

The 4th Undergraduate Conference on Applied Linguistics, Linguistics, and Literature (ALLURE)

Vol. 4(1), March, 2026

Online ISSN: 2807-8926

THE EFFECT OF ICE BREAKING AS A METHOD TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS IN LEARNING ENGLISH AT A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

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Abstract

This study aims to assess the effectiveness of the icebreaking method in enhancing student motivation for learning English. The objective of the study was to determine whether the ice-breaking technique significantly impacts the teaching of English. This research employed a mixed-method design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data. The data were collected from a sample of 16 students. The instruments utilized in this research were an observation sheet and a questionnaire. The observation data analysis was executed in four distinct phases: (1) data reduction, (2) coding, (3) data display, and (4) conclusion. The questionnaire data were analysed utilising a 4-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=agree; 4=strongly agree) to evaluate students' perceptions of ice-breaking activities in the English classroom. A 4-point Likert scale was examined through frequency and percentage computations. The study's results indicated that (1) ice-breaking activities are essential and highly beneficial for implementation in English classes; (2) the incorporation of ice-breaking fosters a positive impact on establishing an interactive learning environment; (3) students' feedback regarding ice-breaking activities is overwhelmingly positive. It can be concluded that the ice-breaking method significantly affects the learning of English; (4) The statements received positive responses from 5 percent of students with a high criterion, and from 95 percent of students with a very high criterion.

Keywords: Ice-breaking, Motivation, Learning English

A. Introduction

Instructing junior high school students in English has become a formidable challenge. Currently, it is challenging to locate students who exhibit

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motivation to acquire proficiency in English. Many of them become easily disinterested, particularly if the instructor consistently employs the same methodology without introducing invigorating activities like icebreakers. Icebreaking is an activity employed to alleviate tension within groups and foster a cheerful, festive ambiance during training sessions, seminars, or analogous events. This activity can be tailored to foster a disciple-like state, thereby facilitating an optimal learning environment. The primary advantage of ice-breaking is the establishment of a favorable environment, which is crucial for the success of any endeavor. The absence of excitement hinders the brain's ability to maintain prolonged concentration, thereby complicating focus. Ice-breaking activities can take various forms, including games, simulations, and participatory exercise.

Based on the observation in MTS Nurul Islam Pati, the researcher identified several issues in class VII, notably a deficiency in student enthusiasm for studying. This is apparent from students' conduct during English classes. While some students remain attentive in class, others may doze off or engage in casual conversation with a peer. To mitigate issues, English teachers must cultivate an atmosphere of euphoria in the classroom through creativity, innovation, and enjoyment. The educator must exhibit creativity and innovation in selecting materials, as contemporary media in teaching and learning can foster new interests and motivations, thereby stimulating students' psychology.

The researcher contends that employing a technique was essential to inspire student motivation in learning English. The ice-breaking technique was selected to address the issue, as it is an effective method for enhancing student motivation.

B. Literature Review

The Definition of Motivation

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Penny, (1996) asserts that the term "motivation" is well-known in our society; however, the true meaning of the word is far more complex than its mere pronunciation suggests. The concept of "motivation" is inherently complex and challenging to articulate. However, it becomes more accessible and practical when we consider the 'motivated' learner—an individual who is not only willing but also enthusiastic about dedicating effort to learning endeavors and advancing their knowledge. The motivation of learners significantly enhances the experience of teaching and learning, rendering it not only more enjoyable but also more effective, underscoring the relevance of this subject for educators.

Schunk et al., (2014) assert that the term motivation originates from the Latin verb 'movere' (to move), referring to the process that initiates and sustains goal-directed activity. The teacher should be aware that students with high motivation are likely to study diligently and achieve success in their learning endeavors.

According to Syahhila, (2023), motivation is a conscious effort to shape, guide, and maintain an individual's behavior, compelling them to take action towards specific goals or objectives.

Kinds of Motivation

According to Harmer (2007), motivation was classified into two categories: intrinsic and extrinsic. (1) Intrinsic motivation refers to a motive that is activated or whose function does not require external stimulation. Each individual possesses an innate inclination to take action. (2) The term "extrinsic motivation" describes the active and practical drive brought on by outside stimuli.

Ice-breaking

According to Hutasoit & Tambunan, (2018), the term "ice-breaking" originates from the phrase "break the ice," which in turn originates from specialized vessels known as "icebreakers" that are designed to break up ice in arctic

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regions. In the same way that these ships make it simpler for other ships to travel, an icebreaker helps to clear the way for a successful exchange of ideas by making the participants feel more at ease and actively engaging them in conversation. In addition to being an excellent way to kick off a meeting, icebreakers can also be utilized to alleviate stress and provide much-needed breaks during meetings that are particularly intense. Icebreaking relaxes participants, making them more open to listening and contributing information. Nida (2017), as cited in Tamamala et al.(2020), asserts that the term "ice breaker" derives from two foreign words: "ice breaking," which denotes a rigid nature, and "breaker," which signifies resolution. The literal interpretation of 'ice-breaking' was to solve problems. Ice-breaking can be understood as an endeavor to dissolve a rigid atmosphere in order to foster comfort and relaxation.

Types of Ice Breaking

According to Rahmayanti et al. (2019), Forbes & Greene distinguish between three categories of icebreakers: openers, energizers, feedback, and disclosure. (1) Openings are a type of icebreaker that can be used to initiate a session or discussion, or to introduce a new topic. Our objective is to motivate and challenge students in order to warm them up. (2) a stimulant. When students are experiencing anxiety or a lack of enthusiasm for their studies, this icebreaker is implemented. (3) Feedback and disclosure are implemented to illustrate a communication variable. It may be implemented at the conclusion of the lesson to assess the students' understanding of the information they have acquired.

C.Method

The researchers utilized a mixed-methods approach. The mixed-method approach combines qualitative and quantitative research to attain a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. Creswell, (2014) defines

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mixed research as a methodological approach that amalgamates quantitative and qualitative components.

This methodology comprises two separate phases in the investigative procedure. The preliminary stage involves the gathering and analysis of quantitative data. Using a survey study design, data is gathered and analyzed quantitatively. The subsequent phase entails gathering and evaluating qualitative data via observations, which will subsequently guide further qualitative data analysis.

The Subject of the Research

1. Population

Sugiyono (2014) defines a population as a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects with specific qualities and characteristics, which writers use to study and then draw conclusions. This is used by writers in order to study and then draw conclusions. For the purpose of this investigation, the population consisted of sixteen students who were enrolled in the seventh grade at MTS Nurul Islam Pati.

2. Sample

According to Arikunto (2017:173), the definition of a sample suggests that it is a portion of the total quantity and characteristics that make up a population that has been chosen at random. A study sample is considered the entire population if the number of subjects includes fewer than one hundred individuals, as stated by Arikunto (2017:173). A study sample is considered the entire population. Five to fifteen percent or fifteen to twenty-five percent of more than 100 subjects can be taken. In order to accomplish the objectives of this study, the sample was comprised of sixteen individuals who agreed to participate in the survey. This research made use of a technique that is commonly referred to as saturation sampling. As a result of the relatively small size of the population, this approach involves treating every single person in it as if they were a sample. This allows researchers to collect more complete and population-representative data.

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Instrument of the Research

Cohen et al. (2007) define research instruments as tools utilised for measuring and collecting data, facilitating the processing of information in research. The purpose of this research instrument was to gather data concerning the execution of the study. This research will use an observation sheet and a questionnaire as instruments.

1. Observation Sheet

During the process of teaching and learning, this observation sheet was utilised in order to retrieve the information that was required. A data collection process has been carried out by the researcher through the observation of the teaching and learning process in the conditions and situations of the classroom. The researcher has observed the teaching, class conditions, and student attitudes in this activity. The researcher has provided a detailed explanation of the observation material that will be conducted, and the results of these observations will be documented in the form of field notes.

2. Questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire is to serve as a research instrument for assessing the various factors that influence the level of interest and effectiveness that students have in the learning process. Each question on the questionnaire can be answered with one of the following four possible responses: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), or strongly disagree! For each of the five choices, the response scores range from four to one. Specifically, the responses for affirmative assertions are as follows: (SA) = 4, (A) = 3, (D) = 2, and (SD) = 1. (SA) = 1, (A) = 2, (D) = 3, and (SD) = 4 are the responses concerning the negative claims; on the other hand, The scoring of responses from respondents is implemented with the intention of simplifying the processing of data.

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Table 1. Likert Scale

Response	Score
Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

Method and Data Collection

The data was gathered through observation and a questionnaire. The protocols used for data collection are outlined below:

1. Observation Sheet

The methodology for gathering observational data is outlined as follows:

- a. During the observations, the researcher employs an observation sheet to systematically gather data.
- b. Observations are conducted during the teaching and learning process, with data collected for all students or specific groups based on research requirements.
- c. The researcher documents the outcomes of direct observations on the observation sheet throughout the session.

2. Questionnaire

There were twenty questions on the questionnaire for the students. The survey comprised Likert-scale-based questions with optional responses. Strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree are the four optional

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responses that the researcher used. Students placed a checkmark (☐) in the table corresponding to the response they selected.

Method and Data Analysis

A method of analysis that is utilised in the process of determining the outcome of research is known as the data analysis technique. An analysis of the data was performed by the researcher using the following formula:

1. The results of the students' motivation were determined by the researcher through the use of scoring data from the questionnaire that the students filled out. The Likert scale parameter is utilised in the process of carrying out the scoring calculation itself. The researcher then used the following formula to calculate the scoring report for the questionnaire:

$$\text{Score percentage} = \frac{\Sigma \text{score}}{\text{score maximum}} \times 100$$

2. The data from the observation sheet is analysed by using the Miles and Huberman (2014) concept; they are: data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

D. Finding and Discussion

1. The Result of the Observations

The observation data collection process consisted of 3 meetings. The first meeting was held on October 17, 2024, the second meeting on October 24, 2024, and the last meeting on October 31, 2024. During the observations, the researcher wrote down all the developments in the activities of students in class VII during the learning process in field notes. Then, the results of these observations are described in the following table:

Table 1. Result of Observations

meetings	indicators	Findings
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1	Students' enthusiasm	Out of 16 students, 12 students enthusiastically participated in the game, while 4 students were still passive.
	Change in students' attitudes	Before the ice breaker, students tend to be unfocused and less responsive to the teacher's explanation. After the ice breaker, the classroom atmosphere became more lively and the students were more eager to learn.
	Students' ability to complete task	Most students completed the task well, but there were 4 students who needed additional guidance.
2	Students' enthusiasm	A total of 14 students actively participated in ice breaking, and 3 students were still shy about trying
	Change in students' attitudes	Students paid more attention during the lesson. Most of the students laughed and felt entertained during ice breaking, so the classroom atmosphere became more conducive.
	Students' ability to complete task	When given a task, the number of students who completed the task without guidance increased from 13 to 15 students.
3	Students' enthusiasm	All students were actively involved in this game.

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Change in students' attitudes	Before the ice breaker, the students looked tired and unfocused. However, after this activity, students were more excited about learning new material.
Students' ability to complete task	All students were able to complete the task with good result.

It is evident from the above table that icebreaking techniques progressively raised students' motivation at each session. From the first to the third meeting, students' activity, excitement, and capacity to finish assignments improved. An enjoyable and supportive learning environment was successfully created by the engaging and varied icebreaker.

2. Result of Questionnaire

To collect information regarding the responses of the students, the researcher made use of a questionnaire. For the purpose of evaluating the students' points of view, this questionnaire is a Likert scale. On the Likert scale, the option is rated on a scale that ranges from strongly agreeing to strongly disagreeing to either agreeing or strongly disagreeing. By placing a check mark (☐) in the table, students will indicate their preferred response option. The following table provides a description of the performance of the students in relation to the response:

Table 2. Percentage Students' Answer

No	statements	Score	%
1	I feel interested when the teacher explains the English lesson material.	52	81
2	The material presented in English lessons always catches my attention.	57	89

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3	Videos, pictures or visual aids used in English lessons make me more focussed on learning	54	84
4	I feel that time passed quickly in English lessons because they are fun.	55	86
5	I am confident when doing English assignments or exams.	52	81
6	I feel able to understand the English material well.	52	81
7	I am confident when speaking in English in front of friends or teachers.	55	86
8	I feel that my English skills are improving over time.	54	84
9	I feel satisfied with my grades in English lessons.	51	80
10	I feel happy after completing tasks in English lessons.	56	88
11	I feel proud of my achievements in learning English.	59	92
12	The ice breaking session conducted by the teacher makes me more interested in English lessons.	58	91
13	I feel more focused after the ice breaking session before starting to learn English.	58	91
14	Ice breaking activities make the classroom atmosphere more fun so that I pay more attention to the lesson.	56	88
15	I feel that ice breaking makes learning English easier to understand.	56	88
16	The ice breaking activity helps me feel more prepared and confident for English lessons.	55	86

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17	I feel more capable of completing English assignments after ice breaking.	57	89
18	I feel satisfied with atmosphere of English learning after ice breaking.	57	89
19	Ice breaking makes me feel happier in participating in English lessons.	56	88
20	I am satisfied with the way the teacher uses ice breaking to make English lessons more interesting.	58	91

Upon obtaining the criteria for each item, the researcher proceeded to present the data in order to derive the overall criterion of the students' responses through the following calculations:

$$\text{Very high criterion} : \frac{19}{20} \times 100 = 95\%$$

$$\text{High criterion} : \frac{1}{20} \times 100 = 5\%$$

Table 3. Criteria for Interpreting Scores

Criteria	Score
Very low	0% - 20%
Low	21% - 40%
Medium	41% - 60%
High	61% - 80%
Very high	81% - 100%

(Riduwan 2009:89)

The percentage data for each of the aforementioned statements indicated that 95% of students were associated with a very high criterion for the

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statements, whereas 5% of students were associated with a high criterion for the statements in question.

Discussion

1. the effectiveness of using icebreaking activities to motivate students to learn English.

The findings of observation demonstrate that icebreakers in English classes progressively boost students' desire to learn at each session. Even though there were 26 students actively participating in the first session, some still required assistance to finish the assignment. With 28 students actively participating in the second session, the classroom environment brightened and the calibre of the assignments produced improved. By the third session, every student was fully engaged, exhibited a lot of excitement, and finished the assignment on their own with outstanding outcomes. Significantly, the classroom environment changed from one that was initially passive and worn out to one that was more dynamic, focused, and energising as a result of the icebreaker. This demonstrates how different icebreakers can foster a positive learning environment, boost participation, and motivate students to attain their best learning results.

2. Students' perceptions about the use of ice breaking to motivate students in learning English.

The questionnaire, which included 20 statements, shows that the average response score is 54.2, translating to an average percentage of 86.7%. The statement that received the highest score was "I feel proud of my achievements in learning English," which scored 59 (92%). Several statements regarding the effectiveness of icebreaking activities followed closely behind this, including "I feel more focused after the icebreaking session before starting to learn English" and "The icebreaking session conducted by the teacher makes me more interested in the English class," both of which scored 58 (91%). The statement that received the lowest score

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of 51 (80%) was "I feel satisfied with my grades in English class." Overall, the data indicates that learners are quite satisfied and motivated when it comes to learning English, particularly because of the incorporation of visual media, an enjoyable classroom environment, and engaging icebreaker activities. The teacher's interactive approach really helped boost our concentration, confidence, and overall satisfaction with the learning experience.

E. Conclusion

The researcher concludes that the use of icebreaking is an effective method for increasing students' motivation in learning English, as evidenced by the previous research findings and the discussion above. Students are more engaged, enthusiastic, and active in the learning process as a result of a variety of activities, including games, short stories, and energetic movements. In other words, the implementation of icebreakers has a beneficial effect on the development of an interactive learning environment and the motivation of students to enhance their English language proficiency. The most effective approach is for educators to adjust the types of icebreakers to the students' abilities and requirements in order to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Students respond favorably to the use of attention-grabbing strategies during icebreakers to encourage their acquisition of English. This is demonstrated by the fact that 95% of students were awarded a "very high" criterion, while 5% of students were awarded a "high" criterion. Students appear to enjoy and be more engaged in the process of learning English when attention grabbers are implemented during the icebreaker. It implies that students are highly interested in employing attention-grabbing techniques during icebreakers to encourage them to learn English. In other words, the results of this study, which

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employed attention-grabbing icebreakers to encourage students to learn English at MTS Nurul Islam Pati, are positive.

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