The role of socio-economic factors in motivation to learn English as a foreign language: The case of Chile

Judit Kormos[1] and Thom Kiddle[2]

1 Lancaster University, Department of Linguistics and English Language, United Kingdom

2. Research Department, Universidad Chileno-Británica de Cultura, Chile & Norwich Institute of Language Education, United Kingdom

Corresponding author: Judit Kormos
j.kormos@lancaster.ac.uk

Abstract

In the present study we surveyed the English language learning motivations of 740 secondary school students belonging to different social classes in the capital of Chile, Santiago. We applied multiple analyses of variance to analyze how motivational variables differ depending on students' social class. The results suggest that social class has an overall medium-size effect on motivational factors with self-efficacy beliefs being the most strongly related to socio-economic status. The most important differences in motivation, self-regulation and learner autonomy were found between upper-middle and high social class students on the one hand and low and lower middle class students on the other hand, which we explained with reference to the inequality created by the Chilean schooling system.

Introduction

Although multilingualism is widespread in today's world, and in many countries foreign language learning is part of compulsory education, most research conducted with foreign language learners has involved participants who study in tertiary education and younger students who come from middle-class or privileged social backgrounds. In contrast with the area of second language learning, where a great deal of research effort has been concentrated on the role of social, cultural and linguistic context (e.g. Peirce, 1995; Gardner, 1985; Gardner, Masgoret & Tremblay, 1990), in foreign language settings the motivation and language learning processes of disadvantaged students have been rarely investigated (for an exception see a recent article by Lamb (2012). The scarcity of research in this area is unfortunate because foreign language competence might open up new opportunities for students from lower social classes and can assist them in breaking social barriers. The study of language learning motivation in different social-contexts is also necessary to reveal whether the oft-reported lack of motivation among students in under-privileged contexts is the result of inappropriate educational provision (Lamb, 2012). As motivation is one of the most important factors driving learning (for a recent review see Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), understanding the role of learner goals, self-related beliefs and self-regulatory processes is essential before effective instructional programs for learners studying in different social contexts can be designed and implemented.

In our paper we investigated how socio-economic factors are related to various components of motivation, self-regulation strategies and autonomous learner behavior in a South-American context: Chile. The selection of the research site was motivated by the fact that although Chile is often referred to as the most stable country in South America, it also has a high degree of social stratification, with the highest income disparity among OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) member countries (OECD,

2011). Moreover, Chile has one of the most segregated educational systems in the world and long-lasting, mass–participation student protests in 2006 and 2011 are testament to the problems successive governments have had in delivering on promises of social mobility through education.

In our research we collected questionnaire data from 740 secondary school students belonging to different social classes in the capital of Chile, Santiago. We applied multiple analyses of variance (MANOVA) to explore how language learning motivation, self-regulation and learner autonomy is related to socio-economic factors.

In this paper we will first review the most important theoretical constructs investigated in our study and discuss the potential role of socio-contextual factors in affecting them. This will be followed by a description of our research procedures and the presentation of the results of our research. Next we will provide a detailed discussion of our findings in the light of theories of motivation, previous research on socio-economic factors in education and within the Chilean social and instructional context. The paper will be concluded by outlining implications for educational policies and future directions of research.

Review of literature

Although the role of socio-economic factors in foreign language acquisition is under-researched, the existing findings in this field clearly highlight the importance of social context in influencing foreign language learning outcomes. The PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) Report (2003) showed that students whose parents had higher qualifications performed significantly better in the language proficiency test administered to European school-age children. Nikolov (2009) observed a similar tendency which indicated a strong link between parents' level of education and students' achievement in language learning in Hungary. Munoz (2008) explained the strong links between socio-economic status

and achievement by arguing that students from different social backgrounds have access to different types of schools (public vs. private) and to varying degrees of extracurricular exposure to the target language (e.g. private tuition, learning resources, study abroad etc.). Socio-economic status, however, does not only affect final language learning outcomes but also has an influence on motivation to learn, self-regulation and students' self-related beliefs (Fan, 2011). In our research we will focus on these three groups of inter-related variables as we consider them the most important antecedents of actions students take to enhance their foreign language learning processes.

Language learning motivation research has a long history in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) originating from Gardner and Lambert's (1959) pioneering work in the bilingual context of Canada. The importance of socio-cultural factors in language learning was recognized in the early work of Gardner (1985; Gardner & Lambert, 1959), who highlighted the significant effect of parental encouragement and praise on students' motivated behaviour. Subsequent models of motivation also included the role of significant others (Williams & Burden, 1997) and the student's family (Noels, 2001). The construct of parental encouragement has also been used in a number of research projects (see e.g. Atay & Kurt, 2010; Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Gardner, Masgoret & Tremblay, 1999; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid & Papi, 2009).

Motivation explains why people select a particular activity, how long they are willing to persist at it and what effort they invest in it (Dörnyei, 2001). These three components of motivation correspond to goals and the initiation and maintenance of learning effort. In the field of SLA a number of different language learning goals have been proposed. Gardner (Gardner, 1985, 2006; Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) differentiated instrumental goals, which are associated with the utilitarian values of speaking another language, from integrative goals, which express students' wish to learn the language in order

to become integrated into the target language culture. In the 21st century however, English has become an international language serving as a lingua franca in a globalized world (e.g. Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2005; Widdowson, 1993). Therefore the English language has ceased to belong solely to its native speakers and their cultures (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Consequently, a new language learning goal has emerged: international posture, which includes "interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to study or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners … and a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures" (Yashima, 2002, ibid, p. 57). Further language learning goals can also include friendship, travel and knowledge orientations (Clément & Kruidenier, 1983).

The motivating power and relevance of these goals shows great variation based on the language learners' social, cultural, linguistic and economic context. Evidently, certain goals such as travel orientation might be out of the reach of students from disadvantaged backgrounds; whereas other goals such as wanting to make international friends might be more easily attained with the help of information technology and might be less influenced by socio-economic factors. Some other goals, for example knowledge orientation, might interact with general academic aspirations, which are also highly prone to social influences (Bandura et al., 1996). The opportunities to use English as a means of communication with speakers of other language backgrounds can also be seriously constrained by socio-economic factors. As shown in Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh's (2006) study, geographical location which was interrelated with the socio-economic status of the students exerted a considerable influence on students' and parents' choice of foreign languages, and consequently on goal orientation. Carr and Pauwels (2006) in Australia and Gayton (2010) in Scotland also found that students from lower social classes who had no opportunities to travel abroad displayed less favourable foreign language learning attitudes. A recent study conducted by Lamb (2012) in Indonesia revealed that students in rural areas had a significantly lower level of international orientation

than learners of English in provincial and metropolitan areas. Lamb's study also demonstrated that among the three learner groups he investigated, those living in provincial areas had the strongest instrumental goals, which he explained with reference to students' desire to move to metropolitan areas to access further education.

Goals are only effective motivators if they become internalized to some extent (Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999); an assumption which is expressed in Deci and Ryan's (1985) important distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsically-motivated students engage in the learning process because they find it interesting and enjoyable; whereas extrinsically-motivated learners carry out the learning activity in order to gain a reward or to avoid punishment. In the field of language learning motivation, Noels (2001) also identified intrinsic language learning goals, which are related to feelings of enjoyment and enhancement experienced during the process of language learning. The development of intrinsic motivation in instructed second language learning is often contingent on classroom factors including the quality of teaching, the personality of the teacher, the relevance and usefulness of instructional tasks and group cohesion (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Resources available in foreign language education are also dependent on socio-economic factors (see e.g. Hu (2003), which might then influence learners' intrinsic interest indirectly, with the mediation of classroom factors (Munoz, 2008).

Additional key elements of motivation are personal agency beliefs, which express one's views as to whether one is capable of performing a given learning task. Bandura (1986, 1997) in his social cognitive theory argues that self-efficacy beliefs, in other words, what people believe about their capabilities, have a stronger influence on the motivation to perform a particular action than actual skills, knowledge or previous accomplishment. Bandura et al. (1996) found that parents' self-efficacy beliefs and the academic expectations they held

towards their children had a significant impact on students' academic self-efficacy beliefs, which highlights the important role of social factors in this constituent of motivation.

In the field of L2 motivation, self-related beliefs are included in the L2 Motivational Self System Theory proposed by Dörnyei (2005), who argued that the main driving force of language learning is the students' future image of themselves as successful users of the language. His model of motivation contains two self-related components: Ideal L2 Self and Ought-to L2 Self. In this model, Ideal L2 Self is one's ideal self-image expressing the wish to become a competent L2 speaker. The Ought-to L2 Self contains "attributes that one believes one ought to possess (i.e. various duties, obligations, or responsibilities) in order to avoid possible negative outcomes" (Dörnyei, 2005, p.106) associated with not being able to speak the L2 in question. Previous research on the motivational self-system has mainly focused on the role of parental encouragement as an important social and contextual influence on the motivational self-system (Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Taguchi et al., 2009). The impact of the wider social context on self-related beliefs in L2 motivation has only been investigated in Lamb's (2012) recent study. Lamb found that students in rural areas of Indonesia held significantly less-favourable views of their Ideal L2 selves than the participants from urban settlements, and the Ideal L2 self also had smaller explanatory power in motivated behavior for rural learners. In the field of educational psychology it was shown that students from disadvantaged social backgrounds often do not develop strong views of their possible selves in terms of academic achievement. This might be due to the lack of role models on the one hand, and because these possible selves are in conflict with their social identity on the other hand (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006).

Self-regulation is also an important process closely related to motivation. Self-regulation assists students in organizing and managing their learning, and it includes learners' control over their thoughts (e.g. their competency beliefs), emotions (e.g. anxiety experienced while

learning), behaviours (e.g. how they handle a learning task) and the learning environment (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Zimmerman, 1998). Students apply a variety of strategies to regulate their learning processes. In his classic work, Kuhl (1985) proposed six action-control strategies, three of which (attention-, encoding-, and information-control) can be regarded as means of controlling cognition (Corno, 2001). Kuhl's incentive-escalation strategy is a means of controlling motivation, and his final two control strategies include emotional and environmental control. Research evidence from the field of educational psychology suggests that parents' views of the role and value of education, expectations for achievement and support in learning have important influence on students' engagement with learning activities (Okagaki, 2001).

Another important construct in the field of language-learning motivation is motivated behaviour, which is usually seen to consist of effort and persistence (e.g. Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei, 2001, 2005; Gardner, 1985, 2006). Similar to self-regulation strategies, effort and persistence in learning activities are also prone to socio-cultural influences (Lamb, 2012; Okagaki, 2001).

A concept related to motivated behaviour is autonomous learning behavior, which is "the regulation of behaviour when people's interests and values are the reason for acting" (p.224). Autonomous learners are capable of taking responsibility for the content and management of their learning (e.g. course materials) and the social-contextual environment in which learning takes place (Benson, 2001; Oxford, 2003). Although the potential attributes of autonomous learners might constitute a long list (Benson, 2001; Littlewood, 1996; Oxford, 2003), it is possible to define the crucial elements of learner autonomy, which include learners' control over the affective and cognitive processes of learning, classroom and curriculum decisions, autonomous use of learning skills, and the independent use of learning resources and technology (Benson, 2001). Benson (2001) in his book on learner autonomy divides learning

resources into two important categories: traditional learning resources (e.g. reference and course-books) and resources provided by modern educational technology (e.g. Web-based applications, computer programs, CD-ROMs). Autonomous learning behavior is highly important in assisting learners exploit the potential of learning resources, both in more traditional learning environments and in a computer-assisted setting (Blin, 2004).

There are a number of possible ways in which socio-economic factors can influence autonomous learning behaviour. On the one hand, the views of the family and the learners' milieu of what learning is and what role students should take in school can have a significant influence on how autonomous learners are (see e.g. Fonseka, 2003). On the other hand, economic factors such as access to learning resources at home and at school can also have an impact on students' autonomous learning behaviour (Benson, 2007).

To summarize, motivational factors, self-regulation strategies and autonomous learning behavior might be strongly influenced by social and contextual factors. Students' immediate environment: their family and friends, and the broader socio-economic context play an important role in goal setting, attitude formation and in influencing students' self-efficacy beliefs and the effort and persistence with which they carry out learning tasks. The wider social and educational context also has considerable impact on motivational and self-regulatory variables and manifestations of autonomous language learning behaviour. Our study aimed to contribute to the understanding of the role of socio-economic factors in these three inter-related concepts which are relevant in the study of foreign language learning motivation. In our research we addressed the following research question:

1. How do motivational variables and self-regulatory strategies as well as manifestations of autonomous learning behaviour vary according to social class among Chilean learners of English?

Method

Participants and context

This study investigated language learners in Santiago, the capital of Chile. Santiago is the largest city in the country, where more than a quarter of the population lives. 99% of the population in Santiago have Spanish as their first language, though as with any major capital city there is a mix of other L1s present. Other L1s are more evident in other regions of Chile, notably Mapudungun, the native Mapuche language in the south of the country, and German in the Los Lagos region due to 19th century immigration patterns. Santiago has similarities to major metropolitan cities in Europe, with a growing economy, and as a regional financial centre has a great deal of business contact with North America and Europe (Wolfram Alpha Curated Data, 2009).

In our research we used criterion-sampling based on information available on the socio-economic status of students attending particular secondary schools. Ten schools that varied according to the socio-economic classification as reported by Sistema de Medición de Calidad de la Educación (System for Measurement of Quality in Education[1]) were selected for inclusion in the research. Out of the ten schools four were municipal or state schools which are totally financed by the state. Three schools represented mixed-funding schools in which the government subsidises part of the students' expenses and the rest is paid by the parents or different kinds of foundations/institutions, etc. The remaining three schools were private schools in which parents pay the full fee. All the students studying in the second year of the selected schools participated in the study.

In municipal or state schools, which are totally financed by the state and which are mainly attended by students from low and lower middle classes, large class sizes are common, with teacher-student ratios of 1:45. English language-learning resources are often state-produced and supplied, and based on non-authentic texts used primarily for reading or

listening comprehension exercises, for grammatical development at the sentence level, or for lexis at the word level, with little evidence of more communicative methodologies influencing materials design. Timetabled hours of English per week are often at the set minimum level (four hours per week), and teachers of English commonly have a low level of language training themselves, and in many cases have been co-opted from other subjects to provide the required minimum number of hours. In mixed-funding schools the government subsidises part of the students' expenses and the rest is paid by the parents or different kinds of foundations/institutions. The majority of the middle class students study in this type of school. In these schools there is a greater emphasis on English teachers' level of English and certification. The class sizes are smaller and coursebooks selected by schools. In private schools parents pay the full fee. These schools are mainly attended by upper middle class students and pupils from the highest social class. They consistently provide native-speaker teachers for languages, include overseas study-trips, have teacher student ratios of 1:20 or lower, require certification in level of English and a language-teaching qualification of teachers. There is also a significant drive towards bilingual education in many of the private schools, and in those schools which are not bilingual in their teaching, there is a high number of hours of English in the curriculum.

Prior to this research the Chilean Ministry of Education classified the ten participating schools into five levels of social classes based on the following information previously collected from the parents of the pupils: monthly household income, father's years of education and mother's years of education. A student survey enquiring about the number of books in the house, the possession of cars and computers and internet access at home and the education of parents was also administered to aid the classification. The five levels, which were also used in the current study, included low, lower middle, middle, upper-middle and high social classes[1].

All together, 740 learners, 302 male and 438 female, responded to our questions. In the sample 116 students belonged to low, 234 to lower middle, 113 to middle, 106 upper middle and 171 to high social class. All the participants were aged between 15 and 16 (the average age of students was 15.38 years). The students were all studying in the second year of the four-year program of upper secondary education. This school year was chosen due to the fact that decisions about future studies and employment were not too distant to be irrelevant, nor too close to be overpowering. The average number of years the participating students had been learning English was 6.5 years.

Instruments

Our questionnaire originally aimed to measure 13 latent constructs and consisted of 64 five-point Likert scale-type questionnaire items. Five additional questions were posed to gain biographical information about the participants (gender, age, years of language learning, father's and mother's highest level of education). Our survey instrument included the most important factors in L2 learning motivation that had been identified in previous research as well as scales measuring self-regulatory strategies and specific aspects of autonomous learning behavior. One scale, that of language learning anxiety (6 items), was excluded from the analyses in this paper as the inter-correlation analyses of the scales showed that it was not strongly associated with the other variables.

The variables seeking to describe language learning motivation comprised two scales on language learning goals (instrumentality and international posture) that were previously found to be important driving forces for the investigated population (Kormos, Kiddle & Csizér, 2011), and one scale on the self-image of language learners (Ideal L2 Self based on Dörnyei, 2005). A further scale was designed to gain insights into the motivated behaviour of learners (based on Gardner, 1985). Two additional scales were included to assess the intrinsic

motivation and the self-efficacy of the learners, both of which were adapted from an unpublished instrument devised by Iwaniec (2010).

Two variables were selected to characterize the self-regulation strategies of the learners: satiation control, in other words, the capacity to overcome boredom and make language learning tasks interesting and a general scale assessing how learners organize and regulate their learning behaviour. Although there are other important types of self-regulatory strategy (see Corno and Kanfer's (1993) taxonomy of action control strategies presented in the review of literature), in our previous study the scale of satiation control was found to have the most favourable psychometric characteristics (Kormos and Csizér, in preparation). We also measured two aspects of autonomous learner behaviour that were concerned with learners' control over language learning resources (see Benson, 2001). One of the learner autonomy scales aimed to gain insights into learners' independent use of learning resources in general, the other into the independent use of learning technology in particular. These two scales were adapted from an earlier instrument devised by Kormos and Csizér (in preparation).

Finally, the role of students' milieu was assessed by two items: one enquiring about parental encouragement and another scale about the role of peers. Items for the parental encouragement scale were adapted from Gardner (1985) and Dörnyei et al. (2006), and the peer-pressure scale, which enquired into friends' and peers' influence on language learning attitudes, was based on Iwaniec (2010).

The following list contains the name of each variable in the survey together with its definition and an illustrative example. The Cronbach alpha reliability measure is also given for each of the scales.

1. *Ideal L2 Self* (5 items): students' views of themselves as successful L2 speakers. Example: I like to think of myself as someone who will be able to speak English. (Cronbach $\alpha = .87$)

2. *International posture* (6 items): students' attitudes to English as an international language. Example: Studying English will help me to understand people from all over the world. (Cronbach α = .84)
3. *Instrumental motivation* (5 items): utilitarian benefits associated with being able to speak the L2 such as higher salary, better jobs. Example: Speaking English will be highly important in my future job. (Cronbach α = .75)
4. *Intrinsic motivation* (4 items): interest in language learning deriving from an internal drive. Example: I study English because I'd really like to be good at it. (Cronbach α = .76)
5. *Motivated learning behaviour* (6 items): students' self-reported efforts and persistence in learning English. Example: I work hard at learning English. (Cronbach α = .79)
6. *Self-regulated learning behaviour* (5 items): Students' capacity to actively seek out opportunities for learning and using the L2. Example: I try to find opportunities to practice speaking in English. (Cronbach α = .76)
7. *Self-efficacy* (7 items): Students' belief that they will be successful users of the language. Example: I am certain that I will be able to get my ideas across when writing in English. (Cronbach α = .79)
8. *Satiation control* (4 items): Students' ability to overcome boredom and make language learning tasks interesting. Example: I am confident that I can overcome any sense of boredom when learning English. (Cronbach α = .73)
9. *Independent use of technology* (3 items): learners' capacity for the independent use of technology in language learning. Example: I use English language-teaching computer programs to practice English. (Cronbach α = .71)

10. *Independent use of learning resources* (3 items): learners' general capacity to exercise control over learning resources. Example: If there is something that I do not understand in the English class, I make efforts to find out more about it. (Cronbach α = .75)
11. *Parental encouragement* (5 items): the extent to which parents support their children in studying English. Example: My parents really encourage me to study English. (Cronbach α = .82)
12. *Peer pressure (4 items)*: the influence of classmates and friends on language learning attitude. Example: My friends think English is cool. (Cronbach α = .88)

Procedures

The instrument was translated into Spanish from the English version. Back-translation was used with two pairs of bilingual translators and a single version was agreed on in consultation with all four translators based on the similarity between the versions re-translated into English, and the original English version. The questionnaires were personally delivered to the secondary schools, where the English department coordinator took charge of the administration of the questionnaires, distributed them among teachers and collected the filled-in questionnaires.

Analysis

All the questionnaires were computer-coded and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences 18.0 was used to analyze the data. The answers to the questionnaire were first subjected to principal axis factoring. Both the Kayser-Meyer-Oklin value (.95) and the Bartlett's Test of

Sphericity ($p < .001$) provide evidence for the factorability of the dataset. The principle axis factoring with Varimax rotation revealed the presence of 12 factors with eigen values exceeding 1 which together explained 59.30% of the variance. The number of factors was established based on the inspection of the scree plot and the criterion that the factor's eigen value should exceed 1. All items had high loadings on their theoretically assigned factors. Based on these analyses, we could conclude that the questionnaire items provided an adequate measure of the various latent components in this study.

The main statistical procedure applied was multiple analyses of variance (MANOVA), which was used to assess the effect of social class on motivational and self-regulatory variables and autonomous learning behaviour. This statistical procedure requires that assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity to be met.[2] No violations of these assumptions were found. The level of significance for this study was set at $p < .05$ and, where relevant, effect sizes were calculated. Eta squared values below .06 were regarded as small, below .13 as medium, and above .13 as indicating large effect size (Cohen, 1988).

Results

The MANOVA analyses showed an overall significant effect of social class on the motivational and self-regulatory variables and autonomous learning behaviour, F (12, 728) = 7.54, $p < .001$; Wilks' Lambda = .63; partial eta squared = .11). The general effect of social class on the investigated variables was in the medium range and suggests that approximately 11% of the variance in the motivational, self-regulatory and learner autonomy scales can be explained with reference to social class. The results of the separate analyses for the dependent variables (see Table 1) revealed that with the exception of self-regulated and motivated behaviour all the differences reach statistical significance, using a Bonferroni-adjusted alpha

level of .004. The effect size for the variable of self-efficacy can be considered large (eta squared = .16), whereas for the Ideal L2 self, instrumental orientation, international posture and parental encouragement there seems to be a moderate effect of social class (eta squared values ranging from .6 to .12). In the case of the remaining variables of intrinsic motivation, peer pressure, satiation control and the independent use of technology and resources only a small effect of social class could be detected (eta squared values below .6).

Insert Table 1 around here

The post-hoc comparison of the groups using the Bonferroni adjustment formula showed that in the case of the Ideal L2 self, self-efficacy beliefs, parental encouragement and peer-pressure, students belonging to high social class and upper-middle class displayed significantly more favourable motivational characteristics than the participants from the lower, lower-middle and middle classes (see last column in Table 1). With regard to intrinsic motivation and satiation control, the learners from the upper-middle class scored significantly higher than the participants from the lower, lower-middle and middle classes, but students from the highest social class only differed significantly from lower class participants. In international orientation, significant differences were observed between the higher and lower social classes. The largest differences were detected between the upper-middle class on one hand and lower-middle and low class on the other; and also between high class students and lower-middle and low class students. In the independent use of technology, upper-middle class students scored higher than lower and lower middle class participants, and interestingly participants the from upper-middle class reported using learning resources more frequently than students from the high, low and lower-middle classes.

Discussion

The aim of our study was to explore how motivational and self-regulatory variables as well manifestations of autonomous learning behaviour vary according to social class among Chilean learners of English. The results of the MANOVA indicated a moderate effect and revealed that 11% of the variation in the investigated variables can be explained by the socio-economic background of the students. Considering the fact that classroom factors and other individual difference variables such as level of proficiency, language aptitude and language learning anxiety (for a recent review see Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011) also contribute to motivation, self-regulation and autonomous learning behavior, the 11% of explained variance can be considered substantial. Unfortunately, to our knowledge there are no comparable studies on motivation either in the L2 field or in the area of the sociology of education. However, in a recent meta-analysis of studies conducted in the United States, Sirin (2005) also found a moderate level correlation between measures of socio-economic status and school achievement. The average correlation co-efficient for the studies included in this meta-analysis was r =.299 (r^2 = .08), which in comparison with our research shows a somewhat weaker link. Although Lamb (2012) does not report the overall effect size for geographical context in his study, the inspection of the eta-square values for his variables reveals that in our study socio-economic status might have exerted stronger influence on language learning motivation. The seemingly stronger link between motivational factors and socio-economic status found in Chile might be due to the highly segregated nature of education and the deep socio-economic divide among the investigated students.

The overall effect of social class on language learning motivation can be explained with reference to a number of theoretical, instructional and contextual factors. On a theoretical level, as pointed out in the review of literature, socio-economic status has an important

influence on the kinds of goals learners set, the motivating power of the selected goals, and consequently on the effort students invest in foreign language learning. Additionally, socio-economic status affects motivational and self-regulation variables through parental expectations, influence and modeling (e.g. Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Dörnyei et al., 2006; Gardner, 1985; Noels, 2001) and with the mediation of the views and behavior of peers (Williams & Burden, 1997).

At the level of the instructional environment, socio-economic factors also play an important role (see e.g Munoz, 2008). As mentioned earlier, in Chile the quality of schools students attend is determined by the financial contribution the parents make to their children's schooling. The educational provision in foreign language education and in other academic subjects varies greatly based on the financial means of the students' families. Large class sizes, under-qualified teachers and lack of resources might all contribute to diminished levels of motivation in learning foreign languages (see Hu (2003) for a discussion of similar issues in China).

At the contextual level, we can establish that students in lower social classes in Chile might rarely need English for professional purposes. Furthermore, due to limited financial resources, they do not have access to the modern technological developments and information technology (e.g. computer games, social networking sites, etc.) that would make it seem beneficial for them to use English in the private spheres of their lives. Our findings, which are similar to the results of Lamb (2012) in rural Indonesian contexts, with regard to the varying degree of the importance of instrumental goals and the role of English as an international language in the different social classes provide empirical support for these observations.

Our results also reveal the most important divide with regard to language learning motivation was between upper-middle and high social class on the one hand, and low and lower-middle class students on the other hand. In our study, with the exception of

international posture, differences in motivation, self-regulation strategies and autonomous learner behavior were not found among the low, lower middle and middle social classes. The explanation for the fact that there seems to be a large gap between the motivational characteristics of higher and lower social classes, but not within these two groups, might lie in the inequality created by the Chilean schooling system. As explained above, a large gulf in the quality of education in Chile can be observed between the state-funded and private schools, that is between the low and lower-middle class students on the one hand and between upper-middle class students and students from the highest social class on the other hand. Somewhat similar results were obtained by Lamb (2012) who found that the most important division in motivational variables was between rural students and language learners from provincial and metropolitan areas. He also explained the differences between learners from different geographical areas with reference to the lack of importance and relevance of English language competence for lower social class students typically living in rural settings and the deficiencies in educational provision in poor areas. It seems that Graddol's (2006) observation that "The world is rapidly becoming more urban and more middle class—both of which are encouraging the adoption of English" (p. 50) holds true not only in Asian contexts but also in this investigated South American setting.

Additionally, the results seem to suggest that the group that has the most favourable motivational characteristics is that of the students from the upper-middle classes. With regard to the independent use of learning resources, participants scored significantly higher than students from the highest social classes, and in a number of scales including instrumental and intrinsic motivation, motivated and self-regulatory behaviour, peer-pressure, satiation control and the independent use of technology their average is numerically higher than those of the participants from the highest social class. This might be explained by the fact that within the uppermost levels of the Chilean education system, the use of English is almost a given in their

social world and not something necessarily related to motivated behaviour. This is evidenced by the presence of English-speaking international students in classes, bilingual education across the curriculum (i.e. the teaching of other subjects in English), and the assumption among the majority of these students that they will attend high quality universities, often overseas, without the level of competition for places which is a feature of the upper-middle class section of the socio-economic strata.

It also needs to be noted that the effect of social class on motivational and self-regulatory factors and autonomous behaviour varies. The most important influence of social class can be detected in the case of self-efficacy. Both upper-middle class and high social class students differed from the students from other social classes with regard to the strength of beliefs they held about the ultimate success of their language learning efforts. Bandura et al. (1996) also found that socio-economic factors had a direct effect on parents' academic aspirations for their children, which in turn exerted a substantial influence on students' academic self-efficacy. Moreover, as a substantial source of self-efficacy beliefs are vicarious experiences, that is observations of others performing a similar task successfully, students from upper-middle and high social classes can be expected to see many more examples of highly proficient second language users in their environment than students of lower socio-economic standing. Self-efficacy is an important precursor to learning achievement (Bandura, 1986) and the important role of self-efficacy beliefs in language learning has also been shown (Mills, Pajares & Heron, 2007; Woodrow, 2006).

The effect of social class on learners' Ideal L2 self, that is on the vision of the future success of their language acquisition processes, shows similarities with self-efficacy beliefs, although in the case of the Ideal L2 self the effect of social class is only in the medium range. The Ideal L2 self also acts as a significant motivating factor in language learning, as a vision of future achievement can act as an important driving force (Dörnyei, 2009). The descriptive

and inferential statistics in our study, however, suggest that in the investigated Chilean context it is only students from the high and upper-middle social classes who are confident about the success of their language learning outcomes, and the students who belong to lower social classes are not highly optimistic about their future language competence. Similar to our results, Lamb (2012) also found that students in rural areas who were mostly from lower social classes had weaker visions of themselves as successful users of English in the future. These findings lend support to Oyserman and Fryberg's (2006) hypothesis that when students do not encounter role models in their particular social context in a given academic domain, "possible selves in this domain are likely to be missing entirely or will be so global as to be useless as a self-regulatory mechanism" (p. 23).

The results reveal a medium effect of social class on two important language learning goals: international posture and instrumental motivation, which confirms previous findings in the field of foreign language learning motivation research that social context exerts an influence on goal setting behaviour (Carr & Pauwels, 2006; Dörnyei et al., 2006; Gayton, 2012, Lamb, 2012). It is interesting to note, however, that different forms of learning behaviour measured in our survey such as motivated and self-regulated behaviour are only slightly affected by social class. Participants of this survey regardless of social class scored in the average or below average range on these two scales. This indicates that Chilean secondary school students do not seem to invest sufficient effort and energy into learning English. A parallel finding to this is that the participants use learning resources on their own initiative rather infrequently and the application of learning technology for fostering language learning is even less frequent. This may be due to the persistence of rather teacher-centred lessons and a reliance on outdated methods of teaching such as the grammar translation method in the Chilean education system. For many students, the learning of English is not an enjoyable activity within itself, but one which they have been required to persist at for many years with

negligible levels of success. Another important consideration is that English proficiency is not currently one of the measurements in the pre-university tests which all students must take if they wish to gain a place at university, and which universities use to select students.

To summarize, in the present study we surveyed the English language learning motivations of 740 secondary school students belonging to different social classes in the capital of Chile, Santiago. We applied multiple analyses of variance to investigate how motivational variables differ depending on students' class. The results suggest that social class has an overall medium-size effect on motivational factors with self-efficacy beliefs being the most strongly influenced by socio-economic status. The most important differences in motivation, self-regulation and learner autonomy were found between upper-middle and high social class students on the one hand and low and lower middle class students on the other hand, which we explained with reference to the inequality created by the Chilean schooling system.

This research, however, is not without limitations. First of all, the findings are constrained in their generalizability as they are representative of the capital city of Chile only. The educational context in rural areas in this country and in other parts of the South-American continent is very different from the situation that one can observe in large metropolitan cities. Even though it is possible that the results have applicability in other large cities in South-America, further research in other regions on the continent would be necessary as countries greatly differ in their educational systems and international relations. Nevertheless, we hope that the exploration of the language learning processes of socially-disadvantaged students will become part of the research agenda in the field of SLA and the understanding of the motivational and language learning profile of these learners will help to eliminate inequality in education.

Notes

[1] Due to data protection reasons and to the fact that the survey of socio-economic status was carried out earlier and independently of the current research, we only had access to the final categorization and to the criteria that were used.

[2] The data was checked against the critical Mahalanobis distance value for 12 dependent variables (32.91), which showed that there were no outliers ($p < .001$). All the scatterplots of the variables were linearly correlated. The criterion of lack of multicollinearity was met as no inter-correlation values above .7 were found among the factors. The Box's Test of Equality of Variance Matrices showed that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated ($p = .43$).

References

Atay, G. & Kurt, D. (2010). The socio-educational model of second language acquisition: The Turkish context . *Procedia, Social and Behavioural Sciences, 2,* 3088-3093.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: the exercise of control.* New York: W. H. Freeman.

Bandura, A. , Barbaranelli, C., Caprara, G. V., Pastorelli, C. (1996). Multifaceted impact of self-efficacy beliefs on academic functioning. *Child Development, 67,* 1206-1222.

Benson, P. (2001). *Teaching and researching learner autonomy in language learning*. London: Longman.

Benson, P. (2007). Autonomy in language teaching and learning. *Language Teaching, 40,* 21-40.

Blin, F. (2004). CALL and the development of learner autonomy: Towards an activity-theoretical perspective. *ReCALL, 16,* 377-395.

Carr, J., & Pauwells, A. (2006). *Boys and foreign language learning. Real boys don't do foreign languages.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Clément , R., & Kruidenier, B. G. (1983). Orientations in second language acquisition: I. The effects of ethnicity, milieu, and target language on their emergence. *Language Learning, 33,* 273- 291.

Corno, L. (1993). The best-laid plans: Modern conceptions of volition and educational research. *Educational Researcher, 22,* 14-22.

Corno, L., & Kanfer, R. (1993). The role of volition in learning and performance. *Review of Research in Education, 21,* 301-341.

Csizér, K., & Dörnyei, Z. (2005). The internal structure of language learning motivation and its relationship with language choice and learning effort. *Modern Language Journal, 89*, 19-36.

Csizér, K., & Kormos, J. (2009). Modelling the role of inter-cultural contact in the motivation of learning English as a foreign language. *Applied Linguistics, 30*, 166-185.

Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and researching motivation* (2nd ed.). Harlow: Longman.

Deci, E. L., Koestner, R., & Ryan, R. M. (1999). A meta-analytic review of experiments examining the effects of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation. *Child Development, 72,* 1135-1150.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behaviour*. New York: Plenum.

Dörnyei, Z. (1994). Motivation and motivating in a foreign language. *Modern Language Journal, 78*, 273-284.

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 motivational self-system. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9-42). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z., Csizér, K., & Németh, N. (2006). *Motivational dynamics, language attitudes and language globalisation: A Hungarian perspective*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (Eds) (2009). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 Self*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Fan, W. (2011). Social influences, school motivation and gender differences: An application of the expectancy-value theory. *Educational Psychology Review, 31,* 157–175.

Fonseka, E. A. G. (2003). Autonomy in a resource-poor setting: Enhancing the carnivalesque. In D. Palfreyman & R. C. Smith (Eds.), *Learner autonomy across cultures: Language education perspectives* (pp. 147-163). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.

Gardner, R. C. (2006). The socio-educational model of second language acquisition: A research paradigm. *EUROSLA Yearbook, 6,* 237-260.

Gardner, R., & Lambert, W. (1959). Motivational variables in second language acquisition. *Canadian Journal of Psychology, 13,* 266–272.

Gardner, R. C., Masgoret, A-M., & Tremblay, P. F. (1999). Home background characteristics and second language learning. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology 18*, 419-437.

Hu, G. (2003). English language teaching in China: Regional differences and contributing factors. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 24,* 290–318.

Iwaniec, J. (2010). Motivation questionnaire for Polish learners of English. Unpublished document. Lancaster University, UK.

Jenkins, J. (2007). *English as a Lingua Franca: attitude and identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kormos, J., & Csizér, K. (2008). Age-related differences in the motivation of learning English as a foreign language: Attitudes, selves and motivated learning behaviour. *Language Learning, 58*, 327-355.

Kormos, J. & Csizér, K. (in preparation). The interaction of motivation, self-regulatory strategies, and autonomous learning behavior in different learner groups. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Kormos J., Kiddle, T., & Csizér, K. (2011). Goals, attitudes and self-related beliefs in second language learning motivation : an interactive model of language learning motivation. *Applied Linguistics, 32,* 495-516.

Kuhl, J. (1985). Volitional mediators of cognition-behaviour consistency: Self-regulatory processes and action versus state orientation. In J. Kuhl and J. Beckmann (Eds.), *Action control: From cognition to behaviour*. (pp.101-128). Berlin: Springer.

Lamb, M. (2012). A self-system perspective on young adolescents' motivation to learn English in rural and urban settings. *Language Learning, 62,* 997-1023.

Littlewood, W. (1999). Defining and developing autonomy in East Asian contexts. *Applied Linguistics, 20,* 71-94.

Masgoret, A-M., & Gardner, R. C. (2003). Attitudes, motivation and second language learning: A meta-analysis of studies conducted by Gardner and associates. *Language Learning, 53,* 123-163.

Mills, N. A., Pajares, F. & Herron, C. (2007). Self-efficacy of college intermediate French students: Relation to achievement and motivation. *Language Learning, 57,* 417-442.

Muñoz, C. (2008). Symmetries and asymmetries of age effects in naturalistic and instructed L2 learning. *Applied Linguistics 29,* 578-96.

Nikolov, M. (2009). Early modern foreign language programmes and outcomes: Factors contributing to Hungarian learners' proficiency. In M. Nikolov (Ed.), *Early learning of modern foreign languages* (pp. 90-107). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Noels, K. (2001). New orientations in language learning motivation: Towards a model of intrinsic extrinsic, and integrative orientations and motivations. In Z. Dörnyei, & R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and second language acquisition* (Technical Report #23, pp. 43-68). Honolulu, HI: The University of Hawai'i, Second Language & Curriculum Center.

OECD (2011). *Divided we Stand: Why inequality keeps rising.* Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/document/51/0,3746,en_2649_33933_49147827_1_1_1_1,00.html

Okagaki, L. (2001) Triarchic model of minority children's school achievement *Educational Psychologist 36,* 9-20.

Oxford, R. L. (2003). Toward a more systematic model of L2 learner autonomy. In D. Palfreyman & R. C. Smith (Eds.), *Learner autonomy across cultures: Language education perspectives* (pp.75-91). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Oyserman, D., & Fryberg, S. (2006). The possible selves of diverse adolescents: Content and function across gender, race and national origin. In C. Dunkel & J. Kerpelman (Eds.), *Possible selves: Theory, research and applications* (pp. 17–40). New York: Nova Science Publishers.

Peirce, B. N. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly 29,* 9-31.

Pintrich, P. R., & De Groot, E. V. (1990). Motivation and self-regulated learning components of academic performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 82,* 33-40.

PISA (2003). *Learning for tomorrow's world—First results from Pisa 2003.* OECD Publishing.

Ryan, S. (2009). Self and identity in L2 motivation in Japan: The Ideal L2 self and Japanese learners of English. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 120-141). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Seidlhofer, B. (2005). English as a lingua franca. *ELT Journal*, 59, 339-341.

Sirin, S. R. (2005). Socioeconomic status and academic achievement: A meta-analytic review of research. *Review of Educational Research, 75,* 417-453.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000). *Linguistic genocide in education- or worldwide diversity and human rights?* Mahwah: NJ.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Taguchi, T., Magid, M., & Papi, M. (2009). The L2 motivational self system among Japanese, Chinese and Iranian learners of English: A comparative study. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 66-97). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Tremblay, P. F., & Gardner, R. C. (1995). Expanding the motivation construct in language learning. *Modern Language Journal, 79,* 505-518.

Zimmerman, B. J. (1998). Developing self-fulfilling cycles of academic regulation: An analysis of exemplary instructional models. In D. H. Schunk & B. J. Zimmerman (Eds.), *Self-regulated learning: From teaching to self-reflective practice* (pp. 1-19). New York: Guilford Press.

Widdowson H.G. (1993). The ownership of English. IATEFL Annual Conference Report, Plenaries 1993. Whitstable: IATEFL.

Williams, M., & Burden, L. R. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wolfram Alpha Curated Data (2009), Wolfram Mathematica City Data, http://www76.wolframalpha.com, retrieved 11/6/09

Woodrow, L. (2006). A model of adaptive language learning. *Modern Language Journal, 90,* 297-319.

Yashima, T. (2002). Willingness to communicate in a second language: The Japanese EFL context. *Modern Language Journal, 86*, 54-66.

Zimmerman, B. J (2008). Goal setting: A key proactive source of academic self-regulation. In D. H. Schunk, & B. J Zimmerman (Eds.) *Motivation and self-regulated learning: Theory, research and applications* (pp. 267-295). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Table 1 Differences in motivational variables based on socio-economic status

Variable	Socio-economic status	Mean	SD	F	Eta squared	Group differences at p <0.01
Ideal L2 self	Low	3.30	1.01	26.83**	0.12	UM - L, LM, M
	Lower middle	3.32	1.17			H- L, LM, M
	Middle	3.47	0.98			
	Upper middle	3.99	0.89			
	High	4.18	0.76			
	Total	3.63	1.06			
International	Low	3.93	0.90	16.03**	0.07	M - L
posture	Lower middle	4.04	1.02			UM - L, LM
	Middle	4.29	0.79			H - L, LM
	Upper middle	4.50	0.54			
	High	4.50	0.57			
	Total	4.23	0.85			
Instrumental	Low	3.29	0.92	11.62**	0.06	UM - L, LM
motivation	Lower middle	3.38	1.01			H- L, LM
	Middle	3.52	0.95			
	Upper middle	3.92	0.75			
	High	3.77	0.80			
	Total	3.55	0.93			
Intrinsic	Low	3.52	0.91	9.07**	0.04	UM - L, LM
motivation	Lower middle	3.77	0.99			H - L
	Middle	3.81	0.88			
	Upper middle	4.17	0.80			
	High	3.98	0.79			
	Total	3.84	0.91			
Motivated	Low	3.22	0.75	3.54**	0.02	
behaviour	Lower middle	3.28	0.80			
	Middle	3.30	0.60			
	Upper middle	3.48	0.54			
	High	3.44	0.56			
	Total	3.34	0.68			
Self-regulation	Low	2.84	0.88	3.26*	0.01	
	Lower middle	2.98	1.03			
	Middle	2.93	0.87			
	Upper middle	3.25	0.75			
	High	2.91	0.75			
	Total	2.97	0.89			

Self-efficacy beliefs	Low	3.20	0.89	37.88**	0.16	UM - L, LM, M
	Lower middle	3.27	1.02			H- L, LM, M
	Middle	3.45	0.90			
	Upper middle	3.87	0.80			
	High	4.19	0.68			
	Total	3.58	0.97			
Parental encouragement	Low	3.38	1.02	16.72**	0.08	UM - L, LM, M
	Lower middle	3.62	1.16			H- L, LM, M
	Middle	3.59	1.06			
	Upper middle	4.14	0.88			
	High	4.17	0.85			
	Total	3.78	1.06			
Peer pressure	Low	3.15	0.63	9.13**	0.05	UM - L, LM, M
	Lower middle	3.22	0.78			H- L, LM, M
	Middle	3.19	0.60			
	Upper middle	3.51	0.61			
	High	3.47	0.46			
	Total	3.30	0.66			
Satiation control	Low	2.76	0.74	6.22**	0.03	UM - L, LM
	Lower middle	2.88	0.90			H- L
	Middle	3.00	0.81			
	Upper middle	3.23	0.75			
	High	3.09	0.79			
	Total	2.97	0.83			
Independent use of technology	Low	2.22	0.83	4.71**	0.02	UM - L, LM
	Lower middle	2.23	1.02			
	Middle	2.39	1.06			
	Upper middle	2.68	1.02			
	High	2.33	0.91			
	Total	2.34	0.97			
Independent use of resources	Low	3.40	0.93	5.68**	0.03	UM - L, LM, H
	Lower middle	3.44	1.07			
	Middle	3.57	0.81			
	Upper middle	3.87	0.78			
	High	3.38	0.89			
	Total	3.50	0.95			

L – low social class, LM – lower middle class, M – Middle class, UM – Upper middle class, H – High social class

* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.001$