

Students' Perceptions of Using Canva in Project-Based Learning for Writing Activities

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ABSTRACT

Writing is an essential English language skill, yet many students experience difficulties in generating ideas, organizing content, and maintaining motivation. Although Canva has been increasingly integrated into language learning, limited studies have explored students' perceptions of its use in Project-Based Learning (PjBL) for writing activities at the junior high school level. This study aimed to explore ninth-grade students' perceptions of using Canva in PjBL for writing activities at SMP Suster Pontianak. A qualitative descriptive design was employed involving 35 students from Class 9B selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires, classroom observations, and documentation. The findings indicated that students generally perceived Canva positively, as it enhanced creativity, motivation, confidence, idea organization, collaboration, and active participation in writing activities. Despite challenges related to internet connectivity and certain Canva features, Canva was perceived as an effective learning tool that supported writing activities within the Project-Based Learning framework.

Keywords: *Canva, Project-Based Learning (PjBL), Students' Perceptions, Writing Activities*

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INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the four essential language skills that students need to master in English language learning. Through writing, students can express ideas, opinions, experiences, and information in a structured form. Writing also plays an important role in academic success because it enables students to communicate effectively and demonstrate their understanding of various topics. According to Harmer (2004), writing is a process that encourages students to think, organize ideas, and communicate messages through written language. Similarly, Byrne (1993) states that writing is not merely producing sentences but involves organizing thoughts and presenting them coherently for readers.

Despite its importance, writing is often considered one of the most challenging skills for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Many students experience difficulties in generating ideas, organizing content, applying grammatical rules, and selecting appropriate vocabulary. These challenges frequently lead to low confidence and limited motivation during writing activities. Fareed (2016) explain that EFL students commonly face problems related to grammar, vocabulary, idea development, and organization when completing writing tasks. Likewise, Graham & Perin (2007) argue that students require meaningful learning experiences and effective instructional strategies to improve their writing performance.

In Indonesian secondary schools, writing instruction is often conducted through traditional approaches that focus heavily on textbooks, worksheets, and teacher explanations. Based on classroom observations at SMP Suster Pontianak, English learning activities are generally dominated by workbook exercises, grammar-focused activities, and teacher-centered instruction. Students frequently complete writing assignments individually and have limited opportunities to explore ideas creatively. Larsen-Freeman (2018)

emphasizes that teacher-centered instruction may reduce opportunities for students to develop creativity, independence, and critical thinking skills. Furthermore, Ferris (2014) states that writing skills develop more effectively when students are given opportunities to process ideas, receive feedback, and participate in meaningful writing experiences.

The rapid development of technology has created new opportunities to improve language learning. Digital technology has become an important component of modern education because it enables teachers to create more interactive and engaging learning environments. According to Gilakjani (2017), technology integration can increase student participation, motivation, and learning effectiveness in language classrooms. Similarly, Ng (2012) argues that technology plays a significant role in developing digital literacy skills that are essential for students in the twenty-first century.

One digital platform that has gained popularity in educational settings is Canva. Canva is a web-based graphic design platform that provides various templates, visual elements, images, fonts, and collaborative features that support creative learning activities. Originally developed for graphic design purposes, Canva has increasingly been used as an educational tool to facilitate student learning. Fitria (2022) states that Canva offers attractive visual features that can support English language learning by making learning materials more engaging and accessible. In addition, Asmara (2023) explains that Canva helps students organize ideas and present written information more systematically through visual and multimodal representations. Recent studies have also highlighted that Canva enhances students' creativity, confidence, engagement, and writing performance by supporting collaborative and visually rich learning activities (Harahap, 2024; Rosyida & Setyawan, 2022; Ulyani & Jayanti, 2025).

The integration of Canva into writing instruction is particularly relevant because writing requires students to organize information effectively. Through Canva, students can combine text, images, colors, and visual layouts to present information in a more structured and meaningful way. Rosyida & Setyawan (2022) found that the use of Canva can improve students' confidence and creativity in writing activities. Similarly, Santoso & Pratiwi (2022) reported that Canva supports students' multiliteracy skills by allowing them to create digital writing products that integrate visual and textual elements.

Besides technology integration, contemporary education also emphasizes student-centered learning approaches. One approach that has received considerable attention is Project-Based Learning (PjBL). Project-Based Learning encourages students to investigate problems, collaborate with peers, create products, and apply knowledge in authentic situations. Bell (2010) explains that PjBL enables students to develop critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity skills through meaningful learning experiences. Likewise, Thomas (2000) describes Project-Based Learning as an instructional approach that engages students in exploring real-world issues and producing authentic outcomes. Recent studies further indicate that Project-Based Learning promotes active learning, collaboration, creativity, and meaningful engagement in English language classrooms (Boss & Larmer, 2023).

Research has consistently shown the positive impact of Project-Based Learning on student engagement and learning outcomes. Kokotsaki et al. (2016) found that Project-Based Learning promotes deeper learning, active participation, and increased motivation among students. Furthermore, Boss & Larmer (2023) argue that Project-Based Learning prepares students for future challenges by developing essential twenty-first-century competencies. Within language learning contexts, PjBL allows students to practice language skills while working collaboratively on meaningful projects.

The combination of Canva and Project-Based Learning offers significant potential for improving writing instruction. Through project-based activities supported by Canva, students can collaborate, organize ideas, create visual representations, and produce meaningful written products. Previous studies have reported positive outcomes regarding the use of Canva in educational contexts. Harahap (2024) found that Canva contributed positively to students' writing performance. (Ulyani & Jayanti, 2025) also reported that

Canva integrated into Project-Based Learning helped students improve their writing skills and engagement during learning activities.

Although previous studies have examined the effectiveness of Canva and Project-Based Learning separately, research specifically focusing on students' perceptions of using Canva in Project-Based Learning for writing activities remains limited, particularly in junior high school contexts. Understanding students' perceptions is important because positive perceptions can influence motivation, participation, and learning outcomes. According to [Davis \(1989\)](#), students are more likely to accept and utilize technology when they perceive it as useful and easy to use. Similarly, [Teo \(2019\)](#) emphasizes that students' perceptions play a significant role in determining the successful implementation of educational technology.

Therefore, this study aimed to explore students' perceptions of using Canva in Project-Based Learning for writing activities among ninth-grade students at SMP Suster Pontianak. Specifically, the study sought to investigate students' responses toward the use of Canva and examine how Canva helped them organize ideas and complete writing tasks during Project-Based Learning activities.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore students' perceptions of using Canva in Project-Based Learning (PjBL) for writing activities. According to [Kim et al. \(2017\)](#), qualitative descriptive research allows researchers to describe participants' experiences and perceptions in their natural settings. Similarly, [Creswell \(2012\)](#) states that qualitative research aims to understand participants' perspectives regarding a particular phenomenon. This design was considered appropriate because the study focused on describing students' perceptions rather than measuring causal relationships or testing hypotheses.

Settings

This study was conducted at SMP Suster Pontianak during the 2025/2026 academic year. The research focused on Class 9B students who had previous experience using Canva in Project-Based Learning (PjBL) activities during Grade 8. The school was selected because it had implemented project-based learning and provided opportunities for students to use digital tools such as Canva in learning activities, particularly in writing projects.

Respondents

The participants of this study were 35 students from Class 9B at SMP Suster Pontianak during the 2025/2026 academic year. They were selected using purposive sampling because they had previous experience using Canva in Project-Based Learning (PjBL) activities during Grade 8. Purposive sampling was chosen to ensure that all participants had direct experience with the phenomenon being investigated and were therefore able to provide relevant and meaningful information about their perceptions of using Canva in writing activities. According to [Creswell \(2012\)](#), purposive sampling enables researchers to select participants who can provide relevant information related to the research objectives. Furthermore, [Palinkas et al. \(2015\)](#) state that purposive sampling is appropriate for identifying information-rich participants who have direct experience with the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, Class 9B students were considered the most suitable participants because they had experienced learning through Canva in Project-Based Learning and could meaningfully reflect on their experiences.

Instruments

Three research instruments were used in this study: questionnaires, classroom observations, and documentation. The questionnaire served as the primary instrument for collecting data on students' perceptions of using Canva in Project-Based Learning for writing activities. It consisted of close-ended and open-ended questions that allowed students to express their opinions and experiences. Classroom observation was conducted to support the

questionnaire data by examining students' participation and responses during learning activities. According to Fraenkel & Wallen (2012), observation is useful for collecting information about classroom activities as they naturally occur. In addition, documentation in the form of photographs was used to record learning activities and provide supporting evidence for the study.

Procedures

The research was conducted in several stages. First, the researcher obtained permission from the school to conduct the study and prepared the research instruments. Second, the respondents participated in Project-Based Learning activities using Canva for writing tasks. During the implementation of the learning activities, classroom observations were conducted to examine students' participation and responses. After the activities were completed, the questionnaires were distributed to collect data regarding students' perceptions of using Canva in Project-Based Learning for writing activities. Finally, photographs were taken as documentation to support the research findings.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed using descriptive qualitative analysis. The questionnaire responses were categorized and interpreted to identify patterns related to students' perceptions of using Canva in Project-Based Learning for writing activities. Data obtained from classroom observations and documentation were used to support and validate the questionnaire findings, providing a more comprehensive understanding of students' experiences during the learning process. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), qualitative data analysis consists of three interactive processes: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are presented in three categories based on the research objectives: (1) students' perceptions of using Canva in Project-Based Learning for writing activities, (2) Canva's role in organizing ideas and supporting writing activities, and (3) challenges encountered by students during the implementation of Canva in Project-Based Learning.

Students' Perceptions of Using Canva in Project-Based Learning (PjBL) for Writing Activities

The findings showed that students generally had positive perceptions toward the use of Canva in Project-Based Learning (PjBL) for writing activities. Based on questionnaire data, most students reported positive feelings and enjoyment when using Canva during writing tasks. In Question 1, 74.3% of students stated that they felt happy and more enthusiastic while using Canva. Similarly, 62.9% of students reported that Canva made writing activities more enjoyable and less boring. Several students also mentioned that Canva helped make their writing more attractive, organized, and visually appealing.

The findings further revealed that Canva positively influenced students' confidence and motivation. In Questions 6 and 7, 57.1% of students reported feeling more confident in writing independently and completing writing tasks. In addition, 62.9% of students stated that Canva increased their enthusiasm for learning writing. Students also expressed positive experiences regarding collaboration, with 62.9% reporting that they felt comfortable working with classmates during Canva-based projects.

Students demonstrated positive attitudes toward the continued use of Canva in future writing activities. A total of 68.6% of students agreed that Canva should continue to be used in writing lessons, while 54.3% preferred using Canva directly in project-based writing activities. Overall, the findings indicate that Canva contributed to a more engaging, enjoyable, and motivating learning experience.

Students' Perceptions of Canva in Helping Organize Ideas and Complete Writing Activities

The findings also showed that students perceived Canva as a useful tool for organizing ideas and completing writing activities within the PjBL framework. Questionnaire results indicated that 60% of students believed Canva helped them organize ideas before writing. Furthermore, 88.6% of students reported that Canva helped improve their writing, while 77.1% agreed that Canva facilitated collaboration with classmates during project activities.

The highest percentage appeared in Question 13, where 91.4% of students agreed that Canva helped them produce more organized and attractive writing products. Students explained that Canva features such as templates, layouts, text tools, and design elements helped them arrange information clearly and revise their work more efficiently.

Classroom observations supported these findings. Students actively used Canva features, communicated effectively during group work, demonstrated enthusiasm during learning activities, and used Canva to revise their writing products. However, observations also revealed several challenges, including unequal participation among group members and difficulties maintaining focus during project activities.

Students' Challenges in Using Canva during PjBL Writing Activities

Although students generally responded positively, several challenges were identified. The most common difficulties were related to unstable internet connections, limited devices, and restricted features in the free version of Canva. Some students also reported limited classroom time and occasional confusion when using certain Canva features.

To overcome these difficulties, students adopted various strategies, including exploring Canva independently, searching for tutorials, and seeking assistance from classmates or teachers. Despite these challenges, students remained able to complete their projects and participate actively in learning activities.

Discussion

The findings indicate that Canva created a positive learning experience for students during Project-Based Learning writing activities. Most students reported feeling more interested, motivated, enthusiastic, and confident while completing writing projects. These findings were supported by classroom observations showing that students actively participated in project activities and enthusiastically utilized Canva features throughout the learning process.

The results support the theory proposed by [Krajcik & Shin \(2014\)](#), who argue that meaningful learning occurs when students engage in authentic activities that lead to concrete outcomes. In this study, students were not only required to write texts but were also involved in designing project products using Canva. This combination of writing and project creation enabled students to participate more actively and express their ideas creatively.

Another important finding is Canva's role in supporting idea organization and writing development. Students perceived Canva as useful for planning ideas, revising drafts, collaborating with peers, and producing more structured writing products. The visual features provided by Canva, including templates, layouts, and editing tools, helped students arrange information more systematically and improve the quality of their writing products.

These findings are consistent with the study conducted by [Hafner & Ho \(2020\)](#), which found that multimodal writing environments help students integrate textual and visual elements during the writing process. Similarly, [Li & Akoto \(2023\)](#) explain that digital platforms support students' cognitive processes by allowing ideas to be revised and reorganized more easily than through traditional writing methods.

The study also highlights the collaborative benefits of Canva within the PjBL framework. Observation results showed that students communicated effectively during group work and used Canva collaboratively while developing their projects. These findings

suggest that Canva supports not only writing development but also communication and teamwork skills, which are essential components of Project-Based Learning.

Despite the positive findings, several challenges were identified. Technical issues such as unstable internet connections, limited access to devices, and restrictions in Canva's free version occasionally affected students' learning experiences. Furthermore, classroom observations revealed unequal participation among group members and difficulties maintaining focus during project activities. These findings suggest that successful implementation of Canva in Project-Based Learning requires effective classroom management and teacher guidance.

CONCLUSIONS

Students in Class 9B at SMP Suster Pontianak generally had positive perceptions of using Canva in Project-Based Learning (PjBL) for writing activities. Most students perceived Canva as making writing activities more interesting, enjoyable, and engaging. They also experienced increased motivation and confidence in completing writing tasks and reported positive experiences when collaborating with classmates during project activities. Furthermore, Canva supported students in organizing ideas, revising their work, collaborating with group members, and producing more organized and visually appealing writing products. Features such as templates, layouts, text tools, and editing functions were considered helpful throughout the writing process. Although some challenges, particularly internet connection problems and unequal participation among group members, were identified, these difficulties did not prevent students from completing their writing activities using Canva.

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