



Improving Students Procedural Writing Skills through Project Learning with Canva Utilization

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61987/jemr.v4i6.1485>

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Project Based Learning (PjBL), Canva, Procedural Writing Skills

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This study investigates the impact of integrating Project-Based Learning (PjBL) supported by Canva on procedural writing skills among eighth-grade students at SMPIT Muhammadiyah An Najah Jatinom. The research aimed to enhance student engagement, motivation, and writing performance by using digital tools in a bilingual Islamic education context. The results showed significant improvements in students' writing, with the percentage of students meeting the minimum mastery criterion increasing from 28% in the pre-test to 82% in Cycle II. The study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) with iterative cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through qualitative methods (observations, interviews, field notes) and quantitative methods (writing tests). The findings confirm that PjBL and Canva effectively support multimodal literacy, foster collaboration, and enhance writing skills. The study contributes to educational practice by offering a model for integrating digital tools into PjBL, particularly in bilingual classrooms. Future research should explore the long-term effects and the application of this approach to other genres of writing and educational settings.

Article History:

Received: September 2025; Revised: October 2025; Accepted: November 2025

Please cite this article in APA style as:

Warastuti, A. D., Setiyadi, D. B. P., Haryono, P., & Hersulastuti. (2025). Improving Students' Procedural Writing Skills through Project Learning with Canva Utilization. *Journal of Educational Management Research*, 4(6), 3105-3119.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is an essential skill that plays a significant role in students' ability to express themselves and communicate effectively in various contexts (Bora, 2023). The development of writing skills, particularly procedural writing, is crucial for students as it enables them to organize their thoughts, follow logical steps, and convey instructions clearly (Takdir et al., 2023). As a fundamental aspect of education, improving writing skills is essential not only for academic success but also for future professional endeavors (Izzatullakhon, 2024; Nykyporets et al., 2023). The ability to write well is increasingly important in the digital era, where communication often takes place through written texts

(Lopera, 2023). Research has shown that effective writing can enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills, contributing to the development of a knowledgeable and capable society (Xu et al., 2023). Therefore, addressing the challenges students face in writing, particularly procedural writing, is vital for both individual growth and societal advancement.

In the current educational landscape, students often struggle with writing procedural texts, which are an essential genre in junior high school curricula (Rachmani et al., 2025). This issue is particularly prominent in Islamic junior high schools, where students may face additional challenges related to language proficiency and cultural context. Students' difficulties with procedural writing stem from various factors, including a lack of motivation, poor organization of ideas, and inconsistent use of vocabulary and grammar (Ristati et al., 2024; Zai, 2023). These issues hinder their ability to produce coherent and detailed procedural texts, which are required in both academic and practical settings. Addressing these challenges is essential to improve writing performance and foster greater engagement in the learning process, ensuring that students can meet the academic standards and develop essential skills for the future.

At SMPIT Muhammadiyah An Najah Jatinom, students in Class VIII have consistently demonstrated low writing scores, particularly in procedural writing tasks. Observations show that students often produce fragmented texts that lack clarity and detail, which indicates a gap in their understanding of how to structure a procedure logically. Additionally, students' motivation to write procedural texts is relatively low, and many find the task daunting. Despite efforts to improve writing instruction, the results have not yet met the expected standards. This issue highlights the need for more effective teaching strategies that can engage students and help them overcome their writing challenges (Endarwati et al., 2023). The integration of innovative approaches, such as project-based learning (PjBL), could provide a valuable solution to address these difficulties and enhance students' writing abilities (Chao et al., 2025).

Previous research has emphasized the effectiveness of project-based learning (PjBL) in improving students' engagement and writing performance. PjBL, rooted in constructivist theory, encourages students to engage in authentic, real-world tasks that promote collaboration and creativity (Omelianenko et al., 2024). Studies have shown that PjBL not only enhances writing skills but also fosters critical thinking and problem-solving abilities (Chao et al., 2025). In addition, digital tools such as Canva have been recognized for their ability to support multimodal literacy, enabling students to visualize their ideas and enhance their writing process (Tilana et al., 2024). However, despite the potential of these methods, few studies have explored the combination of PjBL and Canva in Islamic junior high schools, particularly in bilingual classrooms where cultural

authenticity and student voice are key considerations.

The gap in existing research lies in the limited exploration of the integration of PjBL with digital tools like Canva, particularly in the context of Islamic junior high schools. While PjBL has been widely studied, there is a lack of research that combines it with digital platforms to enhance procedural writing skills. Furthermore, previous studies have not fully addressed the unique challenges faced by students in bilingual classrooms, where the incorporation of cultural relevance and language proficiency is crucial (Hidayah et al., 2024). This research aims to fill this gap by investigating the impact of PjBL assisted by Canva on procedural writing skills in an Islamic junior high school setting (Royani et al., 2024). Addressing this gap is important as it provides insights into how digital tools can be used effectively in conjunction with pedagogical strategies to improve writing outcomes in diverse educational contexts.

The novelty of this research lies in its classroom action research design, which combines PjBL with the utilization of Canva to enhance procedural writing skills. This study is the first of its kind in the context of Islamic junior high schools, particularly in bilingual classrooms, where cultural authenticity is an essential factor. By focusing on the iterative process of planning, action, observation, and reflection, this research aims to provide valuable insights into how teachers can scaffold students' writing instruction more effectively. The integration of visual to verbal transitions and collaborative projects will offer a new perspective on how to engage students in the writing process and improve their ability to write clear and coherent procedural texts.

This research aims to address the following problem: How can project-based learning (PjBL) assisted by Canva improve students' procedural writing skills in Islamic junior high schools, particularly in bilingual classrooms? The research will argue that the combination of PjBL and digital tools like Canva provides an effective approach to enhance writing skills, promote student engagement, and foster greater motivation to write. By integrating visual elements into the writing process and encouraging collaboration, this approach offers a practical and innovative solution to the challenges faced by students in writing procedural texts. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of more effective teaching strategies that can be applied in diverse educational settings.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) using the spiral model of planning, action, observation, and reflection as proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (Wulandari et al., 2025). This design was chosen because it allows for continuous improvement in students' procedural writing skills through iterative cycles of action and reflection. The collaborative nature of the research

involved both the researcher and a colleague teacher, ensuring validity and reflective practice. This design is particularly suited to the aim of enhancing students' writing skills and adapting teaching methods based on real-time classroom data.

The research was conducted at SMPIT Muhammadiyah An Najah Jatinom during the second term of the 2024/2025 academic year. This location was chosen because it is an Islamic junior high school with students possessing varying levels of English writing abilities, making it a representative sample of learners in Islamic educational settings. Additionally, the school operates in a bilingual context, which adds a layer of complexity that makes the integration of project-based learning (PjBL) and digital tools like Canva particularly relevant. The diversity in student abilities and the bilingual environment made this location ideal for exploring the impact of PjBL and Canva on procedural writing.

Data collection combined qualitative and quantitative approaches to capture both the process and the outcome of the learning intervention. Qualitative data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, field notes, and documentation of students' work. These methods provided detailed insights into student engagement, collaboration, and creativity during the learning process. Instruments used for qualitative data included observation sheets, interview guidelines, and photo documentation. Quantitative data were obtained through writing tests administered at three stages: before the intervention, after Cycle I, and after Cycle II.

Data analysis involved three main stages: data condensation, data display, and data verification. Data condensation was carried out by selecting and summarizing relevant data from the observations, interviews, field notes, and writing tests. Data display involved organizing and presenting the data in tables, graphs, or narrative forms to make it easier to interpret and understand the students' progress in procedural writing throughout the research cycles. Data verification was performed by comparing and confirming the findings through reflection on each action cycle, as well as feedback from the co-teacher and students, ensuring the accuracy and consistency of the results. This iterative process helped to evaluate the impact of the intervention and made it possible to adjust teaching strategies in response to the students' needs.

To ensure data validity, this research employed several techniques. First, triangulation was used by collecting data from multiple sources, including observations, interviews, field notes, and writing tests, to cross check the consistency of the findings. Second, member checks were conducted by sharing preliminary findings with the co-teacher and students to confirm that the interpretations aligned with their experiences and perceptions. Third, peer debriefing was employed by involving an external researcher to review and

provide feedback on the data analysis process, ensuring the objectivity and credibility of the findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Improving Writing Quality

The findings of this study align closely with previous research that underscores the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in improving student engagement and writing performance. The significant improvement in students' procedural writing skills, as evidenced by the increase in the percentage of students achieving the minimum mastery criterion from 28% in the pre-test to 82% in Cycle II, is consistent with the work of Bell (2010), who found that PjBL fosters deeper engagement by incorporating authentic tasks (Goshu et al., 2024). This study's results support Dewey's (1938) principle of "learning by doing," as students actively participated in meaningful tasks that required them to design, write, and present procedural texts (Marzulina et al., 2025). The observed improvement reflects the principles of constructivist learning theory, where students build knowledge through hands-on experiences, further supported by the students' growing motivation and engagement observed throughout the cycles.

Table 1. Improvement of Students' Writing Achievement

Test Stage	Students ≥ 75	Percentage (%)
before action	8	28%
after action 1	16	55%
after action 2	26	82%

In addition to the positive effects of PjBL, the integration of Canva as a digital tool provided additional support for multimodal literacy, which is in line with Kress's (2003) theory of multimodality (Li et al., 2024). Canva's visual templates allowed students to visualize their ideas before transforming them into written texts, bridging the gap between abstract thinking and concrete writing production. This finding mirrors the results from Andriyanti et al. (2023), who highlighted the role of digital tools in supporting writing by encouraging students to organize their thoughts visually. The ability to structure procedural texts clearly before writing them helped students produce more coherent and detailed texts, which was evident in the progress of students' vocabulary, grammar, and text organization throughout the cycles.

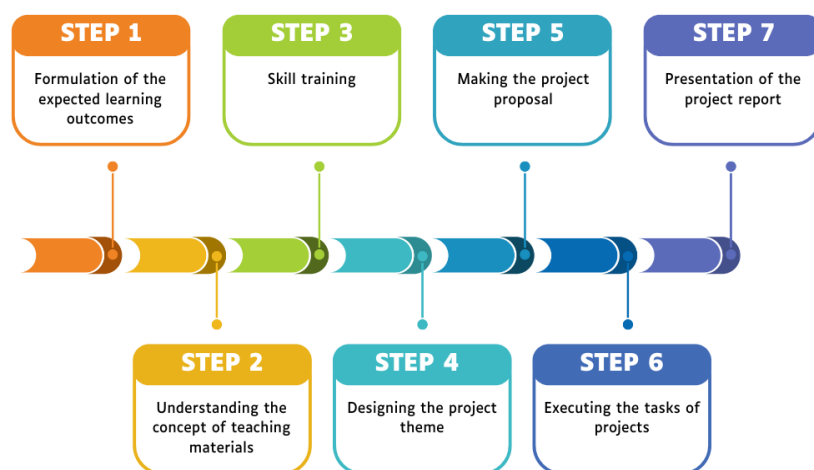


Figure 1: Seven Steps of Project-Based Learning

The iterative process of classroom action research, as outlined by Kemmis & McTaggart (2005) further strengthened the results by allowing continuous reflection and adaptation of teaching strategies (Soh, 2024). This approach ensured that instructional methods met the evolving needs of the students, which is a key feature of effective teaching and learning. The data from the classroom observations, field notes, and interviews showed that the reflective practice inherent in CAR led to more tailored and responsive teaching, which contributed to the improvements observed in students' writing skills. The feedback and revisions encouraged by peer interactions also played a crucial role in refining students' work, consistent with the idea that collaborative learning can enhance writing accuracy and content quality.

The theoretical implications of this study suggest that combining PjBL with digital tools like Canva can significantly enhance procedural writing instruction by integrating visual and verbal learning modes. This combination encourages students to take ownership of their learning while also developing essential writing skills. Practically, the study demonstrates that educators can implement project-based learning in bilingual Islamic education contexts, using digital tools to support writing development. This approach not only improves writing achievement but also fosters creativity, collaboration, and student-centered learning, which are crucial skills in today's educational landscape. The findings offer valuable insights for educators seeking innovative ways to enhance writing skills, particularly in Islamic schools where the emphasis on both language proficiency and cultural authenticity is paramount.

Lastly, this research contributes to the broader literature on Islamic education management by highlighting the benefits of integrating innovative pedagogies and digital literacy tools into classroom practice. By demonstrating how PjBL and Canva can work together to improve writing outcomes, this study provides a model for enhancing both teaching strategies and student learning experiences in bilingual settings. The findings suggest that incorporating

technology and collaborative project work into the curriculum can help foster a more dynamic and engaging learning environment, preparing students not only for academic success but also for the demands of the 21st century.

Increasing Student Motivation and Engagement

Improvement in student motivation and engagement refers to the heightened enthusiasm, active participation, and effort students exhibit during the learning process, particularly in writing tasks. Motivation is evident in students' willingness to engage in class activities, show interest in projects, and produce high-quality work. Engagement, on the other hand, is observed through their collaboration with peers, contribution to discussions, and responsibility for tasks. This sub-theme explores how Project-Based Learning (PjBL), combined with digital tools like Canva, enhances both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which in turn boosts student engagement in procedural writing.

Interviews with students revealed how the use of Canva made the writing process more enjoyable. Informant 1 expressed, "I felt more excited about the project because I could see the visual representation of my ideas. It made writing more fun, and I wanted to keep improving it." This statement underscores the role of Canva in fostering intrinsic motivation by making the writing task more interactive and engaging. By visualizing the writing process, students connected emotionally with the material, leading to increased enthusiasm and participation.

Similarly, Informant 2 mentioned, "Before, I didn't like writing because it was hard for me to organize my thoughts. But using Canva helped me to see the steps more clearly, and I felt like I could finish the task better." This response highlights Canva's role in easing the cognitive load of organizing ideas and breaking down the writing process into manageable steps. Visualizing the structure of the procedural text allowed students to approach the task with greater confidence, increasing their motivation and engagement.

Classroom observations further supported these findings, with students becoming more focused and proactive in their collaborations. The presence of Canva as a tool for visualization seemed to enhance how students approached their tasks, making them more likely to ask questions, share ideas, and participate in group discussions. The integration of PjBL, alongside digital tools like Canva, helped students feel more involved in the learning process, leading to greater responsibility for their projects and overall engagement. This combination of intrinsic motivation, visual support, and collaborative learning facilitated a more enriching educational experience.

Table 1. Student Motivation and Engagement

Informant Position	Interview Excerpt	Indicator
Student 1	"I felt more excited about the project because I could see the visual representation of my ideas. It made writing more fun, and I wanted to keep improving it."	Motivation (Intrinsic), Engagement (Active Participation)
Student 2	"Before, I didn't like writing because it was hard for me to organize my thoughts. But using Canva helped me to see the steps more clearly, and I felt like I could finish the task better."	Motivation (Increased Confidence), Engagement (Task Responsibility)

The table highlights the impact of Canva on student motivation and engagement from both intrinsic and extrinsic perspectives. Informant 1's statement points to an intrinsic increase in motivation, as the visual aspect of Canva made the writing process enjoyable and engaging. This intrinsic motivation manifested in the student's desire to improve the task further. Informant 2 response indicates that Canva not only enhanced intrinsic motivation by making the task feel more manageable but also improved extrinsic motivation through increased confidence. This led to a greater sense of responsibility toward completing the task. Both informants exhibit higher engagement, as they actively participated in their projects and were more involved in the process. These responses illustrate the pattern that the use of visual tools, like Canva, increases both motivation and engagement, fostering a more dynamic and participatory learning environment.

Strengthening Collaboration and Peer-to-Peer Learning

Strengthening collaboration and peer-to-peer learning refers to creating a classroom environment where students actively work together, share ideas, provide feedback, and support each other's learning. This collaborative approach encourages students to engage in cooperative tasks, such as group discussions, collaborative writing, and offering constructive feedback. In the context of this study, collaboration was enhanced by Project-Based Learning (PjBL), where students worked in groups to design and write procedural texts, using Canva as a tool to visually organize their ideas. These activities promoted interaction, discussion, and mutual improvement, thereby fostering stronger collaborative skills and enhancing peer learning.

Interviews with students revealed the positive impact of peer collaboration on their writing skills. Informant 1 stated, "I really liked working with my friends because we could help each other figure out the best way to organize our steps. When I got stuck, my friends gave me new ideas, and it helped me finish the task better." This suggests that peer interaction provided

opportunities for students to learn from one another, exchange ideas, and solve problems together, which made the learning process more effective. Peer support played a crucial role in enhancing writing tasks by offering both creative ideas and practical solutions, demonstrating the power of collaborative learning.

Informant 2 also highlighted how peer-to-peer learning improved their writing process, saying, "At first, I wasn't sure how to organize my procedure, but after discussing it with my group, we came up with a plan that worked. We used Canva to draw out our ideas, and then we helped each other write it down in clear steps." This comment underscores that collaboration, supported by the visual tools provided by Canva, helped students organize their ideas and engage in shared problem-solving. The tool enabled clearer communication and a more structured approach to writing, which helped students refine their procedural texts and improve their academic skills.

Classroom observations confirmed the effectiveness of collaboration in improving students' writing skills. Students were observed engaging in productive group discussions, offering constructive feedback to peers, and actively participating in group activities. The use of Canva facilitated these interactions by enabling students to create visual representations of their ideas, which they could then discuss and refine together. This collaborative environment encouraged students to take ownership of their learning and provided a supportive atmosphere where students were genuinely interested in helping their peers succeed. The findings suggest that peer collaboration, enhanced by digital tools like Canva, positively influenced student engagement and writing quality, fostering a dynamic and interactive learning environment.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate a significant improvement in students' procedural writing skills and underscore the positive impact of Project-Based Learning (PjBL), complemented by digital tools like Canva, in enhancing student motivation, engagement, and collaboration. These results are consistent with previous research that emphasizes the effectiveness of PjBL in fostering deeper student engagement and improving writing performance (Syamsuddin et al., 2025). The improvement in student achievement, as shown by the increase in the percentage of students meeting the minimum mastery criterion from 28% to 82%, reflects the power of authentic, hands-on tasks in promoting student learning. This finding aligns with Dewey's (1938) principle of "learning by doing," where active participation in meaningful tasks encourages students to take ownership of their learning. Moreover, the use of Canva as a tool for multimodal literacy supports Kress's (2003) theory of multimodality, where visual aids help students bridge the gap between abstract thinking and concrete

text production (Torres et al., 2024). The integration of visual and verbal modes of learning allowed students to organize their ideas more effectively, leading to clearer and more structured writing, a process also observed by Andriyanti et al. (2023). This study confirms that combining PjBL with digital tools like Canva enhances writing performance and provides a meaningful and engaging learning experience.

The positive influence of Canva on student motivation and engagement is consistent with findings in existing literature. The study revealed that students' intrinsic motivation was heightened as they enjoyed visualizing their ideas, leading to increased enthusiasm and participation in the writing process. This is in line with previous research by Syamsuddin et al (2025), which demonstrated that PjBL increases motivation by engaging students in authentic tasks that require active involvement and creativity. The interviews with students in this study revealed that the ability to visualize the steps of a procedural text before writing increased their confidence and allowed them to approach the task with greater clarity. This finding also aligns with research by Graves (1983) and Graham et al. (2012), who found that peer feedback and collaborative learning strategies improve writing quality (Zou et al., 2023; Rafaha et al., 2025). By visualizing their ideas using Canva, students not only gained better clarity but also felt more capable of completing their tasks, thus increasing both motivation and engagement. This is especially important in educational settings where students may struggle with the organization and execution of writing tasks.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of multimodal learning, where digital tools like Canva serve as valuable aids in the learning process. As Kress (2010) suggested, combining visual and verbal learning modes can help students engage with the material in diverse ways, making learning more accessible and enjoyable (Lai, 2024). In this study, students reported that the visual templates in Canva helped them clarify their thoughts and organize their ideas before writing. This multimodal approach aligns with the principles of constructivist learning theory, where knowledge is built through active engagement and problem-solving (Abri et al., 2024; Renninger, 2024). The iterative process of planning, action, observation, and reflection. This approach encourages reflective practice and continuous improvement, both crucial for effective teaching and learning.

From a practical standpoint, the integration of PjBL and Canva in the classroom provides valuable insights for educators seeking to improve student writing and engagement (Royani et al., 2024). This study demonstrates that teachers can foster a more interactive and collaborative classroom environment by incorporating digital tools that support visual learning (Nordin et al., 2024). The combination of project-based tasks and peer-to-peer collaboration not only

enhances the writing process but also cultivates important skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and creativity (Nayak et al., 2024). Educators in bilingual and Islamic education contexts, where cultural authenticity and language proficiency are important, can particularly benefit from this approach (Ahmadi, 2025). By using Canva to help students visualize their ideas and work together, teachers can facilitate a more inclusive and engaging learning experience that prepares students for future academic and professional success.

The findings from this research also contribute to the broader literature on educational innovation, particularly in the context of Islamic education management. By demonstrating how PjBL and Canva can be integrated to improve writing outcomes, this study offers a model for enhancing both teaching strategies and student learning experiences in bilingual settings. The results indicate that incorporating technology and collaborative work into the curriculum can create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment, which is essential in today's rapidly evolving educational landscape. Furthermore, the study shows that these tools not only enhance writing achievement but also foster a student-centered approach, where learners are more actively involved in their learning process. This contributes to the growing body of literature on the importance of integrating digital literacy into teaching, especially in educational settings where students' needs and contexts are diverse.

CONCLUSION

This classroom action research demonstrated that the integration of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) assisted by Canva significantly improved the procedural writing skills of eighth-grade students at SMPIT Muhammadiyah An Najah Jatinom. The iterative cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection were key in continuously refining teaching strategies, which led to improvements in both student engagement and writing performance. Students exhibited greater motivation, collaboration, and responsibility in completing their writing projects, with noticeable improvements in organization, vocabulary usage, grammatical accuracy, and mechanics. Quantitatively, the percentage of students meeting the minimum mastery criterion increased from 28% before the intervention to 82% after Cycle II. This underscores the effectiveness of combining PjBL and Canva in enhancing procedural writing skills and fostering a more engaging learning environment.

This study contributes significantly to the field of education by showcasing the impact of combining PjBL with digital tools like Canva to foster multimodal literacy and student-centered learning. The findings demonstrate how Canva's visual elements helped students organize their ideas, align with multimodality theories (Kress, 2010), and enhance writing quality. Additionally,

it highlights the potential of these tools in bilingual Islamic education contexts, promoting creativity, cultural authenticity, and collaborative learning. However, the study had limitations, such as being conducted in a single class, which may affect generalizability. Future research could explore the effectiveness of this approach in various educational settings, other genres of writing, and examine the long-term impact of such teaching strategies on students' overall literacy development.

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