

Fostering Efficacy, Interest, and Independent Learning



A MOTIVATIONAL DESIGN PROJECT BY
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Motivational Problem



- Lisa is a sophomore in a competitive college access program (CAP). She has the potential to be a high achiever, but is underperforming in her classes and earning Cs.
- Lisa's subject of greatest concern is Spanish: she says she hates Spanish because it is difficult. She attends Spanish tutoring with a CAP coach, but she knows that she also needs to do extra practice on her own if she wants to improve her mastery of Spanish. Still, she does not complete the independent practice her coach assigns her.
- **The specific behavior that most manifests Lisa's lack of motivation to learn Spanish is her failure to complete independent at-home Spanish work assigned by her CAP coach.**

Additional Evidence



- Lisa attends her CAP Spanish sessions 100% of the time and seeks approval of her work from her coach often in those sessions.
 - Lisa enjoys working with people.
 - Lisa relies on her Coach to monitor her progress and design at-home tasks.
- At the beginning of the year, Lisa completed independent at-home Spanish work assigned by her CAP coach 0% of the time.
 - Lisa states that when she sits down to complete her independent at-home Spanish tasks, she feels discouraged and overwhelmed because she knows that if she gets stuck there is no one there to help her.
- Interestingly, Lisa completes independent at-home work for Reading Enrichment (a subject she enjoys and excels in) 80% of the time.
 - Lisa says she finds Spanish to be boring and difficult, and she stated that she doesn't think it has any relevance to her goals and interests.

Connection to Course Concepts



- The expectancy x value model of motivation provides a useful framework for understanding Lisa's current motivational problems related to her failure to complete assigned at-home Spanish work (Wentzel & Brophy, 2014, p. 142).
 - This model “holds that the effort that people are willing to invest in an activity is the product of (a) the degree to which they *expect* to be able to perform the activity successfully if they apply themselves...and (b) the degree to which they *value*” the activity as worthwhile (Wentzel & Brophy, 2014, p. 142).
- Lisa lacks both components of the expectancy x value model.
 - She lacks self-efficacy in Spanish since she has always earned poor grades in Spanish and feels incapable of completing tasks without support.
 - She lacks value for the task: the tasks are neither inherently and intrinsically valuable to her, nor does she find them to be relevant to her interests or goals.

Motivational Intervention Plan



- **Goal:**
 - Increase Lisa's rate of completion of independent assignments from CAP Spanish sessions to 75% by the end of the first semester.
 - Increase Lisa's self-efficacy and interest in Spanish.
- **Three Intervention Components:**
 - **Component 1: Work with an older peer tutor once a week**
 - ✦ Peer tutor is now successful in Spanish, but used to struggle with motivation and performance.
 - ✦ *Fosters situational interest (value)* in Spanish since Lisa enjoys working with people.
 - ✦ *Fosters relevance (value)* of Spanish since the peer tutor will explain how she found Spanish to be valuable to her goals, including attending a selective college.
 - ✦ *Fosters self-efficacy* since self-efficacy can be developed “by watching the successes and failures of others, especially people similar to ourselves” (Wentzel & Brophy, 2014, p. 144).

Motivational Intervention Plan (continued)



- Component 2: Restructure weekly sessions with CAP tutor
 - ✦ Instead of meeting for 20 minutes, meet for 1 hour.
 - ✦ Use the extra time to teach and practice strategies for self-monitoring, checking her own work, and problem-solving when she gets stuck.
 - ✦ *Fosters self-efficacy* by arming Lisa with strategies she can use to complete independent work and gauge her own progress.
- Component 3: Include Lisa in design of at-home independent assignments
 - ✦ Lisa and her Coach will design the tasks and co-create a plan for strategy use and self-monitoring.
 - ✦ *Fosters interest (value) and self-efficacy* since “providing student with opportunities to choose a...learning task can enhance their reported enjoyment of the task or their sense of confidence” (Wentzel & Brophy, 2014, p. 61)

Rationale



- Lisa has verbalized that she lacks both elements of the expectancy x value model in regards to independent at-home Spanish tasks. She is rejecting the task, which is common when “both success expectations and value perceptions are low” (Wentzel & Brophy, 2014, p. 143).
- Thus, to modify Lisa’s rejecting behaviors and improve her 0% completion rate her self-efficacy and task value must be addressed.
- This intervention addresses Lisa’s self-efficacy and task value by capitalizing on the element that Lisa has identified as most engaging and empowering: working with the support of coaches and peers.
 - The plan ensures that Lisa has continued support from her coach and a peer tutor, but the inclusion of strategy instruction and collaborative task-design also supports Lisa’s development as a capable independent learner.
- Accordingly, this plan should increase Lisa’s completion rate for independent at-home Spanish tasks.

TARGET Assessment: Pre- and Post-Intervention



Motivational Dimension	Pre-Intervention	Post-Intervention
Task	Perceived by Lisa as too challenging to complete alone	Task will appear more manageable to Lisa due to strategy instruction and practice
Authority	No input in design of tasks	Lisa participates in designing tasks.
Recognition	Verbal praise from CAP coach	Verbal praise from CAP coach and Peer Tutor
Grouping	Work only with CAP coach.	Collaborates with a Peer Tutor once a week.
Evaluation	Work evaluated only by CAP coach.	Lisa learns to monitor her own progress.
Timing	Two 20-minute sessions per week.	Hour-long session with CAP coach makes time for strategy instruction and practice.

Results



- Independent at-home Spanish task completion rate
 - From 0% at week 4 → 45% at week 14
- Grade in Spanish class
 - From 36% at week 4 → 78% at week 8 → 80% at week 13
- Verbal descriptions of Lisa's attitudes towards Spanish
 - Lisa stated she “hated” Spanish and that it was “hard” and “boring” at week 4. By week 12, Lisa said that Spanish was “finally clicking” and she was “starting to get it.”

Next Steps



- While Lisa's task completion rate, attitude, and grade have improved, she is still inconsistent with her completion of at-home tasks.
 - Her moods seem to fluctuate dramatically and influence her academics. Her mother also mentioned that she cries often at home during homework. Encourage Lisa to seek out social/emotional support from the school Guidance counselors.
- Create opportunities for Lisa to act as an “expert” to further enhance her sense of competence.
- Create opportunities for Lisa to articulate her long-term goals, values, and interests so that CAP staff can help her discover how Spanish is relevant to her goals and values.