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Love or Money? Reinterpreting Traditional Motivational Dimensions in Modern Social and Economic Contexts

Virág Csillagh

Abstract Categorising language learning motives according to their sources or directions is an essential aspect of traditional L2 motivation theory, and the most influential of all such dimensions is the external-internal continuum. The chapter discusses dominant conceptualisations of the dichotomy from the perspective of modern learning contexts, which represent considerable challenges to traditional approaches to L2 motivation. Based on Dörnyei's model of motivation as a continuous, dynamic process of identity construction and reinforcement, the present study explores the question of how aspects of the self interact with elements of the social and economic environment. In order to investigate the impact of contextual influences on Swiss university students' attitudes to English, the study adopts an interdisciplinary perspective, complementing the analysis of L2 motivational phenomena with concepts and findings from the field of language economics. The results are indicative of the role that social and economic factors play in forming participants' attitudes and self-concept, and attest to the potential of applying interdisciplinary approaches to the study of contextual influences on language learning.

Keywords Motivation · Self · Language economics · Value · Plurilingualism

1 Introduction

Traditional approaches to L2 motivation theory classify motives according to their sources or directions and test these models through empirical tools. However, recent developments in the field indicate that twenty-first century L2 learning is a complex dynamic process which calls for flexible theoretical frameworks and interdisciplinary perspectives in research design (cf. Dörnyei, MacIntyre, & Henry, 2015).

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During a recent panel discussion (Dörnyei, Noels, Ushioda, Lamb, & Kormos, 2014), lead theorists agreed that different approaches are to complement one another, since they are the pieces of the puzzle that represents L2 motivation theory as a whole. Therefore, after a brief overview of traditional motivational concepts, the present review moves on to examine the potential of an interdisciplinary approach using tools from the field of language economics. A relatively new branch of economics, this emerging discipline investigates interactions between economic and linguistic phenomena. Subsequent sections also discuss the findings of a questionnaire study of Swiss university students' language skills and attitudes in the light of current contextual and economic trends.

2 The Internal-External Dimension in L2 Motivation

The origin or the direction of the learning motive has long been the focus of motivation theory. The *intrinsic-extrinsic* dichotomy, as an element of Self-Determination Theory (SDT; cf. Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000), became one of the most influential approaches to learning behaviour in the twentieth century. According to this model, since internal motives are the result of genuine interest and desire, they represent a greater motivational power. However, as Sugita McEown, Noels, and Chaffee (2014) point out, the two poles of the dichotomy should not be regarded as distinct, mutually exclusive motivational regulators but rather as two axes of a more complex system. In SDT, this is captured by the concept of *internalisation*, the process through which external influences become part of learners' internal drive (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Gardner's Socio-Educational Model (SEM; Gardner, 1985, 2001) offers a slightly different view of internal-external influences. It conceptualises L2 learners' most important internal orientation as an *integrative* attitude towards a native speaker target group. External influences in the SEM are gathered under the concept of *instrumentality*, which refers to the utilitarian aspects of language proficiency, from financial gains to being able to communicate abroad or enjoy content in the language. Even a cursory comparison of these two models raises the question of compatibility. In an in-depth overview, Sugita McEown et al. (2014) draw attention to a large pool of empirical results that not only indicate a strong relationship between integrativeness and intrinsic motivation but also closely link an integrative disposition to more self-determined forms of extrinsic influences. The authors conclude that the connections between the two models are bound to be more complex.

Interestingly, however, both models demonstrate an essential feature of language learning and an increasingly relevant theme in theoretical thinking: the interplay of individual and contextual factors. This becomes even clearer if one considers that integrativeness, a representation of the convergence of innate aspirations and obligations, has been repeatedly shown as a major motivating factor in second language (SL) environments. On the other hand, the question that ensues is how this

convergence manifests itself in foreign language (FL) contexts, where integration into a target language community is often not a relevant goal.

While most of the literature uses the term *L2* motivation to refer to language learning in general, SL contexts differ from FL environments in a number of ways. The most important of these is that the latter often lack a clearly defined, pertinent or attractive target group to which learners could adhere. Moreover, in some settings, such as the Swiss one discussed in this chapter, relationships among the different SLs and FLs, in different social and economic roles respectively, further enrich the language learning milieu and render the issue of L2 motivation research even more complex. In this chapter, I continue to refer to all languages learned in an educational setting as L2s unless a distinction is to be made as regards the presence of a salient target language community.

3 A Dynamic View of Motivation in FL Contexts

In order to account for the complexity of FL learning environments, the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2009) proposes a reinterpretation of the integrative motive. It defines motivation as a continuous, dynamic process of identity construction and reinforcement. The *ideal L2 self*, a central element of the model, measures the strength of learners' self-vision (cf. Dörnyei, 2014) and amalgamates a number of influential motives traditionally considered internal, intrinsic or integrative. On the other hand, the *ought-to L2 self* represents external influences through individuals' perceptions of the different expectations they are faced with as language learners and members of certain communities, which might range from very close and local to distant and international. While empirical tests have constantly showed the ideal L2 self as an important predictor of learning effort, the ought-to L2 self has been more difficult to capture. This might reflect the power of internalisation, since the ought-to L2 self was often identified as a predictor, or even constituent, of the ideal L2 self (Csizér & Kormos, 2009).

The relationships between the self-guides and motivated learning behaviour highlight the complexity of the interplay between internal and external factors and FL learners' motivation. From an even more comprehensive point of view, Ushioda (2009) argues for a *person-in context* view of motivation, which centres on the individual but also takes into account the multitude of contexts that a person participates in. Undoubtedly, the economic milieu is often part of this network of contexts, and language economics, an emerging field focusing on the interplay of economic and linguistic phenomena, offers valuable tools and insights into its influence.

4 Language Learning, Economic Value and Motivation

Language economics "refers to the paradigm of mainstream theoretical economics and uses the concepts and tools of economics in the study of relationships featuring linguistic variables" (Grin, 2003, p. 16). Although economic elements in this concrete sense are not part of traditional L2 motivation discourse, there is good argument to be made for the use of such tools in the investigation of contextual influences. Economic concerns regarding the special status of English worldwide have serious implications for the teaching and learning of not only English but other languages as well. Therefore, it is worth examining the motivational impact of these global processes in the light of the basic principles of economic theory.

4.1 A System of Values

At the heart of any economic approach lies the intricate relationship between supply and demand, and the case of languages is no exception. However, due to their particular nature as social constructs and their qualitative characteristics, language skills hardly fit into the conventional typology of a marketable, exchangeable commodity. Perhaps the best way to illustrate this uniqueness is through the examination of economic *value* as it is applied to language. Language economists propose a complex system of values, displayed in Table 1.

Relying on well-established constructs in economic analysis, Grin (1999, 2003) categorises the different *values* associated with language proficiency, such as financial gains and more abstract benefits like the enrichment of individual or social culture, along two central dimensions. On the one hand, *market value* is distinguished from *non-market value*, separating financial gains from other types of benefits. On the other hand, according to their level of impact, values can be further categorised as either *individual* or *social*. In economic analysis, generally the sum of individual benefits equals, with some extra calculations, the total of social gains.

However, languages, anchored in their social and economic milieu, represent more complex systems. Thus, the equation cannot be upheld without factoring in a number of variables, many of which, such as the fluctuations of the market value of language skills due to changes in the number of speakers in a given community, are difficult to gauge or simply unavailable to the analyst (Grin, 2003). Moreover, languages play an important role in complex economic and social processes that surpass national boundaries (cf. Crystal, 2003), rendering the computability of the overall market value of language skills difficult, if not impossible. In addition, while

Table 1 The four values in language economics, adapted from Grin (2003)

Individual market value	Social market value
Individual non-market value	Social non-market value

some benefits can clearly be classified as market- or non-market-related, others are more complex than to fit into these categories. Therefore, language economics does not aim to calculate *the overall value of any given language*. Rather, it focuses on investigating market values both at the individual level, in the form of salary differentials (Grin, 1999), and at the social level, by comparing state investment and gross domestic product (GDP) (Grin & Sfreddo, 1997).

L2 motivation research takes a slightly different perspective. By definition, it is mainly concerned with private values, of which societal benefits are sometimes considered a part. On the other hand, both market and non-market values are central to motivation research, with considerable emphasis on their relationships. While both external and internal motives have non-market aspects, market values have been mostly associated with the extrinsic or instrumental dimension. The most important difference between psycholinguistic and economic perspectives is in the conceptualisation of value. Whereas motivation research is essentially based on learners' perceptions, language economics defines the net economic value of a language according to the fundamental laws of supply and demand (Grin, personal communication, October 2, 2014).

Language skills are considered to possess economic value if they are in demand and are compensated accordingly. Therefore, in strictly economic terms, in order to be deemed profitable, a system of language education is required to produce such skills of an overall value outweighing the cost of investment. Consequently, the notion of *efficiency* is introduced, so as to measure the profitability of policies inside and outside the educational system (Grin, 1999). The dynamics of efficiency, both *internal* and *external*, are shown in Fig. 1.

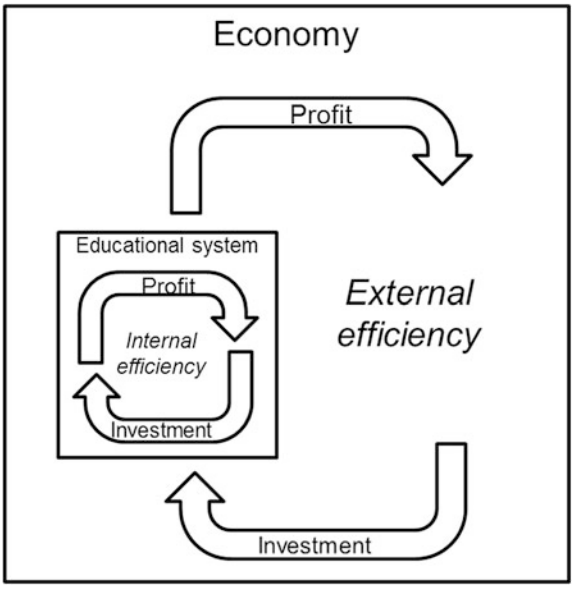

Fig. 1 Economic efficiency in education (based on Grin, 1999, 2003)

As the difficulties of assessing the overall value of skills in a given language demonstrate, there are considerable limits to analysing linguistic phenomena using an exclusively economic approach. Nevertheless, it is also evident that economic aspects form an integral part of modern language learning contexts. Moreover, economic considerations are inherent to theories of language learning and motivation, manifest not only in different conceptualisations of internal and external motives but also in notions of *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu, 1991) and *investment* (Norton, 2013).

4.2 Love or Money? Economic Aspects of L2 Motivation

Although the current economic status of English is often considered as an inherent aspect of teaching and learning the language (Crystal, 2003), there is little empirical research investigating its impact on learners' motivation. Nonetheless, the above discussion of economic concepts finds an echo in L2 motivation research findings. First of all, there is a clear link between economic values and the external-internal dimension of language learning motives. While integrativeness and the ideal L2 self incorporate first and foremost individual non-market values, market benefits are an important part of the aspired identity. Market values are also an essential component of instrumentality and, indirectly, of the ought-to L2 self, since financial benefits are often part of the argument for learning English. Although motives are generally driven by individual goals, social values often play an indirect role in learners' attitudes, with the Swiss context, discussed in the following section, being a perfect example.

Secondly, investment and efficiency are not alien concepts to L2 motivation theory. Motivation by definition implies investment (see Norton, 2013) on the part of the learner, both in terms of effort and time, but also in terms of other, often costly, resources. The learning process is thus efficient if it brings sufficient returns, that is, if certain language goals are achieved. As Fig. 2 demonstrates, the dynamics used to describe language education as part of the economic system can also be applied to analyse processes of language teaching and learning, where motivation becomes key to efficiency.

In summary, economic concerns have never been far from issues of language education, and their influence in mainstream motivation theory is unmistakable. As learners are inseparable from their cultural and economic milieu, these contexts have important reflections in their self-concepts. Therefore, as Csizér (2012) who laments the lack of interdisciplinary approaches in second language acquisition (SLA) research training has also claimed, I would argue for more studies investigating the link between the economic setting and L2 motivation. While recent years have seen an increase in initiatives to bring together different perspectives in language learning motivation research (cf. Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009; Dörnyei et al., 2015), the field continues to offer little in terms of projects merging the instruments and the benefits of seemingly distant disciplines. The study presented in the

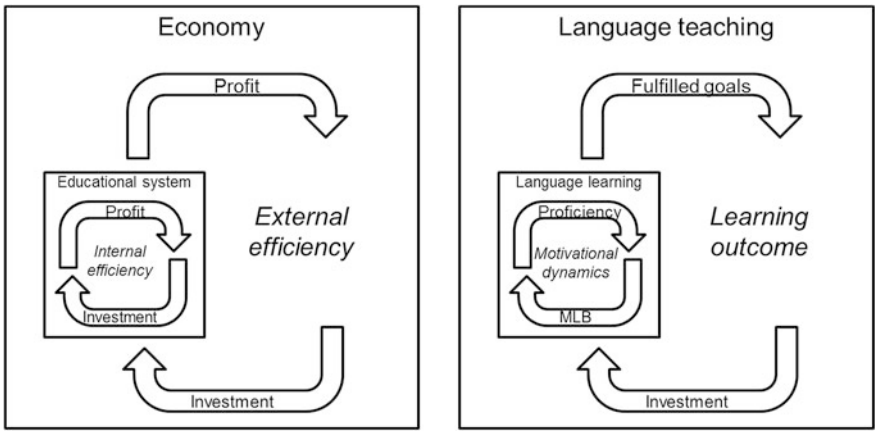

Fig. 2 Economic efficiency (cf. Fig. 1) as applied to the subsystem of language education. *Note* MLB stands for motivated learning behaviour

following sections takes a step towards that direction, examining university students' language skills and attitudes in the light of the educational context and recent findings of language economics.

5 Languages in Switzerland: A Story of Diversity

The history of the language issue in Switzerland goes back to the time of Napoleon, under whose reign the three language regions (German, Italian and French) were united by force, and the first plurilingual state was formed (Elmiger & Forster, 2005). Although that confederation was short lived, the 1848 Constitution of the new nation state reinstated the three-language policy. Today, with four official languages (German, French, Italian and Romansh, which was added in 1938), the Swiss context is arguably among the most intriguing ones in terms of FL learning.

While the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (CDIP) coordinates policies and issues recommendations, regulations on language, culture and education are formulated at the cantonal level. Therefore, the 1999 Constitution (cited in Grin, 2010, p. 67) lists twenty-two monolingual cantons. The seventeen German-speaking and four French-speaking cantons are separated by the *Röstigraben*, the mythical border dividing Switzerland into two culturally and linguistically different regions, in addition to the single Italian-speaking canton of Ticino. Furthermore, in the three bilingual cantons, both official documents and road signs demonstrate this duality, while the trilingual canton of Grisons (Graubünden in German, Grischun in written Romansh) has been the centre of the

fight for the preservation of Romansh and the initiative to support plurilingualism (cf. Grin, 2010). Last but far from least, in cantons like Geneva, foreign residents account for a considerable number of the population, which further enriches the linguistic landscape of the country.

5.1 Speaking Swiss

According to the 2000 census data, 63.7% of the population in Switzerland are German L1 speakers, while 20.4% declared French, 6.5% Italian and .5% Romansh as their mother tongue (Lüdi & Werlen, 2005). Although in this case participants were allowed only one option, eliminating the possibility of bilingualism, questions on family languages elicited comparable answers. In addition, in German-speaking cantons, 80.5% of all respondents and 90.8% of Swiss residents speak a Swiss German dialect (or *the dialect*) but not Standard German at home (Lüdi & Werlen, 2005).

These figures showcase an intricate balance, which, as Elmiger and Forster (2005) explain, is the result of a long history of Swiss German dialects living alongside Standard German. The former have always been a metaphor for the home and everyday life, while the latter traditionally represented the professional sphere until *schwyzertütsch* started gaining ground and became an emblem of Swiss ideological and economic independence in the twentieth century and gradually replaced Standard German in a number of contexts. As local varieties have become all but in name the main language of German-speaking cantons, French speakers start to question the usefulness of learning Standard German.

Foreigners comprise one fifth of the country's population, and many of them live in the highly multilingual French-speaking areas, where 18.4% of residents have a mother tongue other than French (Lüdi & Werlen, 2005). Most foreigners speak one of the official Swiss languages as an L1, French or Italian being a more frequent choice than German, while 37.7% of them use a non-official language at home (ibid). Multilingualism at this scale raises the question of whether, indeed, a common language can be found.

Scholars like Heller (2003) have suggested that the use of English could be a solution to the challenges of such contexts. However, investigating Swiss firms, Lüdi, Barth, Höchle, and Yanaprasart (2009) found that linguistic policies as well as employees' language practices reflect a different reality in which diversity and even linguistic virtuosity play an important role. Murray, Wegmüller, and Khan (2001) conclude that, in Switzerland, English is a resource rarely resorted to as a lingua franca. Furthermore, they emphasise the lack of empirical data supporting claims of a future where English becomes more prevalent in Swiss communication (ibid). Studies conducted under the DYLAN project (Berthoud, Grin, & Lüdi, 2013) discuss the economic and social benefits of cultural and linguistic diversity, lending further support to the argument for plurilingualism.

5.2 *Plurilingualism, the Swiss Form of Multilingualism*

The term *plurilingualism* stands for more than the mere coexistence of the four official languages and many dialects. Plurilingualism, which entails equality among different languages and speakers' awareness of the linguistic and social interrelationships of these languages, is an emblem of modern Europe and an inherent aspect of Swiss national identity (Breidbach, 2003). Consequently, in line with recommendations issued by the Council of Europe, it has become a term of reference in Swiss education and language policy, with visible effects on language use and teaching practices at various institutional levels (Elmiger & Forster, 2005). In its institutional form, plurilingualism also provides the necessary basis for both federal and cantonal language policies. On the other hand, as a skill, it is often regarded as the life blood of the country's economy.

Lüdi et al. (2009) observe that plurilingual practices are essential in professional communication in all linguistic regions, as many firms operate across linguistic borders and in multilingual contexts. Individual plurilingualism of staff members is, therefore, key to their proper functioning, and employers and employees navigate this delicate situation through the use of corporate guidelines and plurilingual communication techniques respectively. The latter seem especially effective in successfully resolving communicative situations where no common language is available. Although the policy relative to these instances recommends the use of Standard German, employees often use a combination of languages to bridge the gap (ibid). Non-local languages are often used in all three linguistic regions (Grin, Sfreddo, & Vaillancourt, 2009). In French-speaking areas, German is used on a daily basis by 29.9% of employees, English by 27.5% and Italian by 11.8%, while 13% of all professional communication takes place in English, 10% in German and 2% in Italian (ibid).

Statistics show that if, from one day to the next, all residents who speak another official language became monolingual, the loss could amount to as much as 10% of the country's GDP (Grin et al., 2009). However, plurilingualism is more than a professional practice, and Grin (2014) argues that, as a political entity, Switzerland exists mainly on the basis of active cooperation among linguistic regions but even more importantly on the *willingness* to put such cooperation into place. In a recent blog post, the former spokesperson for the State Councillor of the canton of Vaud, Chantal Tauxe (2014), called plurilingualism a pillar of Swiss national identity and expressed her concerns over changes in language education policy that might damage this balance. Recent events indeed seem to suggest a growing interest in English as opposed to Swiss official languages. L2 teaching in Switzerland will now be discussed from the perspective of the plurilingual context and its relevance to the country's economy.

5.3 Foreign Language Teaching

First of all, it is important to note that, regardless of their status or target community, all languages taught in Switzerland are treated as FLs both in policy documents and in daily practice. Secondly, a historical overview (Elmiger & Forster, 2005) clearly demonstrates the impact that the emergence of English as an international language has had on Swiss language education policies. Built on the principle of promoting understanding among Swiss citizens put forward by the CDIP in 1975, language education in the different cantons traditionally favoured the other official languages, mainly German or French but also Italian. In 1997, however, the canton of Zurich announced its intention of introducing English as the first FL, opening a series of debates.

The reform took effect in 1999, requiring primary schools to teach English and one more obligatory language, with a third language as an option. One official language was still mandatory, although the order of introduction was not specified. The CDIP subsequently appointed regional Conferences to evaluate the proposal and design the new framework, which gradually introduced the same changes all over the country.

In 2014, the cantons of Nidwalden and Thurgau also established English as the first FL to be taught at primary school, relegating French to the second place and reigniting the debate. Grin (2014) addresses the arguments in favour of English as the more 'pragmatic' option over Swiss official languages, pointing out that not only might hopes put into the early introduction of English be misplaced but that abandoning or even postponing official language instruction might have dire sociological, political and economic consequences.

Since FL education constitutes CHF 1.5 billion of the yearly federal budget (Grin & Sfreddo, 1997), economic considerations are, indeed, far from negligible. Earlier I argued that individual plurilingualism and especially skills in official languages are key to the country's economy. However, they are also a major source of financial benefits at the individual level. A recent study of more than 2,000 companies and of over 1,000 employees revealed that, in business dealings across linguistic borders, official languages were used more often than English (Andres et al., 2005). Similarly, in the French-speaking cantons, German skills were in higher demand than English (54 against 42%), while, across the language border, French was even more sought after (77% as opposed to 51% for English) (Grin et al., 2009).

Revenue differentials showed a similar pattern. In French-speaking Switzerland, proficiency in English resulted in an average salary increase of 10%, whereas German skills were rewarded by a raise of 14% (Grin, 1999). In the German-speaking cantons, these figures amounted to 12% against 17% for English and French respectively. Thus, it can be concluded that, from an economic point of view, official languages represent a greater asset, and the premise of English as the 'pragmatic' choice is only a myth. The question, then, is whether Swiss university students are aware of this harsh reality. At the dawn of their professional career,

do students' attitudes towards English reflect the still considerable market value of the language or do their perceptions rely on non-market benefits of self-expression and international openness? In addition, in the light of their plurilingual background, do they respond to these questions differently than students in other contexts?

6 The Study

A few years ago, Dörnyei and Ushioda compiled a volume dedicated to the investigation of L2 motivation as a self-based, dynamic concept (2009). Although many of the research reports included focused on English, even a cursory comparison of the results reveals marked differences in learners' motivation in the different research settings mentioned in the book. This prompted the author of this chapter to design a study exploring a very special learning context, multilingual Geneva. It soon became apparent that not only is Swiss language learning influenced by the country's plurilingualism, but learners and teachers are also very much concerned about the economic issues underlying L2 education. A simple quantitative analysis of university students' attitudes towards English, therefore, developed into an exploratory project on the impact of these economic undercurrents. This change in scope inevitably introduced certain limitations on the conclusiveness of the study, which are discussed at the end of the chapter. Nevertheless, the results are indicative of the interplay between motivational and economic factors in this setting. Thus, they open new directions in the analysis of motivational phenomena and might generate some thoughts about the increasingly frequent questions concerning the learning and teaching of an international language.

In addition to a general enquiry into Swiss university students' motivational profile, the questionnaire study aimed to explore the relevance of the economic aspects of L2 learning in Switzerland to participants' attitudes through the following research questions:

1. Do university students' language skills correspond to labour market demand and to their plurilingual environment?
2. Do their attitudes and motivation towards English reflect global and/or local economic trends? If so, in what form?
3. Do students of various faculties differ in their language skills and attitudes towards English?
4. Do Swiss students have a different linguistic and motivational profile from their foreign peers?

7 Method

In order to answer these questions, an online questionnaire consisting of 102 items was created. The message containing the web link to the questionnaire was forwarded to students of four faculties at the University of Geneva during the fall of 2013 by the secretariats, teachers and student associations of these faculties. Students who consented to participate in the study were redirected to the LimeSurvey® platform (2012, V. 2.0), where data collection took place in complete anonymity. The data obtained were submitted to statistical analysis and compared with research results in language economics (see Sect. 11).

8 Participants

A total of 375 students at the University of Geneva from the Faculties of Law and Medicine, Sciences, and Economic and Social Sciences (SES, as of January 1, 2014 two separate entities) participated in the study. Their numbers are listed in Table 2 per faculty, mother tongue and L2 level reported. Seven students attended more than one of the four faculties and were thus excluded from the comparative analysis of these faculties. Of the 368 remaining participants, 25.5% attended the Faculty of Law, while 17.4% studied Medicine, and 40.8 and 16.3% were students at the faculties of Science and SES respectively. Low participation rates from the latter were due to difficulties in reaching out to these students. Female students represented 66.8% and male students the remaining 33.2%.

Respondents' answers reflect the multilingual setting of the study, as only 24 (6.4%) were completely monolingual. Competences in two languages were reported

Table 2 Participants grouped by gender, faculty and language proficiency

	Law	Medicine	Science	Economic and Social Sciences	Total
Male	27	20	52	23	122
Female	67	44	98	37	246
Total	**94**	**64**	**150**	**60**	**368**

L2 Level (scale option)	German	French	Italian	English	Other
A1 (1)	29	1	17	7	n/a
A2 (2)	34	3	13	14	n/a
B1 (3)	50	3	20	59	n/a
B2 (4)	48	10	14	74	n/a
C1 (5)	17	23	8	112	n/a
C2 (6)	9	62	4	62	n/a
Means L2	**3.09**	**5.32**	**2.93**	**4.39**	**n/a**
Total L2 speakers	187	102	76	328	103
Total L1 speakers	25	291	25	21	98

by 68 students (18.1%), and 136 students (36.3%) spoke three and 106 (28.3%) four languages. Interestingly, as many as 35 participants (9.3%) had skills in five languages, and 6 students spoke six to eight languages. Although the majority of students were French L1 speakers, the results revealed trends of diversity. Other official languages corresponded to 13.3% and English to 5.6% of all L1 s, whereas 26.1% of respondents declared another non-national language as their mother tongue. Moreover, students could choose multiple answers, and while the majority of participants (i.e., 298) indicated only one L1, 69 (18.4%) reported two, with 6 having three and 2 four mother tongues respectively. Participants' ratings of their L2 skills on a six-point scale adapted from the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR; Council of Europe, 2001) were even more diverse and will be discussed in detail in the following section.

However, one interesting aspect of the language data that is worth mentioning here concerns the discrepancy between mother tongue and L2 learning on the one hand, and L2 speaking and L2 learning on the other. The results showed that various L1s were also mentioned in the category of L2s learned at the moment, and, reversely, some L2s were being learned but not spoken by respondents. German was among the most frequent languages (28) of the latter kind, after the languages categorized as *other* (36). In addition, Swiss German dialects were treated in the same category as German throughout the analysis.

Since nationality and citizenship are similarly complex issues in the Geneva context, participants who had taken their school-leaving exams in Switzerland were assigned the label *Swiss*, indicating that they had participated in foreign language classes in Switzerland during their upper secondary education. As expected, the majority of respondents (N = 256, 68.3%) belonged to this group, whereas 69 'foreign' students came from France, reflecting the social and economic ties between Geneva and the neighbouring regions of France. Participants came from all levels of university education and age groups (16–65), with an average age of 23. The majority of the Swiss students had completed their secondary studies in the canton of Geneva (187), and a similar number (191) were already engaged in a professional activity.

9 The Questionnaire

The three-part questionnaire was written in French and, after a brief introduction, started with questions on students' demographic and linguistic background, including the ones discussed above. The second section asked participants to rate various statements about English on five-point Likert scales, and in the third part (consisting of one scale, *Direct contact*) students chose one out of five options based on how often they used English in different activities. The 11 multiple-item scales in the last two sections were chosen based on previous studies in other contexts. They were further developed as part of the author's MA research in

Hungary and then translated and adapted to the Geneva context. Reliability scores and the number of questions included in the final analysis were the following:

(1) *Motivated learning behaviour* (3 questions; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; α = 0.755)
(2) *Ideal L2 self* (4 questions; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; α = 0.874)
(3) *Ought-to L2 self* (3 questions; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; α = 0.635)
(4) *Attitudes to learning English* (3 questions; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; α = 0.907)
(5) *Attitudes towards traditional target groups* (10 questions; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; α = 0.897)
(6) *International posture* (4 questions; Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Yashima, 2009; α = 0.736)
(7) *Ethnocentrism* (5 questions; Ryan, 2009; α = 0.805)
(8) *Global village* (4 questions; Csillagh, 2010; α = 0.806)
(9) *Willingness to communicate* (6 questions; McCroskey (n.d.); α = 0.933).
(10) *Perceived importance of contact* (3 questions; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; α = 0.763)
(11) *Direct contact* (21 questions; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; α = 0.894)

10 Analysis

Participants' answers were recorded through the university's LimeSurvey® platform (2012, V. 2.0) and exported to Microsoft Excel (2010), where cleaning and decoding took place. Reliability measures were controlled in SPSS® (2013, V. 22.0) and the software was used to compute scales. The results of the descriptive statistics and multivariate analysis are discussed in the next section.

11 Results and Discussion

In this chapter, I argue for the potential of applying interdisciplinary approaches to the study of motivational phenomena in order to better understand the impact of contextual influences. Therefore, the following discussion brings elements of language economics to the analysis of L2 motivation in the plurilingual context of Geneva. Although the design of the study, from the choice and composition of the scales to the statistical procedures involved, follows quantitative L2 motivation research traditions, the results obtained lend themselves to some noteworthy comparisons between university students' language attitudes and the economic reality of Swiss FL learning.

12 Foreign Language Skills

Swiss university students' language portfolio is highly plurilingual. On the whole, more than one in five (22.4%) students speak three L2s, more than an additional third (37.1%) reported skills in two L2s, and an extra 24.8% speak one L2. As seen in Table 2, Swiss official languages have an especially important role to play in this wide-spread plurilingualism.

A remarkable number of participants (187) speak German, most of them rating their proficiency level as B1–B2, which corresponds to the official school-leaving exam (*maturité*) requirements and is also the average level of German skills for the sample in this study. Many of them (53) continued to study German at the time of enquiry: after English, German was the most popular language currently learned. These results, firstly, underline the efficiency of German teaching in secondary education. Secondly, they indicate that university students are aware of the importance of German skills, which Grin et al. (2009) found to be in high demand in French-speaking Switzerland.

In addition, a considerable number of 76 (20%) participants spoke Italian as an L2. Interestingly, despite a more equal distribution, students' most frequent level of Italian was also B1. In their Italian skills, these students also possess a great asset, since more than one in four (26%) companies seek Italian speakers (ibid). French L2 speakers (102) in general rated their proficiency very high, which is understandable in a French-speaking context where these skills are basic requirements for employment and also for most university programs.

Unsurprisingly, English was by far the most popular L2 among participants. Altogether, 328 students spoke English as an L2, with an average level of B2, the highest after French. In addition, one third of them (112) mastered English at a remarkable C1 level. These figures characteristically surpass the demand expressed by companies (ibid), corresponding to global trends of market saturation. Therefore, it is questionable whether such high levels of English skills are sufficiently compensated by market-related gains either at the individual or the social level. At the same time, these results might also indicate intriguing underlying patterns of motivation that point beyond the appeal of financial benefits obtained through language proficiency.

In order to gauge L2 users' proficiency, native speakers and students with no competence were excluded from the above analysis. However, more focused analysis including participants who reported no skills in the language in question revealed interesting patterns. Swiss students ($N = 256$) consistently outperformed their international peers ($N = 119$) in the three official languages. This difference was statistically significant in the case of German ($p = 0.000$) and French ($p = 0.011$). Interestingly, there were no marked differences between the two groups in terms of English skills. The conclusion that Swiss participants were better geared to meet labour market L2 requirements might, on the one hand, testify to the merits of Swiss foreign language education. On the other hand, it also mitigates claims for abandoning national languages in favour of English in Swiss primary schools. The

interesting question is what role these different languages are allotted to in students' life, and whether students' attitudes towards German and English clearly mark the former as the pragmatic choice associated with market benefits and the latter as a means to self-expression and identity creation.

13 Differences Between Faculties

Not all vocations require the same level or combination of language skills, and a comparison of the different faculties, displayed in Fig. 3, indeed shows a remarkable pattern. Differences were statistically significant for French ($p = 0.014$), while Italian skills virtually disappeared with the inclusion of non-speakers. It is visible at a glance that French skills were strongest at the faculties of Law and Medicine, followed by the SES. Although not statistically significant, the figures for German ($p = 0.056$) suggest similar trends, indicating that Swiss official languages might belong to the same category. On the other hand, Law students also excelled at English ($p = 0.228$), with the SES ranking slightly higher than Medicine. However, as these differences were non-significant, it can be concluded that the study showed no clear distinction between faculties in terms of English skills. Finally, the faculty of Science ranked lowest on all three measures.

Table 3 shows that even the lowest figures for French at the faculties of Science and SES reached C1 level. Again, at all faculties, Swiss students' competence in French ($p = 0.011$) and German ($p = 0.000$) considerably surpassed their international counterparts, even though in the case of German the presence of 'false' L2 speakers (i.e., students who marked German both as an L1 and an L2) was negligible. Skills in English ($p = 1.000$) remained quite strong throughout all the sub-groups without any significant difference.

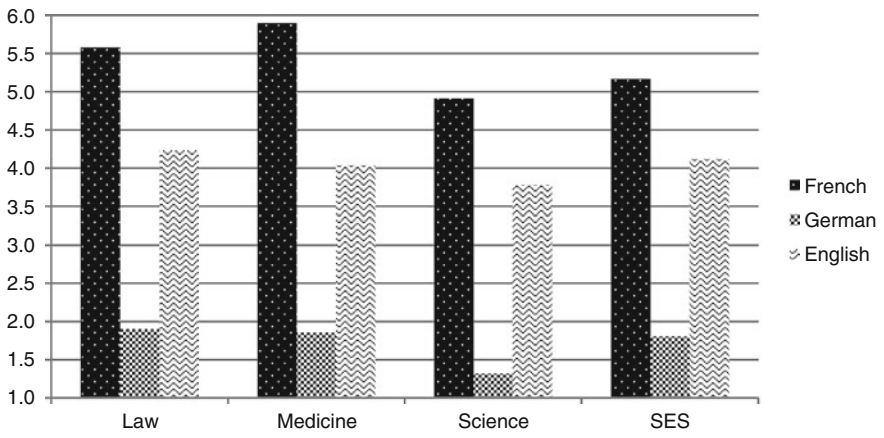

Fig. 3 Average foreign language levels by faculty

Table 3 Average foreign language levels per faculty and place of secondary education

Faculty	Place of secondary education		L2 levels (1 = A1, 6 = C2)			
			German	French	Italian	English
Law	Abroad	M	1.83	5.57	0.35	4.71
		N	23	14	23	21
		SD	1.90	0.65	1.11	1.19
	Switzerland	M	1.92	5.58	0.74	4.08
		N	66	24	65	65
		SD	1.89	1.10	1.54	1.97
Medicine	Abroad	M	1.79	6.00	0.07	3.80
		N	14	2	15	15
		SD	1.67	0.00	0.26	1.78
	Switzerland	M	1.88	5.88	0.98	4.11
		N	48	8	48	45
		SD	2.01	0.35	1.64	1.63
Science	Abroad	M	0.84	4.52	0.47	3.79
		N	63	21	60	61
		SD	1.52	1.25	1.16	1.87
	Switzerland	M	1.67	5.54	0.62	3.77
		N	85	13	79	87
		SD	1.78	1.20	1.41	1.70
Economic and social sciences (SES)	Abroad	M	0.64	4.83	0.45	3.83
		N	11	6	11	12
		SD	1.03	0.98	1.51	1.70
	Switzerland	M	2.13	5.33	0.65	4.19
		N	40	12	46	47
		SD	2.00	0.78	1.32	1.44

Interestingly, these results show only partial convergence with the latest report on linguistic practices in different sectors. Lüdi and Werlen (2005) found that in French-speaking Switzerland 22.9% of employees in the sectors of management, banking and law used Swiss German at work, while 30.4% reported using English and 7.5% Italian. In the medical, scientific and education sectors, the figures were considerably lower, 14.2% for Swiss German and 17.1 and 4.9% for English and Italian respectively. In the present study focusing on university students, two trends were identified. Whereas medical and law students excelled in Swiss official languages, the faculties of Medicine and Science reported the weakest skills in the case of English. One possible reason for this could be the importance of official languages in professions concerned with local affairs and in which skilled labour is in high demand locally. In contrast, science students had the lowest L2 averages throughout all comparisons, even in English, which is perhaps unexpected given the often-cited international nature of science.

14 Attitudes, Motivation and English in the Swiss Context

There were further differences between faculties regarding the motivational scales. Figure 4 shows that students' attitudes to learning English ($p = 0.053$) were most positive at the faculty of Law, although with an average of 4.2 for all participants the figures were very high overall. More importantly, contrary to research findings in other countries (Sect. 3), medical students' ought-to L2 self ($p = 0.015$) was especially strong at 3.8, which showcases a general trend among respondents. In addition, students also valued opportunities to speak English the most ($p = 0.053$).

That the self-guide representing expectations and social pressure emerged as a concept highly relevant to students' life might reflect, first of all, the strictness of their university environment and their goal-orientedness. Furthermore, it also reveals some noteworthy undercurrents characteristic of the Swiss learning context. Participants' strong ought-to L2 self is suggestive of their aspirations to find their place in a society that highly values language skills.

Differences between the Swiss group and that of foreign students were most significant on six attitudinal scales, which are shown in Fig. 5. Foreigners reported stronger Ideal L2 Selves ($p = 0.019$) and were more positive towards the global village and the international community ($p = 0.021$). These attitudes were more in line with research findings in other contexts discussed in Sect. 3. It can be concluded that, in contrast with their Swiss peers, foreign students were more inclined to view language learning and career as personal endeavours and elements of their imagined future self in an international world.

Swiss students' attitudes, on the other hand, followed an altogether different pattern. They had more favourable attitudes to English and American native speakers, a trend also observed by Murray (2003) in her study of language teachers in Switzerland. However, are such views merely a reflection of cultural interest, are they based on frequent themes in language education, or might they suggest a more

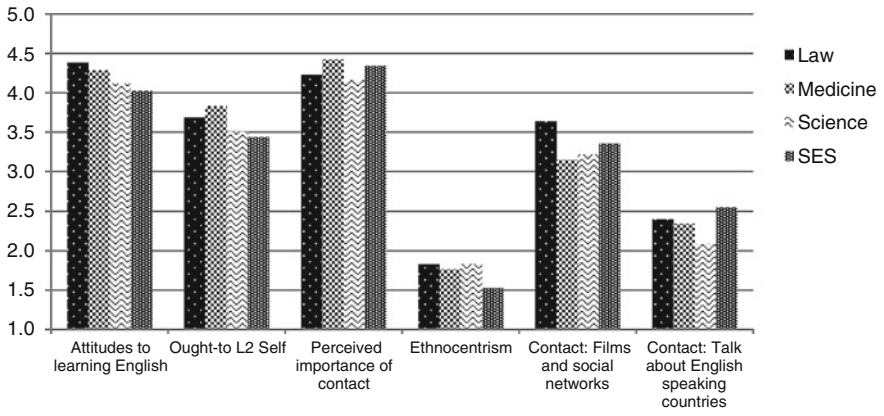

Fig. 4 Mean values by faculty

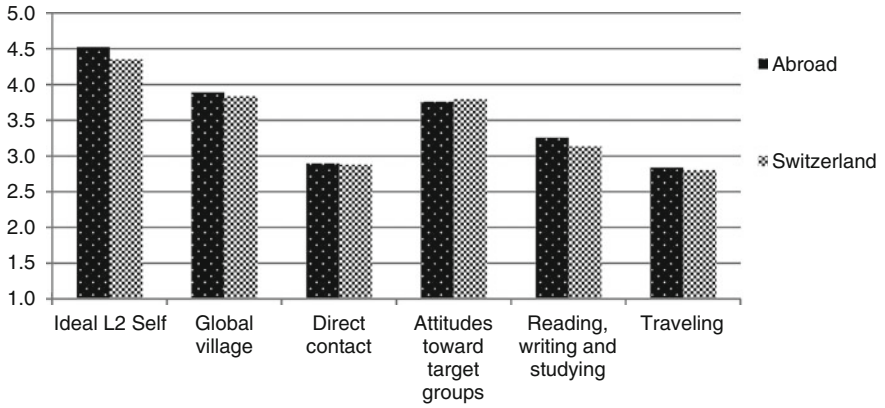

Fig. 5 Mean values by place of secondary education

serious issue of linguistic inequality? Phillipson (1992) argues that, as an effect of linguistic imperialism, native speakers of English enjoy certain benefits that others are deprived of. Swiss students' remarkable attraction to these traditional target groups raises the question of whether it might be linked to the advantages native speakers represent.

Despite these differences, students in both groups demonstrated strong future self-visions, and the ideal L2 self was the variable with the highest mean value for the whole sample. Moreover, the question linking English to a desired career yielded the highest score among all the attitudinal items. However, although a relevant aspect of students' self-concept and of their language attitudes, the ideal L2 self was not the most important factor in terms of its link to motivated learning behaviour. Correlational analysis of the attitudinal scales, as shown in Table 4 below, sheds more light on the relative strength of the different factors.

As expected, the strongest correlation was found between motivation and attitudes to learning English. More interestingly, among the rest of the scales motivated learning behaviour was linked first and foremost to students' ought-to L2 self, indicating the importance of an individual's obligations and responsibilities in a highly value-centric society. Indeed, views concerning one's responsibility in securing gains at a social level at the same time as achieving personal financial stability are arguably more overt in Switzerland than in other contexts. Therefore, these relationships suggest that social values and, indirectly, market-related benefits might play an important role in the construction of university students' self-concept and motivation.

The ideal L2 self had a less strong but still marked connection to motivation, indicative of the link between motivation and more personal aspects of the self. Consequently, although not as powerful as social expectations, personal goals are still an important element of Swiss university students' language attitudes. These results are suggestive of the influence that both market and non-market values exert

Table 4 Correlation coefficients (Pearson's) for the main attitudinal scales

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11A	11B	11C	11D
1 Motivation	0.580**	[ns.]	0.388**	0.405**	0.327**	0.256**	.316**	[ns.]	0.394**	[ns.]	0.181**	0.214**	[ns.]
2 Attitude		0.335**	0.336**	0.367**	0.374**	0.328**	0.225**	−0.151**	0.547**	0.280**	0.255**	0.383**	0.219**
3 WTC			0.223**	0.216**	0.180**	0.312**	[ns.]	−0.144**	0.245**	0.452**	0.303**	0.328**	0.217**
4 Ideal Self				0.456**	0.429**	0.382**	0.316**	−0.233**	0.320**	0.353**	0.213**	0.280**	0.135**
5 Ought-to Self					0.500**	0.430**	0.358**	−0.181**	0.409**	0.278**	0.270**	0.275**	0.212**
6 Global village						0.407**	0.471**	−0.243**	0.443**	0.189**	0.265**	0.316**	0.133**
7 Imp. of contact							0.268**	−0.470**	0.397**	0.228**	0.223**	0.162**	0.301**
8 Intl posture								−0.151**	0.359**	[ns.]	0.143**	0.142**	[ns.]
9 Ethnocentrism									−0.263**	[ns.]	−0.140**	[ns.]	−0.114*
10 Target group										0.212**	0.199**	0.297**	0.267**
11A Read-write											0.472**	0.579**	0.371**
11B Travel												0.422**	0.302**
11C Films-social													0.306**
11D Talk about													

Notes *Significant at the $p \leq 0.05$ level (2-tailed). **Significant at the $p \leq 0.01$ level (2-tailed)

over participants' motivation, especially as an element of their responsibilities in their social milieu. Moreover, since the two self-guides were also strongly linked, it can be argued that they represent important social as well as individual aspects of university students' self-concept. The exact motivational impact of these components is to be investigated in further stages of the project.

In addition to the self-guides, positive attitudes to native speakers and favourable views on the notion of the global village and international posture all emerged as factors closely related to motivated learning behaviour, which might reflect the role of English as a means of international communication, regardless of the origin of its speakers. Competence in English as an international language offers indisputable financial benefits, while it also represents more subtle aspects of modern learner identity and thus carries considerable non-market gains, ranging from cultural elements to social media. Indeed, films and social media displayed strong links to motivation, which might indicate the relevance of non-market values associated with English and confirm widespread impressions among language teachers.

Further analysis is needed to establish the direction and relative strength of these relationships, but the results treated in this section suggest that Swiss university students' motivation might be linked to both market-related benefits and non-market values. These values are represented, on the one hand, by a general openness to native speakers as well as international issues and communication. On the other hand, social responsibility and expectations were also shown as relevant to participants' self-concept and motivation, as were career prospects and a future-oriented disposition. It is clear that university students view English as highly important in a professional context, even though their motives point beyond the influence of market-related benefits.

15 Conclusion

In summary, these preliminary results reveal, first of all, that students at the University of Geneva show an outstanding level of plurilingualism, both in terms of L1 and L2 skills. In line with the requirements of the local context, Swiss official languages are central to this plurilingualism. Altogether, the figures look promising in the light of labour market demand and are indicative of the strength of FL education in Switzerland.

Moreover, the study investigated the relevance of economic factors using established concepts in L2 motivation research and relying heavily on the economic elements inherent to these constructs. On the one hand, Swiss participants reported a remarkably powerful ought-to L2 self, which was also strongly linked to their motivation to learn English. This indicates the importance of social values in students' life and language learning, while the relevance of the ideal L2 self draws attention to personal values.

On the other hand, the study confirmed that career prospects as well as social requirements are relevant aspects of participants' self-concept and motivation. Both

market-related benefits, in the form of career opportunities, and non-market values, such as social acceptance and international interests, were revealed to have a strong, indirect influence on university students' attitudes. Arguably, the most intriguing question the above analysis raises is how economic values as standalone factors are related to motivation. This question, in turn, introduces two issues.

The first is methodological in nature and concerns the suitability of traditional research methods for the analysis of modern motivational phenomena and their composite relationships. As I argued above, interdisciplinary research designs carry enormous potential for the exploration of contextual influences in language learning and the present chapter takes a step towards integrating an interdisciplinary lens into traditional quantitative analysis. However, further studies are required to fully explore the applicability of interdisciplinary perspectives and to test to what extent such new methods are suited to assess the influence of contextual variables. Secondly, this chapter discussed the theoretical links between motivational and economic constructs. The results of the survey study indicate that such ties are worth investigating beyond the bounds of theory. Therefore, the interface of L2 motivation and language economics offers an interesting territory for future research to explore.

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