Canva's efficacy in improving student writing skills

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Abstract: More and more studies on language education are currently considering the use of technology in writing training. Furthermore, the importance of using visual media in EFL lessons has been highlighted by the current study, which aims to help students improve their writing skills. The current study aims to investigate the impact of Canva on students' writing skills. This was accomplished by randomly assigning forty-four Indonesian EFL students—known as the experimental and control groups—to two writing classes. Prior to starting treatment, both groups completed a pre-test. Throughout the sessions, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach was used to instruct both classes. To help them explore their writing ideas, students in the experimental group were instructed to utilize Canva as a writing medium. After the treatment, a post-test was administered to both groups. The results of the pre-test and post-test were then processed using SPSS with the t test. The results of this test showed that the experimental group that was given treatment got better scores than the control group. After that, interviews were carried out to obtain qualitative data. As a result, each student had positive and negative perceptions.
Keywords: writing skills; visual media; Canva; and teaching communicative language

Introduction

Writing in English is a valuable skill for many students, particularly when it comes to Indonesia. Speaking, listening, and reading are considered to be more complex academic skills than entry-level English proficiency (Makalela, 2004). Students can use writing as a communication tool to create and express their ideas as well as experience knowledge. Zamel (1982) also looked into every process that meaning came forth. Given that writing it requires a recursive process, it has meaning.

According to Hyland (2003), the process model used to create the instructions consists of the following steps: 1) prewriting; 2) composition; 3) answers to draughts; 4) editing and proofreading; 5) evaluation; 6) publication; and 8) follow-up responsibilities. As part of the process itself, students must discover and express their thoughts while attempting to approximate the meaning. In this case, language teachers are unnecessary because you may teach your kids English while assisting them with a challenging writing assignment. In an EFL session, written teaching aids should be introduced to support students' writing skills.

Learning to write is a challenging task for many EFL students because they lack sufficient vulnerability outside of the classroom's authentic language. According to earlier studies (Ying, 2018; Yundayani, 2018; Zhang, 2018), EFL learners may face difficulties with writing because of things like a lack of writing experience, a lack of language proficiency, and a lack of desire. Though scholars in the field have generally accepted nearly all of this article as true, there is disagreement about how to assist students in overcoming obstacles.

Right now, students desire to participate in their activities using technology. Some studies (Hernandez, 2017; Wiyaka et al., 2018) claim that technology is important in this sense because it can increase student motivation when utilised as a tool for language acquisition. According to Tinio (2002), they exhibit high levels of productivity, strong reasoning abilities, digital literacy, higher order thinking, and effective communication skills. The significant use of technology in writing sessions, including media forms, was one of the controversial topics in learning a foreign language. Students need to develop their language skills.

Learning is aided by physical media forms where content is entered and shown. Visual media is one type of media that is used for language acquisition. It could be images from a computer screen, cartoons, photos, drawings on a whiteboard, books, and more (Smaldino, Lowther, Mims, and Russell, 2015). This medium delivers a learning-coordinated experience with student characters because it is a digital original. Visual media, which includes various websites with graphic tools, facilitates communication and self-expression among EFL students.

Canva is a visual tool that follows a standard format and provides access to over a million images, graphics, and fonts. There are millions of pictures, photo filters, free icons, shapes, and a plethora of fonts available (Canva, n.d.). A website called Canvas offers visual media that can be used as a window to the world in language training, and of course, there's an abundance of authentic content available.

Canva is something you can use to promote learning. According to Smaldino et al. (2015), images in the classroom, particularly those made with Canva, can be utilised to: 1) lower learning ability; 2) encourage students; 3) get their entire attention; 4) reproduce knowledge; 5) retain previous information; and 6) make abstract ideas concrete. Canva should be a tool that helps you quickly turn an idea into a well-thought-out site plan. It can also result in any productive learning environment, which affects the attitude, memory, and focus of students. If students have a good view of themselves and the world around them, they are more likely to actively participate in the learning process through direct participation. For children to learn, it is best when they come across important but easily remembered information. Canva offers a quick creative work experience that helps students replicate the content and remember what they already know.

Canva isn't usually used for writing in most research projects and media presentations in EFL lessons. Wahyuni & Thohiriyah (2018) presented Canva as an infographic tool and examined data from earlier works in this field. Research indicates that Canva provides a large selection of themes and a professional look to create visually appealing infographics that may be used to showcase educational resources. Additionally, it is a really simple tool with great usability. It is important to note that their study only looked at infographics and did not employ Canva as a language for media studies.

The earlier findings from Masturoh et al. (2023), the result shows that students' writing abilities in procedural texts have improved both before and after utilizing Canva. With Canva, students may write more creatively, enjoy themselves, understand concepts more readily, and feel more motivated to study English—especially when it comes to creating procedure texts. Canva's user-friendly interface and visually appealing application motivate pupils to become more engaged in their studies. Canva made it simple for them to communicate their thoughts and for readers to comprehend the instructions in the method text they created.

The second research by Putri & Syafryadin (2023) shows that Canva is very popular with students when making greeting cards. Greeting Cards are an example of functional text. This research uses a questionnaire as an instrument. The results of the questionnaire received a high rating in terms

of attractiveness, usefulness, and they stated that they liked using Canva. Last but not least, according to Andriyanti et al. (2023), there has been a noticeable improvement in the pupils' drive, organization, and inventiveness. They can now write with greater fluency and control. However, the three studies above are still based on student and teacher perceptions. I have not seen any quantitative data that supports the opinions above. So, it is very important to do this research with the title Canva's Efficacy In Improving Student Writing Skills.

Both students and English language teachers stand to gain from this research. Teachers may learn more about how to use technology—in this example, Canva—to help students write better. by giving them fresh concepts and approaches to apply to their pedagogical approaches. A more dynamic and interesting method of teaching writing to students can help them write better academically and provide them the tools they need to produce papers that are visually appealing. Furthermore, according to Tanjung and Faiza (2019), Media Canva provides a range of presentation types, such as business, marketing, sales, creative, educational, basic, architectural, advertising, and technology. The study highlights the transferable abilities that students acquire from using Canva, including digital literacy, creativity, and efficient dialogue.

The goal of this study is to ascertain whether using Canva versus not using Canva results in statistically significant differences in student writing outcomes. This survey also seeks out student preferences to incorporate into the Canva user manual. Hopefully this study will stimulate more research into cutting-edge techniques and resources to raise the standard of English language instruction

Method

The method used in this research is a mix-method where the researcher combines qualitative and quantitative research. Combining two approaches may be better than utilising just one since it will probably yield deep insights into the research phenomenon that are not possible to completely understand when employing simply qualitative or quantitative methodologies (Dawadi et al., 2021). Quantitative research is carried out first. The subjects of this research were 44 high school students who were then divided into two groups, namely 22 people in the control group and 22 people in the experimental group. Both groups were given a pre-test and post-test at the same time. What differentiates the two groups is the treatment given. In the control group, conventional learning was carried out without exposure to Canva, while exposure to the Canva application was given in the experimental group.

The pre-test and post-test results from both groups were then processed using SPSS. The test used was the t-test. Homogeneity and normality tests were carried out first to ensure homogeneity and normality of data distribution. The majority of statistical approaches need that the assumption of normality be evaluated. Reliability and validity of interpretation and inference may be impaired if the assumption of normality is disrupted (Mohd & Bee, 2011). To test the normality, Shapiro-Wilk was used because the data was less than 50. Meanwhile, Lavene's Test was used to test homogeneity.

Then qualitative research was carried out. The technique used was conducting interviews with several students. There were 4 students invited to carry out interviews. This number was taken based on the purposive sampling method. It is a nonrandom technique that does not require a predetermined number of informants or underlying ideas. In other words, the researcher determines what information is required and then searches for sources willing and able to contribute it based on their experience or knowledge (Dolores & Tongco, 2007). These 4 students were the highest scorers in the experimental group. This interview aimed to find out their perceptions of the Canva application and its use.

Results

This research aims to find out whether Canva have a significant role in improving students' writing skills and to find out students' perceptions about Canva and its use. Pre-test and post-test have been carried out to determine the role of Canva. Meanwhile, to find out students' perceptions of

Canva, interviews were conducted between teachers and students. This results section will contain the results of data that has been collected qualitatively or qualitatively. The following are the results of quantitative data that has been processed via SPSS.

Table 1. Student's pre-tst and post-test result

Group		Mean
Control	Pre-test	59.1
	Post-Test	63
Experiment	Pre-test	63.3
	Post-test	74.2

The table 1 above is the mean value of the pre-test and post-test from the two groups. From the appearance of the mean, it can be seen that the experimental group in its post-test scores had higher results than the post-test of the control group. The post-test mean score of experiment group is 74.2, meanwhile the control group's is only 63.

Table 2. T-Test result

t	df	*Sig. (2-tailed)*
3,871	53	0,000

Based on the results of the t-test data in the table 2 above, it is known that the probability value or Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.000, this probability value is smaller than the significance level of 0.05. This means that H0 which is 'there was no significant difference in the posttest average of the experimental class and the control class' is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference in the posttest averages of the experimental group and the control group.

After the quantitative data has been obtained, the researcher continues the research by exploring qualitative data. The instrument used was an interview. The interviews were aimed at the 4 students who got the highest scores. The interview results consist of two groupings. Namely the positive and negative perceptions of each student.

Table 3. Students' positive and negative perception of using Canva

Positive Perception	
S1	I discovered that using Canva aided in the development of my writing ideas. This media offered a lot of color and imagery.
S2	I gained valuable experience writing in English thanks to the use of Canva. I was inspired.
S3	I was able to produce my own writing, and the Canva visuals strengthened my writing concept.
S4	Canva was quite useful for writing. Using the photos to further explore the concept made it simpler for me to write.
Negative perception	
S1	Using Canva did not make my grammar and parts of speech mistakes better.
S2	There was no interactive writing tool offered by this software.
S3	I didn't understand how to use Canva for group writing.
S4	No errors detector for my writing.

From table 3 above we can see that negative perceptions from students lead to Canva's attractive visual appearance. According to students, this can increase their creativity. They stated that they were more motivated in writing so they found it easier to complete their writing. However, each

student interviewed also had a negative view. According to them, Canva is not suitable for writing media. They consider that their mistakes in writing are not detected, so they don't know which ones to correct, whether their writing is wrong or correct. One of them also stated that he could not detect writing errors such as errors in spelling and grammar.

Discussion

The teacher offered Canva as a visual resource that might inspire students to write with prompts by photos, graphics, images, photography filters, free icons, shapes, and hundreds of typefaces, thus it was predicted that the findings would result in a significant shift. Canva, which delivers visual content via technology, was suggested as a possible means of increasing the chances for students to actively participate in the writing process. ICT, according to Tinio (2002), fosters digital literacy, creative problem-solving, higher-order thinking, effective communication, and high levels of productivity among pupils.

Additionally, the findings are consistent with those of Dunkel (like Liu, Moore, Graham, and Lee, 2002), who contends that technology enhances students' self-confidence, professional preparation, linguistic proficiency, learning autonomy, and, specifically, immediate feedback. They may be a few of the causes for how technology has improved language acquisition. This was deemed to be a useful and efficient instrument in the writing process that enhances students' creative abilities and gives them a sense of independence in their studies.

The students' writing revealed some elements, such as idea development, motivation, confidence, and creativity to pique the interest of the readers in reading the text and which makes it easier for them to understand the meaning of the written text, according to the qualitative results of student voting about the advantages of using Canva. The national student education technology standards (NETS-S), which specifically underline the expectations set for students who use technology to support learning, are the basis for these findings. According to Smaldino et al. (2015), the expectations included creativity and invention, communication and teamwork, fluency in research and information, critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making.

Canva was seen as helpful in both writing class and studying. The study's findings demonstrated Canva as a visual learning tool where students may express their creativity. According to Yuyun (2018), who made this discovery, integrating it into student-centered teaching-learning activities might help students have a deeper comprehension of the material as well as allow them to express their creativity. The development of the internet led to the creation of the Canva app.

However, this study also discovered some flaws that the students who used Canva pointed up. Here are the comments made by the participants during the writing process: Canva is unable to provide feedback or fix errors. They had the impression that they would receive criticism, and writing requires revisions. You can provide feedback on a text from the appropriate location, such as a mistake, incorrect word placement, incorrect verb tense, harmony, lie form, singular or plural (Hyland, 2003). The best way to reply to students' work and have an impact on writing quality is generally thought to be feedback and corrections. Furthermore, both criticism and correction speak to how the content reads and how it might be improved.

The third and fourth negatives are related to Canva because it does not have an interactive pen. Therefore, were the students perplexed about how to apply this Canva summary? These conclusions are hotly contested by other studies in the field. The majority of them had faith that collaborative technology will benefit students. Lee (2000) discovered, for instance, that Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) gives students the chance to work in pairs or groups. Haring-Smith also understood that technology might be the most significant source for group writing and collaborative learning (as cited in Suwantarathip and Wichadee, 2004). Additionally, Alsubaie & Ashuraidah (2017) take into account the positive benefits of integration in EFL contexts, a partnership between technology and education. They claimed that collaboration and technology know-how may be employed to help students develop their various learning preferences while using the same

instruments. Since cooperation can also enhance individual learning, successful cooperative learning is theoretically achievable.

Canva is frequently mentioned in quantitative data analysis as having a favourable impact on students' writing. The students also mentioned a few benefits and drawbacks of using Canva's writing interface. In conclusion, research findings supported Canva's beneficial effects on the writing process for students

Conclusion

The t-test results revealed that students' writing in the posttest was noticeably better than in the pretest. A statistically significant difference between the two groups was also shown by the investigation. The formulated null hypothesis is thus disproved.

Regarding the student voice from using Canva, it can be argued that students we value and believe in using Canva. Canva offers great benefits to improve their writing performance. In general, the majority of students mentioned using Canva to support them in writing by providing images, colours, images, photos, fonts, and graphics. They were prepared to expand on his literary concepts. They felt that utilising Canva had made their English writing more imaginative. They also discovered that writing was simpler using Canva. It was simple to put his thoughts into practise, and Canva makes it simple for readers to comprehend the contents as well. Finally, the students claimed that using Canva helped them feel less anxious and gave them more motivation to write.

Students learn how to integrate technology in language learning as well as how to improve the quality of their writing presentations by using Canva as a technology environment. The study of foreign languages is another option, which was once considered to be enjoyable for the pupils. Overall, students think that using Canva to promote writing is effective and practical hands-on learning.

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