

# Focus on this learner assignment

[Education](#)



A unique human ability is to be able to create and use language to communicate to each other. Humans learn their culture through communication using their linguistic competence and performance. In an article written by Ellen C. Lapping, " Cultural Content in Introductory Linguistics" he states that " This holistic view of linguistic and cultural signing is communicated to students most effectively by means of examples. Lapping, 153). As I approached Xavier Ivan Muriel, a level C IMAX student, after observing his reading class, he seemed enthusiastic to speak to me in English. Although he stuttered some words and at times failed to understand my instructions from the needs analysis survey, after repetition and using deterrent vocabulary, he was happy to help. As defined in an article from the textbook, intrinsic motivations " may be defined as motivations that stem from previous attitudes of the learner before attending a given learning experience.

Learners are motivated from within. "(Harmer, 52). Through Saver's survey, I believe he is an intrinsically motivated learner. His motivation to learn English stems from his desire to be able to travel around the world and be able to communicate with others. I believe I could help Xavier improve his English speaking skills by guiding a conversation course with topics he is interested in. I was born in Calgary, Alberta in Canada where the dominant language is English and the second official language is French.

Growing up in a traditional Chinese family, I learned Cantonese and English at the same time. My parents made an effort to speak both Cantonese and English to me as a young child for me to have an extended vocabulary and avoid language barriers at a young age. During university, I was inspired to

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learn Spanish during an exchange program to Ecuador. Just like Xavier, I was then motivated to learn for the sole reason that I wanted to travel through South America and be able to connect with locals.

With this drive, I found myself speaking Spanish whenever possible, I listened to Spanish music and watched Spanish dramas. It did not matter how irrelevant or what the topic of conversation as, if it was in Spanish, I was attempting to join in. When I sat down with Xavier, and asked him if he prefers to work alone or in large groups, he replied saying that he prefers to work with other people because it allows him communicate out loud and he is able to use his verbal skills.

Xavier was born here in Quadrangular, Calico and he has wanted to learn English for as long as he could remember but due to financial issues, he was unable to take classes until recently. Instead, Xavier takes notes when reading books and watching television programs in English. He also mentions that listening to English music helps him with pronunciation. As we go over the survey, I noticed that Xavier sometimes read the questions twice to understand it, but when I read the questions out loud and phrased the question differently, he was able to understand better.

Through oral communication, I think Xavier is more successful in understanding English because of his extensive English practice through music and television programs. Like myself, Xavier, too, has a specific learning style that helps him make sense of the context. For the question, " I prefer to work with a group when there is work to be done," Xavier circled the number four which represents a statement that is most like him. We can

see that there is a very specific way of understanding new concepts just as we all do.

He prefers to be handed the material for reference, but to work in groups and to try and help out one another. Xavier also checked off number four for the statement "If I have to decide something, I ask other people for their opinions". This shows that he uses what he learns in the classroom in real life situations to communicate with them. Making decisions is an everyday factor in everyone's life, therefore, Xavier's response to this statement shows that he readily uses the English he learns and incorporates them into his daily life.

In an article by Martin V. Covington, "Intrinsic versus Extrinsic Motivation in Schools: A Reconciliation", he mentions "students also indicate that they often manipulate academic circumstances to create a tolerable balance between grades and caring. The most frequent strategies involve making school more interesting by deliberately seeking out what is of interest to them, even in the case of boring assignments, or arranging a course of study, or even a college major, around personal interests. Thus, the compatibility of grades and caring is also. Most of the time though, school systems format their teaching practices towards classes as a group instead of individuals. This makes learning new concepts hard for some students. If I were to teach Xavier a new topic, I would immediately put him into a pair or a group of students, making it so he can learn at his strongest point, with others. Also, this encourages an environment where students can help each other. In Lapwing's article, he also mentions that linguistic choices are subject to contextual constraints imposed by the structure of social relationships within

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a given community. (Lapping, 155). This statement proves to be accurate in Saver's case because his English linguistic choices are constrained only by when he is in an English speaking environment or community. I would write the new grammar on the board so that he is able to visually understand it and then get him to repeat after me for pronunciation. I then would write down some questions that apply to everyday life to get everybody to start a conversation using the new vocabulary provided.

I would then get his group to present their conversation, making it so that each individual had their own parts to say and because Xavier stated that he prefers to show and explains how something works rather than put it down in writing, I feel that this format of teaching would be the most efficient and effective for a student such as himself. In conclusion, teaching is guidance through study of specific subjects, just like a math teacher's profession is all the sub-categories of mathematics, an English teacher's profession lies beneath all the linguistic factors that belong specifically to English.

Above all, teaching, both have to be experts in their own field, and also have to change their own teaching styles to adapt to different learners. Teaching is not only about being knowledgeable of a subject; it has to do with the desire to want others to learn. Anybody can read a textbook and recite it in front of a group of people but not everybody is willing to go the extra mile to make sure every individual understands the material the best they can. Whether it is learning visually or from oral dialogue, all students have different needs that have to be fulfilled in order to create a positive learning experience.