



Application of Ice Breaking Techniques to Improve Learning Concentration of 2-3 Year Old Children at the Al-Wildan SPS Institution in Manyarsidomukti Village

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Abstract

Young children have short attention spans, requiring learning strategies that help them maintain focus during activities. This study aims to examine the implementation of ice breaking techniques in improving the concentration of children aged 2-3 years at SPS Al-Wildan Manyarsidomukti. A qualitative case study approach was used through observation and documentation of two children before and after the ice breaking sessions. The results indicate that ice breaking did not significantly improve concentration. The children still showed inconsistent attention, low engagement, and limited ability to follow instructions and movement patterns. These findings suggest that the ice breaking activities applied were not yet suitable for the developmental needs of children aged 2-3 years and require adjustment to effectively support their learning readiness.

Kata kunci:

ice breaking, konsentrasi belajar, anak usia dini, fokus belajar, strategi pembelajaran.

Abstrak

Anak usia dini memiliki rentang konsentrasi yang pendek, sehingga diperlukan strategi pembelajaran yang mampu membantu mereka mempertahankan fokus selama kegiatan belajar. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengetahui penerapan teknik ice breaking dalam meningkatkan konsentrasi anak usia 2-3 tahun di SPS Al-Wildan Manyarsidomukti. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif studi kasus dengan observasi dan dokumentasi terhadap dua anak sebelum dan sesudah kegiatan ice breaking. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan ice breaking belum memberikan peningkatan konsentrasi yang berarti. Anak masih menunjukkan perilaku kurang fokus, mudah bosan, serta belum mampu mengikuti instruksi dan gerakan secara konsisten. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa ice breaking yang digunakan belum sesuai kebutuhan anak usia 2-3 tahun dan perlu disesuaikan agar mampu mendukung kesiapan belajar mereka.

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INTRODUCTION

Children in early childhood, especially between 2 and 3 years old, enter a developmental period that requires active stimulation and a supportive learning environment. At this age, children tend to exhibit high levels of physical activity and agile motor skills, making maintaining focus during learning activities a major challenge. Research shows that early childhood concentration skills have a significant impact on their learning outcomes. The level of concentration in preschool children has a positive and significant impact on learning outcomes, with a coefficient of determination of 25.1%, indicating that 25.1% of the variation in learning outcomes can be explained by early childhood concentration (Budiwanto *et al.*, 2025). Therefore, in the context of educational services such as at SPS Al-Wildan, Manyarsidomukti Village, it is important to design interventions that can improve the concentration aspect in children aged 2-3 years.

Direct observation in the field of two active early childhood children at SPS Al-Wildan revealed that although the children showed high enthusiasm to be involved in learning activities, they consistently faced difficulties in maintaining attention when the activity lasted more than a few minutes. These children are easily distracted by stimuli from the environment, such as noise, movement of peers, or sudden changes in activity (Aziz & Dwiayama, 2022). Based on the theory of learning concentration, this process involves the individual's ability to direct attention to a specific task or learning object, as well as withstand distractions both from within and outside the self. For example, in learning activities about daily prayer, colors, identification, learning when the child's perception does not listen to the teacher's instructions. In the literature, concentration is associated with conducive environmental conditions, children's cognitive capacity, and effective teaching methods in focusing attention (Juwita *et al.*, 2025).

In a study of 2 children before the activity *ice breaking* As soon as the lesson began, the children appeared unfocused and not fully prepared to participate in the learning activities. "Sz" was seen pacing back and forth several times, leaving her seat, or paying little attention to the teacher. This situation indicated that the initial atmosphere of the class was less than conducive and the children's enthusiasm was not being channeled properly. After the activities, *ice breaking* The class atmosphere began to become more relaxed, but the children's responses varied. "Ar" seemed less enthusiastic about the movements and preferred to lie down, so she still needed additional motivation.

Taking this situation into consideration, the technique *ice breaking* has emerged as a promising approach to be applied in early childhood learning to strengthen concentration. This technique is defined as a light, engaging, and entertaining activity carried out at the beginning or during a learning activity to "freeze" the atmosphere or move from a state of less focus to a state of greater readiness for learning. The application of this method *ice breaking* In early childhood, it has been statistically proven to increase learning concentration compared to the control group. *Ice breaking* can change the learning atmosphere from passive to active, from rigid to dynamic, from boring to cheerful which indirectly supports the readiness and continuity of children's concentration in learning (Ulfadhilah & Nurkhaifah, 2025).

Several previous studies indicate that the technique *ice breaking* has a positive impact on increasing the concentration and involvement of early childhood children in the learning process. Research by Hidayah & Filasofa (2024) in the Obsession Journal shows that the

implementation of *ice breaking* Before the main activity, it can help children refocus, as the learning atmosphere becomes more relaxed and enjoyable. This finding aligns with research conducted by Lestari & Suryana (2021), which shows that *ice breaking* is effective in increasing children's readiness and response to teacher instructions, especially in preschool-aged children who are prone to losing attention. Meanwhile, research conducted by (Ningsih, 2019) also stated that *ice breaking* is able to increase children's participation in learning through simple, engaging movement activities. Putri & Raharjo, (2022) confirms that light motor activities are carried out in *ice breaking* can help stimulate children's concentration and readiness to learn. Overall, the results of the study show that *ice breaking* provide a positive impact on the focus, enthusiasm, and learning behavior of PAUD-aged children.

The similarity between this research and previous research lies in the same objective, namely to examine the role of *ice breaking* as a strategy to improve concentration in early childhood learning. Both previous and this research emphasize the importance of short, enjoyable activities as a means to reduce children's boredom before returning to the main learning activity. Furthermore, both stem from a similar concept: that movement, rhythm, or small games can help improve children's focus, enthusiasm, and readiness to learn.

The difference between this study and previous research lies in its focus and context. This study examined children aged 2–3 years, while previous research generally focused on children aged 4–6 years. Furthermore, this study used a case study approach with in-depth observations of two children at SPS Al-Wildan to obtain more contextual data. Observations focused on spontaneous responses, the ability to follow movements, and changes in focus after activities. *ice breaking*. Through this research, it is hoped that a real picture will be obtained regarding the effectiveness of *ice breaking* in improving the concentration of early childhood learning, as well as being a reference for PAUD educators in designing more interesting learning activities that are appropriate to children's needs (Novelinna & Putri, 2025). Therefore, researchers want to know how to apply the technique of *ice breaking* can improve the learning concentration of early childhood children aged 2-3 years at SPS Al-Wildan, Manyarsidomukti Village.

RESEARCH METHODS

Qualitative research methods are an approach that emphasizes an in-depth understanding of social phenomena from the perspective of participants or individuals being studied, without relying on numbers or statistical data, but rather on the meaning, processes, and experiences experienced by the subjects (Agustini *et al.*, 2023). In the context of early childhood education, this method is used to understand how children learn, interact, and respond to learning activities such as the application of techniques. *ice breaking* to increase concentration. This study adopted a qualitative research method, which emphasizes an in-depth understanding of social phenomena from the perspective of participants. Qualitative research aims to explore and understand the meanings perceived by individuals or groups as a result of social or humanitarian problems. The researcher acts as the primary instrument, directly observing, recording, and interpreting phenomena occurring in the field (Abidin *et al.*, 2023). A qualitative approach was chosen because this research focuses on the process, meaning, and in-depth understanding of early childhood behavior in the context of implementing techniques. *ice breaking* in their learning environment.

The type of research applied is a case study. A case study is a research method used to explore phenomena in a real context (Assyakurrohim *et al.*, 2022). In this research, the case study focused on one institution, namely SPS Al-Wildan in Manyarsidomukti Village, by conducting in-depth observations of two early childhood children aged 2 to 3 years who served as the main subjects of the study. Through the case study method, researchers were able to gain a clear and contextual understanding of how the technique *ice breaking* used in the learning process, children's responses to these activities, and the impact of applying this technique on increasing children's learning focus.

The observation method is carried out directly on children's activities during the learning process at SPS Al-Wildan, both before and after the application of the technique *ice breaking*. This observation aims to collect real data regarding children's behavior when interacting with teachers and peers, as well as their responses to learning activities involving *ice breaking* (Amelia *et al.*, 2021). Researchers observed factors such as attention levels, concentration duration, facial expressions, and children's participation in movements or games. Observations were conducted repeatedly to identify consistent behavioral changes related to increased learning concentration. Documentation methods complemented the observations by collecting visual and written evidence, such as photographs of activities *ice breaking*, field notes from teachers. These documents help researchers understand the learning context more objectively and ensure that the process of implementing the technique *ice breaking* properly recorded as evidence of research implementation (Ramdhani *et al.*, 2019).

The data analysis technique in this study follows the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman in their research Hayati & Zurianti (2024) which is divided into three main steps: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. In the data reduction step, researchers select, focus, simplify, and process raw data obtained from observations into information relevant to the research objectives. This process aims to highlight important aspects related to the application of engineering *ice breaking* and its impact on the concentration of early childhood children. Furthermore, in the data presentation stage, the results of the reduction were arranged in narrative form and observation tables to make it easier for researchers to see the relationship patterns of the various findings that emerged during the study. This data presentation facilitated researchers' understanding of how changes in children's behavior occurred after the application of the technique *ice breaking*. The final step is drawing conclusions and verifying them, the process of interpreting the meaning of the presented data to obtain valid findings. Researchers draw conclusions based on the patterns, relationships, and trends they discover, then verify them by comparing data from various sources to ensure the accuracy of the research results. (Widiastuti & Dewi, 2023).

This research was conducted at the Al-Wildan Early Childhood Education Institution (SPS) in Manyarsidomukti Village, Manyar District, Gresik Regency, East Java. This location was chosen because the institution actively carries out learning activities for early childhood and is open to the implementation of innovative learning methods such as *ice breaking*. The subjects in this study were two early childhood children aged 2–3 years who actively participated in activities at SPS Al-Wildan. Subjects were selected using purposive sampling, a sampling technique based on specific considerations, in this case children who showed

difficulty maintaining concentration during learning activities. The following table lists the assessment instruments used in this study::

Table 1.

Assessment Instrument for the Application of Ice Breaking Techniques in Improving Learning Concentration of Early Childhood 2-3 Years at the Al-Wildan SPS Institution

No	Theory	Concentration in Study	MB	BSH	BB	Information
1	<i>Ice breaking</i> helps break up boredom and increase children's focus through short, fun activities (Guidance, 2020).	Note whether the child returns to focus after the activity.				Note whether the child returns to focus after the activity.
2	<i>Ice breaking</i> can reset children's energy and emotions so that they are ready to receive relearning (Lestari & Suryana, 2021).	Children respond quickly to teacher's instructions				Observe the child's response speed after <i>ice breaking</i>
3	<i>Ice breaking</i> able to increase children's participation and involvement through repetitive movements and social play (Ningsih, 2019).	Children participate without being forced				Note enthusiasm, activeness, or resistance
4	<i>Ice breaking</i> stimulate motor readiness that supports the ability to concentrate (Putri & Raharjo, 2022).	Children are able to follow simple movement patterns				Write down whether the child follows the sequence of movements correctly.
5	<i>Ice breaking</i> helps trigger short-term memory through movement/rhythm patterns (Dewi, 2020).	Children remember the sequence of activities <i>ice breaking</i>				Note the ability to repeat movement sequences.

Information:

MB : Starting to Develop

BSH : Developing As Expected

BB : Not Yet Developed

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

In this study, the results obtained were in the Indicators *ice breaking* helps break up boredom and increase children's focus through short, fun activities that have not yet developed.

Children "Sz" after the activity *ice breaking* it was found that the activity *ice breaking* not yet able to break the boredom, this can be seen from the child "Sz" still walking around the class, then when increasing focus, child "Sz" was only able to focus for 1 minute. Indicator *ice breaking* can reset the child's energy and emotions so that they are ready to receive relearning which has not yet developed. In children "Sz" they are not yet able to reset their energy and emotions as when doing *ice breaking*. Child "Sz" cries for toys and often gets angry when child "Sz" is not obeyed. Indicator *ice breaking* able to increase children's participation and involvement through repetitive movements and social play has not developed. Child "Sz" if changes begin to appear in increasing participation and involvement through repetitive movements, child "Sz" is willing to imitate the teacher's movements but does not always do so depending on the child "Sz"'s mood. Indicator *ice breaking* stimulate motor readiness that supports the ability to concentrate which has not yet developed. At that time *ice breaking* by doing motor activities, child "Sz" wants to do it but after *ice breaking* When finished, child "Sz" no longer concentrates and immediately does his own activities according to his heart's desire. Indicator *ice breaking* helps trigger short-term memory through undeveloped movement patterns or rhythms. After doing *ice breaking* Child "Sz" was not yet able to answer questions from the teacher in the opening or closing activities.

On the Indicator *Ice breaking* helps break up boredom and increase children's focus through short, fun activities that have not yet developed. Children "Ar" after the activity *ice breaking* It was found that he was not yet able to break his boredom. This can be seen from the fact that child Ar still likes to sleep in class, and in terms of increasing the focus of child "Ar" it has not developed at all. Indicator *Ice breaking* can reset the child's energy and emotions so that they are ready to receive relearning which has not yet developed. In "Ar" children, they are not yet able to reset their energy and emotions as when doing *ice breaking*. Child "Ar" often falls asleep and is emotional during learning, often gets angry and doesn't like doing activities. Indicator *ice breaking* able to increase children's participation and involvement through repetitive movements and social play has not developed. "Ar" children have not been able to increase participation and involvement through repetitive movements and are not interested in social play, "Ar" children during *ice breaking* just likes to lie around. Indicator *ice breaking* stimulate motor readiness that supports the ability to concentrate which has not yet developed. At that time *ice breaking* In class, child Ar doesn't want to move at all, but if his friends have gone home and there is no teacher in the class, child "Ar" is willing to be with his parents. Indicator *Ice breaking* helps trigger short-term memory through undeveloped movement patterns or rhythms. After doing *ice breaking* Child "Ar" was not yet able to answer questions from the teacher in the opening or closing activities.

Table 2.

Results of the Assessment of the Application of Ice Breaking Techniques in Improving Learning Concentration of Early Childhood 2-3 Years at the Al-Wildan SPS Institution.

No	Theory	Name						Information
		Sz			Ar			
		MB	BSH	BB	MB	BSH	BB	
1	<i>Ice breaking</i> helps break up boredom and increase children's focus through short, fun activities (Guidance, 2020).			in			in	Note whether the child returns to focus after the activity.
2	<i>Ice breaking</i> can reset children's energy and emotions so that they are ready to receive relearning (Lestari & Suryana, 2021).			in			in	Observe the child's response speed after <i>ice breaking</i>
3	<i>Ice breaking</i> able to increase children's participation and involvement through repetitive movements and social play (Ningsih, 2019).			in			in	Note enthusiasm, activeness, or resistance
4	<i>Ice breaking</i> stimulate motor readiness that supports the ability to concentrate (Putri & Raharjo, 2022).			in			in	Write down whether the child follows the sequence of movements correctly.
5	<i>Ice breaking</i> helps trigger short-term memory through movement/rhythm patterns (Dewi, 2020).			in			in	Note the ability to repeat movement sequences.

Discussion

From the perspective of the theory of concentration in learning, the increase in focus that occurs in children after *ice breaking* can be explained through the child's ability to direct his attention to one learning object and avoid distractions from the surrounding environment (Budiwanto *et al.*, 2025). At the age of 2–3 years, children's attention span is still limited, so active and interactive learning methods such as *ice breaking* It is important to maintain their concentration. Activities such as body movements, singing, or simple games in *ice breaking* helps combine children's sensory and motor functions, so they can refocus on the main activity (Mualli *et al.*, 2022).

Theoretically, the relationship between *ice breaking* and increased concentration in learning is also supported by Gebi *et al.* (2021), who found that play activities in learning increase children's motivation and attention. In this context, *ice breaking* It not only functions as

entertainment, but also as an educational strategy that improves children's emotional state so they are ready to learn again. The 4F principle explained by Lena *et al.* (2023) Fun, Friendly, Focus, Fresh can also be seen being applied in activities at SPS Al-Wildan, where the learning atmosphere becomes fresher, friendlier, and more enjoyable, so that children are more easily directed to participate actively.

Based on the observation data shown in Table 2. *Documentation of the Assessment Results of the Application of Ice Breaking Techniques in Improving Learning Concentration of Early Childhood 2-3 Years at the Al-Wildan SPS Institution*, indicating that the indicator *ice breaking*, which aims to overcome boredom and improve children's concentration through short, fun activities. This condition is in accordance with research by Mardiani (2024) which explains that children's activities *ice breaking* can create a pleasant learning atmosphere, reduce stress, and rekindle students' interest and focus in learning. However, children "Sz" and "Ar" did not show any positive or adequate changes in attitudes in the two children observed (children "Sz" and "Ar"). Both still showed signs of boredom, such as wandering around the classroom and lying down, and had very low concentration, lasting only about one minute. This indicates that the learning method *ice breaking* currently implemented is not effective in dealing with the problem of boredom and children's focus during the learning process in class (Adiansa *et al.*, 2023).

On the indicator *ice breaking* The role of the child's energy and emotions to reorganize them so they are ready for relearning has not shown any improvement. Child "Sz" exhibits fluctuating emotions, such as crying and anger when her desires are not met. Similarly, child "Ar" often falls asleep and expresses anger when faced with learning. This indicates that *ice breaking* have not been successful in managing their emotions and energy so they can refocus on learning (Ifadah, 2021) Ice-breaking indicators that can encourage children's participation and engagement through repetitive activities and social interactions have not shown significant progress. Although children "Sz" have begun to imitate the teacher's behavior, this is not consistent; this depends on their mood. Meanwhile, children "Ar" have not shown interest in social movement or play, preferring to sleep (Erviana *et al.*, 2023).

On the measure that stimulates motor preparation that supports focus, child "Sz" shows involvement when involved in the opening motor activity of the event but loses attention after the activity is finished, while child ar chooses not to engage in any activity at all, except when accompanied by parents when alone, depicting minimal motor readiness to support focus (Adiansa *et al.*, 2023; Erviana *et al.*, 2023). Indicators that assess the ability *ice breaking* still not successful in triggering short-term memory through movement patterns or rhythm. Children "Sz" and "Ar" were not able to provide answers to questions asked by the teacher either at the beginning or at the end of the class after *ice breaking*, which shows that short-term memory stimulation has not been achieved (Adiansa *et al.*, 2023; Ifadah, 2021). Research Ulfadhilah & Nurkhafifah (2025) confirms that *ice breaking* effective in improving children's concentration because it provides an active break that refreshes their minds from the fatigue of studying. Observation results for children "Sz" and "Ar" did not support these findings, where both showed no increase in attention and engagement after the session. *ice breaking*.

CONCLUSION

Implementation of activities *ice breaking* For children aged 2-3 years in this study, the results were suboptimal in various aspects measured. Icebreakers were not successful in reducing boredom and increasing children's attention during the learning process, with children still showing signs of boredom and low attention. Furthermore, *ice breaking* It's also not effective in resetting children's energy and emotions so they're ready to effectively re-receive learning materials. Children's participation and engagement through repetitive movements and social play haven't shown significant improvement. Children's motor skills, which support concentration after ice-breaking activities, are still lacking, and short-term memory stimulation through movement patterns or rhythms hasn't developed.

All these findings indicate that the method *ice breaking* The methods applied need to be improved with a more interesting, varied approach, and one that is appropriate to the characteristics of children so that the goal of increasing children's motivation, focus, and involvement in learning can be achieved well.

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