

ABSTRACT

Speaking anxiety is the fear felt by students when speaking English, which can significantly hinder their ability to communicate effectively in the classroom. To address this issue, teachers employed various strategies to create a more comfortable and engaging learning environment. One of the most effective methods is the use of ice-breaking activities. These activities can be conducted at the beginning, middle, or end of a lesson and are designed to reduce tension and anxiety among students, thereby fostering a more relaxed and interactive atmosphere. This study aimed to explore how teachers utilize ice-breaking activities and how students perceive these activities in overcoming speaking anxiety. The research employed a qualitative method and a case study design to gather comprehensive insights. The participants included one English teacher and 29 students from a vocational high school in Ciamis. Data collection involved interviews and closed-ended questionnaires to gather detailed information about the teachers' practices and students' perceptions. The findings of this study indicate that ice-breaking activities can indeed reduce the speaking anxiety experienced by students during the learning process. However, the study also revealed that ice-breaking activities have not been able to significantly improve students' public speaking skills or enhance their self-confidence. Despite this limitation, the study concludes that ice-breaking activities have a positive impact on the teaching and learning process, contributing to a more enjoyable and less stressful environment for students. In summary, while ice-breaking activities are effective in reducing speaking anxiety, they may not fully address their skill of public speaking and self-confidence. Nonetheless, their positive influence on the classroom atmosphere makes them a valuable tool for English language teachers seeking to create a more supportive and engaging learning environment for their students.