

## **The Effectiveness of Using Canva as Assisted Language Learning Media to Improve Undergraduate Students' Writing Skill**

**Imam Fauzi**  
**Universitas Serang Raya**  
**imamfauzi@unsera.ac.id**

### **Abstract**

Writing skills are something that all teachers should be aware of. A business pamphlet is one of the writing assignments for economics and business students. This study aimed to determine the differences in the learning outcomes of economics and business students by applying the Canva application as an English learning tool to improve their writing skills. The research design used a quasi-experimental design. The research population is economics and business students for the 2022-2023 academic year. The research sample was taken using a saturated sampling technique with the experimental and control groups. The data analysis technique used is the analysis prerequisite test including the normality test and hypothesis testing. The results showed that the post-test average value of the experimental class students' learning outcomes was 81.94, and the control class was 77.34. The hypothesis testing results showed a significant difference between learning outcomes and student activity in the experimental group, which was better than the control group. Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that the application of the Canva application in learning activities to improve the writing skills of economic and business students which was applied to the experimental class had a significantly greater value than students in the control class using PPT software for learning activities and writing skills. In the learning process, lecturers can develop English learning by using learning applications that are more effective and interesting in improving English learning outcomes and students' writing skills in accordance with learning objectives.

**Keywords:** *writing skill, Canva, project-based learning*

### **INTRODUCTION**

One of the important English language skills is writing. Writing allows students to convey their ideas, opinions, suggestions, feelings, or thoughts to the readers. Harmer (2001) says writing is a form of communication to convey or express thoughts through written forms. Nunan (2003) also said that Writing is the mental work of generating ideas, deciding how to communicate, and developing them into clear statements and paragraphs for the reader. Writing activities also allow students to practice using the English that they have learned. Undergraduate students can directly apply language learning theories to their writing. This is in line with what has been expressed by Harmer (2004) who says that writing encourages students to focus on using accurate language.

The purpose of someone's writing will be conveyed to his readers through his writing. According to Grenville (2001), the three purposes of writing are to entertain, provide information, and influence or persuade the reader. Fadhly et al, (2017) stated

that the purpose of writing is to entertain, inform or teach, convey or express emotions, and convince or urge. The various types of writing activities are varied. According to Brown (2007), there are five types of writing activities. Copying is the first type of writing activity (imitative or mechanical learning). This is an early-level writing activity in which students learn to write simple letters, words, or short sentences to learn spelling rules. The intensive or controlled writing activity is the second type of writing activity. It is a writing activity in which students create appropriate vocabulary in a given context or demonstrate grammar skills. Examples of activities are rewriting paragraphs that have been read by the teacher or you can also ask students to write a story by giving guiding questions after students watch the video. The third writing activity is self-writing. In this writing activity, students write with only themselves as the audience. Two examples of this writing activity are writing in a diary or taking notes from the teacher. Scientific writing is the fourth writing activity. Undergraduate students complete exercises with short answers, write essays or write research reports in this writing activity. Authentic writing is the fifth writing activity (real writing). The objective of this writing activity is to communicate the desired message to the reader. Examples of activities are writing scientific information, writing letters, filling in blanks, or writing on postcards. Writing is a specific language competence that can assist students in increasing their creativity, confidence, and comprehension in writing exercises (Wahyuni et al., 2020)

According to the explanation above, the activities of writing business pamphlets for economics and business students can be categorized as real writing activities. In this writing activity, students communicate the messages they have written on business pamphlets aimed at readers by using Canva media for students' writing practices. Good writing activities will go through several stages. This is done to ensure that the resulting writing is exactly as expected and that the writer's intent is correctly communicated to the reader. According to Harmer (2004), a writer will go through the planning stage (planning), draft stage (drafting), editing stage (editing), and final draft stage (writing) (final version). Mogahed (2013) stated that writing activities begin with prewriting in the form of preliminary activities before writing, such as watching videos, participating in discussions, reading, and so on. Following that, it is continued by writing the first draft, then providing comments on the first draft, writing the second draft, providing comments or correcting other writings, and finally writing the final draft. EFL students are required to be able to write their academic text such as essays, projects, reports, and lecture notes which are relevant to their study. Therefore, writing skill has become in high demand for EFL students to be able to develop their own thoughts in written language expressions (Linuwih & Winardi, 2020).

Writing activities for economics and business students should not only be oriented toward the result but should also be enjoyable for students. Some business economics students find it difficult to write in English. Furthermore, most of them do not have English language skills at higher education levels. Writing is one of those activities that can be considered boring, difficult, and uninteresting. Undergraduate students are required to understand words, grammar, and so on. This is exactly what Tuan (2010) said writing is not as simple as speaking or putting words on paper. In general, a writer must be familiar with standard grammar, vocabulary, and syntax. In

addition, they must also understand the use of punctuation and spelling. This is a time-consuming process it cannot be done spontaneously. Writing is one of the language abilities that must be mastered by EFL students so that they can understand the written contents and encourage them to think, reflect, and rehearse (Taufik & Cahyono, 2020).

Writing business pamphlets requires more than just writing skills; it should also be a fun activity for students in terms of designing the pamphlet so that it looks beautiful and the results are eye-catching. This can increase the economics and business students' motivation to learn and students' learning outcomes. However, many students still believe that this activity is simply completing assignments to be submitted to the lecturer for evaluation.

Based on the experience of researchers who have taught for 10 years at the Faculty of Economics and Business, the activity of writing business pamphlets was not followed up with other meaningful activities. The English lecturer only collects assignments that have been made by undergraduate students and gives grades. The results of writing business pamphlets tasks for economics and business students in the semester of the 2022-2023 academic year show that business pamphlets made by students are still minimal in words or expressions, and there are some mistakes in writing vocabulary, phrases, or sentence structures. Some students are likely to use pronouns and conjunctions inappropriately. Undergraduate students are still making conventional business pamphlets with minimal designs. The teacher has told students to be able to make business pamphlets both manually and digitally but most of the students make them manually.

From the results of the questionnaires filled out by economics and business students, it is also seen that the lecturer's teaching method does not motivate them so they think that writing business pamphlets is not an interesting activity. Students also admit that they have limitations in choosing vocabulary and ideas in writing business pamphlets. Based on the analysis of the problems above, the researcher applies a project-based learning approach and uses the Canva application in digitally writing business pamphlets. Project Based Learning (PBL) was chosen by researchers as a learning strategy that is expected to solve student learning problems, one of which is students' learning outcomes. Blumenfeld et al (1991) stated that projects can increase student interest because they engage students in solving authentic problems, collaborating with others, and developing real-world solutions. Student interest in teaching and learning activities is one of the factors in increasing student learning outcomes. Issa & Khataibeh (2021) proven that Project-based learning (PBL) improves the students' skills needed to meet the global community. It supports student learning outcomes and develops students' abilities, especially in communication, cooperation, creativity, and critical thinking. Project-based learning (PBL) provides opportunities for students to build these qualities, as well as more deeply learn traditional academic content and understand how it applies to the real world (Larmer et al., 2015). Project-based learning has emerged as a powerful tool, as it involves the principles of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (Halimatusyadiyah et al., 2022). Project Based Learning is a very powerful teaching method, one of which is to engage undergraduate students to participate more actively in language learning activities.

In addition to implementing PBL researchers also chose Canva as a medium for students to create business flyers digitally. The digital learning and teaching process is designed to facilitate the EFL students' curricula, programs, and learning materials that can be accessed (Fauzi et al., 2023). Canva has a simple but complete interface. This application can be helpful in stimulating students' critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative skills (Lastari & Silvana, 2020). Students can study examples of pamphlet templates available in Canva, thereby enriching students' knowledge of vocabulary, terms, or expressions related to business flyers. When using Canva, students just drag and drop where various templates and fonts are ready to be used. Researchers believe this can also improve students' writing results, and the level of interest in completing assigned projects also increases. Canva also offers another advantage, namely that student business flyer designs can be downloaded directly in various formats, namely JPG, PNG, and PDF, or saved directly on the Canva website and can be shared directly through social media. This advantage allows students to submit assignments directly to their English lecturers considering that we are currently in the digitalization of education. Canva as a website is a visual media source that can be used as a window to the wider world outside the language classroom and is of course a collection of authentic material that is easy to access (Susilawati & Chairunnisa, 2019). Ramli (2012) stated that visual media, one of which Canva provides many advantages such as making abstract ideas real, motivating students, paying direct attention, repeating information, recalling previous knowledge, and simplifying learning efforts. In terms of making writing practices easier for the students, Canva can positively engage them in writing activities and it can be suitable to be implemented in the writing exercises (Priyatna et al., 2023). In line with the Canva application in language classrooms, Nanda & Fatimah (2023) described that Canva as a creative learning media that can effectively motivate students to practice how to design their business templates and improve students' writing skills. Canva is a useful platform that is accessible and flexible for students to be able to increase their critical thinking and creativity in the language learning process (Suputra et al., 2023).

Based on the background of the problems stated above, the problem can be stated as "How are the differences in the learning outcomes of writing skills and the activeness of economic and business students in the English language learning process at the Faculty of Economics and Business with the Canva application as learning media?". The purpose of this study was to find out how effective the application of project-based learning and the use of Canva was in improving the ability to write business pamphlets and learning outcomes for students of the Faculty of Economics and Business. The researcher hopes that the results of this study will contribute to teaching theories, especially writing business pamphlets, enrich teachers' strategies in solving problems when teaching English writing skills, and become a reference for future researchers who are also interested in carrying out similar research.

## **METHOD**

The experimental research method was used in this study. A quasi-experimental form of non-equivalent control group design was used for the experimental research. As research subjects in this design, there are two groups: experimental and control.

The experimental group was given treatment in English learning activities using the Canva application. Meanwhile, the control group engaged in English learning activities using PowerPoint software. The activity of the experimental and control groups was measured using a pre-test to determine the students' writing ability before being taught, and a post-test to determine the students' learning outcomes in the writing skills aspect and student activity after being taught.

The population in this study is economics and business students in the second semester of the 2022/2023 academic year. The sample in this study was taken using a saturated sampling technique which ensured equality with 35 students of class A as the experimental group and 35 students of class B as the control group. Data collection techniques in this study include interviews, documentation, observation, questionnaires, and tests. The data analysis technique of the research results uses the prerequisite analysis test and hypothesis testing. The analysis prerequisite test is needed to determine whether the data analysis for hypothesis testing can be continued or not. The prerequisite tests used in this study are normality and homogeneity tests. To test normality, the researcher uses the test Lilliefors by looking at the values in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov table. Hypothesis testing was carried out to distinguish whether the learning outcomes and activity between the experimental and control group students were the same or different after receiving treatment. Hypothesis testing in this study uses a two-tailed test (two-tailed) independent sample t-test method on the SPSS version 21 program. After the data is revealed differently, it can be concluded that this study has achieved the expected learning results.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

During the research, the findings of the study were presented in the form of student learning outcomes data. The data comes from learning outcomes and student activity before and after being taught using the Canva application. The learning project instrument is used to assess the outcomes of English learning in the area of writing skills. Student learning outcomes are taken from the total score obtained, compared with the maximum score of 100, then multiplied by 100. Assessment of student learning outcomes in the experimental and control groups was carried out before and after being taught. The average value of the pre-test of the experimental class students is 69,09. The highest value of the pre-test score of the experimental group students is 80 and the lowest score is 55. Meanwhile, the mean of the pre-test of the control group was 69,49. The highest value of the pre-test score of the control group students was 77 and the lowest score was 60.

After being given treatment in the learning process, the average value of the post-test of the experimental group of students was 81,94. The highest score of the experimental group students' learning outcomes was 99 and the lowest score was 67. Meanwhile, the average value of the post-test of the control group students was 77,34. The highest score of the control group student learning outcomes is 88 and the lowest score is 67. Description of student learning outcomes data based on the results of the pre-test and post-test can be described in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic

		Classes	Statistic
Learning Outcomes	Pre-Test Experiment (Canva)	Mean	69.09
		Minimum	55
		Maximum	80
	Post-Test Experiment (Canva)	Mean	81.94
		Minimum	67
		Maximum	99
	Pre-Test Control (PPT)	Mean	69.49
		Minimum	60
		Maximum	77
	Post-Test Control (PPT)	Mean	77.34
		Minimum	67
		Maximum	88

Based on the pre-test and post-test given to students in the experimental and control groups, the data obtained from student learning outcomes are in Table 1. Based on Table 1, it is known that the average value of the pre-test of the experimental group was 69,09, and the control group was 69,49. The difference in averages between the two is 0.04. Based on the difference in an average preliminary learning activity, there is no significant difference in values before being taught. Meanwhile, the average value of the post-test learning outcomes of the experimental group was 81,94 and the control group was 77,34. The difference between the two averages is 4,6. Based on the difference in average learning outcomes, it is possible to conclude that there is a significant difference in value after being taught. Researchers feel satisfied because the implementation of project-based learning went smoothly, and there was good collaboration between researchers, teachers, and undergraduate students to achieve the learning objectives in the language learning classroom. In terms of using Canva media as language learning aids, undergraduate students look very enthusiastic and interested. This demonstrates that PBL and Canva positively impact students' motivation and writing skills. Students' writing skills can be improved through project-based learning. Each stage of learning in PBL provides an opportunity for students to thoroughly understand the material and plan projects that will be carried out in a more structured manner in terms of planning and scheduling. Using Canva also helps students improve their understanding of the material because Canva offers a variety of business promotion flyer templates that students can explore. The following is the histogram of the average learning outcomes of the experimental and control classes.

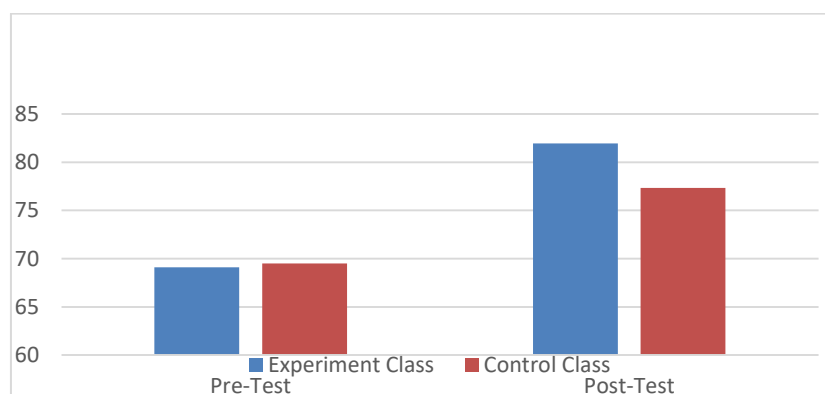


Figure 1. Histogram of The Learning Outcomes Average

The outcomes of student projects show that there is an improvement in all aspects of writing, including content, language vocabulary, and design. It is proven that students' ability to write business promotion pamphlets has improved. There was an increase in terms of student creativity in designing business promotion pamphlets. Project-based learning approach gives students more opportunities to learn a lot about business promotion pamphlets and how to design business content using Canva. This occurs when the teacher explains the material to the students to understand various business promotion flyer templates by using Canva as a medium for designing business promotion flyers that are effective in increasing student interest and developing students' writing skills. The research aims to discover differences in learning outcomes and student activity in the language learning process by using a project-based learning model with Canva as a learning media to design business promotion pamphlets and improve students' writing skills. There is a significant difference between the activeness of students who are taught the project-based learning model with Canva and those taught using PowerPoint software. It is proven that the learning outcomes of students who were taught using a project-based learning model using Canva were bigger than students who were taught using PowerPoint software, with an average post-test score of student learning outcomes in the experimental class is 81.9 while the control group is 77,4. Based on the results of the study, the learning outcomes and activeness of students who were taught the project-based learning model with Canva were much better than students who were taught using PowerPoint software. The normality test is carried out to determine whether the distribution of the data obtained is close to the normal distribution. If the data distribution is normal, the Independent-Sample T Test is used for analysis. The normality test in this study uses the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test which is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Tests of Normality

Classes		Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>		
		Statistic	df	Sig.
Learning Outcomes	Pre-Test Experiment (Canva)	.132	35	.128
	Post-Test Experiment (Canva)	.121	35	.200*
	Pre-Test Control (PPT)	.134	35	.115
	Post-Test Control (PPT)	.093	35	.200*

Based on the data output above, it is known that the significance value (Sig) of the data from the pre-test and post-test results prove that the Sig value of the normality test is bigger than 0.05. it can be concluded that the research data is normally distributed. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using the independent sample t-test method with SPSS version 21.

Table 3. Independent Sample t-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Learning outcomes	Equal variances assumed	6.166	.015	2.752	68	.008
	Equal variances not assumed			2.752	61.184	.008

The hypothesis test of differences in learning outcomes and student activity in this study used a two-tailed test of independent samples t-test on SPSS version 21. Based on the results of hypothesis testing, it can be concluded that the learning outcomes and activeness of students in the experimental group are better than those in the control group. Project Based Learning allows students the option to finish their projects on their own time, carefully planning out every last aspect. The easiness of the Canva application that makes available templates for business promotion flyers contributes to the improvement of the design quality. Students can select a template, modify the text's size, mix and match colors, insert photographs, and so on. Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.008 < 0.05. This is indicated by the post-test average value of student learning outcomes in the experimental group of 81.94%, while the control group is



77.34%. In addition, the average value of student activity in the experimental group was 85% in the good category, while the control group was 72% in the good category. Research conducted by researchers at the Faculty of Economics and Business also concludes that there are significant differences in student learning outcomes and student activity in the experimental class, which is better than the control class.

This means the project-based learning model using Canva media is more effectively applied in the learning process than learning using Powerpoint software media. In line with the application of learning media in language classrooms, Harahap et al (2018) says that models and learning media are interrelated because the main function of learning media is as a teaching aid. The use of learning media will greatly assist the activeness of the learning process and materials delivery during the language teaching and learning process.

## **CONCLUSION**

Project-based learning has the potential to improve the students' ability to write. Each stage of learning passed in PBL gives students the opportunity to understand the materials very well and prepare the project that will be carried out systematically in terms of planning and preparing a timetable. Using Canva also helps enrich students' understanding of language materials because Canva provides a variety of business pamphlet templates that students can use for designing their own business pamphlets. The results of the learning projects carried out by students can be seen there has been an increase in writing skills, content, as well as business pamphlet design. Canva also plays the role of improving the content aspects when students make business pamphlets. This is because students are given larger opportunity to practice some templates of business pamphlets that are widely available on Canva.

Using Canva application through Project-based learning can positively engage students' interest in improving their writing skills. Students in the experiment class using Canva have shown much better results of learning outcomes than control class. The average score of the experiment class is 81.94 bigger than the control class 77,34. The results of students' learning outcomes show there is a significant difference between the experiment class and control class with Sig 2-tailed  $0.008 < 0.05$ . It can be concluded that the use of Canva media through project-based learning can significantly improve students' writing skills and their learning interest in language learning activities.

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