

# LANGUAGE AS AN IMPEDIMENT TO IMMIGRANTS' WELFARES AND DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY

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## Abstract

*Language is the means of expressing or communicating ideas which provide the capacity to communicate, thus making it a tool crucial to social integration and development whereas humans are migratory species. Due to some (influential) factors people migrate. They move to new location and new language. These changes in the linguistic environment are not without consequences to the point that theories have pointed language as being among factors to keep in mind in the study of migratory movements.*

*This paper focuses on the utility of language in action in order to understand how can language blocs, impedes immigrants in their daily interaction as it is inconceivable for man to do almost any activity that he does without the use of language. The theoretical models considered for the data analysis in this study include that of Ravenstein (1885) "Push" and "Pull" and that of Myrdal and Prothero only "Push" factors. Data were collected using structured interview and unobtrusive observation. Analysis shows that only "push" factors are applicable to forced migrants as Myrdal and Prothero opines contrary to Ravenstein "Push" and "Pull". Our study further reveals language a sine qua non condition to immigrants social integration, welfare and development. This study also raises the subsequent issues of the negative attitude of the host population. Findings also show the forced immigrants in needs of language of communication to develop a certain bi/multilingualism in addition to a lingua franca to help them overcome language barriers and experience successful economic and social integration in the host country.*

**Key words:** *Language, Push and Pull theory, Migration, Welfares and Development, Impediment, Integration*

## Résumé

*La langue est un moyen d'expression ou de communication par excellence. Comme tel, la langue joue un rôle vital dans l'organisation sociale, assure l'intégration, le bien être et le développement. En fait, langue et développement sont intimement et incontestablement liés que développement ryme avec langue. L'espèce humaine est en outre connue pour être une espèce migratoire; les gens migrent pour une raison ou une autre. Il n'est pas fortuit d'observer que le mouvement de personnes induit aussi le mouvement des langues. Ce changement dans l'environnement linguistique ou écologie de langues n'est pas sans conséquences. D'où, selon certaines théories, la langue se trouve au cœur des éléments clés d'appréciation de mouvements migratoires.*

*Aussi, cette étude a été entreprise pour apporter d'avantage d'éclaircie sur le degré duquel la langue peut être une entrave à l'intégration sociale et par de là au développement des immigrants. A cette fin, les données ont été collectées sur la base d'instruments à savoir l'interview et l'observation. L'analyse de ces*

*données nous ont permis de valider la théorie de Myrdal et Prothero selon laquelle seuls des "push" facteurs influencent et amènent les gens à émigrer. Nos résultats ont aussi révélé que la méconnaissance de la langue de la population hôte se révèle un couteau à double tranchant : impossibilité d'intégration sociale, de connaître le développement, vie en conclave et, d'autre part, une attitude de rejet de la population hôte. Pour essayer de parer à ce lot de maux, on observe la mise en place d'un bi/multilinguisme et le développement d'une lingua franca.*

**Mots clés** : Langue, Theory, Migration, Bien être et Développement, Entrave, Intégration

## 1. Introduction

Language is a key to human lives which basic, primary function is to transmit important factual information and to convey essential command. Language is social by nature and thus inseparably connected with people. "It grows and develops together with the development of society. It arises and develops with the rise and development of a society. It dies when the society dies. Apart from society there is no language" (Stalin in Kerswill, 2017:2). Man uses his language as a tool for thinking and planning and, ultimately for communication. Language is therefore, the main means of communication and that without communication individuals become socially isolated.

Then people migrate voluntarily and or unvoluntarily, for one (influential) reason or another Ravenstein calls 'Push' and 'Pull' factors. They moved to new location and new language ecologies where they come in contact with speakers of a specific set of other languages while to entertain any kind of social order, people must communicate. It is through communication that a social system is held together. That is, all communication and society is possible only through language which is also the major means of communication in which the rest of the community culture is embedded(Nana, 1996). Furthermore, UNESCO believes that there is nothing in this world which promotes understanding between people better than communication.

Finally, one can share Norman (1969: 149)'s view point that "(...) language is the chief instrument (...) with which man integrates himself, both internally and externally and both as a functioning individual and as an active participant in a human group, member of human society." This is, "the success of development depends on language and effective communication". (Rut, 2008:218)

It is in this premiss that this study investigates the role played by Language in the immigrants development and welfare. The theoretical

models considered for the data analysis in this study include that of Raveinstein and Mirdal and Prothero.

This paper first examines the theories that have pointed language as being among factors to keep in mind in the study of migratory movements. As this paper contends that language, communication, integration and development and migration go hand in hand, it then looks at the relationship between language and immigrants development in the country in which they settle.

In order to achieve the primary aim of this study that is the role of language as an empediment, the study focuses on the importance of language and seeks answers to the following questions: What role does language and communication play in the social integration and development of the immigrants? in what way(s) can language impede migrants welfare and development? In particular, it discusses: How do refugees cope with the eventuel linguistic blockade. Do (forced) migrants or refugees experience development in terms of Nixon(2011) that means modernisation, transformation of human beings because of effective communication by language with their host.

The fields of language and migration have a long standing literatures examining migration and language contact(Garett 2004, Mendiza-Denton 1996, Urciuoli 1995)in Hilary(2011) . But, there is a lack of empirical research on migration particularly forced migration in African context. As De Haas(2008) put it: “African migration research is haunted by the lack of reliable official data and the absence of appropriate sampling frameworks in the form of census or survey data.” Therefore, this study tries to provide empirical basis in understanding how vital language is as well as an impediment to immigrants development. This study will also fill the gap with concern literature on language and migration especifically with regard forced migration (refugees/ asylum seekers) in African particularly Nigérien context.

## **2. The drivers of migration**

Humans are migratory species. Migration as to Ebri(2017), is an essential part of man’s nature perceived as people moving from one place to another for various reasons. But, before going any further, distinction should be made between types of migration as

voluntarily(economic) and forced or involuntary migration also termed involuntary displacement even though there is no clear cut between the two because of the complex motivations in an individual case.

Nonetheless, Boyle et al. (1998:36), state that:“Different sub-groups of the population have different migration propensities”.

Based on this last statement a line can be drawn between the two types: that voluntarily(economic) migrants moved out because they have the ambitions and resources to make this happen. In this case, migration can be seen as a function of people’s aspirations and capabilities to migrate (De Haas, 2011; 2014). The second type, that is forced migrants would not have moved under normal conditions or peace and security. Besides, according to IOM, forced migration is “a migratory movement which, although the drivers can be diverse, involves force, compulsion, or coercion.” Labelled International Forced Migration or Asylum International Migration, this type is practiced by asylum seekers that seek refuge in a destination nation state due to frustration and push factors such as insecurity, kidnapping for ransom, terrorists’ attacks, political upheavals that turn into lack of security, wars, exclusion and many other problems they confronted in their home countries. They are individuals in need of help and refuge. They are internationally refugees, internally/transborder displaced persons who claim refugee status. This phenomenon is increasing and becoming global: forced migrants are nowadays in and from Africa(BurkinaFaso, Mali, Nigeria,Niger,Somalia,etc.);Asia(Syria,Afghanistan,Lebanonetc.);Europe (Ukraine);Americas(Mexico, Colombia, Haiti). With regard the latter, we rather are of the same opinion as Myrdal and Prothero quoted in Ebri (2017:58) who opines that only “Push” factors are responsible for international migration that is the scope of this study.

On the other hand, regarding language, the literature confirms that economic migrants are more proficient in the host country language than refugees.(Adsera, 2016:352). So to speak, emigrants from a country are far more likely to move to a destination country which speaks the same language as the emigrant’s country; this is, because an insufficient command of the host language is a stressor for successful adjustment in a new culture as “not being able to identify with other cultural groups may lead to negative attitudes towards such groups” (Bartel, 2001).

In the case of forced migrants L2 skills are poor as having a common language does not seem to determine the final choice. As stated earlier, L2 skills are rather found among voluntarily immigrants with primarily economic motivations. Of course, being able to communicate in the host country's language plays a key role in the successful integration into labour markets and society, and influences a number of non-economic outcomes. It can be assumed that language proficiency means easier assimilation in the host country.

Fuethermore, migration is widespread in Africa that makes Africa seen as a continent of mass displacement and migration. Amongt the main drivers of, especially forced migration, are violent conflict, warefare, security problem. By the way, Schoumaker et al,(2015), Sander & Mainbo(2003) quoted in Ebri (2017) have described African migration as security problem associated with trafficking and terrorism eventhough most african migrations are rather towards other African countries.

### ***2.1. Language, Communication and (context) Development***

The primary purpose of language is communication. Communication is an important prerequisite of development and this is manifested through language. "Where there is no language there is no development, and this is a fact" (Betty, 2014: 213).

The Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2013) defines development as "when someone or something grows and becomes more advanced".

Indeed, language and development are intimately and incontestably linked that no country in the world could develop under using a language other than that of the concerned population. Language is the vector of development and development is a process in the center of which language is. Indeed, the success of development depends on language and effective communication.

### ***2.2. Language And Social Integration***

African migration has not been greatly searched; literature is patchy. Hence, we consider what has been said and or done on the European, American, Australian domain to frame our context.

If we consider contemporary migration, language seems to take on importance. In this vein, we can assume that knowing language is

important not only for succeeding in the labour market but also for integration. In the EU, UK, US for instance, language has been recognised as an essential element in the process of integrating immigrants. It is stated that “host countries seem to attach more and more importance to the question of language. They are establishing new language-related requirements in different stages of the process of settlement or integration, or new tools designed to ensure that immigrants know the local language. Once again language emerges as a factor that contributes to successful integration into the labour market. Alicia(2011:11) posits: “The importance of language in the process of integration featured specifically in the Common Basic Principles (CBP) on Integration. Its fourth principle says ‘basic knowledge of the host society’s language, history and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration”.

More precisely concerning the UK for example, the Commission on Integration and Social Cohesion created after the terrorist attacks of July 2005 to advise the government, presented a report (in February 2007: 13), in which it said “the inability to speak English is the greatest barrier that keeps immigrants from integrating successfully in the UK... If you can’t speak English you are on path to isolation and separation.” Because it fulfils a number of functions, language has a particularly significant role to play in the process of individual and societal integration. It constitutes both the medium of everyday communication and a resource (...). (Betty2014: i).

### **3. Geographical Area and Population of the study**

At a cross-roads of migratory route, Niger Republic is the hub to West-African migrants for decades. For a time, Niger neighbours following the example of Burkina, Mali and Nigeria are confronted with terrorism and trafficking of all sorts. Just as Burkina and Mali, “Nigeria experience various insurgencies associated with security problem due to boko haram attacks”. (Idio et al, 2015). As a consequence, kidnapping for ransom, murdering, experiencing many forms of attack, etc. have made their residents migrate whichever way to Niger. These situations are responsible for the massive cross-border migration of mostly peasants, along the border with Nigeria in the East and Burkina and

Mali in the South. Among those forced migrants, those coming from Borno State constitute our population.

The Niger Nigeria border runs for one thousand, four hundred and ninety kilometers (1490).

Borno and Diffa are both situated at the extreme North-East and South-East of Nigeria and Niger Republic respectively. People in the Borno area are the Fulbe, the Hausa and the Kanuri. On the other side, Diffa people are mostly Kanuri and Fulbe. On both side Kanuri predominates and includes the varieties of Manga, Mobbar and Kanembou on the part of Borno and Kanembu, Tumari, Manga, Mobeur, Dagra, Kubria, Suugurti etc, in Diffa

Most of our population come along from Damasak, Duji, Gashegar, Malamfatori. About 31826 people forcibly migrate to Niger in Diffa Region because of islamist attacks. Refugees aged 18 to 59 are 14130 in number distributed as follow: site of Awaridi (1678) and Djori Koulo (3222) and 296 asylum seekers (UNHCR 31jan 2021).

#### **4. Theoretical Framework**

The research focuses on the main drivers of especially involuntarily or forced migration on the one hand and the extent to which language acts as an impediment to the immigrants social integration in the host societies, welfare and development on the other hand. In this regard, some explanations however brief reveal imperative with regard the theoretical framework(s) upon which the study is anchored.

There is a well-known theory that is, the “Push” and “Pull” factors Migration Theory, first revealed by Ravenstein (1885), a theory that explains the “how” and “why” of migration within a territory or across borders (.....) in Haas(2008:57/8). It is one of the theoretical frameworks that has really enjoyed the patronage of quite a number of research efforts. As Rut(2008,1) states: “Among the models used to explain large-scale migratory movements, one of the best known is the “Push” and “Pull” factors model. It seeks to explain international migration by identifying the degree of influence of factors that push the population of certain territories abroad and those which pull people towards other countries.” In the same vein Lee(2017) posits that: “...migration is provoked by two factors which happen to be ‘Pull’ and ‘Push’”. He sees International Migration as a reaction to the ‘Pull’ and

'Push' factors. (.....). Other scholars like Sovani, Base, Trewartha in Haas (2008:40) also state that: "the combination of 'Push' and 'Pull' factors are responsible for the migrants decision in leaving his/her territory".

De Haas(2016:3-4) appears to be opposed to this view. To him, 'Such 'push-pull' views, however, ignore that people will only migrate if they have the ambitions and resources to make this happen. We therefore need to refute popular 'push-pull' models, as they lead to misleading analyses on the nature, causes and future of migration.

Better and better, Myrdal and Prothero (2017) quoted in Ebri (2017) opines that only "Push" factors are responsible for International Migration. In other words, Myrdal and Prothero theoretical framework model is mainly concerned with factors that push the population of certain territories abroad. This theory is seen very apposite for this study.

In this, I attempt to test the validity of the theoretical thrust for this paper which is Myrdal and Prothero proposition with concern forced migration.

On the other hand, with regards language, assumption is made that emigrants from a country are far more likely to move to a destination country which speaks the same language. This likely implies that linguistic skills are a vital part of an immigrant's human capital. This trend has also enjoyed the patronage of quite a number of research efforts which attest to the inseparable connection between language and societal integration and development. As to Alicia et Malicia Adsera(2012), this suggests that the ability to learn and speak a foreign language might be an important factor in the potential migrants' decision making. Besides, UNODC (2010) stipulates that "a migrant choice of destination can be traced to the language of communication" as "The inability to speak language is the greatest barrier that keeps immigrants from integrating successfully in the host society". To put it succinctly, language is a sine qua non to development and welfare.

Furthermore, we align with Hartmut (2006) to state that deficits in the command of the languages give rise to differentiation and discrimination, distancing, segregation and inequalities while societal recognition and social contact are significantly, although not

exclusively, determined by linguistic competence in the relevant national language.

So, quite obviously, Language reveals an impediment. As a result, ``In West Africa, the dominant sociolinguistic effect appears to be an increase in individual multilingualism and the spread of lingua francas`` Jonathan Baker & Tade Akin Aida(1995:7). This is in addition to other strategies mainly translation, interpretation and, only as a very last resort the host language acquisition consist of ways out immigrants resort to in view to overcome the language obstacle.

## **5. Methodology**

### ***5.1. Research Design***

The researcher used descriptive survey design she considered appropriate. A survey is used to collect original data for describing a population too large to observe directly (Shilubane, 2009). As Mugenda (1999) states, it obtains information about a particular issue from a sample of people by means of self- report, that is, the people respond to a series of questions posed by the investigator. This type of research is convenient for the present study as it provides an accurate account of the population under study. It meets our objective to asses the extent to which language reveals an impediment to immigrants welfare and development. It uses both quantitative and qualitative method where, providing insights and understanding of the study problem, qualitative research enables one to study things in their natural settings and attempts to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Human behaviour is also explained best using this approach (Mugenda & Mugenda 2003). Put otherwise,

It is an unstructured, exploratory research method that studies highly complex phenomena that are impossible to elucidate with the quantitative research. Although, it generates ideas or hypothesis for later quantitative research. Qualitative research is used to gain an in-depth understanding of human behaviour, experience, attitudes, intentions, and motivations, on the basis of observation and interpretation, to find out the way people think and feel. It is a form of research in which the researcher gives more weight to the views of the

participants. Sharique Ahmad, Saeeda Wasim<sup>2</sup>,  
Sumaiya Irfan et al (2019: 2829)

As to the quantitative method, it was necessary for accounting the percentage of immigrants views through interview and the unobtrusive observation .

Overall, advantages of using the survey design also include the ability to accommodate a large sample size, generalizability of results, ease of administering questions and recording answers (...) (The McGraw-Hill Companies, 2001). It is in this regard and considering the global, worldwide aspect of forced migration in that no part of the world is spared Asia(Syrians,Afghans to Canada, Germany, USAetc.); Europ(Ukrain), Americas(Columbia, Mexico), Africa(Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso,etc.) this study also recourses to the case study method viewed as an intensive study of a single unit with an aim to generalise across a larger set of units(Gerring, 2004).

## ***5.2. Research Instruments and Sampling***

Random sampling method was used in collecting samples for this study. A total of 60 respondents were selected, regardless of sex, but on the basis of age. All the participants are between 17 and 55years; they are Kanuri and Fulbe native speakers from north eastern Nigeria chosen because of their being readily available and accessible on two out of the three refugees camps. They vary in their status. The male-female ratio was evenly distributed as 50% of the respondents were male and the other 50% of the respondents were female.

Furthermore, to gather the primary data, two main instruments were used in conducting the research, structured interview and unobtrusive observation.

The structured interview was used in order to gather verbal insights from participants based on questions such as:

- 1) Why did you leave your country origin?
- 2) Did you face any language related-difficulties once settled in?
- 3) Is there any advantage for you as an immigrant to know the language of the host country?
- 4)What role (if any) does language play when interacting with the developers, the host population and among you selves as refugees?

Hence, random sample of 60 help tailor the interview conducted over a period of two weeks on the refugees camps in Diffa. Participation in the study was voluntary. Respondents were given brief insights about the objectives of the research prior to the interview. Each interview lasts about 5 to 10/15minutes. The participants were audio recorded. To ensure the quality of recording as well as the smooth transfer of data a special recorder was used which has an SD Card and the ability to transfer data into the computer file.

The other instrument used in conducting the research was the unobtrusive observation as this kind provided enough information, what helped find out what linguistic communicative strategies do people resort to with respect to their isolation (owing to not knowing the host population language) and break the barriers they are facing.

### ***5.3. Ethical consideration***

As to Mackey and Gass (2005: 38) “various troubling practices of the past have raised questions about the ethical treatment of human subjects in research. Accordingly, the confidentiality of the information supplied by the research subjects and the anonymity of respondents must be respected, Economics and Social Research Council (ESRC) (2006).

In the same vein, Mac Daniel and Gates (2001:66) in Jalaludeen(2019:16)revealed that a high standard of ethics and professionalism go hand in hand. Ethical obligation that researchers have toward participants research include that participants should not be harmed or deceived but be willing, informed and be held in confidence. The participants in this research were well-informed from the very beginning and they were willing to participate inspite of their fear of boko haram member. We tried our best to make them feel confident as they were willing to participate. The data they provided was confidential and processed anonymously.

### ***5.4. Data Presentation and analysis***

The core objective of this research is to explore to what extent is language an impediment to immigrants’ welfare and development. This section presents the data collected for the present study and the analysis based on the audiorecorded data obtained from the strutred interview and unobtrusive observation.

More so, this study investigates and tests the validity of the Myrdal and Prothero's 'Push' factors theory as opposed to Ravenstein theory 'Push' and 'Pull' factors

Bellow , is the result tabulated, obtained from the interview with participants on the refugee camps.

Questions	Answers	Number of respondents	Percentage
1.Why did you leave your country origin? (push factors)	Insecurity, kidnapping for ransom, murder, attacks, flows, distress	60	100%
2.What were the influential (pull) factors that guided your choice of Diffa and surroundings: common language or family relationship? State if otherwise.	No common language/no family relationship. Search of serene environment/better life; geographically near	57	95%
3.Did you face any language related difficulties with the host population?	Language was a barrier, an impediment, an obstacle As to the Host population attitude: we are strangers; coming from somewhere representing a	60	100%

	threat		
4. How do you communicate with the host population, developers and among yourselves?	No interrelation with host population; with developers and others through interpreters/translators Linguafranca: Hausa	60	100%
5. Do you think knowing the host population language would have been an advantage following what you are experiencing?	No doubt but, as to now there is no opportunity to learn; even the kanuri communicate in Hausa	60	100%

As results we found that contrary to economic or family migrants, forced migrants (refuges and asylum seekers) did not migrate voluntarily. They were pushed around by factors such as violent conflict, kidnapping for ransom, murdering, livestock taking, lack of good governance resulting in insecurity. At the end, people feel there is any other viable livelihood option except to migrate; they, consequently migrate in search of serene environment, looking for better life.

From the outset, our findings also indicate that the influential factors among which having a common language did not determine their choice as an infinitesimal percentage of our participants answered ‘yes’ while the majority definitely answered ‘no’ contrary to Borneo in Kerswill(2017) who stated that “in the context of migration, Knowing or sharing a language is valued as one of the luring factors that draw

migratory flows toward a particular country. In other words, the language that is spoken in a country is one of the features that a person willing to migrate takes into account when it comes to selecting a destination.”

As Chiswick and Paul(2014) put it “immigration results in the coming together of diverse peoples originally speaking a variety of languages.”Then, immigrants found themselves in a kind of multilingual ecology where they have to come into contact to share commonness. Analysis reveals a language contact complex where language acts as an obstacle, a barrier to communication, an impediment to development and welfare. This is, because refugees do speak different languages and dialects. According to many of them communication is very limited; that makes it a true statement that when a community with its language is in a situation where it must communicate with another community having different culture and language very considerable difficulties arise. Indeed, there is always some lack of comprehension in communication by language from one community to another. How they overcome these language related problems, let say barriers. They, in this context develop a strategy when they establish a bit the use of a lingua franca in this case the Hausa. Thus, linguistic pluralism always triggers the need for a general communication medium which can usually be fulfilled through the acquisition of the relevant national language or a generally valid lingua franca(Hartmut, 2006).

Results also shown language as a barrier that prevents refugees to come into contact with the host population who, in turn, look at them, talk to them disdainfully and consider them as strangers, perceive them as a threat(ref, answers from the table on page11). Due especially to language barrier, this negative attitude of the host population towards them can be interpreted as a result of their not being able to identify with themselves on the one hand and with host population what corresponds to the assertion that “not being able to identify with other cultural groups may lead to negative attitudes towards such groups” (Bartel, 2001). As a result, refugees are to live in conclave whereas ethnic concentration, in turn, hinders L2 acquisition. As a way out, refugees try to set up a medium of communication among themselves. In this context, the dominant sociolinguistic effect appears to be the spread of lingua franca among others. This is, migration has led to Hausa being used as such, particularly by L2 users, replacing the

indigenous Kanuri and fulfulde. They make do with a lingua Franca language as learning a language before to communicate is a time taking activity. Another reason is that while using the lingua franca they still maintain their native language.

Again, language constitutes a barrier when communicating with developers/operational agencies, sensitizers, partners, animators, NGOs. In this context, it impedes the capacity of either to communicate effectively. It is through communication that development can be achieved, whereas development is a process in the center of which the language is. For now, as solution, immigrants and their abovementioned partners go through interpreter/translator service.

But communication is the basis of social integration, then of development. Because of the lack of communication by language our participants feel desperate and abandoned to their fate, to some extent waiting for charity developers. They are aware of the importance of language concerning their situation as for instance, that they cannot get integrated nor get the social benefits of language such as getting involved in the civic life, befriend, visiting a doctor's office, etc.

### ***5.5. Findings***

The information gathered from structured interview and unobtrusive observation were analysed. Thus, the findings clearly go against migration 'Push' and 'Pull' factors theory to rather assess only Push factors on the one hand and, language as a determining factor in accounting for immigrants welfare and development, on the other hand. Accordingly, our results show that:

- Migration is not only a matter of poverty, economic incentives as all of the participants to our study stated firmly having resist to migrate; they were pushed to do.
- With forced migration language was not the determining factor that pull people to a certain direction.
- Language proves itself an impediment with regards interrelation/interaction/communication between immigrants selves, between immigrants and host population, immigrants and developers, sensitisers, NGOs, agencies. as low levels of language proficiency create high hurdles to ... engaging in everyday social interaction (Ingo), for instance.

- There is no communication by language what seriously empede on their developpement. This is, because wellfare, the success of development depends on language and effective communication.
- social integration is most difficult for forced migrants/refugees than to economic migrants as language is prerequisite to any social integration and well-being of immigrants.
- Overall, linguistic skills reveal very important in accounting for migrants' well-being(both types) that acquiring adequate proficiency in the host country language is an important driver of immigrant economic and social integration.

## 6. Conclusion

The paper, through Myrdal and Prothero 'Push' factors theory demonstrates that migrants do not have the same 'propensities' to migrate. Contrary to employment or economic voluntarily migrants who aspire to do so thank to push and pull factors, involuntarily or forced migrants move following very strong and influential/push factors only.

Furthermore, voluntarily migrants migrate considering the destination language while forced migrants do not decide based on language. Certainly, for both types, language proficiency reveals a main driver to welfare and development. For forced migrants, language is particularly a critical key to survival, successful integration, and self-esteem.

Moerover, this study raises the issues of the negative attitude (social distances, discrimination etc..) of the host population towards those immigrants. As a result, immigrants leave in a linguistic enclave( high level of ethnic concentration neighbourhood, intra-ethnic contacts and opportunities for communication in the language of origin in the neighbourhood Hartmut, p.ii) what hindered the acquisition of the language of the receiving country. In this regard, to cross linguistic boundaries, immigrants develop certain bi/multilinguism in addition to a use of a lingua franca as a medium of communication in the West African Context. Hence, language retention may ensue. But, with children acquiring the host country language overtime, forced migration will rhyme with among other consequences language endangement, language attrition even language lost(Nana Aichatou,2020).

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