

INVESTIGATING TEACHER'S USE OF ICE BREAKING IN TEACHING SPEAKING

Hairori Sahrul Hafiz¹, Lalu Kerta Wijaya² Muhammad Zainul Hanaqi³

¹Institut Agama Islam Hamzanwadi NW Lombok Timur

²Universitas Hamzanwadi

³Institut Agama Islam Hamzanwadi NW Lombok Timur

¹Email: hairori.sahrulhafiz@iaihnwlotim.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study aims at examining the types and extent of teachers' use of ice-breaking strategies in teaching speaking. A descriptive qualitative method was employed, using interviews and classroom observations as data collection techniques. The data is collected from all relevant sources, such as interviews, observations, and documents. Qualitative data analysis techniques focus on gaining a deep understanding of the phenomenon being studied by identifying themes, patterns, or categories that emerge from the data. The findings revealed that teachers employed various types of ice-breaking activities, including physical motions such as *head Shoulders, yel-yel*, clapping hands, singing, and games like *snowball* and *whispering* and tension reducers such as telling stories and pop-up questions and 95% of the teachers chose games. These activities were found to be effective in increasing students' attention, motivation, participation, and self-confidence in speaking English. Ice-breaking activities were most commonly used at the beginning of lessons to capture students' attention and foster an enjoyable learning environment. Teachers implemented these strategies both in planned and spontaneous ways depending on classroom conditions. Overall, the findings confirm that ice-breaking strategies play a vital role in creating a dynamic, interactive, and supportive learning atmosphere that enhances students' speaking skills.

Keywords: Ice breaking, speaking skill

INTRODUCTION

The process of teaching and learning speaking allows teacher to meet the problem. There are students become unmotivated, make noisy, and do not pay attention to the learning. This condition can be influenced by several things. First, learning has been going on for a long time, or the material is too complex, so students already feel bored, sleepy, and tired. Second, teachers do not use variations in learning; the teacher looks at the whiteboard too much and interacts less with students during learning. Thus, students start to make noise by talking to their chair's matte. Furthermore, teachers can overcome this circumstance by using varied and fun teaching methods that provide interesting activities such as ice breaking. Ice breaking is a specific

activity teacher does in the beginning or when learning occurs (Yuwono et al., 2024).

The use of ice breaking in the teaching and learning process to prepare students before participating in learning also reduces tension. Ice breaking is a simple, light, and brief game or activity aimed at eliminating boredom, stiffness, fatigue, and monotony in learning while creating a fun and enjoyable learning environment (Kaban Sendana et al., 2011).

The usage of ice breaking can make the teaching and learning become fun and motivated. Particularly, when employing games as ice breaking strategies in English teaching speaking process, it may help increase students' enthusiasm for English learning and their performance in participating during class. Many activities can be incorporated into

English teaching and learning through ice breaking to motivate students to participate, such as games, songs, clapping, and more. Additionally, games help teachers create an enjoyable and meaningful learning experience (Nisrina Vita Cahyarani, 2024). stated that games help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful.

Ice breaking is an activity that can help the teacher to boost students' enthusiasm in the learning process (Darmayanti et al., 2023). She found in her research that icebreaking is applied in the teaching and learning process, especially through the use of games. Games assist teachers in increasing students' enthusiasm for learning English. Additionally, they can help improve students' classroom participation and performance. According to (ZIOUD Fatima Zahra, 2021). There are several benefits to carrying out ice-breaking activities, such as reducing boredom, nervousness, and fatigue, as they allow students to break away from the routine of the lesson through free and enjoyable activities. Using ice-breaking activities allows teachers to face challenge. (Kamel et al., 2019) .

The challenge in using ice-breaking activities lies in the teacher's preparation and teaching performance. Teachers' limitations in mastering various types of ice-breaking activities can also be a challenge, as it may cause students to feel bored with repeated activities. Therefore, teachers must prepare varied and innovative ice-breaking activities. When students are presented with the same ice-breaking activities repeatedly, they may feel bored and less interested (Mahmud et al., 2023).

Using icebreakers in speaking practice can be very effective, especially for creating a relaxed atmosphere and reducing anxiety or fear when speaking. Icebreakers help participants feel more comfortable and open to speaking, as they often involve light, fun activities like games or casual discussions.

(Hamrin, 2022)

Some benefits of using icebreakers for speaking practice namely, boosting Confidence: Icebreakers give participants the chance to interact without pressure, which helps build their confidence when speaking, reducing Anxiety: For many people, speaking in front of others or in a group can be stressful. Icebreakers help ease the tension and make the environment more comfortable, encouraging Active Participation: These activities encourage people to actively engage in conversation, as they feel more involved and valued, and improving social skills which icebreakers help develop social and communication skills, which are crucial for speaking effectively with others.

There are five principles to consider when using ice-breaking activities. First, simplicity the simpler, the better, as ice-breaking activities should not take too long, allowing students to easily follow the activity. Second, non threatening ice-breaking activities should not make participants feel uncomfortable. Instead, they should help students relax and enjoy the activity.

Third, open ice breaking should allow the students to show their uniqueness and express themselves. Fourth, relevant teachers should consider the students' needs and learning goals before selecting ice breaking activities. Fifth, energizing. Ice breaking should get students excited and improve their energy by involving them in physical or fun ice breaking activities (Muh Zaitun Ramadhan, 2020). Implementing suitable ice-breaking activities can enhance students' engagement and maximize their learning outcomes while simultaneously creating an enjoyable classroom environment. Therefore, this research needs to be conducted to explore teachers' purposes and challenges in using ice-breaking activities in English teaching and learning. The formulations offered are to find the kind of teacher's use of ice breaking in teaching speaking at *Islamic Boarding School*

of *Filkhair NW Pringgajurang* in the school year of 2024/2025? and to find the extent teacher's use of ice breaking in teaching speaking at *Islamic Boarding School of Filkhair NW Pringgajurang* in the school year of 2024/2025?

Research Methodology

Research design is defined as a plan and procedure that researchers use to collect and analyze data. This design helps ensure the study is conducted systematically and aligns with the established objectives. Based on the research questions, this study uses a qualitative approach. This approach is chosen because it allows the researcher to explore in-depth how teachers use ice-breaking techniques in teaching speaking, as well as to understand their experiences and perceptions within the learning context at *Islamic Boarding School of Filkhair NW Pringgajurang*.

This study focuses on investigating teachers use ice breaking in teaching speaking at *Islamic Boarding School of Filkhair NW Pringgajurang*. (Madden & Robinson, 2025) Ice-breaking is considered a strategy that can help increase student engagement, reduce speaking anxiety, and create a more comfortable and interactive learning environment. Therefore, this research aims to explore how teachers implement ice-breaking techniques and their impact on students' speaking abilities.

Thus, this research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the application of ice-breaking techniques in teaching speaking and how these strategies can support a more effective and enjoyable learning experience. The qualitative method has a strong capacity to produce complex textual descriptions of how individuals experience a research problem. This research approach is employed to gain a deeper understanding of the issue under investigation. To achieve this, the researcher chose to use the qualitative method to assess teachers' perceptions of the use of ice-

breaking strategies in the speaking learning process. Qualitative data consists of information collected by the researcher through observations and interviews. Additionally, the instruments used in this research are observations and interviews.

The participants involved in this research are English teachers at *Islamic Boarding School of Filkhair NW Pringgajurang*, specifically those who use ice-breaking strategies in their classroom teaching. This school is located in Pringgajurang village, Montong Gading sub district, East Lombok district.

Islamic Boarding School of Filkhair NW Pringgajurang is an educational institution established under the auspices of the *Nahdlatul Wathan Pringgajurang* Islamic boarding school foundation. There are four English teachers at this Islamic boarding school of *Filkhair NW Pringgajurang* however, in this study, the researcher selected only two English teachers as research subjects. Data were collected through interviews and observations. The schools involved in this study are *MTs NW Pringgajurang* and *MTs NW Talun*. In this study, the researcher conducted interviews and observations with the teachers who use ice-breaking in teaching speaking.

The researcher used purposive sampling in selecting participants for this case study. Purposive sampling is a method of selecting participants based on specific characteristics required by the researcher. As stated by (Ames et al., 2019), Purposive sampling is a technique for determining research samples based on certain considerations, aimed at ensuring that more representative data can be obtained. It focuses on specific characteristics of the existing population, which enables the researcher to effectively answer the research questions. Furthermore, (Neetij & Bikash Thapa, 2015) It is stated that purposive sampling is a process of sample selection by choosing subjects not based on level or region,

but based on specific objectives. In this study, the researcher invited five teachers who use ice-breaking strategies in teaching speaking to be interviewed in order to provide relevant answers to the research questions.

One of research procedure is an interview is typically a face-to-face conversation between a researcher and a respondent, involving the transfer of information to the interviewer. Interviews can be conducted one-on-one or with more than one person in an informal dialogue. Additionally, interviews can also be conducted via telephone or over the internet (Lee, 2007). The research instrument used in this study is an in-depth interview, which serves as the primary technique for data collection. An in-depth interview is a technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a specific idea, program, or situation” (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006)).

In order to obtain in-depth information related to teachers' perceptions of the use of ice-breaking strategies in the speaking learning process, particularly in teaching English, the researcher used a semi-structured interview method. According to (Kallio et al., 2016) A semi-structured interview is an interview with predetermined questions, but the interviewer is free to ask additional questions beyond the prepared list to clarify or expand on participants' answers. This method allows for flexibility in exploring participants' responses while maintaining a structured framework. It helps researchers gain deeper insights, as participants can elaborate on their experiences, perspectives, and opinions beyond the predefined questions.

In this study, ten interview questions regarding the use of ice-breaking strategies in teaching speaking were addressed to five pre-service English teachers at *Islamic boarding school Pesantren Filkhair NW Pringgajurang*. The interview process lasted between 10 to 15

minutes for each participant. The researcher collected data by providing the participants with these questions, which focused on the use of ice-breaking strategies in the speaking learning process, particularly in teaching English.

There are several steps involved in gathering data from the interviews:

- a. The researcher conducted interviews with two teachers as participants and recorded the interviews using a smartphone recorder.
- b. The researcher transferred the audio recordings to a laptop to facilitate easier listening and transcription of the data.
- c. The researcher carefully listened to the audio recordings and transcribed the audio files.
- d. The researcher analyzes and interprets the data obtained from the interviews.
- e. The researcher draws conclusions from the interview data to determine the findings of this research.

The researcher collected data from the participants based on the steps outlined above without skipping any steps.

The observation method is also use as data collection technique carried out by observing, recording, and analyzing phenomena or behavior directly within the research environmen (Anna Formisano et al., 2024). Observation allows researchers to obtain more objective data, as it is collected firsthand without relying on respondents' reports. Types of observation methods:

1. Participant Observation

- a. The researcher takes part in the activities being observed and interacts with the research subjects.

Example: A The researcher joined a classroom learning session to observe how the teacher applied the ice-breaking strategy.

2. Non-Participant Observation

The researcher only observes without directly engaging in the subjects' activities. The researcher observes the learning process from outside the classroom without

interacting with the teacher or students.

3. Structure Observation

Observation is conducted using a pre-designed guide, such as a checklist or specific indicators. In this activity, the researcher records how often the teacher uses ice-breaking strategies in one teaching session based on predetermined criteria.

4. Unstructure Observation

Observation is conducted flexibly without rigid guidelines, allowing the researcher to note unexpected findings. The instance is researcher freely observes the classroom atmosphere and records various aspects relevant to the study. The observation method was used to support the interview results by directly observing how teachers implement ice-breaking strategies in teaching speaking in the classroom.

Documentation is the process of investigating, interpreting, and explaining written or recorded information through documentary sources. In this study, the necessary documents included photos and videos.

In qualitative research, data analysis is an important step conducted after data has been collected from all relevant sources, such as interviews, observations, and documents. Qualitative data analysis techniques focus on gaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied by identifying themes, patterns, or categories that emerge from the data.

The data collected in qualitative research is typically in the form of text or narrative, such as interview transcripts or field notes. The analysis process begins with coding the data, which involves breaking the collected information into smaller pieces to make it easier to group and organize. These pieces of data are then categorized into relevant themes that align with the focus of the study.

The main goal of qualitative data

analysis is to uncover the meanings embedded within the data and to understand the perspectives or experiences expressed by the participants. The outcome of this analysis is not just numbers or percentages, but rather a detailed description and interpretation of the phenomenon under investigation.

Result and Discussion

The research findings are explained based on the research questions. The research questions are: "What kind of teacher's use of ice breaking in teaching speaking? To what extent is teacher's use of ice-breaking in teaching speaking?" To answer these questions, the researcher presented findings from interviews. In this study, the researcher applied a coding process to extract information from participants' responses. This process ensured the alignment of each element with the theoretical framework of the interview and observation instruments. All responses were coded and categorized into specific themes.

After going through several stages, the researcher obtained several findings composed of two main points based on the research questions. The first point concerns teachers' perspectives on the use of ice-breaking techniques in the teaching speaking whether these techniques are effective and useful in engaging students' attention. The second point concerns how teachers' perceptions influence their choice of ice-breaking in teaching speaking.

1. The kind of ice breaking the teacher uses in teaching speaking

a. Head Shoulders.

Based on the interview results with several teachers, the use of the ice breaking *Head, Shoulders* had been very effective in boosting students' enthusiasm and focus at the beginning of the lesson. The teachers stated that this simple song and movements had helped students become more relaxed and

physically active, making them more prepared to follow the learning process.

b. Yel-Yel and Telling Story

Teachers said that *Yel-Yel* effectively boosts students' enthusiasm and teamwork before lessons. It helps create positive energy and improves focus. *Telling Story* also got positive feedback as it grabs attention and practices in teaching speaking skills. Both techniques make learning fun and improve student motivation, though their success depends on class conditions.

c. Singing

Teachers stated that singing as an ice breaking activity effectively creates a fun classroom atmosphere and helps students relax before lessons. Singing improves students' mood and togetherness, while also practicing pronunciation and intonation, especially in learning English. Choosing suitable songs is important to keep the activity engaging and effective.

d. Pop-up Question

Pop-up questions are effective ice breaking techniques because they encourage students to move around and

become more active. Teachers mentioned that this activity grabs students' attention quickly and helps refresh their focus during lessons. By involving quick, spontaneous questions, students stay engaged and participate more enthusiastically. This method also creates a lively and dynamic classroom atmosphere, making learning more enjoyable.

e. Games such as Snowball and Whispering

Teachers stated that the *Snowball* and *Whispering* games are effective in creating a fun and interactive classroom atmosphere. *Snowball* helps students actively practice speaking and listening, while *Whispering* trains listening skills through passing messages in a chain. Both games increase students' motivation and engagement in learning.

2. The extent of the teacher's use of ice breaking in teaching speaking

Based on the interview results regarding teachers' perceptions of the use of ice-breaking strategies in the teaching speaking process, the researcher identified several themes, which have been categorized in the table below:

Table 4.1 the themes of teachers' choice of ice breaking

No	Teachers	Perceptions	Kind Of Ice-Breaking
1	Teacher A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think it is very effective because it can relieve students' burdens and regain their attention. When students begin to lose focus. I always used double activities because they help students relax since they see them as games. That's the type of ice breaking I used In the middle usually I used to tell the funny story and games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head Shoulders Yel-Yel Telling Story Gamas
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In my opinion, ice-breaking games are very fun and engaging, especially for students who are shy, lack self-confidence, feel bored, or sleepy. These games can help them relax, become 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A simple clap hand Singing pop-up question

2	Teacher B	<p>more active, and feel more comfortable interacting with others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I used simple activities like clapping hands at the beginning of the lesson to energize the students and create a fun learning atmosphere • Pop-up questions, yes, because this type of ice breaking makes students move and become more active • In the middle usually I used singing • I usually use games because when I first applied them, the students were very enthusiastic about doing this type of ice breaking, such as snowball, whisper challenge, and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games such as snowball and whispering
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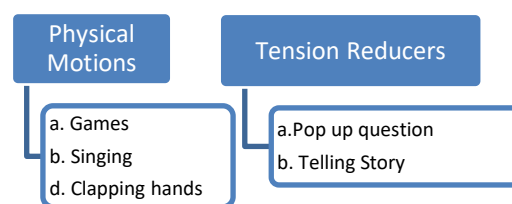
Based on the table above, it can be concluded that, from the teachers' perspective, ice breaking was used to make learning more fun and active. Many teachers thought it was a good way to get students involved. In relation to the implementation of ice breaking activities, students were observed to respond positively during classroom sessions where the strategy was applied. They appeared more enthusiastic, participative, and attentive throughout the learning activities.

The participants further stated that ice breaking activities were particularly helpful in capturing and maintaining students' attention during lessons. As a result, the use of ice breaking not only made the learning process more efficient and enjoyable but also enhanced students' focus and engagement. As is widely recognized, ice breaking is one of the most useful strategies for fostering a more comfortable and exciting classroom atmosphere. It helps reduce tension, minimize boredom, and improve classroom dynamics. According to the participants, ice breaking activities contributed to making students feel more cheerful, motivated, and emotionally ready to learn. With a more supportive and lively classroom setting, students became increasingly eager to participate actively in the learning process. The use of ice breaking,

therefore, played a significant role in improving both the emotional climate of the classroom and the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning interactions.

There are various types of ice breaking strategies, including physical motions, deinhibiters, tension reducers, feedback or disclosure loops, and energizers (McMullen et al., 2014).The researcher identified more specific ice breaking strategies based on the teachers' perceptions and preferences for implementation in English language learning. These categorized strategies are presented in the table below:

Diagram 4.2 the specific categorize of teachers' choice of ice breaking



Based on Diagram 4.2, the researcher concluded that the teacher's most frequently used the strategies of physical motions and tension reducers in their teaching and learning process. Physical motions refer to body movements designed to make students more

active and engaged during lessons. As a result, the teaching and learning process becomes more refreshing, interactive, and creative. In this study, the types of physical motions implemented by the teachers included activities such as games, shouting, singing, and clapping hands. These activities not only serve to energize students but also improve classroom dynamics and help maintain students' focus.

Starting from the most basic level, teachers can provide direct instructions for students to perform certain movements, such as stretching their arms, bending their bodies, twisting their waists, or moving in place. These simple instructions are often used as warm-up exercises to help students refocus after a period of passive learning. To make the activity more engaging and enjoyable, teachers may incorporate these movements into interactive games or role-playing activities. Instructions can also be combined with short stories or songs, stimulating students' imagination and creating a more joyful and immersive learning environment.

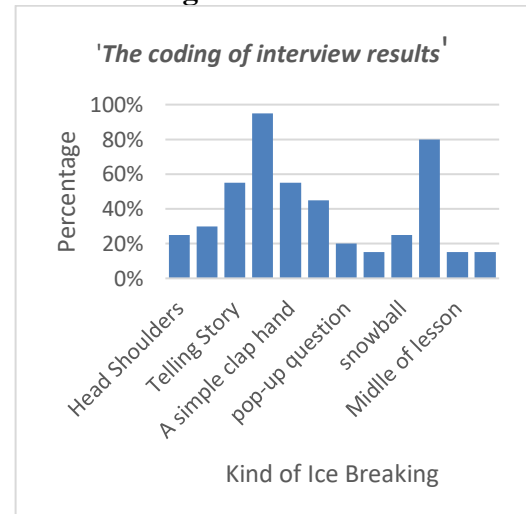
Furthermore, this kind of physical engagement can positively impact students' mental and emotional well being. It provides an opportunity for students to release tension, reset their attention span, and become more motivated to participate in upcoming learning tasks. Teachers observed that the consistent use of such strategies contributed to building a more supportive, active, and responsive classroom atmosphere. Therefore, physical motions serve not only as a classroom management technique but also as a powerful pedagogical approach to enhance the effectiveness of English language learning.

Tension reducers are tools that are quite effective in helping to focus students' attention. In this study, the tension reducers used were Telling Story and pop-up questions. Telling Story is a powerful element of communication because stories can evoke emotions such as laughter, tears, fear, and anger. When lessons

feel relevant to students, they are more likely to become engaged. (Deslauriers et al., 2019) explained that Telling Story is a great activity it is fun and very easy for anyone to participate in. This activity also brings out the creative side of students, and some wonderful Telling Story can emerge from this exercise. According to (Cornell, 1989), specific actions taken by students help make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more effective, and more transferable to new situations.

The interview results at MTs. NW Pringgajurang and MTs. NW Talun covered all the items that were included in the list of questions given to the teachers regarding whether the implementation of ice breaking was effective or not. The questions also addressed the conditions that were considered suitable for applying ice breaking in teaching speaking tactics in the classroom, the styles of ice breaking that were used, the planning that had been done by the teachers before implementing the intended techniques, as well as the strategies that were applied spontaneously.

Chart 4.3 the coding of interview results



Based on the data collected through interviews and scoring by two teachers, the results show the frequency and perceived effectiveness of nine types of ice-breaking activities, as well as the preferred time for their implementation in teaching speaking. The data

is presented in bar chart above that illustrate the average scores and percentage ratings for each type of ice-breaking activity and their timing.

The analysis reveals that the most frequently used and effective type of ice-breaking activity is Games, which received the highest average score of 9,5 and a percentage of 95%. This suggests that game-based activities are highly effective in increasing students' enthusiasm, creating a fun classroom atmosphere, and encouraging student participation during speaking lessons.

Following that, Telling Story and A Simple Clap Hand both received an average score of 5.5, with a usage percentage of 55%, indicating their effectiveness in engaging students and stimulating imagination and interaction. Singing was also moderately favored with a 4.5 average score and 45% usage rate.

Other types of ice-breaking activities such as Head Shoulders and Snowball had lower average scores (2.5 each) and percentages of 25%, while Pop-up Question, Whispering, and Yel-Yel showed the least frequency, with percentages ranging from 15% to 20%, despite some receiving moderate effectiveness scores. This suggests that while some of these activities are known to teachers, they are less frequently applied, possibly due to time limitations, classroom management issues, or lack of materials.

In terms of the timing for implementing ice-breaking activities, teachers showed a strong preference for using them at the beginning of the lesson, with an average score of 8 and a percentage of 80%. This reflects the intent to capture students' attention early and set a positive tone for the lesson. The use of ice-breaking activities in the middle or at the end of the lesson was significantly lower, each receiving an average score of 1.5 and a percentage of 15%. This indicates that teachers tend to prioritize content delivery after the initial warm-up.

The teacher's responses revealed that before implementing the ice-breaking strategy, teachers need to prepare certain materials, which is called the planned technique. The planned technique is a method commonly used by teachers when applying ice-breaking strategies. Teachers need to prepare materials before entering the classroom, such as the procedure for the ice-breaking activity they intend to use. For example, in the snowball game, the teacher needs paper, which should be prepared in advance, preferably at home. The purpose of the planned technique is to ensure that the teacher is better prepared before applying the ice-breaking strategies in class. Overall, the findings confirm that ice-breaking strategies play a vital role in teaching speaking by fostering a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment. Choosing the appropriate type and timing of ice-breaking activities can significantly enhance the teaching and learning process, helping students feel more confident, motivated, and actively engaged in speaking tasks.

3. Observation

Based on the observation data, the teacher actively implemented ice-breaking activities at various stages of the lesson—beginning, middle, and end depending on the classroom atmosphere. At the beginning of the lesson, a clapping game was used to energize students and grab their attention. In the middle, the teacher told funny stories to reduce boredom and re-engage the students. Ice-breaking activities were also sometimes used at the end of the lesson, depending on the mood of the class. The teacher used various ice-breaking techniques, including physical movements such as head, shoulder, and hand exercises, as well as interactive games like the “Snowball” game. These strategies proved effective in several ways: students became more attentive and focused, many participated enthusiastically with smiles and enjoyment, and shy students began to speak up—indicating reduced speaking

anxiety. Additionally, the teacher showed good preparation by bringing the necessary materials and selecting ice-breaking activities that suited the classroom conditions for example, choosing lighter and more relaxed games when the atmosphere felt tense

4. Interview

Based on interviews conducted with teachers at *MTs. NW Pringgajurang* and *MTs. NW Talun*, it was found that they had very positive perceptions of using ice-breaking strategies in speaking lessons. The teachers agreed that ice breaking is effective in reducing students' tension, regaining their focus and attention, creating a fun and engaging learning environment, and encouraging active participation—especially from shy or less motivated students. Kurnain, S.Pd., stated that ice-breaking activities help students feel more relaxed because the learning feels like a game, making them more comfortable. Similarly, Siti Bardiatil Khairi, S.Hum., mentioned that ice breaking helps to wake up bored or sleepy students, making them more active in class interactions. The teachers used various types of ice-breaking activities, which can be grouped into two main categories. The first is physical motion, including “Head Shoulders,” chants (Yel-Yel), clapping hands, singing, and games like “Snowball” and “Whispering.” The second is tension-reducing strategies, such as telling funny stories and using pop-up questions. Among these, games were the most frequently used and considered the most effective because they succeeded in boosting student enthusiasm, participation, and overall class energy.

Most teachers preferred to use ice-breaking activities at the beginning of the lesson to quickly capture students' attention and set a positive tone for learning. However, some also used ice breaking during the middle of the lesson when students started to lose focus or become bored. The use of ice breaking at the end of the lesson was selective and depended on the classroom situation.

Teachers applied ice-breaking strategies using two main approaches: planned and spontaneous. The planned technique involved preparing materials and steps beforehand, such as preparing paper slips at home for the Snowball game. Meanwhile, the spontaneous technique allowed teachers to adjust activities on the spot based on the classroom atmosphere—for example, choosing lighter and more relaxed activities when students seemed tense or unengaged.

According to the interview results, the implementation of ice-breaking strategies had significant positive impacts on students. These included improved attention and focus, increased confidence and willingness to speak, reduced speaking anxiety (especially among shy students), greater classroom participation, and increased motivation to learn. Overall, the interviews confirmed that ice-breaking strategies play an important role in improving the effectiveness of speaking instruction. By selecting appropriate types of ice-breaking activities and using them at the right time, teachers can create a more dynamic, interactive, and emotionally supportive classroom environment. This not only enhances learning outcomes but also boosts students' emotional readiness and enthusiasm for participating in English-speaking activities.

DISCUSSIONS

The use of ice breaking in teaching speaking is quite extensive and considered very important by many teachers. Many teachers regularly apply ice breaking techniques to create a comfortable, relaxed, and engaging environment for students. These techniques help reduce students' anxiety, encourage active participation, boost confidence, and make speaking activities more enjoyable and effective. However, the extent to which ice breaking techniques are used can vary depending on the teacher's teaching style, class size, classroom conditions, and the specific needs of the students.

Playing games is one of the effective ice breaking strategies to increase students' motivation in learning English, based on the perceptions of English teachers at *Islamic Boarding School of Filkhair NW Pringgajurang*. This study showed that playing games appeared in 95% as one of the most commonly used types of ice breaking by teachers to make the classroom atmosphere more active and enjoyable. Ice breaking games are often chosen when the situation or activity becomes stagnant. These games are interesting and engaging to use. (Fredericksen et al., 1999) stated that an ice breaking game is a non-graded activity designed to help the teacher get to know the students, help the students get to know each other, feel more relaxed, and be ready to learn the material.

Playing games are interesting activities to use in the learning process. Teachers use ice breaking games to break the formal atmosphere; these games can serve as a medium to encourage students to speak or interact with their peers. According to (Wang, 2010), ice breaking games are a way to shift the situation from boring, monotonous, or tense to relaxed, spirited, and enjoyable during the learning process. Ice breaking games are important to create good interaction among students and to warm up conversations between them. Ice breaking games are an effective method or strategy to be implemented at *Boarding School of Filkhair NW Pringgajurang* to help students become more motivated and enthusiastic in learning English.

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