

**MIHALY'S FLOW THEORY ON
EFL STUDENTS' ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCES :
A CASE OF INDONESIAN VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL**

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for Gaining the Bachelor Degree
of English Language Education



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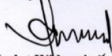
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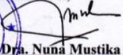
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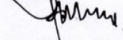
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Wassalamualaikumwr.wb.

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DEDICATION

Praise is given to Allah SWT who has blessed the researcher, so that the researcher could finish the thesis.

This thesis is dedicated to all English teachers and everyone who supported the researcher in accomplishing the thesis, especially to my beloved father and mother who always give support, motivation, and endless love. Praises is given to my friends who supported the researcher to finish this work

MOTTO

“Start now. Start where you are. Start with fear. Start with pain. Start with doubt. Start with hand shaking. Start with voice trembling, but start. Start and don’t stop. Start where you are, with what you have. Just start”.

ABSTRACT

Title : **Mihaly's Flow Theoeoy on EFL Students' Online Learning Experiences ; A case of Indonesian Vocational High School**

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Online learning is a hot topic that is being discussed. As a lesson that has just been applied – recently the Covid situation has received special attention from various circles. Researcher is interested in conducting research on the experiences of EFL students during online learning. It becomes important to know the background of students starting from how they feel learning online so that they have experience. The main purpose of this study was to determine the online learning experience of EFL students in terms of Mihaly's flow theory. This is indicated by the natural dimensions of Mihaly's flow theory experienced by students, meaning they are in a state of flow. This research is included in the classroom follow-up research, including the subjects of this study are 11th grade students, there is one main class that is the focus of the research. With the criteria of the sampling technique, of the 15 students who were interviewed, there were 4 students who met the research criteria. This research was conducted by interviewing selected participants by conducting in-depth interviews. After conducting interviews, the researcher made field notes based on the raw data, then applied several data collection

processes. Field texts (commonly called data) were created by participants and researchers to present aspects of the experience. Field texts are shaped by the selective interests of researchers and/or participants. Therefore, composing field texts is an interpretive and contextual textual process. Method this research is a narrative inquiry research. Researcher used thematic analysis to process the data. The results of this study can be a lesson for students that learning experiences need to be built to get maximum results. Mihaly's flow theory that occurred in the four participants led to student achievement, so that other students could learn from someone's experience to imitate the habits of the four selected students at SMK N 1 Tanon.

Keywords : *Foreign langauage learning, Mihaly's Flow Theory, Online langauge learning*

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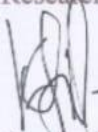
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Finally, the researcher realizes that this thesis is the way far from the perfect arrangement. Therefore, the researcher will be happily accepting

and constructive suggestions to make this thesis better.

Semarang, 16 December 2021

The Researcher,



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher explains the background of the research, reason for choosing the topic, research questions, research objectives, scopes of the research, and pedagogical significance.

A. Background of Research

With the development and availability of the internet which is increasingly widespread, many activities including the learning process are carried out online. Online learning is a teaching and learning process that utilizes the internet and digital media in delivering the material. The online learning method is considered closer to the current generation of students who are known to be very integrated with technology products. This is one form of digitalization in the world of education, which is starting to apply a learning system by utilizing the internet network.

It has been known that the number of online learning environment in formal

educational setting is increasing. The delivery of distance education is usually supported by various forms of technology. Recent and rapid improvements in information and communication technologies and the increasing bandwidth of internet access have made the use of synchronous solutions for instruction more popular¹. The nature of interaction and the type of teacher support required by physical and virtual learning environments differ; and the use of synchronous conferencing techniques has unique benefits in education, as well as challenges. First, real-time interaction allows simulation of a real physical classroom learning situation and immediate interactive clarification of meaning². Moreover, the teaching and learning process in the online learning system, may promise the significant

¹ Ng, K. C. *Replacing face-to-face tutorials by synchronous online technologies: Challenges and pedagogical implications*, The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 8(1). 2007, p.1

² Steeples, C., Jones, C., & Goodyear, P. *Beyond e-Learning: A future for networked learning*, Networked Learning: Perspectives and issues. London: Springer-Verlag. 2002, p. 4

increase to students' performance. Some researchers noted that synchronous conferencing through the internet offers participants a feeling of immediate contact, motivation, and even some fun, which is especially valuable for distance learners. It is also reported that the level of the students' motivation to EFL learning and learners' foreign language proficiency were increased during the online learning process³.

Online learning has become a widespread practice over the years as an integrated technology in education. Not a few conveniences are offered to users who have felt the benefits of online learning. In terms of practicality, with online learning, the interaction between teachers and students will be more practical because they do not have to travel to meet. In addition, there is no classroom as a place for formal learning. On the other hand, online learning offers a pleasant

³ Shishkovskaya, J., Bakalo, D., & Grigoryev, A. *EFL teaching in the e-learning environment: updated principles and methods*. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 206, 199-204. 2015, p. 3

learning experience. Because the format of the material in online learning is more interesting with various media formats, be it photos, videos, or audio. All of them will provide a pleasant online learning experience.

Regarding online learning experiences, a previous study by Sharpe and Benfield (2005) investigated the online learning experiences of students at Oxford Brookes University. They highlight some common themes in students' online learning experiences and recommend implications such as the emotionality of the student experience and concerns about time management⁴. According to Chen, the study of flow experiences usually emphasizes the influence of skill/control, challenge and telepresence. Skadberg and Kimmel suggest that an important consideration of flow experience is to provide a task or operation with a high degree of balance between skill and

⁴ Sharpe, R., & Benfield, G. *The Student Experience of E-learning in Higher Education: A Review of the Literature*. Brookes eJournal of Learning and Teaching, 1(3). 2005, p. 2

challenge, as well as a clear and attractive interface when practitioners design online systems⁵.

Due to the impact of online learning, the experiences of students during this process and opinions about whether online education is effective for learning have become issues of concern recently. Expectedly in this critical period, the feelings/thoughts and experiences of students during the online classes are significant matters to be dealt with to measure their effectiveness and to sustain continuity of online education platforms. Apart from these issues, flow experience of students needs more specific observation due to its giving opportunity to closely examine their experiences such as engagement, intense concentration, enjoyment,

⁵ Skadberg, Y. X., & Kimmel, J. R. *Visitors' flow experience while browsing a web site: Its measurement, contributing factors and consequences*. Computers in Human Behavior, 20, 403–422. 2004, p. 2

self-control and cognitive competence in online learning.

Basically, flow theory or flow concept was first named by Mihaly in the early 1990s and the theory itself has been applied to many areas of science and learning since then. He explains flow as “the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it”. Born out of a desire to understand intrinsically motivated activity, flow refers to a state of optimal experience characterized by total absorption in the task at hand; a merging of action and awareness in which the individual loses track of both time and self. The flow state is experientially positive, and out of the flow experience emerges a desire to replicate the experience. The concept of flow was developed nearly four decades ago by psychologist Mihaly while he was observing

students at an elite art school in the United States⁶. In an effort to understand what led individuals to be passionate about their creative pursuits, Mihalyi observed the students as they worked on their artistic creations. He quickly noted that students often became so engrossed in their work that they would effectively tune out any outside distractions or obligations. Students would lose track of time, missing meetings or mealtimes, working well into the night, apparently sustaining deep levels of both concentration and enjoyment for extended periods. Almost paradoxically, once the painting or sculpture was completed it seemed to lose its value to the student: The creation was often hauled back to a dark corner of the studio where it would sit indefinitely⁷. It became clear that for these art students, the value in art was not to be found in the final product so much as it was

⁶ J A Schmidt, *Flow in Education* , Northern Illinois University, Elsevier. 2010, p. 1

⁷ Csikszentmihalyi, M. *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper and Row.

in the process of creating it: once the final brush stroke was applied students rarely took the time to admire their own creation, but instead were eager to get involved in a new project. Mihalyi came to characterize these experiences as autotelic, where the goal lies in participation itself. In the nearly four decades that have elapsed since this initial discovery, Mihalyi and colleagues have studied the flow experience in multiple contexts, and have identified a shared phenomenology in that participants consistently describe optimal states of complete absorption, focus, and enjoyment⁸. In line with this explanation, language teachers using 21st century skills in online education are expected to make students experience flow in the course of classes. The concept of flow is also significant since it enables students to lower anxiety and increase comfortable atmosphere

⁸ Nakamura, J. and Csikszentmihalyi, M. *The concept of flow*. In Snyder, C. R. and Lopez, S. J. (eds.) *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, pp 89–105. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2002, p. 16

during online classes in such a way to see how they adapt themselves in a new learning environment. Although several people have given explanations for this concept, their explanations do not vary on a large scale, Mihalyi (1997) describes the flow in nine categories, including: the objectives conveyed by the instructor are clear, task challenges and skills of students are balanced, action and awareness emerge, consciousness is cleared of distractions, it becomes a failure source of anxiety, learner loses sense of self-awareness, learner loses sense of and autotelic experience⁹. Regarding these elements, it is worth paying attention to discussing the differences between streams in face-to-face learning and in online learning.

A previous study, Egbert in 2003, tells about the flow of experience in face-to-face language learning. In his study, Egbert examines the relationship between language learners and

⁹ Csikszentmihalyi, M. *Finding flow: The psychology of engagement with everyday life*. New York, NY: Basic Books. 1997, p. 20.

flow experiences and finds out whether flow occurs in foreign classrooms. The findings suggest that flow does exist in the foreign language classroom and suggest that flow theory offers an interesting and useful framework for conceptualizing and language learning activities. In addition, in his study Egbert also stated that experience is characterized by a balance between challenge and skill , interest, control, and attention focused on a person during a task¹⁰.

Considering the literature review mentioned above, most of the studies on face- to-face language learning have dealt with the issue of whether students experience flow during the class. According to these studies, the students mostly experienced flow in face-to-face language learning. While tasks given to the students during learning process showed significant impacts on flow (Cho, 2018, Cox & Montgomery, 2019;

¹⁰ Egbert, J. *A study of flow theory in the foreign language classroom.* The Modern Language Journal, 87, 500e518. 2003, p. 571

Egbert, 2012; Senturk, 2012), 21st century skills were also found to be correlated with flow experiences of the students (Cox, 2014; Cox & Montgomery, 2019). only a few researchers have investigated flow in the second language classroom during online learning. To fill the research gap, this research was conducted. This is an urgent investigation because this is an updated issue that will definitely contribute to the world of education, especially in the EFL classroom. In addition, this study investigates the flow dimensions experienced by EFL students in terms of Mihaly's flow theory. Researcher used a narrative approach in order to find results that are in accordance with the research objectives. Researcher want to know whether EFL students experience flow during online learning. In this study, the explanation of student experiences will be discussed in more depth.

B. Reason for Choosing the Topic

This research discussed “Mihaly’s Flow Theory on EFL Students’ Online Learning

Experiences : A case of Indonesian Vocational High School” The reasons for the researcher to choose this topic are as follow :

1. Some teachers are not aware of how to make a flow in English learning activities in the EFL classroom.
2. Students who use English as their mother tongue, when given a task challenge in learning English, will definitely experience flow. Because the tasks and abilities are equal. It is different with EFL students, who do not necessarily experience flow. This is something that should be investigated.
3. In the EFL Classroom, Flow has less been applied in the field of foreign language education, especially in the era of digital language learning. This is the reason that underlies researcher to focus on the flow experience of students at SMK N 1 Tanon.

C. Research Question

What flow do EFL students experience when learning online ?

D. Objective of the Research

According to the research question, the objective of this research is to analyze students' experiences during online learning in term of flow theory

E. Scopes of the Research

In this research, the researcher focuses on analyzing the students experience during online learning. The researcher would like to identify the experience in term of flow theory

F. Pedagogical Significance

1. Theoretical Benefit

The researcher wishes that this result of the study will give additional information to the readers. They will know more how to create “flow” in learning EFL classroom.

2. Practical Benefit

The researcher hopes that the result of this study can provide some positive contribution in the context of learning English. The result of this study are expected to provide some information for researchers themselves and

people in the field of education. The researcher hopes that the result of this research can be useful for :

a. For the teacher

The results of this study are expected to be used as material for consideration in preparing teaching materials, telling teachers how important it is to create flow in a second language class.

b. For student

It is hoped that this research can be useful and can help them develop their flow experience so that they can achieve maximum learning outcomes.

c. For further research

This research can provide a reference for those who are interested in flow theory.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This chapter presents a review of related literature on online learning, the concept of flow, flow in language learning, flow experiences in online environment, and the dynamic nature of flow dimensions. The purpose of presenting a literature review is to create a framework about the problem in the study. In addition to presenting a literature review, this chapter also presents previous studies. Some researchers who have conducted research similar to this study will be discussed.

A. Previous Research

The theory of ‘flow’ coined by Mihaly (1990) has been an interesting field to be investigated in foreign countries. In particular, for numerous researchers, it's been an essential point to be addressed in language learning. In reference to this, there are numerous studies carried out on flow experience in face-to-face language learning (Deweale & MacIntyre 2017; Cox & 1st viscount montgomery of alamein, 2019; Kirchoff, 2013). They mostly address to the

question whether students experience flow and the factors inflicting this state (Cho, 2018). Besides these, there are different research finished on flow experience in game-based language learning (Hong et al., 2017; Hsu, 2017). But, there are a few research investigating flow level in online language learning in phrases of its effect on studying process (Ebrahimzadeh & Alavi, 2016).

Research conducted by Egbert (2003) aims to examine the relationship between language learning and flow experience and to find out whether flow occurs in a foreign language classroom. The findings obtained from 13 Spanish language learners revealed that students experienced their language classroom. Overall, the analysis that has been carried out shows that the higher the observed odds for flow on the four dimensions, the more likely the participants will feel the flow. Other findings also suggest that experiencing flow is a way of developing existing tasks. For example, students find that interacting with

native Spanish speakers in terms of their assignments can facilitate their flow¹¹.

Regarding flow perceptions in speaking activities, Senturk (2012) investigated teacher and student perceptions of flow experiences. With 163 participants, data were collected both qualitatively and quantitatively. The results of the study showed that flow was present in the speaking class, but there was a significant difference in each task regarding the perception of flow. In addition, there was a significant visible relationship between activity type and engagement for students' perceptions of challenge and ability balance, control, intense focus, and interest. This finding also shows that four dimensions can index the flow of experience¹².

Followed by research in the following year, focusing on one of the English language skills, trying to explore whether there is flow experience. Kirchoff

¹¹ Egbert, J. *A study of flow theory in the foreign language classroom*. The Modern Language Journal, 87, 500e518. 2003, p. 570 .

¹² Senturk, B. A. *Teachers' and students' perceptions of flow in speaking activities*. Uluslararası Yönetim İktisat ve İşletme Dergisi, 8(16), 2010, p. 285.

(2013) investigated the flow of experiences of Japanese students in an extensive English reading class. In addition, another aim of this research is to study the conditions that cause flow and whether the experience of flow affects students' motivation in extensive reading. The findings obtained from 74 students by means of multiple questionnaires indicate that students experience high flow and concentration in their reading class. Flow experiences have been suggested in this study to contribute to reading motivation and may assist in reading engagement. The study found that participants experienced frequent concentration in a second language extensive reading class. The conditions that allow for the flow experience as reported by these participants emphasize the importance of maintaining a calm reading environment. It relates to the dimension of control flow experience¹³.

¹³ Kirchoff, C. *L2 extensive reading and flow: clarifying the relationship*. *Reading in a Foreign Language*. 25(2), 2013, p.8.

Research exploring the frequency of experiencing positive flow and anti-flow has been conducted by Deweale and MacIntyre (2017). The study was conducted in a Spanish foreign language classroom. A total of 232 Spanish foreign language learners provided feedback on flow experiences via an online questionnaire. The results of statistical analysis revealed that participants experienced significantly more flows than anti-streams. Researchers illustrated the participants' findings of flow status in foreign language classes, feelings of full involvement in individual or collective tasks, intense focus and excitement that made them feel time was passing by so quickly¹⁴.

Then Cho (2018) investigated the impact of modalities (writing/speaking) and task complexity on students' perceptions of task difficulty/skills and task experience. The study also examines whether the balance between challenge and skill is balanced

¹⁴ Dewaele, J. & MacIntyre, P. D. *Flow in the Spanish foreign language classroom*. Unpublished manuscript. 2017, p. 3.

against flow experience. 141 English learners were participants in this study. they worked on four tasks consisting of task complexity and modality before answering a questionnaire about their perception of task difficulty, their skills and experiences. Participants concluded that only modality had an impact on perceived skills and flow. Given that challenge and skill are balanced in flow, writing leads to a more favorable experience. In more depth, a balance between challenge and skill was found to predict flow experience¹⁵.

Subsequent research conducted by Cox and Montgomery (2019) defined the flow experience as 'optimal engagement'. With a mixed methods study, this study aims to investigate whether the intense flow experience experienced by students. A total of 34 undergraduate students in the Spanish language course participated. By using the interview technique for 30 minutes the researchers tried to dig up

¹⁵ Cho, M. *Task complexity and modality: exploring learners' experience from the perspective of flow*. The Modern Language Journal, 102(1), 2018, p.15

information relevant to the research objectives. The results of this study indicate that flow does not exist during the course, but flow occurs when given certain tasks¹⁶.

Some of the studies above explore information about the flow experience that occurs in face-to-face learning. In 2016 Ebrahimzad and Alavi investigated students' enjoyment of e-learning to find out if there was a prediction about an increase in the vocabulary of high school EFL students. With quantitative research, it was found that the enjoyment of e-learning in vocabulary learning. The dimensions of enjoyment of e-learning on balanced challenges and skills can form a positive correlation. Language learning that is implemented online seems to be correlated with the fun experienced by students so that it can increase their motivation in learning a second language. According to the results, enjoyment

¹⁶ Cox, C. B., & Montgomery, C. *A study of 21st century skills and engagement in a university Spanish foreign language classroom.* *Foreign Language Annals*, 52(4), 2019, p. 23

can enable students to continue the long process of learning vocabulary and can grow their motivation.¹⁷

B. Review of Related Literature

In this sub-chapter a literature review related to this research will be discussed. The researcher will discuss online learning, the concept of flow, flow in language learning, flow experience in the online environment and the dynamic nature of the flow dimensions. The purpose of presenting the literature review is to create a framework concerning with the issue within the study.

1. Online Learning

Some time ago, Indonesia implemented a different learning system, namely distance learning. Distance learning is a big challenge for teachers and students in carrying out learning. Distance learning is commonly known as online learning. Online learning can be defined as e learning. E-learning is a

¹⁷Ebrahimzadeh, M. & Alavi, S. *Motivating EFL students: e-learning enjoyment as a predictor of vocabulary learning through digital video games*. Cogent Education, 3(1), 2016, p. 4

teaching and learning system that uses information and communication technology¹⁸. Michael (2013) define E-learning as all forms of learning activities that utilize electronic media to help humans learn¹⁹. With this opinion, it has a broad meaning because it emphasizes electronic-based learning. Meanwhile, Hartley (2001), E learning is a type of teaching and learning that allows teaching materials that allow teaching materials to be delivered to students using the internet, or other computer network media²⁰. E-Learning is a learning activity using computer electronic devices to obtain learning materials that suit their needs, meaning that learning activities can be done anytime and anywhere. There are three components of e-

¹⁸ Naidu, S. *E-learning a guidebook of principles, procedures and practices*. Behalf of the Commonwealth Educational Media Center for Asia. 2006, p. 100

¹⁹ Allen, Michael. 2013. *Michael Allen's Guide to E-learning*. Canada : John Wiley & Sons. 2013, p. 23

²⁰ Hartley, D. E. *Selling E-Learning*, American Society for Training and Development. 2001, p. 51

learning, namely technology, content and learning design. All these components must be met, because if one of the three components is not present, it is not e-learning.²¹

In online learning, electronic media is used as a tool to deliver learning materials. There are also those who must be connected to the internet to access the material. Online learning is one example of e-learning. Using the internet network that connects students and teachers, so that there is direct interaction in learning even though in different rooms. Online learning methods are considered closer to current students who are known to be highly integrated with technology products. This is a form of digitalization in the world of education that has many benefits. With online learning, it can help students to learn subjects that students cannot learn in school.

²¹ Khasanah et al. *Pendidikan dalam masa pandemi covid-19*. Journal Sinestesia, 10(1). 2020, p. 6

The use of the internet in online learning allows teachers and students to communicate with each other. According to Gomez-Rey, online learning platforms are a way to structure instruction, which encourages optimal content organization²². Student interaction with online learning platforms can reduce the workload of teachers, improve the teaching and learning process inside and outside the classroom. Online learning platform is a learning tool that facilitates teachers and students to reciprocate in a communication. There are various platforms used in online learning, including zoom, google meet, google classroom, whatsapp group, youtube, telegram, etc.

At the research location in one of the vocational high schools in Sragen, google classroom and whatsapp group became the

²² Gomez-Rey, P. (2016). *Measuring teachers and learners' perceptions of the quality of their online learning experience*. Distance Education, 37(2) 2016, p. 13.

platform of choice for conducting online learning. This application was chosen because it can be used according to the needs of its users. Google Classroom is a complete place for learning activities and tools that can help students manage, measure, and enrich their learning experience. This platform that really represents the rapidity of digital technology has many advantages. Users can discuss directly with each other like in a conventional class. The material delivered by educators can be accepted by students wherever they are. One of the advantages of this platform is that all learning is centralized in one place, due to integration with various other Google applications. This can make it easier for teachers and students. Teachers can grade student assignments, save teaching materials, and share assignments in one application. On the other hand, students can also see all assignments in a certain folder and get feedback on assignments from the teacher. In

addition to using google classroom, the whatsapp group is a supporting platform. Whatasapp groups are used by teachers to provide information related to the learning process.

2. Flow Concept

Flow is a condition in which individual experience fusion in fun activities. This can be achieved through the intensity and focused attention on the activity. The flow of circumstances can motivate individuals and communities to achieve excellence²³. Flow occurs when the difficulties and challenges faced by individuals in a task are balanced with their abilities. When experiencing flow, a desire arises in oneself to experience it again, and for that a person feels motivated to look

²³ Schouten, et al. *Transcendent Customer Experience and Brand Community*, Journal of the Academic Marketing Science 35: 357–368, 2007, p. 5.

for other, more challenging tasks in a row²⁴. If his abilities exceed the level of difficulty and challenges he faces, he will feel bored, but if the level of quality and challenges faced exceeds his abilities, he will find it very useful²⁵. If someone has experienced flow, then whatever he does is totality and really focused, melted into the activity. When a person experiences a feeling of being disturbed while focusing on something, they are no longer in a state of flow.

The person who first introduced the concept of flow was Mihalyi Csikzentimihalyi. He built a theory about optimal experience based on the concept of flow, which is a situation where a person is immersed in an activity that he enjoys, and the

²⁴ Esenger, S., Rheinberg, F. *Flow, Performance and Moderators of Challenge-Skill Balance*, Journal Motivation Emotion 32: 158-172 , 2008, p. 4

²⁵ Baumann, N., Scheffer, D, *Seeking Flow in the Achievement Domain: The Achievement Flow Motive behind Flow Experience*. Journal Motivation Emotion: 1-18, 2010, p. 11

experience creates a pleasure of its own that makes the person will do it again even though it costs money, just to experience "sensation of taste" that arises when doing these activities²⁶.

According to Mihalyi in Bassi and friends (2006) optimal experience is a state when a person is in high concentration, experiences involvement in something, controls the situation, has goals, and gets clear feedback, feels satisfied and is intrinsically motivated²⁷. Intrinsic motivation is an individual's interest and pleasure in something that is displayed through behavior²⁸. When the individual experiences an optimal experience, he feels joy, a feeling of pleasure that is deep and lasts

²⁶ Csikzentmihalyi, M., *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, HarperCollins e-books

²⁷ Bassi, M., Steca, P., Fave.A.D., & Caprara, G.V. *Academic self-efficacy beliefs and quality of experience in learning. Journal of Youth and Adolescence*.36(3). 301-312. 2006, p. 4

²⁸ Waterman, A.S., *When Effort Is Enjoyed: Two Studies of Intrinsic Motivation for Personally Salient Activities*, *Journal Motivation and Emotion* 29: 3: 165-188, 2005, p. 22

a long time, and it is stuck in the memory of how life should be²⁹.

3. Mihaly's Flow Theory

According to Mihalyi, flow is illustrated as an optimal state of experience. In layman's terms, flow can be referred to as “being in the zone” or “in the groove” and was first studied using creative individuals such as athletes, musicians, and artists (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). It was found that these individuals would persist in challenging tasks even though there was no clear external reward motivating them. Consequently, Csikszentmihalyi (1975) proposed the concept of a flow state to help explain why and how individuals are motivated in these tasks. According to Mihalyi (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002), this type of task (eg sports, art, or music) has several characteristics that provide an

²⁹ Csikszentmihalyi, M., *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, HarperCollins e-books

intrinsically rewarding experience, or more specifically, flow. Along these lines, Mihalyi (1990) later clarified the characteristics of this particular task as a balance between perceived challenge and skill alongside clear goals and immediate feedback. Of these three characteristics, the first (balance between challenge and skill) is the most researched and discussed in the stream literature.

Mihalyi illustrates the idea that experiences where individual skills and task challenges go hand in hand and complement each other. If the challenges inherent in a task far exceed the individual's skills then they will experience anxiety and frustration due to the inability or difficulty in completing the task. On the other hand, if an individual's skill in a task exceeds the existing challenge then they will experience boredom or apathy because the task becomes rough. However, when skills and challenges match, individuals can use their various skills to complete tasks that they view

as challenges that allow them to demonstrate a type of mastery (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). It should be noted that the work of Mihalyi (1990) also suggests that perceived skill and challenge must be moderate to high for flow to occur. It was found that very low skill, low challenge tasks, such as watching tv, were not interesting enough to generate stream status. Again, perceived skill and perceived challenge are of the utmost importance so when both are perceived by the individual as being moderate to high, flow is possible.

The next characteristic is intense concentration and focus on task performance. When an individual engages in flow during a task, their attention is focused solely on completing the task and not on any distractions that are present. Second, when in the flow of individual actions and consciousness, it means that one does not have to think about every individual behavior they do, on the contrary, the action seems to flow naturally. For

example, a pianist while performing doesn't think about every note they have to hit, but they just play it. Third, the loss of reflective self-awareness while in the flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). This is also referred to as loss of consciousness as a social actor which means when in stream individuals don't think about what other people think, they just focus on the task. Fourth, when in flow, individuals feel direct control over their actions and believe that these actions have specific results. A fifth characteristic of flow experience is the feeling of temporal distortion (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975), although there is a paucity of empirical research examining this component. Sixth, when the process of completing the task, and not the final product, becomes the most intrinsically useful. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) defines this experience as an autotelic experience which is directly translated from the Greek meaning self-goal. Purely autotelic activity is any task

that a person would perform only for the pleasure of doing the task itself; however, it is rare to find a perfectly autotelic experience that does not offer any external reward (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

4. Flow in Language Learning

In general, flow theory can relate to foreign language learning and more specifically to the context of EFL on these affective factors. Flow theory involving anxiety, motivation, skills and challenges can also be considered feasible and used to contribute to student achievement³⁰. Furthermore, Mihalyi developed a theory, suggesting a theory that can be effective in ensuring student participation through building enthusiasm and shared joy. The state of flow can have a positive effect on individual

³⁰ Shernoff, D. J., Csikszentmihalyi, M., Schneider, B., & Shernoff, E. S. *Student engagement in high school classrooms from the perspective of flow theory*. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 18, 158-176. 2003, p. 10

happiness thereby increasing creativity³¹. Therefore, planning and implementing programs and activities in an EFL context in a way that will enhance students' flow experiences can contribute to their happiness and creativity. In summary, flow theory involves components that also have a key role in the EFL context.

Egbert assumed that there was a strong relationship between the school and the language being studied. He proposed a flow and language acquisition model in which interactions between individual learner characteristics and classroom environment variables (such as task characteristics) could lead to flow. In contrast, flow makes time focus on the task and stimulates people's motivation to be productive during the task, this combination of time and motivation

³¹ Csikszentmihalyi, M. *The systems model of creativity: The collected works of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi*. Netherlands: Springer, 2014, p. 22

causes the learner's language (learning) ability to change³². This is in line with the concept of self-motivation for second language learners from Dornyei where experience is one of the main structures that determine motivational learning behavior³³. Grabe & Stoller (1997) in Scott Aubrey (2017) on language learning counseling, teachers have the opportunity to influence the learning experience and thereby improve the flow of lessons by planning homework carefully and emphasizing the content of assignments³⁴. Students are given a choice of meaningful assignments. In this way, a language learning environment specifically designed to elicit and maintain task processes can lead to a more positive classroom

³² Egbert, J. *A study of flow theory in the foreign language classroom*. *The Modern Language Journal*, 87, 500e518, 2003, p. 551

³³ Dornyei, Z. *The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005, p.3

³⁴ Aubrey, S. *Inter-cultural contact and flow in a task-based Japanese EFL classroom*. *Language Teaching Research*, 21(6), 717e73, 2017, p. 9

experience and ultimately enhance language learning and development³⁵.

Many factors play a role in the context of teaching English as a foreign language. The context is considered to involve several internal factors other than cognitive competence. In particular, Horwitz argues that students in foreign languages apply more individual effort than in other learning contexts because they are interacting with foreign cultures at the same time³⁶. Therefore, affective factors, such as attitude, motivation and anxiety, seem to play an important part in learning a foreign language. “State of flow” as a concept closely related to anxiety and motivation, appears to be among these factors. Flow is associated with motivation, anxiety,

³⁵ MacIntyre, P. and Gregersen, T. *Emotions that facilitate language learning: The positive-broadening power of the imagination*. Studies in Second Language Learning, 2012, p. 15

³⁶ Horwitz, E. K. *Student affective reactions and the teaching and learning of foreign languages*. International Journal of Educational Research, 23(7), 573-579. 1995, p. 7.

boredom, challenge and competence of positive psychologists, and flow theory is evolving for possible uses in various fields of study. On the one hand, if the level of challenge discussing the individual is higher than the skill level, then anxiety occurs. Furthermore, if the challenge level is lower than the skill level, it is likely to appear bored³⁷. On the other hand, flow theory suggests that a delicate balance between individual skills and challenges contributes to optimal performance and learning in any context. Due to the balance between skill and challenge, people feel engaged in the tasks they create and experience fluidity. The factors of anxiety, motivation, participation were also highlighted in the foreign language learning environment. Therefore, flow theory can also be correlated with the environment.

³⁷ Csikszentmihalyi, M. *The systems model of creativity: The collected works of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi*. Netherlands: Springer, 2014, p. 19.

In fact, Egbert 2003 points out that the flow state and the foreign language learning process involve similar components, which promotes the idea that the flow state is very important in the context of foreign language learning and may have a positive effect.³⁸

5. Flow Experience in the Online Environment

The concept of flow theory has been studied as a theoretical framework for studying interaction between human experience and computer-mediated environment³⁹. Flow has been described as “the process of most useful enjoy” and described as “the holistic sensation that human beings sense after they act with overall involvement⁴⁰. Flow activities on the web,

³⁸ Egbert, J. *A study of flow theory in the foreign language classroom*. The Modern Language Journal, 87, 500e518, 2003, p. 504.

³⁹ Shin, N. *Online learner's 'flow' experience: An empirical study*. British Journal of Educational Technology, 37(5), 206, p. 9.

⁴⁰ Csikszentmihalyi, M. *Beyond boredom and anxiety*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1975, p. 12.

especially network navigation, facilitate deep awareness and intense engagement as they may be extraordinary from what argues as "the most important truth of the ordinary lifestyle". Flow is a complex construct, and researchers have measured the state of optimal experience through multiple dimensions⁴¹. Based on the concept of flow theory, Hoffman and Novak (1996) proposed a conceptual model of client navigation behavior in a hypermedia computer-mediated environment to understand human and computer interaction⁴². They asserted that the flow experience will lead to numerous tremendous subjective stories like multiplied studying, multiplied perceived behavior control, expanded exploratory and participatory behavior, and positive subjective enjoy. Likewise, Trevino

⁴¹ Csikszentmihalyi, M. *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper & Row. 1990, p. 72

⁴² Hoffman, D.L. dan Novak, T.P. *Marketing in Hypermedia Computer-Mediated Environments Conceptual Foundations*, Journal of Marketing, 60, 50-68. 1996, p. 8

and Webster (1992) used flow constructs to examine the effect of optimal experience on employee interactions with PC-mediated communication technology (CMC), they decided that going with the flow in CMC technology interactions resulted in a high-quality mastery effect in the workplace, along with effective communication, reduced barriers, and a fantastic attitude towards technology⁴³. Furthermore, based on the concept of Ghani et al. (1991), investigating flow experience and user satisfaction in computer-mediated task obligations, characterizes flow constructs with perceived control, concentration, and pleasure. They found that perceived control and challenges associated with the flow experience result in

⁴³ Trevino, L. E. dan Webster, J. *Flow in Computer-Mediated Communication*, Communication Research,19, 539-573. 1992, p. 2

user satisfaction in computer-supported work learning⁴⁴.

There has been a study effort in web-based learning that shows that flow experience has an outwardly positive influence on the acquisition of student learning outcomes. Shin (2006), using the concept of flow to examine the impact of flow experiences in the context of online learner satisfaction, suggests that flow is a multidimensional construct that includes elements of enjoyment, focused attention, engagement, telepresence, and time distortion in the learner's experience⁴⁵. His observations found that flow was a very good predictor of online course satisfaction and that in aliases were more likely to be satisfied in the virtual curriculum. In addition, Skadberg and Kimmel (2004) examined stream

⁴⁴ Ghani, J. A., Supnick, R., & Rooney, P. *The experience of flow in computer-mediated and in face-to-face groups*. ICIS Proceedings, 9. 1991, p. 7

⁴⁵ Shin, N. *Online learner's flow experience: An empirical study*. British Journal of Educational Technology, 37, 705e720. 2006, p. 4

experiences associated with websites, characterizing stream constructs as enjoyment, time distortion, and telepresence⁴⁶. They showed that in a web environment, stream experiences increase engagement and lead to changes in attitudes and behavior, which are associated with knowledge expansion, which in turn can lead participants to take positive actions. Kiili (2005), investigated the impact of useful content material, creation, challenges, and factors on flow experiences in academics video games, also found that stream experiences increase student engagement to have a positive influence on learning⁴⁷. Furthermore, a study of useful resource planning education with web-based digital learning systems according to Choi, Kim, and

⁴⁶ Skadberg, Y. X., & Kimmel, J. R. *Visitors' flow experience while browsing a web site: Its measurement, contributing factors and consequences*. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 20, 403–422. 2004, p. 5

⁴⁷ Killi, K. *Content creation challenges and flow experience in educational games: The IT-Emperor case* (vol. 8). *Internet & Higher Education*. 2005, p. 1

Kim (2007) found that flow deviations that occur in the context of corporate resource planning education have positive benefits. In employee training, the results of students' preferences for online learning increase when they are in conditions of involvement, concentration, control, and intrinsic interest⁴⁸.

6. The Dynamic Nature of Flow Dimensions

Flow is either a short-term phenomenon or a useful construct when applied to a single, discrete experience⁴⁹. Egbert (2003) for instance, applied the flow construct in this way, examining the flow of learners who performed with seven unrelated tasks⁵⁰. However, another view of the researcher is that flow status is not an isolated experience

⁴⁸ Choi, D. H., Kim, J., & Kim, S. H. (2007). *ERP training with a Web-based electronic learning system: The flow theory perspective*. *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, 65(3), 223–243. 2007, p. 5

⁴⁹ Dornyei. *Motivational dynamics in language learning*. Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters. 2015, p. 10

⁵⁰ Egbert, J. *A study of flow theory in the foreign language classroom*. *The Modern Language Journal*, 87, 500e518, 2003, p. 551

but arises as a result of conditions influenced by previous experiences. On the other hand, given that initial motivational states can have far-reaching implications for future behavior⁵¹. The likelihood for a learner to experience flow in one task is influenced by previous attempts with a similar task. Thus, longitudinal studies, in which a form of task repetition is implemented, can explain how flow is shaped by experience. In this more temporal view of flow, it is important to consider the dynamic aspects of flow.

It was previously identified that the balance between *challenge* and *skill* is one of the most important prerequisites for flow to occur⁵². According to flow theory, “people” should flow when they feel both the challenges

⁵¹ Verspoor, M. Initial conditions. In Z. D€ornyei, P. D. MacIntyre, & A. Henry (Eds.), *Motivational dynamics in language learning* (pp. 38–46). Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters. 2015, p. 8

⁵² Liao, L. *A flow theory perspective on learner motivation and behavior in distance education*. *Distance Education*, 27(1), 45–62. 2006.

in a given situation and their skills are high. High levels of challenge or low skill combinations can cause temporary anxiety⁵³. A low level of challenge/skill combination can cause anxiety, whereas a high level of challenge/skill combination can cause boredom. With classroom-based assignments, the challenges of language assignments may be related to the ability to process information and concepts, and are likely to have an effect on the type of task (eg, information exchange or decision making), content assignments, and interlocutors. According to Bygate (1999) repeated tasks can relieve cognitive demands on the learner and aid in consolidating language knowledge through practice⁵⁴. Thus, creating a more balanced skill-challenge

⁵³ Csikszentmihalyi, M. *Finding flow: The psychology of engagement with everyday life*. New York, NY: Basic Books. 1997, p. 6

⁵⁴ Bygate, M. *Task as context for the framing, reframing and unframing of language*. *System*, 27(1), 33–48. 1999, p. 2

dimension and conditions in which flow is more likely to emerge.

Attention, the second dimension of flow is synonymous with *intense concentration* and automaticity during a task⁵⁵. The ability to focus on what one is doing without breaking concentration has been linked to high flow rates⁵⁶. Egbert (2003) suggests that there are two types of attention at the time of flow, namely the automatic state that increases fluency and the type of attention associated with focus on accuracy. According to Csikzentmihalyi (1997), attention can increase when students "discover something new" during the activity. In the context of a repetitive task, attention may be paid to the content of the task being varied (i.e., the

⁵⁵ Egbert, J. *A study of flow theory in the foreign language classroom*. *Modern Language Journal*, 87. 2003, p. 499

⁵⁶ Mandigo, J., & Thompson, L. *Go with their flow: How flow theory can help practitioners to intrinsically motivate children to be physically active*. *Physical Educator*, 55(3), 145–160. 1998, p. 21

content is new in the iterative performance)⁵⁷. On the other hand, repetition of tasks can lead to boredom and apathy as learners can become “tired of doing the same thing”⁵⁸.

The third dimension is *interest*. Interest is often associated with important, complex, new, and meaningful activities. Interest can be categorized into two components: (1) interest as an emotional experience, curiosity, and momentary state; (2) interests as individuals, personal preferences for an activity-referred to as individual interests⁵⁹. In flow theory, interest is considered as a by-product of intense involvement in activities that were previously uninteresting or proposed by Nakamura (2005) calling "emerging

⁵⁷ Csikszentmihalyi, M. *Finding flow: The psychology of engagement with everyday life*. New York, NY: Basic Books. 1997, p. 13

⁵⁸ Kim, Y. *Promoting attention to form through task repetition in a Korean EFL context*. In K. McDonough & A. Mackey (Eds.), *Second language interaction in diverse educational settings* (pp. 3–24). Amsterdam, the Netherlands: John Benjamins. 2013, p. 5

⁵⁹ Silvia, P. J. *Exploring the psychology of interest*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 2006, p. 56

motivation". However, Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2002) have also observed that "having" skills and interest in an activity is one of the prerequisites for finding flow, suggesting that learner interest plays several roles in flow⁶⁰. In fact, Egbert (2003) claims that flow-promoting tasks should be linked to the student's "favorite hobby or pastime".

The fourth dimension of flow is *control*. A sense of control can be described as one's power over one's environment, a feeling of autonomy, or "experiencing" oneself as the origin of one's behavior. Since flow is a function of the interaction between the individual and the environment, the activities that contribute to flow may contribute to flow may be different for each student. However, Whalen (1997) notes that contexts such as school and family help enable more flow

⁶⁰ Nakamura, J., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. *The Concept of Flow*. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 89-105). New York: Oxford University Press. 2002, p. 11

experiences both by setting rules and responsibilities there, but also offer their members opportunities to practice economics and self-expression. This claim has support in the work by Abbott (2000), who found that 'supporting autonomy' environments, even in schools, were more conducive to flow than controlled environments and tasks⁶¹.

This sense of control or autonomy is also an important aspect of language acquisition⁶². For example, "maintenance" of self-esteem as a person through involvement in decision making and the degree of freedom to use preferred learning strategies contribute to motivation in language learning⁶³. Mc Quillan and Conde (1996), for example, note that

⁶¹ Abbott, L.J., and Parker, S. Audit Committee Characteristic and Auditor Switches. *Research in Accounting Regulation*. Vol. 15. pp 151-165. 2000, p. 7

⁶² Thanasoulas, D. *What is learner autonomy and how can it be fostered?* *The Internet TESL Journal*, 6(11). 2000, p. 7

⁶³ Brett, P. *The design, implementation and evaluation of a multimedia application for second language listening comprehension*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Wolverhampton, England. 2000, p. 14

readers are best at determining their own reading level and suggest that students should play a role in their selection of reading material outside of the classroom⁶⁴.

The four dimensions are based on Egbert (2003) and are not complete dimensions. As these dimensions are interrelated, different researchers offer contrasting views of the role each dimension plays in flow construction⁶⁵. In addition, additional flow dimensions can also appear in different contexts. Flow theory, for example, defines *clear and immediate feedback* as a condition for flow, whereas associated flow characteristics also include reflective *loss of self-awareness*, *distortion of temporal safeguards*, and the experience of intrinsically rewarding activity. One would

⁶⁴McQuillan, J. & Conde, G. *The Conditions of Flow in Reading : Two Studies of Optimal Experience*. Reading Psychology, 17, 109-135, 1996, p. 3.

⁶⁵Egbert, J. *A study of flow theory in the foreign language classroom*. The Modern Language Journal, 87, 500e518, 2003, p. 502

expect that if students repeat each activity in online learning, the flow rate will ebb and flow as each dimension interacts with the online learning experience.

C. Conceptual Framework

Mihalyi defined flow as "the holistic sensation that people feel when they act with total involvement"⁶⁶. Flow states are states of heightened experience in the sense that the person involved in the activity feels "simultaneously cognitively efficient, motivated, and happy"⁶⁷. Moreover, Mihalyi and others found that these states correlated with enhanced performance in a variety of creative and sporting activities, as well as learning. The conditions of flow include a sense that one is engaging in challenges at a level which is appropriate to one's capacities, having clear,

⁶⁶ Csikszentmihalyi, M., *Play and intrinsic rewards*. Journal of humanistic psychology, 15. 3, 1975, p. 21

⁶⁷ Moneta, G.B. and Csikszentmihalyi, M., *The effect of perceived challenges and skills on the quality of subjective experience*. Journal of personality, 64. 2, 275-310. 1996, p. 5

proximal goals with immediate, accessible feedback about progress that is being made. The enjoyable nature of flow promotes learning and engagement with more complicated activities since, to maintain the state, the subject of the experience has to maintain the balance between challenge and skills, resulting in a synchronized increase in task difficulty as proficiency develops. It was this unfolding "virtuous circle" of self-actualisation, in which an individual continually seeks out new tasks by setting, and ultimately surpassing, increasingly challenging problems, that Mihalyi saw as the key not only to a rewarding and productive life for the individual but also for the flourishing of whole communities and cultures⁶⁸.

Mihalyi early work on flow describes a number of elements that characterise the state. The first is a "merging of action and awareness" in

⁶⁸ Engeser, S. and Rheinberg, F. *Flow, performance and moderators of challenge-skill balance*. *Motivation and Emotion*, 32. 3, 158-172. 2008, p. 7

which a person is aware of the actions being performed but not the state of awareness itself. There is a focusing or centering of attention on the specific details of the problem at hand and a loss of self-consciousness so that individual considerations become irrelevant to the task. This is accompanied by feeling of control or mastery over the performance of the task together with clear, unambiguous knowledge of the course of action, clarified by immediate and plain feedback. Objectives are perceived as logically connected with a clear order of operation and reaction to subtasks is automatic. Finally, the state has an "autotelic" nature, that is, there is no need for external goals or rewards as the experience of participation is its own reward.

In subsequent elaboration of the theory, Mihalyi and others also suggested that further characteristics of flow included a sense of "the distortion of temporal experience of time", i.e. that time seemed to go faster when the individual engaged in the activity in the flow-like state. In

addition he looked at precursors or conditions that are required to exist before a flowlike state develops. The most important of these is that a person should have a feeling of control over the process with a balance between the challenge involved and the skills required to complete a task. The challenge-skill requirement has led a number of researchers to try to develop a model of flow based on these components⁶⁹.

Based on explanation above the researcher tries to aimed what dimensions Mihaly's flow theory occurs on EFL students during online learning. For more modified explanation conceptual framework by Egbert (2003) as follow⁷⁰ :

⁶⁹ Csikszentmihalyi, M., *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper & Row. 1990. p, 20

⁷⁰ Egbert, J. *A study of flow theory in the foreign language classroom*. The Modern Language Journal, 87, 500e518, 2003, p. 504.

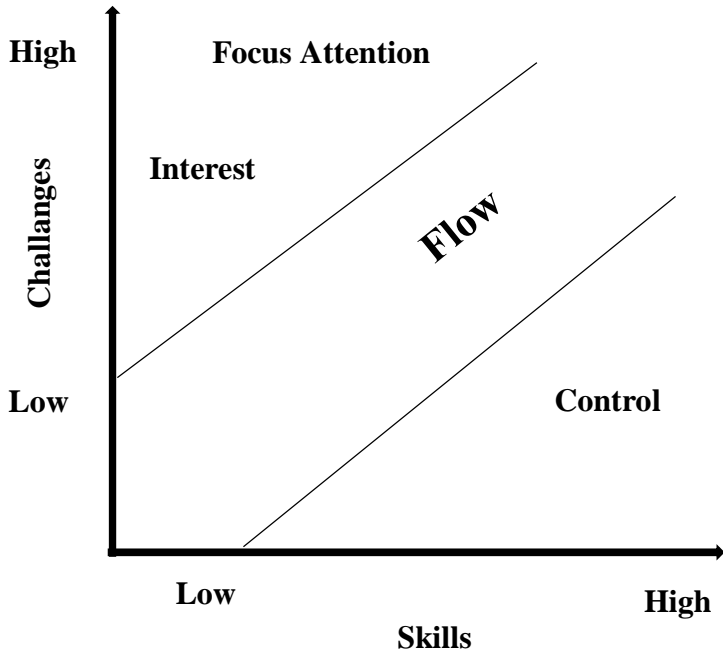


Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework of Mihaly's flow theory by Joy Egbert (2006)

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter presents the methodology in conducting the research. It includes the research setting and subject, the research design, source of data, techniques of data collection, data analysis, and data validation discusses the research method applied in this research. There are research setting, research design and procedure, data collection, and data analysis technique.

A. Research Design

1. Research Method

The central focus of this study is to conduct a small narrative investigation which tries to collect data from a number of vocational high school students regarding the experience of online learning. In accordance with its objectives, the approach in narrative inquiry determines the most suitable for this research because this approach emphasizes the human experience and captures the "detailed story of life

experience" of the individual of life experiences" of individuals⁷¹.

The term *narrative inquiry* was first used in the educational research field in 1990 by Connelly and Clandinin. They established the educational importance of narrative as a research methodology (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) based on Dewey's philosophical tradition that claims education, experience, and life are interrelated⁷². This approach is known to have "a long intellectual history both in and out of education", including in the discipline of anthropology, linguistics, literary theory, philosophy, theology, women studies, organizational theory, psychotherapy, geography, law, and medicine⁷³. The wide use of narrative in and across disciplines reinforces

⁷¹ Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C., Sorensen, C.K., & Walker, D. *Introduction to research in education*. Canada: Cengage Learning. 2010, p. 8

⁷² Dewey, J. *Experience and education*. New York, NY: Macmillan. 1938, p. 13

⁷³ Craig, C.J. *Story constellations: A narrative approach to contextualizing teachers' knowledge of school reform*. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(2). 2007, p. 173

narrative inquiry as a widely acknowledged approach which is able to generate insights and to foster multiple interpretations of the phenomenon being studied.

Narrative inquiry, as its name suggests, can generally be defined as a qualitative approach which captures the personal and human dimension of lived experiences and presents them narratively. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) elucidate that narrative inquiry is the study of how humans experience the world⁷⁴. Similarly, Moen (2006) outlines that a narrative approach focuses on the meanings and values that individuals attach to their experiences through the stories they tell and share⁷⁵. Furthermore, Clandinin, Pushor, and Orr (2007) underscore that the narrative is “the study of experience as

⁷⁴ Connelly, F. M. & D. J. Clandinin. *Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry*, Educational Researcher 19 :2, 2-14. 1990, p. 3

⁷⁵ Moen, T. *Reflections on the narrative research approach*. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5(4), 56-69. 2006, p. 7

story”⁷⁶. These ideas imply that narrative inquiry approach attempts to understand how people think and experience through events and what they value. For that reason, the researcher applied narrative inquiry in this study as a way to make sense of understanding students online learning experiences. Researcher fully understand that the inquiry is subjective, but it captures the complexities of meanings embodied within the stories representing an in-depth analysis of data.

2. Research Setting and Context

Qualitative research requires a certain social location as the natural background of the problem in order to provide a basis for explaining a comprehensive understanding. Therefore, this research was conducted in one of the vocational high schools in Sragen, Central Java. The choice of research location was based on the focus of research on student experiences during online

⁷⁶ Clandinin, D.J., Pushor, D., & Orr, A.M. *Navigating sites for narrative inquiry*. Journal of Teacher Education. 2007, p. 3

learning. The reason for choosing the location of this research is because at that school there is English language learning, which even though in vocational high schools, English subjects are not English for specific purposes. This means that learning English has not led, and is still general in nature. In addition, the school implements online learning totally for a certain period of time. So there is an interest in knowing how students experience learning English during online learning.

3. Participant

In this study, the term population was not used. This study uses a "social situation" because it is more suitable with the research method taken. In "social situations" there are three elements, consisting of places, actors, and activities that are carried out at the same time. In this type of research, a sample is called an informant. The selection of informants in qualitative research is fully determined by Patton (2002) called purposive sampling, namely selecting informative

cases based on predetermined strategies and objectives, which depend on the objectives and resources of the study⁷⁷.

Qualitative research does not recognize the existence of a minimal sample. Generally, qualitative research uses a small sample size. Even in certain cases only one informant is used (Martha 2016). In this study, criteria sampling technique was used, which aims to obtain informants/cases that match the established criteria. Researchers have set several criteria, including: having abilities that are in line with challenges, feeling interested in online learning, feeling able to follow the flow of online learning, and having rich fun experiences during online learning. The four informants Ema, Hasan, Hana and John (pseudonym) are informants who meet these criteria. They are in grade 11 with a film production expertise program and television program. Their age range is between 16-17 years.

⁷⁷ Patton, M. Q. *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods (3 ed.)*. California : Sage Publishing. 2002, p. 56

B. Data Source

The source of data in the study is the subject from which the data was obtained⁷⁸. The main data sources in qualitative are words and actions, the rest are additional data such as documents and other literature⁷⁹. Researchers used two data sources to find and collect data sources in this study, and the results obtained, namely:

1. Primary data sources

Primary data is data taken directly by researchers to the source without any intermediary. The words and actions of the people observed or interviewed are the main sources of data⁸⁰. All primary data are sources of data obtained by digging up original sources directly from respondents, recording the main data sources through

⁷⁸ Arikunto, Suharsimi. *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu pendekatan Praktek*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta. 2010, p. 34

⁷⁹ Moleong, Lexy J. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung : PT Remaja Rosdakarya. 2006, p. 24

⁸⁰ Moleong, Lexy J. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung : PT Remaja Rosdakarya. 2006, p. 25

interviews obtained through the combined efforts of viewing, listening and asking activities. In this study, researchers collected data through direct interviews and using the whatsapp platform. All collections and aims to find out the experience of EFL students learning online.

2. Secondary data sources

Secondary data sources are indirect data sources capable of providing additional and strengthening the research data. The sources of data in this qualitative research, apart from the words and actions of the informants, were also obtained through library research using books and internet media to support analysis and discussion. In addition, it will also take data from archives and photos during the research. Secondary data in this study were in the form of recordings during the interview and several photographs. In

order for this research to be accountable, secondary data sources are very important so that truly detailed research results will be obtained.

C. Method of Collection Data and Instrument

1. Data Colletion Procedure

Data collection techniques used in qualitative research is to use interview techniques, documentation and field notes. Researchers can adapt the data collection techniques used to the conditions at the research site. According to Sugiyono, data collection techniques are the main step in research, because the main purpose of research is to obtain data. Without knowing the collection technique, the researcher will not get data that meets the established standards⁸¹.

As a typical form of qualitative research, narrative research usually focuses on the study of a single person or individual and how that

⁸¹ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D*, Bandung : Alfabeta. 2009, p. 128

individual gives meaning to his or her experiences through the stories told, collecting data by collecting stories, reporting on individual experiences, and discussing the meaning of those experiences for them. But in this study, the focus is not only on one person, but two participants. In this study, the authors applied steps to collect data, including:

- a. Field text: with interviews as the unit of analysis to research and understand how EFL students experience during online learning. In narrative research, interviews are often conducted in an informal conversational manner to encourage participants to tell their life stories.
- b. Interview: in the interview session, the researcher first guides the interview process. By going through several processes, the researchers dug deeper information in order to get rich information about the experiences of

EFL students during online learning. In this case, the informant clearly tells as much as possible about the experience felt in detail and thoroughly.

- c. Conversation: to get incomplete information at the time of the interview, a conversation was carried out via whatsapp media. With this, the researcher explores the experiences of EFL students during online learning more fully.

2. Instrument

In qualitative research, the research instrument is the researcher himself. Qualitative researchers as human instruments, have the function of determining the focus of research, selecting informants as data sources, collecting data, assessing data quality, analyzing data, interpreting data and making conclusions on all of them. In addition to the researcher as the main instrument, there is also an instrument to complete the data and

compare it with the data that has been obtained through interviews⁸². So in this study, the researcher becomes the research instrument itself. In addition, to obtain data and instrument are used for each techniques :

a. Interview

Interviews are collecting data about attitudes and behavior, experiences, ideals, and human expectations as stated by the respondent to the questions of the researcher or interviewer (Jacob Vredentbregt, 1979:88). Interviews are used as a data collection technique by researchers through a series of question and answer activities on several questions which then provide data on the problems being studied by researchers. According to Burhan Bungin there are two types of

⁸² Sugiyono. *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D*, Bandung : Alfabeta. 2009, p. 129

interviews, namely structured interviews and in-depth interviews⁸³. This study uses in-depth interviews, because in-depth interviews can be explored about what is hidden in a person's heart, whether it concerns the past, present, or future.

This method researchers use to collect data about the experiences of EFL students during online learning. In this study, interviews were conducted with 2 students, the first session was conducted directly with a duration of 30 minutes, the language used was Indonesian. In the second session, the interview was conducted through WhatsApp media. In the first session participants were given 8 questions that were relevant to the objectives of

⁸³ Bungin, Burhan. *Analisis Data penelitian Kualitatif*. Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada. 2012, p. 97

this study. Here were some listed questions for the interview.

**Table 3.1. Interview Guidelines
for EFL Students**

No	Question
1	Is your ability to use digital media able to complete English tasks well ?
2	Does the English online learning that is applied can facilitate you to show the best abilities that you have ?
3	When you are given an English assignment, do you really focus on completing the task?
4	When you take online English learning, do you do it with full concentration?
5	Do you like learning English online? and want to experience it again?
6	Are you able to control the important elements when learning English online? such as maintaining motivation, and maintaining a conducive environment

7	When you encounter obstacles when learning English online, independently, can you overcome them?
8	Are you interested in learning English online? Why ?

b. Documentation

Documentation is a record of events that have passed. Documentation can be in the form of writing, pictures, or works monumental of a person. In qualitative research, documentation is a complement to the use of observational techniques and interviews used in qualitative research. Results data collection from interviews and observations will be more credible or trustworthy if supported by

documentation⁸⁴. Documentation in this study are photograph or pictures and archives of a series of activities what researchers do while in the field.

D. Data Analysis Technique

After collecting the data, researcher processed to construct the partisipants' online learning experiences reflect Mihaly's flow theory. In this study, which focused on students' online learning experiences, the approach used to analyze the data was thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) say that thematic analysis is a qualitative research analysis technique that can identify, analyze and report patterns contained in the data and present them in detail and complete. Besides being able to show complete and detailed data, Taylor & Ussher (2001) also added that this thematic analysis technique can be used to interpret a variety of different subjects.

⁸⁴ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D*, Bandung : Alfabeta. 2009, p. 129

Thematic analysis is assumed to be the most appropriate method used in research that uses interpretation as one of the data analysis techniques. The reason is because the thematic analysis is systematic, and makes it easier for researchers to associate how often the themes occur with the overall data. In addition, thematic analysis also helps researchers to connect and compare various concepts and opinions with data found in the field⁸⁵. From the statements above, it can be concluded that thematic analysis is a way in which the data that has been obtained by researchers are interpreted using various emerging themes.

In using thematic analysis, the researcher analyzes the field text and then arrives at finding the theme that forms the basis of the content. In this study, the process of thematic analysis

⁸⁵ Alhojailan, Mohammed Ibrahim. *Thematic Analysis: A Critical Review Of Its Process And Evaluation*. West East Journal of Social Sciences-December. 2012, p. 2

followed six definite phases by Braun and Clarke
:

1. Phase one

After getting the data from the informants, it becomes important for the researcher to immerse himself in the data to what extent the researcher is familiar with the depth and breadth of the content. Immersion usually involves “rereading” the data, and reading the data actively—looking for meanings for patterns, and so on. It is ideal for reading through entire data sets, as ideas and pattern identification may be formed as we read. During this phase it is a good idea to start taking notes or marking ideas for coding which will then be returned to the next phase. After this, the researcher is ready to begin the more formal coding process.

In this study, the initial step of analyzing the data involved the activities of listening carefully, copying, and becoming familiar with the raw data. After listening to the

audio interview for several times, the researcher transcribed the verbal data found. For interviews conducted in Indonesian, the researcher must first translate them into English. In addition, in this phase the informants checked the interpretation of the collected transcripts. This is the main step in narrative investigation to maintain the authenticity of the story told by the informant. It takes time and patience to go through this phase. but it is a valuable experience. This allows the researcher to engage deeply with the field texts and increase understanding so that they can explore the data further.

2. Phase two

This phase begins when the researcher has read and familiarized himself with the data, and has generated a list of initial ideas about what is in the data so as to find interesting things about it. After that, this phase involves the production of the initial code

from the data. The code identifies the data features that appear to be of interest and refers to the raw data. The researcher paid intense attention to processing the field text. In maintaining an account of the field text, the researcher coded as many potential themes as possible. Some significant sections were coded more than once to obtain a comprehensive thematic map.

3. Phase three

The third phase begins when all the data are initially coded and collated, and the researcher has a long list of different codes that have been identified across the data set. This phase focuses on a broader theme-level analysis, involving sorting the different codes into potential themes, and compiling all coded data extracts relevant to the identified themes. At this stage the researcher also has a set of code that seems irrelevant to the main theme.

At the end of this phase, the candidate themes, sub-themes, and all coded data extracts were collected. At this point, the researcher looks at all the data in detail, making sure the themes persist, or whether some need to be combined, refined, and separated or discarded.

4. Phase four

The fourth phase begins when the researcher has designed a set of candidate themes, and it involves refining those themes. This phase involves the process of reviewing and refining the data. The review was carried out at the level of the encoded data extract. This means the researcher needs to read all the collected extracts for each theme, and consider whether they form a coherent pattern. The results of this review will produce a thematic map that presents the links and relationships between themes. Then the researcher checked the theme with the original data results and re-examined the

thematic map to ensure a strong foundation and uniformity of the theme.

5. Phase five

At this point, the researcher defines and refines the themes further with the aim of identifying the essence of each theme and determining what aspects of the data are captured by each theme. On each theme, the researcher needs to conduct and write a detailed analysis. In addition to identifying the “story” each theme tells, it is important to consider how it fits into the broader “story” of the whole. As part of the refinement, the researcher will identify whether a theme contains sub-themes or not.

The next process is to assign a short name for each theme. After the thematic categories are created, the data is imported into popular software with information management, presentation and reporting. It enables researchers to categorize and store information and make presentations

effectively. It can also create opportunities to rearrange and re-arrange themes in order to identify complex relationships and patterns.

6. Phase six

This phase begins when the researcher has a fully worked out set of themes, and involves the final analysis of report writing. In this process, the researcher interprets complex information from the field text and presents the findings in a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive, and interesting manner across themes.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Braun, V. and Clarke, V. *Using thematic analysis in psychology*. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2). 2006, p. 77-101

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDING

This chapter deals with the research finding and the discussion. The research finding, the discussion and the interpretation of the data answer the research question which had been formulated. In this chapter, the result of the data analysis are presented. The data were collected and then processed in response to the problem and elaborate the findings with the existing theory.

A. Finding

1. The Online Learning Experience of EFL Students

The research finding provide for the research question which is describing students' online learning experiences reflect from Mihaly's flow theory.

a. Ema's Online Learning Experiences

Ema was one of four participants who answered the questions completely and in detail. Her English skills are quite good. To understand

easily, the following is shown more detailed data based on themes :

1. Persistence

The first theme that the researcher will discuss is Ema's persistence in achieving her goals. Based on the interview answers from Ema, the researcher collected data from Ema that she knew what she had to do to succeed and did not make a lot of useless excuses. Instead, he relied on reason and his ability to develop creativity. Like the explanation :

“So I tried to measure my ability first. Maybe the ability I have to do assignments from the teacher. As I do when given a rather difficult task, if I already know my abilities, I believe I can complete them. It turned out that the assignments given by the teacher

were balanced with my abilities. Not many people know how I've been doing all this time. There are many obstacles, such as internet connection that sometimes gets lost during online learning. I work around this by changing the subject of study. Not infrequently I study in a rice field hut so that the connection continues”

Researcher were impressed with Ema's story. She chuckled at how odd it was to other people, but it was also clearly proud of her feelings. This kind of determination can encourage to find out strategies to overcome obstacles in online learning.

Ema said that her abilities were sufficient to complete the tasks given by her teacher. In using digital media, she is quite

proficient. Since Ema is a millennial generation, she doesn't want to be out of date. She always learns new things related to technological sophistication. It became an interesting thing for her.

“According to my abilities, I can complete all tasks well. I feel like I finished it well, even though I don't know what the result will be. Regarding my ability to use digital media, I think I'm pretty smart, haha.. we are millennials, everything that is difficult can be easy. Things I don't understand yet, I keep learning until I can. I don't know why this is interesting to me. Not without reason, we are in the era of technological progress. All sectors rely on

technology. If we want to move forward, we must follow.”

Based on the answers above, it can be seen that Ema has the ability to use digital media so that she can complete the tasks given by the teacher. It is argued that the task or challenge must be in accordance with abilities. When balanced students will feel more comfortable and think to complete the task as well as possible. For digital-based online assignments, you don't feel too tired because students are quite proficient in using digital platforms.

On the other hand, Ema's persistence can be seen when she talks about the focus of attention when learning online. With full concentration Ema did the online

learning process. Likewise when doing the work done. Although sometimes there are things that make the focus disperse, such as an unfavorable situation, unstable internet connection, this can be circumvented.

“To be able to focus on online learning is easy for me. What requires more effort is how to keep focus so as not to lose. Sometimes when the house is crowded and the internet connection drops, it can cause my focus to break. But things like that can still be overcome.”

Researcher saw Ema's persistence to keep her focus during online learning. She put all his effort into staying focused.

Based on Ema's explanation, the theme of

persistence is the right name to label her experience. This theme represents the dimensions of flow theory (challenge-skill balance and focus attention). The various challenges that she is able to overcome with her abilities, show that Ema is a persistent student and does not easily give up despite obstacles. In addition, her persistence in maintaining his focus also deserves special attention. Ema tries to stay focused despite the distractions that cause her to lose focus.

2. *Interest*

The second theme that will be discussed is interest. This theme describes Ema's interest in online learning. Ema is interested in online learning. According to her, online learning is not as terrible as

she previously expected. Even she felt like it. Because online learning does not require a long time like face-to-face learning.

“Initially I was not comfortable studying online. But as time went on, I liked it then became interested. Because online learning is not too long hehe the time is shorter.”

Even though Ema likes online learning, when asked further by the researcher, *would you like it if online learning would be re-applied?* The answer is surprising. She really likes online learning, but prefers face-to-face learning. As she said

“Oh... just once. I prefer face-to-face learning. I just feel more comfortable with face-to-face learning.”

This shows that student experience the flow interest dimension with a percentage of 50%, because Ema say she prefer face-to-face learning.

3. *Authority Power*

The last theme that will be discussed by the researcher is the power of Ema's authority. This theme represents the dimension of flow theory control. Ema felt that she could control the things around her. For example, by controlling important elements such as motivation, commitment, setting clear and directed goals. She feels fully responsible for what she does, and must be able to manage all things, both small and big.

“Of course I can control myself, although sometimes I need help from other people. It becomes a

responsibility for me to control my motivation and commitment. Online learning has become a new thing for me when it comes to managing time appropriately, controlling emotions, and generating motivation. Although I know this is not an easy thing, but I believe that when we encounter certain situations, it must be for a reason, it is not possible without a reason. It was an experience that made me learn a lot of new things for my future.”

An indication of control indicates that this participant has the autonomy to regulate herself. Feeling that she has a responsibility that he has to bear, indicates that the control he has can have a positive impact, such as how to maintain motivation,

control emotions and have clear goals.

The conclusions that can be drawn from the three themes, it can be concluded that Ema is experiencing flow in the online English class. With the four dimensions of flow that occurred to her, Ema achieved high marks in English subjects. In the four dimensions, according to Ema, the control dimension is more dominant.

b. Hasan's Online Learning Experiences.

Hasan is one of the outstanding students in the class. His English skills are unquestionable. Public speaking is quite good. He often fills school events and takes part in cross-city English competitions. According to one of his

teachers, Hasan has good academic grades. He was enthusiastic when asked for information by the researcher. To find out the details, here is the data that describes Hasan's online learning experience based on themes :

1. Persistence

The first theme to be discussed is Hasan's persistence during online learning. Persistence is a form of tempestuous spirit. This persistence is illustrated by the story of Hasan's experience. Hasan feels that the tasks given by the teacher are a challenge. Not only a task, online learning is also a challenge. Because according to him, online learning requires a lot of preparation. This participant feels that there is no time to wait for when the readiness is there, he has the principle that now is the time to be ready. By

feeling ready to learn online, of course, his abilities will be fully explored to meet the challenges.

“The use of digital media is not new for me, because it is in accordance with my passion. Because digital media is something I struggle with every day. My ability can be said to be sufficient enough to complete the tasks at hand. What makes me a challenge is the process of online learning it self. Because learning online is a new thing that I have never experienced. The process of understanding learning materials that are not as usual makes me a little lacking in this regard. But for tasks in fact I can complete it.”

Researcher see Hasan as a persistent student. Although initially Hasan felt that he was not ready to go through the online learning process, with his abilities he made the process

go through gently. With well-completed tasks, it indicates that the skills that participants have can meet the challenges at hand. This means challenge and skill are balanced.

In terms of focus of attention, Hasan's persistence is also evident. When attending online classes, Hasan puts his full attention on learning. Even in order to keep his focus, he ignored his surroundings. He has committed, if time to study, must study. No need to pay attention to other things that are not important. If there is something that causes his focus to break, he immediately takes steps to find a solution and refocus.

“Everything I do, I do with great concentration. This includes online learning. Precisely with things that I have never experienced before, I have to carry out with full concentration. I

continue to focus. If there is something that causes my focus to disperse, I immediately find a solution so that my focus returns. I just do this so that I can understand the learning material well. Because I feel there is a shortage in this.”

One dimension that underpins the flow experience is focused attention. Based on the participant's explanation, it is illustrated that he has a very deep focus of attention. This indicates that the participant is experiencing flow experiences.

Based on Hasan's presentation, the theme of persistence is a suitable name to describe his figure. It was seen when Hasan had to face online learning which he thought was a new thing. At that time Hasan felt challenged. With the abilities he has, it's not a difficult thing to conquer

these challenges. In addition, the focus of attention can also represent this theme. Hasan is always focused on what he is doing, and ignores the distracting surroundings. This indicates that the flow dimension (challenge-skill balance and focus of attention) occurs in Hasan.

2. *Interest*

The second theme is interest. The researcher tries to explain Hasan's interest. Hasan feel he need to make an effort to grow interest first before experiencing interest. According to him, all based on interest. When interest has been planted in the heart, everything that is done feels easy. If the interest already exists, it is possible to like it.

“For me the most important thing is interest. Once there is interest, then love can emerge. I am interested in

learning online first. It's been fun for a long time. I can enjoy every process. It means that indirectly I have been interested in online learning. The tasks given by the teacher during online learning are also more varied, so I don't feel bored. ”

The interests possessed by these participants, led to an interest in online learning. The thing that made him interested was because he could enjoy the online learning process. Tasks that are more varied are also the things that underlie the growth of this interest.

3. Authority Power

The last theme that will be discussed by the researcher is the power of authority. This theme represents the flow dimension, namely control. Hasan claim that he can control himself and him surroundings. Interest in task characteristics offers

relevant and meaningful experiences so that participants feel they are in control.

“Because I am interested in varied tasks, I feel a new experience because I have never experienced it before. It also reduces the impression of monotony. The tasks that exist require me to always be active. This causes me to have control so that the task can be completed properly.”

Hasan's exposure shows he is experiencing control to control himself. This control has an impact on the completion of tasks that require students to be active. This of course will be different if the task is passive, which does not really offer a learning experience. So the task criteria also affect the occurrence of the control dimension.

Of the three themes that explain Hasan's experience, it can be concluded that Hasan experienced the four dimensions of flow with different dominance. Of the four dimensions, the challenge-skill balance dimension ranks first for him. That's because Hasan's abilities are in accordance with the challenges of the tasks given by the teacher.

c. Hana's Online Learning Experiences

Hana was one of the four selected participants. Hana is an outstanding student and organizational activist at her school. Being an activist, of course, makes Hana's study time take up a lot of organizational activities. This becomes interesting from the researcher's point of view to explore the flow experience on her. To find out

the details, here is the data that describes Hana's online learning experience based on themes :

1. Persistence

The first theme that the researcher will discuss is Hana's persistence during online learning. Based on Hana's answer, the researcher collected data from Hana that she is really good at dividing time for organizational and learning activities. According to her, the condition she feels now, according to her wishes. It becomes a challenge for Hana to be able to balance time between organization and study. Like the explanation :

“I feel that I am in two options that it is impossible to choose one of them. Both (organizational activities and learning) are things I like. Despite the pandemic, organizational activities

continue to run online, as well as the learning process. It is a challenge for me to divide my time so that the two run in balance. I think online learning is a lot of digital-based tasks that must be done with limited time. But it's not a problem for me, because I can meet the challenges of the task with the ability to balance time between organizational activities and learning. Organizational activities do not interfere with the online learning process at all."

Hana's story made researchers interested and flattered at the same time. When many students are the same age as her, sometimes dividing the time to do many things is still not smart. But this participant, felt that dividing time is a challenge, and the ability he has can meet the challenge, so that all tasks can be completed

properly. Researcher see Hana as a persistent student. Even though she was busy with organizational activities, it was not an excuse for him not to complete tasks well.

The other side of Hana's story, it seems that the focus of attention is so full on her. When joining online classes, Hana did so with full concentration and left everything that did not support the learning process.

“When I'm ready to join the online class, I definitely do it with full concentration. Start forgetting things that are not important, and build focus first. It's easy enough for me to focus on online learning, because the conditions at home are not too crowded, and the internet connection is stable. If everything is fulfilled, I am ready to learn online and focus my

attention on understanding the material from the teacher”.

From Hana's story, it can be indicated that she experienced the dimensions of Mihaly's flow theory. With the persistence theme, is a suitable name label to represent the dimensions (challenge-skill balance and focus attention). With the challenges that she is able to conquer, and the abilities that are balanced with the challenges, as well as the focus of attention during online learning, it is enough to represent the two dimensions of flow (challenge-skill balance and focus attention).

2. *Interest*

The second theme is interest. This theme explains more about Hana's Interest. Hana mentioned that she is easily attracted to something. So it is possible that he will feel interested in

online learning. Hana said that she was interested in online learning, which had never been done before.

“I am interested in learning online. Plus I am a person who is easily attracted to something. Learning online is certainly a new thing for me. That's exactly what intrigued me. Online learning activities are more diverse, the tasks are also more varied. That intrigued me even more.”

The attraction process experienced by Hana started from the beginning. With the variety of activities offered and more varied tasks when learning online are factors that make Hana feel interested.

Based on Hana's story, it can indicate that Hana is experiencing Mihaly's Flow Theory. The theme of interest represents the dimension of interest that occurs in Hana.

3. *Authonomy Power*

The final theme is a further explanation of the power of Hana's authority. This theme represents the dimension of flow theory (control). Hana felt herself in complete control of what she was doing. This means she can freely control herself and her environment. More specifically, Hana can control her full time, to balance study time with organizational activity time, because it has become part of her responsibility.

“I can freely control myself completely. It has become a responsibility for me to balance my time between study and organizational activities. Besides that, I can also control the ups and downs of learning mood, how to generate motivation, and target what I want to achieve. Even though I know, controlling ourselves is not easy, but if

you let go of the dick you can lose your way. We still need help from friends, we are social humans, intervention from other people is certain."

This indicates that Hana has the power of authority to control herself. By controlling important elements such as maintaining the mood, generating motivation and targeting what he wants to achieve. The theme of authority power is an appropriate name label that represents the dimensions of Mihaly's Flow theory, namely control.

From the three themes that have been described, it can be concluded that Hana experiences Mihaly's flow while studying online. Hana experienced the four dimensions, it's just that the more dominant dimension is the dimension of authority power. It is because of this dimension that it has been seen from the

start that Hana can manage her time well.

d. John's Online Learning Experiences

John is one of the four participants who are classified as less intelligent, but diligent students, besides that he is also active in asking questions in class during online learning. With John's character, the online class atmosphere is not monotonous because there is a form of two-way communication between teacher-students during the learning process. The teacher can usually also use this as a general description to assess how much potential students have who ask questions or express their opinions. It is very clear that John's online learning experience is not just any experience. To be clear about John's online learning experience, here are some

dimensions of Mihaly's flow theory which are represented on several themes, including:

1. *Persistence*

The first theme is persistence. This theme discusses more deeply about John's persistence during online learning. John, who is a student who is active in asking questions in class, must have something behind this activity. Based on an interview with John, he believes that by not having the courage to ask questions when faced with difficulties, he will continue to be left behind with further understandings. Although at first John was afraid to ask, but he killed that fear, and tried to be brave.

“Actually, I was a less intelligent student. I still feel left out with friends who ran further. What I can do is study harder, have the courage to ask the

teacher, and summarize the learning materials. Regarding digital-based tasks given by the teacher, my abilities are sufficient to complete them. It's not a difficult thing for me because the digital world is something I do every day."

The quote conveyed by John illustrates how persistent John is in catching up with his friends. John showed courage to start asking questions. Then the challenges of the tasks given by the teacher can be resolved easily. Because John's ability is capable enough to pass all challenges. This means that John experienced one of the dimensions of Mihaly's flow theory, namely balanced challenge-skills.

In another story, John's persistence can be seen in how he stays focused when learning online. In order to focus

on online learning, John creates a conducive and comfortable learning environment. How to create a comfortable atmosphere for learning for everyone can be different. However, generally a comfortable learning atmosphere can be created by cleaning the study table and removing all items that will not support the learning process. That's what John did, just like his presentation

"To be able to focus attention, there must be an effort. I usually prefer to keep the environment conducive. Such as cleaning the study table, throwing away or tidying things up, in order to create a comfortable atmosphere for learning. If the atmosphere is conducive, focus can be formed easily."

One dimension that underpins the Mihaly's flow theory is focus

attention. Based on John's Explanation, it is illustrated that he has focus attention. This indicates that the participants are experiencing Mihaly's flow experience.

2. *Interest*

The second theme is interest. John's interest in online learning is deep on this theme. According to John, he is interested in online learning because the variety of learning activities makes interest grow and does not get bored easily. The methods used by teachers are more diverse, not only that. Such as using learning methods that ask more questions and tell stories, invite active students to give opinions or give explanations or answer questions. Like John's presentation :

“I feel quite interested in online learning. because the methods used by

the teacher are more diverse, such as using learning methods that ask more questions and tell stories, besides that the teacher also invites students to actively share opinions. With a variety of methods, automatically the tasks are also more varied. So it's not monotonous and boring. So I feel interested."

It is that Mihaly's theory of dimensional flow has occurred, namely the dimension of interest. With more diverse learning methods, activities, and tasks, John's interest in online learning was formed.

3. Authority Power

The last theme is the power of authority. This theme represents Mihaly's flow dimension, namely control. John claims that he can control himself and his surroundings. Controls are used to keep focus from

being distracted, and to keep the environment conducive.

"Obviously I have a sense of control. It is used to maintain focus and condition the environment to remain conducive. I ask the attention of the people at home, if I am studying, please stay calm and urge you not to do anything that will distract me."

John's explanation indicates that he has experienced the dimensions of Mihaly's flow theory, namely the control dimension. He tries to control himself and his environment by asking the householder to pay more attention to stay calm while John attends online classes. It is clearly evident that he has complete control over himself and his surroundings.

Based on the three themes, it can be concluded that John experienced Mihaly's flow theory. With all four

dimensions of Mihaly's flow happening to him, it's clear that he is experiencing it. Although with different dominance in each dimension. For John's participant, the more dominant dimension is interest.

B. Discussion

This discussion section is written to justify the findings of research on student online learning experiences based on Mihaly's flow theory. The term learning experience is interpreted differently by each student. Although the learning activities are the same. The experience gained depends on how students respond to it. In other words, each student may achieve a different experience. But the framework of activity they experience will be similar. In general, this study found the results that EFL students in vocational high schools were in a state of flow during online learning.

Data findings on the first dimension (challenge-skill balance) show that online learning

runs smoothly, varied tasks are quite challenging, but the skills students have are sufficient to overcome difficulties as mentioned by Cox (2014).

In the second dimension, the focus of attention. Students find it easy to focus at the start of an online learning session. But because there are shortcomings, such as problems with sudden connection drops, power outages, the absence of a stable internet connection, and an unfavorable environmental atmosphere. This deficiency causes students' concentration to sometimes break. There must be a certain effort to re-establish focus.

Next for the third dimension, interest. Students claim that they experience an affinity with online learning. By reason of online learning does not take a long time, and the activity when learning online is something new, so there is no feeling of boredom. Tasks that require students to be active can attract students' interest to complete them well. Even so, they don't want to experience online learning anymore, because they think that

face-to-face learning is still the best choice to better understand students.

On the last dimension, control, the findings show that the emergence of a sense of control makes them aware of what they are doing and why they are doing it, which explains that they have cognitive involvement in learning.

All participants argued that the four dimensions of flow (challenge-skill balance, focus attention, interest, and control) were related. These four dimensions have been experienced by participants when learning online. This can answer the questions in the research question. It was about whether the students had flow or not during online learning. The result shows that students had flow experiences during online learning as in several studies (e.g., Cho, 2018; Cox, 2014; Cox & Montgomery, 2019).

The results showed that the two participants experienced the dominance of different dimensions. The first participant, Ema, experienced a more dominant control dimension.

By controlling himself by controlling his emotions, interests, time. Then followed by the dimensions of challenge-skill balance, interest, and finally focus attention. Then the second participant, Hasan. The challenge-skill balance dimension is the most dominant dimension for him. With the abilities he has, he does not feel exhausted to meet the challenges in the task. Followed by interest, control, focus of attention occupying the last rank.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter presents the conclusion and the suggestion related to the research findings. The conclusion summarizes the research findings, and the suggestion purpose further action for partial on research purposes.

A. Conclusion

The conclusion was taken based on the data which had been analyzed on the previous chapter. Overall, these findings suggest that the higher the observed odds for flow on the four dimensions, the more likely the participants will feel the flow. These findings also suggest that these four dimensions can index flow experiences and that a narrative approach can be relied upon to examine these. From the data, learning experience of EFL student toward online learning could be concluded in sentences.

First, the results depicted that interest placed in the first rank made the participants feel

more secure and triggered their motivation on study. Students find interest in English online learning. With various supporting opinions, the interest dimension has a tendency more than the other dimensions.

Second, the challenge-skill balance dimension ranks runner up. The findings suggest this dimension can influence student flow. In the supporting data, it appears that digital-based assignments might affect student experience. Because, digital-based assignments provide opportunities that are not provided in regular teacher-centered activities. In other words, the introduction of technology affects the flow experience. So the skill has a close relationship with the challenges in the flow experience.

Third, students feel they have the autonomy to regulate themselves and their environment. This shows that participants experience the flow dimension, namely the control dimension. By regulating emotions, interests, motivations, keeping the environment conducive,

it is an effort made by participants to stay focused on online learning English.

The last dimension, focus intention. Participants found it difficult to maintain their focus when learning English online. This is because participants study from home, so it is very difficult to dispel interference from outside. So that focus attention occupies the last rank of the four dimensions.

B. Suggestion

Researcher try to provide useful information about the theory of flow csikzentmihalyi on EFL students online learning experience. The researcher hopes that this research can be useful for:

1. For English teacher

Based on the findings of this study, it can be suggested that teachers can design their online language classes in the form of face-to-face training and online teaching to keep students from

being alienated from language learning. However, if they have to continue their language teaching process online, they can record the lesson and let their students watch and repeat the lesson to reinforce the results. Further suggestions for teachers may be to pay more attention when giving assignments, adjust to the ability of students. to strike a balance between challenge and skill. Next, make sure to compose learning materials that are more interesting in order to arouse student interest.

2. For the next researcher

In addition to the questions posed throughout this article, an important issue to investigate in future studies is the effect of flow on language learning outcomes. In language learning, flow theory is also expected to be examined in each skill. In addition, the factors

that influence and result from the flow experience are expected to be further investigated by the next researcher.

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List of Appendix

1. Time Schedule of The Research
2. Interview Guidelines for EFL Students
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4. Documentation
5. Research Permit Application Letter
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APPENDIX 1

Time Schedule of the Research

Activities	Date
Asking permission from the lecturer	01 November 2021
Asking permission from the research place	09 November 2021
Doing Research	10 November 2021 - 30 November 2021
Interviewing with selected students	16 November 2021

APPENDIX 2

Interview Guidelines for EFL Students

No	Question
1	Is your ability to use digital media able to complete English tasks well ?
2	Does the English online learning that is applied can facilitate you to show the best abilities that you have ?
3	When you are given an English assignment, do you really focus on completing the task?
4	When you take online English learning, do you do it with full concentration?
5	Do you like learning English online? and want to experience it again?
6	Are you able to control the important elements when learning English online? such as maintaining motivation, and maintaining a conducive environment

7	When you encounter obstacles when learning English online, independently, can you overcome them?
8	Are you interested in learning English online? Why ?

	Student 1	<p>Untuk bisa konsentrasi di awal itu mudah. Yang susah bagaimana mempertahankan konsentrasi itu sampai akhir pembelajaran. Kan belajarnya dari rumah ya, banyak gangguan. Kadang sinyal internet tiba-tiba hilang, kadang ada suara bising dari tetangga. Itu juga cukup mengganggu sebenarnya.</p>
5	<p>Researcher</p> <p>Students 1</p>	<p>Do you like learning English online? and want to experience it again?</p> <p><i>Apakah kamu menyukai belajar bahasa Inggris secara online ? dan ingin mengalaminya kembali ?</i></p>

		<p>Saya cukup menyukai belajar bahasa Inggris secara online. Suka karena bisa dilakukan dirumah, tidak perlu ke sekolah. Selain itu, belajar online aktivitasnya berbeda dengan belajar offline. Tugas-tugasnya juga tidak begitu-begitu saja, bervariasi. Tapi saya merasa kurang maksimal ketika harus belajar bahasa Inggris secara online. Banyak hal yang kurang saya pahami. Kalau untuk mengalaminya lagi tidak deh, saya pilih belajar tatap muka saja.</p>
6	Reseacher	<p>Are you able to control the important elements when learning English online? such as maintaining motivation, and</p>

	Student 1	<p>maintaining a conducive environment ?</p> <p><i>Dapatkah anda mengontrol elemen-elemen penting ketika belajar bahasa Inggris secara online ? seperti membangun motivasi dan mengkondisikan lingkungan ?</i></p> <p>Tentu saja saya bisa mengendalikan diri, meski terkadang saya membutuhkan bantuan orang lain. Menjadi tanggung jawab bagi saya untuk mengendalikan motivasi dan komitmen saya. Pembelajaran online menjadi hal baru bagi saya dalam hal mengatur waktu secara tepat, mengendalikan emosi, dan membangkitkan motivasi. Walaupun saya tahu ini</p>
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	Student 2	<p><i>melakukannya dengan penuh konsentrasi ?</i></p> <p>Semua yang saya lakukan, saya lakukan dengan konsentrasi tinggi. Termasuk pembelajaran online. Justru dengan hal-hal yang belum saya alami sebelumnya, harus saya jalani dengan penuh konsentrasi. Saya terus fokus. Jika ada yang menyebabkan fokus saya buyar, saya segera mencari solusi agar fokus saya kembali. Hal ini saya lakukan semata-mata agar saya dapat memahami materi pembelajaran dengan baik.</p>
5	Researcher	<p>Do you like learning English online? and want to experience it again?</p>

8	Researcher	<p>Are you interested in learning English online? Why ?</p> <p><i>Apakah anda tertarik untuk belajar bahasa Inggris secara online ?</i></p> <p><i>Mengapa ?</i></p>
	Student 2	<p>Cukup tertarik ya, karena tidak monoton kalau online itu. Banyak aktivitas-aktivitas menarik. Siswa-siswa juga jadi lebih aktif.</p>

		situasi ya, kalau sudah kondusif mending offline aja deh
6	Reseacher	<p>Are you able to control the important elements when learning English online? such as maintaining motivation, and maintaining a conducive environment ?</p> <p><i>Dapatkah anda mengontrol elemen-elemen penting ketika belajar bahasa Inggris secara online ? seperti membangun motivasi dan mengkondisikan lingkungan ?</i></p>
	Student 3	<p>Bisa. Hal-hal seperti itu sudah menjadi ranah diri sendiri untuk bertanggung jawab. Hal itu bisa dikendalikan oleh diri masing-masing. Tergantung kemauan.</p>
7	Researcher	When you encounter obstacles when learning English online,

	Student 3	<p>independently, can you overcome them?</p> <p><i>Ketika anda menemui kendala saat belajar bahasa Inggris secara online, secara mandiri, apakah anda bisa mengatasinya ?</i></p> <p>Ada beberapa hal yang bisa saya selesaikan sendiri, ada juga yang perlu bantuan dari orang lain. Tidak mungkin bisa mengatasi semua secara mandiri. Pasti ada beberapa hal yang perlu bantuan dari orang lain.</p>
8	Researcher Student 3	<p>Are you interested in learning English online? Why ?</p> <p><i>Apakah anda tertarik untuk belajar bahasa Inggris secara online ? Mengapa ?</i></p>

		<p>Kalau belajar online itu aktivitasnya lebih berbeda-beda. Tidak seperti offline yang terkesan monoton. Jadi saya tertarik</p>
--	--	--

	Student 4	<p>independently, can you overcome them?</p> <p><i>Ketika anda menemui kendala saat belajar bahasa Inggris secara online, secara mandiri, apakah anda bisa mengatasinya ?</i></p> <p>Ada beberapa yang bisa saya atasi sendiri, pasti juga ada yang tidak bisa diselesaikan sendiri. Pasti ada beberapa hal yang perlu bantuan dari orang lain. Seperti mengatasi masalah tugas kelompok, kan harus diselesaikan bersama. Kan kita juga makhluk sosial ya.</p>
8	Researcher	<p>Are you interested in learning English online? Why ?</p> <p><i>Apakah anda tertarik untuk belajar bahasa Inggris secara online ? Mengapa ?</i></p>

	Student 4	Tertarik. Metode yang digunakan guru bermacam-macam. Jenis tugasnya juga berbeda-beda. Itu menjadi ketertarikan sendiri bagi saya.
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APPENDIX 4

DOCUMENTATION

Interview with students



APPENDIX 5

Research Permit Application Letter



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI WALISONGO SEMARANG
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Nomor: 3663/Un.10.3/D.1/DA.04.09/11/2021 08 November 2021
Lamp : -

Hal : Mohon Izin Riset
a.n. : Kartika Jati Kartini
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Yth.
Kepala Sekolah SMK N 1 Tanon
di Tempat

Assalamu'alaikum Wr.Wb.,
Diberitahukan dengan hormat dalam rangka penulisan skripsi, atas nama mahasiswa :

Nama : Kartika Jati Kartini
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Alamat : Mojorejo RT.14, Tanon, Tanon, Sragen
Judul skripsi : Mihaly's Flow Theory on EFL Students' Online Learning
Experiences : A Case of Vocational High School

Pembimbing :
1. Lulut Widyaningrum, M. Pd.

Sehubungan dengan hal tersebut mohon kiranya yang bersangkutan di berikan izin riset dan dukungan data dengan tema/judul skripsi sebagaimana tersebut di atas.

Demikian atas perhatian dan terkabulnya permohonan ini disampaikan terimakasih.

Wassalamu'alikum Wr.Wb.



Tembusan :
Dekan Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Walisongo Semarang (sebagai laporan)

APPENDIX 6

Completion of Research Letter



PEMERINTAH PROVINSI JAWA TENGAH
DINAS PENDIDIKAN DAN KEBUDAYAAN
SEKOLAH MENENGAH KEJURUAN NEGERI 1
TANON

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Satuan Pendidikan : Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Walisongo Semarang

Untuk melaksanakan Penelitian Penulisan Skripsi yang berjudul "**Mihaly's Flow Theory of EFL Students Online Learning Experiences : A Case of Indonesian Vocational High School**" di SMK Negeri 1 Tanon dengan waktu yang secukupnya.

Demikian Surat Pemberian Izin ini kami buat untuk dapat dipergunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas Perhatian dan kerjasamanya kami ucapkan terimakasih.

Tanon, 9 November 2021

Pt. Kepala Sekolah
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