

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SEGMENT – CHAIN ACTIVITIES TO
IMPROVE THE STUDENTS’ ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE
PARAGRAPHS**

THESIS

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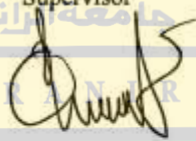
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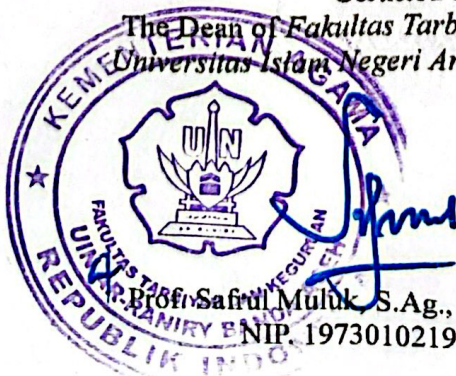
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Adalah benar-benar karya saya, kecuali semua kutipan dan referensi yang disebutkan sumbernya. Apabila kesalahan dan kekeliruan didalamnya, maka akan sepenuhnya menjadi tanggung jawab saya. Demikian surat pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sesungguhnya.

Banda Aceh, 25/04/2025

Saya yang membuat surat pernyataan



Marlinda

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Alhamdulillah rabbi 'alamin, with gratitude and appreciation, I would like to thank Allah *Subhanahu wa Ta'ala* for giving me the opportunity, inspiration, and strength to complete my thesis entitled “The Implementation of Segment Chain Activities to Improve the Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Paragraphs”. Shalawat and greetings to our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) who has become an example for all of us to be the best human beings.

First, on this opportunity, I would like to express thanks and my deepest gratitude to my beloved supervisor Ms. Chamisah, S. Ag., M.Ed., who has given time, advice, guidance, ideas and support with great patience during the process of writing and completing this thesis.

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Banda Aceh, 27 April 2025

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ABSTRACT

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Thesis Working Title : The Implementation of Segment Chain Activities to
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This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of segment chain activities in improving students' ability to write descriptive paragraphs and to identify challenges during the implementation. A quantitative experimental design was used, with a randomly selected experimental group (27 students) and control group (28 students). Due to some absences, only 19 students from each group attended the post-test. Data were collected through post-tests and a questionnaire, which aimed to explore the students' obstacles in writing descriptive paragraph. The results were analyzed using SPSS 26.0 and revealed a significant improvement in the experimental group, with a post-test mean score of 16.89 (SD = 2.76), compared to 8.47 (SD = 3.56) in the control group. The degrees of freedom (df) were 53, and the p-value was less than 0.05 ($0.00 < 0.05$), indicating a significant difference between the groups. The study also identified challenges during implementation, but overall, segment chain activities were effective in enhancing students' writing skills. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted.

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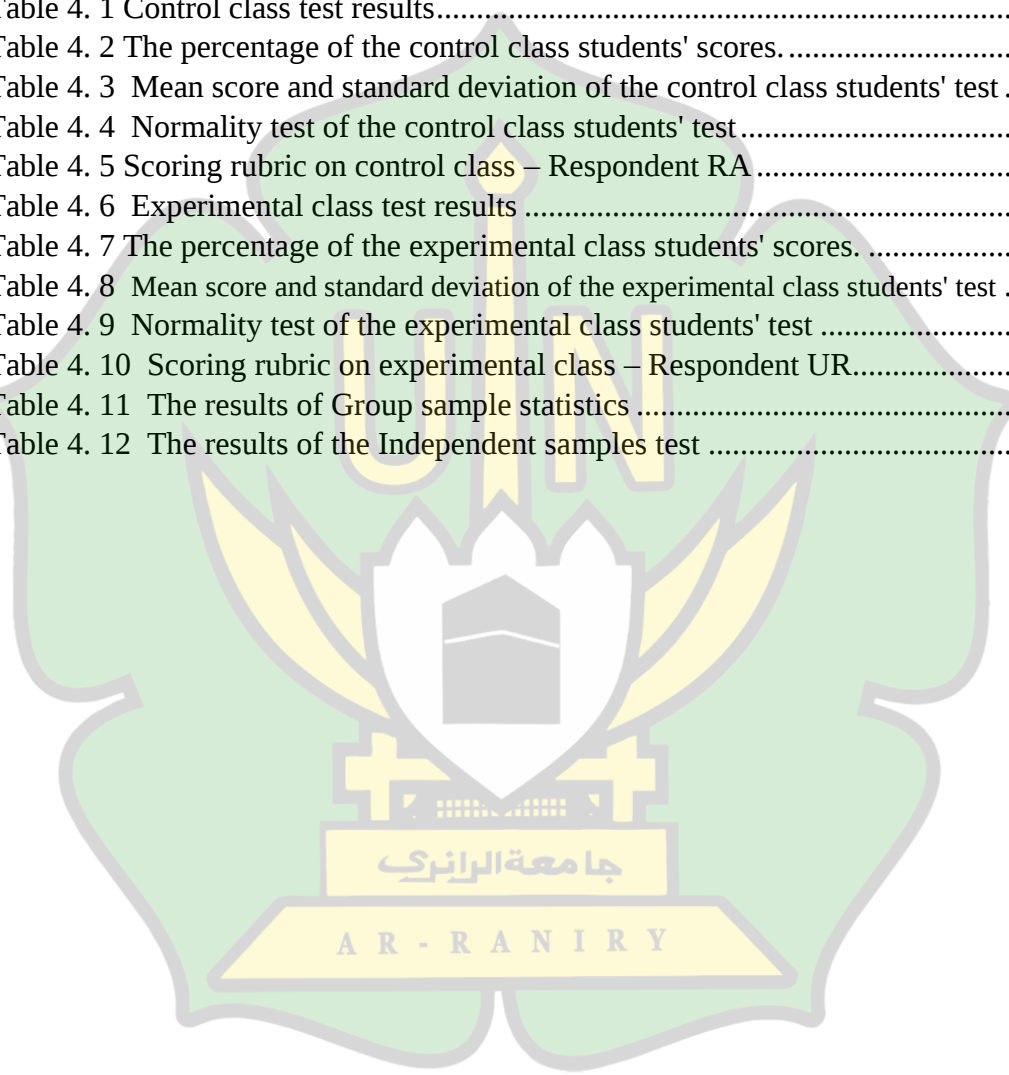
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Writing is an important skill in language learning, especially in the context of English as a second language (ESL). One of the major challenges students face is writing cohesive and well-structured paragraphs, particularly when it comes to descriptive writing. Descriptive paragraphs require students to present information clearly, use rich vocabulary, proper sentence structure, and effective organization. However, many students have difficulties in formulating coherent and organized descriptive texts. This difficulty can hinder their overall academic performance and their communication skills (Harmer, 2015; Richards & Renandya, 2018). Therefore, writing is not just about creating content, but also about interacting with readers, convincing, informing or entertaining them through structured language. Research shows that effective writing improves cognitive abilities, encourages critical thinking, and helps individuals to better organize and express their ideas (Graham & Perin, 2019).

In education, writing remains a fundamental part of the learning process as it aids deeper understanding and reflection. Students are often assessed on their ability to express complex ideas clearly through writing. Studies show that writing, especially academic writing, challenges students to critically engage with

content and develop well-supported arguments (Barclay & Moltzen, 2021). As technology evolves, writing is increasingly influenced by digital tools and platforms, which provide both opportunities and challenges for writers. The rise of tools like Grammarly and writing-based communities like Medium and Substack have made writing more interactive and accessible, while placing greater emphasis on clarity, structure, and online engagement (Williams, 2020).

One of the main reasons why students struggle in writing descriptive paragraphs is the lack of understanding regarding the steps to follow in the writing process. Research shows that many students feel pressured when it comes to writing, often due to assessment anxiety, uncertainty about how to begin, and difficulty in logically structuring arguments (Graham & Perin, 2020). In addition, more traditional teaching approaches often emphasize end results, such as final assignment assessments, which can cause students to feel trapped and lose motivation. In this context, it is important to find more innovative and systematic learning strategies to help students overcome difficulties in writing. To address this issue, a more structured and activity-based approach can be used.

One of the increasingly popular methods in writing learning is segment-chain activities, which is a learning method that teaches students to write gradually through clear and organized steps. Through this method, students can more easily understand how to plan, develop, and complete descriptive paragraphs in a systematic way (Ismail & Anwar, 2019).

In a journal entitled “The effect of Chain Writing Method on Students' Writing Ability of Descriptive Text” it is explained that segment chain is a method used to help students in learning a language, especially writing. With this method, students take one sentence for each sentence and reach the improper part in the process of the sentence, so they need to write the sentence together which has an important role in making it easier for students to write (Rizkia Nabilah, 2023)

Segment-chain activities can help students focus on one part of the writing in each step, so that they can improve each element of the writing gradually. This method allows students to look at each part of the writing separately, from introduction, idea development, to conclusion, before finally combining them into a complete paragraph.

Segment-chain activities, which are one of the important aspects of learning to write , also encourage collaboration among students. In this activity, students are invited to work together in groups, discuss, provide feedback, and help each other improve their writing (Fountas & Pinnell, 2021). Research shows that collaboration in learning can increase students' motivation and engagement and help them develop important social skills. This kind of cooperation not only contributes to the improvement of writing ability, but also creates a more positive and supportive learning environment.

The success of segment-chain activities in improving writing skills can be seen from various studies that support the effectiveness of this method. Graham and Perin (2020) stated that writing method that involve collaboration and feedback from peers can significantly improve the quality of student writing. In addition, Olinghouse and Leaird (2021) found that students who engage in a structured writing process tend to have a better understanding of the essential elements of writing, as well as the ability to produce higher quality writing. This suggests that the segment-chain method not only helps students in producing better writing, but also in understanding the writing process itself.

Regarding the complexity of writing, some activities to improve students' writing are adapted to the learners' abilities. At the initial level, students copy words written by the teacher or match words with pictures. Gradually, they try to build sentences and then develop their ideas into paragraphs. This task is done after they have mastered some Competencies. They can do this in secondary school where they are encouraged to be more effective.

By implementing segment-chain activities, students not only learn about writing techniques, but are also trained to think systematically. This model teaches students to break down seemingly complex tasks into simpler parts, which can increase their confidence in writing (Hyland, 2019). This method is particularly relevant in the modern educational context, where students are

required to not only be able to write, but also to communicate effectively and argue clearly.

Recent research shows that this method not only improves students' writing ability, but also increases their motivation during the writing process (Susanto, 2020). Through a structured writing process, students are better able to manage their thoughts and avoid the frustration that often occurs when writing long and complex paragraphs.

Several studies have examined the use of segment chain activities in writing instruction. Dewi and Jannah (2021) found that this method can improve students' writing quality in terms of structure and organization. They also observed that students who used this technique were better able to identify and correct errors in their writing. Similarly, Zhang (2018) reported that students could write more clearly and in more detail after using segment chain activities in their writing practice.

However, these previous studies have certain limitations. Most of them were conducted in general writing contexts or in different educational settings, and did not focus specifically on descriptive paragraph writing in Indonesian secondary schools. In addition, while the results were promising, the studies primarily emphasized learning outcomes without exploring the actual implementation process of segment chain activities in the classroom.

This study seeks to fill that gap by focusing on how segment chain activities are implemented in the classroom and how they affect students' ability to write descriptive paragraphs. Different from previous studies that focused mainly on general writing improvement, this research specifically addresses the development of descriptive paragraph writing and is conducted at the secondary school level.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the implementation of segment chain activities as a strategy to improve students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs. The results of this research are expected to provide useful insights for English teachers, particularly regarding effective strategies for teaching descriptive writing. Furthermore, the findings may serve as a foundation for improving writing instruction practices in accordance with students' needs in a more practical and contextualized manner.

However, while segment - chain activities offer many benefits, its implementation in the classroom does not always go smoothly. Teachers need to have a good understanding of how to implement this method effectively. Limited learning time and difficulties in adapting the method to different students' learning styles are some of the challenges that are often encountered (Dewi & Jannah, 2021). Therefore, it is very important for educators to practice and look for the right ideas so that this method can be applied optimally.

This research will not only contribute to the understanding of writing learning, but also to more effective educational practices, which can ultimately lead to improving the quality of education at various levels. By applying the right method, we can help students to overcome difficulties in writing and achieve better academic success in the future.

Based on the above background, the author is interested in conducting a study entitled “the implementation of segment-chain activities to improve the students’ ability in writing descriptive paragraphs” (an experimental study on second-year students of SMA Negeri 1 Muara Tiga, Pidie)”, because this method breaks down the writing process into small segments that are easier for students to understand and master, assessing the increase in students’ confidence level in completing writing tasks after implementing segment-chain activities. This method is expected to make students feel easier and motivated to write so as to increase their participation in writing activities. As explained by Harmer, J. (2004), the segment chain method can help students understand and master each element in writing gradually, thus improving their ability to build a complete writing. This study aims to find out whether with the paragraph descriptive passing method, students feel more confident in producing descriptive writing, which in turn can reduce their anxiety or fear of writing tasks.

B. Research Question

From the description above, the researcher formulates the following research questions :

1. How does the application of segment chain activities affect students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs?
2. What are the obstacles faced by students in writing descriptive paragraphs using segment chain activities ?

C. Research Aims

From the formulation of the problem above, the researcher has the following research objectives :

1. To find out how the application of segment chain activity affect students' ability in writing.
2. To find out the obstacles faced by students in writing descriptive paragraphs using segment chain activities.

D. Significance of the study

The implementation of segment-chain activities in improving students' ability to write descriptive paragraphs has significant value for both educational theory and practice. This research is expected to provide insight into how a step-by-step structured activity can improve students' writing skills, especially in terms of

organizing ideas and producing coherent and detailed descriptions. This research has some important significance as follows:

a. Significance of the study in theory

1. Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2010): Cognitive load theory suggests that learners have a limited capacity to process information at one time. By dividing writing tasks into smaller, segmented steps, segment chain activities help reduce cognitive load, allowing students to focus on one element of descriptive writing at a time, such as the depiction of setting, characters, or sensory details. This theoretical framework highlights how organizing tasks in manageable chunks improves cognitive processing and retention, which results in better learning outcomes in writing.
2. Task-based Learning (Ellis, 2019): Task-based learning emphasizes the use of real-world tasks to actively engage learners. The segment chain activity is a form of task-based learning that encourages students to focus on writing by completing each segment of the description systematically. This approach encourages authentic language use and meaningful engagement with writing tasks, which helps students develop their descriptive writing skills through constant practice and application. Task-based learning, as supported by Ellis (2019), shows that dividing tasks into small components enhances learners' ability to master language skills in context.

3. Writing Process Theory (MacArthur et al., 2016): Writing process theory, which includes planning, drafting, and revising, suggests that writing is a recursive and systematic process. Dividing the writing activity into different stages-planning, segmenting, writing, and revising-allows students to engage in the writing process gradually. This approach helps students organize their thoughts and focus on each aspect of their descriptive writing, which improves the overall quality of their writing. The use of segment chain activities reinforces the value of structured planning and revision in writing.
4. Scaffolding and Collaborative Learning (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 2019): Scaffolding is an important aspect of effective learning, especially in complex skills such as writing. Using the segment chain activity, teachers provide scaffolding to students, allowing them to work on specific parts of a descriptive paragraph while receiving feedback. This approach enhances students' ability to refine their skills gradually. The collaborative element in the segment chain activity also encourages interaction and feedback between classmates, which reinforces the importance of social interaction in the learning process.

b. Significance of the study in practice

1. Improved Descriptive Writing Ability: The segment chain activity helps students develop specific components of descriptive writing, such as

organization, sensory details, and vivid descriptions. Research shows that students often struggle to write coherent and detailed descriptive paragraphs. The segment chain activity addresses this by focusing on small parts of the writing task, which can result in more organized and detailed writing (Kellogg, 2017). By practicing these elements gradually, students can improve their ability to compose descriptive paragraphs with more clarity and precision.

2. **Scaffolding and Guided Learning:** This research shows how the segment chain activity can provide scaffolding for students, which is an important instructional strategy. Scaffolding refers to providing support that gradually decreases as students gain independence in their learning (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 2019). In terms of writing, the segment chain activity provides scaffolding by allowing students to focus on certain elements of descriptive writing (such as setting, characters, and sensory details) before combining them into a cohesive paragraph. Over time, students will be able to write independently and more effectively.
3. **Increased Student Engagement and Motivation:** According to recent research, task-based activities, such as segment chain activities, can significantly increase student engagement and motivation (Ellis, 2019). By breaking down the writing process into manageable chunks, students will not feel overwhelmed, which fosters a positive attitude towards writing. This approach also allows for immediate feedback and

interaction, which increases student motivation and engagement (Graham & Perin, 2016). As students see their progress step by step, their confidence and motivation to improve their writing skills will develop.

4. **Development of Critical Thinking and Organizational Skills:** Writing is not only a technical skill, but also an intellectual skill that requires critical thinking and organization (MacArthur et al., 2016). The segment chain activity encourages students to focus on the logic and flow of their writing by organizing ideas into segments that build on each other. This practice helps students learn how to organize their thoughts and present them in a logical and coherent manner. As a result, students can improve the structure of their writing, which is a valuable skill in many academic and professional contexts.
5. **Supports Diverse Learners:** The segment chain activity is particularly valuable in classrooms with diverse learners, including students with different levels of writing ability. This method allows teachers to adjust the complexity of the segments and provide additional support as needed. For students who struggle with writing, a stepwise approach helps them overcome barriers to writing by focusing on one element at a time. Conversely, more advanced students can be given more complex tasks within each segment, ensuring that the activity is flexible and customizable (Graham, 2019).

6. Promotes Collaboration and Peer Feedback: The segment chain activity encourages collaborative learning, as students can work together in small groups or pairs to discuss and refine each segment of their descriptive paragraph. Peer collaboration allows students to give and receive feedback, which is an important component in the writing process (Cho & Schunn, 2017). By engaging in collaborative learning, students not only improve their writing skills but also develop important social and communication skills.

E. Terminologies

The terminology utilized in this study will be explicitly specified as follows :

1. Segment chain activities

Segment Chain Activities is a collaborative learning method that engages students in sequentially structuring a text or story, where each student adds a segment or section of writing. This method is designed to increase student engagement as well as communication and teamwork skills, which are essential components in collaborative learning (Storch, 2005). By sharing ideas and contributing to each piece of writing, students learn to appreciate the perspectives and creativity of their classmates. In addition, this activity not only helps the development of writing skills, but also supports students in building a coherent and interesting narrative together.

Through this approach, students can feel a sense of collective accomplishment that increases their confidence in writing (De Smet, van Keer, & De Craene, 2014), helping to maintain readers' interest. Readers are more likely to understand and be interested in continuing reading because the writing feels fluid and purposeful, without confusion or irrelevant surprises (Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. 2018).

The segment chain approach to writing can also help create a coherent and comprehensible flow. By connecting ideas in structured segments, writers can maintain continuity between sections (Lunsford, A. A., & Tallman, N. 2020). Each segment serves to develop the main idea, explain an argument, or provide supporting evidence, so that readers can follow the writer's train of thought more easily. This coherence is important in different types of writing, from essays to academic research (Williams, J. M. 2021).

The segment chain referred to in this research is a descriptive writing method that divides a paragraph into several sequential segments or parts. Each segment focuses on a specific aspect of the animal being described, such as its name and habitat, physical characteristics, habits, and unique features. This method is designed to help students construct coherent and well-structured paragraphs, and to make it easier for them to develop ideas through clearly guided stages of writing.

2. Ability in Writing

Ability in Writing refers to an individual's capacity to produce effective and well-structured texts. It includes various aspects, such as mastery of grammar, appropriate use of vocabulary, organization of ideas, and the ability to convey messages clearly and compellingly (Graham et al., 2018). Good writing ability involves technical skills as well as creativity, which enables writers to communicate effectively with their audience. It also involves critical thinking, where students can formulate and develop their ideas logically. Students who have good writing skills can construct strong arguments and provide in-depth analysis on various topics (Rasinski et al., 2021). In the context of education, the development of these abilities is crucial to support students' academic performance and prepare them for future challenges. It is important to note that writing skills can be improved through various teaching methods that involve practice and feedback. Effective learning strategies, such as collaborative writing and the use of technology, can accelerate the development of students' writing skills (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2020). By providing the right support, students can improve their expertise in writing, which in turn will boost their confidence and overall academic success.

Writing ability in this study refers to students' skills in writing descriptive paragraphs, especially in organizing ideas, using appropriate vocabulary, and composing coherent sentences to describe animals based on certain aspects such as name, habitat, physical characteristics, and habits. Students are guided to write

sequentially from one segment to the next until a complete and cohesive paragraph is formed.

3. Descriptive Paragraphs

Descriptive paragraphs are paragraphs that aim to describe something in detail so that the reader can imagine or feel it clearly. These paragraphs use language that evokes the reader's senses, such as sight, hearing, feeling, smell, and taste. The main purpose of a descriptive paragraph is to create a vivid and comprehensive picture of the subject being discussed, be it a place, person, object, or event. By using specific and detailed words, the writer can describe the features, atmosphere, or condition of the subject in depth, so that readers can feel it as if they were in that place (Oshima & Hogue, 2017).

In this research, a descriptive paragraph refers to a paragraph where students describe an animal, focusing on specific aspects such as its name, habitat, physical characteristics, habits, and unique features.

Writing a descriptive paragraph usually starts with a topic sentence that introduces the subject to be described. Next, details that support the main idea are organized sequentially to provide a coherent picture. At the end of the paragraph, the writer can provide a conclusion or concluding statement that reinforces the picture that has been presented. Descriptive paragraphs are very useful in various writing contexts, such as in narrative essays, literary works, or travel reports, as they can

make the text more interesting and captivate the reader through the richness of the details presented (Langan, 2019).

