

Flow in Second Language Acquisition

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I. Introduction

II. Flow

- A. Definition: Flow is a state of mind in which a person feels so completely engaged by an activity that the person's actions and awareness merge (use quotes from Flow p. 53 to illustrate—dancer, rock climber, mother)
- B. Autotelic (illustration of rock climber poet p. 47 from "Bored vs. Anxious")
- C. Goal-directed
- D. Rule-governed
- E. Universal
- F. Unambiguous feedback
- G. Inner skills and outer challenge are matched
- H. Intrinsic motivation—three components
 - 1. Innate tendency to solve problems
 - a. Challenge, competence, mastery
 - b. Rock climber
 - c. Info gap
 - 2. Information processors
 - a. Novelty, complexity, variability, discrepancy
 - b. Sheer pleasure in processing information
 - c. Reading intricate novel
 - 3. Perceived control of one's surroundings
 - a. Determine their own fate
 - b. Mc: "personal causation"
 - c. Skinner: controlling one's own progression through a program fosters motivation (evidenced by kids who are captivated by video games)

III. Flow and Learning

- A. Donald Norman in Things that Make Us Smart, has made observations about the relationship between learning recreation: the activities are identical, but motivation is radically different (arcade games elicit many behaviors that educators often seek in their students)
- B. The implication is that learning should be more game like.
- C. Traditional teaching materials might produce Flow, but not for a sustained period
 - 1. Textbooks, tapes, exercises

2. “disappearing ego” not likely in classroom (distraction of classmates and teacher)

D. Traditional teaching methods

1. Lecture-style teaching
 - a. Chinese lecture

IV. **Flow Applied**

A. Story Mazes

1. What it is
 - a. Adventure game, originally critical thinking exercises for business executives
 - b. Task-based
 - c. Modular sections
 - d. Actions lead to other actions
 - e. Possible structure
2. Potential obstructions to Flow
 - a. Interruptions and disruptions
 - b. Catastrophic choices (use of intelligent tutoring)
 - c. Boredom (game designers know how to amuse..)
3. Instructional design principles
 - a. (list)
4. Inducement to Flow

B. Language lab

V. **Conclusion**