

**Improving the Writing Skills of the Eight Grade Students through the Use of  
Personal Computer Game ‘Far Cry 3’ Pictures  
at SMPN 3 Kroya in the Academic Year of 2015/2016**

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to improve the writing skill of the students of Grade VIII G of SMP Negeri 3 Kroya using pictures taken from the submenu handbook of PC Game ‘Far Cry 3’. This action research study consisted of two cycles, carried out in four sessions from April 2016 to May 2016. The researcher worked collaboratively with the English teacher and the students. The subjects of this research were 36 students of Grade VIII G of SMP Negeri 3 Kroya. The data of this study were qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data instruments were observation sheets, interview guideline, a camera and writing tests. Meanwhile, the quantitative data were obtained by assessing the students’ writing skill through a pre-test and two post-tests. Therefore, the quantitative data were the students’ writing scores. The data collected from class observations and interviews were analysed based on the qualitative data analysis model by Miles and Huberman (1994). The results of this research indicated that the use of pictures taken from submenu handbook of PC game ‘Far Cry 3’ improved the students’ skills in writing. The actions made significant improvement of the students’ writing in the aspects of content, organization, language use, vocabulary and mechanics. The actions implemented were successful in improving the students’ writing skill. The findings were supported by the means of the students’ writing score which improved from 67.03 in the pre-test to 73.88 in the post-test in Cycle I and 77.59 in Cycle II. In reference to the students’ writing scores, the students’ gain scores between pre-test and post-test II for the content is 3.56, for the organization is 1.50, for the vocabulary is 2.00, for the language use is 2.47 and for the mechanics is 0.94. Moreover, the use of pictures taken from submenu handbook of PC game ‘Far Cry 3’ was able to improve the students’ interest, motivation and attitudes toward the teaching and learning process.

**Keywords:** *writing skills, pictures of handbook of Far Cry 3 game*

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### **Introduction**

English is one of the compulsory subjects in Indonesian schools. One of the aims in English teaching and learning process is the mastery of the four language skills. Those skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is one of the most important skills in language learning. One of the reasons is that it is related to the students’ future need for occupational purposes, academic study, or personal communication. Based on the standard of graduate competency stated by *Permendiknas* no. 23/ 2006 Republic of Indonesia, in the writing skill, the graduates of vocational high school must be able to express meanings in written products in interpersonal and transactional discourses, formally and informally, in

the form of expressing written requests and commands related to daily life. Therefore, the students must have a good mastery, so that they can create proper products of writing.

However, writing is often regarded as a difficult skill. Richards and Renandya (2002) mentioned that difficulties in writing arise not only in generating and reorganizing ideas but also in translating the ideas so that the readers could understand what the writing is about. They also proposed that a second language writer should pay attention to the higher skills of writing; i.e. generating and reorganizing ideas. In addition, the second language writer should also pay attention to the lower writing skills such as spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on.

It is clear that a writing skill is important for students, but the teaching of writing is not an easy task. The teacher need to understand some steps before conducting the teaching and learning process; i.e., what are going to teach, how to teach, what student's needs, etc. In addition, the teacher should also know how to motivate and increase students' interest in writing. It is also necessary for the teacher to adjust the tasks to students' proficiency by simplifying the questions at the first and raise the difficulty level regularly.

There are some important things that the students need to consider in producing a text. Those are content, organization, vocabulary and mechanical considerations such as spelling and punctuation. Therefore, writing is also considered as the skill that needs much attention because it is not an easy skill. The skill of the learners depends on their ability and responses towards writing courses. The learners should not only master the skill in generating ideas and organizing the ideas, but also in expressing those ideas into a readable text.

Based on the information obtained in the observation on the English teaching and learning process of writing conducted in SMP N 3 Kroya, the researcher had identified some problems related to it. First, many students lacked motivation, tended to be passive and got bored easily. Second, their writings were full of misspelling and incorrect grammar. Third, the students found it difficult to generate and develop their ideas. The teacher tended to use the lecturing technique with the whiteboard and text books as the conventional media. As a result, students had difficulties in expressing their ideas during the writing process. They also had difficulties in writing good sentences and using appropriate grammar. Besides, they often made mistakes in spelling, using punctuation and arranging sentences in their writing.

It is true that writing is considered as a difficult language skill. Thus, initiatives to bring out creative methods are needed to facilitate and give a new colour in the world of teaching. Pictures taken from personal computer game named "Far Cry 3" can be used to deal with these difficulties in the teaching and learning process of writing.

## **Research Methods**

This research study is classified as classroom action research. Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (1999:33) explain that the action research had four fundamental steps. Those steps are: planning, action, observation and reflection. Pictures from PC Game 'Far Cry 3' were used as media to improve the students' writing skills. The subjects of this research were 34 students of VIII G class at SMP N 3 Kroya, Cilacap. This research was conducted from April to May 2016.

Observation sheet, interview guidelines, and camera were used as the instruments to collect the qualitative data while pre-test and post-test were used as the instruments to collect the quantitative data. There were five stages of data analysis techniques that the researcher used which was adapted from Burns (2010: 104-105). Those were assembling the data, coding the data, comparing the data, building meanings and interpretations, and reporting the outcomes. Besides, the researcher also analyzed the quantitative data to know the tendency of the students' writing scores. The validity of the data was obtained by applying democratic validity, outcome validity, process validity, catalytic validity, and dialogic validity. Meanwhile, to assess the reliability of the data, the researcher would involve more than one source in gathering the data. The researcher would involve the research, the English teacher, the observer, and the students of grade VIII.

## **Research Findings**

In this research, the researcher acted as the teacher and delivered the teaching and learning process while the English teacher acted as the collaborator and observed the teaching and learning process. This action research study was carried out in two cycles. There were two meetings in each cycle. Before implementing the actions, the researcher conducted a pre-test to measure the students' writing ability.

The results of the first cycle showed the students' improvement in developing ideas. Pictures displayed by the researcher attracted the attention of the students and made them focus on the lesson. To improve students' vocabulary collections, the researcher made additional portions of the vocabularies itself. The students were presented with vocabulary list that would be used to help them. The students were also given some activities in groups for improving their vocabularies. Teaching vocabulary through incidental learning is more effective when it entails active engagement. The researcher also used some tasks in order to teach vocabularies through incidental learning. In the JCOT activities, the students had to actively engage in discussion. It also successfully helped the students improve their vocabulary mastery. Besides that, the students' motivation in teaching learning process improved. They seemed enthusiastic to construct a descriptive text. However, the students' improvement in content, vocabulary, and language use still needed to be improved. From the results of research in the first cycle, the researcher and the English teacher discussed to conduct the second cycle.

In the second cycle, the researcher conducted two meetings because the school would hold the final semester examination. In this cycle, the students'

improvement increased. They could construct a text in a good chronological order. The media picture provided helped the students to generate ideas in writing a recount text. Though they made few mistakes in terms of grammar, the students' improvement in content, vocabulary and language use was satisfying. Furthermore, the students' attitudes in the teaching and learning process improved. Pictures displayed and the use of LCD could attract their attention. They seemed very enthusiastic to write. They seemed very active in the class. They asked the researcher when they found some difficulties in writing a recount text.

The quantitative data also supported the findings. The students' improvements could be seen from their writing score which improved from 67.03 in the pre-test to 73.88 in the post-test in Cycle I and 77.59 in Cycle II. The students' gain scores between pre-test and post-test II for the content is 3.56, for the organization is 1.50, for the vocabulary is 2.00, for the language use is 2.47 and for the mechanics is 0.94. The data of the tests supported the observation results as well as the interview transcripts that indicated the success of the implementation of the strategy. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the use of object pictures taken from personal computer game Far Cry 3 improved the students' ability in writing.

## Conclusions

Based on the results of the research, it could be concluded that the use of pictures taken from Personal Computer Game 'Far Cry 3' improved the students' writing skills in five aspects. The aspects were: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The most significant improvement was in the aspect of content and language use. The use of pictures that applied in writing made the students interested to the media. They had high motivation to join the teaching and learning process and they had good will to learn English while the pictures media is applied in writing class. The students paid attention more when the researcher used and showed the pictures. They felt comfortable and they did not look bored. It was easier for the students to write the descriptions on paper because they still remembered what they saw while the teacher displayed the pictures. It proved that the use of pictures taken from PC Game 'Far Cry 3' as the media in the teaching and learning process improved the students' writing skills.

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