# The Comparative Study of the Use of Genially Interactive Multimedia to Canva in Improving Students' Descriptive Text Writing Skills

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**Abstract**

This study compares the effectiveness of interactive digital media Genially and Canva in developing the descriptive text writing skills of seventh-grade pupils at a one of junior high schools in Garut Regency. Teaching English writing in junior high school is frequently hampered by the dominance of traditional methods, a lack of visual stimulation, and students' low active participation in structuring ideas in a systematic manner. Given the scarcity of empirical studies comparing the efficacy of multimedia platforms in promoting productive language abilities, this study used a quasi-experimental methodology with a Nonequivalent Control Group methodology model. Purposive sampling was used to choose 60 students, who were then divided into two groups: the treatment group (Genially) and the comparator group (Canva). A descriptive text writing test was used to assess concept development, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and writing mechanics, and the results were graded using an analytical rubric. Statistical tests included the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, Levene's homogeneity test, independent t-test, and Normalized Gain index. The data indicate a large gap between the groups. The N-Gain index for the Genially group was 0.501 (moderate), but the Canva group had 0.313 (low-moderate). The findings show that Genially's interaction elements, nonlinear navigation, and quick feedback play a larger role in facilitating step-by-step support (scaffolding) during the text development process. Academically, these findings add to the literature on multimedia learning technology; practically, they help practitioners choose digital platforms that meet contemporary pedagogical needs.

**Key words***: Descriptive text, Writing Skill, Multimedia platforms, Genially, Canva*

## 1. Introduction

The communication skills and international literacy of students have been developing since early adolescence [1]. In this learning context, writing skills are one of the main indicators of learning success because they involve complex cognitive and linguistic processes, from planning ideas, organizing discourse, to continuous revision [2]. However, various empirical findings show that writing skills, especially in descriptive text, are still considered low. Monitoring results at one of Junior High Schools in Garut regency recorded that the average writing competency scores over three consecutive academic periods (66, 67, and 69) were still

below the minimum passing threshold of 75. This situation is reinforced by findings that students face difficulties in detailed idea development, choosing descriptive vocabulary, applying the simple present tense, and constructing cohesive paragraphs according to the generic text structure.

The low achievement is closely linked to learning practices that are still dominated by conventional methods like lectures, explaining materials, and giving assignments without systematic guidance in the writing process [3]. Practices like this widen the gap between 21st-century curriculum expectations, which emphasize critical thinking, innovation, and tech adaptation, and the reality in the classroom [4]. From this perspective, using instructional technology in the form of interactive learning media is seen as a strategic intervention to create a more dialogic, visual, and meaningful learning ecosystem [5].

Interactive learning media facilitate the synchronization of various elements ranging from text, visuals, audio, video, animations, to responsive activities within a unified learning platform [6]. Based on the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, presenting material through dual channels (visual-verbal) concurrently has been proven to optimize information processing and strengthen long-term retention [7]. Among the various platforms available, Genially and Canva have been widely adopted in educational contexts. Genially offers advantages in terms of interactivity, nonlinear navigation, animations, and exploratory features that support student-centered learning [8]. In contrast, Canva is more prominent for its ease of visual design, availability of templates, and production of attractive graphic content [9]. Although both platforms are web-based and have the potential to enhance learning motivation, the pedagogical characteristics inherent in each platform have different implications for the process of students' knowledge construction, particularly in writing skills that require a gradual scaffolding process [10].

The research gap emerging from the literature review indicates that previous studies tend to isolate the use of Genially or Canva within specific disciplinary contexts, such as mathematics, Indonesian language [11], or social studies [12]. Empirical comparative studies that specifically test the effectiveness of both platforms in enhancing descriptive text writing skills in English learning at the junior high school level remain very limited [4]. Therefore, this study becomes relevant to address this gap by presenting findings based on inferential statistics regarding which platform is more optimal in facilitating productive writing skills. The novelty of this research lies in the direct comparative design reinforced by rigorous statistical

calculations, as well as its practical contribution for teachers in selecting multimedia platforms that align with the characteristics of writing skills.

## 2. Research Methodology

This study used a Nonequivalent Control Group Design. The sample is divided into two groups, namely the experimental group using Genially multimedia and the comparison group using Canva [13]. The design scheme is presented visually in Figure 1.

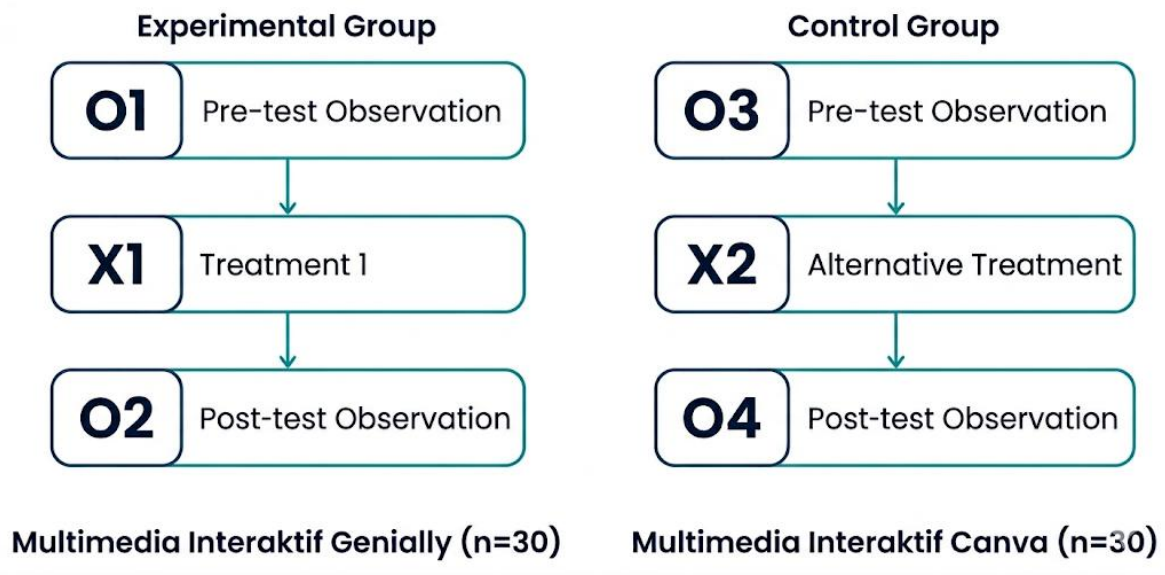


Figure 1. Research Design Nonequivalent Control Group Design

Description: $O_1$ and $O_3$ = Pretest; $O_2$ and $O_4$ = Posttest; $X_1$ = Genially Treatment; $X_2$ = Canva Treatment

The research population comprises all seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Cigedug in the 2025/2026 academic year. The sampling technique employed purposive sampling based on considerations of similar initial ability characteristics and subject teacher recommendations [14]. The sample consisted of two classes, namely Class VII A as the experimental class ($n_1$ = 30) with Genially treatment, and Class VII B as the control class ($n_2$ = 30) with Canva treatment, making the total sample N = 60 students.

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The main instrument is a descriptive text writing test administered before (pretest) and after (posttest) the treatment. The test is designed in the form of guided writing with topics that are equivalent in difficulty level, for example, "My Favorite Animal" for the pretest and "My School" for the posttest. Assessment is conducted using an analytical rubric with a score interval of 0–100.

The research implementation procedure consists of five stages: (1) preparation and coordination with the school; (2) administration of the pretest in both classes; (3) and (4) treatment given over two meetings according to the learning syntax of each platform; (5) administration of the posttest; and (6) data processing and analysis. Figure 2 illustrates the research procedure flow systematically.

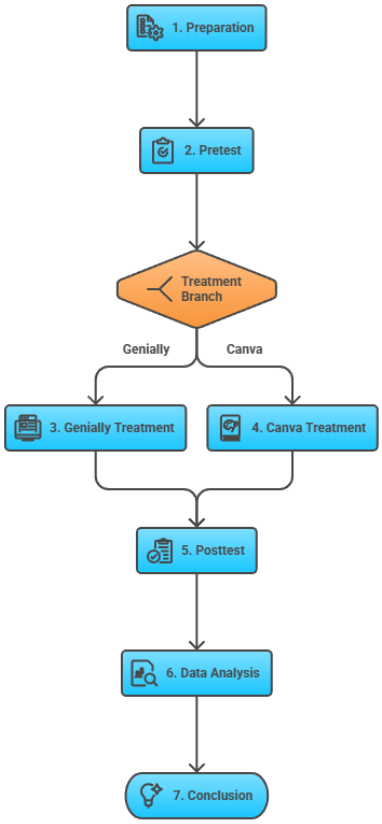


Figure 2. Flowchart of the Research Procedure

Data analysis was conducted in stages, including descriptive statistics, prerequisite tests, and hypothesis testing.

Descriptive Statistics

The calculation of the mean and standard deviation was performed using the formulas:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} Xi}{n} \quad (1)$$

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n}(X_i - \bar{X})^2}{n-1}} \quad (2)$$

where $\bar{X}$ is the mean value, Xi is the ith individual value, and n is the sample size.

Normality and Homogeneity Tests

Normality was tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test to examine the assumption of data distribution. The testing criterion: data is normally distributed if the significance value $p > 0.05$. Variance homogeneity was tested using Levene's test with the criterion that variances are homogeneous if $p > 0.05$ [14].

Hypothesis Testing (Independent t-Test)

To test for a significant difference between two groups, an independent two-sample t-test is used with the formula:

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{S_p^2\left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}\right)}}$$

where $\bar{X}_1$ and $\bar{X}_2$ are the posttest means of the experimental and control classes, $S_1^2$ and $S_2^2$ are the variances of each class, and $n_1$ and $n_2$ are the sample sizes [14]. The null hypothesis ($H_0$) is rejected if the significance value $p \leq 0.05$ or the calculated t > table t at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

Normalized Gain Test (N-Gain)

To determine the effectiveness of improving writing skills, the N-Gain formula is used [17]:

$$g = \frac{S_{post} - S_{pre}}{S_{max} - S_{pre}}$$

g = ((posttest - pretest)) / ((maximum_score - pretest))

The interpretation of gain values refers to the criteria: $g \geq 0.7$ (high), $0.3 \leq g < 0.7$ (medium), and $g < 0.3$ (low).

## 3. Findings and Discussions

### 3.1 Findings

Research data were obtained from the results of pretests and posttests of descriptive text writing skills in both classes. A summary of descriptive statistics is presented in Table 1.

Table1. Descriptive Statistic of Pretest dan Posttest result

| Kelompok | n | Pretest $\bar{X}$ | Pretest SD | Posttest $\bar{X}$ | Posttest SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Genially (Eksperimen) | 30 | 68,50 | 8,20 | 84,30 | 6,50 |
| Canva (Kontrol) | 30 | 67,80 | 8,50 | 77,90 | 7,10 |

Based on Table 1, the experimental class using Genially showed an average increase of 15.80 points, while the control class using Canva increased by 10.10 points. The average increase in the Genially class was higher compared to the Canva class, which provides an initial indication of a difference in effectiveness between the two platforms.

Hypothesis testing is conducted to examine the significant difference in posttest results between the experimental class and the control class. Manual calculations are carried out with the following steps. Known:

Genially Class : $\bar{X}_1 = 84{,}30$; $S_1 = 6{,}50$; $n_1 = 30$
Canva Class : $\bar{X}_2 = 77{,}90$; $S_2 = 7{,}10$; $n_2 = 30$

*Step 1: Calculating the pooled variance ($S_p^2$)*

$$S_p^2 = \frac{[(n_1 - 1)S_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)S_2^2]}{n_1 + n_2 - 2}$$

$$S_p^2 = \frac{[(29)(6{,}50)^2 + (29)(7{,}10)^2]}{30 + 30 - 2}$$

$$S_p^2 = \frac{[(29)(42{,}25) + (29)(50{,}41)]}{58}$$

$$S_p^2 = \frac{[1225{,}25 + 1461{,}89]}{58} = \frac{2687{,}14}{58} = 46{,}33$$

*Step 2: Calculating the t_calculated value*

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\left(S_p^2 \times \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}\right)\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{84{,}30 - 77{,}90}{\sqrt{\left(46{,}33 \times \left(\frac{1}{30} + \frac{1}{30}\right)\right)}}$$

$$t = 6{,}\frac{40}{\sqrt{(46{,}33 \times 0{,}0667)}} = 6{,}\frac{40}{\sqrt{(3{,}09)}} = 6{,}\frac{40}{1}{,}758 = 3{,}64$$

Step 3: Determining the t_table value

$$dk = n_1 + n_2 - 2 = 30 + 30 - 2 = 58$$

$$t_{tabel}(\alpha = 0{,}05;\ dk = 58) = 2{,}002$$

Step 4: Decision Making

Since t_calculated = 3.64 > t_table = 2.002 and the significance value p = 0.001 < 0.05, the null hypothesis ($H_0$) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ($H_1$) is accepted. This means that there is a significant difference between the descriptive text writing skills of students using Genially-based interactive multimedia and those using Canva.

Effectiveness Analysis (N-Gain)

The N-Gain calculation is carried out to measure the effectiveness of improving writing skills in each class.

*Genially Class (Experiment):*

$$g_1 = \frac{posttest - pretest}{skor_{maksimum} - pretest}$$

$$g_1 = \frac{84{,}30 - 68{,}50}{100 - 68{,}50} = \frac{15{,}80}{31{,}50} = 0{,}502$$

*Canva Class (control):*

$$g_2 = \frac{posttest - pretest}{skor_{maksimum} - pretest}$$

$$g_2 = \frac{77{,}90 - 67{,}80}{100 - 67{,}80} = \frac{10{,}10}{32{,}20} = 0{,}314$$

The calculation results indicate that the Genially class obtained an N-Gain score of 0.502 (medium category), while the Canva class obtained an N-Gain score of 0.314 (medium-low category). Although both classes showed improvement, the effectiveness of learning with Genially is quantitatively higher.

### 3.2 Discussions

The findings of this study confirm that interactive multimedia based on Genially produces a more significant improvement in descriptive text writing skills compared to Canva. This difference can be explained by the pedagogical characteristics of each platform. Genially is designed with high-level interactivity features, such as nonlinear navigation, information pop-ups, integrated quizzes, and responsive animations that allow students to interact directly with the learning material [15]. These features support the principle of scaffolding in the writing process, where students are guided gradually from the stage of visual observation, exploration of text structure, guided exercises, to independent writing production [7].

Conversely, Canva, which focuses on visual design and slide presentation aspects, tends to be more static in the context of content delivery [9]. Although Canva's visual appearance can enhance learning motivation and aesthetics [12], limitations in interactive features and immediate feedback result in students acting more as passive recipients rather than active participants in knowledge construction. This aligns with Bond's findings [5], which emphasize that digitally designed technologies in an interactive manner can enhance students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement more profoundly.

From the perspective of multimedia learning theory, Genially facilitates the dual-channel and contiguity principles by presenting explanatory text of the descriptive text structure alongside visual stimuli of the objects being described [7]. This combination helps students build a more concrete mental representation before translating ideas into written form. In addition, the presence of interactive practice features with automatic feedback on Genially allows students to perform conceptual revisions independently, which is an essential component in the writing process [2].

Comparison with previous studies reinforces these findings. Rainannisa and Pradita [11] found that Genially significantly improves students' business letter writing skills in junior high school through aspects of systematics and structural accuracy. On the other hand, Shinta Sari [9] showed that Canva is effective in enhancing creativity and idea organization; however, in the context of writing instruction that requires repeated processes and continuous feedback, Genially's advantage in interactivity has a stronger impact on cognitive learning outcomes. This study is also consistent with the findings of Oktaviane [8], who stated that Genially is capable of improving students' digital literacy and learning motivation through exploratory experiences.

Based on the N-Gain results, the improvement in writing skills in the Genially class falls into the moderate category (0.502), indicating that the platform is effective but still requires combination with face-to-face learning strategies to achieve high improvement. Meanwhile, the Canva class with an N-Gain of 0.314 is on the borderline of the low-moderate category,

suggesting that the use of Canva as the main learning medium for writing skills needs to be accompanied by a more intensive pedagogical approach.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that: (1) there is a significant difference in descriptive text writing skills of students using Genially-based interactive multimedia compared to those using Canva, with a calculated t-value of 3.64 and $p < 0.05$; (2) Genially-based interactive multimedia provides a higher improvement effectiveness (N-Gain = 0.502; medium category) compared to Canva (N-Gain = 0.314; low-medium category); and (3) This study's practical implication is that teachers should evaluate the level of interaction of digital platforms when selecting instructional media, especially for productive skills like writing that require guided processes. The practical implication of this study is that teachers should evaluate the level of interaction of digital platforms when selecting instructional media, especially for productive skills like writing that require guided processes and repeated practice.

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