WRITING LEARNING MODEL BASED ON *ÉCRITURE AUTOMATIQUE* METHOD IN COURSE *AUFSATZ I*

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Abstract: This study aims to describe the process and the result of implementing *Écriture Automatique* writing method for *Aufsatz I* Course. The research specifically describes the finding based on the data gathered from the questionnaires. The study indicates that the *Écriture Automatique* method encourages students to write, inspire, and help them elaborate their ideas. From the students' writing activity in two meetings, their scores are between 84.1 and 80.1 in average from maximum grade 100, both of which are categorized 'good'.

Key words: Écriture Automatique, Aufsatz I

Abstrak: Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan proses dan hasil implementasi metode menulis dengan *Écriture Automatique* untuk mata kuliah *Aufsatz I*. Secara khusus, artikel ini membahas hasil penelitian berdasarkan data yang didapatkan dari angket penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa metode menulis dengan *Écriture Automatique* meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis, mencari inspirasi dan mengembangkan ide penulisan mereka. Hasil penilaian kegiatan menulis mahasiswa selama dua pertemuan, implementasi metode menulis *Écriture Automatique*, rata-rata nilai mereka adalah 84.1 dan 80.1, dengan kategori nilai "bagus" dengan maksimal nilai 100. I

Kata-kata kunci: Écriture Automatique, Aufsatz I

The course *Aufatz* (in English Writing) consists of two courses, namely *Aufsatz 1* and *Aufsatz 2*, each of which has three credits *Aufsatz*. These courses are two of the courses designed to assist students develop writing skill. Substantial teaching hour is given to this course to help students develop and enhance their German writing skill. The linguistic skill and competence of the german department students, particularly those from B class, is portrayed by their final scores of *Deutsch 2* course acquired during the even semester of academic years 2012/2013. The class average score obtained on the writing exam during midterm is of 69, whereas that of final term is of 71 and from this it can be assumed that students still experience difficulties in writing.

Out of the four language skills, writing should be allotted the biggest portion as this skill is considered the hardest to master. Writing is the last language skill to be mastered by

language learners after listening, speaking, and reading (Iskandarwassid, 2009:248). Hence, someone ought to deploy a certain set of techniques in order to develop his writing skill. One potentially effective and applicable method for developing writing skill is *Écriture Automatique* method. The working principle of this method is to write by focusing on letting ideas flow rapidly without prioritizing form and grammar (Knaus, 2009: 28). This issue is discussed in the following questions: how is the learning process by using the *Écriture Automatique* method? And how is the result learning of such methods?

Writing is defined as the act of conveying a message or of communicating through written language. There are four elements involved in written communication, namely the writer as the author of the message, the message or the subject matter, the writing as the medium, and the reader as the recipient.

Basically, written language is used as a means of indirect communication between the communicator/writer and the communicant/reader. Writing is an act of expressing ideas through written language with the purpose that the ideas to be read and understood by others (Gie, 2002:9). From this statement, it can be concluded that writing is one's attempt to communicate through written language in which ideas, notions, and thoughts are expressed to the reader in series of processes.

Student's effort to learn and master writing skill, in this research, is specifically focused on the writing skill in German language. The level of German language mastery is described in The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The CEFR describes foreign language proficiency at six levels: A1 and A2, B1 and B2, C1 and C2. It also defines three 'plus' levels (A2+, B1+, B2+) It is used in Europe but also in other continents and is now available in [40 languages](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp). In German it consists also of six mastery levels: A1 and A2 *(elementare Sprachverwendung),* B1 and B2 *(selbständige Sprachverwendung)*, and, lastly, C1 and C2 *(kompetente Sprachverwendung).* Each of those levels is described in *Kannbeschreibung* (competence description), both in terms of receptive as well as productive competence (Glaboniat, 2005).

Meanwhile, the students of B class year 2012 were currently on level A2 during the first semester of academic year 2013/2014. Their writing skill has been honed through the *Aufatz I* course taken this semester. All of the writing assignments are based on the Course Outline designed by German Language Departement (GLD) linguistic team. The GLD catalog stipulates that materials of this course are intended to provide students with writing experience that are closely related to the aspects of their daily life context. Students are required to make use of signal words and connectors in simple texts, various kinds of letters, illustrations, advertisements, text reproducings, articles to name a few. Those tasks are given with the primary goal that students develop their productive skill in written German language at the level of A2-B1. (Katalog, 2012:32).

Écriture Automatique is a France phrase which means 'automatic writing.' With this method, students are encouraged to write as smoothly as they can without pressure, reflection, stopping, or control (Knaus, 2009:28). In other words, this technique requires students to write anything they can think of. This way, during the writing process they must keep going and should not look back to correct any errors they make such as spelling or grammatical errors. Next, they may check and correct the writing only after it's finished. This method can help students who frequently experience 'writers block.'

One of the critics about this method says: "bei der écriture automatique, gilt hingegen als nutzlos, vielleicht sogar als gefährlich, weil es im Widerspruch zur Richtigkeitsideologie

derjenigen steht, die den Mut, Fehler zu machen, nie haben durften" (Hornung, 1997:87). It means, Écriture automatique is not only useless, maybe also dangerous, because the idealogy of this method is, errors and mistake could be done in writing. As a study reports on a study of free writing conducted with 29 male and 29 female undergraduates, McKinney (1976) wrote that method of free writing that helped them cope with real problems during a 9-wk period, and they were asked to keep notes on the successes of and resistances to the methods used.

METHOD

This is a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims at describing the process and findings of the implementation of *Écriture Automatique* writing method. After collecting and analyzing the data, the researcher describes the findings to represent the students' competence in German language writing, particularly during the *Aufsatz I* course.

The primary data were obtained from all of written words, phrases, clauses, sentences and paragraphs found in the data source. The secondary data were collected from questionaires that have been distributed to and filled out by the students. In analyzing the data, the researcher collects and checks the completeness of the data and describes the students' respond. Students' writings are assessed by giving scores that are weighed on the assessment criteria from Goethe Institut, which has two aspects: communicative design/content and scope, *(Kommunikative Gestaltung/Inhalt und Umfang)* with maximum grade 4, and the formal correctness *(Formale Richtigkeit)* with maximum grade 4. The grade total is 8 x 2 = 16 points The scores are then summed to produce the total score (Kharis, 2014:72). The closed questionnaire is used in this study, which consisted of a series of statements and answers criteria that have been provided. The questionnaire responses obtained data on the application of writing method Écriture automatique in the course *Aufsatz I* and also defined the weaknesses and strengths.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Using Écriture Automatique method

Écriture Automatique method was applied in two meetings during the *Aufsatz I* course. Based on the Course Outline, the themes given for the writing were animals *(Haustier)* and tour *(Reisen).* The learning process consists of initial, main, and final activities. This paper focuses on describing one example of the learning activity only, the *Haustier* theme.

In the initial activity, the lecturer did a question and answer session with the purpose of recalling the vocabularies that the students already learned. The vocabularies and expressions collected were then written on the blackboard in the form of associogram, which can help students to explore the vocabularies related to the topic given. (Hidayat, 2011:18). Next, during the main activity the researcher and the students discussed on designing writing outlines in the form of tasks *(Leitpunkte).* The purpose of giving *Leitpunkte* is to keep the writing on track and to help setting teachers' focus in assessing. (Hidayat, 2011:18). The discussion yields a number of suggestions on *Leitpunkte* from the students such as: had/ have you pets? Why? which pet is especially popular by young people?, what are the advantages and disadvantages of having a pet? All of these tasks are collected in German: *haben/hatten Sie Haustiere? Warum?, welches Haustier ist besonders bei Jugendlichen beliebt? Was sind die Vor- und Nachteile, ein Haustier zu haben?*

After deciding the *Leitpunkte* as the basic of their writing, the students started to write the rough draft using *Écriture Automatique* method. During the writing process, students were not allowed to work together or to use any aids such as dictionary or any other notes. In this stage, students were given 10 minutes to write the rough draft. After that, students were given time groupwork to correct the grammar, orthography, and other components in their writing. After completing their revisions, students were given time to have a peer discussion in partner work, to enable them to consult their writings with their colleagues. In this stage, the researcher, in his capacity as the facilitator stayed inside the classroom whilst answering questions from students. The common questions raised by students were mostly regarding grammar, diction, conjuction, or any other communicative expressions. The revision process took approximately 30 minutes and subsequently focused on the partner work decided earlier.

In the final activity, the students submitted the revised assignments and afterwards did some evaluation and self reflection regarding the activity of the day. Before the class ended, the students completed the open and closed questionnaires in order for the researcher to collect feedback from students relating to *Écriture Automatique* method used in writing skill.

Result

The application of *Écriture Automatique* method in two meetings using the *Haustier* and *Reisen* theme resulted in the average scores 84.1 and 80.1 from maximum score 100. As an example, how an essay examined by asessment criteria for learners in level A2 is based on the following GER manual below:

In *Kommunikative Gestaltung/Inhalt und Umfang* asessment criteria, students' writing is assessed based on whether or not the content covers the whole given *Leitpunkte*. The connection between sentences is also analysed in order to find out whether it makes the sentences relevant to each other. For the sake of clarity the content of *Leipunkte* task is underlined below.

<div align="center">HAUSTIERE</div>

Ich habe niemal ein Haustier. Meine Mutter verbietet mir, ein Haustier zu haben. Eigentlich mag ich Katze. Wenn ich einen Katze als mein Haustier hätte, würde ich mich darauf freuen. Meine meinung nach sind Katze, Hund, und Vogel sehr bekannt als Haustiere. Viele Jugendlichen haben diese Tiere als ihre Haustiere. Vielleicht brauchen die Jugendlichen nicht so viel Zeit, um die Haustiere sich zu kümmern. Man ist mehr verantwortlich, wenn man Haustiere hat. Das ist die Vorteile vom Haustiere. Aber es gibt auch die Nachteile. Manchmal braucht man extra Geld, um die Haustiere sich zu kümmern. Zum Beispiel, wenn die Haustiere krank sind, muss man sie zum Tierartz bringen.	*Leitpunkt* 1 *Leitpunkt* 2

(DCF)

The analysis shows that student DCF achieved grade 4 because she has written all the *Leipunkte*. Besides, she is also capable in elaborating the sentences into a communicative paragraph. This can be seen through the usage of conjunctor and signal words such as actually (*eigentlich),* if *(wenn)* and but *(aber).* Besides that, the sentences do not always begin with subjects, which gives natural impression on them. (Kharis, 2014)

Whereas in *Formale Richtigkeit* assessment criteria, students' writing is assessed based on the grammatical error she makes. The errors are underlined and analysed in the table.

Ich habe niemal ein Haustier. Meine Mutter verbietet mir, ein Haustier zu haben. Eigentlich mag ich Katze. Wenn ich <u>einen</u> Katze als mein Haustier hätte, würde ich michdarauf freuen. <u>Meine</u> meinung nach sind Katze, Hund, und Vogel sehr bekannt als Haustiere. Viele Jugendlichen haben diese Tiere als ihre Haustiere. Vielleicht brauchen die Jugendlichen nicht so viel Zeit, um die Haustiere sich zu kümmern. Man ist <u>mehr verantwortlich</u>, wenn man Haustiere hat. Das ist die Vorteile vom Haustiere. Aber es gibt auch die Nachteile. Manchmal braucht man extra Geld, um die Haustiere sich zu kümmern. Zum Beispiel, wenn die Haustiere krank sind, muss man sie zum Tierartz bringen.

(DCF)

Table 1. Types of errors

Line	Type of Error
2	Inappropriate usage of *unbestimmte Artikel 'einen'* for Katze. The right article for Katze is *die,* and therefore in the *Akkusativ* case it should be 'eine'.
3	*Meiner Meinung nach ...* is an expression that is followed by Dativ case. Besides, the letter 'M' in '*Meinung*' should be written in capital letter since it is a noun.
4	Animal names should be written using their plural forms, thus it should have been *Katzen, Hunde, Vögel.*
6	'mehr verantwortlich' could have been written more efficiently 'verantwortlich'.

The analysis shows that student DCV achieves grade 4 (four) in the *Formale Richtigkeit* assessment criteria because she committed only a few grammatical errors and all the sentences are understandable. The grade achieved by student DCF according to the two assessment criteria used above is 8 (eight). The total of grade achived then times 2, is divided by 16 (maximum grade total) and times 100 to get the point conversion. Thus, the final score of student DCF is:

$$N = \frac{8 \times 2}{16} \times 100 = 100$$

Despite the perfect score, however, the researche found it necessary to suggest revision.

Meanwhile, the open questionnaire asks students to describe the advantages and disadvantages of *Écrticure Automatique* method in *Aufsatz 1* course. Based on the questionaire distributed to 22 students, obtained is the following data.

REGARDING ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Students were also required to give their feedback regarding the advantages and disadvantages of this writing method. Based on the information obtained from the questionnaire, students believe that this writing system gives them a number of advantages: it helps them to write in a simple yet structural fashion, gather all the important points and develop them into broad contents, write easily without the aid of dictionary, find alternative ideas when the ideas available are too difficult to process further, train them to think faster, write independently, and of course, to write without having to worry about grammar. In addition, students claim that this method also lets them realize about their vocabulary limits and saves them more time for they don't have to think for too long. Lastly, despite being a

good method to apply in *Aufsatz I,* it is suggested that *Écriture Automatique* is applied for easier themes, for an example *Reisen*.

As for the disadvantages, responses to the questionnaire reveal that students complain about difficulties when writing without dictionary due to their limited vocabularies. On the other hand, due to the 'non-stop writing' technique, they find it even harder to find ideas for the given time is very limited, which also leads them to ignore grammatical rules and their writings tend to stray from the main point. Some also criticize that this method demands more concentration as well as imagination.

Responses to question that asks whether the *Écriture Automatique* writing method inspires students in their writing, 4 students (18% of the students) highly agree, 14 students (64%) agree, and 4 students (18%) disagree. This is relevant to the Knaus' statement (2009:28) that *in der Sammlungsphase ist Écriture Automatique ein ausgezeichnetes Mittel, um schreibend auf Ideen zu kommen oder diese zu verfeinern.* It means, in the collection phase Écriture Automatique method is an excellent way to get or/and to refine ideas. Meanwhile, related to the next question, which is whether the *Écriture Automatique* writing method helps the students develop their ideas, 5 students (23%) highly agree, 9 students (36%) agree, and 8 students (41%) disagree. This data matches the statement that *...so kann man möglichst viel sprachliches und gedankliches Rohmaterial produzieren.* (Knaus, 2009:28). It means, with this metode we can produce as much as possible linguistic and notionally material.

To the next question that asks whether the students face any difficulties in applying the *Écriture Automatique* writing technique, 4% of them highly agree, 32% agree, 59% disagree, and the rest 4% highly disagree. However, it is suggested, that students face difficulties in applying this technique by stating '*Falls Sie nicht mehr weiter wissen, wiederholen Sie das letzte Wort, bis wieder neue Wörter und Gedanken kommen'*. (Knaus, 2009:28), it means, if you do not know what to do, repeat the last word, until new words and thoughts come up.

CONCLUSION

The application of *Écriture Automatique* method motivates students to write and inspires them to elaborate their ideas. Beside its advantages, however, *Écriture Automatique* also has some disadvantages: it is difficult to apply on students with very limited vocabularies. On the other hand, during the writing process, students are prohibited to use the aid of dictionaries. This way, there is a big risk that the writing strayed from the point of the writing itself, unless they have to discuss their text in groups.

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