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The Implementation of Canva Through Poster Creation on Fourth Graders

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Abstract

This community service program introduced Canva, a graphic design platform, to elementary school students as part of the University of Al-Azhar Indonesia's Gerakan Nasional Revolusi Mental, under the theme of "Digital Literacy and Ethics". The program was carried out at Al-Fityan School Tangerang on August 21, 2023. Students, in 4th grade, were trained to create a poster using Canva. They were asked to choose one of their five favorite things: mom, dad, hobby, food, or animal. The results showed that the popular choice was between "hobby" and "animal" while the least popular was "dad". All 28 students produced their own posters and even six of them produced two posters. In this regard, the training of Canva seemed to be effective. There should be a continuation of training using the similar theme to Al-Fityan students for the future program given students' progress and enthusiasm.

Keywords – Canva, Gerakan Nasional Revolusi Mental, Poster Creation, Fourth Graders, Digital Literacy

1. INTRODUCTION

Canva is an online design tool created by Australian entrepreneur, Melanie Perkins, in 2012 (Gehred, 2020). Since its release, it has been a staple within the business and education communities. It is also popular because it can be a creative outlet for users to express themselves freely. Canva's fame can be attributed to two factors. First, a user-friendly interface that simplifies the complexity of graphic design. Second, its accessibility and affordability. While it offers a premium subscription with access to extra content, the core features and experience of Canva remain available in its free plan.

Canva provides a wide range of features that cater for its users' graphic needs. One of its standout features is customizable templates, which simplify the creation of a project by only requiring users to input the necessary

information. Canva has a variety of templates, encompassing presentations, posters, brochures, resumes, documents, infographics, social media, and more. That is why it is a popular application for students in creating posters (Amher, 2023).

Canva also allows users to go beyond pre-designed templates and unleash their full creative potential by making their own unique templates and designs. Its drag-and-drop interface, coupled with alignment guides, ensures elements are correctly centered or aligned with other elements (Klug & Williams, 2016). Therefore, such a feature makes it easier for users to create designs that fit their personal preferences. This flexibility indicates how accessible Canva is to individuals of all backgrounds and skill levels.

Canva can even be used by children as young as ten years old (Filla & Mudinillah, 2022; Sari & Fatonah, 2022). Canva's extensive library and

design elements are fascinating to draw children's attention. Under the guidance of teachers or facilitators, children can perceive Canva as a means of exploring their creativity and developing digital skills. They can learn to create visually stunning presentations, posters for class projects, and attractive templates, with fun.

Integrating Canva into a classroom can be transformative since it allows students to develop their skills for the future. Canva helps enhance critical skills like visual communication and digital literacy. In this regard, students can easily convey complex ideas with clarity and creativity. While creating informative posters, interesting presentations, or attractive infographics, students not only learn the art of visual storytelling but also develop an idea for design. In addition, Canva's collaborative features promote teamwork and problem-solving for students when they are tasked with a group project. The ability to collaborate in real-time, share ideas, and collectively revise their designs not only builds social skills but also prepares them for their future in the digital age. Furthermore, exposure to Canva may open up students' minds to technological innovation. Teaching Canva in the classroom catalyzes producing a generation of designers and digitally literate individuals. This is part of the activities to equip students with skills that are vital in today's technologically advanced world (Hinchcliff & Mehmet, 2023).

In 2023, the University of Al-Azhar Indonesia had an opportunity to teach Canva for elementary school students as a part of its community service program called *Gerakan Nasional Revolusi Mental*, or GNRM for short. This program is dedicated to the development of Indonesia's citizens, particularly its youth (Fitriana, 2022). As stated in the Statutory Mandate No. 2 of 1989, national education is an attempt to enlighten and increase the quality of Indonesian human resources.

GNRM in UAI changes its theme every year. In 2023, the chosen theme was "Digital Literacy and Ethics". This theme aimed at fostering digital literacy as well as a strong sense of ethical behavior. It also attempted to help Indonesia's youth anticipate the changing digital world.

Apart from digital literacy, English lessons were also needed by students of Al-Fityan School Tangerang to help improve their language skills. To support such an activity,

media are needed to express students' understanding of English lessons. In this regard, Canva is chosen as the media because of its freedom and accessibility.

The objective of the 2023 *Gerakan Nasional Revolusi Mental* (GNRM) program was to help elementary school students adapt to digital development. It is critical for the young generation to be equipped with essential knowledge and skills needed to thrive in a world that is becoming increasingly reliant on technology (Nascimbeni & Vosloo, 2019).

This community service program aimed at training Canva to fourth graders through poster creation. There were five facilitators from the English Department, consisting of two lecturers and three college students. There were 28 male students in 4th grade from Class 4B. The teaching took place in a class where each student brought their own devices, such as mobile phones, tablets, and laptop computers.

2. METHOD

Time and Place

The community service program was focused on Class 4B of Al-Fityan School Tangerang. The school is located in *Perumahan Dasana Indah Blok RB No. 17*, at *Jalan Raya Dasana Indah, Bojong Nangka*. There were 28 male students who participated in this activity. The program was scheduled for one day only, on Monday, August 21, 2023. It started from 13:00 to 15:00.

Teaching Process

The *Gerakan Nasional Revolusi Mental* (GNRM) community service program was carried out by two lecturers, Dhuha Hadiyansyah and Ria Herwandar, and three college students, Farhan Alfarizi Iskandar, Raditya Daffa Adrimurlan, and Rasika Tasdyatta Mahendro. All of the college students were from the second semester. The main teacher was Rasika, and the others served as facilitators.

The training of Canva was completed in four stages. First, grouping, which aimed at enhancing student's focus. Second, energizing, which was designed to excite participants and foster an enthusiastic learning environment. Third, an informative presentation, which provided students with clear instructions. Last,

Canva simulation, which allowed students to apply their newly acquired knowledge.

In grouping, 28 students were divided into seven groups to help them focus. It was determined by the student’s attendance list. Each facilitator supervised one or two groups. Grouping proved to be helpful in increasing the students’ cognitive acquisition (Gibson, 2012).

In energizing, students were asked questions related to English vocabulary comprising directions, likes and dislikes, and numbers in International Sign Language. Three students managed to get the questions right, and they were each rewarded with a hand-wrapped gift. Afterwards, they were reorganized into seven groups for the Canva session. This time, students were free to pick their group mates.

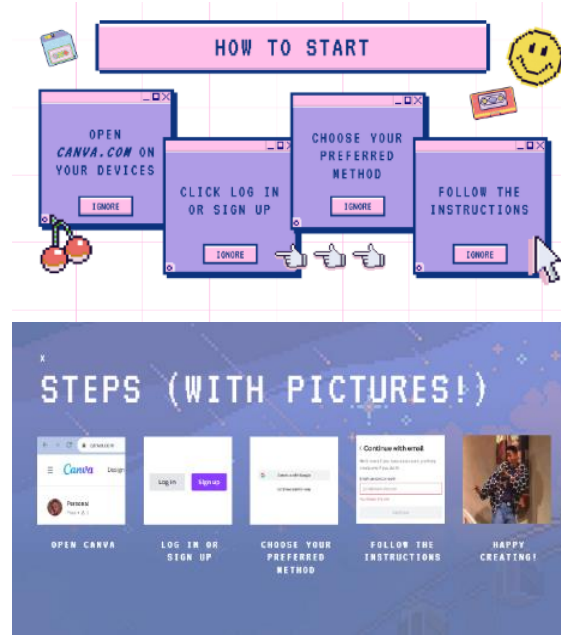


Picture 1. The winners of the energizer quiz

The third step was an informative presentation. The main teacher delivered a set of instructions through a PowerPoint presentation which explained the process of creating a Canva account step-by-step. The instructions covered key elements, such as opening the website or downloading the application and logging in or signing up, depending on the user’s account status. The students had options to choose their preferred method of logging in or signing up, either through Google or another way, and they were then guided through the steps provided by Canva. Each method has a different set of instructions.

Following the account creation, the main teacher explained the concept of poster creation in Canva along with its features, such as elements and texts. The explanation was through a PowerPoint presentation in which every step was meticulously arranged. Starting with clicking the “Create a design” button, followed by “Create new”, and selecting the poster template from the drop-down menu, students could then change the background color of their

posters and add the elements and texts they wanted to use, but only after they picked a theme.



Picture 2. PowerPoint presentation about account creation

The students were presented with five different themes to choose from. All five themes shared a common thread, related to their favorite things. These themes encompassed “mom”, “dad”, “hobby”, “food”, and “animal”. Each student was advised to pick only one theme from the selection. The popular choices were “hobby” (9) and “animal” (9), closely followed by “mom” (5), “food” (3), and “dad” (2).



Picture 3. PowerPoint presentation about poster creation

During Canva simulation, all 28 students demonstrated remarkable tech-savviness as they began poster creation in Canva. It was reflected by the way they operated Canva with ease. They were enthusiastic, too, in their endeavor to personalize their posters. They carefully and meticulously picked out the background colors, elements, and texts of their posters according to their preferences.



Picture 4. The situation in the classroom during the teaching session

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on questionnaires collected from 28 students after the teaching session ended, 27 of students stated that they liked using Canva, while one student stated that he did not. Additionally, when asked if they would use Canva as a means of creating posters and other graphics, 27 students responded positively. The remaining student made a checkbox of his own saying “maybe” when the options provided were only “yes” and “no”.

The students were then asked about their willingness to show off their best poster creations. 26 responded in the affirmative, one student answered in the negative, and the other one just went on to tell the story behind the poster he had created. Of the 26 students who responded positively, 21 elaborated on their intentions to showcase their designs with family, friends, teachers, and even neighbors. The other five students only answered “yes” without going into specifics.

There were 12 students who favored the overall design experience of Canva for its ease of use. 13 students liked adding elements (often referred to as “pictures” by the students) into their posters. One student specifically liked adding text, while the other appreciated the color variety. One student liked the templates despite not being taught about them. Among the students who enjoyed elements, one expressed his preference in a different way. He stated that he liked the part where the soccer player kicked the ball into the goalpost because it resulted in a goal.

Regarding their art preferences, the majority (20 students) favored digital art using Canva. Four students liked both digital and physical arts, while two students preferred physical art. While the remaining two were inconclusive in their answers. Among those who chose digital art, 10 students found it easier to use, five students appreciated its speed, three students liked the features, and two students found it to be more fun. Of the four who favored both, three considered them to be equally enjoyable. One student did not specify the reasons. One of the two who chose physical art stated that he could not draw people in digital art, while the other did not provide an explanation. The two students with inconclusive responses did not specify their preferred method.

The Canva teaching session was a success due to cooperation from students, the main teacher and facilitators. The enthusiasm of students to learn digital literacy also contributed to the success. All 28 students actively engaged in the activity, each producing his own poster. Six of them even went on to create additional posters after completing their first ones. This level of participation and continued interest demonstrated the effectiveness of the GNRM’s community service program and rendered a positive impact on the students.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This community service program related to Canva training for Class 4B of Al-Fityan School Tangerang proved to be a success. The students learned the graphic design platform swiftly and enthusiastically. Within a short span of half an hour, they could understand how the tool worked, and within an hour and a half, all 28 students produced a poster. Their remarkable tech-savviness signified their adaptability in

today's digital age. It also highlighted their readiness to face the futuristic world.

The students' enthusiastic responses and eagerness to use Canva provide invaluable insights as to how Canva can be integrated into a classroom. Not only will the students learn digital literacy early, but they will also be able to harness their creative potential. Canva has the capability to turn today's youth into a new generation of designers poised to meet the challenges of the future with creativity and enthusiasm.

As many as 100% of students, from the survey that the English team held after the teaching, were willing to team up again in the next program. Therefore, it is best for the university to continue the service with a similar theme to them to monitor the improvement of their English skills. It will also be best for the GNRM committee to hold a rehearsal for its facilitators before the teaching commenced to ensure optimum effort from the facilitators and smooth implementation of the program.

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