

STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN LEARNING ENGLISH USING ICE BREAKING : A CASE STUDY OF STUDENTS' AT SDN 025/II MUARA BUNGO

Manisa Laksana Putri

English Education Department Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo

e-mail: teysalaksana@gmail.com, rendalestari95@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Motivation was one of the essential factors that influenced students' success in learning, especially in English language learning at the elementary level. Based on initial observation and interviews, students at SDN 025/II Muara Bungo showed a positive response to the use of ice breaking in the learning process. They appeared more enthusiastic, focused, and actively involved in classroom activities. These initial findings led the researcher to investigate what types of motivation students had and what strategies they used to maintain their motivation.

This study used a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with five students as participants. The researcher used open-ended questions to explore students' learning experiences in depth. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's model, which consisted of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

The findings showed that students' learning motivation was influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors included interest in English and the desire to achieve, while external factors involved teacher encouragement, a joyful learning atmosphere, and the implementation of ice breaking. Ice breaking helped reduce tension, created a relaxed classroom environment, and increased student engagement. To stay motivated, students actively participated in interactive activities, focused on the teacher's explanation, and responded positively to praise.

Keyword: *Motivation. Ice breaking. Strategy*

ABSTRACT

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana Motivasi menjadi faktor penting yang mempengaruhi kesuksesan siswa dalam belajar, terutama dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di tingkat sekolah dasar. Berdasarkan pengamatan awal dan wawancara, siswa di SDN 025/II Muara Bungo menunjukkan respons positif terhadap penggunaan ice breaking dalam proses pembelajaran. Mereka tampak lebih antusias, fokus, dan aktif terlibat dalam kegiatan kelas. Temuan awal ini mendorong peneliti untuk menyelidiki jenis motivasi apa yang dimiliki siswa dan strategi apa yang mereka gunakan untuk mempertahankan motivasi mereka.

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan lima siswa sebagai peserta. Peneliti menggunakan pertanyaan terbuka untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman belajar siswa secara mendalam. Data dianalisis menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman, yang terdiri dari reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa motivasi belajar siswa dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal dan eksternal. Faktor internal meliputi minat terhadap bahasa Inggris dan keinginan untuk mencapai tujuan, sementara faktor eksternal meliputi dorongan dari guru, suasana belajar yang menyenangkan, dan penerapan ice breaking. Ice breaking membantu mengurangi ketegangan, menciptakan lingkungan kelas yang rileks, dan meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa. Untuk tetap termotivasi, siswa secara aktif berpartisipasi dalam aktivitas interaktif, fokus pada penjelasan guru, dan merespons positif terhadap pujian.

Kata Kunci: *Motivasi Ice breaking. Strategi*

INTRODUCTION

Education played a very important role in developing the intelligence and potential of children as the next generation of the nation. Through the education process, children were not only taught various academic knowledge, but also social, emotional, and character skills that shaped them into qualified individuals. Therefore, every country had an obligation to provide an education system that could accommodate the learning needs of every child, both in terms of accessibility, quality, and diversity of learning methods. Learning activities had to be followed by all students and teachers so that educational goals were achieved properly.

Motivation was an effort that was carried out continuously to achieve predetermined results, where the effort included encouragement, enthusiasm, and a person's commitment to take the necessary actions so that the desired goals were achieved. In the context of learning, motivation played a very important role because it could be the main driver for someone to keep trying and persisting in the learning process, despite the challenges or difficulties faced

Dörnyei (1994) argued that Motivation was a reflection that appeared in people consciously or subconsciously, causing them to be moved to do something because they wanted to reach their goal or

purpose. This implied that motivation was a change in energy or drive that arose in a person, which could occur either consciously or unconsciously. This energy or drive moved a person to take an action, such as learning, with the aim of achieving something desired, whether it was a short-term or long-term goal. When a student was motivated to learn for example, it was because he wanted to get good grades or achieve certain goals in his class.

This theory was related to the experience of researchers during teaching practice at SDN 025/II Muara Bungo. Students who were interested and passionate about English often looked for fun ways to maintain their enthusiasm in learning the language. This interest could be influenced by various factors, such as interactive and fun learning approaches, one of which was an effective technique called ice breaking.

Ice breaking in English learning served to create a more relaxed and fun atmosphere, which made students feel more comfortable and motivated to actively participate. Creative and interesting ice breaking activities broke the ice at the beginning of learning, opened up opportunities for students to interact with their peers, and gave them space to speak in English without anxiety or fear of making mistakes. Thus, ice breaking not only helped students get

rid of awkwardness, but also became one of the ways to maintain and even increase their interest and fascination with English. Through fun and interactive activities, students continued to feel enthusiastic about learning English, which in turn improved their skills in communicating and understanding the language more deeply. The application of ice breaking in Class V of SD Negeri 025 Muara Bungo during English language learning was highly anticipated by the students, as ice breaking activities made them more enthusiastic and motivated to learn and to concentrate when the teacher explained the material.

According to Fitria (2023), ice breaking was useful for increasing the level of attention among training participants. Therefore, ice breaking could help students focus better and become more concentrated during the learning process. Therefore, ice breaking could make students become more concentrated. The ice breaking learning procedure focused on creating a dynamic, vibrant, and non-tiring teaching and learning environment, which was carried out both individually and in groups. One of the appropriate methods used in learning English in class V of SD Negeri 025/II Muara Bungo was the ice breaking method. This method was used to create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom so that

students could focus more on learning. According to Astuti (2020), this method also aimed to build good relationships between teachers and students in the classroom, and could improve students' memory of the subject matter because their mental state was more ready to receive new information. Students who had a high interest in English tended to be more motivated to learn and tried harder to understand the material. However, maintaining that interest in the long term was often a challenge, especially if the learning methods used were less interesting or less interactive. One way to maintain students' interest in learning English was by applying ice breaking techniques at the beginning of the lesson.

Ice breaking was a series of activities designed to create a more relaxed atmosphere, reduce awkwardness, and increase student engagement in the learning process. Fun ice breaking activities made students feel more comfortable, both with classmates and with the subject matter. In the context of English language learning, this technique helped students to be more open in using English, without feeling afraid or anxious about making mistakes. Activities that involved language games, gestures, or guessing, for example made students more enthusiastic and excited about the lesson. For students who were very interested in and loved English, ice

breaking activities were one way to strengthen their interest. With a fun and interactive atmosphere, students found it easier to remember vocabulary and sentence structures in English. In addition, they also felt that English was not just a subject that had to be mastered, but a fun language that could be used in various social contexts. Therefore, the application of ice breaking in English learning played an important role in maintaining and increasing students' interest in the language.

several students learned English because of future purposes such as gaining a good job effectively or studying successfully in an English speaking country. The other students learned English because they wanted to integrate into the activities and culture of another group of people. From that, the author became interested in researching ice breaking, especially for the achiever students. Therefore, the researcher conducted a study with the title: —Students' Motivation In Learning English Using Ice Breaking : A Case Study At SDN 025/II Muara Bungo

METHOD

There were 5 students from SDN 025/II Muara Bungo who participated in this research. The participants were interviewed to explore what motivated them to learn English and what strategies they used to maintain their motivation in learning English. Each participant was asked to respond to several open-ended questions during a semi-structured interview session. The interviews were conducted in the Indonesian language to ensure clarity and comfort for the young participants.

The instrument used in this research was an interview guideline developed based on the research objectives. The questions were designed to be simple and easy to understand by elementary students. The data collection was carried out through face-to-face interviews, and the responses were recorded and later transcribed for analysis.

The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The researcher carefully read and re-read the transcripts to identify themes related to motivation and learning strategies. Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and their participation was voluntary.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

FINDING

Myles and Hubberman
Analysis Data

1. Data Collection Before the teacher conducted the analysis, the interview transcript data had been collected by the researcher. The transcripts that were submitted were the results of the interviews. After completing the data collection from the students, the researcher continued by inputting the interview results. The data used by the researcher was obtained from interviews with five participants

2. Data Reduction After the data was collected, the researcher summarized the results of the five student interviews, highlighted the key points, and provided a clearer overall picture.

3. Data presentation/Display The next step was for the researcher to provide a more detailed explanation of the analyzed data, which could increase our awareness of the factors that motivated students to learn English.

4. Drawing Conclusion The final step was for the researcher to provide conclusions based on relevant data and evidence.

Indicator	Motivation	Maintaining
Students_ basic Motivatio nal Strategy	1.The teacher_s fun teaching methods	1. they maintained their motivation by enjoying the fun way of learning and inviting their friends
	2.Learnin g Using Songs	explain when they didn't understand and enjoyed learning through games, and songs
	3.Future	3. enjoyed learning through songs and moved around to stay focused
	4.Excited	4. realized the importance of english for the future and kept trying despite sometimes feeling lazy
	5. Support from teacher	5. really liked English before, stayed

		motivated, and got encouraged again by friends and teacher when feeling bored 6. Received praise from			
Students way in Generating their Motivation	1. The Teacher is Fun	1. felt motivated when the teacher was fun, and noticed that friends became more diligent in learning 2. lost motivation sometimes but recovered it by playing games and enjoying the lesson with the teacher		4. The Supportive From Friends	was fun and engaging 4. stayed motivated with support from friends and by requesting the teacher to make learning more interesting when feeling lazy. 5. stayed motivated because the teacher made lesson fun with games, singing, group activities, and exciting challenges
	2. The Way Teacher Taught	3. had enjoyed English for a long time, kept motivated, and got excited again because the learning atmosphere		5. The Teacher Way of Teaching Very Fun	
	3. The Lesson Not Boring		Students Maintaining and protecting their motivation in learning English	1. with guessing, and games pictures	1. regained motivation through fun activities like guessing games and story telling using pictures, which made learning enjoyable 2. kept motivated by singing fun songs during
				2. Sing Songs	

		lessons, which helped memorize words and made learning enjoyable			in English
	3. Learning Through Play	3.kept their motivation by engaging in fun activities like word guessing games and competitions during class	Students= positive self-evaluation their motivation	1.A great to make parents proud	1.kept motivated by understanding the importance of learning for the future and wanting to make parents proud
	4. Encouraged by Parents, and Friends	4.kept motivated by support from parents, classmates, and the teacher, which helped Overcome difficulties in learning English		2. Realize	2.admitted difficulties, asked for help, practiced more, and promised to keep trying to improve English skills
	5. Enthusiasm For Learning	5. kept motivated by using various ways like watching videos, making notes, practicing speaking, and interacting with others		3. Confident	3.gained confidence by answering questions, accepted mistakes as part of learning, and stayed motivated with support from teacher and classmates
				4. felt that could learn	4.kept motivated by enjoying fun teaching methods, practicing

	5.strategy	harder on difficult parts, and studying with friends for support 5. kept motivated by using fun strategies like writing notes, singing songs, asking for help, and practicing speaking alone
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Based on the results of interviews that have been conducted by researchers and have the process of analyzing the data. The analysis of this research obtained themes and then found an overview of the results of the research carried out. The analysis was carried out based on the data obtained by the researcher, then grouped the data based on the themes determined based on the description of the process to be revealed in each participants. The analysis obtained the following results.

1. Students' Motivation in Learning English

a. Basic Motivational Strategy

Students with high motivation in learning English tended to have certain strategies to maintain their enthusiasm for learning. These students realized that they needed to maintain consistency and enthusiasm throughout the learning process. Most of the students stated that their motivation in learning English arose from a strong desire and interest in the subject.

The strategies they used to maintain their motivation were driven by several factors, such as a pleasant learning atmosphere, interesting teaching methods, engaging ways of teaching, and support from parents, friends, and teachers. This aligned with the theory used by the researcher to support this study, namely the theory by Dornyei (2001), which included basic motivational strategies, generating motivation, and maintaining and protecting motivation. In this context, students' motivation was formed through their personal goals and interest in English (generating motivation), maintained through fun and interactive learning approaches (maintaining and protecting motivation), and strengthened by a supportive environment—such as support from teachers and family—which corresponded to the basic 108

strategies in creating and sustaining learning motivation (basic motivational strategies). 1. High Motivation Students who had high goals and a strong interest in learning English showed a strong underlying motivation during the learning process. This was reflected in students such as DAP, RAP, AAE, MFS, and ACS, who consistently demonstrated a passion for learning. Their personal goals and keen interests helped them stay motivated in learning English, despite the challenges they faced. In addition, the fun learning methods applied by the teachers in this study also played a role in maintaining and sustaining students' learning motivation. The conducive classroom atmosphere, interactive approach, and the use of varied media and activities made the learning process more interesting and less boring. The Basic Motivational Strategies theory proposed by Dornyei (2001) emphasized the importance of building, maintaining, and protecting students' motivation, especially in the context of foreign language learning. These strategies included providing a supportive learning environment, setting clear and challenging learning goals, and offering consistent support from teachers and the surrounding environment. Thus, a combination of internal factors (such as students' goals and interests) and external factors (such as the teachers' instructional methods) played an

important role in increasing students' motivation and success in learning English.

b. Students' Generating Their Motivation In Learning English

Participants such as DAP, RAP, AAE, ACS, and MFS stated that the things that motivated them to learn English were the fun and not boring teachers, the exciting learning atmosphere, the interactive learning activities, and the support from classmates. These factors made them feel comfortable and excited to continue learning. This statement was in line with Dornyei's (2001) Basic Motivational Strategies theory, especially in the aspects of building a positive classroom atmosphere, encouraging learning group cohesiveness, and increasing students' self-confidence.

In addition, this finding was also relevant to Vygotsky's Sociocultural theory, which emphasized the importance of social interaction and collaboration in shaping cognitive development and learning motivation. According to Vygotsky, students could build their understanding and motivation through meaningful interactions with peers and teachers. Furthermore, the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) also supported these findings, as the theory explained that students' intrinsic motivation grew if three basic psychological needs were

met, namely: autonomy (freedom in learning), competence (feeling capable), and relatedness (feeling socially connected). Support from teachers and peers provided a sense of community that encouraged students to continue to be motivated in learning English.

c. Students' Maintaining Their Motivation

Participants such as DAP, RAP, ACS, MFS, and AAE developed various strategies to maintain their motivation to learn English. One of the ways they often did was to invite Ms. Y1 to play while learning and sing together. This activity made the classroom atmosphere more lively and fun, so they did not feel bored while learning. In addition, they also formed small study groups outside of class hours. In these groups, they discussed and helped each other understand difficult material. With supportive friends, they felt less alone in facing learning challenges. This strategy helped them to stay motivated and strengthen each other in the English learning process. The students also had a habit of taking notes on anything that was difficult for them. They tried to keep understanding the learning and stayed motivated. In this way, they learned to keep going even though they sometimes found it difficult. Support from teachers was also an important factor in maintaining

students' learning motivation. A pleasant and patient teacher always gave encouragement and appreciation to students. This made students feel valued and confident in learning English. The combination of students' personal strategies, peer support, and fun teaching methods from teachers kept their motivation up and helped them achieve better learning outcomes.

d. Students' Maintaining And Protecting Their Motivation

Participants such as DAP, RAP, AAE, ACS, and MFS stated that the way they maintained their motivation to learn English was through interactive learning techniques, such as the use of pictures, songs, playing while learning, and support from parents at home. These methods made the learning process more fun, less boring, and helped them understand the material more easily. Emotional support and motivation from parents were also important factors that made them feel valued and kept them enthusiastic about learning. This finding was in line with Dornyei's (2001) Basic Motivational Strategies theory, which emphasized that student motivation could be maintained through the creation of a positive learning environment, involving the use of interesting media, varied learning approaches, and support from the surrounding environment,

including teachers and parents. With fun learning strategies and strong external support, students became more motivated and were able to maintain their passion for learning despite challenges. 4.1.5. Students' Positive Self Evaluation Students at SDN 025 revealed that their self-evaluation of their learning motivation tended to be positive. They attributed this to several key factors, including a high awareness of the importance of learning for the future, a strong sense of confidence in facing academic challenges, an increasing ability to learn, and the use of learning strategies that were considered effective and appropriate to each individual's learning style.

When viewed from the perspective of Dörnyei's motivation theory, specifically within the framework of the —L2 Motivational Self System,¹¹ the factors mentioned by these students could be linked to the three main components in the theory: the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self, and the Learning Experience. In this context, awareness of the importance of learning and the use of effective strategies were attributed to the Ideal Self component, which referred to the idealized future self-image that motivated students to try harder. Their self-confidence and learning ability represented the Learning Experience aspect, which included pleasant learning experiences and previous academic successes that

shaped positive attitudes toward learning. Thus, students' learning motivation at SDN 025 was not only formed internally through positive self-evaluation, but was also strengthened by psychological components as described in Dörnyei's theory. This theory emphasized that learning motivation was the result of the interaction between future expectations, social pressure, and actual learning experiences. This suggested that creating a supportive learning environment and strengthening students' self-confidence could contribute significantly to the continuous improvement of their learning motivation.

DISCUSSION

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Students who participated in this study indicated that their learning experience became more meaningful when teachers used ice breaking consistently. They felt more focused, happier, and more interested in the English material. In addition, the fun classroom atmosphere also allowed them to support each other and build good cooperation, especially in group activities. In addition, students also showed that they had strategies in maintaining their motivation. They said that apart from liking English, they also wanted to keep their enthusiasm for learning so that they could achieve their goals and got good grades. Ice breaking helped them to stay focused and not get tired during learning. This also supported Brown's (2007) theory which stated that a pleasant learning atmosphere

could increase students' intrinsic motivation. Based on these results, it was concluded that the objectives of this study had been achieved. Students who had high motivation and achievement in learning English turned out to have a very positive experience of the use of ice breaking. Ice breaking activities made them more enthusiastic, confident, and consistent in learning.

CONCLUSION

This research investigated students' motivation in learning English through the use of ice breaking activities, with a focus on fifth-grade students at SDN 025/II Muara Bungo. The study revealed that students demonstrated a high level of enthusiasm and motivation when learning English, especially when the learning process was supported by creative and interactive methods such as ice breaking. The students' motivation was influenced by both internal and external factors.

Internally, students were driven by their personal interest, enjoyment, curiosity, and a genuine desire to master English. Externally, their motivation was supported by positive reinforcement from the teacher, an engaging classroom atmosphere, peer interaction, and learning activities that sparked excitement and confidence. Ice breaking played a vital role in bridging these two aspects by reducing tension, increasing participation, and making the learning process more enjoyable.

The findings showed that ice breaking through activities such as clapping, singing, games, and storytelling effectively created a dynamic, fun, and student-centered environment. These activities helped students become more focused, less anxious, and more open to expressing themselves in English, which was especially important in elementary-level language learning. By feeling more relaxed and confident, students were able to absorb material more easily and participate more actively during lessons. Furthermore, students employed several personal strategies to maintain their motivation.

These included developing a habit of reviewing lessons at home, staying engaged through playful learning methods, seeking help when confused, and showing consistent effort to participate. The teacher's ability to use praise, attention, and varied methods also contributed significantly to sustaining students' motivation. Overall, this study concluded that the integration of ice breaking activities into English language learning was highly effective in increasing student motivation. It not only supported language acquisition but also enhanced students' emotional readiness, confidence, and joy in learning. Ice breaking proved to be more than just a warm-up; it was a strategic tool that fostered meaningful engagement, improved

classroom interaction, and helped students maintain a positive attitude toward English learning. The use of such interactive approaches was recommended for broader implementation, particularly in early education settings, to cultivate a strong and lasting interest in language learning.

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