

BANANA BOOM ICE-BREAKING IN EFL CLASSROOM: STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES

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Abstract: Banana Boom Ice-breaking is one of the most popular activities in the classroom. This study aims to investigate the impact of Banana boom ice-breaking activities on students' enthusiasm for learning and their English skills. This research uses qualitative case study research to know what students felt after doing Banana Boom Ice-breaking. The participants in this study were Junior High School students in Medan, the totalling 28 students in class IX. The data were analysed in two ways: in quantitative methods using content analysis and in qualitative methods using qualitative interpretation based on interviews with participants. The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions that were filled in by 28 students 9th class. The results show that more than half of the students who filled out the questionnaire experienced changes after doing ice breaking. Moreover, in terms of assignments, Banana Boom Ice-breaking can improve students' English skills, which can be seen from the results of this study. It is suggested that educators consider integrating Banana Boom Ice-breaking and similar engaging activities into their teaching practices to enhance students' enthusiasm for learning and foster improvements in their English language skills.

Keywords: ice breaking; language learning; motivation.

INTRODUCTION

Upgrade in creative teaching approaches is very important to improve the quality of education (Gilbert et al., 2021; Mykhailyshyn et al., 2019; Shuhratovich, 2020). Schröder & Krüger (2019) stated that innovation in education is essential to raising the standard of education as a whole. Adopting innovative and successful teaching strategies is essential in the ever-changing educational landscape in order to meet the varied needs of students and stay up with the constantly evolving expectations (Malik, 2018; Sheninger, 2019). These innovations cover an extensive range of strategies, such as the incorporation of technology, active learning, and group projects (Bean & Melzer, 2021). Educational institutions may create a dynamic environment that engages students and prepares them with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in a constantly changing society by promoting a culture of continual development and adaptation (Ansari & Khan, 2020). As the importance of educational innovation becomes more widely accepted it is clear that funding progressive teaching

approaches is an investment in the future and development of success learners (Pelletier et al., 2022).

By addressing the problems students experience thoroughly and sustainably, students will be able to develop excellent English language skills, which will help their academic performance and prepare them for success in an increasingly interdependent world (Ladson-Billings, 2011). To improve students' English proficiency, especially their fluency in pronouncing English words, there are several aspects that affect it such as motivation, background, personality, and gender (Rahman Hz, 2022). Among these aspects, motivation is the main factor in how a student has an interest in learning. With motivation to learn, they will be more interested and curious (Hidi & Renninger, 2020). Teaching English in a country where English as foreign language (EFL) can be difficult (Getie, 2020). That is the challenge for teachers in improving the quality of students' learning environment. There are challenges in creating an environment that supports collaboration and

communication between students (Hussein, 2021). One of the main problems is the lack of social engagement among students (joyful learning), which can affect their interactions in the classroom and outside the classroom.

To overcome this, teachers need to create certain strategy to make the relationship between students and teacher. One of strategy that can be used is ice breaking. the use of ice breaking techniques is an appropriate method. Ice breaking can create a friendly and supportive atmosphere, allowing students to feel comfortable interacting with each other (Martin & Bolliger, 2018). After researched, it turns out that many students have low interest in learning. They don't like studying because it's boring, and they end up feeling sleepy and uninterested in learning.

In that case, one type of ice breaking that can be used is the banana boom. Banana Boom is an ice breaking that has been modified from banana dance. Banana dance is an ice breaking that has been around since 2010. Regarding the inventor of banana dance is not known specifically, but a blogger with the blog's name is ridzkijanuar. He is a student from Bandung, he wrote in his blog that the banana dance song was introduced by Kang Prima, PCMI West Java. At that time not many people used this ice breaking, and then some college students began to introduce this ice breaking through forums that went down to schools. In banana dance students can only master vocabulary and feel happy and entertained. Therefore, researchers developed this type of ice breaking so that students are more enthusiastic in learning, not bored in class, feel happy and funny and so that students can strengthen vocabulary in English, can increase student concentration and of course can create closeness between students and teachers. So that a closeness is created. Creating closeness between students and teachers can increase student motivation, facilitate communication, and form a positive learning environment (Gares et al., 2020; Kaufmann & Vallade, 2022).

There have been numbers of researcher than already investigated about ice-breaking which can improve students' motivation (See: Artati, 2021; Fayanto et al., 2020; Kadek Bagus Rusman, 2022). These results only highlight the importance of paying attention to students' emotional and social aspects in the learning process. In the research (Fayanto et al., 2020) using ice clap-clap breaking, while in the research (Artati, 2021) using kahoot ice breaking, and in the research (Kadek Bagus Rusman, 2022) using various types

of ice breaking, namely clap-clap, yell-yell, game and sing together. Ice-breaking is not just an introductory method, but also an effective tool to create a supportive environment, increase interest in learning, and strengthen students motivation (Pratama et al., 2021). Therefore, the researcher will investigate the impact of using Banana Boom ice-breaking in increasing students' motivation in learning English. Especially can improve their English skill. This study aims to identify whether Banana Boom ice-breaking activities can positively contribute to students' level of student involvement, their interest in learning, and willingness to participate in learning activities, student's experiences from the point of view of students.

METHOD

This study uses qualitative research that examines the use of ice breaking in the classroom. The type of qualitative was used in this study is qualitative case study. Baxter & Jack (2015) stated that qualitative case study is a research that involves collecting data from several sources to explore an activity with different perspective about a phenomenon. Therefore, this research uses qualitative case study research to know what students felt after doing Banana Boom Ice-breaking. By using qualitative case study, the researcher can investigate how much influence Banana Boom ice-breaking on students' enthusiasm for learning and their English skills.

The participants in this study were Junior High School students in Medan, the totaling 28 students in class IX. The participants were selected using random sampling method. By applying the random sampling method, the researcher was able to ensure that every student in the EFL class had an equal chance of being part of the sample, so that the results of the study reflect the experience of the students as a whole. Furthermore, the data collection for this study involved three main methods namely observation, interview and questionnaire (Schensul, S. L., Schensul, J. J., & LeCompte, 1999) : an observation that provides direct behavioral data without reliance on subjective interpretation (Denzim & Lincoln, 2011), an interview that provides depth and contextual understanding that is difficult to achieve through other methods (Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L., Gutmann, M. L., & Hanson, 2003), and the third thus allowing for more objective analysis modified questionnaire comprising aspects of

certain teaching methods or approaches in learning (Jurgelaitis et al., 2019). The combination of the three, known as triangulation, has gained wide acceptance as it increases the validity and reliability of research.

Data were analyzed in two ways: in quantitative methods using content analysis and in qualitative methods using qualitative interpretation based on interviews with participants. By using content analysis that involves systematic analysis using Likert Scale (5-1) to measure the extent of students' experience in using Banana Boom Ice-Breaking by collecting students' opinions. And through qualitative interpretation of interviews with participants, the researcher can understand more deeply the experiences, perceptions, and meanings that participants give to the research topic. This approach provides deep and contextual insights into the phenomenon studied. Through these two methods of data analysis, an

overview of Boom Ice-Breaking activities can be obtained to achieve the goal of increasing students' enthusiasm for learning and their English skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result from quantitative research using questionnaires show data that can be measured numerically in percentage terms, providing a more detailed picture related to the variables studied. The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions that were filled in by 28 students 9th class in one of the Junior High Schools in Medan. They filled in the questionnaire during class time after the ice-breaking activity that had been going on for 2 months. Students were asked to respond to this questionnaire by selecting one of five options: *strongly agree*, *agree*, *neutral*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree*. These are the questions in the questionnaire which are presented in the table.

Table 1 : *The percentage (%) of the result of the questionnaire about students' experiences in doing Banana Boom Ice-breaking*

No.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	I enjoy ice-breaking activities in between learning activities	50 %	39.3%	10.7%	0%	0%
2.	Banana Boom Ice breaking is important as a learning strategy to create a good environment in the classroom	35.7%	53.5%	10.8%	0%	0%
3.	Banana Boom Ice breaking increases my enthusiasm for learning	39.3%	50.4%	10.3%	0%	0%
4.	Banana Boom Ice-breaking is effective in motivating me to learn better	25%	58%	17%	0%	0%
5.	Ice breaking helps me to get rid of sleepiness when studying	42.9%	39.9%	17.3%	0%	0%
6.	Ice breaking activities can make the positive relationship between teachers and students	35.7%	50%	10.7%	3.5%	0%
7.	After doing Banana Boom Ice- breaking, I'm more focused in learning (especially learning English)	21.4%	53.6%	21.4%	3.6%	0%
8.	Banana Boom Ice-breaking can improve my English skills (from vocabulary mastery to pronunciation)	32.1%	32.1%	28.6%	7.2%	0%
9.	I believe that learning enthusiasm is influenced by the success of ice-breaking activities	21.4%	42.9%	35.7%	0%	0%
10.	After doing Banana Boom Ice -breaking I am more interested in learning	17.9%	42.9%	39.3%	0%	0%
11.	Boom banana ice breaking activity is appropriate to do at the beginning or in between lessons	10.7%	67.9%	17.8%	3.6%	0%
12.	I am excited and enthusiastic about the Boom Banana Ice-breaking activities	14.3%	53.6%	25%	7.1%	0%
13.	I feel that boom banana practiced my					

	listening skills and focus in learning (when counting and saying boom)	28.6%	53.6%	14.3%	3.6%	0%
14.	I feel that Boom banana Ice-breaking helps to improve my speaking skills	21.4%	50%	28.6%	0%	0%
15.	Ice breaking helps me to get rid of tension and shyness in expressing myself when learning.	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the results using a questionnaire, it was found that of the 28 students who stated that Banana Boom Ice-breaking is important as a learning strategy to create a good environment in the class; there are 35.7% strongly agreed, 53.4% agreed with the statement, 10.8% were neutral towards the statement and no one chose to disagree and strongly disagree with this statement. This is evident that Banana Boom Ice-breaking can be a learning strategy to create a good environment in the class.

From the next statement, it was found that of the 28 students who stated that Ice Breaking Banana Boom increased enthusiasm for learning; there are 39.3% strongly agreed, 50.4% agreed with the statement, 10.3% were neutral towards the statement and no one chose to disagree and strongly disagree with this statement. This proves that Ice Breaking Banana Boom can increase students' enthusiasm for learning.

The other statement, it was found that of the 28 students who stated that Banana Boom Ice-breaking is effective in motivating to learn better; there are 25% strongly agreed, 58% agreed with the statement, 17% were neutral towards the statement and no one chose to disagree and strongly disagree with this statement. This proves that Ice Breaking Banana Boom is effective in motivating students to learn better.

The next statement, it was found that of the 28 students who stated that Ice breaking helps to get rid of sleepiness when studying; there are 42.9% strongly agreed, 39.9% agreed with the statement, 17.3% were neutral towards the statement and no one chose to disagree and strongly disagree with this statement. This proves that Ice Breaking Banana Boom can get rid of sleepiness and learning can become more enthusiastic.

And the next statement, it was found that of the 28 students who stated that Banana Boom Ice-breaking can improve my English skills; there are 32.1% strongly agreed, 32.1% agreed with the statement, 28.6% were neutral towards the statement, 7.2% disagree and no one chose strongly disagree with this statement. This proves that Banana Boom Ice-breaking can be learning strategy to improve students' English skill

because more than half of the students in the class agreed and a fourth were neutral to the statement and there were a few students who disagreed. However, it is definitely possible that Banana Boom Ice-breaking can improve English skills.

Banana Boom Ice-breaking is one type of ice breaking that is suitable for junior high school students. This type of ice breaking is suitable before starting learning or in between learning is taking place. The way to do this ice breaking is that first the students have to do Banana Dance. How to do it is that students pretend to be a banana and then follow the stages of how to eat a banana. In English, it is commonly called a procedure text, which is a text for doing something. The steps are; first, students say *peel banana* while making movements like peel a banana. Second, students say *cut banana* while making movements like cut banana. Third, students must say *eat banana* while making movements like eat banana. Fourth, students must say *shake banana* while making the movements like monkey shake her stomach. And then, student must say *boom banana* while making the movements students must clap their hands. and the next way to do it is that students will be appointed by the teacher randomly by counting from one to six (ex: one-banana), but with a note that every even number students must say *boom banana*.

Moreover, in terms of assignments, Banana Boom Ice-breaking can improve students' English skills. And can also improve students' concentration in learning. This can be seen from the changes experienced by students when learning.

"Banana Boom Ice-breaking can indeed improve my English skills, because there is also counting because for every even number we are not allowed to say the number but we have to say boom. This challenges the students to concentrate more because the teacher will randomly point out the numbers." – (said one of students which doing the Ice Breaking)

Banana Boom Ice-breaking can be a great way to break the monotony in the class. This can be seen from students who are more actively

interacting when learning after doing ice breaking. And also can create closeness between teachers and students in the class. The closeness between teachers and students makes the learning atmosphere better (Hargreaves, 2000). The emotional closeness between teachers and students creates a more conducive learning atmosphere, allows for positive and supportive interactions, and increases the effectiveness of the learning process (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). It can open up space for a more open exchange of ideas and strengthen the bond between teachers and students, creating an environment where learning does not only focus on knowledge transfer, but also on building deep and trusting relationships. With this closeness, not only is the learning material better absorbed, but also the students' sense of engagement and motivation to achieve better.

In addition, Banana Boom Ice-breaking can increase students' enthusiasm for learning. And Banana Boom Ice-breaking can reduce sleepiness when learning. And also Banana Boom Ice-breaking can an option to learn in a fun way.

"I'm more excited to learn, I don't feel sleepy anymore, it feels more fun to learn in a fun way." – (said one of students which doing ice breaking)

Banana Boom ice breaking not only fosters a positive learning atmosphere, but also encourages students to express themselves freely during the learning process. As a result, they no longer feel embarrassed to ask questions or seek clarification on material they find difficult. This method effectively breaks down communication barriers, allowing students to engage in a more open and collaborative learning environment. By introducing ice breaking, the learning experience becomes not only educational but also fun, relieving students from undue pressure (Howe & Watson, 2021). This approach encourages a sense of friendship among students, enhancing their overall educational experience and making the learning process more dynamic and interactive.

In a research that included direct observation by the researcher, it was found that students had changes after doing Banana Boom Ice-breaking, those changes are: First, Students are more enthusiastic in learning. Second, students are more active in interacting with teachers and students in the classroom. Third, no students sleep during lesson. And the fourth, students have more

vocabulary than before. And the last, students are more confident in saying words in English

From some of the changes experienced by students after doing Banana Boom Ice-breaking activities that have been found by researchers based on the results of observations, it cannot be denied that before doing ice breaking activities many students in the class fell asleep. This is due to the fact that the activities are very busy. Because this school is a boarding school based tahfiz, which requires students to memorize the Qur'an and other activities that make students sleep less. Therefore, researchers made observations to observe these changes. And the results of the observation that students are no longer sleepy during the lesson time and other positive results, after doing Banana Boom Ice-breaking activities students have many changes with the context of changing for the better. In this finding, according to Hariono (2021) stated that Ice breaking is one of the ways that can get rid of sleepiness to change the situation from boring to fun.

To ensure the accuracy of the data in this study, researchers conducted a study by distributing questionnaires to 9th grade Junior High School students in Medan. Of the 28 students who filled out the questionnaire, it was found that more than half of the students experienced changes after doing ice breaking, this can be seen from the results of filling out the questionnaire that has been presented in Table.1. From the overall data obtained, more students chose strongly agree and agree, less than half of the students chose neutral and 2 people chose disagree. It can be concluded that Banana Boom Ice breaking has a good impact on student experience. After doing the Banana Boom ice breaking, students experienced many changes, especially in learning enthusiasm, active learning and reduced sleepiness. But not only that, in addition to students can increase their enthusiasm and motivation to learn, students can also develop their English skills.

Overall, these finding is in line with previous research. In Fayanto (2020), the finding found that ice breaking clapping is very helpful for the learning process in boring situations. This is certainly in line with the findings in this study, which also found that ice breaking can get rid of boring when learning even though with different types of ice breaking, in Fayanto (2020) using clap-clap ice breaking and in this study using Banana Boom ice breaking. And this result is also in line with previous research in Artati (2021), the

finding found that an ice breaking has an effect on EFL students' learning motivation, this research use Kahoot ice breaker. And in the findings of this study Banana Boom ice breaking can break boredom when learning. Moreover, and also this research is in line with previous research, in Kadek Bagus Rusman (2022) the findings are that ice breaking can change the learning environment from passive to active, stiff to moving, and bored to happy. This is certainly in line with this study which found that ice breaking can also change the passive environment to an active one. There are various types of ice braking used in Rusman's research (2022), namely games, shouting, singing, clapping, humour, and limb movements. And in this study only uses one type of ice breaking, namely Banana Boom Ice-breaking. Although this research is in line with several previous research, there is something different about this research. Besides being able to break the monotony in the middle of learning, it can motivate students in learning, can create a passive environment to be active Banana, but also Boom Ice-breaking can also improve students' English skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been done, the researchers conclude that Banana Boom Ice-breaking has an effect on students' enthusiasm for learning. In particular, Banana Boom Ice-breaking is very helpful for students in get rid of sleepiness while studying. Based on the results of observations, the changes experienced by students during one month were very significant and also based on the results of interviews and questionnaires given by researchers to students, most students agreed with the statement. However, there are some students who disagree with the statement. Because we cannot force students to be able, it all depends on the student. However, there are only a few students who disagree as much as they agree. And students stated that Banana Boom Ice-breaking not only can motivate them in learning, but also can improve students' English skills. Therefore, it is recommended for teachers, especially Junior High School teachers to use Banana Boom Ice-breaking at the beginning or in between lessons to break boredom, increase concentration, motivate students in learning, get rid of sleepiness, and can improve students' English skills.

However, this study is limited for some extent. First, the respondents taken in this study were very small, which can impact for the results of this study not being as accurate as if there were

more respondents. Respondents taken only came from one educational institution and only one class, it could be that the results in other schools were different. Second, this ice breaking is more interesting only for female students. This causes male students to be less attracted in doing ice breaking. And the last one, Banana Boom Ice-breaking, must be done by a teacher who has a loud voice to guide students in doing this ice breaking. So if the teacher has a quiet voice, it will cause this ice breaking to not go well.

However, there have been many disadvantages in this research. For this reason, the researcher hopes for the next researchers will create a type of ice breaking that is can interest to all of students for female and male students that not only can solve boredom in the classroom, but can also improve students' skills in learning.

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