

## **ENHANCING THE USE OF ADJECTIVES AND COMPARISONS IN WRITING THROUGH HOUSING ADVERTISEMENT IMAGES: AN ACTION RESEARCH**

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**Abstract:** *This action research was conducted to improve the descriptive writing skills of second-semester Information Technology students enrolled in the English course. The course aims to enable students to communicate in English at an intermediate level, both orally and in writing, on various real-life topics such as memories, city life, transportation, food, technology, and celebrations. As part of the course objectives, this study focused on enhancing students' ability to express opinions and make comparisons using adjectives in written form. A total of 30 students participated in the study and completed writing tasks based on apartment and housing advertisement images, which were submitted through the Edlink Sevima platform. The research was carried out in two cycles. Quantitative data showed that 87% of students (26 out of 30) successfully demonstrated the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences using adjectives and comparative forms, while 13% (4 out of 30) still encountered issues with grammar accuracy. The findings suggest that integrating visual prompts and digital platforms in English writing instruction can significantly support student achievement in line with course learning outcomes.*

**Key word:** *action, research, descriptive, writing, adjective.*

## INTRODUCTION

Writing is a key component of English language learning, especially for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at the tertiary level. Among the different types of writing, descriptive writing plays a crucial role in helping students convey detailed information, form opinions, and describe people, places, and things effectively. However, many EFL learners, including second-semester Informatics Engineering students, often struggle with constructing complex descriptive sentences—particularly those involving adjectives and comparisons.

Preliminary observations revealed that most students were only able to produce simple, single-clause sentences such as —the house is big|| or —this apartment is comfortable.|| When asked to make comparisons or write longer descriptions, they found it difficult to expand their ideas into grammatically correct, varied sentences. This limitation suggests a gap in both syntactic development and the ability to use adjectives and comparative forms in context.

Several previous studies have shown that visual media can serve as

effective prompts for enhancing descriptive writing. (Mukramah et al., 2023) found that picture and text prompts help students better organize ideas and improve the structure of their descriptive writing. Similarly, (Ratnawati, 2022) reported that visual prompts increased students' motivation and writing accuracy, especially in using appropriate vocabulary and grammar structures.

Building upon these findings, this action research utilized housing advertisement images as instructional media to help students improve their ability to use adjectives and comparisons in writing. By describing these visual materials, students were encouraged to go beyond single-sentence constructions and develop longer, more varied descriptive texts. Tasks were assigned through the Edlink Sevima platform to facilitate digital learning and writing submission.

This study aims to investigate the extent to which housing advertisement images can support second-semester Informatics Engineering students in producing more complex and accurate descriptive sentences using adjectives

and comparisons. It also seeks to provide practical insights into how visual prompts can be integrated into writing instruction to address learners' specific challenges in grammar and sentence development.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Related Theory**

#### **Descriptive Writing in EFL Context**

Descriptive writing is a type of writing that focuses on providing detailed descriptions of people, places, objects, or events to help readers visualize and understand the subject (Harmer, 2004). For EFL learners, mastering descriptive writing is crucial because it develops their ability to use vocabulary and grammatical structures effectively to convey meaning. (Hyland, 2004) emphasizes that writing in a second language requires not only linguistic knowledge but also an understanding of how to organize ideas coherently and use appropriate language features such as adjectives and comparison.

#### **Use of Adjectives and Comparative Structures**

Adjectives play a vital role in descriptive writing by adding detail and specificity (Hagen & Azar, 2017).

Comparisons using comparative and superlative forms of adjectives help learners express differences and preferences, which enrich their writing by making it more dynamic and informative (Gao et al., 2000). However, many EFL students often struggle to combine adjectives and comparisons into longer, grammatically correct sentences, which limits their descriptive writing proficiency.

### **Visual Prompts in Writing Instruction**

Using visual media such as pictures or advertisement images as prompts has been proven to enhance writing skills in language learning (Ratnawati, 2022). Visual prompts provide contextual clues that help learners generate ideas, organize their thoughts, and produce more coherent and varied sentences (Mukramah et al., 2023). This approach is particularly effective in descriptive writing, where students need to observe and describe detailed features. Visual prompts can reduce cognitive load by providing concrete references that stimulate vocabulary usage and sentence complexity.

### **Digital Platforms in Language**

## Learning

The integration of digital tools like Edlink Sevima facilitates the teaching and learning process by enabling online submission, feedback, and interaction (Chen & Huang, 2024). Using digital platforms supports students' motivation and engagement, while also fostering autonomous learning. These tools can complement instructional strategies such as the use of visual prompts to enhance writing skills effectively.

## Action Research in Language Teaching

Action research is a reflective, cyclical process used by educators to improve their own teaching practices by identifying specific classroom problems, implementing targeted interventions, and analyzing the outcomes (Kemmis et al., 2014). In the context of language teaching, action research empowers teachers to explore methods that address students' unique needs and learning challenges in real time. It promotes professional development through continuous reflection and adjustment based on observed results.

According to (Kemmis et al., 2014), the action research cycle

typically involves four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. In this research, the problem identified was the students' limited ability to construct extended descriptive sentences using adjectives and comparative structures. The intervention involved the use of visual prompts—specifically housing advertisement images—to stimulate their writing. This was followed by the observation of their written output and the reflection on their progress and challenges.

Action research is particularly effective in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts because it allows teachers to adjust their methods based on learners' responses. (Richards & Farrell, 2005) argue that action research supports contextualized language learning, where strategies are developed and refined in direct response to the specific linguistic difficulties encountered by students.

In this study, the action research approach enabled the instructor to observe how visual media and digital submission platforms (like Edlink) could motivate students to move beyond single-sentence

constructions and begin producing longer, more complex descriptive texts. Through this cyclical process, students' progress was monitored, evaluated, and used as the basis for further instructional improvements.

### **Related Previous Studies**

A number of previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of using visual aids and contextualized tasks to improve students' writing skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting. These studies serve as the foundation for the present research, which aims to enhance descriptive writing abilities through housing advertisement images.

(Ratnawati, 2022) conducted a classroom action research study to investigate the use of picture prompts in improving students' descriptive writing. The results showed significant improvement in students' vocabulary use, idea organization, and grammatical accuracy after being exposed to picture-based tasks. Visual stimuli helped students recall relevant language and encouraged them to form longer and more detailed sentences.

Similarly, (Mukramah et al., 2023) examined the impact of

combining picture and text prompts to support descriptive writing. Their findings indicated that students produced more complex and cohesive texts when they had access to visual input, particularly when describing places and objects. The study emphasized that pictures helped reduce students' anxiety and supported their idea development.

In terms of digital tools, (Trisna et al., 2023) explored how Edlink, a local digital learning platform in Indonesia, affected students' writing motivation and engagement. Her findings suggested that online submission platforms facilitated better student participation and enabled teachers to give timely feedback, which contributed to students' improvement in writing structure and accuracy.

These studies support the notion that integrating visual prompts and digital tools in writing instruction, especially within an action research framework, which can significantly improve learners' performance. However, most of the existing research focuses either on picture usage or digital platforms separately. The current study attempts to combine both elements—visual

advertisement images and online writing submission via Edlink—within an action research model to address the specific difficulty students face in constructing comparative and descriptive sentences.

## **METHODOLOGY OF STUDY**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a classroom action research design, which was complemented by quantitative analysis techniques to evaluate the improvement of students' descriptive writing abilities. The research aimed to address a specific instructional issue: second-semester Informatics Engineering students were unable to construct extended descriptive sentences using adjectives and comparative structures. Action research was selected as the framework because it allows practitioners to systematically examine and improve their teaching strategies in a real classroom setting. Although action research is often qualitative in nature, the researcher integrated quantitative methods to objectively assess the impact of the intervention through measurable student performance outcomes.

### **Participants**

The participants in this study were 30 students from second-semester students enrolled in the Informatics Engineering program. These students were taking the —English 2II course, which is designed to develop communicative competence in English, both in oral and written forms, with an emphasis on intermediate-level topics. The participants were selected as a single intact group, and no additional English instruction outside the course was provided. All students had a similar academic background and had previously studied basic grammar, but they demonstrated difficulty in constructing longer written expressions, particularly when using adjectives in comparative contexts.

### **Research Instruments**

Several instruments were developed and utilized in this study to collect and analyze data in a systematic and valid manner:

**Writing Tests (Pre-test and Post-test):** Before the intervention, students were assigned a writing task where they were asked to describe and compare two housing advertisements using adjectives and comparative structures. The same type of task was

administered at the end of the research as a post-test to evaluate their progress.

**Scoring Rubric:** A detailed analytical rubric was developed to assess student writing across four main components: (1) grammatical accuracy; (2) appropriate use of adjectives and comparison structures; (3) variety and complexity of sentence construction; and (4) clarity and relevance of content. Each component was scored on a scale of 1 to 5.

**Observation Checklist:** During the classroom activities, the researcher used an observation sheet to record students' participation, responsiveness, and engagement in descriptive writing exercises.

### Research Procedures

The research was conducted in 8 weeks, involving three main cycles that followed the typical stages of action research: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

In the planning stage, the researcher identified students' main difficulties in using adjectives to make comparisons and in forming extended descriptive sentences. Instructional materials were designed based on housing advertisement images to serve

as visual prompts that could inspire longer and more meaningful writing.

During the action stage, students were introduced to descriptive writing techniques and taught how to use adjectives and comparative forms effectively. The visual prompts (housing advertisements) were presented, and students were guided through a series of writing tasks.

In the reflection stage, the researcher analyzed the collected data and reflected on the effectiveness of the intervention. The results were used to plan for further instructional improvement.

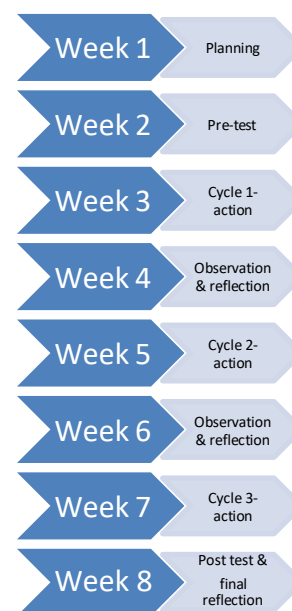


Figure 1. Research procedure

### Data Analysis

The data collected from the pre-test and post- test writing tasks

were analyzed using quantitative methods. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were calculated to summarize students' performance in each rubric category. Furthermore, to determine the significance of the improvement in students' writing skills, a paired-samples t- test was conducted. This statistical test compared the pre-test and post-test scores of the same group of students to evaluate whether the observed differences were statistically significant. The threshold for statistical significance was set at  $p < 0.05$ , meaning that any p-value below this level would indicate a meaningful improvement in students' performance after the intervention. The results of this analysis provided empirical evidence of the effectiveness of using housing advertisements as visual prompts in enhancing descriptive writing in an EFL classroom context.

Table 1. Scoring Rubric for Descriptive Writing

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Needs Improvement (1)
<b>Grammar Accuracy</b>	Grammar is almost flawless; very few or no errors	Some minor grammar errors but do not	Noticeable grammar errors that	Frequent grammar errors that

		impede meaning	slightly affect clarity	interfere with understanding
<b>Use of Adjectives</b>	Uses a variety of appropriate adjectives effectively to describe	Uses adjectives appropriately but limited variety	Uses some adjectives but they are repetitive or less precise	Rarely uses adjectives or uses them incorrectly
<b>Use of Comparison</b>	Effectively uses comparative structures with clear meaning	Uses some comparative forms correctly	Uses limited or inconsistent comparative forms	Does not use or misuses comparative forms
<b>Sentence Complexity &amp; Variety</b>	Uses complex and varied sentence structures including compound and complex sentences	Uses mostly simple sentences with some variation	Mostly simple sentences with little variation	Uses very simple and repetitive sentence structures
<b>Content &amp; Relevance</b>	Content is rich, detailed, and directly related to the prompt	Content is relevant with adequate detail	Content is somewhat relevant but lacks detail	Content is vague, off-topic, or insufficient

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result and Findings

This study involved 30 second-semester Informatics Engineering students who participated in action research focused on improving their



descriptive writing skills, specifically in the use of adjectives and comparative sentences based on housing advertisement images. The students completed a pre-test before the intervention and a post-test after the three cycles of teaching and practice. Here are the post test assignment and some students' work for Post test:



Figure 1. Students' Task for Post-test  
Source: (Richards, n.d.)



Figure 2. Some Students' Post Test Result

## Descriptive Statistics

The table below shows the mean scores and standard deviations of students' writing performances based on the rubric criteria before and after the intervention:

Table 2. Mean Score and SD

Criteria	Pre-Test Mean (SD)	Post-Test Mean (SD)	Improvement (%)
Grammar Accuracy	2.1 (0.5)	3.4 (0.4)	61.9%
Use of Adjectives	2.3 (0.6)	3.6 (0.5)	56.5%
Use of Comparison	1.8 (0.7)	3.2 (0.6)	77.8%
Sentence Complexity & Variety	1.9 (0.6)	3.1 (0.5)	63.2%
Content & Relevance	2.5 (0.5)	3.7 (0.4)	48.0%

The overall average score increased from 2.12 in the pre-test to 3.40 in the post-test, indicating a significant improvement in students' descriptive writing skills after the action research intervention.

## Statistical Analysis

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare students' scores before and after the intervention. The results showed a statistically significant improvement in overall writing scores,  $t(29) = 9.47$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , confirming that the teaching method

using housing advertisement images effectively enhanced students' ability to write descriptive texts with correct adjective use and comparative structures.

Most students showed significant progress in forming more complex sentences that included adjectives and comparisons, moving beyond the single simple sentences commonly seen in their pre-test writings. The use of visual prompts in the form of housing advertisements effectively facilitated students' ability to generate more detailed and varied descriptions.

While grammar accuracy showed substantial improvement, a few students still made occasional errors such as omitting —to be verbs or using redundant expressions. Notably, the improvement in using comparative forms was the most prominent, indicating that the focused practice supported by visual context helped students better understand and apply comparative adjectives. Overall, the intervention proved effective in addressing the initial difficulties faced by second-semester Informatics Engineering students in writing descriptive text.

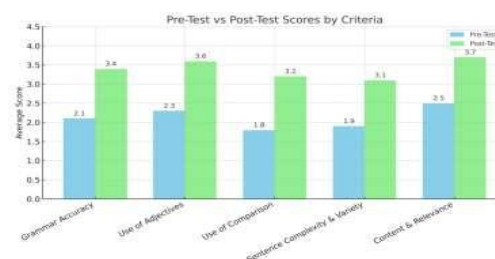


Figure 3. Pre-Test and Post Test Result

The findings of this study demonstrate a notable improvement in students' descriptive writing abilities after the implementation of action research using housing advertisement images. As shown in the comparison between pre-test and post-test scores, students made substantial progress across all five assessed criteria: grammar accuracy, use of adjectives, use of comparison, sentence complexity and variety, and content relevance.

The most significant improvement was observed in the use of comparative forms, where the mean score increased from 1.8 to 3.2. This suggests that students, who initially struggled with constructing comparative sentences, gained a clearer understanding and were able to apply the concept more confidently through visual contextual learning. Similarly, the use of adjectives also improved greatly, with the mean score rising from 2.3 to 3.6, indicating that

the visual prompts helped students select and apply a wider range of descriptive vocabulary appropriately.

Grammar accuracy showed a marked improvement as well, with students demonstrating better sentence structure and fewer errors, although minor issues such as omission of —to bell verbs and redundancy still occurred in some cases. The mean score for grammar increased from 2.1 to 3.4, reflecting overall enhancement in grammatical competence. In terms of sentence complexity and variety, students moved beyond basic sentence structures and began incorporating compound and complex sentences. The post- test mean score of 3.1 compared to the pre- test mean of 1.9 indicates that the task encouraged students to write more elaborated and connected ideas. Furthermore, content and relevance improved from 2.5 to 3.7, suggesting that students were able to stay on topic while expanding their descriptions with relevant details.

Overall, the action research intervention effectively addressed students' initial challenges in writing descriptive texts. The integration of visual media, such as housing advertisements, served as a powerful

stimulus to trigger students' imagination and support their ability to form more complex and meaningful English sentences using appropriate descriptive and comparative language.

### **Discussion**

This study was conducted through three cycles of action research over eight weeks, aiming to improve second-semester Informatics Engineering students' ability to write descriptive texts using adjectives and comparative forms. Each cycle followed the stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection, allowing for continuous refinement of teaching strategies based on student progress.

**Cycle I** focused on identifying the students' initial ability to describe objects using adjectives and comparison. At this stage, most students only managed to write short, simple sentences, often using single-word adjectives without context. Their writing lacked variety, and many were unfamiliar with comparative forms. The activities in this cycle were designed to introduce the concept of descriptive writing and to expose students to sample sentences derived from housing advertisement images.

However, observation showed that students still required more guidance and modeling.

**Cycle II** addressed the gaps identified in Cycle I by emphasizing modeling and peer collaboration. Students were given more targeted exercises, such as comparing two houses or apartments and using visual stimuli to guide sentence expansion.

The teacher facilitated discussions on grammar structures, particularly comparative and superlative forms, and provided feedback through Edlink submissions. During this stage, students began to experiment with more complex sentence structures. Although errors still occurred, especially in grammar (e.g., missing —to be or redundancy), a noticeable shift occurred in their confidence and willingness to write longer texts.

**Cycle III** served as the culmination of the intervention, where students were expected to apply their learning to independently produce descriptive writing based on new visual prompts. At this point, the majority of students were able to describe housing advertisements using a variety of adjectives and accurate

comparative structures. Their sentence variety and complexity improved significantly, as did their ability to stay relevant to the task. Observation notes and post-test results confirmed this progress, showing increased scores across all assessed areas. Furthermore, students' engagement in Edlink submissions demonstrated higher autonomy and awareness of language use.

In conclusion, the action research cycles successfully supported the gradual development of students' descriptive writing skills. The reflective nature of the process allowed instructional methods to evolve in response to students' needs, while the visual media used (housing advertisements) proved to be an effective stimulus for contextual learning.

The integration of Edlink as a submission and feedback platform also played a role in facilitating consistent practice and formative assessment. These findings underscore the effectiveness of action research in classroom-based interventions and highlight the importance of visual context and repeated practice in improving students' writing abilities.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusion**

This action research aimed to enhance the descriptive writing skills of second-semester Informatics Engineering students by integrating housing advertisement images as visual prompts to support the use of adjectives and comparative forms in writing. The study revealed that students initially faced difficulties in constructing extended descriptive sentences, often limiting themselves to simple structures and lacking variety in language use.

Through a structured process involving three cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, students gradually improved their writing performance. Each cycle allowed for targeted interventions and revisions based on observed challenges and student feedback. The use of visual media proved effective in stimulating ideas and enabling students to produce more varied, accurate, and contextually relevant descriptions. Moreover, the use of Edlink as a digital platform for submission and feedback facilitated formative assessment and encouraged

learner autonomy.

Quantitative analysis of the pre-test and post- test scores showed significant improvement across all assessed aspects, including grammar accuracy, use of adjectives, comparative structures, sentence complexity, and content relevance. These results indicate that the intervention successfully addressed students' initial difficulties and supported their development in descriptive writing.

Overall, this research highlights the importance of contextualized learning materials, visual support, and continuous reflective teaching practices in enhancing students' ability to write descriptively in English. It also affirms the value of action research as an effective method for improving teaching and learning outcomes in language education.

### **Suggestion**

Based on the results of this study, it is suggested that future research could explore the use of alternative visual media such as infographics, digital posters, or interactive models to enhance descriptive writing. English lecturers

may also consider integrating writing tasks with speaking activities to reinforce language use in both written and oral forms. Additionally, the role of digital platforms like Edlink, Padlet, or Grammarly can be further examined in providing feedback and promoting learner autonomy. Longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the long-term impact of visual-based instruction on grammar retention and vocabulary development. Moreover, applying this approach across different disciplines—such as business, nursing, or engineering—could offer valuable insights into its effectiveness in ESP contexts. Finally, focusing on specific grammar elements like comparative structures or adjective clauses may provide more targeted outcomes in future writing instruction research.

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