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The Implementation Of Ice Breaking As A Learning Strategy To Improve The Concentration Of Grade V Students At SDN Langaleso

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of ice breaking as a learning strategy to improve the learning concentration of Grade V students at SD Negeri Langaleso. By employing a qualitative approach and a case study methodology, the research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena occurring within the school environment. The research subjects are Grade V students of SDN Langaleso, with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. The findings indicate that the implementation of ice breaking activities in the learning process can enhance student concentration. Ice breaking activities create a relaxed and enjoyable learning atmosphere, enabling students to concentrate better and become more receptive to the learning material. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that ice breaking is an effective strategy for improving learning concentration, particularly among Grade V students at SD Negeri Langaleso. The study recommends applying similar strategies in other classes to comprehensively enhance the quality of learning.

Keywords: *Ice Breaking, Learning Strategy, Student Concentration, Primary Education*

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INTRODUCTION

In the learning process at school, there are several crucial factors that directly impact the success of learning. These factors include students as learning subjects, teachers as facilitators and guides, the community environment that provides social context, the curriculum as a reference framework, and various other supporting elements integrated into the education ecosystem (Zuliani & Uyun, 2023). These elements interact dynamically and determine the quality and effectiveness of the learning process. Learning is a lseries of conscious and planned activities conducted by individuals that result in relatively permanent changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior. These changes do not occur instantly but go through systematic and continuous stages, involving complex cognitive, affective, and psychomotor processes within the learner.

The learning process involves deep interaction between acquired experiences, a facilitating environment, and the individual's cognitive structure, which then leads to significant modifications in thinking, feeling, and behavior. This perspective highlights the importance of integrating external stimuli with the internal processes occurring in the learner's mind to produce meaningful transformations in various dimensions of development (Sutiana, 2021). Learning as a process of behavioral transformation resulting from dynamic interaction between the individual and their surrounding environment. This definition emphasizes behavioral change as the main indicator of successful learning and underlines the significance of the environment in shaping meaningful learning experiences. For students, learning is a complex thinking process that involves the recognition and understanding of the universe, animal diversity, plant varieties, human interactions, and various knowledge materials found in textbooks and other learning resources (Anisa *et al*, 2020). This process allows students to actively construct knowledge and develop the competencies needed to face life's challenges. From the teacher's perspective, learning is understood as a comprehensive pedagogical sequence in which teachers must deeply understand the diverse learning needs of students, delve into their developmental psychology, and design and implement appropriate, adaptive, and innovative learning strategies. The role of the teacher is not only to deliver information but also to design learning experiences, act as a motivator, evaluator, and guide to facilitate each student's optimal development.

To ensure effective learning, students must maintain concentration during the learning process. Concentration is the art of focusing attention and deeply understanding the core of each lesson (Rizki *et al*, 2024). Concentration as the ability to focus on the subject without being distracted by unrelated matters during learning. Student concentration is one of the key factors in effective learning. Without good concentration, students will struggle to absorb information, understand lesson materials, and actively participate in learning activities. Students may lose concentration during lessons due to various factors, including their level of intelligence. However, in practice, many students are found to have difficulty maintaining concentration during class. Factors that can disrupt student concentration include lack of motivation, boredom, external distractions, and lack of engagement in learning activities. One way to improve student concentration is by implementing ice breaking into the lesson (Puspitasari & Marzuki, 2023).

At the elementary school level, children have a relatively shorter attention span compared to adults. They are easily distracted by their surroundings and may become bored if the lesson is too monotonous or does not actively involve them. This can affect the quality of the learning process, where students who are not focused will struggle to understand the lesson and achieve the intended learning goals. To address students' lack of concentration, it is necessary to adopt learning strategies that attract their attention, increase engagement, and create an enjoyable and conducive classroom atmosphere. One effective learning strategy in this context is the implementation of ice breaking. Ice breaking is an activity carried out spontaneously or without special preparation to grab attention and create a more positive atmosphere (Zuhaeri *et al*, 2024). Ice breaking as a method for

breaking the ice or stiffness in a group to create a comfortable, friendly, and open atmosphere. This method is used to initiate interaction between teachers and students as well as among the students themselves (May *et al*, 2023).

Ice breaking is a learning strategy aimed at reducing tension, creating a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere, and fostering better relationships between teachers and students. Through light and interactive activities, ice breaking can help divert students' attention from distractions and enhance their concentration during lessons. Previous studies have discussed the importance of concentration in the learning process and the factors that influence it, such as motivation, the learning environment, and the teacher's pedagogical approach. Furthermore, the concept of ice breaking has often been described as a method to ease group interactions and improve social and emotional comfort. However, empirical studies specifically examining the effectiveness of ice breaking in enhancing students' learning concentration especially at the elementary school level are still limited. Most studies have focused more on its social and emotional functions, while its direct impact on learning concentration has not been extensively explored.

Additionally, there are very few studies that explicitly link ice breaking strategies with the learning dynamics in Grade V classrooms, which have unique cognitive and psychological development characteristics. At this stage, students are more prone to losing focus due to shorter attention spans and the need for engaging learning stimuli. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research that specifically examines how the application of ice breaking as a learning strategy can improve student concentration in the context of Grade V at SDN Langaleso. Based on the dynamics in the learning process, many factors influence the effectiveness and learning outcomes of students from the role of the teacher and learning environment to the characteristics of the students themselves. One of the main challenges in education, especially at the elementary level, is maintaining students' concentration throughout learning activities. Poor concentration can hinder students' ability to understand materials, reduce active participation, and ultimately impact learning outcomes. To address this, effective learning strategies are needed to stimulate interest, create a fun atmosphere, and foster positive interaction between teachers and students. One approach considered effective in this regard is the use of ice breaking. Ice breaking activities not only function to break the ice but also play an important role in capturing students' attention and enhancing their focus during lessons. Hence, this study focuses on "**The Implementation of Ice Breaking as a Learning Strategy to Improve the Concentration of Grade V Students at SDN Langaleso**."

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology, focusing on descriptive data in the form of words and images rather than numerical data (Grange Lian, 2022). The primary aim of this approach is to describe and analyze the significance of implementing ice breaking as a learning strategy to enhance the concentration of Grade V students at SD Negeri Langaleso, located in Dolo Subdistrict. Qualitative research emphasizes an in-depth

understanding of social phenomena through the analysis of participants' language, perceptions, and experiences, rather than through statistical analysis. The data collected are typically in the form of field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and direct observations. These are interpreted to understand the meaning behind behaviors and responses from the perspective of the research subjects.

Qualitative research produces descriptive data derived from observed behavior and verbal communication, which helps create a comprehensive picture of a phenomenon. This method enables researchers to explore the lived experiences of participants in their natural context (May *et al*, 2023). Qualitative research seeks to understand the social and cultural contexts in which specific phenomena occur, giving special attention to the complexity of human interaction and environmental influence. It follows an inductive analysis model in which patterns, themes, and theories emerge from the data collected in the field rather than being tested against pre-existing hypotheses (Pahleviannur *et al*, 2022).

The research was conducted to analyze how the application of ice breaking activities can serve as an effective learning strategy to increase student concentration during lessons. Specifically, this study sought to evaluate how such activities help create a more conducive learning atmosphere and improve focus among students throughout the instructional process. Through close observation of various ice breaking techniques employed by the teacher, the study aimed to identify the most effective methods in capturing students' attention and maintaining their engagement in the classroom setting. Grade V students at SD Negeri Langaleso were selected as research subjects due to their transitional cognitive development stage and the increasingly complex academic materials they face at this level. These factors make concentration a crucial aspect of their academic success.

To ensure data accuracy and validity, this study employed three main data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were systematically conducted using specially designed observation sheets that tracked changes in student concentration levels. The researcher directly monitored student behavior before, during, and after the application of ice breaking activities. Indicators of concentration included active participation in class, response to teacher questions, timely task completion, group discussion involvement, and body language signaling attention. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format, allowing for both guided and flexible questioning. Teachers were interviewed regarding the types of ice breaking activities commonly used, the challenges encountered, and their perceptions of effectiveness. A purposive sample of students was also interviewed to gather their perspectives on how these activities influenced their focus and motivation to learn. Documentation complemented the other two methods by collecting lesson plans that included ice breaking elements, photos of classroom activities, teacher reflection notes, students' work before and after implementation, and video recordings of sessions for later

analysis. This documentation served as a cross-validation tool for findings derived from observation and interviews (Polynskaya & Kulikova, 2022).

Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which involves a continuous and interactive process (Anggeriani & Ain, 2024). The first step, data reduction, involved selecting, organizing, and simplifying the raw data to identify relevant themes. This was followed by data display, in which information was arranged in narrative form and visual aids like charts and matrices to clarify patterns and relationships. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification allowed the researcher to formulate tentative insights early and adjust them as more evidence emerged. Triangulation was applied by comparing data across methods and sources, strengthening the reliability of the findings (Suniyati *et al*, 2022). Through this approach, the study revealed how the thoughtful implementation of ice breaking strategies can meaningfully support student concentration, contributing to a more engaging and effective learning environment in the Grade V classroom of SD Negeri Langaleso.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

Based on in-depth observations conducted in the Grade V classroom of SD Negeri Langaleso, it was found that the learning pattern is still largely dominated by activities such as note-taking or summarizing the material and listening to the teacher's explanation. The learning process tends to follow a conventional flow in which the teacher serves as the main source of information and students act as passive recipients. A high dependence on textbooks as the sole learning resource creates a classroom atmosphere that is less dynamic and interactive. Students show signs of boredom and a decline in interest when the teacher does not extend the learning material beyond what is presented in the book. Further observations revealed that this rigid and monotonous learning process significantly affects student engagement in classroom activities. The lack of variety in teaching methods and strategies causes students to remain passive throughout the lessons. Indicators of declining concentration are clearly seen in behaviors such as repeated yawning, staring blankly out the window, doodling aimlessly in notebooks, or whispering to seatmates about topics unrelated to the lesson.

A particularly concerning phenomenon is the emergence of avoidance behavior among some students, marked by an increased frequency of requests to go to the restroom during class time. Records from the observation period showed that, on average, 5 to 7 students requested to leave the classroom during a single 2x35 minute lesson, with an absence duration ranging from 7 to 10 minutes. Informal interviews with several students revealed that these requests were often used as a strategy to briefly escape a boring and stressful learning environment, rather than due to genuine biological needs.

Such a classroom condition is clearly not conducive to achieving optimal learning objectives and requires strategic intervention to revitalize class dynamics and enhance student engagement. During the learning process, students were generally only able to

maintain optimal concentration for about 15–20 minutes. After surpassing this time threshold, their concentration levels declined significantly, making the learning process less effective and the classroom atmosphere less conducive. This directly impacts students' ability to absorb and comprehend the material delivered by the teacher (Deswanti *et al*, 2020). This decline in concentration is a natural occurrence in the dynamics of classroom teaching and learning. While students are expected to focus intensively during lessons, biologically and psychologically, there is a limit to how long high levels of concentration can be maintained. After roughly twenty minutes, students' mental focus begins to drift, and the quality of attention diminishes.

This decline is closely linked to the limitations of human cognitive functioning, particularly the constraints of working memory, which can lead to cognitive fatigue when continuously processing information over extended periods. Mental exhaustion also plays a role in reducing students' ability to stay focused. To address this challenge, educators need to design learning strategies that take into account the optimal concentration span of students. Implementing varied teaching methods, providing strategic breaks, and incorporating active learning techniques can help sustain student engagement and minimize the natural decline in concentration. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to create a more enjoyable learning atmosphere that helps students regain their focus. Ice breaking activities, in this context, serve the purpose of lightening the classroom mood and boosting students' concentration, enabling them to re-engage with the learning material more effectively.

DISCUSSION

The effective timing for implementing ice breaking activities in a learning context involves several strategic patterns. At the beginning of a lesson, ice breaking is ideally conducted for 5 to 15 minutes to help students build comfort, develop rapport, and get to know one another. This implementation acts as a bridge for interaction, opening communication between students and between students and teachers, thereby establishing a more conducive learning atmosphere from the outset.

Following break times, using ice breaking for 5 to 10 minutes provides significant benefits in helping students recover their energy and refresh their mental focus. These activities serve as transitions that prepare students psychologically to re-engage with the lesson content at an optimal level of receptivity. During the lesson itself, short ice breaking activities lasting 3 to 5 minutes function to reduce cognitive fatigue and maintain students' concentration. This positive interruption gives the brain a momentary break from intensive information processing, thus preventing mental exhaustion and sustaining the ability to absorb learning material. In group discussions, conducting ice breaking activities for 5 to 10 minutes plays a strategic role in creating a more open and collaborative environment. These activities break the stiffness of interaction, reduce communication barriers, and foster more productive group dynamics, enabling smoother and more effective exchanges of ideas and thoughts. Well-planned implementation of ice breaking at each stage of the learning

process can serve as a pedagogical tool to increase student engagement, preserve concentration, and optimize knowledge transfer throughout the lesson.

A wide variety of ice breaking formats can be used to create a more vibrant and enjoyable learning environment. Group singing, for instance, is an effective form of ice breaking. Songs that are energetic and involve simple movements can elevate student enthusiasm while simultaneously easing mental tension. When aligned with the lesson theme, singing not only refreshes the atmosphere but also reinforces conceptual understanding. Chanting group slogans or cheers is another form of ice breaking that builds team identity and cohesion. Through the creation and presentation of unique chants, students experience joy and develop a sense of belonging to their group. This activity encourages creative collaboration and enhances students' confidence in speaking before their peers.

Patterned clapping, such as motivational or thematic claps, serves as a physical stimulus that reactivates students' mental alertness. These rhythmic gestures combine movement coordination with concentration, effectively relieving monotony while training students' focus. Games that challenge and train students' attention such as word guessing, verbal puzzles, memory games, or simple problem solving challenges offer a more comprehensive form of ice breaking. These activities bring elements of fun while stimulating cognitive functions. Through well-designed games, students develop critical thinking, memory retention, and enhanced focus, all of which support the next phases of the learning process.

A multi-sensory approach to ice breaking accommodates various student learning styles, creating a more inclusive experience and a responsive educational environment. When implemented with the right variation, ice breaking becomes an integral part of modern pedagogy that addresses cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of learning. Ice breaking has a significant impact on students' socio emotional development, enhancing their intrinsic motivation to learn. It acts as a catalyst to reduce social awkwardness and encourage active participation. These interactive moments foster a sense of psychological comfort and connection with the learning environment, both with peers and teachers. In such a classroom atmosphere, students become more open and receptive to the lesson material. They demonstrate higher motivation levels when the classroom environment is designed to be relaxed and student-friendly. This positively influences not only cognitive aspects but also the formation of strong interpersonal relationships, fostering a sense of togetherness and solidarity within the classroom community. These positive social dynamics contribute greatly to the long-term improvement of students' concentration.

Ice breaking has the capacity to transform learning into a more meaningful and effective experience. In this context, meaningful refers to an optimal and enjoyable learning environment that significantly enhances students' psychological comfort during lessons. This comfort is expected to reinforce mental focus and concentration, which in turn correlates positively with measurable academic achievement. As a pedagogical instrument, ice breaking helps ease tension that frequently arises in the learning dynamic, enabling students to sustain and even enhance their concentration. There is a proportional

relationship between the level of concentration and the quality of learning outcomes such as the higher the concentration and the more optimal the results. Therefore, well planned ice breaking should be considered an essential component of a comprehensive teaching strategy aimed at maintaining or restoring student focus and mitigating boredom during learning.

By addressing both cognitive and affective dimensions, appropriate ice breaking activities serve as a pedagogical intervention that not only improves academic performance but also supports students' psychological well-being and holistic social development. To ensure comprehensive student understanding of lesson content, teachers must maintain and sustain student concentration throughout the learning session. Concentration is a crucial factor that determines the quality of information absorption and knowledge construction. As professional educators, we have the responsibility to continuously develop and implement innovative teaching methods that preserve cognitive focus, with ice breaking being one of the most effective strategies when integrated into the learning process.

This approach is supported by scientific evidence which reveals that ice breaking significantly boosts students' enthusiasm for learning. This enthusiasm fosters optimal psychological conditions that enable students to absorb, process, and internalize information effectively (Zakiyyah *et al*, 2022). The rise in enthusiasm directly correlates with students' active engagement in the learning process. Beyond increasing enthusiasm, ice breaking also functions as a powerful pedagogical tool that fosters a more comfortable, dynamic, and conducive classroom environment. The positive atmosphere it creates helps reduce psychological pressure, facilitating natural restoration of concentration. With sustained focus, the effectiveness of knowledge transfer and skill development is greatly enhanced.

Strategic use of ice breaking also reduces cognitive fatigue, a common issue in long learning sessions. These stimulating yet refreshing activities offer cognitive breaks that allow students to recharge their attention span, re engaging in lessons with higher focus and more sustained concentration. By combining an understanding of students' cognitive dynamics with the thoughtful implementation of ice breaking, educators can create a learning environment that enhances academic performance while supporting students' holistic psychological well-being. The implementation of ice breaking activities among Grade V students at SD Negeri Langaleso has demonstrated significant, multidimensional impact across various learning aspects including improved concentration, heightened motivation, increased active participation, and deeper student engagement throughout the instructional process. These interactive strategies have positively transformed the classroom learning ecosystem.

The creation of a fun and stimulating learning environment through ice breaking has proven, empirically, to help students maintain cognitive focus during learning activities. This mental state allows students to receive, process, and internalize information more efficiently. A more dynamic learning experience supports a more effective knowledge transfer process. These findings align with the research which found that integrating ice

breaking not only refreshes the classroom atmosphere but also boosts student participation (Fajarudin et *al*, 2021). By creating a more fluid, interactive, and supportive environment, psychological barriers that hinder active involvement are minimized, enabling more collaborative and participatory learning dynamics.

The cumulative effect of improved concentration, strengthened motivation, and intensified participation contributes substantially to achieving curriculum goals. Observation data shows that classes using structured and consistent ice breaking activities achieve better academic performance compared to conventional learning settings without such interventions. The pedagogical implications of these findings highlight the importance of integrating ice breaking as a regular component of lesson planning especially at the elementary level, where students' attention spans are relatively limited. With the right approach, ice breaking can be a transformative tool that not only enriches student learning experiences but also increases the overall effectiveness of classroom instruction.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion regarding the implementation of Ice Breaking as an innovative learning strategy to improve the concentration of Grade V students at SD Negeri Langaleso, Dolo Subdistrict, it was discovered that prior to the intervention, the learning conditions showed serious issues. Students experienced acute boredom and a significant decline in learning motivation, which ultimately resulted in a classroom environment that was not conducive to effective knowledge transfer. This boredom led to various negative behaviors, including diminished responses to learning stimuli and low levels of active participation in class discussions. This situation reflected a negative cycle within the learning ecosystem, in which student disengagement contributed to the development of an unsupportive classroom atmosphere, further deteriorating the learning environment. The impact was evident in the overall decline in learning effectiveness, including the absorption of material, achievement of learning objectives, and the quality of educational interactions. Recognizing this, teachers at SD Negeri Langaleso took strategic action by implementing Ice Breaking as a form of pedagogical intervention.

The decision to use Ice Breaking was based on a deep understanding of the psychological characteristics and cognitive developmental stages of elementary school students. The results showed that the structured integration of Ice Breaking into the learning process had a positive impact on classroom dynamics. These changes were reflected in increased student engagement, restored learning enthusiasm, and the creation of a more emotionally and academically conducive and interactive learning environment. These findings were further supported by in-depth interviews with three teachers and two Grade V students. They shared testimonies regarding the transformation that occurred after the implementation of Ice Breaking. Students reported increased motivation, improved concentration, and greater enjoyment during lessons. The classroom atmosphere also became more relaxed and enjoyable, reducing psychological pressure and allowing students to absorb information more effectively. From the teachers' perspective, this strategy also fostered more dynamic educational interactions not only between teachers

and students but also among the students themselves. The study's findings suggest that Ice Breaking can serve as an effective pedagogical approach to enhance student concentration and participation, particularly at the elementary level. Therefore, Ice Breaking deserves to be considered as part of an active learning strategy in other primary schools to foster a more enjoyable and productive learning environment.

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