



Exploring the Efficacy of Creative Ice Breaking Techniques in Classroom Learning

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Abstract: Saturation in the teaching and learning process often disrupts the effectiveness of learning and creates a less conducive learning environment. To overcome this problem, the icebreaking method is applied as a solution. This research aims to analyze the forms of icebreaking implementation, its impact, and its importance in the learning process. The approach used is qualitative, with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data was obtained from students and teachers in fourth-grade of Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, with data validity maintained through triangulation. Research instruments include observation guides, interviews and documentation. Research results show that icebreaking, such as shouting, patting, games, songs, and body movements, can improve the classroom atmosphere and student motivation. This method creates a fun and interactive learning environment, as well as improving students' attitudes and abilities, overcoming boredom, and increasing learning effectiveness. This research contributes to elementary school education by showing that the application of icebreaking can overcome boredom, increase motivation, and create more effective learning methods, thereby facilitating a more enjoyable and productive learning experience for students.

Keywords: ice breaking, learning, elementary school

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Introduction

David P. Ausubel stated that learning is a teaching and learning activity carried out by teachers by involving students as a strategic effort to realize the goals of educational institutions (Lay et al., 2024; Febriana, 2021; Gemnafle & Batlolona, 202; Simatupang, 2019). When learning takes place, students need to have a learning environment that is comfortable, fun, cheerful, and free from coercion (Crysanta et al., 2022; Pratiwi & Nur, 2022; Ukobizaba et al., 2020). Students who study in a comfortable and supportive environment will more easily understand the material being taught, have high learning motivation, and show better learning results (Utaminingsih et al., 2021; Dewi & Yuniarsih, 2020; Sholihah & Kurniawan, 2016).

However, the reality on the ground shows that creating an ideal learning environment often faces various challenges. When the learning process takes place, students frequently experience boredom, especially students at the elementary school level. When they reach a saturation point, students tend to be unfocused and not pay attention to the learning being delivered by the teacher. They may even create noise and disturb other friends who are studying, resulting in a learning environment that is not conducive. This kind of phenomenon is often encountered in the continuity of learning in elementary schools. Research by Wedyawati et al. (2022) shows that boredom when studying often occurs in elementary school students because of monotonous teaching methods and a lack of variety in learning, which causes students not to be interested in the learning they are taking part in. In addition, Damayanti (2022) found that more than 60% of students in several elementary schools felt bored during the learning process, especially when teachers used prolonged lecture methods. According to a study by Rahma et

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al. (2022), the phenomenon of boredom in learning also affects the learning environment, which results in the creation of a learning environment that is not conducive, such as noise and interference from classmates, which can result in students not being able to concentrate well. This research shows that students who feel bored and uninterested in the subject matter tend to create noise and disturb other friends, thus disrupting the overall learning process.

Furthermore, the results of initial observations in fourth-grade of Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School, which was carried out on November 5, 2023, found the same problem. Two phenomena of learning problems were found, namely the occurrence of learning boredom and a classroom environment that was not conducive. After the first 20 minutes of learning, students began to busy themselves, did not pay attention to learning, and were less enthusiastic about learning, resulting in one-way communication. In learning using the group method, students are reluctant to join their groups and sometimes switch groups. Many students are huddled together, not paying attention to the teacher's instructions, even lying down, running around, and joking with friends, so the classroom atmosphere becomes noisy and unconducive. These studies show that boredom and lack of interest in learning among elementary school students is a real phenomenon and requires serious attention from educators.

Icebreaking is an activity that can be conducive to the situation in the classroom so that learning becomes more enjoyable (Puspita, 2023). Research by Amelia et al. (2023) shows that icebreaking is an effort to create and maintain an ideal learning environment, avoid boredom, and create a pleasant learning atmosphere. This statement is in line with previous research, which states that fun learning through icebreaking will make students enjoy their learning and feel comfortable, and there is no pressure in learning (Dewi et al., 2023). Icebreaking also has a positive impact on students, involving them emotionally and intellectually, fostering critical thinking skills, reducing anxiety, and creating solidarity in the classroom (Khodijah, 2023). The implementation of icebreaking also builds strong relationships between teachers and students and increases students' enthusiasm for learning (Felani, 2022). Icebreaking is defined as a tool to lighten the atmosphere in the classroom so that students are more relaxed and less tense in learning, which is implemented in the form of games or other activities (Noviyanti et al., 2022; Shaleha, 2023). Icebreaking is part of creative thinking, strategic thinking, positive thinking, problem-solving, and learning strategies (Kamilah et al., 2024). The application of icebreaking during the learning process can refresh the mind and make students focus on learning so that an active, enthusiastic and enthusiastic learning environment is created (Hamdi & Syarifudin., 2023; Iskandar et al., 2023; Savitri et al., 2023).

Based on the learning problems in fourth-grade of Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School above, the researcher intends to research further the application of icebreaking as a solution to create a fun and conducive learning atmosphere in an effort to solve learning problems in the classroom.

This research offers novelty by focusing on teacher creations in implementing icebreaking and the reasons behind this application in learning. Existing research maps show that icebreaking can create and maintain an ideal learning environment, avoid boredom, and create a pleasant learning atmosphere (Amelia et al., 2023; Putu Risma Dewi et al., 2023; Khodijah, 2023). Most previous research focuses more on the general effectiveness of icebreaking without explaining in depth the creation and specific reasons for teachers' implementation of icebreaking. This research will fill this gap by exploring various forms of icebreaking activities implemented by teachers as well as the reasons and impacts of these implementations on students.

This research aims to examine the forms of icebreaking activities in the classroom, the impact of implementing icebreaking on students, and the reasons for the importance of implementing icebreaking in learning. The results of this research will contribute to understanding effective learning strategies, especially through the application of icebreaking. It is hoped that this research can provide guidance for teachers in creating a pleasant learning environment and increasing student interest and focus in learning. Apart from that, this research also has the potential to provide new insight into teachers' creativity in using icebreaking as an effort to overcome boredom in class.

Methods

This research employed a qualitative approach with a type of field research, where the researcher conducts research directly at the location to obtain accurate data about something in its natural state.

The research was carried out at the Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School, which is located at Jl. Raya Mr. Moch Ichsan, Wates, District. Ngaliyan, Semarang City, Central Java.

The data sources in this research consisted of two types, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained from grade four teachers and all 4th-grade students, but the researchers involved five students as samples in the research. Secondary data was obtained through documentation in the form of photos and videos taken during the research. The object of this research was icebreaking activities in the learning process in grade four. Research subjects include 4th-grade teachers and 4th-grade students at Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School.

The research instruments used include observation, interviews and documentation. Observations were carried out to directly observe learning activities and the implementation of icebreaking in the classroom. Interviews were conducted with teachers and several students to obtain in-depth information regarding their experiences and views regarding icebreaking. Documentation in the form of photos and videos is used to support observation and interview data.

Test the validity of the data using triangulation techniques. The triangulation technique was carried out by examining data obtained through several data extractions from the same source using different techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis in this research uses the Milles and Huberman analysis model. According to Sugiyono in Erviana et al. (2023), data analysis consists of several stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The data that has been collected is reduced to filter relevant information, then presented in a form that is easy to understand, and finally, conclusions are drawn based on research findings. The research method is presented in the following diagram.

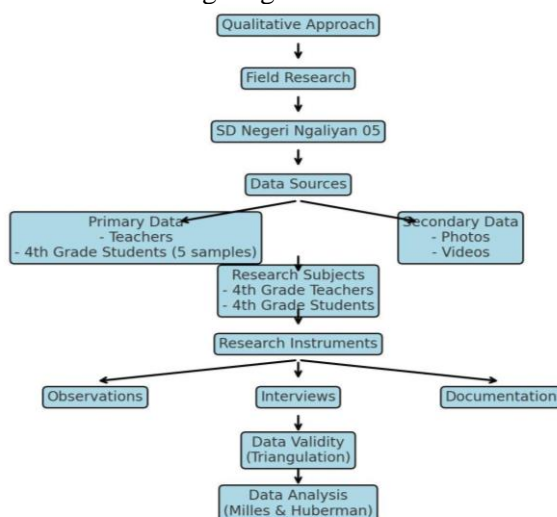


Figure 1. Research Method Diagram

Results and Discussion

Based on the results of research observations conducted in fourth-grade of Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School, teachers and students already know the icebreaking technique. The following is an explanation of the implementation of icebreaking carried out by the 4th-grade teachers at Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School:

a. Icebreaking at the beginning of learning

Icebreaking at the beginning of learning is implemented by creating a cool and pleasant atmosphere to foster enthusiasm and help students' readiness to learn (Ola & Karim, 2024; Puspita, 2023; Fauzana, 2022; Widiasworo, 2018). If students' enthusiasm for learning is not yet visible, the teacher will repeat icebreaking with different variations to foster enthusiasm for learning in the class (Sari et al., 2024; Mariyaningsih & Hidayati, 2018). Icebreaking that teachers usually apply at the beginning of learning is clapping and shouting encouragement.

b. Breaking the ice in core activities

In core activities, teachers do not apply icebreaking too often because, in core activities, students focus more on learning activities such as reading, writing, and doing assignments.

However, the teacher still inserts icebreaking by adjusting the circumstances and situations in the class. When the class does not seem conducive, students start to get bored, or when the assignment is finished, the teacher optimizes the application of icebreaking as a distraction from learning activities so that students can concentrate again. This is in line with previous research that the use of icebreaking in the middle of learning can make students concentrate more (Khairunnisa et al., 2023; Nisa, 2023; Puspitasari & Marzuki, 2023; Fajrudin & Samsudin, 2021; Amalia, 2020). Icebreaking, class chants, and applause are examples of the application of icebreaking in core activities.

c. Icebreaking at the last activity

In the last learning activity, the teacher did icebreaking as a form of entertainment before going home. This provides positive and enjoyable moments before students leave the classroom so that the learning that day will leave a special impression on students (Putri & Wahyuningsih, 2023).

Icebreaking activities in class can create a good mood for students while studying. The correct implementation of icebreaking can help students understand the lessons delivered by the teacher and have an enjoyable learning experience (Magdalena et al., 2023). This icebreaking activity can help restore concentration and become a supporting force during learning activities (Adawiyah et al., 2022).

In the process of implementing icebreaking by the 4th-grade teacher at Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School, the teacher still considered the elements of safety, time, equipment and education when carrying out icebreaking. This shows that icebreaking activities have been planned and then adjusted to the learning schedule. Icebreaking carried out by grade 4 teachers sometimes applies it according to the material being taught so that the material presented is easy to remember and students are more focused on learning (Adiansa & Wulandari, 2023; Haryati & Puspitaningrum, 2023). Although icebreaking does not always have to be in accordance with the learning theme, teachers need to be creative in connecting icebreaking with learning material so that it is relevant. This statement relates to the findings of an interview with a 4th-grade teacher at Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School:

"If you apply icebreaking, you also look at the learning material. For example, like yesterday about what is called norms by PKN, I used icebreaking to make songs with learning material about norms, religious norms, and legal norms. "Then there is IPAS, the material is songs about plants, so there are various types of plants, there are leaves, that's what I sing as well as the plant parts." (fourth-grade teacher interview, January 23, 2024).

With the strategy used by the teacher above, it can be seen that the teacher needs to be creative in linking fun, ice-breaking activities with the concept of the material being taught. When implementing icebreaking, teachers can also do it spontaneously by looking at the class conditions. This can be done at any time based on the situations and conditions that occur during learning (Putri & Wahyuningsih, 2023). Especially when the class starts to get busy, students look bored and sleepy while studying. This shows that teachers act as facilitators and innovative teachers (Muhammad, 2019; Wahyuningsih, 2018) in responding to students' desires and encouraging them to maintain a conducive learning environment and support students in their development (Saniy et al., 2021).

In implementing icebreaking, teachers carry out different variations of icebreaking every day. For example, on Monday icebreaking "clapping and chanting," the next day, icebreaking "chanting and games." Teachers carry out icebreaking variations so that students do not get bored while learning, make the learning atmosphere comfortable, full of enthusiasm, and can provide benefits for students in learning activities (Yusro et al., 2021). This can train teachers' creativity in applying icebreaking techniques with various forms of icebreaking in the learning process to achieve learning goals optimally (Novianti, 2022).

Ice Breaking Application Form

The forms of Ice Breaking that teachers apply in fourth-grade at Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School include:

1. Shout

Icebreaking implemented by teachers usually contains sentences to raise students' enthusiasm or make the class cheer. Icebreaking can be said to be a learning option so that students remain enthusiastic in receiving lessons and focused on learning (Adiansa & Wulandari 2023). The following is an example of using an icebreaker shout.



Figure 2. Icebreaker Spirit Cries



Figure 3. The Icebreaker Class Screams



Figure 4. Ice Breaking Scream Before Going Home

Based on Figure 2, teachers usually implement icebreaking before learning begins or at the beginning of activities carried out together. First the teacher said "Morning Spirit..." and the students answered "Morning... Morning... Morning... Amazing... Great...". This is the teacher's effort to arouse students' interest in learning and arouse students' enthusiasm to follow the learning process to completion.

Based on Figure 3, this ice-breaking chant was made by the homeroom teacher himself as a form of appreciation for fourth-grade students in learning. This singing is performed together at the beginning of the activity or in between lessons. The teacher makes a class shout by using sentences that inspire students' enthusiasm for learning. At first the teacher said "Fourth-grade..." then the students followed the teacher "Fourth-grade...I'm smart, you're smart... Smart... Fourth-grade I can, you can... Can... Fourth-grade is BEAUTIFUL."

Based on Figure 4, the teacher does icebreaking at the end of the lesson so that it makes students enthusiastic again. This icebreaking begins with the sentence "Everyone, let's go home..."

Hooray... To the teacher, congratulations... Afternoon... See you tomorrow... we'll go to school again... Be enthusiastic about being Pancasila students... Huhaa..." End icebreaking, the students immediately responded by folding their hands on the table and praying to this. This proves that icebreaking carried out before school will be an encouragement for students which will make one day's learning memorable.

2. Pat

Icebreaking patting which is applied at the beginning of learning, between lessons and when learning begins is not conducive. Icebreaking clapping is used as a way to make students cheerful and close to the teacher. This cheerful mood can build students' self-confidence which refers to their affective development (Putri & Wahyuningsih, 2023). An example of an icebreaking clap carried out by a teacher is an enthusiastic clap done together. First the teacher will say "Clap 1" then the students respond by clapping 1x then saying "se". Then the teacher said "Clap 2" the students responded by clapping their hands 2x while saying "sema". Then the teacher says "Clap 3" and the students respond by clapping their hands 3 times and saying "happy". Finally, the teacher says "Pat 123", then the students answer by clapping their hands to the rhythm while saying "yo..spirited... Yo.. Yo...spirited". So in this case the teacher is one of the important factors in the success of icebreaking pat in learning (Puspita 2023).



Picture 5. Me Stop Clapping

3. Song

This form of icebreaking song can be used at the beginning of learning, but sometimes teachers apply this icebreaking song in between core activities as an effort to restore students' enthusiasm. Icebreaking carried out by teachers rarely uses tools such as voices, but prioritizes students singing together and creating a unified tone. It is hoped that icebreaking in the form of a song can attract students' attention to focus on learning, so that the teacher's delivery of material can be easily understood (Marzatifa et al., 2021). The following is an example of implementing an icebreaking song in fourth-grade at Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School.



Figure 6. Ice Breaking Song Game



Figure 7. Javanese Song Ice Breaking



Figure 8. Ice Breaking English Song

Based on Figure 6, Icebreaking is carried out by dividing into two groups, starting with group 1 answering "Open your mouth and laugh once" then group 2 answering "ha". Followed by group 2 saying "Open your mouth and laugh twice" then group 1 changed to answering "haha". Then again group 1 said "Open your mouth and laugh 3x" then group 2 answered "hahaha". Then all groups say "Open your mouth, laugh silently" and all students must be silent. Icebreaking is used to train cohesiveness in groups, create a relaxed atmosphere, and minimize student learning boredom (Febianti & Riyani, 2023).

Based on Figure 7, the teacher applies icebreaking at the beginning of learning every time there is a Javanese lesson on Thursday. This icebreaking was carried out without sound equipment, but the students sang along with the following song lyrics, "Yen Tomorrow.. Sugeng Enjang Yen Cloud... Sugeng Noon Yen Wengi... Sugeng Ndaluu.. Accompanied by maturnuwun,, accompanied by mature people in Yen through nderek langkung Yen lepat nyuwun pangampunten ". Icebreaking with Javanese songs helps students build understanding and think critically about Javanese culture, understand ethics through icebreaking songs, and is part of preserving the Javanese language, so that students' cognitive and moral development can be well honed (Putri & Wahyuningsih, 2023).

Based on Figure 8, the teacher applies at the beginning of learning activities only English learning content as a habit so that students can recall the material taught by the teacher. This icebreaking was carried out with great enthusiasm. "Sunday... Monday... Tuesday... Wednesday... Thursday... Friday... Saturday," are the lyrics of the icebreaking song in English. repeated 2x. So the implementation of icebreaking can help increase students' enthusiasm for learning English (Putri & Wahyuningsih, 2023).

4. Games

Games are one strategy to help students focus more (Sendana and Rachel 2020). So icebreaking in the form of a game is quite effective as an effort to restore enthusiasm for learning and create a more active class atmosphere (Puspita 2023). The teacher carries out icebreaking with a concentration game, namely pointing fingers based on the circle image on the blackboard according to the song sung by other students in turn. This can train them to be more courageous in coming forward in front of the class and increase students' self-confidence.



Figure 9. Concentration Icebreaker Game

5. Movement

The icebreaking gestures applied by the teacher are in the form of dancing or dancing, both in pairs and in groups. Icebreaking is applied at the beginning of learning or at the end of learning. The teacher implements icebreaking using tools in the form of sounds and songs. Students really like icebreaking, in its implementation students are very enthusiastic when the teacher asks them to dance. The icebreaker dances that are often implemented by grade 4 teachers are the "Indian Song Dance" and the Duck Goose Cut Dance. The Indian icebreaker song dance is performed in groups by making 3 rows of banjar, while the duck goose cutting dance is performed in groups. pair. The icebreaking movement comes from the teacher and some collaboration from the students. The application of icebreaking can also be adjusted to class conditions, if students look bored, fed up or are even playing alone then the teacher needs to know how to make bored students enthusiastic and cheerful again. In situations like this, icebreaking dancing needs to be applied (Fu et al. 2023). Teachers and students should focus more on learning (Algivari & Mustika 2022).



Figure 10. Indian Ice Breaking Dance Figure 10. Children's Rhyme Ice Breaking Dance

The Impact of Ice Breaking Activities on Learning Activities

The students' responses to icebreaking activities during learning were proven from the results of interview research.

Icebreaking Can Foster Enthusiasm and Enthusiasm for Learning

The results of the interview research between student 1 and student 2 revealed that icebreaking activities can raise enthusiasm for learning.

"If the teacher invites me to do icebreaking, I feel happy, because if I do icebreaking it will make me more enthusiastic and feel like I can understand the material better." (student interview 1 Thursday, January 25, 2024).

The results of student 2's interview are in line with the findings of student 1's interview that icebreaking can restore enthusiasm when the atmosphere is bored in learning.

"Mom, usually the teacher invites us to icebreaking. It's like when we get sleepy when we study.. Well, after icebreaking, we immediately get excited again" (student interview 2 Thursday, January 25, 2024).

From the results of the interview above, it can be concluded that icebreaking contributes to encouraging learning. This is in line with previous research which stated that this icebreaking activity was implemented to change the learning atmosphere which was starting to get bored and help raise students' enthusiasm for learning (Pranata et al., 2021; Ilham & Supriaman 2022).

Students Collaborate with Each Other

Student 3 revealed that during icebreaking he could build interactions with friends.

"During icebreaking, there is something like pairing up, making it feel like free movement with your partner. Well, couples are different, so you can interact with other friends." (student interview 3 Thursday, January 25, 2024).

This icebreaking activity can generate social interaction, togetherness, and create collaboration and closeness between teachers and students and students and classmates (Lena et al. 2023; Rois et al. 2022; Giani et al., 2022).

As A Stimulus for Student Learning

The results of student interview research 4 revealed that icebreaking made the mind more concentrated in studying.

"Usually when you finish icebreaking you will feel more confident, you will continue to be more focused while studying" (student interview 4 Thursday, January 25, 2024).

Another finding is the result of teacher observations processing lesson material into something creative, such as making songs or guessing words, which is applied through habituation to icebreaking so that learning becomes more interesting, meaningful and easy to understand. This is in line with the use of icebreaking to create a pleasant learning atmosphere (Puspita, 2023; Febriandari et al., 2018).

Building Two-Way Communication in Learning

Based on the results of observations, the 4th grade teacher at Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School, before starting the lesson the teacher invited the students to do an icebreaking applause, after the icebreaking was finished the teacher did an apperception by asking the students several questions related to the material. This makes the learning atmosphere in the class more active where students are interested in answering the teacher's questions and complement each other's theme answers. It can be said that the icebreaking technique can stimulate active involvement between teachers and students so that a good learning environment is built (Fajarudin et al., 2021; Samsiah et al., 2023).

Creating A Positive Environment for Students

Research findings from interviews with 5 students revealed that the implementation of icebreaking made the atmosphere more comfortable.

"Every time there is an icebreaking, learning is not stressful, because every icebreaking is fun, it becomes more comfortable, calmer, more exciting" (student interview 5 Thursday, January 25, 2024).

Interview findings prove that teaching and learning activities, if interspersed with icebreaking, can provide enthusiasm to students during the learning process (Algivari & Mustika 2022).

Based on the explanation above, learning in fourth-grade of Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School implementing icebreaking activities has a positive impact on students' cognitive, creative, attitude and psychomotor development (Rezki, Halim, and Sentosa 2022). Able to make students actively participate

in learning. Icebreaking is one way to create active, fun, familiar, creative and enjoyable learning (Rois et al. 2022; Lena et al. 2023).

The Importance of Ice Breaking in Learning

In learning, paying attention to learning ethics and learning styles is important according to students' preferences to build creative and adaptive learning (Pattipawaej et al., 2023). One way that teachers can do this is by implementing icebreaking activities in the classroom. This icebreaking can be used by teachers as a learning resource. Learning resources are used to convey learning material information through intermediaries or directly (Setiawan et al., 2023). This agrees with Rini (2021) who states that icebreaking can be used as a means of delivering learning material so that students can easily accept the material. By delivering fun material, icebreaking can melt a stiff atmosphere into a relaxed one (Hutahaean et al., 2022). Thus providing space for students to interact, play and share experiences. A good and enjoyable experience will have a positive impact on student development (Shaleha, 2023).

Icebreaking certainly has an important role in the learning process, this is because icebreaking is able to overcome problems in learning, namely eliminating boredom in learning. This is in accordance with the statement by Erviana et al. (2023) that icebreaking can make students concentrate again when studying. Icebreaking is also able to restore students' stamina to maintain physical and spiritual conditions so that they remain fit and comfortable during the learning process (Taufiqurrochman & Rana, 2021). Apart from that, implementing icebreaking in class can motivate students to enjoy learning and not get bored quickly (So seen et al., 2020; Mulyadi et al., 2023).

Apart from that, students certainly have their own psychological needs to be able to achieve learning goals (Mulyadi et al., 2023). One way to achieve this is by icebreaking. It was explained that from a psychological aspect, the implementation of icebreaking can help quiet students become more active in participating in a busier atmosphere, so that they are more open and brave in interacting with teachers and classmates (Amelia et al., 2023).

The application of icebreaking certainly has several advantages, such as learning time feels faster, teaching and learning activities become fun, being able to train students in social interaction, and creating a relaxed, intimate and unified learning atmosphere. With a conducive classroom atmosphere, learning contributes to creating better student achievement (Mahmud, et al., 2023). However, icebreaking also has several disadvantages, namely the class will tend to be busy, there are some students who are not active or quiet during the activity. To overcome the weaknesses of icebreaking, teachers use strategies by making icebreaking more interesting, carrying out variations of icebreaking every day to create learning activities that are fun, creative and adapt to students' interests (Erviana et al., 2023; Pranata et al., 2021).

Conclusion

This research resulted in 4th grade students at Ngaliyan 05 Elementary School implementing icebreaking during learning. The forms of icebreaking that teachers use in learning are shouting, patting, playing, singing or chirping, and body movements or dancing. Where the diversity of icebreaking reflects efforts to adapt activities to students' interests and preferences so that learning is easily accepted.

The application of icebreaking in learning activities has a positive impact on the class atmosphere, student abilities and student attitudes. Icebreaking helps create a relaxed, fun and interactive atmosphere, thus making students more comfortable and motivated to take part in learning activities, thereby creating active learning and a positive learning environment for students.

Icebreaking is an important part of the learning process because it helps overcome various problems in the learning process. Where the icebreaking technique is used as a tool to convey learning material, making learning more friendly and cheerful, helping students interact, play and share learning experiences. So that learning gives a pleasant impression to students.

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