean Orthodox Church, Sunni Islam, Eritrean Catholic Church and Evangelical Lutheran Church⁵. The Tigrinya and Bilen are the only ethnic groups that are predominantly Christian (even though they also count some Muslims). The rest of the groups and close to fifty percent of the population is Muslim and uses Arabic as the dominant language, which places Arabic as the second official language of the country. As for English, it is used as the exclusive language in the national educational system from sixth grade onwards. In elementary school, classes are mainly taught in Tigrinya, but in some regions, where an ethnic minority prevails, they can also be taught in the local language. For example, in the rural areas around Keren, where almost the whole population is Bilen, the elementary school's language is Bilen. Before independence, Tigrinya was not part of the educational structure, Amharic (Ethiopia's official language) was.

Prior to its integration into the Ethiopian federation in 1952, Eritrea was a British colony for a few years (from 1941 to 1945) after being colonized by Italy for more than sixty years (Uoldelul Chelati 2007:258). Nowadays there are still traces of the Italian past, such as the

⁴Eritrea's Ministry of Information. Available at: <http://www.shabait.com/about-eritrea/erina/16508-eritreas-9-ethnic-groups>. Accessed on 09/03/2017.

⁵ Eritrea's population. Available at: <https://www.indexmundi.com/eritrea/population.html>. Accessed on 04/03/2021

architectural structures of the capital city of Asmara but also as of the educational system. Asmara counts one Italian elementary and one Italian secondary school. Italy has been, and still is, a land of welcome for Eritrean immigrants. It is well known that the majority of immigrants decide to go to the country related to their colonial history for linguistic reasons (Craith 2006: 148). For example, many foreigners originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo went to Belgium or France because their ancient colonizers were French speakers and thus it was easier for them to settle in a country where the language was known and possibly mastered already. The same reasons explain the presence of numerous Nigerians in England.

2.1 The Eritrean diaspora in Switzerland

To come back to the case of Eritreans, a significant number settled in Italy, but many passed through Italy to reach other European countries, such as Switzerland for example (Clerc 2015). Since Italy is the closest European country to the African continent after the passage of the Mediterranean Sea, it is becoming increasingly common for African migrants to pass through the peninsula first, before reaching any other European country. Therefore, during their time in Italy, they have time to learn Italian to a certain extent. It is inevitable that migrants have to cross several countries within the African continent before reaching Europe. In most cases, the typical route that Eritreans undertake comprises Ethiopia, Sudan, the Saharan desert, Libya and sometimes Egypt. Depending on the time they spend in those countries, they can also learn Amharic or Arab. Thus, Eritreans are generally multilingual.

Very few studies have been undertaken on Eritreans in Switzerland (Melles 2016). Most of the research deals with Eritrean colonial history and its struggle for independence. As previously stressed, these last few years, Eritrea has caught the media's attention because of the high number of Eritreans leaving their country for Europe. The main European countries in which they apply for asylum are Germany, Sweden, Norway, England and Switzerland. As of

2019, it is estimated that around 40'000 Eritreans live in Switzerland⁶. Therefore, many articles concerning Eritrea have been published in the context of migration. The number of Eritreans in Switzerland may have increased these last few years, but it is certainly not the first wave. The arrivals of Eritreans on Swiss soil have started in the 1970s. Their motives for seeking asylum were completely different from those of the recent wave of arrivals, which is why it is necessary to introduce them as two distinct groups, as follows in the next sub-chapter.

2.1.1 Early arrivals

When liberated from Italian occupation, Eritrea was federated to Ethiopia as a province in the early 1950s by the United Nations General Assembly. Ethiopia had been claiming that Eritrea was part of its territory, while Eritrean separatists saw this differently (Clapham 2007: 119). The Eritrean war for independence went on for thirty years (1961-1991). Eritrea finally became a sovereign country on the 24th of May 1991, when the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) defeated the Ethiopian forces on Eritrean soil. In the course of that month of May, the regime of Mengistu Hailemariam's, who was governing Ethiopia during those thirty years of battle, collapsed. In mid-May, he resigned as head of the Ethiopian government and went on exile in Zimbabwe, where he still resides at the present time. The new transition government of Ethiopia agreed to recognize the right of the Eritreans to hold a referendum on independence, which took place in April 1993 (Clapham 2007:119). The Eritrean people voted almost unanimously in favour of independence. One month later, the United Nations officially recognized and admitted Eritrea as a sovereign and independent country to its membership.

During that time, Eritreans were fleeing the country for many different reasons but the majority concerned war. When Eritrea and Ethiopia were still forming one country, people were living in a dispersed manner all across the country. When war broke out, Ethiopian troops

⁶ Population résidante permanente étrangère selon la nationalité, de 1980 à 2019. *Office fédéral de la statistique*. Available at: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/fr/home/statistiques/population/migration-integration/nationalite-etrangere.assetdetail.13707208.html>.

recruited Eritreans to join the army and fight against Eritreans. This was a major motive for fleeing the country and seeking asylum elsewhere. Fleeing the country of origin at a time of war and national duty may provoke a sense of guilt for those who succeeded in saving their lives while others could not. Therefore, in most cases, Eritreans abroad were active in the contribution for the independence, even though it was not physically in trenches. The sense of nationalism and patriotism is still present for Eritreans living abroad during that period.

Before exploring their arrivals and integration processes in Switzerland, it is necessary to get a closer look at the journey undertaken to reach Europe. Back in the 1970s, unlike today (since 2012, it has been forbidden for Eritreans to seek for asylum in embassies⁷), it was possible to fill an asylum application at Swiss embassies located in the capitals of the neighbouring countries, Khartoum or Addis Ababa. Once the application was accepted and the visa granted, it was possible for Eritreans to fly to Switzerland. There were some agreements between Eritrea and Saudi Arabia which made it possible for Eritreans to go to Riyadh or Jeddah for work purposes. Many Eritreans who are now living in Switzerland were formerly in Saudi Arabia for many years beforehand, which makes French, German or Italian their L3 or L4 language (counting Tigrinya, Amharic and maybe another ethnical group language).

Back in the 1970s-1980s up to the 1990s, asylum was almost never granted (Eyer and Schweizer: 2010), the migrants would receive a temporary residence permit. More importantly, at that time, Eritrean immigrants did not think they would stay in the host country for long. Many of them had the will to return to their home country once war would be over. Generally, linguistic integration did not seem to be a major problem back then. It can be explained by the fact that Eritreans were less numerous. It is known that “immigrants from groups that are largely represented in the host country have a lower probability of achieving second language

⁷ Demande d’asile selon l’ancien droit pendantes auprès des ambassades suisses. L’assemblée fédérale : le Parlement suisse. Available at: <https://www.parlament.ch/fr/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaefft?AffairId=20151036>. Accessed on 6/03/2021.

proficiency” (Alhammadi: 2016 24). The bigger a community is, the more its members stay among themselves and thus the less effort they make to integrate into the host country. On the other hand, when a community is small in the host country, chances are that it will facilitate their integration in the sense that possibilities to mix with the host country’s society are greater.

2.1.2 Recent arrivals

Nowadays, Eritrean immigrants’ motives of seeking asylum differ from the earlier generations. Unlike in the 1970s or 1980s, Eritrean asylum seekers are not fleeing war but the regime in place⁸. Most of them are young people who are fleeing compulsory military service that has been established by the government as a national duty after the eleventh grade of schooling. The majority of asylum seekers’ reasons for migration refer to the harsh conditions and the undetermined duration of the military service, which is officially set to one year, but usually lasts longer. As mentioned before, Eritrean refugees nowadays undertake a difficult journey to reach Europe. The severe trauma that they experience also plays a role in their psychological abilities and motivations to accommodate in the host country. Furthermore, among the Eritreans entering the country, many are underage and numerous undergo severe post-traumatic stress-disorder⁹, which also affects the process of integration.

To come back to the concept of integration, one should bear in mind that the process of integration *per se* only starts once the person in question has been granted asylum or temporary admission. Thus, it is necessary to briefly clarify the main headings of the Swiss Asylum Law, which directly concern the Eritrean migrants. In that sense, according to article 3, paragraph 3 LAsi (*Loi sur l’asile* : Swiss asylum law), *le refus de servir et la désertion ne sauraient justifier en eux-mêmes la qualité de réfugié*¹⁰ (refusal to serve and desertion do not in themselves justify

⁸ Foire aux questions sur l’Érythrée. *Secrétariat d’Etat aux Migrations*. Available at : <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/fr/home/asyl/eritrea/faq.html>. Accessed on 26/03/2021

⁹ Les requérants affluent au Tessin. Available at : <https://www.letemps.ch/suisse/2015/09/30/requerants-mineurs-affluent-tessin>. Accessed on 26/03/2021.

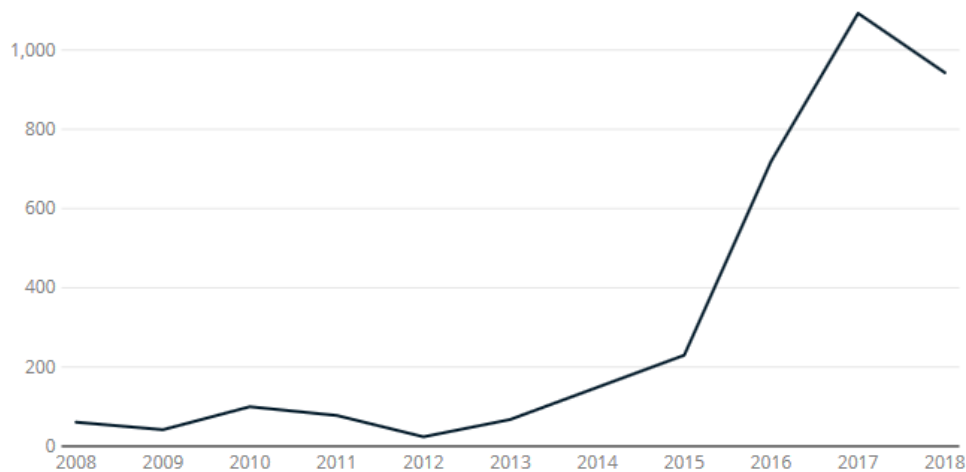
¹⁰ Translation: “refusing to serve or deserting do not solely justify the grant of the refugee status”

refugee status. [My translation.W.M]). However, an asylum seeker should be recognized as a refugee if the refusal to serve or desertion implies persecution within the meaning of article 3, paragraph 1 and 2 of LAsi, meaning disproportionate and inhuman sanctions. The case of Eritreans meets the criteria for the refugee status, which explains why their asylum applications is automatically granted. As specified, military service concerned the majority of the immigrants but not all of them. However, even those who were not concerned by the army and who were not victims of any kind of persecution in Eritrea were still admitted in Switzerland (at least temporarily). This can be explained by the fact that most of the migrants leave Eritrea illegally and are persecuted if they return. Thus, according to article 3 LAsi, the mere fact of fleeing from the country illegally was considered a valid motive for asylum. This has been the case until June 2016, when the State Secretariat for Migration changed the law after a few cases of some Eritrean refugees who returned to Eritrea after their asylum application was granted by the Swiss government and who did not suffer from any kind of persecution, although they had left Eritrea illegally in the first place¹¹. Therefore, according to the decree-law issued by the Federal Administrative Court (Tribunal Administrative Fédéral) the mere fact of leaving the country illegally does not expose the person in question, in case of return to country of origin, to any determining persecution within the meaning of article 3 LAsi¹². In other words, Eritrean nationals who have not been drafted to perform military duty (or who have not been exempt or free of obligations) are not considered refugees for that mere reason anymore. This resulted in several rejections, as we can see in Figure 3 below:

¹¹ Asylum seekers lose status over home visits. Available at: https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/immigration_asylum-seekers-lose-status-over-home-visits/42269960. Accessed on 26/03/2021.

¹² *ibid.*

Figure 3 : Rejections without provisional admission for Eritrean asylum seekers



Available at : https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/asylum_eritreans-stuck-in-switzerland-lose-faith-in-a-better-future/44805196. Accessed on 15/05/2020

While the number of rejections without provisional admission for Eritrean asylum seekers was close to zero, the number of rejections started to rise slightly between 2012 and 2015, which counted the first massive arrivals of Eritreans, until it reached a peak in 2017. The slight decline after 2017 can be explained by the fact that generally, the arrival of immigrants in Switzerland drastically decreased due to the political changes in place. This drastic change in the political framework of asylum applications implies that the chances of Eritreans immigrants to stay in Switzerland have considerably decreased. Many protests and demonstrations for the protection of Eritreans have taken place in various cantons of Switzerland. Limiting the number of admissions for Eritrean asylum seekers is an unprecedented decision that has impacts on the overall integration process.

It has been found that more than 80% asylum seekers are welfare dependent¹³. This can be explained by many facts. Professional success implies a certain knowledge of the cultural

¹³ Domaine de l'asile. *Office fédéral de la statistique*. Available at: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/fr/home/statistiques/securite-sociale/aide-sociale/beneficiaires-aide-sociale/domaine-asile.html>. Accessed on 26/03/2021.

norms of the workplace¹⁴. Moreover, many refugees or temporarily admitted migrants still need to acquire professional qualifications and this requires time. As previously stressed, representation of immigrant groups in the host country plays a role but linguistic distance between the native and the target language is also associated with second language acquisition and thus integration (Alhammedi 2016:25). Isphording and Otten (2011) evaluated the differences in language skills among immigrants in Germany and their results showed a strong correlation between linguistic distance and second language acquisition by immigrants. There is no need to mention that Tigrinya is definitely different from French, since both languages derive from different roots (Semitic languages and Romance languages respectively). In addition to that, a number of Eritrean migrants have not been sufficiently educated in the home country. Some are not familiar with the Latin alphabet, which requires a process of “re-alphabetization”, and this complicates the successful language acquisition¹⁵. In this study, we explore to what extent language plays a role in integration and the reasons that impact the will to learn the language.

3 Theoretical Framework

This part displays the theoretical framework of the study. It is separated into two main parts, which compose the research questions at stake: 1) language and identity 2) linguistic integration. The first part deals with theories linked with language and identity within the concept of migration, including definitions of multilingualism as well as approaches to language and migration, language and ethnicity, and language maintenance. The second part is focused on theoretical concepts and approaches of linguistic integration, which not only include

¹⁴ Foire aux questions sur l’Erythée. *Secrétariat d’Etat aux Migrations*. Available at: <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/fr/home/asy/eritrea/faq.html>. Accessed on 26/03/2021

¹⁵ Foire aux questions sur l’Erythée. *Secrétariat d’Etat aux Migrations*. Available at: <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/fr/home/asy/eritrea/faq.html>. Accessed on 26/03/2021

second language acquisition, language attitudes and learning motivations but also the role of language within the Swiss legal framework.

3.1 Language and identity

Identity refers to “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Norton 2013:45). It is a topic which has long been of interest in the social sciences because it enables the gap between the micro level of the individual and the macro level of the social order to be bridged, through the observation of the individual’s membership of particular groups, affiliations to cultural customs and practices and representations of self and others (Preece 2016). As Preece states (2016:3) “identity is not a free-for all in which individuals are at liberty to mix and match designer identities of their choosing”, instead it is a social construct constrained, among other things, by the:

- Access to the types of social spaces and relations (or discursive spaces) in which identities are constructed, constituted, negotiated, accomplished and/or performed;
- ‘Ascribed’ identities (that is, the identities that individuals are given by others)
- Access to material resources, including income, property and employment status derived from their social class positioning in the society

Bucholtz and Hall (2010:19-26) locate identity in language through five main principles, which can be summarized as follows:

- 1) ‘The emergence principle’: identity emerges in interaction (oral or written form).
- 2) ‘The positionality principle’: within the context of the interaction, the speakers temporarily inhabit particular social roles and stances.

- 3) 'The indexicality principle': identities are indexed in interaction by speakers, who make references to particular identity roles and use language associated with particular group identity or persona.
- 4) 'The relationality principle': identities are always constructed in relation to other identity positions and involve a number of overlapping binaries such as self-other, authenticity-inauthenticity or legitimate-illegitimate.
- 5) 'The partialness principle': identities can only be partial as they are always in a process of becoming.

Thus, language is a social tool and represents one of the vehicles through which identity can be discursively constructed. Identities are manifested in language as, a) first, the categories and labels that people attach to themselves and others to signal their belonging, b) second, as the ways of speaking and behavior through which they perform their belonging and c) third, as the interpretations that others make of those indices (Joseph 2016:19).

Due to globalization, technological developments and migration, the nexus between language and identity has gained particular significance over the past few decades. Within the scope of migration, mobility has made new communicative practices visible, as intense forms of contact that transcended labeled, territorialized, and separate languages emerge within migrant spaces (Canagarajah 2017). Thus, these multilingual and multicultural spaces offer a new perspective on the paradoxical features of fixity and fluidity, stability and change, order and emergence in communication (Canagarajah 2017:9). The language and cultural identity of immigrant communities is viewed as dynamic, fluid and emergent (Holliday 2009; Bloomaert 2010). Cultural identity is a matter of 'becoming', as well as of 'being' and it represents the juxtaposition of an imagined ancestral heritage and the adoption of different subject positions in the discourses available to migrants (Hall 1990). In this case study, cultural identity refers to ways in which culture is performed in lifestyle, dress, food, festivities, etc. and also takes into

account ways in which culture intersects with other dimensions of identity such as ethnicity, nationality, gender, social class and religion (Chowdhury 2016:478). Thus, the migrant stories on displacement, disjuncture, the search for a new place to belong, the learning of a new language and an identity transformation in which the culture, languages, religion, politics, customs and practices of what was left behind enter into a fluid mix with what is and what is to come (Preece 2016:2). Now that the term identity and its relationship to language and culture has been elucidated, the terms multilingualism and multiculturalism can be more clearly defined after which the theoretical approaches of language and migration, language and ethnicity as well as their interplay with language maintenance will be explained.

3.2 Definitions of multilingualism

Multilingualism can be an individual and/or a social phenomenon because it can be considered as an ability of an individual or it can refer to the use of languages in society (Cenoz 2013). While multilingualism refers to the presence of more than one variety of language in a geographical area (Council of Europe n.d.), individual multilingualism is sometimes referred to as *plurilingualism* to highlight the focus on the individual as “the locus and actor of contact” (Moore and Gajo 2009:138). Within individual multilingualism, there can be important differences in the experience of acquiring and using languages. An individual can acquire the different languages simultaneously by being exposed to two or more languages from birth or successively by being exposed to second or additional languages later in life (Cenoz 2013:5). At the societal level, there is an important distinction between additive multilingualism, when a language is added to the linguistic repertoire of the speaker while the first language continues to be developed, and subtractive multilingualism, which refers to a situation in which a new language is learned and replaces the first language (Cenoz 2013:6). For the purpose of this

study, the societal level of multilingualism is not relevant and only individual multilingualism is considered.

More generally, bilingualism and multilingualism are terms used in many different fields such as language acquisition, language learning, sociolinguistics or psycholinguistics and although it is often assumed that readers already understand the meaning of these terms, they may have different connotations. Both terms are often used interchangeably but the use of terminology is in fact debated in multilingualism research. Some researchers use the term *bilingual* to refer to users of two languages and *multilingual* for three or more (Kemp 2009; De Groot 2011). Dewaele and Stavans (2014) argue that the categorization of people according to the number of languages they claim to speak and use is too imprecise. According to them, two contradicting assumptions may arise as of who is considered multilingual or bilingual. For example, a sextalingual with limited knowledge of three out of the six languages would be considered more multilingual than a trilingual with advanced knowledge of three language. On the other hand, although the trilingual might know fewer languages, being more proficient in them may qualify him/her as more strongly multilingual. Thus, labels such as “bilingual”, “trilingual”, or “quadrilingual” may hide the limited aspect of the knowledge of some of these languages and of the use of these languages, as some languages may be less used than others (Dewaele and Stavans 2014; Dewaele 2015). In this present study, both terms “bilingual” and “multilingual” are used interchangeably as they both refer to the knowledge of two or more languages, even though proficiency is not at stake here. The reason for that is more explicitly explained in the following paragraph.

The general perception of who is bilingual/multilingual has evolved throughout time. In an early definition, sociolinguist Bloomfield had defined bilingualism as “the native-like control of two languages” (1935:56). Contemporary scholarship takes broader stances. What are the criteria an individual has to fulfill in order to consider him/herself as bilingual? Myers-

Scotton (2006) presents two issues: the first one concerns who decides that someone is a bilingual and the second one refers to the question of how professionals assess language proficiency. As she explains, speakers can self-identify as bilinguals, or other people may make the assessment but, in either case, the assessment can be absolute, as in *she speaks Moroccan Arabic like a native*, or it can be gradient, as in *I can get around Jakarta in Indonesia, but don't ask me to carry on a conversation with the locals* (Myers-Scotton 2006: 39). According to Baker (2011) the maximalist definition requiring native control of two or more languages is too extreme, but a minimalist definition that considers incipient bilingualism with minimal competence to be considered bilingual/multilingual is also problematic. More flexible views have put the emphasis on language use rather than proficiency as a criterion of categorization. Grosjean and Li (2013) have put the stress on language use as a defining factor because bilinguals use their languages for different purposes, with different interlocutors, in different domains of life. Thus, bilingualism is the use of two or more languages (or dialects) in everyday life (Grosjean and Li 2013:7). To avoid any confusing definitions of “bilingual” which may refer to the idea of the perfect bilingual, Cook and Bassetti (2010) introduced the term “L2 user”, who is a person who uses an L2 in everyday life.

According to Dewaele (2007), individual bilingualism should not be taken for granted because not all L2 users consider themselves bilingual. The latter researcher has investigated adults' self-categorization as bilinguals. Even though all of the participants had at least a working knowledge of a second language, less than half categorized themselves as bilinguals. The results have shown that younger participants were more likely to label themselves 'bilingual', possibly because they were less influenced by the older, more restrictive definitions of bilingualism (Dewaele 2007: 105). Moreover, recency of stay in the L2 environment affects the decision more than the length of time spent there. Therefore, he concluded that:

any definition of individual bilingualism based on strict linguistic criteria would be doomed to failure as some people see themselves as bilinguals and others do not, even if their abilities, experiences and exposures to their L2s appear to be similar.
(Dewaele 2007:105)

Moreover, as Myers-Scotton (2006) specifies, for various reasons, some may prefer not to speak their second language with a native-like pronunciation, some may have a smaller store of words in one language than the other. Therefore, proficiency in speaking another language cannot be used as a criterion to define bilinguals/multilinguals. Even “minimal proficiency” in L2 is problematic; how is “minimal” to be defined? (2006: 44). Consequently, this reinforces Grosjean and Li’s (2013) observation stated earlier that language use should be seen as a main defining criterion of bilingualism/multilingualism, as multilingual speakers use different languages, either in isolation or mixed, according to their communicative needs and their interlocutors (Cenoz 2013; Grosjean and Li 2013).

When defining a bilingual, the notion of culture should also be considered, more specifically the concept of biculturalism. As Grosjean states:

since language is part of a culture and learning a new language may sometimes mean acquiring a new culture, many people share the following false impression of bilinguals: that bilinguals are also bicultural.
(Grosjean 2010: 108)

According to Grosjean (2016), a bicultural person is defined according to three main criteria:

- a) He/she participates, at least partially, in the life of two cultures and regularly.
- b) He/she knows how to adapt, partially or more thoroughly, his/her behavior, his/her habits, his/her language (if it applies) to a cultural environment.
- c) He/she combines and synthesizes traits which belong to each of the cultures. Certain traits (such as attitudes, beliefs, values, behaviors, etc.) belong to one or the other culture (that is the combination part), while others do not belong to either or anymore but form a synthesis.

Thus, a person may become bicultural because he/she is in contact with two cultures and has to live, at least partially, within them. While, bilingualism and biculturalism are not necessarily coextensive, bicultural bilinguals also exist and that is mostly the case for immigrants, who have acquired their second language in the host country and who have adopted their new culture (Grosjean and Li 2013: 22).

In addition, the conditions of displacement of the (im)migrants (which are more thoroughly discussed in the chapter 3.3) play a role in language acquisition. Myers-Scotton (2006: 53) lists several types of displacements, physical or psychological, which result in speakers moving, voluntarily or involuntarily:

- The ruling class changes (wars, colonialism)
- Borders change (peace settlements)
- Circumstances encourage speakers to learn the territorially dominant language (incorporation for national integration)
- Speakers admire/espouse the characteristics of an attractive group (acculturation)
- Education in an L2 is a prerequisite for socio-economic mobility

Among those aforementioned migration circumstances, several can be related to Eritrean immigration into Switzerland to a certain extent, namely involuntary migration and education in a L2 as a prerequisite for socio-economic stability rather than mobility.

Based on the different types of displacements, Myers-Scotton (2006: 79) distinguishes two types of multilingualism: horizontal multilingualism and vertical multilingualism. The first implies that speakers live in their own geographic spaces and are often monolingual: multilingualism may be present at a higher level of society, but each language functions in its own space. Vertical multilingualism, on the other hand, refers to a situation in which people are in direct contact with others because of their living conditions. When this type of spacing

prevails, people work, live, go to school and shop in communities with speakers of different other languages.

3.3 Language and migration

Language and migration have received new incentives in today's neoliberal economy, which is built on production and marketing relationships that value mobile workers, capital and products and which facilitates cross-border movements. In order to facilitate these movements, language has become an important form of human capital (Canagarajah 2017:5). One of the main aspects of this form of economy is what we call labor migration. It represents the idea that talented people, or skilled people from diverse countries, are encouraged to move across borders by industries in developed countries to contribute to their technological innovations. Language plays a crucial role here as workers from different nationalities collaborate in shared workplaces and production and marketing networks. Thus, language repertoires have become an important form of human capital in neoliberal forms of mobility (Canagarajah 2017).

Within the scope of neoliberal economy, it is necessary to distinguish voluntary from involuntary migration. The notion of voluntariness is central to the study of migration because it is assumed by definition of what counts as "forced" migration. According to Ottonelli and Torresi (2013:784) it is important to redefine and rethink the notion of voluntariness to create a conceptual space and to recognize migrants' agency in choosing migration as part of their life plans. As they explain (2013:809):

those who tend to minimize the duties we have towards migrants seek a notion that makes forced migration a relatively circumscribed phenomenon, limited to those who suffer from extreme deprivation in their country of origin, and at the same time, tend to represent voluntary migration as prompted by merely whimsical preferences. Those who advocate more liberal immigration policies, to make the duties toward migrants more pressing, tend to insist that all migration taking place in a context of global injustice is forced.

Thus, these definitions do not leave room to consider voluntary choices, which are nevertheless important goals and ends in people's lives. As Ottonelli and Torresi state "the recognition of migrants' agency and of their choices as voluntary or non-voluntary should not be made to do *all* the normative work in devising the appropriate policy responses to migration, nor should the normative consequences and costs that follow from such choices be assumed to implicitly and uncontroversially be grounded in voluntariness alone" (2013:808). In other words, the complexity of the conception of (in)voluntariness should not serve as the sole basis for policy responses. The multilayered complexity in the notion of (in) voluntariness in migration may explain why it is a rather understudied topic. However, as previously stated, it is central to what counts as "forced" migration, which underlies what constitutes "proper" refugees and distinguishes them from economic migrants, for example. Before looking into the different types of migrants, it is important we define the terms often used to refer to them.

Whether it is in the news or an overheard conversation, several terms are used when referring to the topic of migration in general. Words such as "asylum seekers" and "refugees" are often interchangeably used. At this point it is important to specify the definitions of these terms. According to the UNHCR,

[p]olitics has a way of intervening in such debates. Conflating refugees and migrants can have serious consequences for the lives and safety of refugees. Blurring the two terms takes attention away from the specific legal protections refugees require. It can undermine public support for refugees and the institution of asylum at a time when more refugees need such protection than ever before. We need to treat all human beings with respect and dignity. We need to ensure that the human rights of migrants are respected. At the same time, we also need to provide an appropriate legal response for refugees, because of their particular predicament.

(UNCHR viewpoint: "Refugee" or "migrant": which is right?
<https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html>.
Accessed on 20/04/2020)

There is a difference between an "asylum seeker" and a "refugee." According to the UNHCR 1951 Geneva Convention, a refugee is a person who is qualified to be labelled so, according to certain criteria established by international law. Thus, a refugee is a person, who because of

persecution related to race, religion, nationality, political opinion or affiliation to any group, is forced to leave the country of origin and cannot return. An asylum seeker, on the other hand, is a person applying to get protection from a country other than the country of origin, but whose application has not yet been decided upon. Asylum seeker is thus a temporary status. All refugees are asylum seekers at the beginning of the procedure but not all asylum seekers are recognized as refugees and this will depend on the motives for asylum as well as the (un)voluntariness in deciding to leave the country of origin. Thus, the status granted to a migrant differs according to the criteria mentioned above.

This leads us to the different types of migrants, who are very often distinguished according to their skills. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development:

Skills has become the global currency of the 21st century. Without proper investment in skills, people languish on the margins of the society, technological progress does not translate into economic growth, and countries can no longer compete in an increasingly knowledge-based society. (OECD 2011:1)

Immigration in general has been characterized as a big threat to national economies and one of the major causes of the rise of unemployment among native workers (Vigouroux 2017:312). The extent to which (im)migrants are preferred over native citizens varies depending on their skill levels (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010). However, the term *skill* and who is considered (un)skilled is not clearly defined. According to The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Glossary on Migration, a "skilled migrant worker is a migrant worker who has the appropriate skill level and specialization to carry out the tasks and duties of a given job" (IOM 2019:198) and a "low-skilled migrant worker is a migrant worker whose level of education, occupational experience, or qualifications make them eligible to practice a typically low skilled occupation only" (IOM 2019:126). The Glossary on Migration adds an important note to this latter definition:

Other definitions are possible notably on the basis of the nature of the occupation held by the individual. The term should be treated with caution as it does not reflect the alternative ways in which skills can be acquired and the varying levels of skill of migrant workers within this category. Moreover, it is important to distinguish between “low-skilled jobs” and “low-skilled migrant workers”, as low-skilled jobs are often performed by skilled migrants which results in their “deskilling.” (IOM 2019:126-127)

There is no definition of the term “low-skilled jobs” in the Glossary of Migration, which renders the aforementioned definitions not particularly informative in explaining the different categories of ‘low-skilled’ in relation to ‘skilled’ workers. However, the difference in treatment is made clear through the additional note in the “skilled migrant worker” definition:

Whilst what may constitute a skilled migrant varies between States is often determined by a range of factors such as labor market needs, skilled migrants are usually granted preferential treatment regarding admission to a country (and are therefore subject to fewer restrictions regarding length of stay, change of employment and family reunification). (IOM 2019:198-199)

Therefore, we can see that the idea of “skills” has very concrete socio-economic and life consequences. The ways in which governments sort out migrants by distinguishing between those deemed desirable and those deemed undesirable can be analyzed as a face of neoliberalism (Vigouroux 2017:319). Thus, not only are the definitions unclear but the categories are also problematic because they are understood according to a plus/minus binary rather than a complex continuum (Vigouroux 2017:315) and this is particularly visible when observing how language skills weighs within this global mobility era.

Within the scope of neoliberalism and global mobility, language skills have become a key component of integration (Piller 2001; Extra, Spotti and van Avermaet 2009; Shohamy 2009). This issue is more thoroughly discussed in chapter 3.4. Before that, the focus is drawn on the idea that migrants with higher language skills are more competitive on the local job market than those who do not possess those. However, the equation between economic integration and language skills relies on a number of misconceptions summarized by four main points (Vigouroux 2017:320-322): first, it assumes that any country is linguistically

homogeneous and does not take into account language indexicalities. Second, based on the one-language-one-nation ideology, the sharing of the same language is perceived as a guarantee to social cohesion, which presupposes that migrants who do not speak the host language(s) are unwilling to integrate. This conception does take into consideration the language learning processes and contexts but instead approaches language acquisition from a literacy-based perspective, according to which languages are learned and acquired through formal training rather than interactions and exposure - this aspect is more thoroughly discussed in chapter 3.4 -. Third, studies (Lebeau and Renaud 2002; Godin and Renaud 2005) have shown that prior knowledge of the host language(s) does not necessarily facilitate access to first employment. This leads to us to the fourth misconception, which is treating the acquisition of the host language(s) as the sole criterion to access the job market, as if jobs were equally available to everyone. Other factors such as ethnicity also play a role in the labor market accessibility (Gariba 2009; Bisin, Patacchini, Verdier, Zenou, Ichino and Wasmer 2011; Luthra 2013). Thus, these aspects show that there is a need to deconstruct the institutionalized categorizations of skills by comprehending them within the sociocultural context where they are deployed (Vigroux 2013).

3.3.1 Linguistic distance

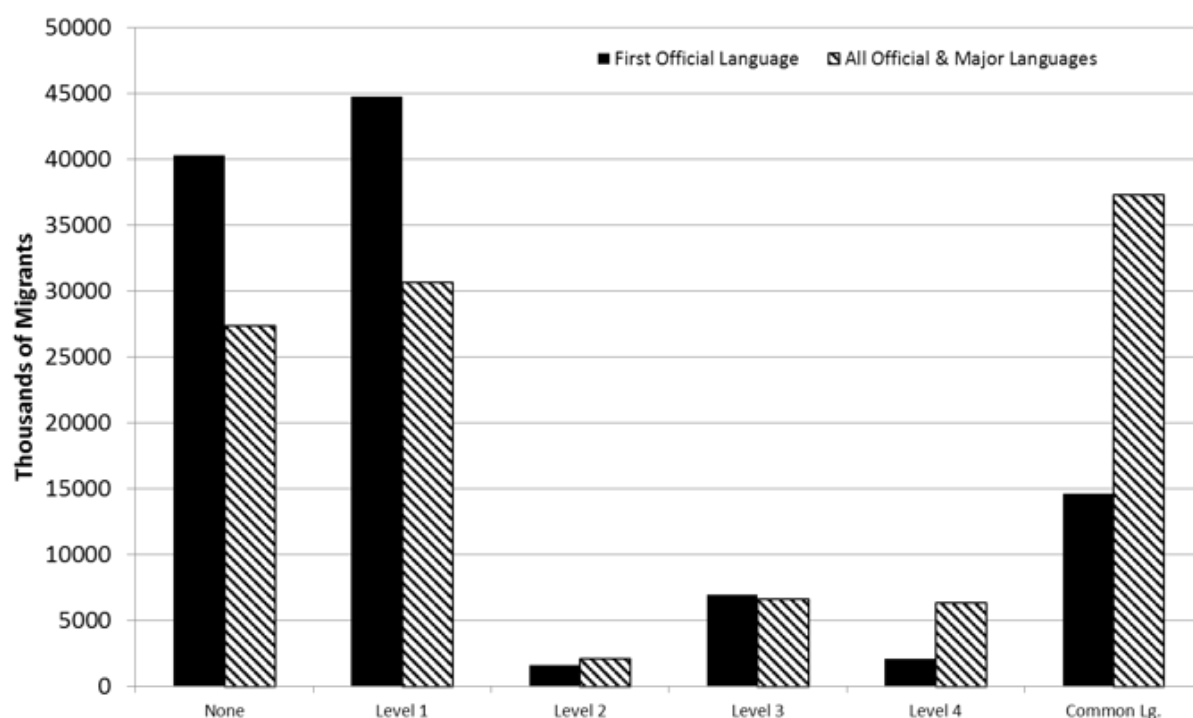
When dealing with immigrant adult language acquisition, linguistic distance is also at stake. Isphording and Otten (2011) have shown in their study on linguistic distance and language fluency of immigrants in Germany that the linguistic distance to the host language is one of the most determining predictors of language acquisition and it explains a large fraction of language skill heterogeneity between immigrants. Chiswick and Miller have carried out a similar study in the United States and Canada and demonstrated the strong negative impact of linguistic distance on the level of language proficiency of immigrants, as it theoretically induces higher costs of learning (Chiswick and Miller 2001; 2005). The linguistic distance is measured on the basis of a lexicostatistical approach, which uses a set of vocabulary of 40 words for each

language describing common things and environments. For each word pair, it is evaluated how many additions or subtractions are necessary to transform one word in one language into the same word in another language (Isophording and Otten 2011: 8). The main shortcoming of this method is that it only covers differences in vocabulary and phonetics while languages differ in many other characteristics, such as grammar, written form or syntax. However, the study in general gives us interesting insights on the role of linguistic distance in language acquisition and ultimately integration in general.

Other scholars such as Adserà and Pytliková (2015) have also studied the impact of linguistic distance in migration, or more specifically of linguistic proximity. There are different ways to measure linguistic distance between countries. One way is to look at the number of common nodes on the linguistic tree (Belot and Hatton 2012). This has shown that there is a net positive effect of language on skill selectivity which suggests that the closer the relationship between languages, the more human capital transfer takes place (Belot and Hatton 2012). Other studies have calculated the linguistic proximity between languages based on the number of branches of the linguistic family tree languages have in common, taking into consideration more specifically three indicators: one that measures the distance between the first official language in the destination and the first official language in the source country; a second for the minimum distance between any pair of official or most widely spoken languages in each country, and a third for the most widely used language in each country (which in some cases is not the official language).

Figure 4 below demonstrates the highest common branch in the linguistic tree between origin and destination.

Figure 4: Migration flows to OECD destinations by the linguistic proximity between source and destination language (1980-2010)



Highest common branch in the linguistic tree between origin and destination

The higher levels indicate greater linguistic proximity between either the first official language in both destination and origin or between the closest among any multiple official or two major languages in each country.

Available at: <https://voxeu.org/article/language-and-migration>. Accessed on 15.05.2020.

Higher levels indicate greater linguistic proximity between either 1) the first official language in both destination and origin or 2) between the closest among any multiple official or two major languages in each country. As we can see, flows are larger at high levels of linguistic proximity when we use instead the minimum distance among all multiple official and the two most widely spoken languages in each country rather than just the official, since the language of the former colonial power is often one of many official languages in former colonies (Adserà and Pytliková 2015). Thus, migration rates are higher between countries which had a common colonial history. For example, migration rates to France from Benin (where French is the first official language, due to colonial past) should be around 18% higher than those from Zambia

(whose language shares only one level of the linguistic tree with French) (Adserà and Pytliková 2015).

While linguistic distance may impact migration flows, factors such as wage levels and network have a higher impact on the determination of a host country's choice; (Geis, Uebelmesser and Werding 2013). Moreover, migrants and refugees tend to be overrepresented in countries where the labor market is rather stable in general and where the unemployment rates are low (Tanay and Peschner 2016).

3.3.2 Language and ethnicity

The term ethnicity or ethnic group still refers back to the idea of separate “peopleness”, but not entirely in the way in which the term was used before (i.e. in a discriminatory way). According to Fishman (2010:xxviii), “it is not a general quality of *peopleness* that is being referred to but merely its minority contextualization.” Thus, the term ethnic group refers to a minority group in a particular context. The language-and-ethnic-identity fold is composed of three main points of views (Fishman 2010:xxx): a) the insider point of view, which refers to the point of view of the individuals whose identity is under examination, b) the outsider point of view on how the insiders' view their own language and ethnicity, which can be subdivided into different sub-groups, depending on which ones one wishes to study and c) the expert, a special kind of outsider because of his/her quality of being particularly well-informed and trained and who is able to elicit perspectives related to theoretically relevant questions and issues based on data. Thus, *ethnic* group is very often linked to *minority* group, especially when referring to immigrant populations, as dominant groups rarely define themselves as ethnics (Edwards 2009). Within the context of politics of power and dominance, ethnicity crosses boundaries. There is no unique relationship between *ethnic* and *minority* as some groups are associated with more than one ethnic group creating dynamic groups. This suggests that group boundaries may change. However, the continuation of boundaries themselves is longstanding (Edwards

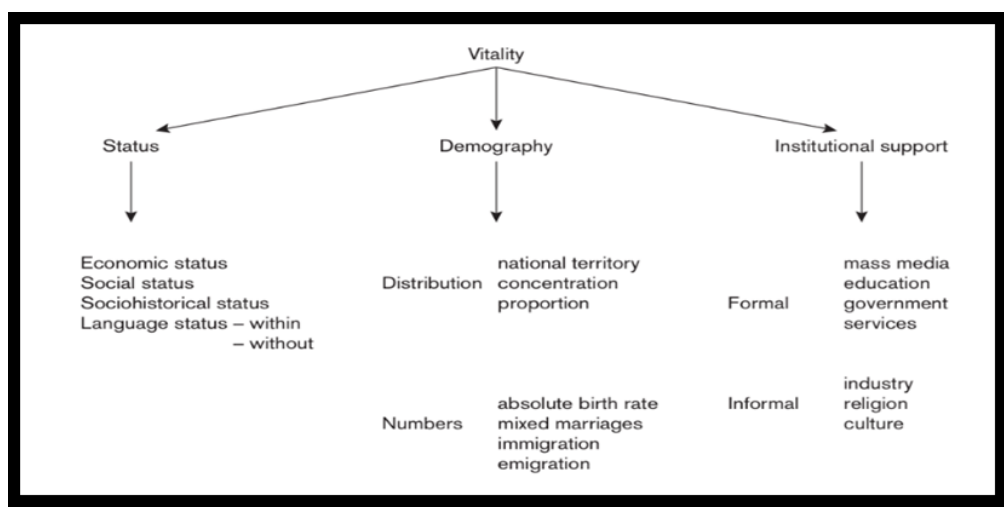
2009:157). This is illustrated across immigrant generations. For example, second generation and third generation Eritrean immigrants in Switzerland are generally quite unlike their first-generation parents in terms of linguistic and cultural habits, yet the extent to which they recognize links and differences from other groups is significant (Melles 2016). More specifically, Melles' study (2016) shows that French is the dominant language among the second generation participants and Tigrinya only plays a small role. Since they were born and raised in Switzerland, their daily life is more linked to the Swiss lifestyle. However, the majority identify themselves as both Eritrean and Swiss. When asked whether they feel Swiss or Eritrean, most second generation participants referred to both cultures, constructing a hybrid identity in the sociocultural space in which they find themselves, which presupposes a similarity and a proximity among the Eritreans who were born and raised in Switzerland. This also presupposes a difference with the groups who consider themselves exclusively Eritrean (such as the parents' generation) or Swiss (very rare).

Another feature of ethnic identity concerns the dichotomy between objective and subjective indicators of group membership (Edwards 2009). Objective characteristics, predominantly language, geographical location, religion and ancestors, define ethnicity as a "given" and immutable historical inheritance. It is clear, especially nowadays thanks to technological innovations and globalization which have brought spatial and temporal boundaries closer together, that objective indicators are not the sole characteristics of group membership recognition (Canagarajah 2017). Such developments contribute to relationships and affiliations that are diversified and changing and built from hybrid resources. Social scientists created a new term for it: superdiversity, which is used to describe fluid forms of community being established by migrant communities in European urban spaces (Vertovec 2007). People from diverse national and ethnic groups settling in an urban space are able to form new communities with mixed features from their languages/ cultures becoming a new

shared repertoire to conduct their social life in the new habitation. These superdiverse communities are even more layered and mixed compared to the separate ethnic enclaves that characterized previous waves of migrant settlement (Block 2018:134). This definition clearly shows the dynamism of identity construction, which is composed of multi-layered aspects and the possibility for individuals to construct, negotiate and re-negotiate their identity within several frameworks at the same time. For instance, thanks to technological innovations which have brought the spatial boundaries closer together, it is now possible for individuals in the host country to maintain close contact with the country of origin. Moreover, individuals with shared culture and language form a new community within the different social spaces offered in the host country, creating particular memberships and identities.

In interactions where in-group members believe their status in the intergroup hierarchy to be illegitimate and susceptible to social change, in-group members would tend to emphasize their own national accent, dialect or language, thus, accentuating the differences between themselves and the outgroup on a dimension salient to their group identity (Bourhis and Giles 1977). This idea is associated with Giles' and his research associates' conception of *ethnolinguistic vitality*.

Figure 5: The Model of Ethnolinguistic Vitality



(Giles 1977:309)

As we can see in Figure 5, they propose a three-part model in which a) the socioeconomic status of the language, b) the demographics of the speakers and c) the institutional support behind the language contribute in the survivability of an ethnolinguistic group (Bourhis and Giles, 1977). According to them, the socioeconomic status of the language in the country plays an important role in the extent to which speakers will maintain the language. The higher the social status a linguistic group is recognized to have, the more vitality it can be said to possess as a collective entity (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977: 309). The number of speakers also influences how speakers use a certain language. If the use of a language is restricted to limited contexts because of a reduced number of speakers, it ultimately leads to a decrease in its use, since the number of speakers will inevitably decrease as well. Moreover, the attitudes towards a vital language and a dying language are not the same, which brings us back to the link between vitality and social status (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977). The social status of a linguistic group is directly linked to the vitality of the language. The resources and the institutional support promoting a language plays a role in its maintenance. The extent to which a language group receives formal and informal representation in the various institutions of a nation, region or community affects people's attitudes towards the language and allows an organized setting for language promotion and transmission (1977: 309). All of these aforementioned factors lead to what Giles and his associates call *ethnolinguistic vitality*, which refers to “what makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intergroup situations” (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977:309).

As pinpointed by Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977), several e/immigration patterns constitute a factor (among others) which may enhance or decrease the vitality of a linguistic minority group. They stress the idea that immigrants can either contribute to the strengthening of a linguistic group by assimilating into it, or they can contribute to its weakening by assimilating into the linguistic dominant group. For example, Giles, Bourhis and Taylor's study

in Canada has shown that “many immigrant groups settling in Québec, including the Greek community in Montreal, have been considered a threat by French Canadians because they have learned English rather than French as means of advancing their socioeconomic condition in the province” (1977:315). In this context, the vitality of French, which is a dominant language in Quebec but a minority language in Canada, is threatened by the immigrant groups who learn English instead of French. Emigration on the other hand, and this particularly reflects the Eritrean diaspora’s current situation, also affects ethnolinguistic vitality as vast numbers of young and active members of linguistic minorities are forced to leave their traditional communities in search of better occupational and economic opportunities elsewhere. As a consequence, “in addition to reducing the numbers of in-group speakers in the traditional linguistic community, such emigrants will often need to learn another language and eventually lose their own mother tongue” and the issue of threat to ethnic identity is perceived as a moderator of second-language learning (1977: 315). The idea that fear for one’s ethnic identity is a barrier to second language learning has been advanced by many scholars (Lambert 1963; Lambert 1974; Taylor and Simard 1975). It is often the case that minority groups are involved in a struggle for cultural and linguistic maintenance in the face of threatened assimilation by more dominant groups (Taylor, Meynard and Rheault 1977). In that sense, for some individuals, the rewards of learning a new language do not balance the perceived costs in terms of ethnic or cultural identity loss.

Some of the main criticisms of the theory of *ethnolinguistic vitality* are that the question of differential weighting of variables and factors is not sufficiently addressed and thus only provides a simplistic analysis of group situations. Clyne (1991:89) criticizes its restricted applicability as the theory only relies on relatively stable minority situations (such as Welsh-English) and cannot deal with constantly changing linguistic scenarios. However, despite these criticisms, the theory of *ethnolinguistic vitality* as presented by Giles *et. al.* remains a

framework which allows an understanding of language and language behavior in intergroup situations. It continues to suggest revisions and readjustments to fit specific current contexts.

More recent studies have also explored ethnic identity as a social factor which has consequences for language teaching and learning (Pavlenko & Blackledge 2001; Gatbon & Trofimovich 2008; Segalowitz, Gatbonton & Trofimovich 2009). The association between ethnic group affiliation (EGA) and L2 proficiency has demonstrated interesting results in terms of how this relationship shapes L2 learning. According to Gatbonton and Trofimovich (2008), strong ethnic group identification, coupled with a positive orientation towards the L2 group can be associated with high L2 proficiency and mediated by amount of L2 use, which reveals a plausible link between EGA and L2 learning success. In another study examining a group of Quebec Francophones' EGA and their English pronunciation, Segalowitz, Gatbonton and Trofimovich (2009) have shown that the stronger the EGA, the less native-like the L2 pronunciation. However, a factor which needs to be taken into consideration, and which is important in the context of our study, is the status of the social group in question. Trofimovich, Turuseva and Gatbonton (2013) have investigated Latvian and Russian groups in Latvia and have demonstrated that the links between EGA and language learning appear to differ for the Latvian and Russian groups. For ethnic Latvians, a strong sense of ethnic identity and strong political views towards the Latvian language are related negatively to their self-rated L2 (Russian) ability, which parallels the results from French speakers of Quebec in Segalotiwitz, Gatbonton and Trofimovich's (2009) study. In contrast, for ethnic Russians, no such negative associations have emerged. As a linguistic and political minority in Latvia, "Russians may prefer (overtly or covertly) not to associate their strong ethnic beliefs with the ability to speak the majority language, perhaps in order to both maintain a strong ethnic identity and also to gain access to the social and economic benefits associated with speaking Latvian"

(Trofimovich, Turuseva and Gatbonton 2013: 566). Thus, strategic language choices are made in order to be able to participate into the social life.

3.3.3 Language maintenance

When settling in the host countries, immigrants face interaction between language shift and language maintenance. Before we look into the reasons and the consequences of such phenomena, it is necessary to start this section by defining the key concepts in the study of language maintenance and shift. As explained by Pauwels,

the term ‘language shift’ is used when the abandonment of one language for another language results not in the complete disappearance or death of the former but merely the disappearance of it from the specific speech community (or part thereof) that finds itself in the contact situation
(Pauwels 2016:18)

Thus, language shift involves the gradual substitution of one’s L1 by another language, usually referred to as L2, in all spheres of usage. In that sense, language shift is considered both a process and a result. On the one hand, it is a process because the shift from one language to another occurs gradually across its uses and settings. On the other hand, it is an outcome if the members of the community do not use their former first language in any sphere of usage anymore. Language shift is associated with terms such as “language loss”, “language death” or “language attrition.” The first two are terms which refer to more dramatic situations where a language is abandoned by the entire speech community and is no longer used or spoken anywhere in the world. Language attrition mainly refers to “the loss or changes in the grammatical and other linguistic features of a language as a result of its declining use by speakers who have changed their linguistic environment and language habits” (Pauwels 2016:20). In this study, the focus will be put on language shift and the topic of language death or attrition will not be pursued.

If language shift is defined as the process in which a language (L1) is gradually replaced by another language (L2), language maintenance is best described as the continued use or the

retention of an L1. More specifically, there are three key elements which identify a situation of language maintenance: a) the period of continued use since the initial language contact, b) the extent to which it is the exclusive language in any given context and c) the number of contexts or domains in which the L1 continues to be used either exclusively or in conjunction with another language (Pauwels 2016:21). Language maintenance, however, is a difficult term to define as it involves the issue of the *degree* of usage and this is rarely addressed. There are different situations where language maintenance is at stake. For instance, a community can move from one linguistic territory into another but does not adopt the other language (L2) and continues to use its own language for all functions and in all contexts. This suggests a more extreme case as it involves a certain linguistic enclave where the migrated community is self-sufficient and does not need any or rather limited contact with the dominance community.

According to Myers-Scotton (2006:89), two main generalizations can be made: (1) there is always a combination of factors at work, and (2) maintenance and shift within a bilingual community form a continuum with those individuals who use only the L1 at one end to those who use only the L2 at the other end. The language use of individuals creates a continuum and shift which cannot be seen as categorical or abrupt but rather as a process, which does not necessarily show the same degree of shift all at once in all of the purposes or situations for which individuals use any language; i.e.: from family to public conversation, from household topics to technical subjects, writing and reading. Specific case studies have shown that group size matters more for an indigenous minority group in a nation with a different official language than it means for an immigrant group in a nation new to them (Myers-Scotton 2006: 90). Myers-Scotton mentions the examples of the minority group of Hungarians living in Slovakia where Slovak is the official language. For these Hungarians, both group size and linguistic culture that equates language with ethnicity and even with nation are the two most important factors in the maintenance-or-shift equation (2006: 91). On the other hand, evidence that a large number of

speakers is not sufficient to guarantee maintenance of an L1 is given by the Vietnamese community in California, which represents the second-largest language group (excluding English, and following Spanish). Monolingualism in English being the pattern for many, it pushes immigrants in general to shift to English. Despite the factors enabling and reinforcing language maintenance, such as living closely, celebrating Vietnamese cultural events, churches, temples and associations the main factor that correlates with higher use of the Vietnamese language use is a short length of stay. Therefore, the longer the length of stay, the higher the shift to English, even though – ironically – the longer the stay, the more the parents encouraged the children to speak Vietnamese. In sum, these case studies make clear that minority languages can rarely survive in all the domains where the dominant language in the relevant nation rules (Myers-Scotton 2006: 103).

Another important factor playing a role in minority language maintenance is the display of positive attitudes towards the language. Surveys of attitudes that individuals and communities hold towards their heritage or minority language and its maintenance reveal a generally positive attitude with the will to transmit and pass on the minority language to the next generation (Pauwels 2016). Moreover, immigrant and minority group parents are often exposed to opinion, beliefs and advices held by professionals in education, health or social services that discourage the use or the maintenance of the heritage language (Pauwels 2016:127). The different settings available in the host country's space play an essential role in language maintenance and sense of belonging for immigrant communities.

Shared social practices also come to serve as a means of *belonging* while *becoming* in the liminal space occupied by skilled migrant worker, retiree, or economic or political refugee: those generally seeking an anticipated good life out of own accord or those who migrate out of free choice with an intent to serve as well as those who have been relocated by force. (Badenhorst and Makoni 2017:275)

There are different ways to organize, initiate and support language maintenance. Creating language-rich environment to aid both the acquisition process and the long-term use

of that language is considered an important technique for language maintenance. This environment can be created not only in the family domain but also beyond. Pauwels presents four main agencies that a community initiates and supports, with or without support from the majority: schools, religious institutions, organized leisure or culture groups and the media (2016:128). Studies on community schools have demonstrated that students attending such schools not only increased L1 skills but also developed positive attitudes towards education, reinforced positive identity and have a better understanding of their cultural background. Religious institutions also impact on language maintenance as they represent a space in which people regularly come together to share religion. Very often, other social and cultural activities such as Sunday school for young children, Bible classes, preparations for special festivals, religion inspired trips, etc. provide opportunities for worshippers to engage more freely with each other in the minority language (2016:139). Other studies have shown how liturgical literacies such as Arabic of the Qur'an for example, plays a role in preserving community identity across national and migratory shifts so that Arabic largely maintains its tie to religion (Omoniyi 2006:133). In that sense, the religious classical serves as a flexible, dynamic linguistic resource for performative identity acts (Rosowsky 2012).

Religion in most African countries, and particularly Christianity (as well as the different religious groups stemming from it) is a result of colonialism. Historically, language was “seized on by the colonial migrant in the attempt to reduce the religion of the ‘savage’ colonized other to the realm of superstition (Chidester 1996). In Eritrea, however, such treatment was not conducted and the country kept the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahdo Church as its official and majoritarian religion (followed by Sunni Islam, Eritrean Catholic Church and Evangelical Lutheran Church, all three of which are recognized religions of the country as well). As stated by Badenhorst and Makoni, religious identity does not exist isolated from other forms of identity-based affiliation and social practice, but rather one’s religious identity exists on a grid

where the ongoing *becomings* of movement, flux and potential continuously collide (2017:289). At this point, it is necessary to emphasize that religious subjectivities exist on a continuum ranging from nominal membership to life-transforming modes of personal devotion so that qualification of being of a particular religion, has more to do with belonging to a community as identity-based resource than solely with variables such as deference to orthodoxy or piety (Badenhorst and Makoni 2017:279). Other types of agencies that communities support are organized leisure or culture groups such as football tournaments for example, which is very common within the Eritrean communities of Switzerland, or organizations of fashion shows or political groups such as YPFDJ (Young People's Front for Democracy and Justice) or the Stop Slavery in Eritrea Campaign represented by various diasporic groups not only in Switzerland, but in many countries throughout the world.

It goes without saying that technological evolution has greatly facilitated communication and contacts in general, and in that sense also impacted language use. The language/migration nexus emerged as significant nowadays and attracted considerable attention due to new social, technological and geopolitical developments. Nowadays, as spatial and temporal boundaries have been brought closer together, distant and virtual forces shape identities, communities and social ties (Canagarajah 2017:2). Digital media enables individuals living in different spaces to maintain relationships with other individuals from all over the world which defines language as a significant resource that mediates, shapes and builds such relationships. This spatial and temporal compression also allows "simultaneity" (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004, Bloomaert 2005). One can enjoy multiple identities and community memberships, which gains salience in mobile interactions, as we are able to conduct social ties and activities in diverse locations at the same time, drawing from multiple identities simultaneously (Canagarajah 2017).

In this chapter, we have looked into the relationship between language and identity and we have seen how this nexus has emerged even more significant in today's context. We have also observed the role that language plays in the context of migration and we have seen how the different types of migration highly impact not only the attitudes towards the target language but also the process of integration in general. This latter topic is more specifically discussed in the next chapter.

3.4 Linguistic integration

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (s.v. *integrate*) “*integration*” refers to the verb “*integrate*” which means to “bring people or groups with particular characteristics or needs, into equal participation in membership of a social group or institution or to desegregate, especially racially.” However, as pointed out by Stevenson and Schanze (2009:90), in the context of migration “the concept of integration is frequently invoked but rarely defined.” Very often, integration is associated with the problems it brings with it and the “lack of integration” of immigrants rather than the positive aspects of integration (Ros i Sole 2014:60). What is successful integration? What does integration imply? Who is integrated and what does it take to be integrated?

In many European countries, language tests are used as a condition either to enter the country, or to be granted a residence permit or citizenship (Van Avermeat 2009: 32). Proficiency in the national language and knowledge of a country's cultural values and norms are required aspects for a foreigner to be considered integrated. Many questions have been raised regarding the efficiency of these language tests. Is a language test the best means to measure someone's degree of integration? Or is it mainly an instrument for exclusion? Is it used as a tool to control migration flows and to distinguish between in-and outgroups? (McNamara 2005). Answers to these questions vary. For Van Avermeat “in some countries, it is clear that

stricter conditions are not only used to ‘strengthen cohesion’ but also as an instrument for exclusion or gate-keeping mechanism” (2009: 36). Today’s neoliberal economic system distinguishes skilled and unskilled immigrants, judging the latter as “non-useful” for the economy of the host country and placing them on a lower hierarchical level. As Blackledge states “language ideologies act as gatekeeping practices to create, maintain and reinforce boundaries between people in a broad range of contexts, including community, nation, nation-state, state and global levels” (2009:85).

Others, on the other hand, do not think that language tests help in determining someone’s level of integration but instead “mask the deeper motivation of the use of language tests as a reinforcement of linguistic and cultural hegemony” (McNamara 2009:158). Shohamy argues that language and language tests, which serve as criteria for obtaining citizenship, are used by governments as means of exclusion and denial of rights and basic services such as education, health care, pension, and social security which thus represents “a violation of basic civic and human rights that reinforces and perpetuates social classes and creates terminal second class people” (Shohamy 2009:45). Therefore, language tests are not always regarded as a fair way of analyzing someone’s social integration in the host country.

However, it is mainly agreed that language has a particularly significant role to play in the process of individual and social integration as it “constitutes both the medium of everyday communication and a resource, in particular in the context of education and the labor market” (Esser 2006:i). When one settles in a new country, learning the language is necessary in order to communicate with locals and be able to learn the lifestyle and practices of the host country’s society. Without language, communication between the locals and the immigrants becomes more difficult.

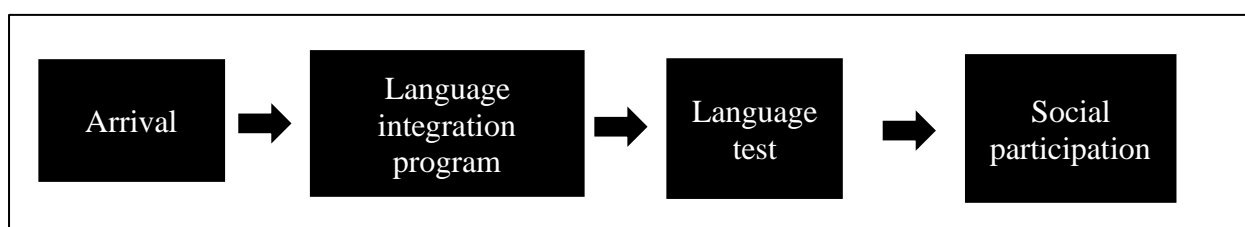
Geis, Uebelmesser and Werding (2013) have demonstrated that the wage levels is at the top of the main elements that determine a host country’s choice and in third position comes

network. Immigrants would rather settle in a place where their community is already well represented. However, it has been observed that living in a country where the members of a certain community are numerous may sometimes imply a deficient integration, in the sense that the more immigrants of the same linguistic background there are, the less effort an immigrant makes to learn the host language (Aumüller and Gesemann 2016). By contrast, a person arriving in a country in which he/she cannot communicate in his/her own language because of the lack of people from the same background forces him/her to make the necessary efforts to acquire the new language.

Others such as Tanay and Peschner (2016) believe that being surrounded by members of your own community helps in the process of integration. A network is important, especially in immigrant communities, for the organization of different structural features such as associations and gathering events, allowing exchange and sense of belonging, which both promote integration. As Tanay and Peschner demonstrated in their study on labor market integration of refugees, “migrants, especially refugees, tend to be overrepresented in countries where the labor market is relatively stable and unemployment is low” (2016:127) which increases their chances of being in employment.

Very often integration and language learning is seen as a linear process in which language is a condition for social participation.

Figure 6: Linear process of integration



(Van Avermaet 2019)

This scheme (Figure 6) above presents the different steps of the linear process of integration. Upon arrival, the immigrant follows language integration programs and language

courses, which are mandatory or not according to the country. Once the language integration program period is regularly attended, the learner takes a language test which is supposed to demonstrate the acquisition of the language. It is only after those steps that the immigrant can socially participate. Pulinx and Van Avermaet (2017) criticize this perspective and point out three main aspects which inhibit the linearity of this model. First, social participation and educational success will not be achieved on the basis of monolingual and assimilationist ideologies as those would lead to segregation instead. Second, social participation and educational success cannot be realized only through integration programs or language course for newcomers. Integration is rather a continuous, complex and dynamic process which involves all members of the society. Third, it is in the processes of social participation and building social networks that languages are being acquired, through the actual language use. Thus, it is crucial to provide concrete opportunities for the learners to use the language as social participation is not a goal to achieve but is an inherent part of the process.

3.5 Integration in the Swiss legal framework

In the national website of the Federal Council and more specifically, in the Federal Justice and Police Department section, the Swiss Confederation defines integration as follows:

L'intégration est un processus dynamique auquel participent à la fois la population suisse et la population étrangère.

L'intégration a pour objectif de favoriser la coexistence pacifique entre la population suisse et la population étrangère. A cette fin, tous les habitants du pays doivent accepter les valeurs de la Constitution fédérale et se respecter mutuellement. Le processus d'intégration ne peut aboutir que si toutes les personnes vivant en Suisse ont les mêmes chances, quelle que soit leur origine.

Concrètement, cela signifie que :

Les étrangers obtiennent des résultats comparables aux Suisses aussi bien à l'école, sur le marché du travail, au niveau de l'état de santé, de la sécurité sociale ou encore de la délinquance.

La réalisation de ces objectifs suppose un esprit d'ouverture de la part de la population suisse. Les étrangers doivent quant à eux respecter les valeurs fondamentales de la Constitution fédérale ainsi que la sécurité et l'ordre publics et démontrer leur volonté de participer à la vie économique et de se perfectionner. Il est primordial que les étrangers apprennent une langue nationale le plus rapidement possible après leur

arrivée en Suisse. La capacité à se faire comprendre constitue une condition importante pour l'accès au marché du travail et facilite la vie en communauté au quotidien.

(Secrétariat d'Etat aux migrations SEM : <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/fr/home/integration-einbuengerung/integrationsfoerderung/faq.html>. Accessed on 04/05/2021)

(Integration is a dynamic process in which both the Swiss and the foreign population participate.

The aim of integration is to promote peaceful coexistence between the Swiss and foreign populations. To this end, all inhabitants of the country must accept the values of the federal constitution and respect each other. The integration process can only be successful if all people living in Switzerland have equal opportunities, regardless of their origin.

In concrete terms, this means that:

Foreigners achieve comparable results to the Swiss at school, on the labor market, in terms of health status, social security or even delinquency.

The achievement of these objectives requires an open-mindedness on the part of the Swiss population. Foreigners must respect the fundamental values of the Federal Constitution as well as public security and order, and demonstrate their willingness to participate in economic life and to develop themselves. It is essential that foreigners learn a national language as soon as possible after their arrival in Switzerland. The ability to make oneself understood is an important condition for access to the labor market and facilitates daily life in the community.) (My translation W.M.)

Thus, in Switzerland, language plays a crucial role in the process of integration. Foreigners are expected to learn one of the Swiss national languages in order to be able to integrate into society and its lifestyle. At the heart of public and political debates on integration of foreigners in Switzerland lies the phrase *encourager et exiger*¹⁶ (“encourage and require”) which emphasizes the idea of dual and reciprocal responsibility of both foreigners and Swiss citizens towards one another to contribute to successful inclusion (SEM). According to the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM), the concept *encourager* refers to the actions taken by the State’s services and institutions in order to encourage foreigners’ integration. This encouragement is reflected in ordinary organizations such as vocational training, eligibility in labor market, health domain, and other opportunities offered to migrants. On the other hand, *exiger* underlines the personal duty of foreigners in terms of the requirements regarding what is expected from foreigners living on the Swiss soil and the possible sanctions in case these requirements are not fulfilled.

¹⁶ Politique suisse en matière de l'intégration. Available at: <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/fr/home/integration-einbuengerung/integrationsfoerderung/politik.html>. Accessed on 03/05/2021.

In fact, chapter 2, art. 4 (LEtr) of ordinance-law on foreigners' integration (OIE) states the four principles and duties of contribution towards integration:

Art.4 Contribution des étrangers à l'intégration

La contribution des étrangers à l'intégration se manifeste par :

- a. le respect de l'ordre juridique et des valeurs de la Constitution fédérale ;*
- b. l'apprentissage de la langue nationale parlée sur le lieu de domicile ;*
- c. la connaissance du mode de vie suisse ;*
- d. la volonté de participer à la vie économique et d'acquérir une formation.*

Ordonnance sur l'intégration des étrangers : Chapitre 2 Contribution et devoirs des étrangers. Art.4 Contribution des étrangers à l'intégration (art.4 LEtr) Secrétariat d'Etat aux migrations SEM. Available at: <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/fr/home/themen/integration.html>. Accessed on 21/02/2021.

(Art. 4 Foreigners' contribution to integration

Foreigners' contribution to integration is manifested by:

- a. Respect for the legal system and the values of the Federal Constitution;
- b. Learning the national language spoken in the place of residence;
- c. Knowledge of the Swiss way of life;
- d. The desire to participate in economic life and to acquire an education.)

(My translation. W.M.)

As we can see, the second point of the article places language as one of the fundamental principles of integration, which leads us to the question of language as the key to integration. In what way is language a central factor of successful integration? How is a successful inclusion reached? Before attempting to answer these questions, it is essential to emphasize the importance put on the compliance with the law. As previously stated, immigrants, who do not fulfil the requirements regarding integration regulations, incur sanctions. Chap. 2 art. 6 of ordinance-law on foreigners' integration (OIE) states:

Art. 6 Participation obligatoire à des mesures d'intégration

¹ *Les réfugiés et les personnes admises à titre provisoire qui bénéficient de l'aide sociale peuvent être contraints à participer à des mesures d'intégration, tels que des cycles de formation ou des programmes d'occupation.*

² *Si, sans motif valable, ils ne s'acquittent pas de cette obligation, les prestations de l'aide sociale peuvent être réduites conformément au droit cantonal ou à l'art. 83, al 1, LEtr, LAsi.*

³ *Le succès obtenu lors de la participation à un cycle de formation ou un programme d'occupation est pris en compte lors de l'examen d'une demande relative à l'octroi d'une autorisation de séjour en vertu de l'art. 84, al. 5, LEtr.*

(Art. 6 Compulsory participation in integration measures)

¹ Refugees and temporarily admitted persons who receive social assistance may be obliged to participate in integration measures such as training courses or occupational programs.

² If they do not fulfill this obligation without good reason, their social assistance benefits may be reduced in accordance with cantonal law or Art. 83 (1) of the Immigration Act.

³ Successful completion of a training or work program is taken into account when considering an application for a residence permit pursuant to Art. 84 para. 5 of the Foreign Nationals Act.)

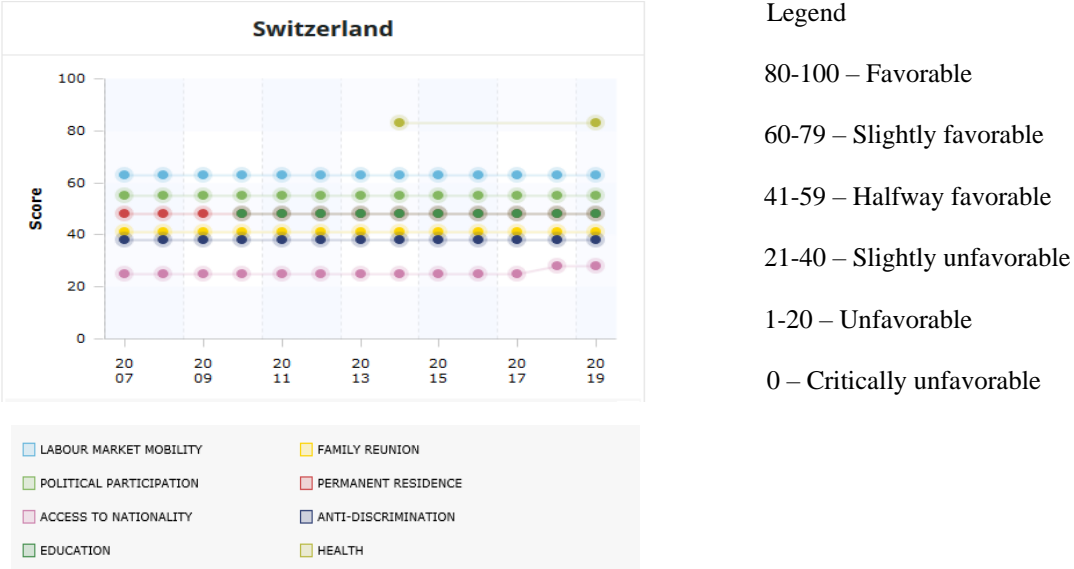
(My translation. W.M.)

Thus, taking part in the various programs of integration offered to immigrants is considered a duty and not a privileged choice. The mandatory participation in these measures of integration influence newcomers' situation in two ways: financially and legally. As explained in paragraph 2 of the article, the non-fulfillment of this obligation leads to financial sanctions resulting in the decrease of social welfare benefits. Paragraph 3 of the article explains the legal implications of this duty on residence authorization, claiming that the successful participation in these integration programs are taken into account when examining the application for residence permit. Thus, not only is conforming to the various measures of integration mandatory, it also greatly affects immigrants' conditions on basic levels; such as the authorization to remain on the Swiss territory and the financial help they will be receiving as their initial main income. Both residence authorization eligibility and social welfare are the main determinants of an immigrant's choice of destination country (Geis, Uebelmesser and Werding 2013). In their study on how migrants choose their destination country Geis, Uebelmesser and Werding (2013) analyze the effects of socio-economic and institutional determinants on immigrants' location choices based on micro-data for France, Germany, the UK and the USA. The findings demonstrate that the most important determinant of the expected utility of an individual living in a certain country is the income expected there and the latter depends on two components: the

wage an individual would earn in each country and the probability to find employment there (Geis, Uebelmesser and Werding 2013:830). In Switzerland, social benefits and the length of asylum procedures - asylum seekers who do not have asylum motives know that they can remain in Switzerland at least for several months, until their application is officially denied - are the main reasons explaining the numerous arrivals of immigrants on the territory (de Graffenried 2012). Therefore, one could consider a successful integration as a full participation in the different layers of the society. As we have seen so far, language and employment are intertwined in this process.

According to the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX 2019), Switzerland scored a mark of 50/100 in terms of immigrant integration policies (measured on a scale of favorable to critically unfavorable). This result has been measured on the basis of a number of indicators, including labor market mobility, family reunion, education, health, political participation, permanent residence, access to nationality and anti-discrimination.

Figure 7 : Swiss migrant integration policies scores (MIPEX 2019)



Available at: <http://www.mipex.eu/switzerland>. Accessed on 21/02/2021.

Figure 7 demonstrates that Switzerland offers an equal number of opportunities and obstacles for non-EU immigrants to fully participate in Swiss society. According to MIPEX,

the obstacles emerge throughout the legal framework, where victims of discrimination are “less protected and supported in CH than anywhere else on the continent”, as Switzerland is now the “only European country in MIPEX without a national anti-discrimination law and equality body to help victims” (MIPEX 2019). Switzerland’s approach to integration is categorized by MIPEX as “Temporary Integration”, which suggest that citizens can benefit from some targeted support for equal opportunities, but they do not enjoy the long-term security to settle permanently, invest in integration and participate as full citizens (MIPEX 2019). In fact, non-EU citizens are left insecure as they scored 18/100 on security, which places Switzerland extremely low (third country from the bottom) on the classification of secure countries adopting the “Temporary Integration” approach. Switzerland’s “Temporary Integration” approach encourages the Swiss public to see immigrants as foreigner and not as equals of native Swiss citizens (MIPEX 2019).

Another study (Liebig, Kohls and Krause 2012), published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), focused on the labor market integration of immigrants and their children in Switzerland (Liebig, Kohls and Krause 2012). Overall, the review shows that integration is successful in Switzerland and that the outcomes for immigrants are favorable in comparison to international results. However, there are two groups with less good outcomes: immigrant women with young children and humanitarian migrants (Liebig, Kohls and Krause 2012). The study has proved that “there are few integration measures for immigrant women and they often do not have access to the full range of active labor market policy tools” (Liebig, Kohls and Krause 2012:5). Moreover, the participation of this group in integration measures has declined in recent years (Liebig, Kohls and Krause 2012:5). This is also the case at European level as “the employment rate for refugee women is on average 45% which is lower than for other female non-EU born and native-born women and also lower than refugee men” (Tanay and Peschner 2016: 124). As for humanitarian migrants, they seem to

encounter more difficulties accessing the labor market. The OECD (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development) divides them into two groups: the first group consists of refugees under the UN convention, who receive a regular residence permit (B-permit¹⁷) and is able to access full labor market; the second group includes provisionally admitted migrants who need to apply for a work permit if they find an employer willing to hire them. Concerning asylum seekers, they do not have access to the labor market during the first three months, after which they may enter the labor market through a test in sectors experiencing labor shortages such as hotel or restauration. In fact, “it appears that the highly-educated immigrants from lower-income countries face obstacles to having their qualifications and work experience valued in the Swiss labor market” (Liebig, Kohls and Krause 2012:32), which often results in over-qualification. Only 53% of the highly-educated immigrants coming from low-income countries are in jobs that match their skill level, which might seem high but it is still low in comparison with natives and immigrants from higher-income countries (Liebig, Kohls and Krause 2012:32).

Several observations can explain these differences. First, the qualifications received abroad may not be recognized in Switzerland for different reasons; it could be due to the difference between Swiss and foreign educational systems and workplaces (Liebig, Kohls and Krause 2012:32). However, Liebig, Kohls and Krause have demonstrated that “highly-educated immigrants from lower-income countries are disadvantaged even when they have obtained Swiss qualifications” (2012:32), which suggests that other additional obstacles that are not related to qualifications or work experience are involved. Lack of access to network and lack of knowledge about labor market functioning are part of them (Liebig, Kohls and Krause 2012:32). This has not been proven by sufficient evidence in Switzerland but there is little

¹⁷ Informations succinctes. *Secrétariat d'État aux migrations*. Available at : <https://www.sem.admin.ch/dam/data/sem/publiservice/publikationen/info-flue-va/info-flue-va-fr.pdf>. Accessed on 23/03/2021.

reason to believe that the situation differs much from other countries such as Norway, Sweden, Germany or Austria, in which a large part of jobs involves informal contacts with employers (Liebig, Kohls and Krause 2012:33). In order to help immigrants acquiring such contacts, mentorship programs have been implemented in some countries but in Switzerland they seem to be quite limited, as only a few cantons developed such programs. For example, Canton de Vaud’s “Mentorat Emploi Migration” (MEM) helps with professional insertion of qualified immigrants from non-EU countries (except, USA, Canada, Australia and New-Zealand) who are settled in canton de Vaud and Genève¹⁸. By contrast, Tanay and Peschner’s (2016) study on labor market integration of refugees places Switzerland together with Norway as the top countries with the highest employment rates for refugee women, as of 60% and 57% respectively (2016:124).

Another observation is the activity rate in the country of origin.

Figure 8 : Female employment by some major countries of origin

	Syria	Iraq	Afghanistan	Eritrea	Kosovo
Asylum seekers employed before arrival [BAMF survey]	29.5%	17.1%	20.3%	41.5%	17.0%
Activity rates (UN)	13.2% [2010]	15.0% [2014]	18.9% [2014]	77.6% [2014]	18.1% [2015]

Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/8d0b1be0-d95d-11e6-ad7c-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>. Accessed on 4/03/2021.

As we can see in Figure 8, women’s activity rate in Eritrea is higher than in other countries. However, “the labor market integration difficulties of women from Africa indicate that a high activity rate in the country of origin may not be enough in itself to ensure successful labor market performance in the EU” (2016:124). Eritrean women’s activity rate in Switzerland is

¹⁸ Mentorat Emploi Migration. *Hospice général*. Available at: <https://www.hospicegeneral.ch/fr/mentorat-emploi-migration-mem>. Accessed on 27/03/21.

rather low which shows on the one hand the non-correlation between both labor market performances and also the difficulty of access to the European labor market. Besides, the lack of participation from women in integration programs, as seen earlier, supports this observation. This coincides with the distinction between skilled and unskilled immigrants.

To conclude, we have seen that integration is a complex term to define. In the migration context, integration can be defined as a socially prominent “key word”, referring to different things, to different people at different times, and contested in public and political debate (Williams 1981). There are no concrete criteria to define what being integrated means. However, one could consider a successful integration as a full participation in the different layers of the society. According to general immigration laws, both language and employment seem to be used as indicators to measure someone’s level of integration. In the next sub-chapter, it will be analyzed how language is acquired in the context of migration.

3.6 Second language acquisition

The meaning of “second language acquisition” requires careful explanation. For one thing, in this context “second” can refer to any language that is learned subsequent to the mother tongue (L1), which means that it can be the second language, but also the third or even the fourth. L2 acquisition can be defined as the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom (Ellis 1997). Grosjean and Li (2013: 119) assert that there are two modes of childhood bilingualism: simultaneous and successive. However, the line between them is arbitrary because it is not possible to classify a precise age for exposure to a second language: for instance, it is quasi impossible to classify the beginning of a child's exposure to a second language between 1 and 2 years old (Grosjean and Li 2013: 119). Thus, in the case of simultaneous language acquisition, neither language can be considered as the first (although there certainly is a dominant language), which is why words like “first” or “second” language cannot be used when referring to bilingual children. Instead scholars like Wölck

(1987/1988) and De Houwer (2009) have adopted the terms Language A and Language α , to avoid implying that a certain language comes first or is privileged (Grosjean and Li 2013: 120).

Bilingual acquisition involves what Yip and Matthews (2007: 30) call "The Logical Problem of Bilingual Acquisition" which consists in recognizing that the problem posed by the input is more severe for the bilingual child both quantitatively and qualitatively. In terms of quantity, the input will more likely be unbalanced, in the sense that the child will not hear a proportional and equal measure of the two languages. According to Grosjean and Li (2013: 122), input is typically unbalanced, with maybe 30-40% of the input in one of the two languages, which is the basis for the development of a weaker language. Qualitatively speaking, the fact that the bilingual child has to deal with numerous underlying grammars, vocabulary and syntactic rules may imply what is called cross-linguistic influence (Grosjean and Li 2013: 122).

Cross-linguistic influence (CLI) concerns the effects of one language on the other (Grosjean and Li 2013: 131). CLI is most often observed when the child has a dominant language. As we have seen earlier, it is possible that the two languages do not cover all the domains of life equally. Thus, a language is considered dominant when it is used in more domains than the weaker language. Furthermore, there is the possibility that CLI occurs only in certain domains and not others. According to Hulk and Müller (2000) two conditions are indispensable to specify the domains in which CLI may occur: a) the structure in question involves an interface such as that between syntax and pragmatics, b) there is a surface overlap between the two languages, with language A allowing one option and language α allowing two (one of which overlaps with language A).

According to Ellis (2005), there are external and internal factors that account for why learners acquire an L2 the way they do. The external factors consist of two main elements: the social milieu, on the one hand, and the input that learners receive on the other hand. The first

element influences the opportunities for learners to hear and speak the language and more importantly the attitudes that they develop towards it. For instance, hostility or distance from native speakers may lead to a negative effect on the learners of that language. On the other hand, the input that learners receive, namely the samples of language to which a learner is exposed, may have an effect on the process of learning. For example, input that has been simplified purposely for the learners facilitates learning as opposed to authentic language of native-speaker communication. The main internal factors that learners possess and which play a role in the process of language learning are the cognitive mechanisms, which enable them to extract information about the L2 from the input. They also possess general knowledge about the world as well as how language in general works (since they have a L1), which they can draw on to help them understand L2 input. Last but not least, learners are equipped with communication strategies that can help them make effective use of their L2 knowledge. For example, in order to refer to the term *art gallery*, learners may use *picture place*.

As explained by Ellis (2005), in the second language acquisition process, the learner constructs a system of abstract linguistic rules, which underlies the comprehension and the production of the L2, viewed as the “mental grammar.” The different kinds of error they produce reflect different learning strategies. For instance, omission errors suggest that learners are simplifying the learning task by ignoring some grammatical features that they are not yet ready to process (2005:37). The learner’s grammar is permeable and transitional at the same time. It is permeable because it is open to influence from the outside (through input) and also from the inside (through omission, overgeneralization and transfer errors). It is transitional because learners tend to change it throughout time by adding or deleting rules and restructuring the whole system.

3.6.1 Immigrant adult language acquisition

Immigrant adult language acquisition takes place long after the age range that Lenneberg (1967) uses for his concept of the “critical period hypothesis” (CPH), which limits automatic acquisition of a language in the natural setting from roughly age two to puberty. Within the context of second language acquisition, the critical period hypothesis has often been criticized. While the supporters of the CPH believe that language learning, which takes place outside of the critical period, is marked by non-nativelike features, many studies (e.g. Birdsong and Molis 2001; Birdsong 2006; Schouten 2009; Zhu 2011) have shown that second language acquisition and also nativelike proficiency is in fact possible for adult learners. The latter studies proved that other factors such as motivation, language aptitude, attitudes, as well as cognitive and socio-cultural influences are more decisive than age.

Language acquisition has been extensively studied and the conclusions are varied. McDonald (2000) finds different results for different groups who acquired English quite early (although not equally early). She concluded that exposure during the critical period does not always mean native-like results and suggests that how different the L2 is from the L1 may have an impact on the results. According to Myers-Scotton, generally late acquisition implies late proficiency as there appears to be a qualitative change in language learning capacities somewhere between ages 4 and 18 (2006:347). However, what this qualitative change is remains debatable. De Keyser and Larson-Hall (2005) state that there is no evidence to date to link the learning problems of late L2 speakers to actual changes in neurophysiological mechanisms in the brain. More recently, De Keyser (2015) introduces the “Skill Acquisition theory”, in which he explains that learning to become an expert (in language as in anything else) is viewed as a process of turning knowledge into behavior (2015: 95). Other approaches to SLA, such as usage-based theories, commit to two main hypotheses: (1) language learning is primarily based on learner’s exposure to their L2 in use, that is the input they receive, (2) learners induce the rules of their L2 from the input by employing cognitive mechanisms that

are not exclusive to language learning, but that are general cognitive mechanisms at work in any kind of learning including language learning (Ellis and Wulff 2015:75).

Ullman (2015) explains that declarative memory and procedural memory are the two most important long-term memory systems which play key roles in languages learning (2015:136). Declarative memory plays a role in learning idiosyncratic knowledge about facts and events across a wide range of domains and procedural memory refer to interconnected brain structures which underlie the implicit (unconscious) learning and processing of a wide range of activities and functions (such as orientation, rules and categories) (2015:137). Ortega (2015:249) states that all three approaches (usage-based, Skill Acquisition and declarative/procedural) allow for an interface position with regard to explicit/implicit knowledge issue, but they posit different relationships in that interface, since the declarative/procedural model offers the greatest degree of specificity in this regard. She mentions two main predictions which are noteworthy for the empirical specificity of this approach:

One prediction is that there will be differential relative involvement of both systems in language learning, with relative degree of reliance on the procedural memory system for younger ages and in contexts of naturalistic-immersive use and on the declarative memory system for older ages and in contexts of instructed use. The second prediction is the posited existence of redundant, competitive, and inhibitory effects for the two memory systems on the resulting implicit and explicit knowledge of language. (2015: 249)

There are a number of recurrent aspects when dealing with an L2. These are the misunderstandings or lack of understanding, which are both difficulties that anyone encounters when trying to communicate in a language, while at the same time learning it. Lack of understanding occurs when a receiver cannot connect incoming information with stored information and, there are at least two ways in which this situation can take place (Allwood and Abelar 1984: 28):

- (a) relevant information is missing (e.g. one does not know what a Swedish May pole is since one has never encountered any such thing);

- (b) a relevant strategy for connecting incoming with stored information is missing (e.g. one knows what a bed is but one has no strategy for connecting the Swedish word *säng* “bed” with this information).

As explained by Allwood and Abelar (1984:29), lack of understanding is a gradual phenomenon which can vary from a total lack to a more complete or less complete understanding, while misunderstandings occur when a receiver actually connects incoming information with stored information but where the resulting meaningful connection is perceived as inadequate or incorrect. Both, lack of understanding and misunderstanding, are related, in the sense that the factors provoking lack of understanding, namely missing relevant information and/or missing strategies for relevant connection, are also behind misunderstanding. The difference lies the fact that misunderstanding also involves an incorrect attempt at interpretation in addition to lack of understanding. Miscommunication is considered both a starting point for reconstructing a system of linguistic and social presuppositions that speakers use to evaluate what they are doing, and as an interactive phenomenon, which enables to find what the learning environment is like, notably through repair strategies (Gumperz 1984:143).

Gumperz (1984) distinguishes communicative competence and grammatical competence. This has the aim of explaining language acquisition process and analyzing the ways in which elements of the target language are acquired by adult immigrants, i.e. at what speed, in what order and to what extent. When looking into adult immigrant informal learning, learning to communicate is at stake and by definition, this is different from learning grammar or a language in the traditional sense. As Gumperz explains, communication is always goal-oriented, which means that learning to communicate refers to learning how to deal with concrete phases of life; for instance to look for a job or an apartment (Gumperz 1984:139). However, both communicative and grammatical competence are related, since we rely on both grammatical and social presuppositions in order to understand. The process of understanding is a process of interpretation, a process in which we take into account “taken for granted knowledge” about grammar and social knowledge (Gumperz 1984:140).

In the context of immigration, learners are also considered “actors” who develop abilities to participate in the host society’s discourse, values and practices. However, being a learner while at the same time developing competence and membership in a new community can be complex. Morita (2011) gives two main reasons: first, the fact that current communities in general are no longer monolithic and stable, but rather hybrid and constantly evolving may suggest a less transparent perception of it as it may force all members to develop multiple competencies that are continually negotiated within the given community. Second, in addition to linguistic difficulties, actors face various other challenges related to practical/professional culture and practice, race/ethnicity, gender, institutional roles or representations, power-relations, identity and so on (2011:33). For example, members of a target community may prevent newcomers from participating in activities (2011:34). This may lead actors to develop a certain attitude towards the target community but also towards the language of its members, which leads us to the next subsection.

3.6.2 Language attitudes

Several studies (Smith 1971, Dörnyei 2001, 2014; Myers-Scotton 2006) have shown that language attitudes play a major role in the process of language learning. Before looking at this issue, it is necessary to first define what we mean by language attitudes. The word attitude is broad and sometimes misused. Garrett (2010) has pointed out six terms which are also related to attitudes and which are often used interchangeably.

- 1) Habits: habits are learned and primarily perceived as behavioral routines, which people usually have less awareness of than of attitudes, since the latter is not perceived as a behavioral routine.
- 2) Values: the term “values” englobes a broader perspective than does “attitudes”. Rokeach (1973) has distinguished two types of values: “terminal values”, which refer to values such as freedom or equality and “instrumental values”, which refer to the importance of

being honest or loyal for example. In that sense, values can influence our attitudes towards something.

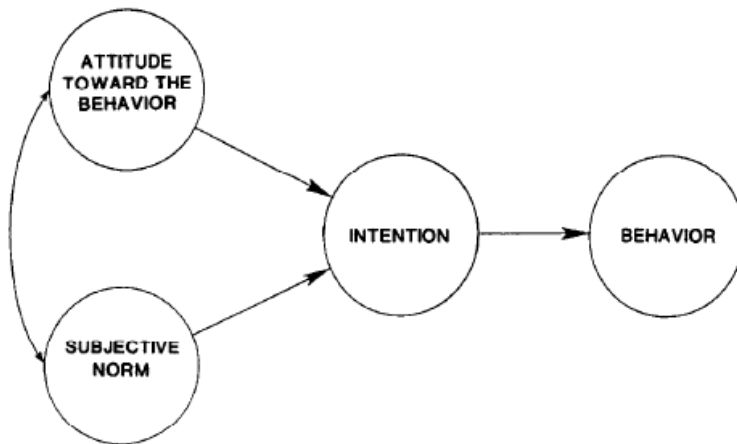
- 3) Beliefs: beliefs refer to the cognitive component of attitudes. They may trigger or may be triggered by strong affective reactions.
- 4) Opinions: opinions are verbalizable which may not as clearly be the case of attitudes, which tend to be latent and conveyed by non-verbal and verbal processes.
- 5) Social stereotypes: social stereotypes consist of categorizing people into different social groups based on certain features such as skin color, country, ethnicity, gender, etc. and language attitudes are influenced by what we think or how we perceive a particular social group related to a particular language. Language attitudes may thus be triggered by beliefs about a speaker or their social group and are often influenced by language ideologies, leading to stereotypic assumptions about shared characteristics of those group members.
- 6) Ideology: the difference between social stereotypes and language ideology is the origin. Social stereotypes originate from the field of social psychology, whereas the notion of language ideology stem from linguistic anthropology. Ideology in its general context represents naturalized sets of assumptions and values about how the world works. Language attitudes are influenced by powerful ideological positions, because that is somehow what shapes beliefs, opinions and stereotypes. For example, standard languages are given legitimacy and prestige over non-standard alternatives.

Therefore, attitude is not easily defined and definitions vary in their degree of elaboration and in the weighting given to different features of attitudes (Garrett 2010:35).

Studying language attitudes usually refers to the disposition to react favorably or unfavorably to a class of objects, based on three components: feelings (affective element), thoughts (cognitive element) and predisposition to act in a certain way (behavioral element)

(Garrett 2010). However, there is some questioning over the status of these three components in relation to attitudes. For instance, instead of focusing directly on behavior, the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen and Madden 1986) considers behavioral *intentions* as an intermediate step:

Figure 9 : Theory of Reasoned Action



(Ajzen and Madden 1986:456)

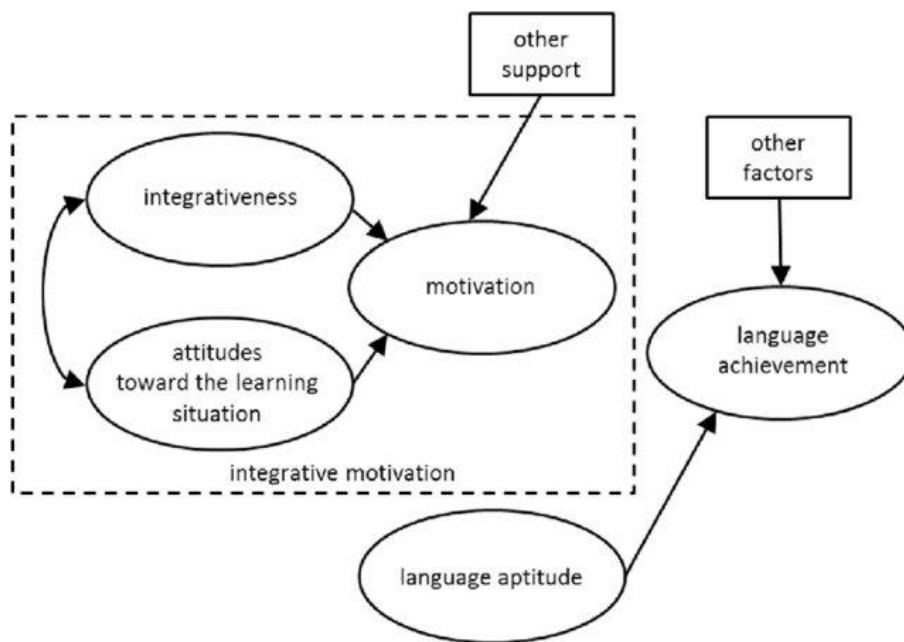
As we can see Figure 9, considering behavioral intentions before going into behavior allows explanations of why certain actions are not taken.

3.6.3 Language learning motivation

For several decades, L2 motivation research has been centered around the concept of instrumental and integrative motivations which was first introduced by Gardner and Lambert (1972). Instrumental motivation, on the one hand, is considered a top-down movement which in a way “forces” the learner to learn the language for practical reasons (i.e. to find a job). On the other hand, integrative motivation can be defined as a personal will or interest to learn a certain language and is thus regarded as a bottom-up movement, since the motivation comes from within and is not imposed by any entity. For this particular reason, integrative motivation is considered more effective in terms of successful language acquisition because it is a personal interest which is at stake (Gardner and Lambert 1959, 1972).

In his study on motivation and second language acquisition, Gardner (2010) focuses on classroom motivation. He insists on the importance of motivation in second language acquisition and seeks to demonstrate that it is more complex than simply wanting to learn the language. According to him, language acquisition is less about the type of motivation than it is about the intensity of the motivation, and, in its broadest sense, it is important to explain the role played by motivation in second language learning (2010:7). He identifies four stages in the development of second language acquisition. The first, called "Elemental", is where the learner is beginning to acquire the bases of that language, such as the vocabulary, grammar, pronunciations, etc. The second is "Consolidation"; the elements are brought together to a certain degree of familiarity with the language. At this stage the rules of pluralization, sentence structures, and the understanding of the syntax are acquired. In the third stage, there is what Gardner calls "Conscious Expression", in which the individual can communicate ideas. The last stage is identified as "Automaticity and Thought" because at this point, the language becomes automatic in most contexts and situations. It is also at this stage that the difference between the terms "language learning" and "language acquisition" becomes more apparent. Gardner explains that the first term corresponds to the skills that allow communication while the second implies that language is part of the self (Gardner 2010:5). The fourth stage corresponds to language acquisition proper because at this stage language and self-become interconnected. To reach this stage, there are two important characteristics to consider: "integrativeness" and "attitudes toward the learning situation" (Gardner, 2010:7). "integrativeness" reflects the individual's interest in learning the other language to interact with its members and to manifest openness towards that community. "Attitudes toward the learning situation" refers to all the variables associated with an educational context (the classroom, the teacher, the quality of the program, etc.). Thus, the intensity of these factors is what determines the role of motivation in second language learning.

Figure 10: Socio-educational model of second-language acquisition



(Gardner 2001:9)

As we can see in Figure 10, Gardner (2001) has proposed the socio-educational model in which he insists that it is not about the type of motivation as such but more about the intensity of the motivation and what forms the motivation. Figure 10 here refers to the classroom context and for him what forms integrative motivation is embedded in the attitudes towards the learning situation, the integrativeness (the desire to learn the language) and the motivation (the effort extended to learn the language). These three elements together with other support is what leads to language achievement and ultimately to language aptitude.

During the past twenty years, there has been growing concern with the theoretical content of this concept. One of the criticisms is that it does not offer any links with the new cognitive motivational concepts that have been emerging in motivational psychology, such as goal theories or self-determination theory (Dörnyei & Ushioda 2009). More recently, Dörnyei, Muir and Ibrahim (2014) have introduced a new psychological construct named Directed Motivational Current (DMC). This framework depicts unique periods of intensive motivational involvement both in pursuit of and fueled by a highly valued goal/vision (2014:9). The key aspects are already established in most of the motivation theories but according to DMC theory,

this concept remains innovative because previous studies considered an overall motivation construct as a static entity.

The powerful motivational states which accompany a DMC were largely explained in terms of the nature of the goals involved and other generalizable factors related to the individuals, such as their expectations of success, their perception of the value of succeeding or their intrinsic interest in the task. An insufficient focus on the time aspect in this regard is able to explain the fact that it is not possible for a single mainstream motivation theory to subsume this new construct, whereby the channeling of such dispositions into specific process with a specific structure is able to hugely amplify the motivational energy released. (Dörnyei, Muir and Ibrahim 2014:17)

The main characteristic of DMC is that it is always directional and geared towards a specific goal which “allows people to focus their energies towards a clear finish line” (2014:13). Six key components of a framework for developing a vision-inspired teaching practice is suggested (2014:21):

1. Creating the vision:

The logical first step in a visionary motivational program is to help learners to create desired future selves, that is, construct visions of who they could become as L2 users and what knowing an L2 could add to their lives.

2. Strengthening the vision:

The more intensive the imagery accompanying the vision, the more powerful the vision; therefore, we need to help students to see their desired language selves with more clarity and, consequently, with more urgency for action.

3. Substantiating the vision:

Possible selves are only effective inasmuch as learners perceive them as plausible (hence the term “possible” self); therefore, students need to anchor their ideal L2 self images in a sense of realistic expectations.

4. Transforming the vision into action:

Vision without action is merely a daydream: future self-guides are only productive if they are accompanied by a set of concrete action plans, that is, the blueprint of a tangible pathway which leads to them.

5. Keeping the vision alive:

Everybody has several distinct possible selves which are stored in their memory and which compete for attention in a person's limited "working self-concept"; therefore, in order to keep our vision alive we need to activate it regularly so that it does not get squeezed out by other life concerns.

6. Counterbalancing the vision:

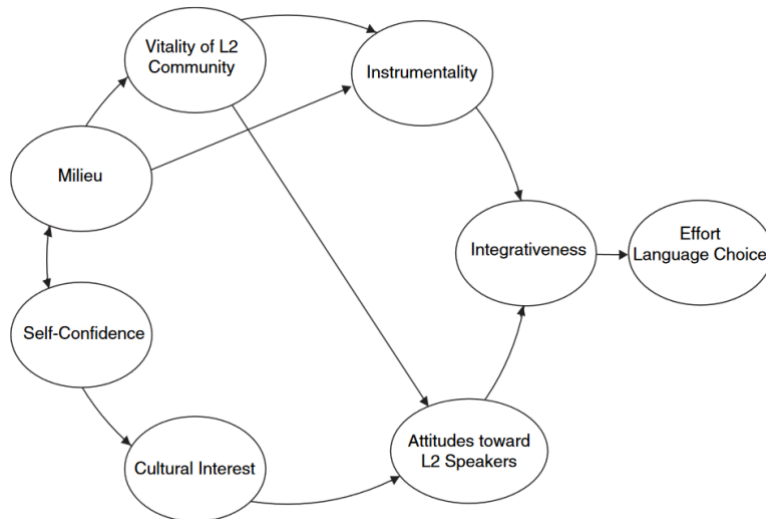
A classic principle in possible selves theory is that for maximum effectiveness as a motivational resource, a desired future self should be offset by a corresponding feared self.

DMC can thus be described as an intensive motivational pathway, which emerges within the framework of a structure of behavioral acts, stimulated by the sense of elevated emotionality associated with a visualization of the final outcome of successful completion.

There are two key components of self theory: the *ideal self* and the *ought-to self* (Dörnyei 2009). The first refers to the representation of the attributed that one would ideally like to possess, namely hopes, aspirations or wishes. The *ought-to self* refers to the representation of attributes that one believes one ought to possess, namely the obligations or moral responsibilities (Dörnyei 2009:13). The difference between both selves resides in the fact that ideal self-guides have a *promotion* focus, concerned with hopes, growth and accomplishments, while ought-to self-guides have a *prevention* focus, regulating the absence or presence of negative outcomes associated with failing to live up to various responsibilities and obligations (Higgins 1998). Considering this, Dörnyei, Csizer and Nemeth (2006) have created a model presenting a schematic representation mediating the effects of

attitudinal/motivational variables on the two criterion measures *Language choice* and *Intended effort to study the L2*.

Figure 11: Schematic representation of the structural equation model



(Dörnyei, Csizér, Németh 2006:67)

Figure 11 shows a schematic representation of the structural equation model. As the L2 speakers are the closest parallels to the idealized L2-speaking self, attitudes towards members of the L2 community must be related to the ideal language self-image. Thus, the more positive the disposition towards these L2 speakers, the more attractive the idealized L2 self and to turn this around, it is difficult to imagine an attractive ideal L2 self if the L2 is spoken by a community which is despised (Dörnyei 2009:28). According to Dörnyei (2009) “in our idealized image of ourselves, we naturally want to be professionally successful and therefore instrumental motives that are related to career enhancement are logically linked to the ideal L2 self” (Dörnyei 2009:28). Thus, instrumentality combines the two types of selves seen above that have a promotion and a prevention focus. On the one hand, one can be motivated to learn a language for the sake of professional advancement (promotion focus) which forms the ideal self and on the other hand, one can be motivated to learn a language in order not to fail an exam (prevention focus) which refers to the ought-to self.

Challenge and feedback are key factors to successful learning and teaching:

Visible teaching and learning occur when learning is the explicit goal, when it is appropriately challenging, when the teacher and the student (...) seek to ascertain whether and to what degree the challenging goal is attained, when there is deliberate practice aimed at attaining mastery of the goal when there is feedback given and sought. (Hattie 2009:22).

Challenging goals provide a “clearer notion of success” (2009:164). According to Busse (2014:159), an optimal level of challenge is defined as a challenge that is slightly harder than one’s skill level. It is important to keep a fair level of challenge. Tasks that are too challenging or too easy may have the opposite effect of successful learning and result in being detrimental. Tasks that excessively surpass one’s skill level may make students feel incompetent and have a lower self-efficacy belief (Bandura 1994). Self-efficacy beliefs refer to people’s perceptions of their ability to perform well on a given task (Bandura 1994). On the other hand, tasks which are lower than one’s skills will not stimulate the students and lead to boredom. Thus, it is important to find the right balance between challenging tasks which do not excessively exceed one’s skills.

Thus, in this section we have seen the different elements to be taken into consideration when dealing with adult immigrants’ language learning and how motivation plays a crucial role in the successful language acquisition.

4 Methodology and Data

This chapter focuses on the methodological part of the study. The data collection methodology used as well as the type of data collected will be explained in detail.

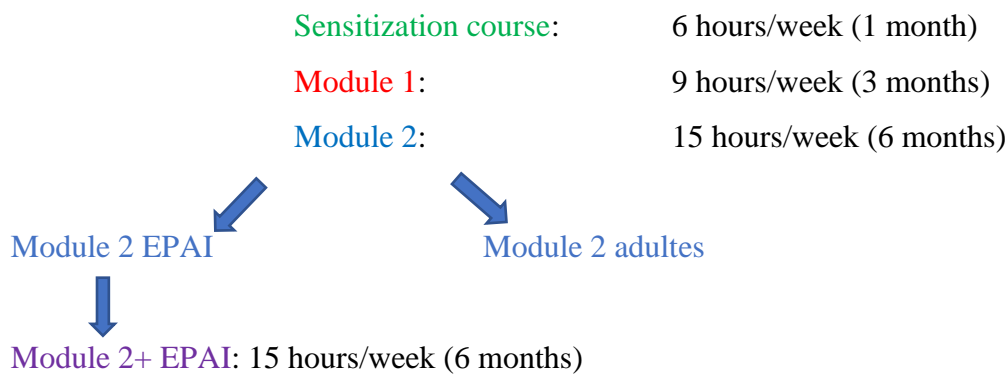
4.1 ORS Fribourg

Data for this study has been collected in two schools organized by ORS Fribourg. ORS is an official organization funded by the State/Canton, which helps people with recent migration

background settle in. Help is particularly geared towards administrative matters, management and accommodation.

In the city of Fribourg, the organization offers French courses for people with recent migration background or asylum seekers who have been assigned to the canton¹⁹. The courses are divided into two main modules: Module 1 and Module 2. These modules are preceded by a sensitization course, which takes place inside the centers where the learners live.

Figure 12 : ORS Modules



As shown in Figure 12, after they have completed the sensitization course, learners can attend Module 1, a three months mandatory course which takes place 9 hours a week. After these first four months, learners pass to Module 2, a 6 months course which takes place 15 hours a week. It is itself divided into two groups: Module 2 EPAI, on the one hand, is dedicated to people under the age of 25 who are eligible to enter a vocational school (EPAI: *école professionnelle artisanale et industrielle*) and in order to do so they have to pass the DELF test after an additional 6 months course, Module 2 + EPAI (15h/week). Those who are over the age of 25 are not allowed to enter any vocational school, therefore they attend the Module 2 *adultes* course which also takes place 15 hours a week for six months.

¹⁹ For more information about the course objectives, see appendixes: Coordination reports of ORS French courses (last update 2017). They show that the objectives of the courses can be categorized into 18 features: alphabet, civility, interrogative pronouns, sensations and needs, presentations, vocabulary, numbers, *être et avoir*, verbal tenses, spatial orientation, gender and number, negation, comparative and superlative, pronouns, phrases, hypothesis, maths. The general objectives (GO) and the specific objectives (SO) vary according to the different levels (represented in the different colors below).

Since the purpose of those two types of Module 2 are different, the course content and the didactic methodologies differ. In Module 2 EPAI, the ultimate aim is to enable the learners to access vocational schools. For that purpose, they need to be acquainted with the course contents and course subjects that they will learn in those vocational schools. Moreover, they need to prepare for the DELF exam (*Diplôme d'études en langue française*), which is a prerequisite. Module 2 *adultes*, on the other hand, employ a methodology called FIDE (*Français, Italiano, Deutsch en Suisse*). The didactical approach of FIDE consists in the development of linguistic competences for concrete daily situations and interactions, such as “how to make a telephone appointment”, “how to read an administrative letter”, “how to go to the doctors”, etc. The defined objectives are thus adjustable and take into account the general dynamic, the actual needs, the expectations, the different levels, the motivation, the context, the educational and the linguistic background of the learners.

4.2 Triangulation design

For data collection, this study employs a triangulated method with questionnaires, recorded interviews and observational studies.

Before proceeding with the actual collection of data, I first carried out a pilot study by creating a first version of a questionnaire. I purposely included several open questions to have an idea of possible answers which would then be used as the basis for further revised questionnaire. Since the study focuses on Switzerland, I have sent the questionnaire via email to the coordinator of ORS Fribourg – French school, with whom I was in contact and I have asked her to forward the questionnaire to a few of the Eritrean French learners in the classrooms to complete the pilot study. A week later, she sent me the questionnaires back but only two people had participated. The coordinator of the school informed me that most of the learners were not comfortable in answering a questionnaire. This suggested that I needed to proceed in a different manner to collect my data and this is explained in the procedure section below.

I was able to create the questionnaire based on the two questionnaires I had received back. The questionnaire is divided into three parts: personal data, language skills and language use. The first part focuses on the personal social features of the participants such as their gender, their age, the time they have lived in Switzerland, the age of arrival, the marital status etc. These social features play a central role for the analysis as many can be correlated with the different findings and results. The second part concerns the language skills of the participants. The aim here is to find out what languages the participants speak, what languages they have learned, under what circumstances, which languages they master best, etc. in order to analyze possible correlations with French language learning processes. The last part focuses on the actual settings and contexts in which those languages are used. This gives information not only about proficiency but also about language choice and the role that certain languages play in the participants daily life. This section also includes questions regarding attitudes towards French and Tigrinya and also towards life in Switzerland in general, as well as questions about integration and how for linguistic integration motivation can be enhanced.

The second method used for this research includes interviews with teachers. The aim is to investigate the other component of a classroom by focusing on the teachers' point of view. Questions here mainly focus on the organization and the planning of the courses as well as the teaching methodology used. Questions relating their opinion on integration and what can be improved in this regard are also included.

In addition to interviews with teachers and questionnaires for learners, I have also observed 5 different classes with different levels (sensitization course, Module 2 and Module 2+ EPAI). My role as an observer consisted in observing the classroom from the back without interrupting the course of the class. No recording or videotaping was undertaken. I simply sat alone somewhere at the back and took notes of what was happening in the classroom. In most of the classes I have observed, I was not introduced and it seems my presence did not influence

the flow of the course in any kind of way. ORS classes have had experiences with researchers attending their classes for observational studies, in the past. Therefore, the learners were used to this type of interventions. However, my role as an Eritrean researcher played a crucial role in the distribution of the questionnaires, which will be further explained in procedure section.

Using all three methods allowed me to have a broader outlook on the different components involved in language learning settings. Being able to have a closer look inside the classrooms enabled me to shed light on the reality of the flow of these classes to complement the questionnaires' and interviews' findings. Furthermore, including both sides of the intrinsic parts composing a class, i.e. the students and the teachers, was useful to understand both perspectives and acquire information about their opinion.

4.3 The participants

As previously explained, five interviews were carried out with teachers, who happened to be all women. Each one of them teaches each module: sensitization module, module 1, module 2, module 2 adults, module 2+ EPAI. Among the five teachers, only one has not pursued a French as a Foreign Language training. The remaining five and most of the teachers of ORS in general (including those I did not interview) have obtained a degree in teaching French as a foreign language. All teachers have had between 3 to 10 years of experience in teaching French as a foreign language.

A total number of 102 informants answered the questionnaire. All of them are Eritrean Tigrinya asylum seekers. In order to keep the scope of the research homogenous, only members of the Tigrinya ethnic group were considered for this research. Two informants stated that their L1 is not Tigrinya, but Arabic and Bilen respectively, but they were still highly proficient in Tigrinya since they mainly grew up in Tigrinya speaking areas and they were able to read and answer the questionnaires written in Tigrinya.

As we can see in Table 1, out of the total number of informants, 38 are females and 64 males. This gender distribution, although not equal, represents the reality of the migration in Switzerland. According to the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) statistics, there are more male Eritrean asylum seekers than female Eritrean asylum seekers, even though the latter represent a higher proportion of the general average of female asylum seekers in Switzerland (Figure 13).

Figure 13 : General gender distribution of asylum seekers according to the SEM

Sexe : Il n'y a pas de variation significative dans la proportion d'hommes et de femmes par rapport à 2018.

En %	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Masculin	80	81	78	79	79	78	76	74	71,5	70,9	72,0	71,9
Féminin	20	19	22	21	21	22	24	26	28,5	29,1	28,0	28,1

Available at: <https://asile.ch/statistiques/suisse/>. Accessed on 05/05/2021.

Table 1: Gender distribution

Female	Male	Total
38	64	102

Table 2 below, shows the informants' age range. 72 participants are aged between 18 and 25 years old and 30 participants are older than 25 years old. This also coincides with the general age group distribution of the population of asylum seekers in Switzerland according to SEM, who fall into the age group of 18 to 29 years old (Figure 14).

Figure 14: General age group distribution of asylum seekers according to the SEM

Âge : En 2018, la proportion des bénéficiaires mineurs a légèrement reculé. A peine 1 bénéficiaire sur 6 est mineur. Parmi les 1234 mineurs, 37 sont non-accompagnés.

En %	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
0-17 ans	13	14	15	15	17	14	16	15	19	19	17
18-29 ans	57	59	55	53	49	54	43	44	42	40	39
30-39 ans	20	19	21	23	24	23	28	27	26	26	27
> 40 ans	10	8	9	9	10	9	13	14	13	15	17

Available at: <https://asile.ch/statistiques/suisse/>. Accessed on 05/05/2021.

Table 2: Age distribution

Age group	18-25	25+
Number of participants	72	30

Table 3 shows the number of participants according to the time they spent in Switzerland. The majority of the informants arrived in Switzerland between roughly a year and a half to two years before the study was conducted, in 2018. Some had been living in Switzerland for about 6 months to a year. The rest arrived in Switzerland a little less than three years before the study. Only one informant had been living in Switzerland for more than three years.

Table 3: Time in Switzerland

Time in Switzerland	6-15 months	16 months-24 months	+25months
Number of participants	22	61	19

All of the participants are asylum seekers. Some have been granted the refugee status while some others have been granted a temporary admission. The majority is still waiting for the final decision to be taken. All of them live in the canton of Fribourg.

For most of them, the concept of questionnaires was previously unknown. Thus, the procedure required specific arrangements which are discussed in the following section.

4.4 Procedure

Because of the political/legal status of the informants, it was necessary to implement certain ethical limits. This particular social group is considered vulnerable and it is crucial that the type of questions does not put the informant in any kind of danger. For this reason, questions

concerning their motives for asylum or their legal status have not been asked. For the same ethical reasons, the school coordination did not permit to carry out recorded interviews.

The very few questionnaires I received back from the pilot study showed that it was necessary to implement a different approach to collect the data. Simply sending the questionnaires to the school teachers or the coordinator for them to hand them over to the participants resulted in an unsuccessful experience as only two participants agreed to answer the questionnaire. The rest felt very skeptical and refused to even see the questionnaires. For this reason, I decided it was most appropriate to collect the data myself by going to Fribourg and introducing the purposes of my project directly to the informants.

In September 2017, after receiving the authorization from the Canton, the school coordinator convened a meeting with all the French teachers and explained my project. She then asked them to inform all of their Eritrean students to come to Gambach on Wednesday morning September 27th to answer a questionnaire and meet me. On that Wednesday morning, 59 Eritrean students came, among which 57 were Tigrinya. After I introduced myself, I explained the purpose of my study in detail. After reading the questionnaire out loud, I gave additional information concerning certain questions which might have caused difficulties to answer to (such as questions requiring rating scale for example). I gave the informants the chance to ask any question or make any comment. After that, the students felt relieved and appeared enthusiastic. All of them accepted to answer the questionnaires, which they filled out individually in that same room. Naturally, some talked among themselves particularly when they did not understand a question but I insisted that they should fill out the questionnaire individually and that they should ask me if they had any questions. Some had questions during the answering process and in order not to disturb the others, I would go to the person in question and explain the question. Once they filled out the questionnaire and handed it to me, I verified whether all the questions were answered. A few times, I noticed that some questions remained

unanswered. After I made sure the questions were not voluntarily avoided, I would ask the informants to go back to their seats and complete the questionnaire. After roughly two hours, I had received all the questionnaires back. Obviously, this does not mean that every single question was answered in every single questionnaire. However, proceeding the way I did helped to reduce the number of blank questions.

In November 2018, I went back to Fribourg to distribute a second set of questionnaires. The reason I waited a year to collect the more data is because I had to wait for a new school year to start to make sure the learners who would participate in the study would be new. On Monday November 5th, I distributed the questionnaire to two groups. The first group consisted of 36 learners in Gambach. The second group consisted of 9 learners in Daillettes, which is another location where M2Adulte learners take classes. The procedure went similarly to the year before. All the participants were grouped in a classroom and they were informed that they would answer a questionnaire. After I introduced myself and explained the purpose of my study more in detail, I distributed the questionnaire. I answered any questions and collected the completed questionnaires.

5 Data presentation

This section presents the main findings of the study. It is divided into three main sub-sections which correspond to the main research questions namely:

- 1) What are the language uses?
- 2) What are the language attitudes?
- 3) What factors play a role in language learning motivation?

In order to answer those questions, it is necessary to first present the main findings before discussing and analyzing them. Three main independent variables have been selected for analysis and to facilitate the reading of the different tables and figures presented in this section, they are presented below.

Table 3, which is here repeated for conveniences as Table 4, shows the time the informants have spent in Switzerland. This plays a crucial role in the different answers given by the participants. The table is divided into three groups: 22 participants have been living in Switzerland between 6 months to a year. The majority, 61 participants, have been living in Switzerland up to two years and 19 participants, for more than two years.

Table 4 : Time in Switzerland

Time in Switzerland	Group 1: 6-12 months	Group 2: 13 months-24 months	Group 3: 25+ months
Number of participants	22	61	19

Table 5 shows the number of years participants have been to school in Eritrea. This allows us to understand what level of schooling they have and until what grade they have been educated. All participants have been to school at least until third grade, which suggests that none of them is illiterate. The first group consists of participants who have been to school until 6th grade, which, in the Eritrean education system, refers elementary school. 35 participants have been to school until the end of middle school (7th to 9th grade). The majority, 56 participants, have reached secondary school and Sawa²⁰ (10th grade until 12th grade). More specifically, 13 participants have reached grade 12 in Sawa and 4 participants have reached the first year of college (12+1).

Table 5 : Level of schooling

Level of schooling	Group 1: 3rd to 6th grade	Group 2: 7th to 9th grade	Group 3: 10th to 12+1 grade	NA
Number of participants	9	35	56	2

²⁰ The Eritrean education system imposes that after 11th grade, students spend the 12th grade in Sawa, in the region of Gash Barka, in Northern-Western Eritrea. 12th grade consists in 6 months of military training and 6 months of school after which students take the final examination, the Eritrean Secondary Education Certificate Examinations (ESECE/Matrik).

As for their level of French, the informants who participated in this study are French learners and their level has been determined according to the class they are attending. As explained in the Chapter 4, there are four main levels of modules: Module 1 (1), Module 2 EPAI (2) and Module 2+ EPAI (3) and lastly, Module 2 Adultes (4). The same number of participants follow module one and two, 42 each. 12 participants are in module 2+ EPAI and 2 participants are in Module 2 Adultes. As previously seen, the course content and methods vary from one level to the other because the purpose of the module is different. The average level of French proficiency in all modules corresponds to A1-A2, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

As we can see in Table 6, the majority of the participants are distributed in level 1 and 2 with 42 participants in each group, 12 participants in level 3 and 2 participants in level 4 (4 participants have not provided their level information).

Table 6 : Level of French

Level of French	1	2	3	4	NA
Number of participants	42	42	12	2	4

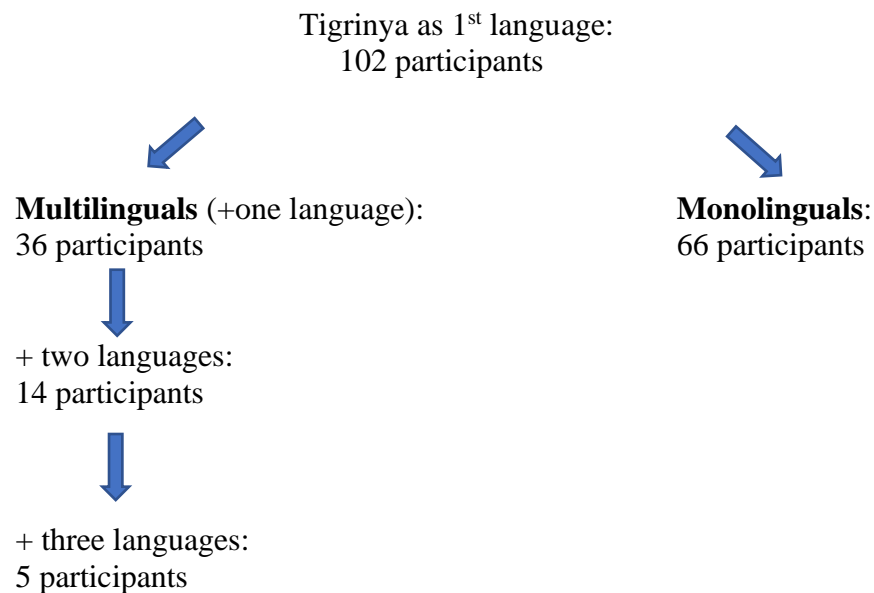
5.1 Language use

In this section, the most relevant results of the questionnaire study are reported. These relate to the general language use of the participants. Before looking into the participants' language use, it is necessary to have a clearer idea of their linguistic background. Are the participants monolingual or multilingual? What languages do they master? What languages have they learned?

Overall, the number of participants who mentioned speaking languages other than Tigrinya is rather small when comparing to the total number of participants. Figure 15 below shows that the majority of the participants consider themselves monolingual (64%). Only 35%

of the participants consider themselves multilingual, which means that they speak at least one more language other than Tigrinya. Among them, 13% speak two more languages and 5% speak three more languages.

Figure 15 : Overview of monolinguals and multilinguals



This suggests that the participants consider themselves predominantly monolingual. This is rather surprising considering that all study French at the moment and that the majority have been educated in English, yet English is only given as an L2 or L3 by a very small number of participants. Thus, even though the participants have been taught English in school, they do not consider themselves English speakers.

Figure 16 below presents the languages that the participants command. They were asked to rank them from the language they are the most fluent in to the one they are the least fluent in. For obvious reasons, Tigrinya does not appear in the figure because it is every participant's L1 and the aim of this question is to find out what other languages are in their repertoire.

Figure 16: Overview of language repertoire

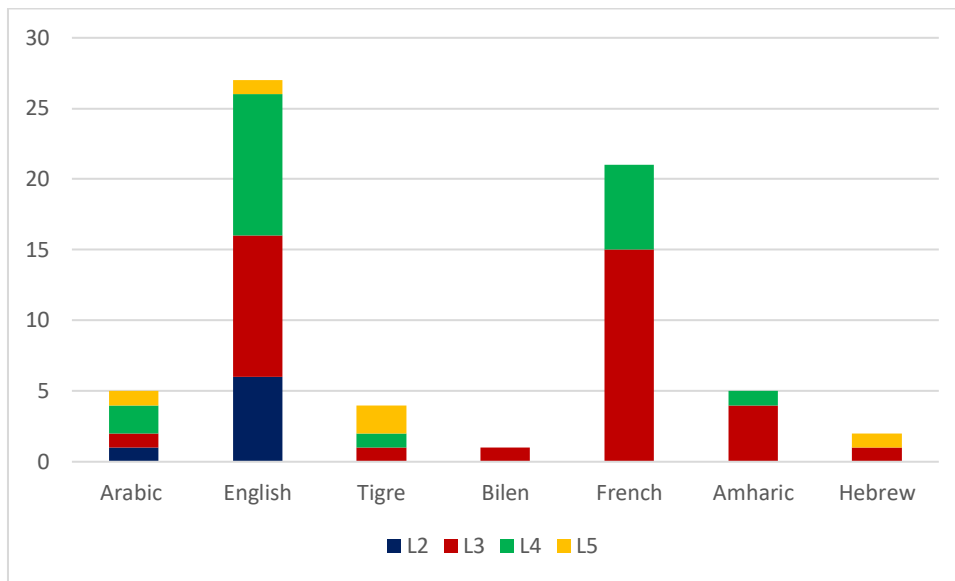


Figure 16 shows that 6% of the participants consider English their L2 and only 10 consider it their L3. In fact, there is a higher number of participants (15%) who consider French their L2 than those who consider English their L2. 5% know Arabic, which is, as previously stated, one of the three official languages of Eritrea. Some have learned it while they were in Libya before crossing the Mediterranean Sea. 4% of the participants speak Tigre and one speaks Bilen, which are two of the nine recognized ethnic groups of Eritrea. 5% of the participants speak Amharic and that is probably due to the fact that they have lived in Ethiopia for some time on their way to Europe. 2% of the participants mentioned having lived in Israel for some years before coming to Europe, which explains why they speak Hebrew.

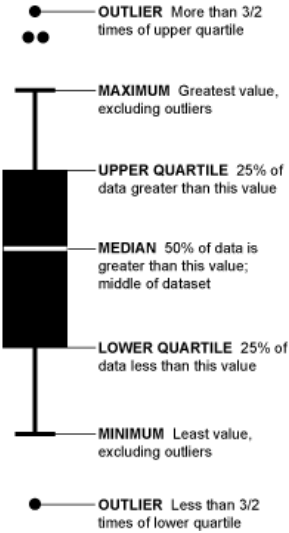
5.1.1 Usage domains

In the third part of the questionnaire, I inquired into the participants' language use in the different domains of their daily lives. Different domains are taken into consideration: language use within the family context, language use outside home, language use with friends and language use inside the classroom. The classroom domain is divided into two parts: language use inside the classroom with instructors and language use inside the classroom with classmates. The latter part is itself divided into two sections, specifying two types of

interlocutors: Tigrinya speakers and non-Tigrinya speakers. These results are reported from the third part of the questionnaire in which participants were asked to indicate which languages they used with the different interlocutors mentioned above. The first set of results presented in this section is the family domain. Results are represented in the form of boxplots.

Boxplots allow a visualization of the distribution across groups, and as they include potential outliers of the dataset, their representation is accurate and directly accessible. The box-and-whisker plot is an exploratory graphic which is used to show the distribution of a dataset. Figure 17 below represents the setup of the graphic.

Figure 17: The box plot set up



Available at: <https://flowingdata.com/2008/02/15/how-to-read-and-use-a-box-and-whisker-plot/>. Accessed on 12/04/2021.

The results are represented in quartiles in the dark box. The upper quartile and lower quartile are separated by the median, illustrated by the white line in the middle of the figure. The upper quartile represents the 25% of all given answers that are above the median and the lower quartile the 25% of those that are below the median. In that sense, all values are arranged from the smallest to the largest and the median represents the value exactly in the middle of the range. If the total number of the values is odd, the median is the one at the middle; if the total number is even, the median is the average of the two values closest to the middle. For example,

in a Likert scale survey where 10 participants are asked to indicate how frequently they use a language with answers ranging from 1=not at all to 4=always, the distribution of answers might be as follows: 1,1,1,1,2,2,3,4,4,4. The median in this case would be 2.

The whiskers represent the other 50% of the data, with 25% of the data falling outside the upper quartile and the 25% outside the lower quartile. They do not include the outliers which are represented by the dots at the top and the bottom of the figure. The outliers represent tokens 1.5 times bigger than the largest value in the upper quartile and 1.5 times smaller than the smallest value in the lower quartile.

The horizontal axis consists of the three main languages in which we are interested in this study: English, French and Tigrinya. The vertical axis shows the scale of frequency that the participants could choose from when answering the questionnaire: 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=often, 4=always.

5.1.1.1 Family context

In this section, I present the results of the language use with family members, including parents, partners or spouses, children and siblings. Since the aim is to investigate language use in the host country, participants were asked to answer only if those mentioned family members were in Switzerland. Participants were asked to rate with the Likert scale values from 1 to 4 how frequently they use either English, French or Tigrinya with their family members (1=never, 4=always).

Figure 18: Language use with parents

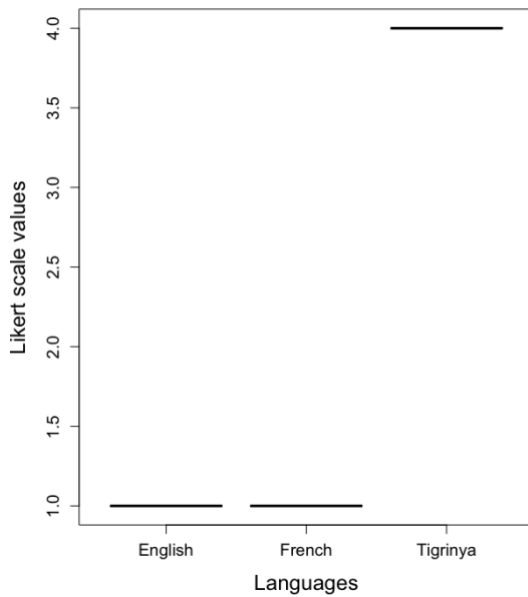
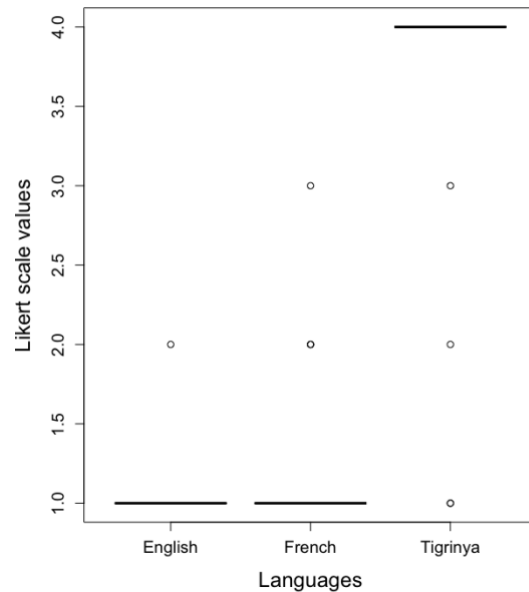


Figure 19: Language use with partner

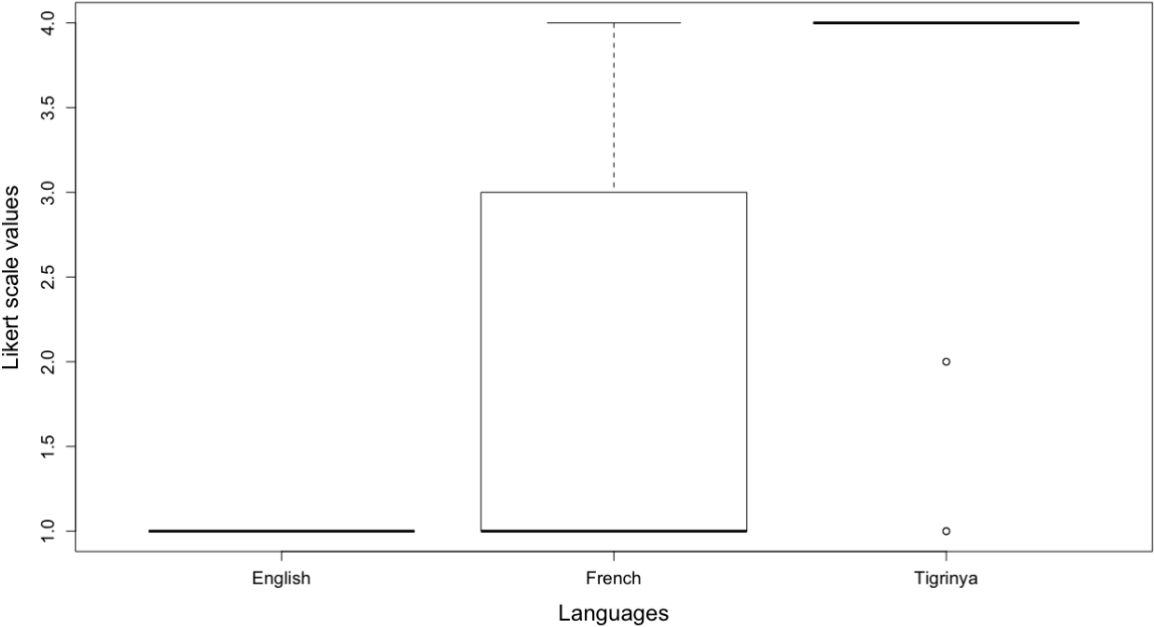


Since only a few participants have their parents in Switzerland, this led to a reduction of the number of participants answering this question. Figure 18 shows a very clear representation of the language use with parents which consists exclusively of Tigrinya for participants whose parents are in Switzerland, as there is no use of English nor French. Language use with partners/spouses, on the other hand, is less clear-cut than the previous illustration. In Figure 19, we can see that although Tigrinya is the preferred and most used language among partners/spouses, a few outliers appear showing usage of English and French as well. Several factors, which will be more thoroughly discussed in Chapter 6, may explain this.

Figure 20 below illustrates language use with children. Just like in the previous figures, Tigrinya is the most used language with children as well, while English is not used at all. However, there is a more frequent use of French with children than with any other member of the family. Even though the general median is low (1.0), the mid-50% box of the data goes up to 3.0 which is the “often” value. The greatest value (excluding outliers) goes up to 4.0 which represents the “always” value. This shows that the upper 25% of the participants always use

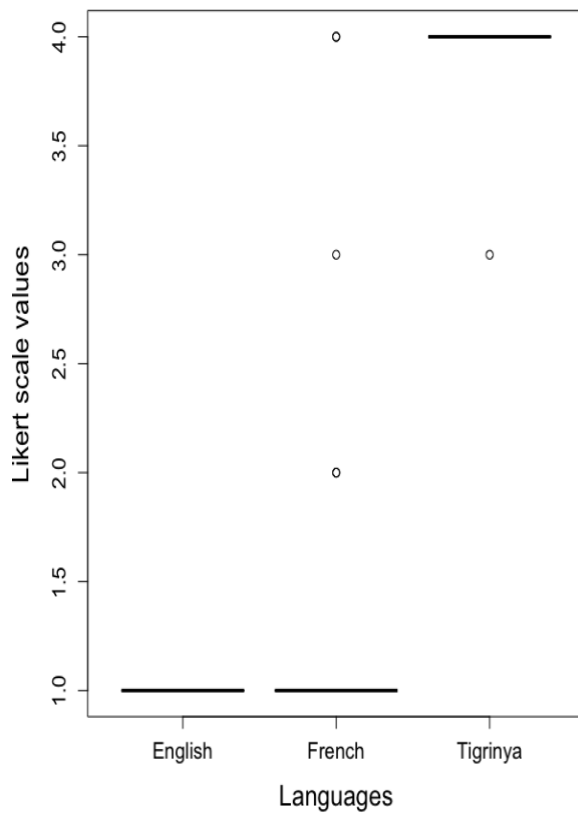
French with their children. Some outliers, represented by the two dots in the Tigrinya never or rarely use Tigrinya with their children.

Figure 20 : Language use with children



The last boxplot (Figure 21) represents language use with siblings. Again, there is no use of English. The use of French is close to never with the exception of some outliers represented by the dots. The use of Tigrinya is close to always with the exception of some outliers as well who mentioned using Tigrinya often but not always. As previously mentioned, these figures refer to family members who are in Switzerland.

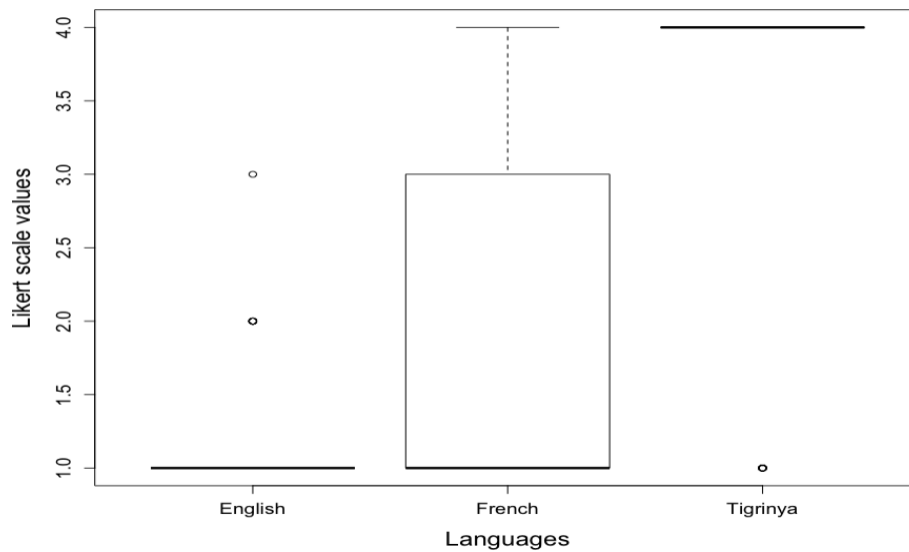
Figure 21 : Language use with siblings



5.1.1.2 Outside home domain

Figure 22 demonstrates the frequency of language use when participants are outside. Outside is a vague term which includes anywhere but home. Participants were asked to answer which languages they use and at what frequency when they are outside home.

Figure 22: Language use outside home



The results are similar to the language uses with children. The main difference here is that some participants use English as well with outliers at 2.0 (“rarely”) and 3.0 (“often”). What is striking is that there is a continual and rather high use of Tigrinya even outside home, although we can perceive a dot at 1.0 (“never”). The use of French indicates a general median of 1.0, but the mid-50% box of the data goes up to 3.0 which is the “often” value and the greatest value (excluding outliers) goes up to 4.0 which represents the “always” value which means that the upper 25% of the participants always use French outside.

5.1.1.3 Friends domain

The Friends domain can be defined as the entourage and the people that the participants socialize with. It is an important component of integration since depending on who the participants are friends with, they may or may not be able to practice French. In this section, the aim is to find out whether there is any use of French with friends and ultimately whether the participants have any French speaking friends or Swiss friends or if they use French, even with Tigrinya speakers.

Figure 23 : Use of French with friends

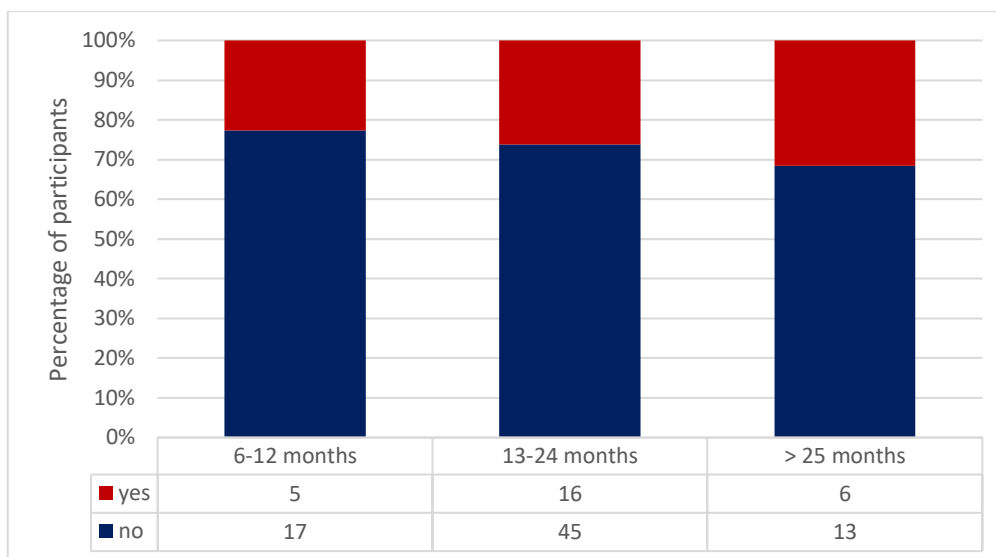


Figure 23 above shows us the use of French according to the time spent in Switzerland. The vertical axis indicates the percentage of participants and the horizontal axis indicates the time spent in Switzerland which is divided into three periods: those who have been in Switzerland for 6 to 12 months, 13 to 24 months or more than two years.

As shown in Figure 23, the majority of the participants do not use French with their friends. Furthermore, the time spent in Switzerland does not significantly impact the use of French. 32% of the participants who have lived in Switzerland for more than 25 months use French with their friends, as opposed to 26% and 22% of the two other groups. This only suggests a small difference between the groups and does not show any particular significance related to time spent in Switzerland.

5.1.1.4 Classroom domain

Now that the results of language use within the private domains of families and friends have been presented, classroom domain findings are shown in this section. Within the classroom, the

focus on the one hand is put on the language use with the instructor and on the other hand the language use with classmates, both Tigrinya speakers and non-Tigrinya speakers.

5.1.1.4.1 With instructor

Figure 24 below represents the use of French with the instructor. The vertical axis indicates percentage of the participants according to their level of French or more specifically the classes they attend, which are divided into different levels (see Table 6). NA, in Figure 24 below, but also in every figure of the study, refers to the participants who did not provide any answer

Figure 24 : Use of French with instructor

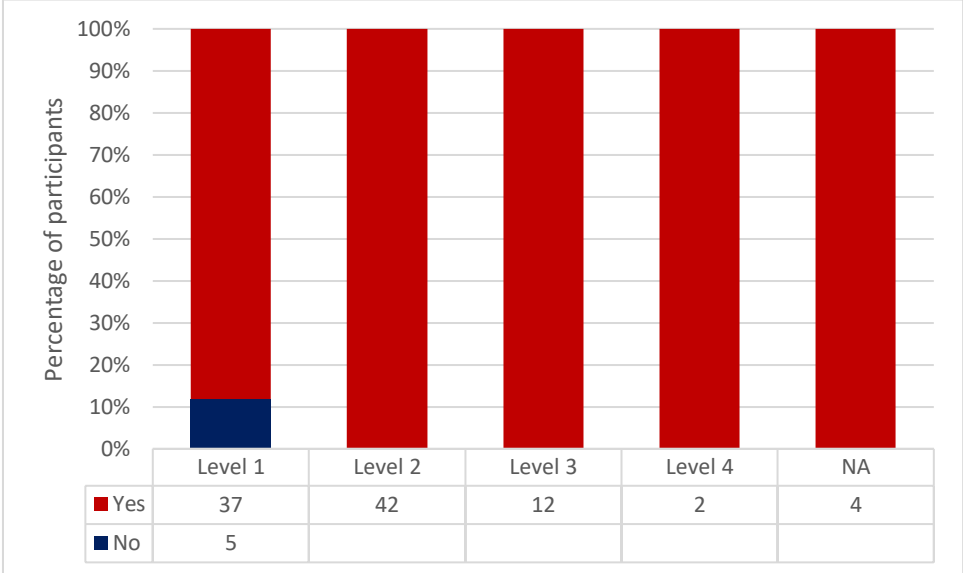


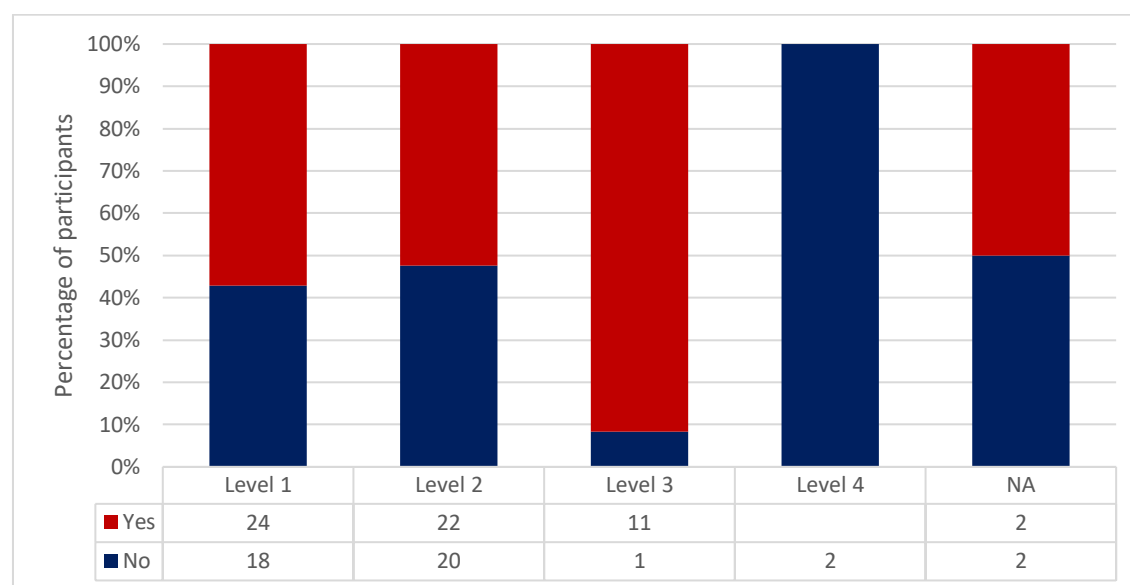
Figure 24 shows very clearly that the main language of communication between the participants and their instructor in class is French. Only a small percentage of the participants (12%) answered not using French with their instructor.

The second language of communication is English. Thus, those who answered not using French use English instead. However, according to the findings of the observational study of the classes, as well as the interviews with the different teachers, English is seldom used and more specifically as a last resort. This is more thoroughly discussed in the Chapter 6. Therefore, French is mainly used within the classroom and that is the case for every level.

5.1.1.4.2 With Tigrinya speaking classmates

Within the classroom as well as outside the classroom, participants are also encouraged to converse with their classmates, and Figure 25 below displays the use of French according to the levels again.

Figure 25: Use of French with Tigrinya classmates



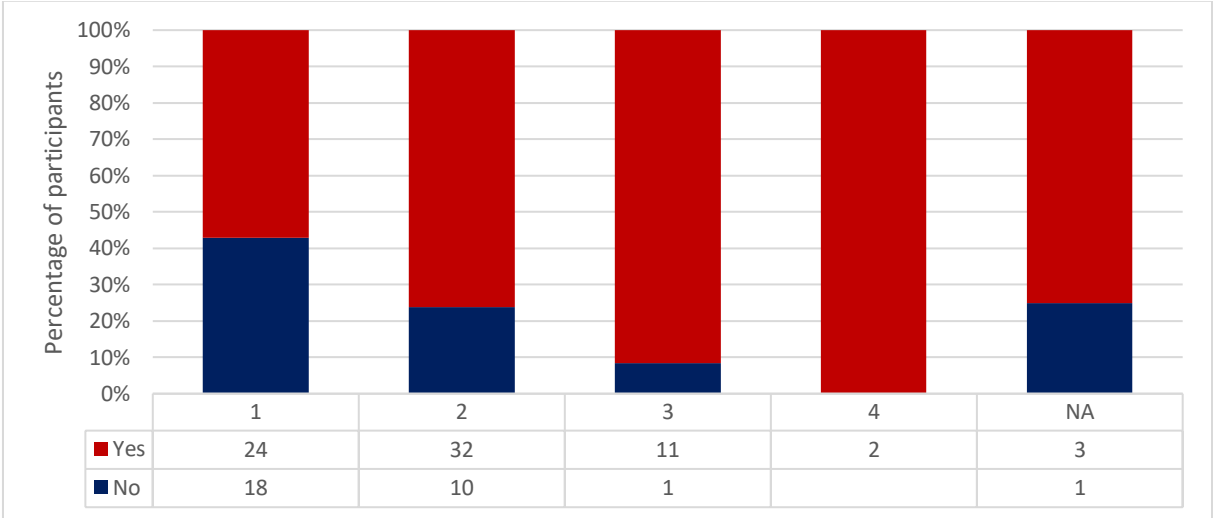
As we can see the total number of participants for each level is different, thus, this may skew the results as all levels are not equally represented. Among the 102 participants, only 2 are in level 4 and both answered not using French with their Tigrinya classmates. This result is unreliable however, as it is likely to be impacted by the very small sample size. What is striking is the difference between level 3 and the first two levels. It appears that participants in level 3 use more French than the first two levels. This can be explained by the fact that their level is higher and thus they probably feel more comfortable using French more often. Only one participant in level 3 answered not using French with his/her Tigrinya speaking classmates, whereas 18 and 20 participants in level 1 and level 2 respectively stated not using French.

It is also interesting to see that there is indeed a general use of French even with Tigrinya speakers. The context here plays a crucial role since they are in a French class and this does not coincide with language use among friends seen in the previous sub-section.

5.1.1.4.3 With non-Tigrinya speaking classmates

When talking to non-Tigrinya speakers, the results do not show drastic differences. Of course, the two level 4 participants stated using French unlike when speaking with Tigrinya speakers. Participants’ responses at level 1 and level 3 are identical to the results in the previous figure (Figure 25). A slight difference is found in participants from level 2. Around 22% of the participants do not use French with their non-Tigrinya speaking classmates as opposed to 47% with their Tigrinya speaking classmates. As the aim was to find out whether they use French or Tigrinya, only these two languages were considered and the participants were not asked what other languages they would use in these cases.

Figure 26 : Use of French with non-Tigrinya classmates



Therefore, Figure 26 above shows that the difference in terms of the number of participants using French with classmates who are Tigrinya speakers or non-Tigrinya speakers is not considerable. This is confirmed by the statistical tests, which will be more thoroughly discussed in chapter 5.4.

5.1.1.4.4 Teachers' perspectives

In order to have a complete study of the classroom setting, interviews were carried out with the teachers. Questions about the languages used in class were asked. The aim was to have the teachers' perspectives regarding the language uses in classes. All five teachers stated using predominantly French in class. English is only rarely used as a last resort as we can see in examples 1 to 3 below:

1. IE : *Donc non. Euh, et puis j'ai utilisé une ou deux fois l'anglais typiquement pour les Erythréens et puis il y a un Ethiopien aussi je crois qui parle aussi anglais. Et euh c'est tout. Après non ouais c'est tout français.*

(IE: So, no. Ehm, and I've used English once or twice, particularly for Eritreans and there is one Ethiopian as well I think who speaks English. And ehm that's it. Then no, yeah it's all French.)

(Interview no.5. Teacher M2 and M2+. Gambach, Wednesday, March 28 2018. 16:00-16:36)

2. IE : *J'utilise quasiment tout le temps le français, s'il y a besoin, si vraiment il y a quelque chose qui n'est pas compris, je peux faire une traduction. Par exemple, moi je parle un peu anglais, si c'est nécessaire j'utilise. Et puis si vraiment c'est pas compris, je demande à faire la traduction à quelqu'un qui a compris dans la langue maternelle.*

(IE: I use French almost all the time, if there is need, if really there's something that's not understood, I can translate. For example, I speak a little English, if necessary I use it. And if they really don't understand, I ask someone to translate in the mother tongue.)

(Interview no.1. Teacher M1 and M2+. Gambach, Monday, March 26 7:30-8:15)

3. IE : *Alors moi ça m'arrive parfois d'utiliser l'anglais. Mais vraiment assez peu parce qu'ils comprennent pas tous l'anglais, mais si par exemple il y a un élève et après je lui explique en français, il comprend toujours pas et je sais qu'il parle anglais je vais faire la traduction.*

IR : *Mais ça va être rare ?*

IE : *Franchement c'est rare, je sais pas je traduis peut-être deux mots en anglais, par leçon. Vraiment maximum.*

(IE: So sometimes I may happen to use English. But really just a little because they don't all understand English, but if for example there's a pupil and after I've explained in French, he still doesn't understand and I know he speaks English, I'll translate.

IR: But that's rare?

IE: Frankly that's rare, I don't know, I may translate maybe two words in English, per lesson. Really maximum.)

(Interview no.2. Teacher M2+. Gambach, Monday March 26 2018. 12:15-13:30)

One teacher mentioned speaking some of the learners' mother tongue inside the classroom, more particularly Farsi, which does not concern Eritreans, as we can see in example 4 below:

4. IE : *Ah alors oui, alors euh, oui, oui. Il faut dire que moi dans mes classes, actuellement j'ai beaucoup d'Afghans et très peu d'autres nationalités, du coup ça fait que les deux Erythréens qui sont là, ils sont un peu à part (rires), ils ont un peu plus de peine, pas que, ils s'entendent bien, ils se saluent voilà, quand ils discutent en groupe ça se passe très bien, mais c'est vrai que, peut-être que, même moi des fois je me rends compte que peut-être j'ai beaucoup eu d'Afghans, j'ai appris beaucoup de mots en farsi, en dari que je peux réutiliser quand ils n'ont pas compris quelque chose. Par contre le Tigrinya, euh je suis un peu perdue (rires). Du coup peut-être que ça fait déjà une différence rien que ça, où je peux pas vraiment les aider autant que je pourrais aider un Afghan. Mais euh, après j'essaye hein d'être le plus juste, le plus égal possible, d'être le plus équitable possible mais bon, c'est possible que ça marche pas toujours je sais pas (rires).*

(IE: Ah, yes, so, ehm, yes, yes. I have to say that currently in my classes, I have many Afghans and very few other nationalities, which means only two Eritreans, they're a bit apart <laughs>, they have more difficulties, not that, they get along well, they greet each other, when they discuss in groups, it goes very well, but it's true that, maybe even I realize sometimes that maybe I've had many Afghans, I learned many Farsi or Dari words that I can reuse when they don't understand something. But Tigrinya, ehm I'm a bit lost <laughs>. So maybe that already makes a difference, only that, as in I can't really help them as much as I can help an Afghan. But ehm I try to be fair, to be as equal as possible, as fair as possible, but well it may not always work I don't know <laughs>.

(Interview no.5. Teacher M2 and M2+. Gambach, March 28 2018. 16:00-16:36)

Thus, the teachers mainly use French in class. They were also asked what language their students use and whether they intervene in the language choice. While the teacher in example 5 says that she sometimes tries to restrain the pupils from speaking their own languages, the teacher in example 6 says that she does not need to intervene because her pupils speak enough French.

5. IR : *Mmh. Maintenant par rapport euh donc ça c'était vraiment le, on vient de finir euh les questions concernant la méthode, maintenant au niveau de l'usage des langues. Bon on en avait déjà discuté pendant la pause, vous aviez déjà dit que vous utilisiez jamais l'anglais et puis quand les élèves essaient de communiquer dans leur langue, vous essayez un peu de freiner ça-*

IE : *Ouais*

IR : *Euh*

IE : *Euh, freiner oui freiner, pas qu'ils commencent à parler arabe ou kurde tout, tout le cours. Par contre si par exemple moi j'arrive pas à expliquer, j'essaye d'expliquer le, le thème le mot, la grammaire en français, si vraiment par des gestes, par des images là le beurre par exemple, la tartine, la confiture, par des images, et si vraiment même ça ça marche pas bein le théâtre ça c'est clair ça pas mal, euh si ça ne marche pas*

après je demande, s'il y a quelqu'un qui parle la langue, d'expliquer. C'est vraiment le dernier recours.

(IR: Erm. Now concerning erm so that was really the we just finished erm the questions concerning the method now in terms of the level of language use. We already discussed that during the break, you told me that you never use English et when the pupils try to communicate in their language, you try to restrain it a little-

IE: Yeah

IR: Erm

IE: Erm restrain yes restrain, so that they don't start speaking in Arabic or Kurdish all all the time. However, if for example I can't explain something, I try to explain the, the topic of the word, the grammar in French and if really, with gestures with images here butter, for example toast, jam, with images et if it it really doesn't work well theater that's for sure that not bad erm if it doesn't work then I ask, if there's someone who speaks the language to explain. That's really the last resort.)

(Interview no.4. Teacher M1. Poya. Wednesday, March 28 2018 11:30-12:05)

6. IR : *Et quelles langues utilisent les élèves entre eux en classe ?*

IE : Bein je trouve qu'ils utilisent pas mal le français.

IR : Ok. Est-ce que vous vous intervenez dans ce choix de langue ?

IE : Bein pour l'instant j'ai pas trop eu besoin, je les, pour l'instant j'interviens pas trop non.

IR : Ok, parce qu'ils utilisent quand même assez le français.

IE : Oui, exactement.

(IR: And what languages do pupils use with one another in class?)

IE: Well, I find that they use quite some French actually.

IR: Ok. Do you intervene in the language choice?

IE: Well, I didn't really need to yet, I, for now I don't really intervene, no.

IR: Ok. Because you feel like they use enough French?

IE: Yes, exactly.)

(Interview no.3. Teacher M2. Gambach, Monday, March 26 2018 16:15-17:00)

Outside the classroom, during breaks, the teacher in example 7 states that the students speak their mother tongue with one another.

7. IE : *Alors les Erythréens, ils ont, ils parlent tous Tigrinya. Y a des Afghans qui parlent dari et farsi et puis y a, j'ai pas l'impression qu'ils parlent l'arabe, euh entre eux parce qu'il y en a qui utilisent euh-*

(IE: So Eritreans, they have, they all speak Tigrinya. There are some Afghans who speak Dari and Farsi and then, there's, I don't think they speak Arabic, erm, with one another because there are some who use, ehm-)

(Interview no.3. Teacher M2. Gambach, Monday, March 26 2018 16:15-17:00)

Thus, the examples above show that, according to the teachers, within the classroom setting, the students speak French and the teachers try to encourage them to do so. However, outside the classroom, the students tend to stay among other Eritreans and use Tigrinya.

5.2 Language attitudes

This section focuses on language attitudes. In the last part of the questionnaire, participants were asked to rate their answers to questions concerning how much they like French, how difficult they find French and how important they think Tigrinya and French are. The aim here is to have an idea of the attitudes they developed towards French and how they feel about preserving Tigrinya in the host country. Thus, this section is divided into two sub-sections relating to the two different languages: French and Tigrinya.

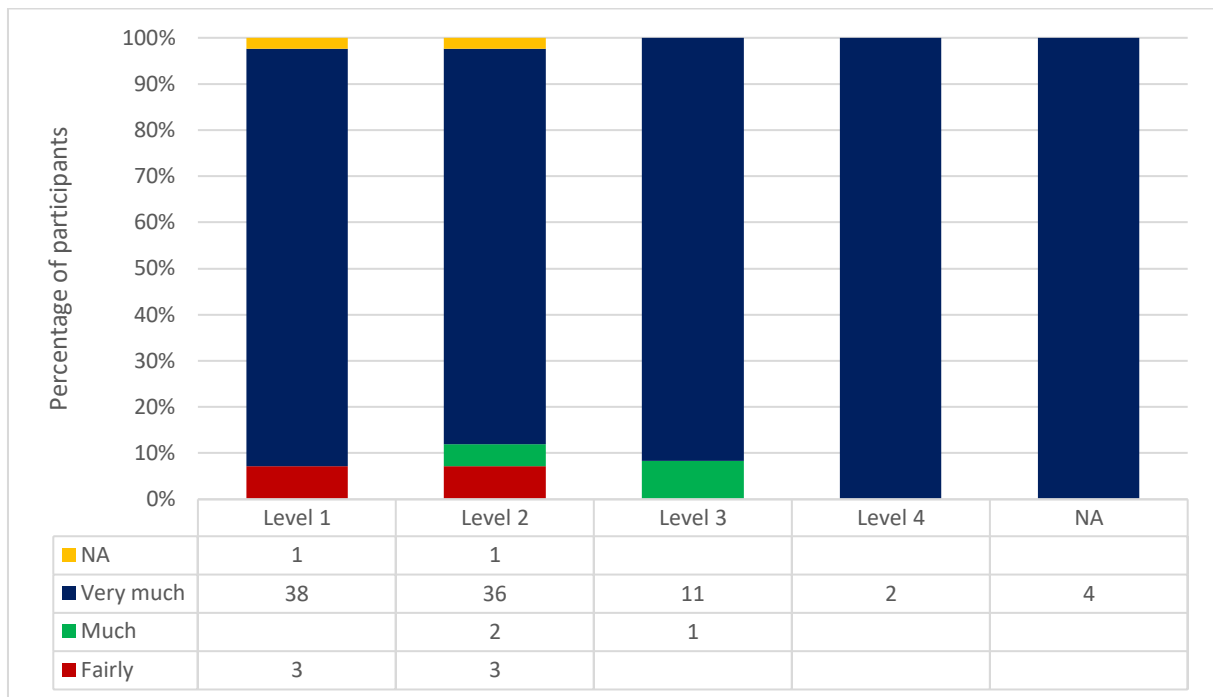
5.2.1 French

Figure 27 below presents how much the participants like French. The participants have been, again, separated according to the levels of their French classes.

5.2.1.1 Love for French

In order to gauge their attitudes towards French, the participants were asked to rate how much they liked French. They had to rate their answers from a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being “not at all” and 5 being “very much”. Figure 27 shows how the participants rated their appreciation towards French according to their level of French.

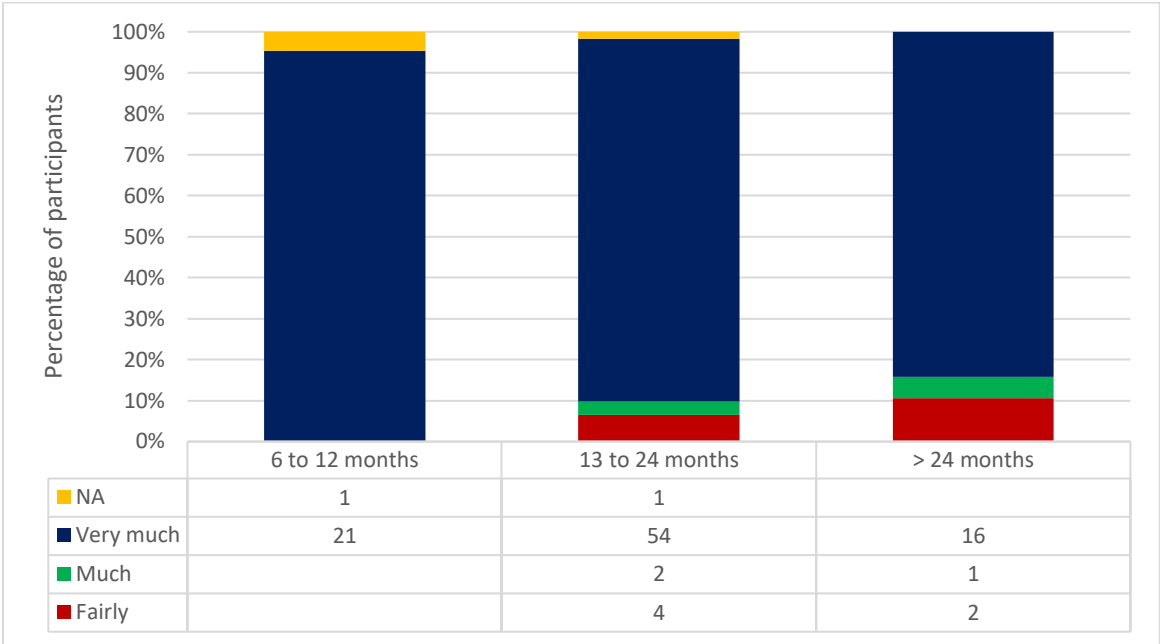
Figure 27: Love for French according to level of French



As we can see, the majority rated their love for French with the highest appreciation “very much”. Therefore, we can conclude that the level of French does not have a significant impact on attitudes towards French since the majority answered loving French “much” or “very much”. However, we can see that around 8% of the participants at level 1 and level 2 have rated loving French only “fairly.” They are in the lowest levels which presupposes that their mastery of French is lower than the participants in the two other levels (3 and 4). This may explain why some did not develop a high appreciation towards French and rated their love for it “fairly.”

Figure 28 below shows the time spent in Switzerland in correlation with the love for French. Although the general opinion about French is positive since the majority answered loving French “very much”, 6% of the participants who have been living in Switzerland between 13 to 24 months and 11% of those who have arrived more than two years ago love French “fairly.” As we can see, proportionally larger numbers are less enthusiastic about French the longer the stay. This implies a number of aspects, which will be more thoroughly discussed in chapter 6.

Figure 28: Love for French according to time in Switzerland

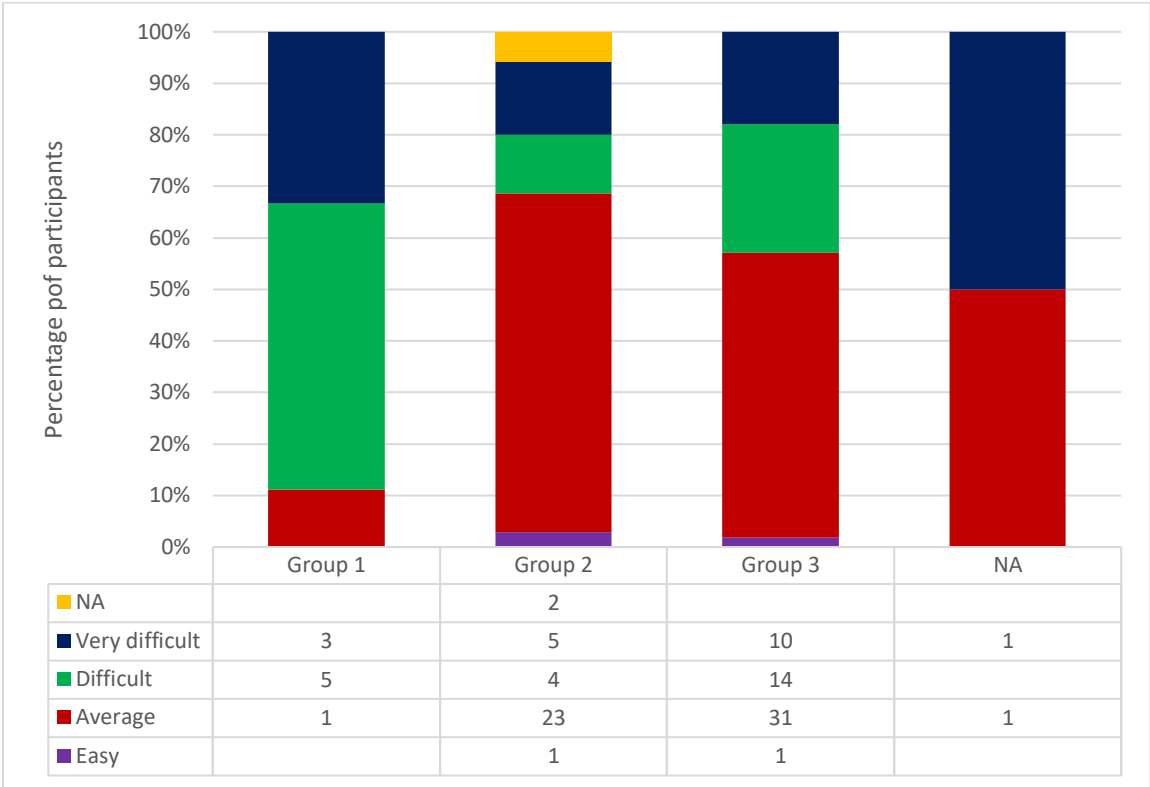


Therefore, it appears that the number of years in Switzerland, just like the level of French, as shown in Figure 27, does not have any impact on the appreciation towards French either.

5.2.1.2 Difficulty of French

The appreciation participants may feel towards French may be influenced by how they rate the difficulty of French and this in its turn may be impacted by their level of education. The number of years they have been to school may influence how difficult they find it or not. Figure 29 below shows the percentage of the participants according to their level of education in Eritrea. The participants have been separated into three groups corresponding to the years they have been to school before coming to Switzerland. As explained at the beginning of this chapter, group 1 consists of participants who have been to school until grade 6, group 2 from grade 7 to 9 and group 3 from grade 10 to 12+1.

Figure 29 : Difficulty of French according to level of schooling



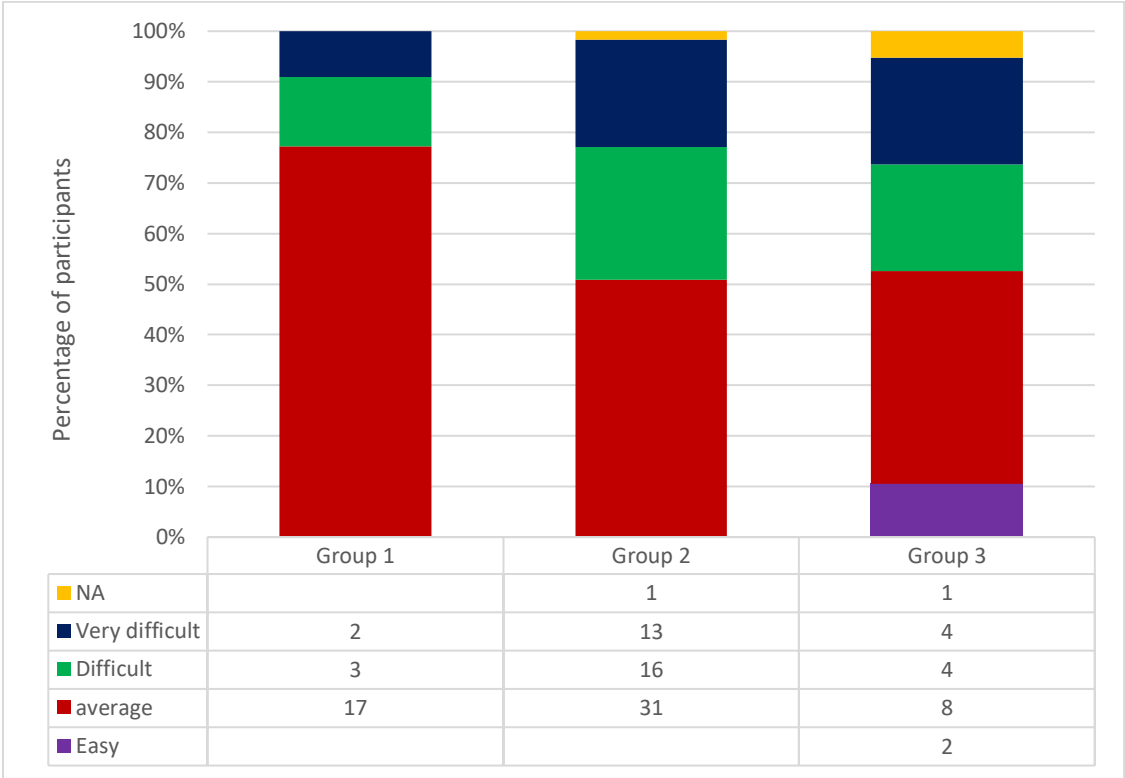
In Figure 29, there is a very small percentage of the participants (represented in purple) who claim to find French easy. The rest is divided between average, difficult and very difficult. If we focus on group 1, namely those who have been to school until grade 6, no one claims to find French easy. The majority (57%) finds it difficult, 32% find it very difficult and 11% find it average. In group 2, we notice more discrepancies. While 2% of the participants find French easy, the majority (67%) finds it average, 11% find it difficult and 14% find it very difficult. Group 3 presents similar results with only 1% judging French easy. The majority of 57% finds it average and the rest answered difficult (23%) and very difficult (19%).

As we can see, the highest percentage of participants finding French very difficult is found in group 1 which represents a group with a low level of education, while group 2 and group 3 have been educated to a higher level. Of these two groups (group 2 and 3), fewer participants find French difficult or very difficult than in the less educated group 1. Group 1 participants have only been educated until grade 6 in Eritrea and this influences how they judge

the difficulty of French. However, we can see that there is a higher percentage of participants finding French averagely difficult in group 2 (67%) than in group 3 (57%) and there is a lower percentage of participants finding French difficult in group 2 (11%) than in group 3 (23%), even though group 3 is supposedly more educated than group 2. Ultimately, even though it refers to a very small number of participants, 2% of group 2 participants find French easy, while 1% in group 3 finds French easy. These results are interesting particularly considering that group 3 counts 56 participants in all while group 2 and group 1 counts 35 participants and 9 participants respectively (see table 6). This shows that even though group 3 is better represented, they still generally judged French more difficult than group 2.

Figure 30 below shows the way the participants rated the difficulty of French according to the time they have spent in Switzerland. Group 1 represents those who have lived for less than a year, group 2 for less than two years and group 3 for more than two years (see Table 3).

Figure 30: Difficulty of French according to time in Switzerland

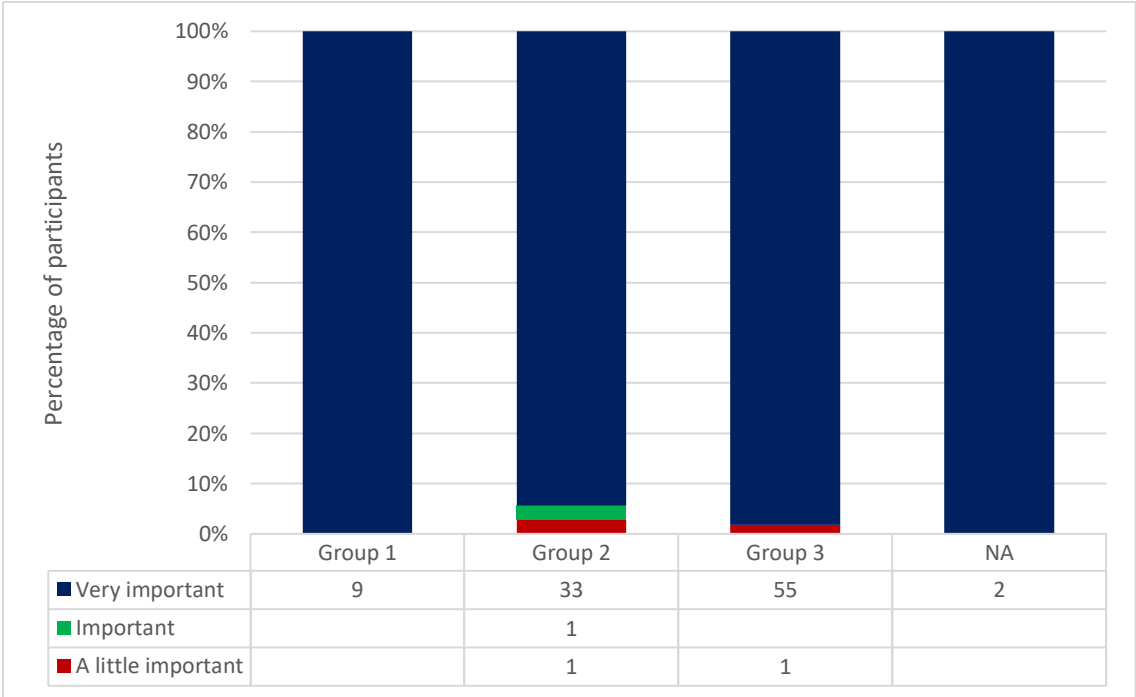


It appears that the majority in all groups combined find French averagely difficult. However, there is a higher percentage of participants finding French difficult and very difficult in group 2 (27% and 20% respectively). In group 1, 13% find French difficult and 9% find it very difficult. In group 3, there is a larger variety of answers; 20% find French difficult, 21% find it very difficult but 11% find it easy. Thus, compared to group 1, group 2 and 3, who represent the groups of participants who have lived in Switzerland for a longer period of time, count a higher number of participants who find French difficult to very difficult.

5.2.1.3 Importance of French

Another factor which may impact the general attitude towards the language is how important the participants feel French is. In the last part of the questionnaire, participants were required to rate the importance of French from “very important” to “not important”. Figure 31 below shows the percentage of participants according to the groups related to their level of education.

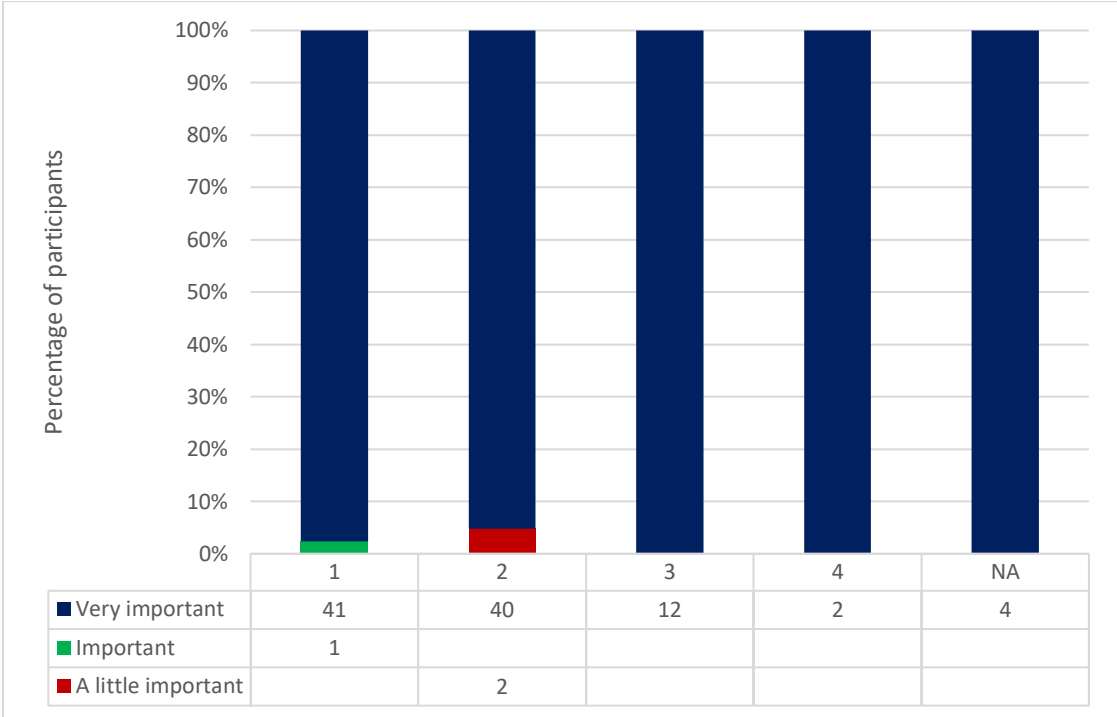
Figure 31: Importance of French according to level of schooling



No one thinks French is not important. 3% and 2% of group 2 and of group 3 respectively, think of French as a little important. 3% of group 2 think of it as important and the rest in all groups thinks that French is very important. Thus, the level of education does not play a significant role on how the participants judge the importance of French.

Figure 32 below also shows the way participants have rated the importance of French, but this time according to their level of French.

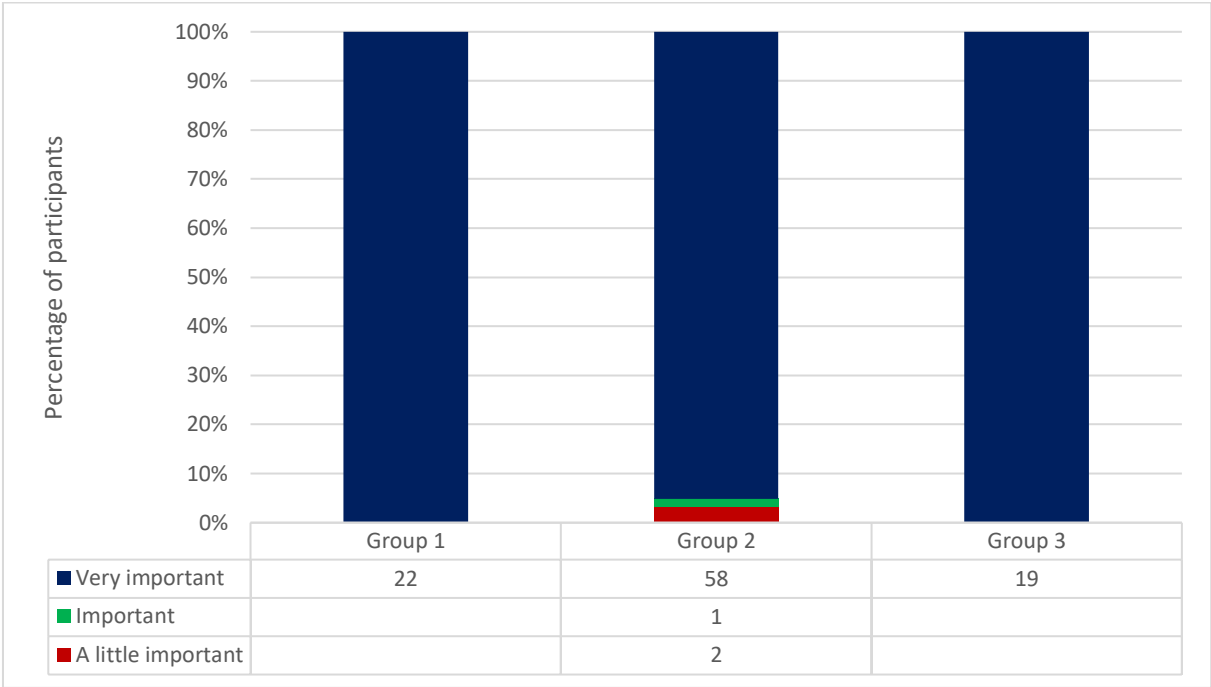
Figure 32 : Importance of French according to level of French



The importance of French is predominantly highly rated in all levels of French. Only 2% of the participants in level 2 find French a little important and 1% in group 1 finds it important. Therefore, the level of French does not significantly impact the importance of French in this study.

Figure 33 below shows the importance of French according to the time spent in Switzerland.

Figure 33: Importance of French according to time in Switzerland



We can see that in all three groups, the vast majority believes that French is important. Group 1 and group 3 count only participants who believe that French is very important. In group 2, which counts the higher number of participants, 1% of the participants thinks that French is important and 2% that French is only a little important.

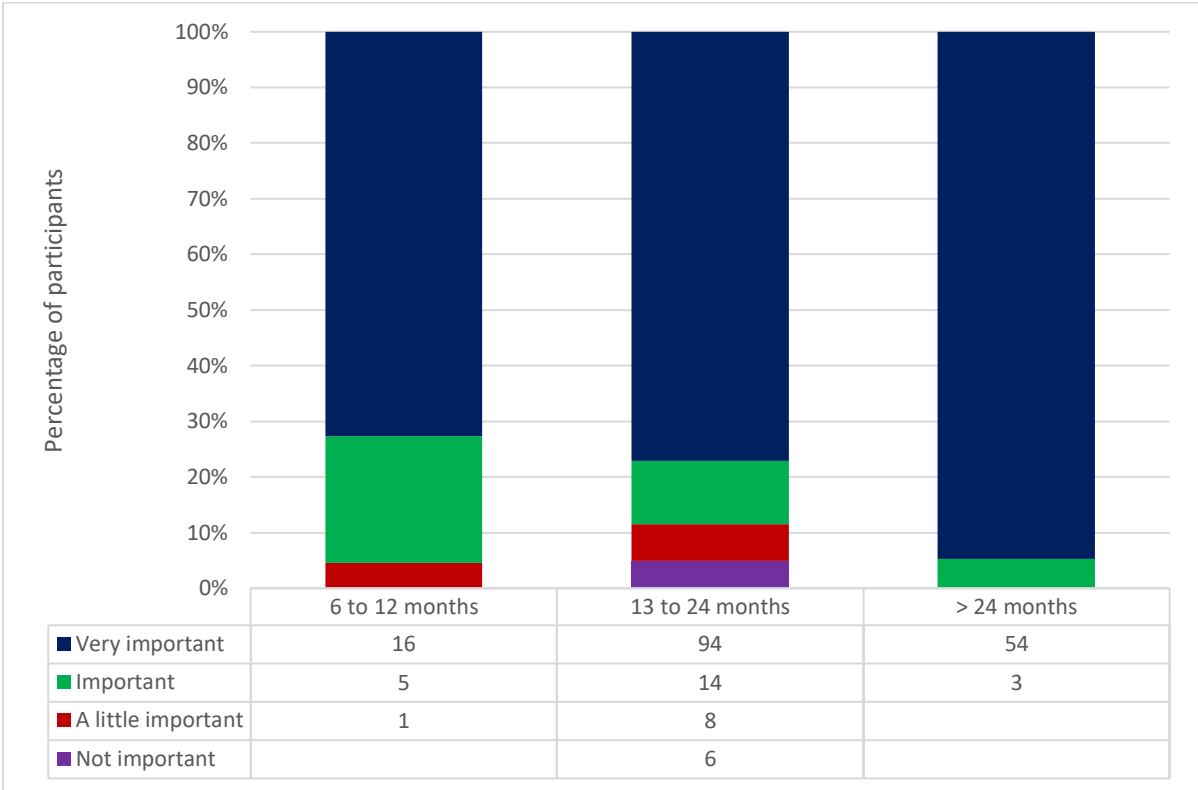
5.2.2 Tigrinya

Now that we have looked at the attitudes towards French, it is interesting to have a closer look into the attitudes towards Tigrinya.

5.2.2.1 Importance of Tigrinya

In the last part of the questionnaire, participants were asked to rate the importance of preserving Tigrinya in the host country. The aim is to find out how participants judge the importance of Tigrinya in the host country according to the number of years they have lived in Switzerland.

Figure 34: Importance of Tigrinya



The general assumption is that the longer they have lived in Switzerland, the more important it is for them to maintain Tigrinya. As we can see in Figure 34 above, generally, most of the participants in all three groups find it very important to preserve Tigrinya. There are slight differences between the different groups. Among those who have been in Switzerland between 6 to 12 months, 23% think it is “important” to preserve Tigrinya and 4% think it is “a little important” while 73% think it is actually “very important” to preserve Tigrinya. No one in this group thinks it is not important unlike among those who have been in Switzerland between 13 to 24 months of which 5% believe it is “not important” to preserve Tigrinya. 6% believe it is “a little important”, 12% “important” but the majority 77% think that it is “very important.” Almost all of the participants who have been living in Switzerland for more than 2 years believe that preserving Tigrinya is very important (98%) and 2% believe it is important.

Therefore, preserving Tigrinya seems to be “very important” for the majority and even more for those who have been living in Switzerland for a longer period of time.

5.2.2.2 *Preserving Tigrinya: why and how*

In this section, we investigate the question of preserving Tigrinya in the host country more thoroughly. For this purpose, we focus on the last two questions of the questionnaire:

*Do you think it is important to preserve the Eritrean culture? Why?
How do you try to preserve and transmit the Eritrean culture?*

These open questions required the participants to answer in a more elaborate way and give their opinion about the question of preserving not only the language but the Eritrean culture in general. As they are open questions, they do not suggest any possible answers and thus they allow the participants to answer in a freer way and more importantly with their own words.

To facilitate the understanding of the results, I grouped the answers which had similar content together and thus formed seven categories for question number 54 and three categories for question number 55.

The legend in Figure 35 below indicates the general idea behind each category. Category 1 consists of answers which convey that it is indeed important to preserve the Eritrean culture but do not give any further explanations as to the reason why the participants believe so. Therefore, this category does not appear on Figure 35 below, since what we are interested in is the reason. Category 2 gathers answers which focus on the sense of identity and belonging:

- 1- Yes, it is important because you should thrive to preserve our culture and language which both represent *Eritreanness*.
- 2- Yes, because it forms part of our identity.
- 3- Yes, because it is our culture, it represents us.

In this category, participants express the belief that the Eritrean culture forms part of their inner self and their identity, which is why it is important to preserve it.

Category 3 emphasizes the idea of intergenerational transmission. Participants in this category have answered that it is important to preserve the Eritrean culture in order to be able to transmit it to their children or the next generations in general.

- 4- Yes, it is important to be able to transmit it to the children.
- 5- Yes, it is important to transmit what our forefathers transmitted to us and pass it on to the next generations.
- 6- Yes, it is important. Your culture is your culture so it is mandatory to transmit it.

As we can see from examples (4,5,6), a certain sense of duty is emphasized.

In category 4, answers highlight the importance of preserving the Eritrean culture because it should not disappear. The emphasis is drawn on the idea that since the participants are abroad, it is even more important to prevent language loss or culture loss.

- 7- Yeah. Very important because your language and your culture should not be lost.
- 8- Yes, because the reasons we fled from our country are political and chances are that we may not return home and it is highly important for us to maintain our culture.
- 9- Yes, important. To avoid losing your identity and culture.

In category 5, the answers present a sense of balance between preservation and integration.

- 10- It is important but if you are in another country, you also need to accommodate to it.
- 11- Yes, because just like we need to know about the Swiss culture, they should also know about our culture.
- 12- One needs to be aware and open to the Swiss culture but also maintain one's own culture.

According to the participants' comments in this category, preserving the Eritrean culture is indeed important but that is not all one should focus on. One needs to be able to adapt and accommodate preservation with integration.

Category 6 focuses on the beauty and the uniqueness of the Eritrean culture and stresses a certain sense of pride.

- 13- Yes, it is important. Our culture is special and it is important to respect it.
- 14- Yes, because we have a beautiful culture.

Finally, category 7 gathers answers of participants who believe that it is not important to preserve Tigrinya. However, they do not provide any further explanation as of the reason they believe so. Four answers did not fit into any of the seven categories, which is why they were separated and gathered under "other."

- 15- Yes, because culture represents life.
- 16- Yes, because you can go everywhere but everything leads to home.
- 17- Yes, it needs to be shown through our actions.
- 18- Yes, it is important because you can talk about everything.

To end, “NA” refers to the small number of participants who did not answer question number 54.

Figure 35 : Do you think it is important to preserve the Eritrean culture? Why?

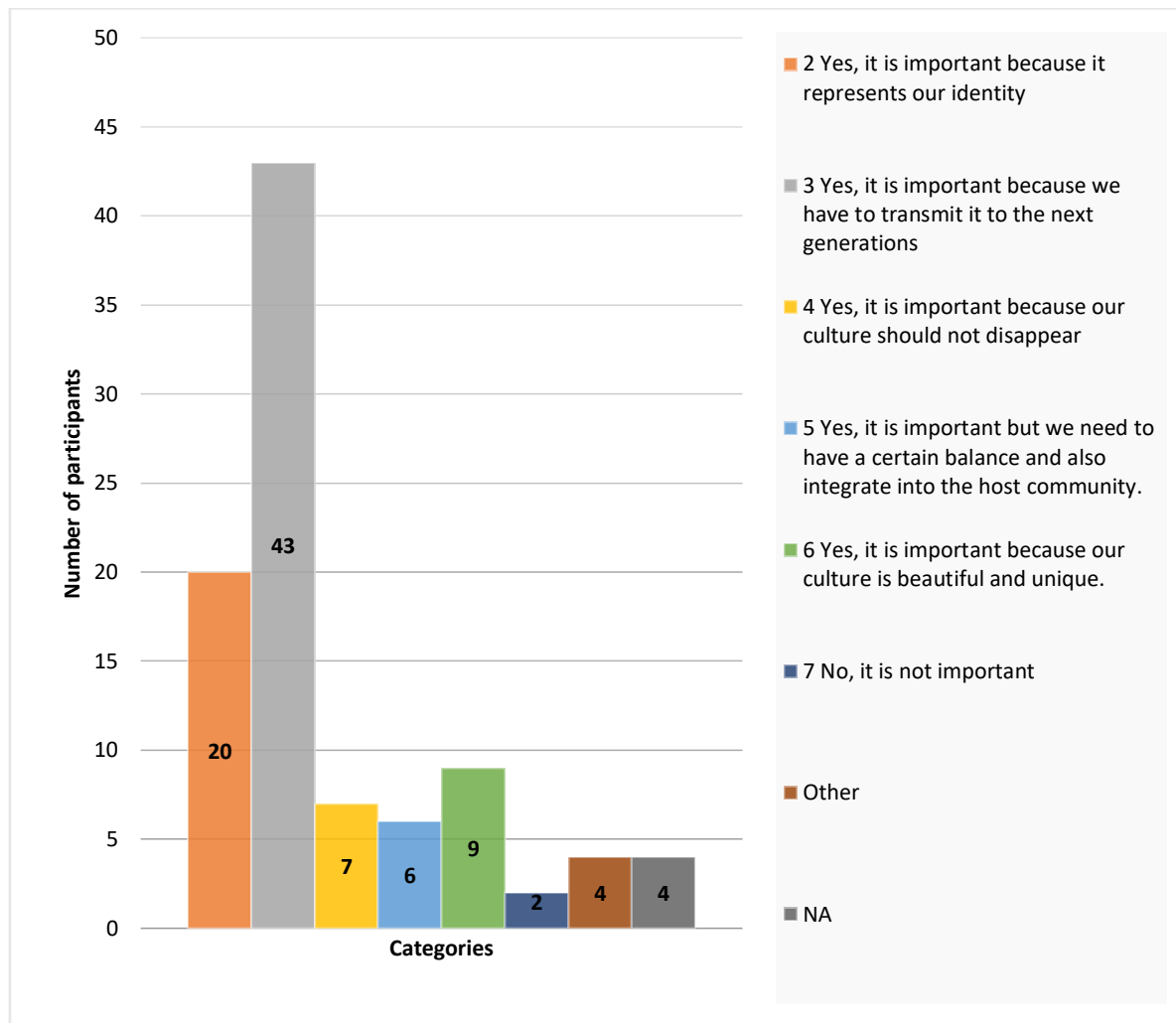


Figure 35 above shows the number of answers for each category. As we can see the majority (44%) fall into category 3, which combines answers related to the idea that culture should be preserved for intergenerational transmission. After that, the category with the second highest number of participants is category 2, in which the answers highlight the idea of identity. The third most important category is category number 6, which emphasizes the subjective

characteristics of the Eritrean culture. Category number 1, in which participants answered that it is important to preserve the Eritrean culture but did give further explanations, and category number 4, which insisted on the fact that it should not disappear, both have an equal number of answers (7). The rest of the participants are divided among category number 5 with 6 participants, 7 with 2 participants, “other” and “NA” with 4 participants each.

Therefore, it appears in Figure 35, that participants predominantly think that preserving and maintaining the Eritrean culture and language is important. The main reasons are because it represents who they are, their identity and also in order to transmit them to the next generations. Only two participants answered it is not important to preserve Tigrinya or the Eritrean culture but they did not give any further explanations, which makes it difficult to understand why they think so.

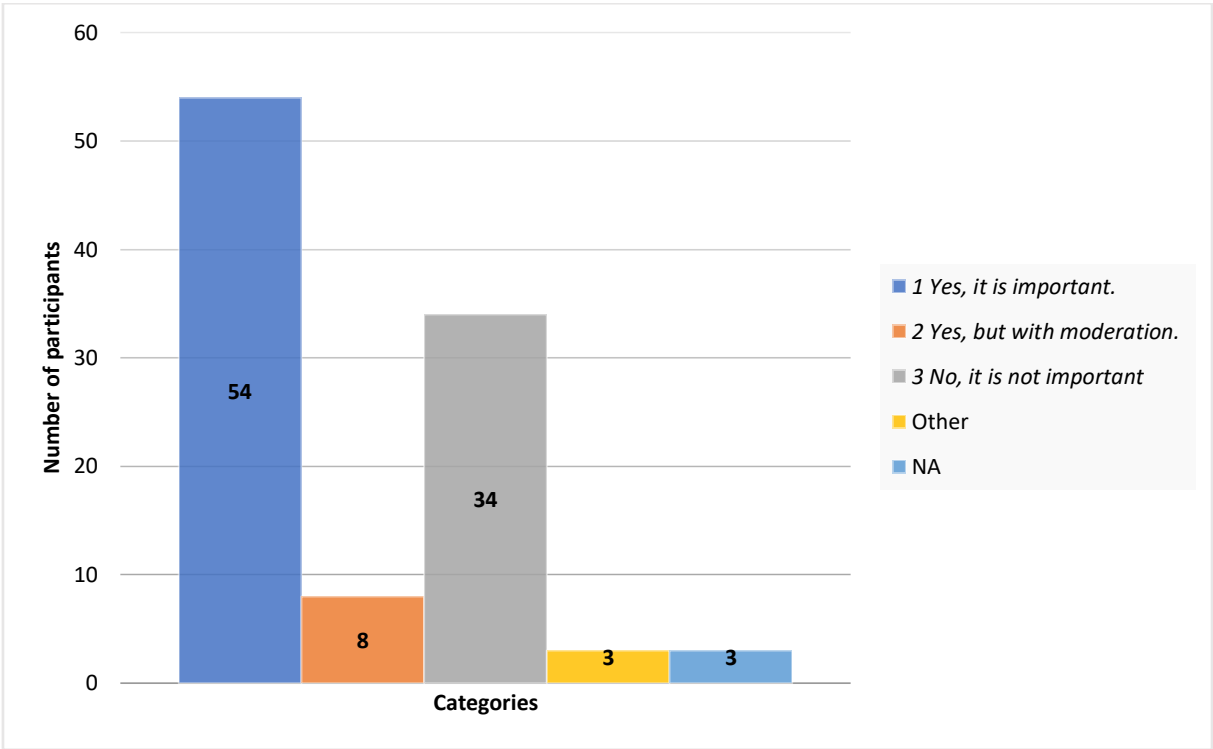
Now that we have investigated the “why” preserving Tigrinya and the Eritrean culture is important (or not), we can focus on the “how” to concretely maintain the culture and what habits to adopt to make sure it is preserved and transmitted. The answers to this question were very diverse. Therefore, I decided to analyze the answers qualitatively. The most common answers say that language and culture can be maintained by gathering with the community. Another way is through actions: for example, the way one dresses, through food or through faith. Storytelling or telling the history of Eritrea is also mentioned several times as a way of transmitting the culture and the language. Very often culture is linked to religion. All participants have stated regularly going to church except for just one participant. All of the participants have specified that the church services take place in Tigrinya. According to certain participants, church represents a gathering place where the community can meet and practice the language and the culture together notably through specific events such as the holidays or weddings, funerals and christenings. Thus, these spaces provide opportunities for the participants to engage more freely with each other in the minority language as also argued by

Pauwels (2016). They also serve as a setting where the migrants can preserve their community identity (Omoniyi 2006; Rosowsky 2012)

5.2.2.3 *Sense of community*

In the last part of the questionnaire, question 53 asked “Do you think it is important to stay in contact with the Eritrean community? Why?” The aim here is to find out what the participants think about the community, more specifically if and why they believe it is necessary and useful (or not) to build a community life with Eritreans in Switzerland. Again, this is an open question and it requires the same type of categorization as for question 54. Before presenting the different arguments raised by the participants, I have separated the participants who answered “yes, it is important”, “yes, but with moderation” and “no, it is not important” to the first part of the question.

Figure 36: Do you think it is important to stay in contact with the Eritrean community?



As we can see in Figure 36, the majority of respondents thinks it is important to maintain a certain community life. However, 33% of the respondents think that it is not important to stay

among the community. 8% of the participants believe that it is important to gather with Eritreans but it needs to be moderate. The “other” category consists in answers which did not fit into the other three categories. One of the participants wrote *You don't improve your language then*, which does exactly answer the question. Another participant answered *There's no problem because sometimes there may be something*. What is meant here is rather unclear. As for the third answer in the “other” category is *It depends on my interest but I know I can only understand Tigrinya*, which again does not answer the question.

Now that the answers to the first part of question 53 have been categorized, we can focus on the second part of the question, which consists of the reasons justifying the participants' answers. Again, here the answers have been analyzed qualitatively since it is difficult to proceed with clear cut categorization when dealing with open questions. Among the participants who answered that it is important to maintain a community life, the majority have geared their answers towards the idea that it is important to maintain the language and to avoid losing it and the best way of achieving that, according to many of them, is to have a community who to share it with. Some other participants highlight the fact that Tigrinya is the only language they can speak so far and they feel like they can communicate thoroughly and discuss deep topics only with members of their community which therefore explains why it is not only important but necessary to maintain a community life.

Those who emphasized a certain “moderation” when it comes to spending time with fellow Eritreans agree that it is important but that it should not be too frequent. Some suggested meeting Eritreans only on the weekends. Most participants in this group agree that it is important to maintain a community life because it makes them feel good to be surrounded by fellow Eritreans and to be able to have deep conversations but the gatherings should be maintained at a moderate frequency.

Among group 3, those who answered that it is not important to maintain a community life with Eritreans, respondents explain their answer by the fact that spending too much time with Eritreans may prevent them from learning French. Therefore, they believe that it is not important to maintain a community life with Eritreans and they emphasize maintaining relations with people with whom they can practice French instead. Thus, for these participants, maintaining and preserving Tigrinya represent obstacles for learning French and impede integration. This is a common phenomenon as it has been observed that living in a country where the members of a certain community are numerous may sometimes imply a deficient integration, in the sense that the more immigrants sharing the same linguistic background there are, the less effort one makes to learn the host language (Aumüller and Gesemann 2016).

5.3 Integration

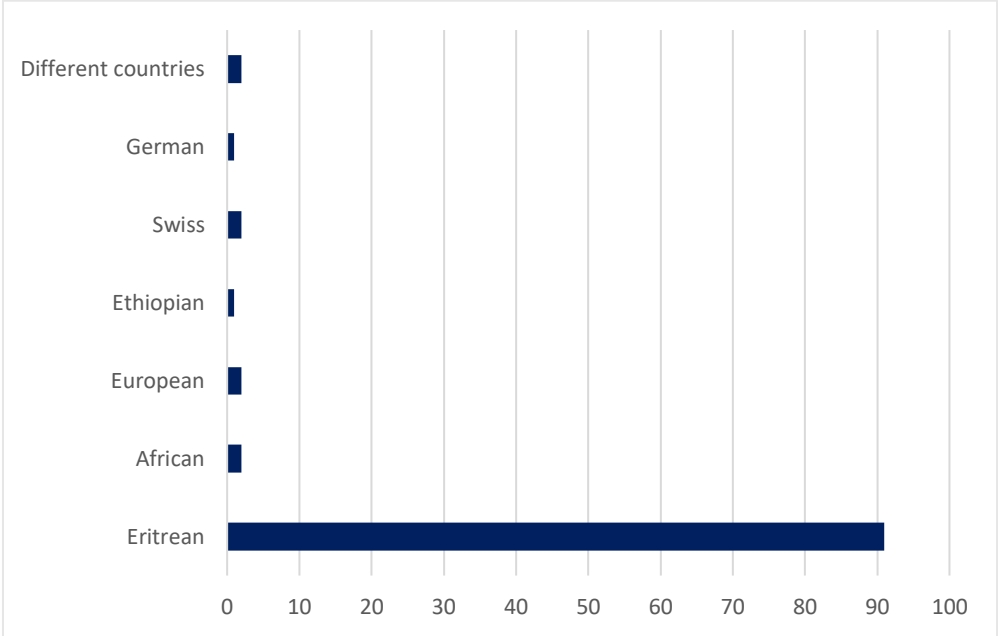
5.3.1 Socialization in Switzerland

This section focuses on the participants' socialization in Switzerland. The aim is to find out whether there has been any kind of movement towards integration and socialization in the host country. For that purpose, the third part of the questionnaire includes questions about their network in Switzerland.

Participants were first asked what nationality most of their friends are. This is a general question, which gives us an idea of the communities of the participants. As we can see in Figure 37 below, most participants have Eritrean friends. This could be explained by two aspects. On the one hand, it can be linked to the wish to preserve their language and culture and thus remain in environments that aid long-term use of the language, creating an important setting for language maintenance (Pauwels 2016). On the other hand, this can be correlated with the fact that Switzerland's "Temporary Integration" approach encourages the Swiss public to see immigrants, particularly non-EU citizens, as foreigners and not as equals of native Swiss

citizens (MIPEX 2019), which may have an impact on the extent to which the participants can/want to socialize with the Swiss society. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

Figure 37 : Nationality of friends



The participants were also asked in a broader question whether they made any friends since they have arrived in Europe. As this was an open question, I categorized the answers and grouped them together. To facilitate data categorization, they were given the choice between “yes”, “no”, “a little”.

Figure 38 : Have you made many friends in Europe?

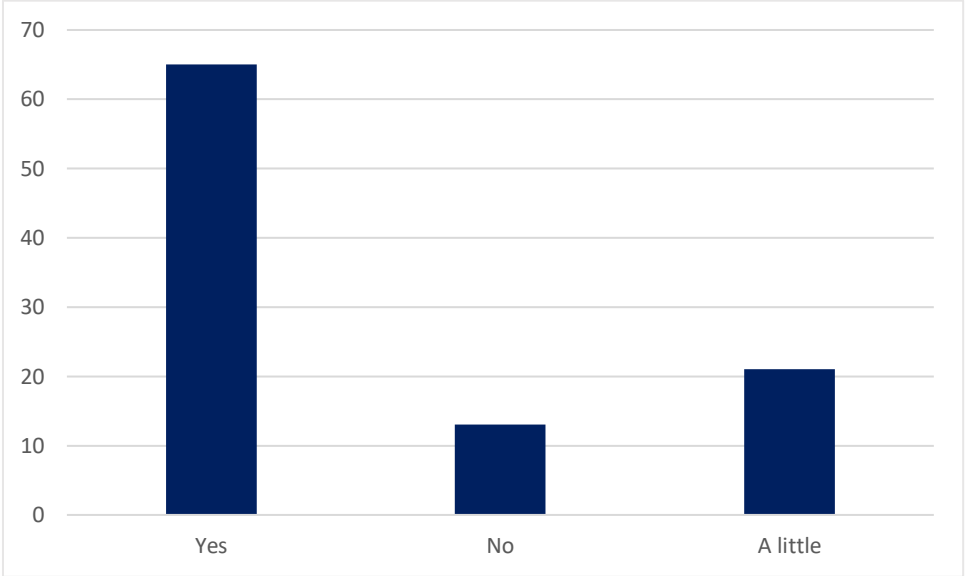


Figure 38 demonstrates that the majority of the participants have made friends in Europe, as 65 participants answered “yes.” 21 participants answered “a little” and 13 participants stated that they did not make any friends in Europe.

To have an even more specific idea of the participants’ socialization, they were asked how many French speaking friends (Q.36) and how many Swiss friends they have (Q.37).

Figure 39 : How many French-speaking friends do you have?

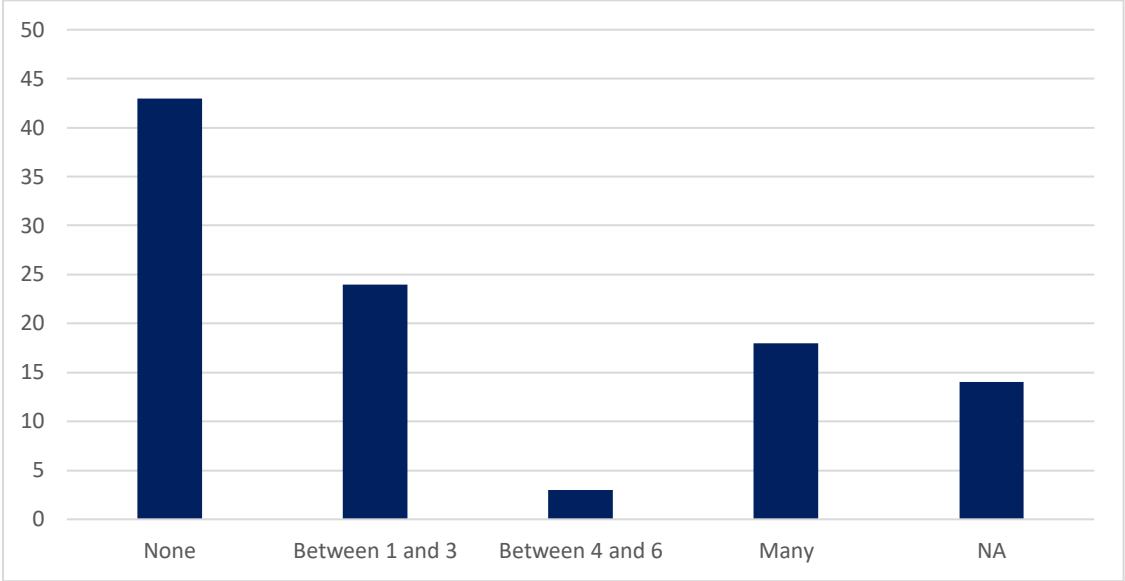
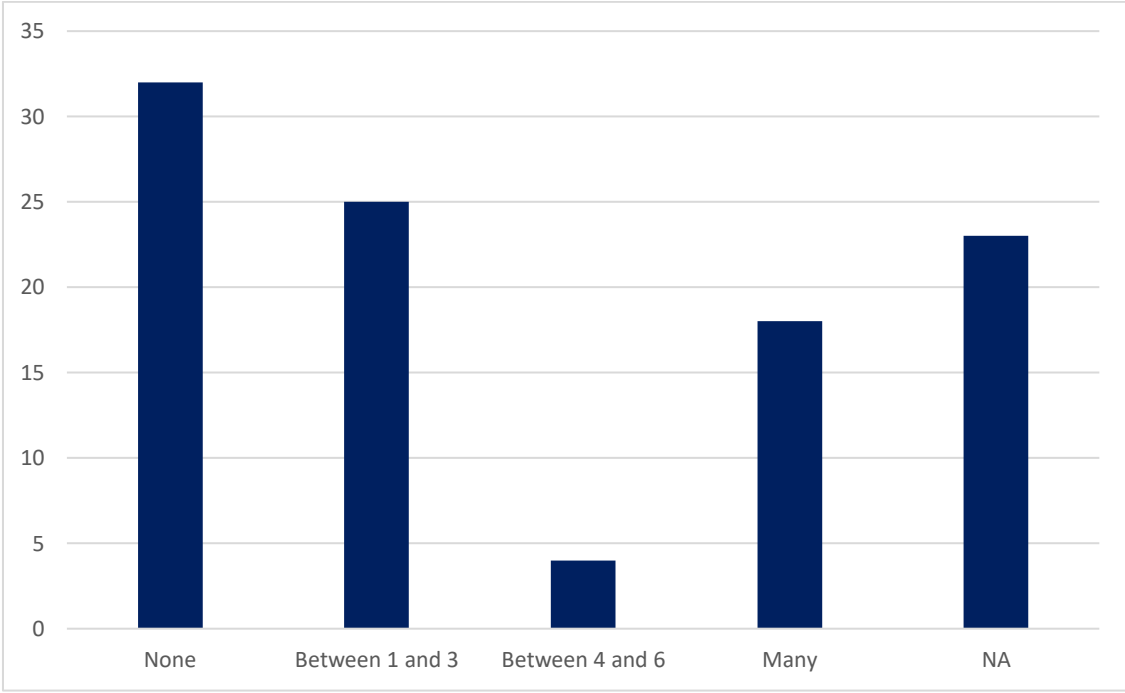


Figure 40 : How many Swiss friends do you have?



The same categories could be selected for answers in both questions. As we can see in Figures 39 and 40, the answers are more or less distributed similarly in both questions. The majority has no French-speaking or Swiss friends or only between 1 and 3 friends. 18 respondents to both questions answered having many French-speaking or Swiss friends. A small number of the participants have between 4 and 6 French-speaking or Swiss friends.

5.3.2 Language learning tools

Another important topic that needs to be addressed in order to answer the research questions guiding this study is language learning. More specifically, participants were asked what would help them in learning French better. The aim here is to allow the participants to give their own opinion about the possible methods or measures that could be implemented in order to facilitate their language learning process. Again, as this was an open question, it is rather difficult to categorize them in clear cut and concise answers. Therefore, all the answers have been grouped according to the similarity they share in terms of the general meaning intended.

Eight categories have been created, including NA, which stands for no answer, as we can see in Figure 41 below. The first category consists in answers focusing on employment prospects. As examples 19, 20 and 21 below demonstrate, finding a job helps in learning the language better because it serves as a setting to practice the language:

19- You have to be able to practice it at work.

20- Be able to work.

21- Find a job.

Some other answers highlight the learning process by paying attention in class and take time to revise and study.

22- You have to learn and pay attention in class. (58)

23- You need to learn and study. (55)

Category 3 and 4 include answers emphasizing socialization and the use of media.

24- You need to find friends because one can only master a language by speaking it. (71)

25- You need to make local friends (25)

- 26- Watching movies or TV helps in hearing the language (3)
- 27- Self-learning through YouTube (23)

Category 5 includes answers which are related to motivation and perseverance.

- 28- Learning motivation. If you are motivated to learn, you can see the improvements and the results (27)
- 29- You have to persevere, you need patience and energy (9)

In category 6, participants answered that there is a need for more teaching time.

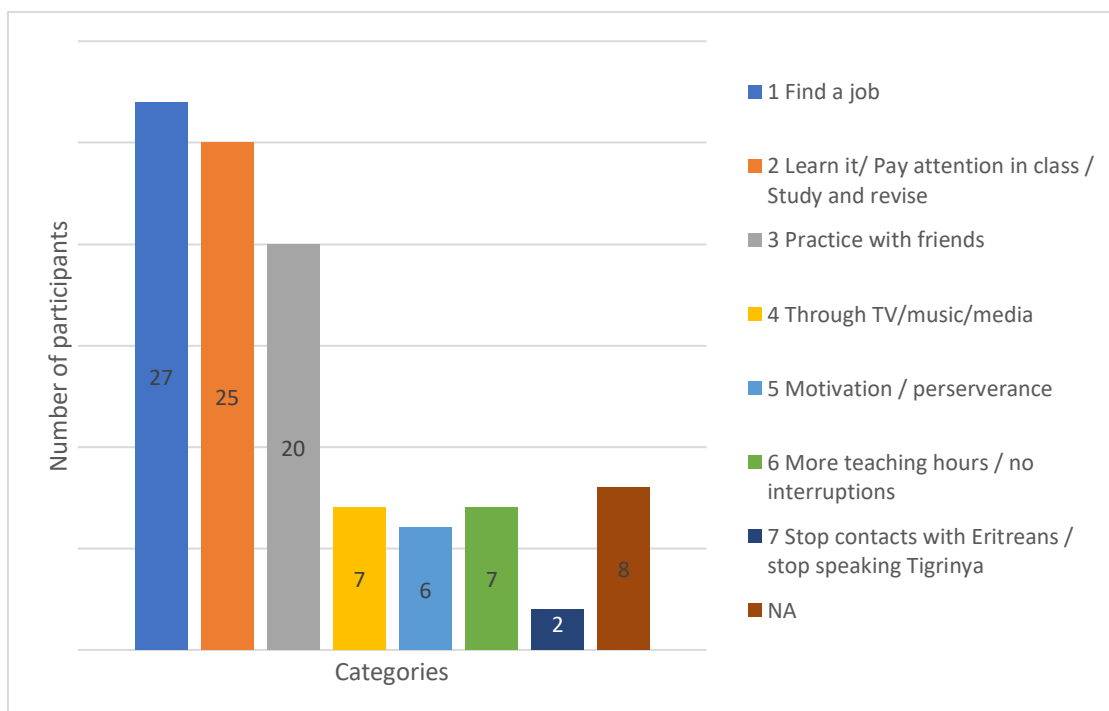
- 30- We need more time, it should be 5 times a week and more hours. (30)
- 31- More classes, 5 days a week and no gap in between, they should teach us all year long (31)

Lastly, category 7 includes answers of participants who believe that quitting any contact with Eritreans would help them in learning French better.

- 32- Not to hang out with Eritreans because they mostly speak Tigrinya even if they know how to speak French.
- 33- I believe school give us the basis but then we need to be able to practice it outside the classroom and we don't do it when we stay among Eritreans. We have to be able to work and to be able to mix each other with the locals.

For a clearer visualization, the categories are represented through bar charts, in Figure 41 below:

Figure 41 : What would help you improve your level of French?



As we can see in Figure 41, the first three categories are the most common within the participants. The first way to facilitate and learn French better according to 26% of the participants is to find a job. According to them, one needs to find a setting to practice the language and working seems to be the best way to do it. 25% of the participants emphasized the importance of not only going to class, but also to study notably after class, at home and to pay attention in class. Another way that they consider important for facilitating language learning again is linked to practicing but this time with friends. According 20% of the participants, it is important to make French-speaking or Swiss friends with whom to practice the language or speak French with friends in general, even Eritrean friends.

An equal number of 7% of the participants answered that being exposed to the language, on the one hand, notably through media, music, or internet helps in improving the language skills, on the other hand, the same number of participants stated that more teaching hours are needed. The number of classes per week depends on the level (see Chapter 4.1). According to them, it is necessary to have more class hours throughout the week and it is important to avoid interruptions. Here is an example of answer:

34- More classes, 5 days a week and no gap in between, they should teach us all year long.

A few of the participants (5%) insist on motivation and perseverance as key concepts to learn a language. Motivation includes many different notions which are more explicitly explained in the theoretical framework (Chapter 3) and which are discussed more thoroughly in the discussion (Chapter 6). Finally, 2% of the participants believe that not speaking Tigrinya or avoiding contacts with Eritreans would help in learning French better.

5.3.3 Teachers' perspectives

In terms of the teachers' perspective, two noticed a difference between the way Eritreans and Afghans learn and/or ultimately acquire French, which might be correlated to their mother tongue.

8. IR : *Euh, est-ce que tu remarques une différence de niveau qui serait peut être liée à leur langue d'origine. Par exemple on dit souvent que les Afghans, ils ont tendance à très vite s'adapter à la langue, contrairement à d'autres nationalités comme les Erythréens par exemple. Est-ce que t'arriverais toi de, à donner une explication plausible ?*

IE : *Ouais les Afghans et les Syriens, par exemple ils ont une facilité parce qu'ils ont quand même une scolarité qui est très proche de la scolarité française donc très proche de la nôtre ça s'explique historiquement. Donc ils ont une manière d'étudier qui est vraiment très semblable. Eux j'ai vraiment pas besoin de leur apprendre à apprendre, sauf ceux qui ont pas été scolarisés du tout, ça c'est autre chose. Ensuite les Afghans, euh...leur langue est aussi très proche de la nôtre dans sa structure, à part le « il » et le « elle », qui existent pas tout comme en arabe. Donc, pour eux c'est plus facile, au niveau de la prononciation aussi c'est plus facile pour eux. Les Afghans ils parlent bien généralement. D'ailleurs le dari est plus facile à apprendre que le Tigrinya (rires) et puis oui alors oui les Erythréens ont plus de mal, sauf ceux qui ont fait beaucoup d'anglais. Ceux qui ont fait beaucoup d'anglais, ils vont retrouver la même structure qu'en français donc ce sera beaucoup plus facile tandis que les autres c'est oui, c'est compliqué. La prononciation, c'est compliqué ce que je comprends vu que le Tigrinya c'est très compliqué pour moi aussi et puis la structure de la langue bein [sic] elle est complètement différente. D'ailleurs pour les Erythréens c'est plus facile d'apprendre l'allemand j'ai remarqué à cause du verbe à la fin donc euh ouais.*

(IR: Ehm, did you notice any level difference, which might be linked to the native language. For example, we often say that Afghans have a tendency to very quickly adapt to the language, unlike other nationalities such as Eritreans for example. Could you maybe give plausible explanation?)

IE: Yeah Afghans and Syrians, for example have a certain ease as their schooling is very close to French schooling and so very close to ours and that's explained historically. So they have a way of studying that's very similar. I don't really need to teach them to learn, except those who haven't been educated but that is another question. Then, Afghans, ehm, their language is also very close to ours in terms of structure, except the "il" and "elle", which do not exist like in Arabic. So, for them, it's easier, on the level of pronunciation as well, it's easier for them. Afghans usually speak well. As a matter of fact, Dari is easier to learn than Tigrinya <laughs> and also, yes, Eritreans have more difficulties, except those who learned English a lot. Those who learned English a lot, they're going to find pretty much the same structure as in French so it's going to be easier whereas the other, it's, yes...complicated. Pronunciation, it's complicated and I understand because Tigrinya is very complicated for me too and the structure of the language well, it's completely different. As a matter of fact for Eritreans, it's easier to learn German, I've noticed, because of the verb at the end so yeah.)

(Interview no2. Teacher M2+ EPAI. Gambach, Monday March 26 2018.12:15-13:30)

As we can see in example 8, the teacher suggests that it is easier for Afghans to learn French than it is for Eritreans because Dari/Farsi and French are less linguistically distant than Tigrinya

and French. Thus, those with a Dari/Farsi background tend to find a similarity which allows them to acquire French in a more efficient way, than Eritreans whose mother tongue not only differs in terms of script, but also phonologically and syntactically. Thus, the linguistic distance to the host language can be considered a determining predictor of language acquisition and it explains a large fraction of language skill heterogeneity between immigrants (Isphording and Otten 2011). Linguistic distance has a negative impact on the level of language proficiency of immigrants as it theoretically induces higher costs of learning (Chiswick and Miller 2001; 2005).

The difficulties Eritrean might encounter is reiterated by the teacher in example 9 below.

9. IE: *Moi je pense, mais je trouve que c'est plus lié à la culture de l'écrit dans le pays, je pense. Quels sont les types d'écrits que les gens sont amenés à produire dans leur langue maternelle, parce que c'est surtout ça le problème c'est, quel genre, le problème c'est vraiment c'est pas forcément la langue qui est déjà un problème en soit mais produire un texte pour dire quoi. Qu'est-ce que je dois dire ? Ou là les Afghans ils vont être adaptés à ça plus facilement que les Erythréens, ils vont savoir quoi dire je vais produire un texte pour demander ça ça ça et puis, euh des salutations et voilà et puis ça, par exemple culturellement je sais pas j'ai l'impression que pour les Erythréens y a pas ça cette même y a pas cette même oui cette même relation à l'écrit quoi, donc c'est pas forcément le problème d'écrire l'orthographe, c'est tout le contexte.*

(IE: I think, but I find that it is more linked to the written culture in the country I think. What types of scripts are people brought to produce in their mother tongue, because that's especially the problem it's what kind of the problem really is, it's not so much about the language, which is already a problem as such but about producing a text to say what. What am I supposed to say? Afghans in this regard are adapted to this more easily than Eritreans. They'll know what to say I'm going to produce a text to ask this this this and then ehm greetings and that's it and this for example culturally, I don't know I feel like for Eritreans there's no such not the same not the same, yes not the same relation to writing, so not necessarily the problem of writing orthographically, it's the whole context.)

(Interview no.3. Teacher M2. Gambach, Monday, March 26 2018.16:15-17:00)

The emphasis is put on the cultural differences, particularly in terms of writing, which forces the teacher to adopt the concept of *apprendre à apprendre* (teaching to learn) as a teaching method to allow the Eritrean pupils to successfully understand the tasks (particularly the writing tasks).

5.3.4 Life in Switzerland

In this section, the answers of two important questions are reported. The aim is to allow the participants to express themselves about their life in Switzerland. The first question that is dealt with in this section (Q.17 in the questionnaire) is as follows: “Do you like life in Switzerland?” The second question (Q.49 in the questionnaire) asks: “What could be done for you to feel more at home in Switzerland?” These two questions are crucial because they allow us to have an idea of how the participants feel in Switzerland in general and since the questions are open, they are able to express their feelings with their own words.

Focusing on question number 17, eight main categories have been selected. The first three categories include mainly positive answers. The fourth and fifth category are more neutral, the last three are negative. “Other” includes answers which did not fit in any of the categories above and “NA” means “not answered.” Answers in the first indicate that participants like life in Switzerland mainly because they believe it is a country of human rights, freedom, peace and democracy. Here are some examples:

- 35- Yes, because you have rights. In short, there is freedom.
- 36- Yes, because your rights are protected.

In the second category, participants simply answered “yes” or “it is okay” without any further justification. The third category comprises participants who mentioned liking their life in Switzerland because they are reunited with their families. The fourth category includes answers highlighting the difficulty of living in Switzerland.

- 37- Life in Switzerland is hard
- 38- It is difficult

The fifth category comprises answers of participants who believe that they have no choice but to get used to life in Switzerland and stay grateful for what they have.

- 39- Yes, because I have to like it. It is now my country because I live here.
- 40- The fact that I am where I am today is God's will and I am grateful to God to even be alive.

The sixth and seventh category contains negative answers respectively of participants who complain about their refugee status being either denied or on hold, and on the other hand about them not having any activity or job.

41- I don't like it because there is no guarantee that you can live in this country. Our life consists in waiting.

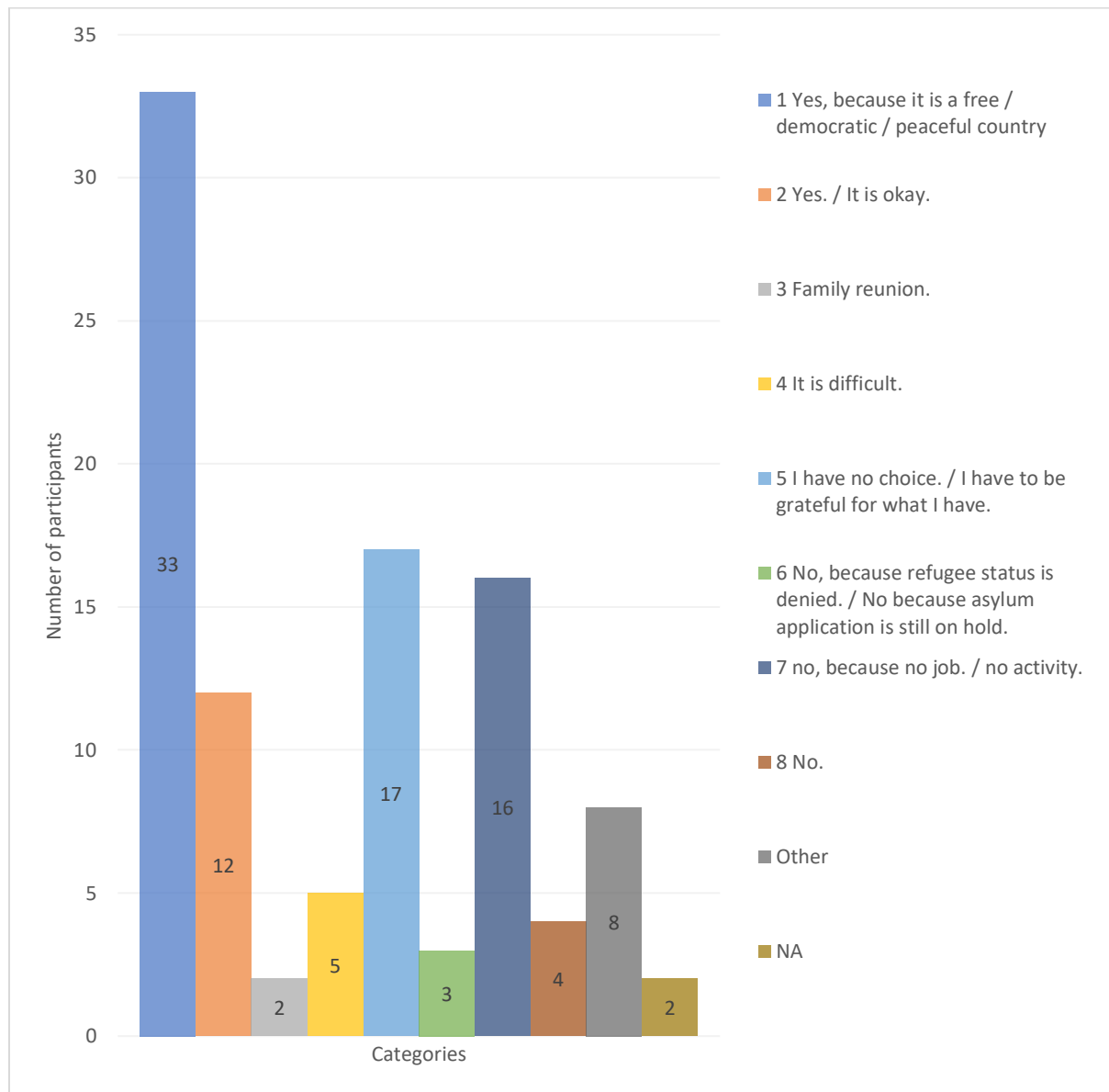
42- No, because it's been almost a year and I still didn't get my papers. I can't work so I can't live peacefully.

43- I don't like it because I have been living in Switzerland for a year and my application got denied.

44- I don't like it because we are just sitting around not doing anything, without any job.

The last category contains answers of participants who mentioned not liking life in Switzerland without any further explanations. Figure 42 below represents the number of participants per category. As we can see, the majority, 33 (32%) participants fall into the first category. There is an almost equal number of participants in the fifth (17%) and seventh category (16%). 12 participants gave answers categorized in the second category and the rest of the participants are almost equally distributed between the rest of the categories.

Figure 42 : Do you like life in Switzerland?



To answer the research questions guiding this study, it is not sufficient to simply ask the participants how they feel about living in Switzerland. Therefore, question 48 asks what they think would help for them to feel more at home in Switzerland. This question allows the participants to express the measures that they think should be implemented to facilitate their integration.

Since this question is, again, open, categories have been created to facilitate data interpretation. The answers have been separated into seven categories. The first category

includes answers of participants who think that more opportunities for school and jobs should be offered.

- 45- Swiss life is peaceful but one should study and afterwards find a job. Something should be done for refugees.
- 46- I feel like home but I lose hope when my country fellow who came before have no work. So, there should be more opportunities for work.
- 47- I have to do a training in order to work. Working gives you more chances to practice the language and to emancipate.

The second category includes answers which refer to the recognition of the refugee status and the rights to live in the country.

- 48- The same chances for education should be available for jobs. Moreover, residence permits should be given within a shorter period of time. Why should it take years? (6)
- 49- My rights should be protected, my resident permit should be given, I should have the right to work and I need to learn the language. (15)
- 50- Be given a residence permit, only that way will I be able to feel like home. (73)

The third category emphasizes socialization in general.

- 51- You have to accept the situation and the life you are in and you need to accommodate to the people. (29)
- 52- To socialize with local people in my opinion. (33)
- 53- You need to have a social life and be able to do things (16)

The fourth category focuses on language.

- 54- First, we have to be motivated to learn and master the language. (43)
- 55- If I want to consider Switzerland like my country, I need to learn and go to school. (46)
- 56- You need to master the language. (18)

The fifth category includes answers emphasizing the idea of self-confidence, motivation and comfort.

- 57- First of all language, perseverance, motivation, rights. (54)
- 58- You need to feel comfortable. (59)

The sixth and seventh category include answers of participants who either already feel at home in Switzerland or believe it is impossible to feel like at home.

- 59- Personally, I don't have any issues. I feel just like at home here. Some other people however because of language issues and because they were not sufficiently educated and thus feel angry and left out. (3)

60- Everything that has been done for me so far suffice. (9)

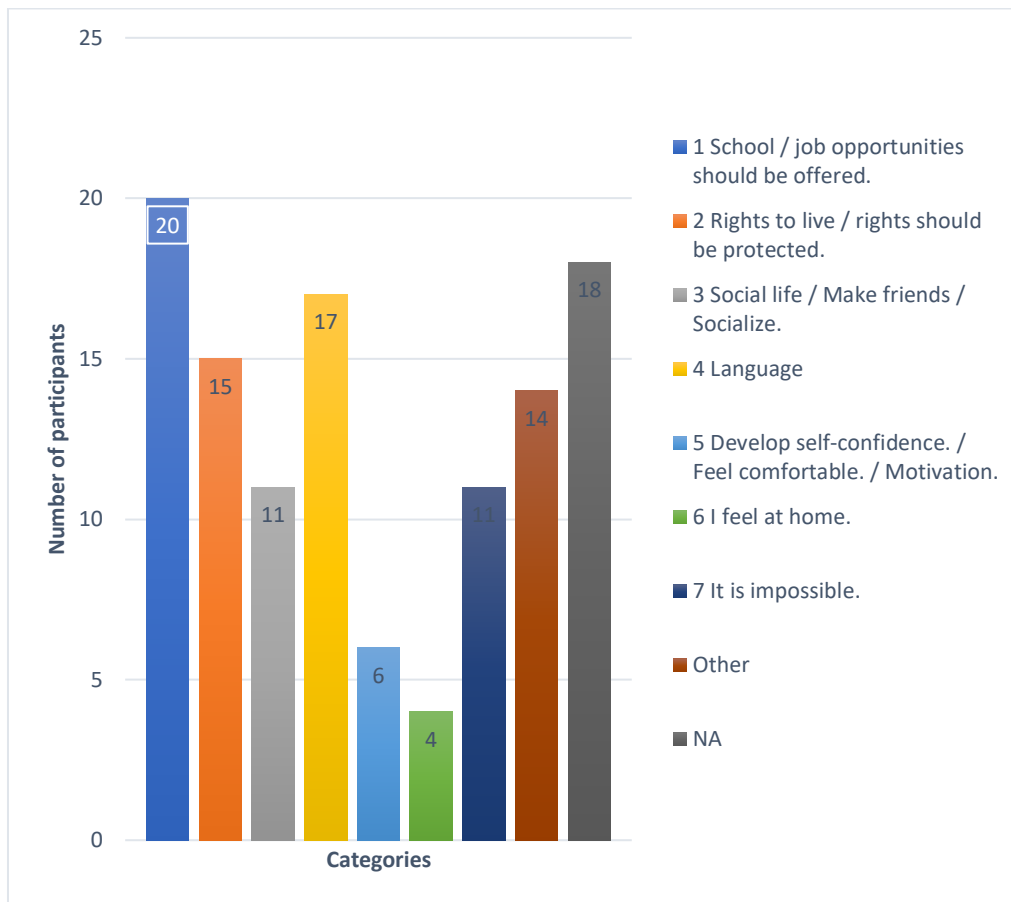
61- It is impossible to feel like home but you have to try and live your times happy. (41)

62- Nothing, it is impossible. (74)

As we can see, these ideas of what could be done to facilitate integration and for the participants to feel more at home can be put into practice by both the higher authorities of Switzerland and by the participants themselves. In fact, these categories can be divided into two main groups: measures which can be executed by the governments and measures which can be executed by the individuals. Category 1 and 2 mainly focus on what should be done by the authorities to facilitate integration. Category 3, 4 and 5 consist in efforts and habits that participants themselves should implement in their daily lives. Category 6 and 7 highlight two contrasting opinions: that everything, which could be done has been done already and thus one feels already at home or that nothing can be done because feeling like at home in another country is impossible. Among the two answers, the most frequently stated is the latter as for eleven participants, it is not possible to feel like at home in a foreign country. This can be linked to the fact that the participants went through an involuntary type of migration (Ottonelli and Torresi 2013), which does not result into an integrative motivation (Gardner and Lambert 1972).

Figure 43 below displays the number of respondents per category. As we can see, unlike previous figures, there are no clear differences between the numbers of answers in each category. The first, the fourth and the second category are among the most numerous but a considerable number of people also fall into “other” and “NA” as well. Category 3 and 7 are equally represented with 11% of the participants and the fifth and sixth category are respectively represented by a small number of 6% and 4% of the participants. Figure 43 does not allow us to draw clear cut conclusions about the frequency of the response. Moreover, since many of the participants’ answers have been categorized as “other”, it is necessary to look at them individually and qualitatively.

Figure 43 : What would help you feel more at home in Switzerland?



The “other” category includes statements, which do not specifically answer the question but nonetheless deserve as much attention as the categorized answers. Here are some examples:

- 63- If you are smart and dynamic you feel like home. (20)
- 64- One needs to accept it like one’s own country. (34)
- 65- You have to have a certain self-confidence, you have to be respectful. Everything depends on your behavior. (38)
- 66- If you have your family, your brothers with you, you can fully dedicate your conscience to your life and your work here without feeling incomplete. (50)
- 67- You need to let your mind accept it (52)
- 68- You need to respect the law (58)

As we can see, certain factors such as being together with the family or building a certain sense of self-confidence may help in developing a feeling of home. Moreover, according to certain participants, it is important to accept the situation, in which one is and develop a certain behavior such as acting smart and being dynamic to feel like at home.

5.4 Statistical analysis

In order to explore the robustness of the data in statistical terms, three tools are used to analyze the statistical significance of the results: tests of independence, linear regression and correlation tests.

The first test that is carried out is the Chi-square test of independence in R. The Chi-square test of independence tests whether there is a relationship between two categorical variables. Categorical variables, also named qualitative variables, are variables that are not numerical, which fit into categories. There are two types of qualitative variables: the ordinal variable, which implies an ordering (e.g. scaling levels, such as Likert scales) and the nominal variable, without any ordering (e.g. gender, since there is no ordering level between female and male) (Levshina 2015). Running the Chi-square test requires certain criteria from the data under study. It needs to contain (Levshina 2015):

- 1. Two categorical variables
- 2. Two or more categories for each variable
- 3. Independence of observations, i.e. no relationship between the subjects in each group
- 4. Relatively large sample size.

In the present study, both the independent variables (see Table 4, 5 and 6) and the dependent variables used in the analysis are categorical. There are two or more categories for each variable and there is no relationship between the subjects of each category. However, in terms of sample size, our data is not large enough in all cases to return statistically significant results.

In order to verify whether the Chi-square is the appropriate tool for the size of our data, we need to create a contingency table of the expected frequencies. If the expected values in one or more of the cells is below 5, then the Chi-square test is not appropriate and in this case the Fisher's exact test is preferred (McCrumGardner 2008; Bower 2003). Another way of verifying which tool is adequate in R is to observe the messages related to the p -value. Before we look

into this, it is necessary to define what the p -value stands for. The p -value is the probability of having observations as extreme as what we measured (in the samples) if the null hypothesis was true. The probability ranges from 0 to 1. The null and alternative hypotheses for both the Chi-square test and the Fisher's exact test are:

- H0: the variables are independent, there is **no** relationship between the two categorical variables. Knowing the value of one variable does not help to predict the value of the other variable.
- H1: the variables are dependent, there is a relationship between the two categorical variables. Knowing the value of one variable helps to predict the value of the other variable (Levshina 2015: 9).

The frequencies observed in our sample are compared to the expected frequencies in order to determine if the null hypothesis was true. Most of the time, we consider that a test statistic is too extreme to happen just by chance when the probability of having such an extreme test statistic given that the null hypothesis is true, is below 5%. Thus, if the p -value is under the threshold of 5% ($=0.05$), we consider that the observations are too unlikely to be due to chance, if the null hypothesis was true. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. With a p -value above that threshold of 5%, we consider that it is not really implausible to face the observations we have if the null hypothesis was true, and we therefore, do not reject the null hypothesis.

To return to verifying the appropriateness of a test, the Chi-square test is usually used when the sample is large enough because the p -value is an approximation which becomes exact when the sample becomes infinite. The Fisher's exact test, by contrast, is used when the sample is small and, in this case, the p -value is exact and not an approximation (McCrumGardner 2008; Bower 2003). Thus, when running a Chi-square test on a data sample which does not fulfil the four criteria mentioned above, R indicates that the p -value is an approximation which might be incorrect. That way, we know that another test is preferable, in that case. In order to retrieve the expected frequencies and create a contingency table, we used the `chisq.test(data)$expected` function in R for every feature. All of them confirmed that that Fisher's exact test should be

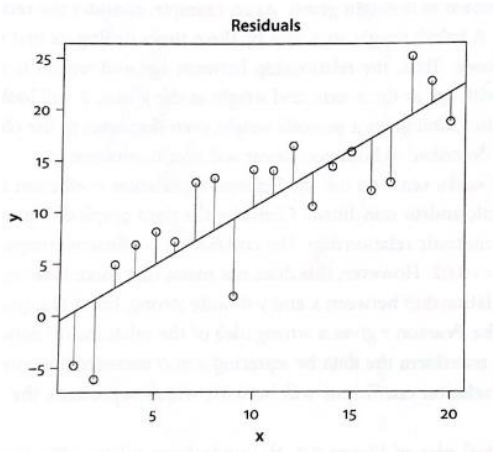
used instead of the Chi-square test because there was at least one cell below 5 in all tests' runs. Moreover, R indicated that the p -value may be incorrect.

In addition to tests of independence, a linear regression was also used to explore significance. A simple linear regression is used to predict a quantitative outcome y on the basis of one single prediction variable x . The goal is to create a formula, which defines y as a function of the x variable. The mathematical formula of the linear regression can be formulated as follows (Gareth, Witten, Hastie and Tibshirani 2014:61):

$$y = b0 + b1*x + e$$

$b0$ is the intercept of the regression line, i.e. the predicted value when $x = 0$ and $b1$ is the slope of the regression line. As for e , it represents the residual errors, the part of y that can be explained by the regression model.

Figure 44 : Plot with a cloud of points, a regression line (the diagonal) and residuals (vertical lines)



(Levshina 2015: 121)

Figure 44 above shows the linear regression model, where the best-fit regression line is represented in blue, the intercept ($b0$) and the slope ($b1$) in green and the residual errors (e) in red. As we can see, not all the data points fall exactly on the regression line. The average variation of points around the regression line is called Residual Standard Error (RSE), which

indicates the overall quality of the fitted regression model. In that sense, the lower the RSE, the higher the quality of the model.

The third method used for statistical analysis is a correlation test. Correlation is the analysis of two quantitative variables, which measures the strength their association variables and the direction of the relationship. A correlation is considered positive if the values of both variable X and variable Y increase and decrease together: if X increases, Y increases, and if X decreases, Y decreases, as well. A negative correlation is observed when the values of X and Y change in opposite direction: if X increases, Y decreases, or if X decreases, Y increases (Levshina 2015:115-116). The coefficient (in this study, Kendall's τ), which measures the strength of such relationship ranges from -1 to 1, where 0 indicates a lack of relationship (Levshina 2015:116). Unlike other correlation coefficient, such as Pearson r for instance, Kendall's τ deals with ordinal data (ranks) and it is a non-parametric test, which does not assume a distribution of a particular shape (Levshina 2015:116). Moreover, it is more adequate when dealing with small sample size. As the sample size of the dataset of this present study is not particularly large, Kendall's τ was used.

5.4.1 Effect of the social variables: Fisher's Exact test

This section shows the statistical analysis of the major findings concerning attitudes towards French, more specifically how the participants rated their love for French and the difficulty of French.

5.4.1.1 Effect of the level of French / time in Switzerland on the love for French

Figure 27 and 28 in Chapter 5.2.1.1 show, respectively, how much the participants rate their love for French according to the level of French of the participants (Figure 27) and the time spent in Switzerland (Figure 28). We have seen that neither the level of French, nor the time

spent in Switzerland have a significant impact on attitudes towards French. This is confirmed by the Fisher's Exact test (Level of French: p -value=0.8439 and Time in Switzerland: p -value=0.5518). The majority of the participants answered loving French "much" or "very much."

5.4.1.2 Effect of level of schooling on difficulty of French

Figure 29 indicates how the participants rated the difficulty of French according to their level of schooling. The results are less clear-cut than in the previous figures but they show that the level of schooling of the participants has an impact on how difficult they find French. This is confirmed by the Fisher Exact test (p -value=0.03078). The majority of the participants in group 1 (level of schooling until 6th grade), which represents the group with the lowest level of education, finds French "very difficult" and "difficult". The majority of the participants in group 2 (level of schooling between 7th and 9th grade) finds French average while the participants with a higher level of schooling (level of schooling above grade 10th) find French "very difficult" and "difficult" versus "average" in almost equal numbers. What needs to be born in mind in these results is that all levels of schooling are not equally represented (see Table 6), which may skew the results. However, it is clear that the level of schooling has an impact on how difficult the participants find French.

5.4.1.3 Effect of time in Switzerland on difficulty of French

Figure 30 shows that there is a higher number of participants finding French difficult to very difficult in group 2 and group 3, which represent the participants who have lived in Switzerland for a longer period of time compared to group 1 (see Table 4). The general assumption would be that the longer one lives in the host country, the more accustomed one is to the language and thus, the easier one finds it. However, the results in this present study does not show such a

trend. In fact, it seems that the time spent in Switzerland does not impact how difficult the participants find French. While the Fisher's Exact test shows no significance (p -value=0.09431), the Chi-square test shows significance (p -value=0.04938). As explained earlier, due to the sample size as well as the values of the cells of the contingency tables, which show that more than one cell is lower than 5, the p -value with Chi-square test might be incorrect. Therefore, only the Fisher's Exact tests' results are considered for the statistical analysis of this study.

5.4.1.4 Effects of the level of French on the difficulty of French

The Fisher's Exact test did not show any significance on the level of French of the participants and how they rated the difficulty of French (p -value=0.6185). The general assumption would be that the higher the level of French, the easier the participants find it or the lower their level, the more difficult they find it since they are not as proficient in the language. However, it appears, here, that the difficulty of French is not impacted by the level of French. This also coincides with the earlier finding, which shows no significant correlation between the time spent in Switzerland and the rate of the difficulty of French.

5.4.1.5 Effect of level of French / time in Switzerland on importance of French

Another aspect, which contributes to measuring the general attitudes towards French is the importance given to it. Figure 31 and 32 demonstrate how the participants rate the importance of French according to their level of French and the time spent in Switzerland. Broadly speaking, the majority of the participants believe that French is *very important* to *important*, regardless of the time they have spent in Switzerland or regardless of their level of French, as seen in Figures 31 and 32. Fisher's Exact test does not show any significance in this regard either (p -value=1 and 0.7215 respectively).

5.4.1.6 Effect of level of French/ time in Switzerland on liking life in Switzerland

The last Fisher's test has been run to find out the significance of the variables time in Switzerland and level of French, but this time the aim is to observe whether they impact how the participants feel about life in Switzerland. Question 17 of the questionnaire asked the participants whether they liked life in Switzerland. It was an open question, which allowed the participants to give an elaborate answer using their own words. The results of this particular question have been analyzed qualitatively (see Figure 35). As previously seen, the tests of independence require two categorical variables, thus the different answers to question 17 were split into two categories: yes and no. Those whose answers started with a *yes* or *no* were categorized accordingly, while those whose answers were neutral have not been considered for the significance test. The aim was to find out whether there was a difference in the way the participants felt about life in Switzerland in relation to the time they spent in Switzerland and to their level of French. However, both tests showed no particular significance (p -value=0.1566 and 0.6115 respectively).

5.4.2 Linear regression model

As explained earlier, based on the p -value, the only item that showed significance between the different variables is the level of schooling in relation to the difficulty of French. The linear regression model allows a visual representation of the correlation between the participants' level of schooling and the way they rated the difficulty of French. However, as we can see in the scatter plot below (Figure 46), there is no increasing relationship between the level of schooling and the difficulty of French. Therefore, both variables are not correlated. The R-results of the calculation are given in Figure 45 below.

Figure 45 : R-Results of the calculation – Level of schooling and difficulty of French

Call:
lm(formula = SCHOOL ~ DIFF_FRENCH, data = French_Difficulty)

Residuals:
Min 1Q Median 3Q Max
-1.5282 -0.5282 0.4718 0.4718 0.6390

Coefficients:
Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept) 2.77897 0.30397 9.142 1.04e-14 ***
DIFF_FRENCH -0.08359 0.08279 -1.010 0.315

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

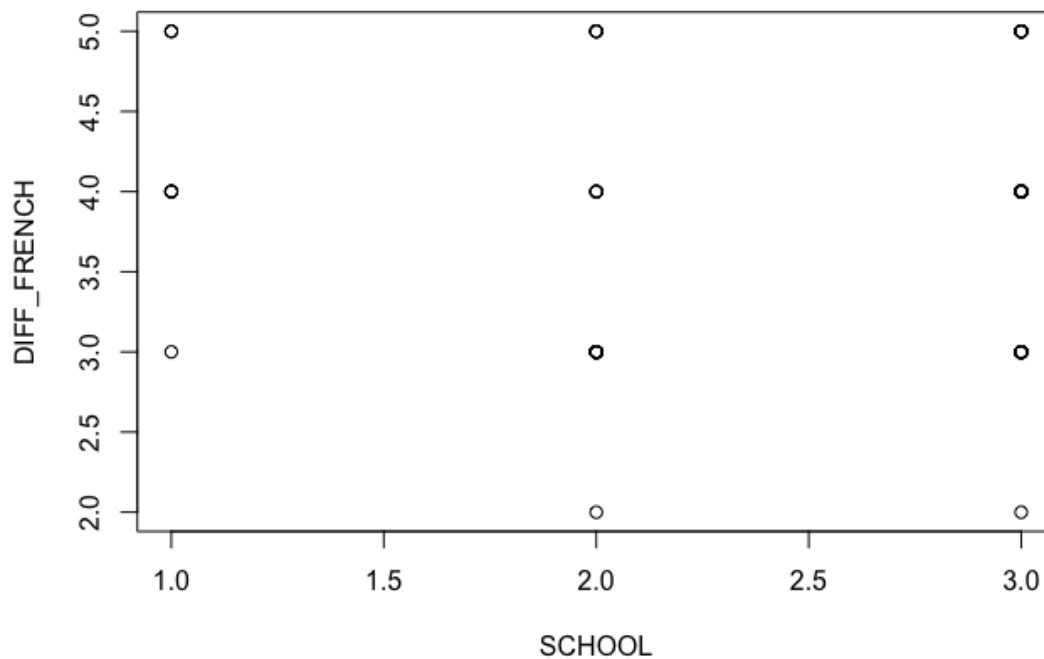
Residual standard error: 0.6615 on 96 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.01051, Adjusted R-squared: 0.0001988
F-statistic: 1.019 on 1 and 96 DF, p-value: 0.3152

> cor.test(SCHOOL,DIFF_FRENCH,method = "kendall")

Kendall's rank correlation tau

data: SCHOOL and DIFF_FRENCH
z = -0.50677, p-value = 0.6123
alternative hypothesis: true tau is not equal to 0
sample estimates:
tau
-0.0472219

Figure 46 : Linear Model Plot: Level of schooling and difficulty of French



5.4.3 Correlation analysis

The correlation test of these same variables do not show any relationship between them either. On R, the correlation test was carried out through the function *cor.test(SCHOOL,DIFF_FRENCH,method= "Kendall")*. As previously explained, Kendall's rank correlation τ is the coefficient which measures the strength of the relationship between the school level and the way the difficulty of French was rated. The coefficient ranges from -1 to 1, where 0 indicates a lack of relationship (Levshina 2015:116). In this case study, the coefficient $\tau = -0.0477219$. Therefore, there is no correlation between both variables. This might be explained by the fact that the categories are not equally represented. Therefore, a normalized dataset was created to test the correlation as well as the linear regression. This is discussed in the next sub-chapter.

5.4.4 Normalized dataset

The fact that the regression tests do not show any correlation may be explained by the lack of equality in the categories. Each category of the independent variables under study are not equally represented. As we can see in Tables 4, 5, 6, repeated as Tables 7, 8, 9 below to facilitate reading, each group contains a different number of participants.

Table 7 : Time in Switzerland

Time in Switzerland	Group 1: 6-12 months	Group 2: 13 months-24 months	Group 3: 25+ months
Number of participants	22	61	19

Table 8 : Level of schooling

Level of schooling	Group 1: 3rd to 6th grade	Group 2: 7th to 9th grade	Group 3: 10th to 12+1 grade	NA
Number of participants	9	35	56	2

Table 9 : Level of French

Level of French	1	2	3	4	NA
Number of participants	42	42	12	2	4

For regression analyses, it is preferable to have an equal number of items in each category (or at least approximately equal). For this reason, in a second step, the dataset was normalized to fit the requirements of the linear regression model. Thus, when analyzing the significance of time in Switzerland, only the first nineteen participants of group 1 and 2 were considered. That way, all three groups were equally represented with 19 participants each. When analyzing the level of schooling, the first 9 participants in group 2 and 3 were considered. Since the number was rather small in this case, in another test run, group 1 was disregarded and only group 2 and group 3 were considered. In group 2, the 35 participants were considered, as well as the first 35 participants of group 3. When looking into the level of French, only level 1 and level 2 (corresponding to the two lowest levels) were considered since the number of participants in both groups is equal.

As previously seen, the tests of independence showed significance only between the level of schooling and the difficulty of French (p -value=0.03078, see section 6.4.1.2). While the linear regression model plot with the current data did not show any correlation, the same goes for the linear regression model with the normalized dataset. The R-output is given in Figure 47 below.

Figure 47 : R-results of the calculation – Level of schooling and difficulty of French

Call:

```
lm(formula = DIFF_FRENCH ~ SCHOOL, data = SchoolingFrench_Difficulty)
```

Residuals:

```
Min 1Q Median 3Q Max
-1.6000 -0.6000 -0.3939 0.4000 1.6061
```

Coefficients:

```

Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept) 2.9818 0.5096 5.852 1.67e-07 ***
SCHOOL      0.2061 0.1987 1.037 0.304
---
Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

```

```

Residual standard error: 0.8191 on 66 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.01603, Adjusted R-squared: 0.001118
F-statistic: 1.075 on 1 and 66 DF, p-value: 0.3036

```

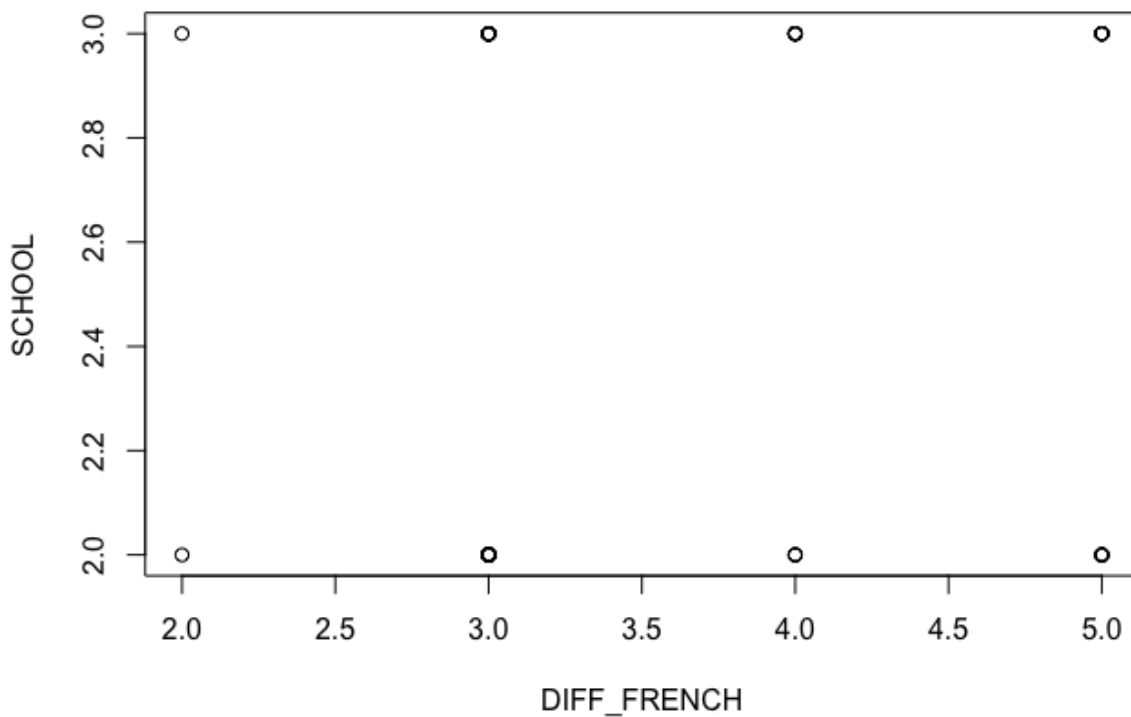
Kendall's rank correlation tau

```

data: SCHOOL and DIFF_FRENCH
z = 1.1592, p-value = 0.2464
alternative hypothesis: true tau is not equal to 0
sample estimates:
tau
0.1346698

```

Figure 48: Linear Model Plot-Normalized Dataset: Level of schooling and difficulty of French



As we can see in Figure 48 no correlation is illustrated by the plot. Therefore, normalizing the data did not make any difference concerning the linear regression model. However, when running Kendall's rank correlation, the value of coefficient is different from the value of the coefficient with the non-normalized dataset. Indeed, as we can see in the formula, $\tau = 0.1346698$ with the normalized dataset, whereas the non-normalized dataset showed a negative correlation

with $\tau = -0.0477219$. Thus, the normalized dataset impacted the value of the coefficient but it is still not high enough to conclude that there is any notable correlation between level of schooling and the rate of the difficulty of French.

6 Discussion

Now that the statistical significance of the independent variables has been presented, we can discuss the overall results. In this section, the main findings presented in Chapter 5 will be discussed and three main aspects are highlighted: the sense of belonging, the motivation in foreign language learning and social integration.

6.1 Sense of belonging and language use

The main languages represented in the participants' language repertoire are Tigrinya, French and English. Thus, considering this, the participants of this study could be considered multilingual/plurilingual (Moore and Gajo 2009) because they have knowledge of other languages and they fit into Cook and Bassetti's (2010) definition of a bilingual, a person who uses an L2 in everyday life. However, we have also seen that the majority of the participants consider themselves monolingual (see Figure 16), even though they have been taught in English and are learning French. Table 5 shows that the majority of the participants have been educated between 7th grade and college in Eritrea. As previously seen, from 6th grade onwards the language of education is English. Yet, only 37 % of the participants stated considering themselves English speakers (see Figure 16). This observation coincides with Dewaele's (2007) study, which finds that individual bilingualism should not be taken for granted because not all L2 users consider themselves bilingual even if they have a working knowledge of a second language. Due to this, any definition of bilingualism based on strict linguistic criteria is

problematic as some people see themselves as bilinguals and others do not regardless of their abilities and exposure to languages. For the participants of this study, English plays a minor role in their everyday language use. In fact, there is a higher number of participants who consider French their L2 than those who consider English their L2 (see Figure 16). This may also be linked to the different types of multilingualism (Myers-Scotton 2006) and in this case, to horizontal multilingualism in particular, which implies that multilingualism may be present at a higher level of society, but each language functions in its own space. This will be more clearly discussed in Chapter 6.2

Besides English and French, the main language used among the participants is Tigrinya. Generally, this is the language they use on a daily basis in the different domains under study: family domain, outside home domain and friends' domain. If we look into the language use among family members more closely, the results clearly show that Tigrinya is the main language, particularly with the parents, where there is an exclusive use of Tigrinya and no use of French or English (see Figure 18). However, we notice some outliers in language use with partners, children and siblings (see Figure 19, 20, 21). As previously explained, for the purpose of this study, only family members who live in Switzerland were considered.

All of the participants who mentioned having a partner specified that they were Eritrean. Thus, all of the participants' partners are Eritrean, which explains why the majority always uses Tigrinya with them. The outlier (which represents a token 1.5 times smaller than the smallest value in the lower quartile) showing that Tigrinya is never used is surprising considering that the partners in question are Eritrean. Even though this is either *often* or *rarely* rather than *always*, a few participants use French with their partners. English is only rarely used in some cases.

Figure 20 shows interesting results on language use with children. Among all the other family members, French is most frequently used with children. This can be explained by the

fact that the children are either born in Switzerland or educated in Switzerland which would suggest that their dominant language is French. While, the upper 25% of the participants always use French with their children, the mid-50% box of the data goes up to 3.0, which represents “often” value. Thus, children appear to be important agents of language integration since they serve as people with whom the participants can practice French. While Tigrinya is still the most frequently used language, we can see some outliers with a small number of participants answering that they never or rarely use Tigrinya with their children. English is never used with children.

Just like with children, English is never used among siblings. French is also rarely used; however, the outliers show that some participants use French always, often and rarely with their siblings. By contrast, many participants state that they always use Tigrinya, some state that they use it often.

Outside the classroom we have seen that most of the participants engage with Tigrinya speakers as most of their friends are Eritrean (see Figure 37). Most participants stated having made many friends in Europe (Figure 38) but the majority indicated that none of them are French speakers or that they are Swiss. This shows that there is a tendency to stay among each other, which presupposes a certain sense of belonging which is more geared towards the Eritrean culture. The majority of the participants believe that it is important to stay in contact with the Eritrean community and to maintain a certain community life (see Figure 35). Furthermore, the majority have indicated that preserving Tigrinya in the host country is very important (Figure 34). This will be discussed in detail in the next sub-chapter. Staying among Eritreans may be linked to the wish to maintain and preserve identity and language but it can also be correlated with the insecure feeling that immigrants, particularly non-EU citizens, face in a country like Switzerland, which adopted a “Temporary Integration” approach (MIPEX 2019). This approach encourages the Swiss public to see immigrants as foreigners and not as

equals of native Swiss citizens (MIPEX 2019). Moreover, the legal framework suggests that victims of discrimination are “less protected and supported in Switzerland than anywhere else on the continent”, as Switzerland is the only European country in MIPEX without a national anti-discrimination law and equality body to help victims. Therefore, this may play a role in the lack of socialization between Eritreans and Swiss and consequently in Eritreans’ tendency to stay among themselves.

A slight difference emerges according to the time spent in Switzerland. The general assumption is that the longer the informants have lived in Switzerland, the more important it is for them to maintain and preserve Tigrinya. The main reasons explaining why it is important for the participants to maintain Tigrinya consist in the fact that they now live in a different country and it is essential to prevent language loss or culture loss. One possible interpretation could be linked with Giles, Bourhis and Taylor’s (1977) theory on ethnolinguistic vitality, more specifically with the idea that the socioeconomic status of the language, the demographic of the speakers and the institutional support given to the language, all play a role in ethnolinguistic vitality. The socioeconomic status of Tigrinya in Switzerland is rather weak because it is a minority language and an immigrant language which does not hold any particular place in the official linguistic repertoire of Switzerland. For this reason, it is particularly important for the participant, not only to maintain and to preserve Tigrinya but also to transmit it to the following generation in order to avoid language or culture loss. Moreover, as we have seen, the Eritrean community is not a recent immigration group since the first arrivals started in the 1970s. As a result, there is a fairly large Eritrean diaspora in Switzerland, which renders language maintenance possible notably through the different gatherings, events and activities organized by the community with the support of the State. Thus, creating language-rich environments aid the long-term use of the language, which is considered an important technique for language maintenance, notably through schools, religious institutions, organized leisure or culture groups

and the media (Pauwels 2016). The most common place of gathering in this present study is church, as the majority of the participants are Christian Orthodox and service takes place in Tigrinya. This setting provides opportunities for worshippers to engage more freely with each other in the minority language (Pauwels 2016). Thus, here the religious setting serves as a dynamic linguistic resource for performative identity acts, since it plays a role in preserving community identity across migratory shifts (Omoniyi 2006; Rosowsky 2012). For many participants, going to church is a regular activity, which allows a certain consistency in terms of exposure to Tigrinya. Therefore, the data of this study confirms previous research, which concludes that language maintenance is made possible through the different settings available in the host country.

The only domain where French is used more frequently is the classroom domain. In this domain, participants mainly use French with their instructors and their classmates, whether they are Tigrinya or non-Tigrinya speakers (see Figure 25 and 26). This suggests that the participants are inclined to use French in any domain that offers the opportunity to do so. In this case, the classroom context is the only place where participants can practice French. This is reiterated by the teachers as well. As we can see in examples 10 and 11 below, students tend to use French in class.

10. *IR : Mmh. Maintenant par rapport, euh donc ça c'était vraiment le. On vient de finir euh, les questions concernant la méthode, maintenant au niveau de l'usage des langues. Bon on en avait déjà discuté pendant la pause, vous aviez déjà dit que vous utilisiez jamais l'anglais et puis quand les élèves essaient de communiquer dans leur langue, vous essayez un peu de freiner ça-*

IE : Ouais

IR : Euh.

IE : Euh freiner oui freiner, pas qu'ils commencent à parler arabe ou kurde tout...tout le cours. Par contre si par exemple moi j'arrive pas à expliquer, j'essaye d'expliquer le, le thème le mot, la grammaire en français, si vraiment par des gestes...par des images...là le beurre par exemple, la tartine, la confiture, par des images, et si vraiment même ça ça marche pas...bein [sic] le théâtre ça c'est clair...ça pas mal...euh si ça ne marche pas après je demande, s'il y a quelqu'un qui parle la langue, d'expliquer. C'est vraiment le dernier recours.

(IR : Errm. Now concerning, erm so that was really the. We just finished erm the questions concerning the method, now in terms of the level of language use. We already

discussed that during the break, you told me that you never use English et when the pupils try to communicate in their language, you try to restrain it a little-

IE: Yeah

IR: Erm

IE: Erm, restrain, yes restrain, so that they don't start speaking in Arabic or Kurdish all, all the time. However, if for example I can't explain something, I try to explain the, the topic of the word, the grammar in French and if really, with gestures...with images...here butter, for example toast, jam, with images et if it it really doesn't work...well theater that's for sure...that not bad...erm if it doesn't work then I ask, if there's someone who speaks the language to explain. That's really the last resort.)

(Interview no.4. Teacher M1. Poya. Wednesday, March 28 2018 11:30-12:05)

11. I : Et quelles langues utilisent les élèves entre eux en classe ?

IE : Bein [sic] je trouve qu'ils utilisent pas mal le français.

IR : Ok. Est-ce que vous vous intervenez dans ce choix de langue ?

IE : Bein [sic] pour l'instant j'ai pas trop eu besoin...je les ...pour l'instant j'interviens pas trop non.

IR : Ok...parce qu'ils utilisent quand même assez le français.

IE : Oui, exactement.

(IR: And what languages do pupils use with one another in class?)

IE: Well, I find that they use quite some French actually.

IR: Ok. Do you intervene in the language choice?

IE: Well, I didn't really need to yet...I...for now I don't really intervene, no.

IR: Ok. Because you feel like they use enough French?

IE: Yes, exactly.)

(Interview no.3. Teacher M2. Gambach, Monday, March 26 2018 16:15-17:00)

Example 10 refers to a teacher of M1 level, which is lower than M2 (in 11). Unlike the latter, the M1 teacher underlines that she sometimes needs to intervene to stop the students from speaking their mother tongue and speak more French whereas the M2 teacher in example 11 does not feel the need to do so because she notices that her students speak French most of the time.

However, outside the classroom, which means during breaks, Eritrean learners speak Tigrinya among themselves as we can see in example 12 below:

12. IE : Alors les Erythréens, ils ont, parlent tous Tigrinya, y a des Afghans qui parlent dari et farsi et puis y a, j'ai pas l'impression qu'ils parlent l'arabe euh entre eux, parce qu'il y en a qui utilisent euh-

(IE: So Eritreans, they have, they all speak Tigrinya, there are some Afghans who speak Dari and Farsi and then there's I don't think they speak Arabic erm, with one another because there are some who use erm-)

(Interview no.3. Teacher M2. Gambach, Monday, March 26 2018 16:15-17:00)

Seldom, English is used by the teachers as a last resort to facilitate explanation. This has been mentioned by three teachers during the interviews (see 13,14,15), however, they specified that they prioritize the use of French and they only use English rarely, particularly for vocabulary translations. During the observational studies, no use of English has been reported.

13. IE : *Donc non. Euh et puis, j'ai utilisé une ou deux fois l'anglais, typiquement pour les Erythréens et puis ya un Ethiopien aussi je crois qui parle aussi anglais. Et euh c'est tout après non ouais c'est tout français.*

(IE: So non. Ehm and I've used English once or twice particularly for Eritreans and there is one Ethiopian as well I think who speaks English. And ehm that's it then no, yes it's all French).

(Interview no.5. Teacher M2 and M2+. Gambach, Wednesday, March 28 2018. 16:00-16:36)

14. IE : *J'utilise quasiment tout le temps le français, s'il il y a besoin, si vraiment il y a quelque chose qui n'est pas compris, je peux faire une traduction. Par exemple, moi je parle un peu anglais, si c'est nécessaire j'utilise. Et puis si vraiment c'est pas compris, je demande à faire la traduction à quelqu'un qui a compris dans la langue maternelle.*

(IE: I use French almost all the time, if there is need, if really there's something that's not understood, I can translate. For example, I speak a little English, if necessary I use it. And if they really don't understand, I ask someone to translate in the mother tongue).

(Interview no.1. Teacher M1 and M2+. Gambach, Monday, March 26 7:30-8:15)

15. IE : *Alors moi ça m'arrive parfois d'utiliser l'anglais. Mais vraiment assez peu parce qu'ils comprennent pas tous l'anglais, mais si par exemple il y a un élève et après je lui explique en français il comprend toujours pas et je sais qu'il parle anglais je vais faire la traduction.*

IR : Mais ça va être rare ?

IE : Franchement c'est rare je sais pas je traduis peut-être deux mots en anglais, par leçon. Vraiment maximum.

(IE: So sometimes I may happen to use English. But really just a little because they don't all understand English, but if for example there's a pupil and after I've explained in French and he still doesn't understand and I know he speaks English, I'll translate.

IR: But that's rare?

IE: Frankly that's rare, I don't know, I may translate maybe two words in English, per lesson. Really maximum.)

(Interview no.2. Teacher M2+. Gambach, Monday March 26 2018. 12:15-13:30)

Additionally, the learners' mother tongues are also sometimes used, particularly Farsi/Dari as many of the learners are from Afghanistan.

16. IE: *Ah alors oui, alors euh, oui, oui. Il faut dire que moi dans mes classes, actuellement j'ai beaucoup d'Afghans et très peu d'autres nationalités, du coup ça fait que les deux Erythréens qui sont là ils sont un peu à part (rires), ils ont un peu plus de peine, pas que ils s'entendent bien, ils se saluent voilà, quand ils discutent en groupe ça*

se passe très bien mais c'est vrai que, peut-être que même moi des fois je me rends compte que peut-être j'ai beaucoup eu d'Afghans, j'ai appris beaucoup de mots en farsi, en dari que je peux réutiliser quand ils n'ont pas compris quelque chose. Par contre le Tigrinya, euh je suis un peu perdue (rires). Du coup peut-être que ça fait déjà une différence rien que ça où je peux pas vraiment les aider autant que je pourrais aider un Afghan mais euh après j'essaye hein d'être le plus juste, le plus égal possible, d'être le plus équitable possible mais bon c'est possible que ça marche pas toujours. Je sais pas (rires).

(IE: Ah, yes, so, ehm, yes, yes. I have to say that currently in my classes, I have many Afghans and very few other nationalities, which means only two Eritreans, they're a bit apart <laughs>, they have more difficulties not that, they get along well, they greet each other, when they discuss in groups, it goes very well, but it's true that, maybe even I realize sometimes that maybe I've had many Afghans, I learned many Farsi or Dari words that I can reuse when they don't understand something. But Tigrinya, ehm I'm a bit lost <laughs>. So maybe that already makes a difference, only that as in I can't really help them as much as I can help an Afghan but ehm I try to be fair, to be as equal as possible, as fair as possible but well it may not always work. I don't know <laughs>)
(Interview no.5. Teacher M2 and M2+. Gambach, March 28 2018. 16:00-16:36)

In example 16, the teacher specifies that she sometimes uses Farsi/Dari in her classes to help her Afghan students. Since she has had many Afghan students in her classes, it allowed her to acquire some basic knowledge of the language.

6.2 Motivation in language learning and attitudes towards French

There are external and internal factors that account for why learners acquire an L2 the way they do (Ellis 2005). Following Ellis, the external factors consist of, on the one hand, the social milieu, which influences the general attitudes developed towards the language and on the other hand, the input that learners receive, which refer to the samples of language to which the learners are exposed. The internal factors consist of the cognitive mechanisms which enable the learners to extract information about the L2 through the input that they receive but also through the general knowledge about the way a language works since they have an L1. In the case of this present study, the participants' L1 is Tigrinya. Tigrinya and French are linguistically distant in the language tree, in the sense that they do not share any close root and are linguistically very distinct languages syntactically, phonologically, morphologically and also in terms of their

script. In that sense, linguistic distance between the native and the target language is also associated with second language acquisition and ultimately with integration as studies have proven that there are negative impacts on the level of language proficiency of immigrants (Alhammadi 2016; Chiswick and Miller 2001,2005; Isophording and Otten 2011). This has been reiterated by one M2+ EPAI teacher, as we can see in example 17 below:

17. IR : Euh, est-ce que tu remarques une différence de niveau qui serait peut être liée à leur langue d'origine. Par exemple on dit souvent que les Afghans, ils ont tendance à très vite s'adapter à la langue, contrairement à d'autres nationalités comme les Erythréens par exemple. Est-ce que t'arriverais toi de, à donner une explication plausible-

IE : Ouais les Afghans et les Syriens, par exemple ils ont une facilité parce qu'ils ont quand même une scolarité qui est très proche de la scolarité française donc très proche de la nôtre ça s'explique historiquement. Donc ils ont une manière d'étudier qui est vraiment très semblable. Eux j'ai vraiment pas besoin de leur apprendre à apprendre, sauf ceux qui ont pas été scolarisés du tout, ça c'est autre chose. Ensuite les Afghans, euh, leur langue est aussi très proche de la nôtre dans sa structure, à part le « il » et le « elle », qui existent pas tout comme en arabe. Donc pour eux c'est plus facile, au niveau de la prononciation aussi c'est plus facile pour eux. Les Afghans ils parlent bien généralement. D'ailleurs le dari est plus facile à apprendre que le Tigrinya (rires) et puis oui alors oui les Erythréens ont plus de mal, sauf ceux qui ont fait beaucoup d'anglais. Ceux qui ont fait beaucoup d'anglais, ils vont retrouver la même structure qu'en français donc ce sera beaucoup plus facile tandis que les autres c'est oui, c'est compliqué. La prononciation, c'est compliqué ce que je comprends vu que le Tigrinya c'est très compliqué pour moi aussi et puis la structure de la langue bein [sic], elle est complètement différente. D'ailleurs pour les Erythréens c'est plus facile d'apprendre l'allemand j'ai remarqué à cause du verbe à la fin, donc euh ouais.

(IR: Ehm, did you notice any level difference, which might be linked to the native language. For example, we often say that Afghans have a tendency to very quickly adapt to the language, unlike other nationalities such as Eritreans for example. Could you maybe give a plausible explanation-

IE: Yeah Afghans and Syrians, for example have a certain ease as their schooling is very close to French schooling and so very close to ours and that's explained historically. So they have a way of studying that's very similar. I don't really need to teach them to learn, except those who haven't been educated but that is another question. Then, Afghans, ehm their language is also very close to ours in terms of structure, except the "il" and "elle", which do not exist like in Arabic. So, for them, it's easier, on the level of pronunciation as well, it's easier for them. Afghans usually speak well. As a matter of fact, Dari is easier to learn than Tigrinya <laughs> and also, yes, Eritreans have more difficulties, except those who learned English a lot. Those who learned English a lot, they're going to find pretty much the same structure as in French so it's going to be easier whereas the other, it's, yes complicated. Pronunciation, it's complicated and I understand because Tigrinya is very complicated for me too and the structure of the language well, it's completely different. As a matter of fact for Eritreans, it's easier to learn German, I've noticed because of the verb at the end, so yeah.)

(Interview no2. Teacher M2+ EPAI. Gambach, Monday March 26 2018.12:15-13:30)

As we can see in this interview extract, the teacher finds that Afghan speakers tend to learn French with more ease than Tigrinya speakers. However, the more educated they are, the easier it is for Eritreans to learn French, particularly for those who have learned English. Those who have learned English have a knowledge of a language that is closer to French, which might facilitate the learning process. By contrast, those who only speak Tigrinya encounter more difficulties in learning French because Tigrinya is so distant and distinct from French in comparison to English. Moreover, this teacher puts a particular emphasis on the concept of “*apprendre à apprendre*” (teaching to learn), which requires the teachers to teach the pupils how to learn because the context in which they have been educated is so different from the context in which they find themselves. They need to be taught how to navigate into this learning system and given new tools to understand the purpose of the tasks.

Another teacher put the emphasis on linguistic distance.

18. IE : *Moi je pense, mais je trouve que c'est plus lié à la culture de l'écrit dans le pays, je pense. Quels sont les types d'écrits que les gens sont amenés à produire dans leur langue maternelle, parce que c'est surtout ça, le problème c'est, quel genre le problème c'est vraiment c'est pas forcément la langue qui est déjà un problème en soit mais produire un texte pour dire quoi. Qu'est-ce que je dois dire ? Ou là les Afghans ils vont être adaptés à ça, plus facilement que les Erythréens, ils vont savoir quoi dire je vais produire un texte pour demander ça ça ça et puis euh des salutations et voilà, et puis ça..par exemple, culturellement, je sais pas, j'ai l'impression que pour les Erythréens y a pas ça, cette même y a pas cette même, oui cette même relation à l'écrit quoi, donc c'est pas forcément le problème d'écrire l'orthographe c'est tout le contexte.* (IE: I think, but I find that it is more linked to the written culture in the country I think. What types of scripts are people brought to produce in their mother tongue, because that's especially the problem it's, what kind of the problem really is, it's not so much about the language, which is already a problem as such but about producing a text to say what. What am I supposed to say? Afghans in this regard are adapted to this, more easily than Eritreans. They'll know what to say, I'm going to produce a text to ask this this this and then ehm greetings and that's it, and this for example culturally, I don't know I feel like for Eritreans there's no such not the same not the same yes not the same relation to writing so not necessarily the problem of writing orthographically, it's, the whole context.)

(Interview no.3. Teacher M2. Gambach, Monday, March 26 2018.16:15-17:00)

In example 18, the teacher highlights cultural distance rather than linguistic distance as such. For her, the difficulties arise because of the cultural difference linked with writing. For some nationalities such as Afghans, writing a text or a letter seems to be a more straightforward task than it is for Eritreans. The three other teachers do not find that the mother tongue or the distance between the mother tongue impacts the learning process.

The participants' answers have shown that more than linguistic distance, what seems to have a greater impact on language learning and acquisition in the present study is the level of education. As seen in Figure 29, the majority of the participants finds French particularly difficult, especially those with a lower level of schooling and this has been proved to be statistically significant (see Chapter 6.4.1.2).

Generally, the attitudes towards French are rather positive. Of course, the observer's paradox (Labov 1972) cannot be completely discarded and the researcher's presence may, indeed, have had impacts on certain answers. However, certain teachers have confirmed that their Eritrean learners have overall rather positive attitudes towards learning French, as we can see in examples 19 and 20 below:

19. *IE : En général, ils sont vraiment tous motivés je trouve. Je dirais que huitante pour cent de la classe est très motivée. C'est des personnes qui ont envie d'apprendre.*

(IE: Generally, they are all motivated, I find. I would say eighty percent of the class is very motivated. These are people who want to learn).

(Interview no.2. Teacher M2+. Gambach, Monday, March 26 2018.12:15-13:30)

20. *IE : Ehhh, il y a un peu de tout, il y a un peu de tout. Encore une fois ça dépend des personnes. Il y a les super motivés qui en veulent encore plus et puis, ils boivent tout ce qu'ils peuvent apprendre et tout. Les Erythréens, ça va encore. Ils sont assez motivés, il y en a qui le sont plus.*

(IE: Ehhh. There's a bit of everything, there's a bit of everything. Again, it depends on the people. There are those who are super motivated, who want more and more and then, they drink everything they can learn and everything. Eritreans are ok. They are sufficiently motivated. Some are more).

(Interview no.4. Teacher M1. Poya. Wednesday, March 28 2018 11:30-12:05)

Only a minority have rated their appreciation towards French in a less positive way and it is interesting to look at these divergences more closely. As previously seen, it seems that the

level of French does not have any significant impact on the appreciation of French. Figure 28 shows the correlation between the time spent in Switzerland and the love for French. The general trend shows that the majority claims to love French very much regardless of the length of stay in Switzerland. This may be considered contradictory given the fact that the majority finds French difficult. Nonetheless, the fact that the majority claims loving French very much despite finding it difficult also shows motivation to learn the language and positive attitudes towards the language in general. The participants state they love French in the sense that they would love to know how to speak the language because they know it is what would lead them to opportunities. However, although the number of participants is not equal in all groups, 6% of the participants who have been living in Switzerland between 13 to 24 months and 11% of those who have arrived more than two years ago love French “fairly”. This suggests that proportionally larger numbers are less enthusiastic about French or develop a weaker appreciation towards French the longer they stay. This can be explained by several reasons. One of them could be categorized as a dissatisfaction with the system, as this is reiterated in the open questions which will be discussed further in the next paragraph. This confirms MIPEx’s (2019) statements on Switzerland “Temporary Integration” approach. Non-EU citizens are left insecure because this approach encourages the Swiss public to see immigrants as foreigners and not as equals of native Swiss citizens (MIPEx 2019). As Morita (2011) states, members of a target community may prevent newcomers from participating in activities, which may lead them to develop a certain attitude towards the target community but also towards the language of its members. This is the case with Eritrean asylum seekers in Switzerland, who do not feel they can integrate into the host society and this is confirmed by the fact that they do not socialize with Swiss people in general (see Figure 37, 39, 40).

On the other hand, another issue that influences the participants’ attitudes towards Switzerland and French is their social status and the fact that it does not allow them to work in

the country. When asked what would help improve their level of French (Q.48), the most commonly used top three answers are as follows (see Figure 41):

- Find a job
- Learn the language / pay attention in class / study and revise
- Practice with friends

As we can see being able to work seems to be very important for the participants as they consider it the main setting to practice the language. It even precedes the idea of learning the language in a classroom setting as they believe that practice is more effective than theoretical learning and this is also reiterated with the third type of answer which suggests that practicing the language with friends would improve their level of French. This confirms Pulinx and Van Avermaet's (2017) criticism of the linear process of integration (see Figure 6). According to this approach, social participation and educational success cannot be achieved only through language courses or integration programs as integration is a continuous, complex and dynamic process, which involves all members of society. Thus, it is in the processes of social participation and building social networks that languages are acquired, that is through the actual language use. Therefore, it is crucial to provide concrete opportunities and settings for learners to use the language, such as jobs for example. Social participation is not a goal as such but it is an inherent part of the process. However, the findings of this present study show that the participants do not extensively socialize and interact with the host society (see Figure 34, 36, 37). As a result, the language learning and integration process is not complete.

As previously seen in Chapter 3, language is considered a key to integration within the Swiss legal framework. Thus, the Swiss confederation defines integration as economic, social and cultural participation and this is enabled by mutual efforts from both the foreigners' as well as Swiss citizens' sides. As stated by the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) : *l'intégration suppose, d'une part que les étrangers soient disposés à s'intégrer, d'autre part, que la*

*population suisse fasse preuve d'ouverture à leur égard*²¹. This refers to the concept of *encourager et exiger*²², which emphasizes a dual and reciprocal responsibility of both foreigners and Swiss citizens towards one another to contribute to successful inclusion. Based on the participants' answers, it seems there is a lack of engagement from the states' sides, as the employment market is difficult to access. According to the open answers as well as the additional comments at the end of the questionnaires, a number of participants feel they cannot fully integrate without being given opportunities and official settings to put what they theoretically acquire in classroom settings into practice. This has been reiterated by the majority of the participants through the open questions' answers as seen in Chapter 5.3.2:

19- You have to be able to practice it at work.

20- Be able to work.

21- Find a job.

Professional opportunities contribute to the idea of self-image construction. As outlined by Dörnyei (2009:28) “in our idealized image of ourselves, we naturally want to be professionally successful and therefore instrumental motives that are related to career enhancement are logically linked to the ideal L2 self”. This is what is missing in the participants' experiences in Switzerland: an idealized L2 self which represents who they would be if they acquired the language. Not only is the job market difficult to access, but most importantly their legal status is unstable as their asylum application remains pending for a long period of time. The data collected for this study show that most participants cannot be assured that they can remain in Switzerland. Many of them have specified, in the additional comments section of the questionnaire, that they have been in Switzerland for one to two years, yet they are still waiting for the final decision on their application. They do not enjoy the long-term security to settle permanently, invest in integration and participate as full citizens (MIPEX

²¹ Secrétariat d'Etat aux migrations (SEM): <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/fr/home/themen/integration.html>. Accessed on 12.12.2018. Translated “Integration presupposes, on the one hand, that foreigners are willing to integrate and, on the other hand, that the Swiss population is open to them.”

²² Translation : encourage and require

2019). Therefore, they lack of a goal visualization and future prospects. As explained in Chapter 3.6.3, Dörnyei, Muir and Ibrahim (2014) have suggested a framework developing a vision-inspired teaching practice, which allows the learner to self-visualize and create specific goals to gear their energies towards the Directed Motivation Current (DMC), which consists of six key components: 1) creating the vision, 2) strengthening the vision, 3) substantiating the vision, 4) transforming the vision into action, 5) keeping the vision alive, 6) counterbalancing the vision.

The lack of goal visualization not only affects the learners' process of language acquisition (and this is illustrated by the fact that most participants rate French as difficult), but also their attitudes towards the country. As the L2 speakers are the closest parallels to the idealized L2-speaking self, attitudes towards members of the L2 community must be related to the ideal language self-image (Dörnyei 2009:28). When asked if they like life in Switzerland, most of the participants have responded positively, particularly because of the quality of life in Switzerland, such as the fact that it is a "free, democratic and peaceful country" as many stated (see Figure 42). However, some participants answered negatively and the reasons mentioned are linked to the fact that their asylum application is still on hold or denied, or to the fact that they do not find employment. Thus, we can see that negative attitudes towards life in Switzerland are mainly related the participants' legal status and lack of activity. This is reiterated in most answers when participants are asked what would help them feel more at home in Switzerland (Q.49) (see Figure 43). While many participants did not answer this question, the majority answered that school / job opportunities should be offered as well as rights to live / rights in general should be protected.

Previous studies have demonstrated that ethnic identity can be considered a social factor, which has consequences for language teaching and learning (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2001; Gatbonton and Trofimovich 2008; Segalowitz, Gatbonton and Trofimovich 2009). Ethnic

group affiliation (EGA) in particular is correlated with L2 learning success and this correlation is strongly impacted by the status of the social group under question. Trofimovich, Turuseva and Gatbonton's (2013) study on the Russian linguistic and political minority in Latvia shows that as a linguistic and political minority in Latvia, Russians prefer not to associate their strong ethnic beliefs with their ability to speak the majority language. This is explained by the fact that they want to both maintain a strong ethnic identity but also gain access to the social and economic benefits associated with speaking Latvian (the dominant language). This coincides with the opinions of the participants of this present study. Due to their current situation, the participants are considered a linguistic and political minority in Switzerland. Their general attitudes towards French is rather positive even though they consider it difficult and even though they underline that they are not being exposed to the language as they much as they want or need to successfully acquire the language. On the other hand, their strong ethnic identity is illustrated through their habits and the measures implemented to maintain and transmit Tigrinya. This aspect is discussed in more detail in the following sub-chapter.

6.3 Identity preservation

As previously seen, maintaining Tigrinya and the Eritrean culture is important for the participants. Several factors play a role in language maintenance. Myers-Scotton (2006:89) suggests two main generalizations in the language shift-maintenance equation: 1) there is always a combination of factors at work and 2) maintenance and shift within a bilingual community form a continuum with those individuals who use only the L1 at one end to those who use only the L2 at the other end. In this case study, we have seen that the participants generally preserve Tigrinya as their main language of communication but we have also seen how they practice more French with their children, as some only use French with their children (see Figure 20). Melles' (2016) study on first and second generation of Eritreans in Switzerland

has shown that the second generation, namely those who were born and raised in Switzerland, tend to use French rather than Tigrinya in most domains, including with family members. Since no studies have been undertaken so far, we can only speculate on the situation of the participants' children of this current study. However, Melles' (2016) results give us an idea of the possible linguistic habits of this generation, namely that the second generation relates more to French rather than Tigrinya. This is confirmed by the language habits of the children of the participants of this present study. Even though only a minority of the participants stated having children, the results showed that those who have children in Switzerland tend to use French with them (see Figure 20).

Another important factor is the length of stay. Myers-Scotton (2006) uses the example of Vietnamese in the United States and states that the longer the length of stay, the higher the shift to English, even though – ironically – the longer the stay, the more the parents encouraged the children to speak Vietnamese. The case of Eritreans in the result of the present study is different. In fact, it seems that the longer the stay, the more important it is for them to maintain Tigrinya (see Figure 34). However, Myers-Scotton's study and this present study are not entirely comparable due to the difference of context: the Vietnamese participants in the United States do not face the same challenges regarding the security of long-term residency as Eritreans in Switzerland do, since they know that they are staying in the United States. Both studies show interesting results. While Myers-Scotton's study shows that the length of stay plays a role in language maintenance and shift, for the majority of the participants of the present study, preserving Tigrinya is "very important" particularly for those who have been living in Switzerland for a longer period of time. Generally, the participants are all recent arrivals, as they have been living in Switzerland between a time frame of six months to three years. However, differences within this time frame occur and the results of the participants who have been living in Switzerland for a longer period of time show that it is more important for them to

maintain and preserve the Eritrean language and culture. The reasons for this vary. The majority believe it is important to preserve the Eritrean culture in order to transmit it to the next generations. The will to transmit and pass on the minority language to the next generation is highly impacted by the attitudes that individuals have towards their heritage or minority language (Pauwels 2016). For many of the participants, Tigrinya and the Eritrean culture represents their identity and who they are, as we can see in Figure 35, which explains why it is important for them to preserve it.

Nowadays, technological innovations and globalization have brought spatial and temporal boundaries closer together and people from diverse national and ethnic groups form new multilayered and mixed communities (Canagarajah 2017, Block 2018). As seen in Chapter 3.3.3, there are different ways to organize, initiate and support language maintenance.

The participants of this study fall into the category of economic and political refugees. They form groups based on shared social practices. On the basis of the current results, the Eritrean participants seem to believe that the most effective way of transmitting Tigrinya to the next generation is through gatherings and organized events such as Eritrean celebrations (National Independence Day, Martyr's Day) or religious celebrations such as Christmas. Moreover, church is often mentioned as a setting where participants cannot only gather and practice their faith, but also as a way of transmitting their beliefs to the next generations. Religious settings serve as a dynamic linguistic resource for performative identity acts (Rosowsky 2012). When asked in what language the church services that they attend take place, the participants all answered Tigrinya. This validates both Rosowsky's (2012) findings and those of other studies, which have also shown how liturgical literacies play a role in preserving community identity (Omoniyi 2006).

Additionally, the legal status of the participants plays a crucial role in the way they perceive and identify themselves. The fact that the majority are in a temporary situation in

which they are either waiting for the decision on their asylum application or have already received a temporary admission impacts their prospects in Switzerland. Not knowing whether they can stay in the country or knowing that they can only stay temporarily has an effect on the efforts and the actions they are willing to undertake towards integration. While the majority of the participants believe that maintaining Tigrinya and transmitting the culture is essential and achievable through the maintenance of a sense of community notably through gatherings and organized events, some think it is not beneficial to stay among Eritreans. Figure 36 depicts the number of participants who think (or not) that it is important to stay in contact with the Eritrean community. The majority believes it is important to stay among each other (54%), but 34% of the participants think it is not important, while 8% believe it is important as long as contact is moderate. The participants who think that staying among Eritreans is not important justified their answers by the fact that spending too much time with Eritreans may prevent them from learning French. They believe maintaining relations and contacts with people whom they can practice French instead is more beneficial for them. This coincides with the Swiss legal framework on integration, which emphasizes reciprocity and duality in terms of the responsibilities and efforts one needs to make to contribute to successful inclusion, which requires efforts from both foreigners and Swiss citizens (SEM).

6.4 Answering the research questions

This investigation answers the three main research questions which guided this study:

1. What are the language uses and language choices in different domains/networks?
2. What are the attitudes towards French?
3. What factors play a role in language learning motivation?

The study demonstrates that the participants predominantly use Tigrinya in the majority of their networks and domains. Within the family network, a few exceptions arose concerning the use

of French with children. This shows that participants who have children in Switzerland tend to use more French with them. The only domain where participants use French on a regular basis is the classroom domain. This was reiterated by most teachers, who confirm that the pupils use French often. However, outside the classroom setting, during breaks, the participants mainly stay among themselves and speak Tigrinya with one another. English plays a small role within this setting. Participants rarely use it and teachers only use it as a last resort to explain misunderstood words. Thus, the main language of communication among the participants is Tigrinya. The use of Tigrinya in networks such as family, friends and church, not only shows that the participants frequently choose it as the main language of communication but also that they mainly surround themselves with Tigrinya speakers and members of the Eritrean community. This can be explained by two main reasons which can be viewed from two different perspectives. On the one hand, the participants believe it is important to maintain and preserve the Eritrean language and culture and believe the main way to fulfil this purpose is to stay among themselves. On the other hand, the Swiss political climate and particularly “Temporary Integration” suggests that the Swiss public sees immigrants as foreigners and not as equals of native Swiss citizens (MIPEX 2019), which may be an obstacle for immigrants to fully participate in the host society and invest in integration.

The fact that French is rarely used is not explained by negative attitudes towards it. In fact, the participants share rather positive attitudes towards French since the majority claim to love it. Moreover, they understand the importance of French for social integration. However, French is generally rated as difficult or very difficult. Most participants state that the learning of French is no easy task. This might be explained by the fact that French is phonologically, syntactically but also in terms of script, very different from Tigrinya. The linguistic distance impacts the language learning process and creates a language skill heterogeneity between immigrants (Chiswick and Miller 2001; 2005; Isophording and Otten 2011) Therefore, the

participants encounter obstacles in successfully acquiring the language. This is endorsed by the teachers who give explanations linked with the differences in the way French and Tigrinya are scripted and structured, which particularly affects the participants who have previously had low levels of education. Another aspect raised by a teacher is the cultural differences, which require the teachers to adopt new methods, such as the “*apprendre à apprendre*” concept (teaching to learn). This method is crucial to certain pupils because they need the necessary tools to be able to navigate the new learning system in which they find themselves, which is different from the learning context of their country of origin. Despite its difficulty, participants generally have positive attitudes towards French.

According to the participants, the main reasons why French is underused are not necessarily linked to its difficulty but to the lack of opportunity to use it, which answers the last research question. The participants underlined that it is in the process of social participation and building social networks that languages are acquired (Pulinx and Van Avermaet 2017). Thus, opportunities such as employment would allow them to practice the language in a real-life situation, as opposed to the classroom setting, which is more theoretically oriented. In addition, their legal status impacts their integration process. The participants are asylum seekers and while some have been granted the legal status of refugee, others have their application still pending or denied. Thus, it leaves them in a temporary situation, where they are unaware whether they can remain in Switzerland or not (MIPEX 2019). The lack of stability and guarantee prevents them from creating goal visualizations and prospects of their future selves (Dörnyei 2009; Dörnyei, Muir and Ibrahim 2014). The difficulties to integrate may partially contribute to the will to preserve Tigrinya and the Eritrean culture. Since the participants feel they are not given enough opportunities to be socially active members of the Swiss society, they tend to stay among members of their own communities and participate in social practices, which predominantly include Eritreans. We have seen how religious activities, which are

regularly attended by the participants, form part of an important setting to practice and transmit Tigrinya. Moreover, the participants' main network consists of Eritreans, since very few have stated having socialized with Swiss or French speakers. Nonetheless, regardless of their opinion on the accessibility or availabilities of opportunities to integrate, the vast majority of the participants believe it is crucial to maintain and preserve the Eritrean language and culture, particularly because they are in a host country. They participate in communities which preserve their heritage language and its maintenances reveal a generally positive attitude with the will to transmit and pass on the language to the next generation (Pauwels 2016). Thus, while integration is judged equally imperative, identity preservation is as significant and both are interrelated.

7 Conclusion

The aims and objective of this research, which contribute to the field of sociolinguistics, language and identity as well as language and migration, were to investigate the relation between identity preservation and linguistic integration of the Eritrean community in Switzerland. This study has shed light on the language practices of members of the Eritrean community in Switzerland and raised awareness of the several factors which play a role in their language learning and integration process as well as in identity preservation.

The results have demonstrated the language use and language choices of the participants in the different domains. The participants of this study stated that the main language they use in most of the domains is Tigrinya, which presupposes that they mainly stay among Eritreans and interact less with the host society. Moreover, they have specified that they do not have French-speaking or Swiss friends. Thus, they mainly socialize with people who share the same linguistic and cultural background. This is partly explained by the fact that they believe it is important to maintain and preserve the Eritrean identity, especially since they are outside their

country of origin. The only place where French is used is the classroom domain, which suggests that they lack language exposure outside the classroom setting.

The findings of this study also show that the participants share a rather positive attitude towards French. They believe it is important to learn it and they generally like French. However, they share rather negative attitudes towards the Swiss political system as they feel they cannot enjoy the long-term security to settle permanently, invest in integration and participate as full citizens (MIPEX 2019). Due to the change in the political incentives of Switzerland, the temporary situation in which they find themselves and the lack of goal visualization (Dörnyei 2009; Dörnyei, Muir and Ibrahim 2014) represents obstacles in integrating fully. Thus, this may also explain why the participants tend to stay among Eritreans and maintain Tigrinya.

This constitutes one of the factors that play a role in language learning motivation. According to the participants, opportunities such as employment would allow them to have a more thorough exposure to French. The language exposure they receive from the classroom setting is, according to them, too minimal and does not allow full integration. The linear process of integration is, therefore, strongly criticized by the participants as they believe that it is in the processes of social participation and through actual language use that languages are acquired (for a similar argument, see Pulinx and Van Avermaet 2017). Their temporary political status does not allow them to project themselves in the future and to make use of concrete opportunities for language use.

Therefore, in this study we see that the interaction between integration and identity preservation can be perceived as a double-edged sword, where both integration and identity preservation are interrelated. On the one hand, the participants believe it is crucial to maintain and preserve Tigrinya and the Eritrean culture. For this purpose, they maintain ties and memberships to communities and settings, which results in them creating language-rich environments for long term language use such as church, for instance. On the other hand, they

want to integrate in the host society, but feel they are not given enough opportunities to fully participate in the society. Their political situation prevents any goal and future prospects visualization, as they do not know whether they can legally remain in Switzerland (MIPEX 2019). As a result, this also invigorates the preservation of Tigrinya and the tendency to stay among Eritreans.

This study also has some shortcomings. To start with, it is limited to the canton of Fribourg and to the particular classes organized by ORS during that school year frame (Sept. 2017-March 2018). This resulted in having a restricted number of participants, which impacted on the statistical significance of the results. It would have been beneficial to gather data from a broader range of participants for more representativeness and observations of eventual patterns. For legal reasons and to ensure the protection of the participants' rights, carrying out interviews with them was not permitted. Having in depth individual conversations with the participants would have allowed to add a more detailed qualitative approach to the research. In this study, the social variable of gender was not considered in the analysis due to the higher number of male participants. However, the fact that the data does not include an equal representation of gender may have influenced the results. Further research may include gender as an independent variable as it might show significance.

Despite its limitations, this research has increased knowledge about a social group which has not been extensively studied in the past. This thematic and topical research has been carried out at a time when a large number of Eritreans are seeking asylum in a Switzerland whose local political incentives have drastically changed. Thus, this study allows us to have a closer look into the Eritrean communities and the issues related to migration in the current Swiss context, with a particular focus on matters linked with integration, sense of belonging, language learning and language attitudes. The results not only suggest that identity is intertwined with aspects of an individual's life but also that the latter is highly impacted by the political status granted by

the host country. The present study provides information that could benefit policy makers in planning educational, political, cultural and administrative policies, which would help and facilitate the process of integration of this social group within the Swiss system.

This investigation can serve as a basis for future research. Most participants of this study have been in Switzerland between six months to three years, as the focus was drawn on people with recent immigration background. Investigating those same participants at a later stage and carry out a comparative study to observe possibly patterns or changing incentives would allow a continuity of the data. Further desiderata may also include comparative studies not only with migrant communities other than Eritrean but also in different cantons and analyze possible similarities or divergences linked with the different languages of Switzerland. Moreover, this research could be used as a basis to investigate concrete methods and measures to contribute to the facilitation of immigrant groups' integration processes within the Swiss host society.

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Ordonnance sur l'intégration des étrangers : Chapitre 2 Contribution et devoirs des étrangers.

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