

## STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON USING ICE BREAKING TO INFLUENCE THEIR CONFIDENCE IN ENGLISH CLASS

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### Abstract

*This study examines perception of ice-breaking activities on the self-confidence of Grade 11 students at SMA Negeri 5 Pinrang. Using a mixed methods approach, the results showed that the students' perception of ice-breaking significantly increased students' self-confidence. Based on the questionnaire administered to 33 students, 45.45% felt more confident after the activity. Although there were differences in students' perceptions, some students felt less affected and 33.33% were still in doubt. Interviews supported these findings, with many students feeling more encouraged to speak up in class, although some still felt anxious. The activity also strengthened relationships between students and created a more collaborative classroom atmosphere. Overall, icebreaking proved to be effective in increasing confidence, although teacher support is still needed.*

*Keywords: Ice-breaking, self-confidence, English Language Learning*

### Introduction

English language learning in schools often faces challenges related to students' self-confidence. An American journalist believes that self-confidence is not only a very important part of life, but it is also very complex (Shipman, 2014). Therefore, everyone needs a sufficient level of self-confidence to be able to express themselves more quietly. Students in the classroom also need to have confidence in order to participate actively in the learning process, succeed in their learning objectives, and take the lead in developing their skills. Additionally, they must have confidence in order to interact socially with their classmates.

On the other hand, our complicated or declining self-confidence and not allowing ourselves to be confident is often more noticeable when we're working or performing in public (Shipman, 2014). However, low confidence in English can hold back students' active participation in class, as well as have an impact on their motivation and learning outcomes. Lack of confidence can make it difficult for us to say or do what we want. This lack of confidence will continue and become a habit in our mind that can be exhausting, frustrating and depressing (Shipman, 2014). As a result, we grow up to be

low self-confident individuals who find it difficult to be visible or active in terms of expression and social interaction. This is important to note because confidence plays a critical factor in the foreign language learning process.

In the meantime, ice breaking is a fun and effective way to help students develop relationships with each other (Staff, 2020). Some games will help students to find out their friends' names, and after a few interactions they will start to share information about themselves. This can help students become more familiar and feel more comfortable to participate in other activities and games. In addition, one author said: "Ice breaking is a way to make the atmosphere more comfortable and relaxed, like melting ice" (Sukmajadi, 2021). Based on this description, the author can conclude that by using ice-breaking the relationship between students can become closer in a good way and the atmosphere of the class during the learning process will become more comfortable and relaxed, and with this atmosphere it will help students to be able to communicate or do something with more courage and confidence, this is a positive step to be able to increase students' confidence.

Previous research has shown that ice-breaking has a number of benefits in language classes, one of which is that it can help to overcome anxiety or lack of confidence, because by doing ice-breaking they can break out of their routine for a while into more cheerful activities and relax (Makhmudovna, 2022). However, these studies focus more on the concept of ice-breaking in English lessons than on the impact on confidence.

Self-confidence has been studied in previous studies. In 2018, Sari (2018) used quantitative methods to study "The Influence of Self-Confidence on Student Prestiment in History Class X IPA Program in SMA Negeri 1 Cerme Gresik" and discovered that self-confidence significantly impacted student learning achievement in the class that used ice breaking.

According to Musdalipah's (2022) research, "The Effect of Ice Breaker in Increasing Students' Motivation to Learn English at the 7th Grade of SMPN 01 Noling," which used a pre-experimental study approach in the VII.2 class, when icebreakers were used, learner's motivation significantly changed. This was further supported by observations showing that students consistently enjoyed, engaged, and participated

in class. When learning English, the students reported that they really appreciated the icebreaker.

Alamsyah (2017) used a pre-experimental approach in their subsequent study, "The Use of Ice Breaker to Improve Students' Speaking Ability at The Junior High School (SMP Negeri 3 Ma'rang) Pangkep." According to the study, icebreakers helped students become more proficient speakers, especially in terms of accuracy and fluency.

Ghifarah (2023) completed another study titled "Students' Perception Towards the Role of Ice Breaking Activities in Learning English at Senior High School." The purpose of this study was to find out how senior high school students felt about icebreakers and what kinds of icebreakers operated best. Using qualitative methods, the study found that students had a positive perception of ice-breaking activities and particularly enjoyed games. The study came to the conclusion that games are particularly appropriate for high school students and that icebreakers are highly suggested to engage students in the learning process.

Additionally, Rogers (2002) conducted research titled "Subtle ice-breaking: encouraging socialization and interaction around a large public display." This study investigates how people move, interact, and socialize in public or in crowds in order to boost self-confidence. Several experiments and icebreaker activities were used in this study. According to this study, it may be beneficial to use these tech-based tools to facilitate the most subdued forms of ice-breaking at social events.

The researchers discovered a number of parallels between this study and the aforementioned research. The application of icebreakers in an educational setting is the primary emphasis of both this study and those earlier studies. The study's goal is to investigate whether icebreakers in the classroom have an impact on students' learning. On the flip side, this study will be carried out throughout the classroom learning process, which includes icebreakers.

But there are also differences. Alamsyah (2017) focuses more on how icebreakers affect students' capacity to talk. However, both studies were conducted in junior high schools, and Musdalipah (2022) focuses on how icebreakers affect students' motivation to learn English. The consequences of ice breaking on learning have been

the subject of numerous earlier studies, but no one has examined how students view its use and how it may impact their self-confidence.

Perception among students is crucial to recognizing the advantages of icebreakers in the classroom. According to Callanan (2017), Kant believed that perception was a process that depends on the mind's inherent cognitive structure. As a result, perception is not just a reflection of the outside world but also the outcome of the interaction between the outside world and the mind's internal structure. Students begin to feel less anxious and more relax when they engage in icebreaker activities, which improves their ability to integrate new material. Students are more receptive to learning when ice breaking is used to create an enjoyable and stress-reducing environment. It helps students to connect what they have learned to their first social encounters. This improves their readiness and makes it simpler for them to. By doing this, we can increase students' positive attitudes and openness to the information, which will improve their comprehension and involvement in the class.

Additionally, according to one professor, perception is an active process where people interpret and assign meaning to the visual data they are exposed to (Zakia, 2017). Thus, it's critical to comprehend how students see the usage of icebreakers in English classes. These impressions can reveal important details regarding how students perceive and assess the efficiency of the confidence-boosting technique. Understanding students' perspectives can help teachers modify more suitable and successful icebreakers to encourage students' confidence growth.

According to Robbins (2001), "perception is the definition of understanding another person." Thus, our perception is influenced by the information we are given. Perception is defined in a number of ways. Chen (2003) believes that determining the effectiveness of training requires considering students' perceptions. Perception is the process by which we use our five senses to understand what we see about a thing, someone, occasion, or context. After processing and interpreting this data, we can react in a positive or negative manner (Agusriana, 2021).

According to Irwanto (2002), there are two types of perception resulting from human-object interaction, which are called positive and negative perception, which are understood as follows:

#### a) Positive perception

Positive perception is the description of all information (known or unknown) in a positive light. To put it another way, to perceive something positive is to evaluate an object that includes oneself and has a positive meaning. In addition, a person who has a good impression of the perceived object will accept and support it.

#### b) Negative perception

Negative perceptions are negative or inappropriate interpretations of information (known or unknown). In short, negative perception occurs when someone evaluates an object that involves them and has a bad meaning. Moreover, a negative perceiver rejects the perceived object

Some academics have also given their views on the definition of confidence (Sahibzada, 2020). Here are some definitions of confidence according to different experts:

- 1) Self-confidence is a factor in learning that can have an impact on the participation and progress of students (Norman & Hyland, 2003).
- 2) Confidence is defined as a student's belief or trust in doing something successfully (Kanza, 2016).
- 3) A significant indicator of success in regard to the tasks completed is self-confidence. This is due to the fact that self-confidence is the force that encourages a person to move forward, to develop, and to constantly improve themselves. (Elfiky, 2009).

Based on the theories of experts, The researcher concludes that self-confidence is the strength that inspires a person to develop or move forward and is one of the supporting factors for success, where the students really need self-confidence to further explore themselves to increase knowledge and experience, and also self-confidence is aspect that can determine the level of success of a person in the activities they do, therefore the self-confidence of students is very important.

In Ryan and Deci's (2000) article on Self-Determination Theory (SDT), there are several key indicators that contribute to increased self-confidence that are relevant in a learning context. These indicators include:

- a) Competence: Self-confidence develops when individuals have a sense of competence and effectiveness in the face of challenges. In a learning context, students who have a sense that they can do a task well will be more confident.

- b) **Autonomy:** The feeling of being in control of actions and decisions. When students feel they have freedom in the learning process, they tend to feel more confident to participate actively.
- c) **Social Connection:** The need to connect and feel valued in social interactions. Positive social support can build students' confidence, both from peers and from teachers.
- d) **Intrinsic motivation:** Self-confidence increases when students engage in activities that they enjoy and feel satisfied with their accomplishments without external pressure.

### Research Methodology

The design of this research was a mixed-methods approach, using the concurrent embedded combination method. The data obtained were expected to be more complete and more accurate. In the combination design, this research aimed to understand the students' perceptions of the use of ice-breaking activities in influencing their confidence in English class.

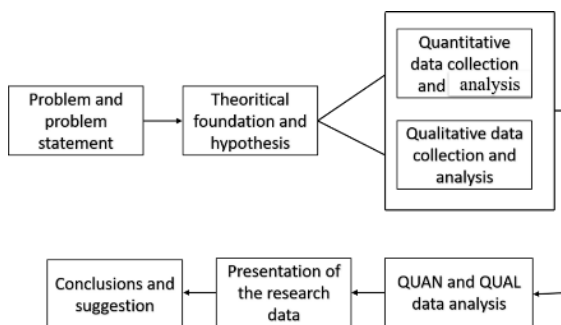


Figure 1. The mix method Design

Based on the diagram 3.1 in this study using qualitative methods as the primary method, the proposed method of thinking is more dominant with the mindset of quantitative methods.

The questionnaire was distributed to all 33 students in class X1.1 after the ice-breaking activities were completed. The goal was to determine students' perceptions of their confidence before and after the ice-breaking sessions. The responses were collected and analyzed to calculate a mean score and standard deviation of students' confidence levels. This questionnaire was based on indicators of self-confidence. If the values obtained from the questionnaire results were at a high level then there

was an increase in influence. To see the score of the questionnaire, the following table is given.

Table 1. The Score According to the Likert Scale (Source: Likert, R. (1932))

No	Indicators	Score
1	Strongly agree	4
2	Agree	3
3	Disagree	2
4	Strongly disagree	1

For the interview, The researchers selected four students. Two students who demonstrated high improvement in reading comprehension and two with lower improvement were chosen based on their questionnaire results. These interviews aimed to provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of the task-based learning approach and identify challenges or factors influencing the students' reading comprehension progress.

## Results and Discussion

### Results

In this part, the researchers present the results of the study on how ice-breaking activities affect students' self-confidence in the English classroom. A mixed methods technique, which combines quantitative and qualitative data, was employed to solve the research issues. The first part of the data was collected through questionnaires, which provided an overview of students' self-confidence levels

Table 2. The Students' Mean Score

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total_Items	33	60	86	67,42	5,831
Valid N (listwise)	33				

The descriptive statistical analysis's findings showed that, following the implementation of ice-breaking activities, the average score of students' self-confidence was 67.42, with a standard deviation of 5.831. The range of self-

confidence scores varied between 60 and 86, reflecting a diversity in the students' confidence levels.

Using the quantitative data from the questionnaires that were completed by 33 respondents, a significant positive correlation was observed between the frequency of ice-breaking activities and the increase in students' self-confidence.

The researcher conducted an interview to investigate the student's perceptions of ice breaking on students' self-confidence, resulting from an analysis of the questionnaire's results. This interview aimed to explore the students' experiences during the ice-breaking activities and their effects in the English classroom. The researcher selected two students with the highest scores and two students with the lowest scores from the questionnaire results. This selection aimed to get different perspectives, including positive experiences and challenges faced by the learners.

Based on the results of the interviews, several effects of ice-breaking were found according to the students' perceptions, which can support the data from the questionnaire results, such as:

1. self-confidence enhancement

Most of the students reported an increase in their confidence after participating in the ice-breaking activity with the meaning that the activity is effective in making students feel more comfortable and encouraged to participate, V mentioned:

Extract 1 V

*"Ice breaking membuat saya merasa lebih percaya diri untuk berbagi pendapat di kelas."* (Ice breaking makes me feel more confident to share my opinion in class).

2. Connections with Peers.

The social connection between students is also strengthened through icebreaking, this suggests that the fun interactions during the activity increased confidence and support among classmates. M states:

Extract 2 M



*"Momen-momen lucu itu membantu saya merasa lebih nyaman untuk berbicara."* (I felt more comfortable talking because of those funny moments).

### 3. Challenges and Processes in Participating

This statement is an indication that there has been a slight improvement, even though the process of comfort is still ongoing.

RA and FF, admits they still have doubts, even though they still feel anxious, there is an awareness of the necessary process to develop self-confidence.

Bothe has also seen progress:

Extract 3 RA

*"Saya merasa sama saja seperti sebelumnya, tapi sekarang saya berusaha lebih untuk ikut bicara."* (I feel the same as before, but now I'm trying harder to speak up).

FF also reflected similar feelings and said:

Extract 4 FF

*"Saya merasa lebih sulit untuk menerima tantangan baru setelah ice breaking, tapi saya berusaha untuk lebih aktif."* (I find it harder to accept new challenges after ice breaking, but I try to be more active).

### 4. Perception of ice breaking effect on student's anxiety

Based on the interviews there are still students who do not feel confident enough when faced with an assessment situation, even with the ice breaking that might help. FF added:

Extract 5 FF

*"Saya masih merasa cemas, tetapi saya mencoba untuk lebih berusaha."* (I still feel anxious, but I try to put more effort into it).

Overall, these interviews revealed that icebreaker activities have great potential to increase the confidence of students. Although RA and FF felt that they

still had some way to go and faced challenges, they were making progress in their efforts to participate more. Many students experienced the positive benefits in terms of courage and connection with their peers, which can contribute to a more positive and active learning atmosphere.

## **Discussion**

The interviews provide more detailed information on how students felt about icebreakers. Most students expressed that ice-breaking activities were beneficial in enhancing their self-confidence. For example, Student V reported feeling more confident in sharing opinions in class after participating in ice-breaking activities, confirming the positive impact these activities have on self-confidence. This is in alignment with previous research by Musdalipah (2022), who also suggested that ice-breaking can reduce anxiety and improve self-confidence, encouraging students to engage more openly in the classroom.

Furthermore, icebreaking not only increased students' individual confidence but also fostered better connections between peers. Many students mentioned feeling more comfortable interacting with classmates after engaging in these activities. For example, Student M felt more relaxed and willing to communicate with her peers after participating in ice-breakers. This finding aligns with Ghifarah's (2023) research, which highlighted that social interactions fostered by ice-breakers helped students build stronger relationships and feel more comfortable in class, thus increasing their overall participation.

Despite the positive effects, some students, like RA and FF, reported that they still faced challenges. RA stated that although she was trying harder to speak up, she still felt somewhat unsure. FF also mentioned that she found it difficult to accept new challenges, even though she was making an effort to be more active. This shows that while ice-breakers are effective for many students, some still need time and additional support to feel fully confident. This process aligns with the findings of Sari (2018), who noted that confidence-building activities may take time to yield significant results, particularly for students who are more introverted or anxious.

These activities not only empower students to participate more actively in class but also create a more supportive and enjoyable learning environment. While most students reported positive outcomes, some expressed challenges in overcoming specific anxieties, indicating that personalized support may be necessary for those who progress more slowly. This aligns with prior research by Ghifarah (2023), Musdalipah (2022), and Sari (2018), which also emphasize the benefits of icebreakers in promoting student confidence and reducing anxiety.

Additionally, while most students felt the positive benefits of ice-breaking, some students still expressed concerns about their anxiety in specific situations, such as during assessments. For example, FF mentioned, "I still feel anxious, but I try to put more effort into it." This suggests that ice-breaking activities help alleviate general classroom anxiety but may not fully resolve students' concerns during high-stress situations. This finding echoes Sari's (2018) research, which emphasized that confidence-building activities help reduce anxiety in regular classroom interactions, but additional strategies may be required to address more specific anxieties, such as those related to assessments or public speaking.

## Conclusion

The findings from the study highlight the significant role of icebreaker activities in enhancing students' self-confidence, reducing anxiety, and fostering stronger peer relationships in the classroom. The study recommends the regular integration of icebreaking activities in the learning process to enhance classroom dynamics and ensure holistic student development.

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