

STUDENTS' SELF-CONFIDENCE IN SPEAKING ENGLISH AND TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FROM STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

English speaking ability is an important skill in foreign language learning, yet many students still show low levels of confidence in speaking, especially in course institutions such as Zain Academy. One of the factors thought to influence students' confidence is their perception of teachers' professional identity, which includes pedagogical competence, interpersonal relationships and affective support. This study aims to find out the relationship between students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and their level of confidence in speaking English. This study used a quantitative approach with a correlational design. Data were collected through a closed-ended Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 16 Zain Academy students who had attended at least one semester of study. Data were analysed through Pearson correlation test and simple linear regression. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and their confidence in speaking English, with a correlation value of $r = 0.548$ and a significance of $p = 0.028$. The regression test results showed that students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity contributed 30% to the variation in students' self-confidence (R Square = 0.300). This finding supports the theory that perceptions of teacher professionalism play a role in building students' motivation and self-confidence in language learning contexts. The conclusion of this study is that positive perceptions of teachers' professional identity can increase students' confidence in speaking English. Therefore, it is recommended that non-formal education institutions provide training for teachers to develop comprehensive professional qualities, and involve affective and interpersonal aspects to create a learning environment that supports students' courage in communicating.

Keywords: Teacher Professional Identity; English Speaking Ability; Self-Confidence

INTRODUCTION

The ability to speak English is an important aspect of mastering a foreign language, especially in the context of a course institution like Zain Academy that emphasizes the development of students' communicative skills. However, the phenomenon of students' low confidence in speaking English is still a significant obstacle in the learning process. Many students show a tendency to be reluctant to speak in English due to fear of making mistakes, lack of internal motivation, as well as uncertainty towards the acceptance of the learning environment (Zheng & Cheng, 2018; Su, 2021). In this context, teachers play an important role not only as facilitators, but also as figures who can influence students' psychology through the quality of their professional identity. Teachers' professional identity-including pedagogical, affective, and reflective competencies-is seen as having the potential to foster a supportive classroom

climate and encourage students' confidence in using English (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Syakira et al., 2023).

While many studies have highlighted the important role of teachers in supporting English language learning (Liu & Geng, 2023; Au & Bardakçi, 2020), studies that specifically examine the relationship between teachers' professional identity and students' confidence in speaking English in a course setting are limited. The majority of studies focus on formal school settings or higher education contexts (Kalaja et al., 2016; Huang & Sang, 2023), while non-formal course contexts such as Zain Academy tend to be overlooked. In addition, approaches that integrate students' affective factors with teacher identity dimensions are empirically underdeveloped (Vähäsantanen, 2015; Raufelder et al., 2016). This study aims to fill this gap by exploring how teachers' professional identity correlates with students' confidence in speaking English in a course environment, in order to enrich the understanding of effective teaching practices and support the development of strategies to improve students' speaking skills. In this study, although the research is conducted in a non-formal education setting (Zain Academy), the term "teacher" is used to refer to language tutors who perform instructional roles equivalent to those of teachers in formal education. This usage follows the functional rather than institutional definition of a teacher, as these tutors possess pedagogical responsibilities and maintain classroom authority. However, to maintain contextual clarity, the term "tutor" may be used interchangeably with "teacher" when referring to non-formal language instructors.

Research by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) published in the *Cambridge Journal of Education* discusses the importance of teachers' professional identity in shaping the quality of effective teaching. In their study, they used a qualitative theoretical approach by reviewing various literatures to develop a conceptual framework of teacher identity, including reflective, pedagogical and emotional dimensions. The results show that teachers' professional identity is strongly influenced by experience, social interaction and self-reflection. They concluded that teachers who have a strong professional identity tend to build positive relationships with students and create a supportive classroom atmosphere. This study recommends that teacher education places more emphasis on developing professional reflection as part of training.

Furthermore, research by Liu and Geng (2023) in the *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* analyzed the role of teacher immediacy behavior and classroom climate on EFL students' self-silencing. Using a quantitative approach based on Self-Determination theory, they involved EFL students in a survey to measure perceptions of teacher behavior and its relationship with students' tendency to hide ideas while speaking. The results showed that teacher behaviors that demonstrate emotional closeness and empathy were able to create a positive classroom climate, which had a direct impact on increasing students' courage to speak. Recommendations were made on the need for teacher training in effective aspects to maximize students' potential. This study positions students as the primary informants, and their perspectives serve as the main source of data regarding both variables—teachers' professional identity and self-confidence. Thus, the title's focus on "students' perspective" is justified, as the findings are based entirely on students' subjective perceptions rather than objective teacher performance. This framing ensures alignment between the research design, instruments, and the title.

Another study by Su (2021), published in *Educational Studies*, examined the relationship between communication strategies, self-confidence, and speaking anxiety of EFL students in

Taiwan. Using a quantitative survey approach, this study used psychometric instruments to measure students' perceptions of their English speaking ability. The theories used were Self-Perceived Competence and Communication Apprehension. The results revealed that students' self-confidence was strongly influenced by their perceptions of the teacher and the frequency of using communicative strategies actively supported by the instructor. This research suggests that teachers should be more active in providing positive feedback and creating opportunities for communication practice to increase students' confidence.

All three studies support the researcher's position that teachers' professional identity has a significant influence on students' affective aspects, especially in building English speaking confidence. By synthesizing the previous findings, this research confirms the importance of strengthening teachers' professional qualities as a strategy to support students' speaking skill achievement in non-formal contexts such as Zain Academy.

The formulation of this research problem is based on a correlational quantitative approach that aims to examine the relationship between two main variables, namely students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and students' confidence in speaking English. Thus, the formulation of the problem in the form of the proposed hypothesis is: There is a significant relationship between students' perception of teachers' professional identity and their level of confidence in speaking English at Zain Academy. This hypothesis assumes that the more positive the students' perception of teachers' professionalism, which includes aspects of pedagogical competence, affective support, and interpersonal relationships, the higher the students' level of confidence in using spoken English. To elaborate the research focus more explicitly, the main questions formulated are: What is the relationship between students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and students' confidence in speaking English at Zain Academy? This question became the cornerstone of empirical exploration in this study and at the same time directed the entire process of data collection and analysis. With this formulation, this research is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the contribution of teachers' professional identity to the strengthening of students' affective aspects, especially in the context of English language learning in non-formal course institutions.

The main objective of this study is to answer the question of the relationship between students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and their level of confidence in speaking English at Zain Academy. Using a quantitative correlational approach, this study specifically aims to identify the strength and direction of the relationship between students' perceptions of aspects of teachers' professional identity - including pedagogical competence, affective support, and quality of interpersonal relationships - and students' confidence in using spoken English. This goal is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the teacher's contribution in shaping a learning climate that encourages students to be more confident in communicating using a foreign language, especially in the context of non-formal course institutions.

The benefits of this research are divided into several parties. Practically, for managers of course institutions such as Zain Academy, the results of this study can be used as a basis for designing teacher quality improvement training, especially in aspects of professional identity that affect students' psychology. For teachers, this research can be a material for self-reflection to develop teaching approaches that are more humanist and support the growth of student confidence. In addition, for researchers and academics, the findings from this study

can enrich the scientific treasure in the field of English language teaching, especially in studies that link teacher affective factors with student performance. This research can also serve as a reference in designing teacher professional development programmes in non-formal education institutions that have so far received less attention in scientific studies.

METHOD

The research paradigm used in this study is a quantitative paradigm, as it aims to examine the relationship between two variables, namely students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and students' confidence in speaking English. This paradigm refers to a positivistic approach that emphasizes objectivity, numerical measurement, and generalization based on empirical data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This study used a correlational survey approach, which is a method that aims to determine the extent to which two variables are related without manipulating conditions (Bakker, 2018). The research instrument used was a closed-ended Likert-scale questionnaire specifically developed to measure two constructs: (1) students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity, covering pedagogical competence, interpersonal relationships, and affective support, and (2) students' self-confidence in speaking English, based on dimensions of motivation, goal-setting, and persistence. Each item was adapted from existing validated scales and refined through expert judgment to ensure content validity. Instrument reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha prior to deployment. The research instrument in the form of a Likert-scale closed-ended questionnaire, which has been tested for validity and reliability, was used to measure students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and their level of self-confidence based on Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory. Through this paradigm, the analysis was conducted statistically using Pearson correlation and simple regression tests, which enabled the researcher to obtain a measurable picture of the effect of teachers' professional identity on students' self-confidence in the context of English language learning in a non-formal course institution such as Zain Academy.

The approach used in this study is a correlational survey, which aims to determine the extent to which there is a relationship between two variables without manipulating conditions (Bakker, 2018). This approach is appropriate to examine the relationship between students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and their confidence in speaking English. The study will be conducted in the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, between April and June 2025. The research site is Zain Academy, a non-formal English course institution in Probolinggo Regency. The source of data in this study are active students who have participated in learning for at least one semester, with data collection techniques using Likert scale questionnaires. The source of research funds comes from internal support from Nurul Jadid University through a grant scheme managed by LP3M. This approach is expected to produce valid empirical findings regarding the influence of teachers' professional identity on students' confidence in speaking English.

The stages of this research began with planning and problem formulation, which was then followed by the preparation of an instrument in the form of a Likert-scale questionnaire to measure students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and their level of confidence in speaking English. Data collection was conducted at Zain Academy using a purposive sampling technique on students who had attended lessons for at least one semester. After the data were collected, the validity and reliability of the instruments were tested, then analyzed

using descriptive statistics to determine the general description of the data. Furthermore, Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between the two variables, and if significant, followed by simple regression to see the contribution of teachers' professional identity to students' self-confidence. Interpretation of the results is done by referring to Bandura's self-efficacy theory and teacher professional identity theory, which are then discussed in relation to relevant literature, in order to draw conclusions that answer the problem formulation and make theoretical and practical contributions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Students' Perceptions on Teachers' Professional Identity

In the following data on the extent to which students rated teachers' professionalism, data were collected through a questionnaire instrument consisting of three main dimensions: pedagogical competence, interpersonal relationships, and affective support, with each consisting of five items. The score of each statement was rated on a Likert scale of 1-4.

Table 1. Average Score of Students' Perception of Teacher Professional Identity

No	Dimensions	Items	Average Score
	Pedagogic Competence	The teacher explains the subject matter systematically and is easy to understand.	3,75
2.	Pedagogic Competence	The teacher uses interesting and relevant learning methods.	3,69
3.	Pedagogic Competence	The teacher provides examples that help students understand the material.	3,56
4.	Pedagogic Competence	The teacher was able to answer students' questions clearly and accurately.	3,69
5.	Pedagogic Competence	The teacher gave constructive feedback on my work.	3,56
6.	Interpersonal Relationships	Teachers are friendly and open to all students.	3,94
7.	Interpersonal Relationships	Teachers treat students fairly and do not show favouritism.	3,81
8.	Interpersonal Relationships	Teachers create a comfortable and pleasant learning atmosphere.	3,69
9.	Interpersonal Relationships	The teacher is easy to discuss with outside class hours.	3,50
10.	Interpersonal Relationships	The teacher respects students' opinions in the learning process.	3,75
11.	Affective Support	My teacher motivates me to keep learning despite difficulties.	3,81
12.	Affective Support	My teacher encourages me to be brave enough to speak in English.	3,88
13.	Affective Support	The teacher shows concern for my learning progress.	3,63
14.	Affective Support	The teacher encourages me when I feel insecure.	3,56

15. Affective Support	The teacher understands my feelings and challenges in learning.	3,69
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Table 1 shows students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity covering three main dimensions: pedagogical competence, interpersonal relationships, and affective support. Overall, the mean score of each dimension was above 3.00, indicating students' positive perceptions of teacher professionalism at Zain Academy. The interpersonal relationship dimension recorded the highest average score of 3.74, reflecting students' appreciation of teachers' friendly attitude, openness, and fair treatment in the learning process. The pedagogical competence dimension followed with an average score of 3.65, indicating that teachers are considered capable of delivering material systematically, providing constructive feedback, and answering students' questions well. Meanwhile, the affective support dimension obtained the lowest average score of 3.71, although it is still in the positive category. The low scores on items related to teachers' empathy for students' challenges and providing encouragement when students feel insecure indicate the need to improve teachers' role in providing emotional support. This finding shows that although teachers have shown good qualities in pedagogic aspects and interpersonal relationships, affective aspects still need to be strengthened to increase students' confidence in learning English.

Students' Self-Confidence in Speaking English

Table 2 below presents data regarding the average scores of students' confidence in speaking English analysed based on three main aspects: motivation, purpose, and perseverance. Each aspect consists of five statement items that describe students' attitudes and behaviours when using English orally. In general, all items obtained an average score above 3.00, which indicates that students have a fairly good level of confidence in speaking English. The variation in scores within each aspect indicates differences in the strength of each of the factors supporting students' self-confidence which can be analysed further.

Table 2. Average Score of Students' Self-Confidence in Speaking English

No	Dimensions	Items	Average Score
1.	Motivation	I feel motivated to speak English in class.	3,44
2.	Motivation	I will be happy if I get the opportunity to speak in English.	3,13
3.	Motivation	I believe that speaking English will improve my skills.	3,69
4.	Motivation	I feel excited when practising English directly.	3,13
5.	Motivation	I want to keep learning so that I can speak English well.	3,81
6.	Purpose	I have a goal to be fluent in English.	3,63
7.	Purpose	I set a target to be able to speak English without hesitation.	3,25
8.	Purpose	I make a plan to improve my speaking skills.	3,44
9.	Purpose	I evaluate my speaking skills regularly.	3,31

10. Purpose	I want to reach a certain standard in speaking English.	3,56
11. Persistence	I keep trying to speak despite the fear of making mistakes.	3,56
12. Persistence	I do not give up even though I find it difficult to speak in English.	3,50
13. Persistence	I practise speaking regularly to improve my skills.	3,25
14. Persistence	I try again after failing to speak fluently.	3,31
15. Persistence	I believe that constant practice will make me more confident.	3,88

Table 2 presents data regarding students' level of confidence in speaking English based on three main aspects, namely motivation, purpose and perseverance. Overall, all three aspects showed an average score above 3.00, reflecting a fairly good level of self-confidence among Zain Academy students. The perseverance aspect obtained the highest mean score of 3.50, reflecting students' unyielding attitude in the face of speaking difficulties, including the courage to try again after failing and the belief that practice will improve their abilities. The motivation aspect followed with a mean score of 3.44, indicating that students felt motivated to speak English because they believed in its benefits in improving their abilities, although some students still showed fluctuating motivation in the context of hands-on practice. The goal aspect obtained the lowest mean score of 3.44, with the variation in scores indicating that some students did not have a concrete learning plan or clear long-term goals in the development of speaking skills. This finding suggests that although students have relatively positive self-confidence, there needs to be a more structured learning strategy to direct their motivation and goals in a more focused manner in improving oral communication skills.

Discussion

Correlation between Students' Perception of Teachers' Professional Identity and Their Confidence Level in Speaking English

To determine the extent of the relationship between students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and their level of confidence in speaking English, a Pearson correlation test was conducted. This test aims to measure the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the two variables. The analysis was conducted based on the data collected from 16 respondents, assuming that the data were interval in nature and met the requirements of normality and linearity. The results of the correlation test are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Correlation Test Results Between Students' Perceptions of Teachers' Professional Identity and Their Confidence Level in Speaking English

Correlations		Students' Perception on Teacher Professional Identity	Students' Self-Confidence in Speaking English
Students' Perception on Teacher Professional Identity	Pearson Correlation	1	.548*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.028
	N	16	16

Students' Self-Confidence in Speaking English	Pearson Correlation	.548*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	
	N	16	16

Based on Table 3, the Pearson correlation test results show that the correlation coefficient (Pearson Correlation) between students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and their confidence level in speaking English is $r = 0.548$ with a significance value of $p = 0.028$. Since the significance value is <0.05 , it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two variables (Ranstam, 2019). As based on the guidelines for the interpretation of the degree of relationship, the value of 0.548 is included in the moderate correlation category (Schober et al., 2018), which indicates a moderately strong but imperfect positive relationship-the more positive the students' perceptions of their teachers' professional identity, the higher their confidence in speaking English.

Theoretically, this result supports the framework which states that perceptions of teachers' professional qualities play a role in the formation of students' self-confidence. This finding is also in line with previous research which states that positive perceptions of teachers' competence and professionalism can increase students' confidence in language skills (see: Arifin, 2021; Nugroho & Maharsi, 2022). On the other hand, this result shows the educational implication that strengthening teachers' professional identity not only has an impact on the quality of teaching but also on students' psychology. However, this study has limitations in terms of the relatively small number of participants ($N=16$), so further studies with a wider scope are needed to strengthen the generalizability of the findings and test the relationship in different contexts. The findings contribute to the novelty of the psychopedagogical relationship between perceptions of teachers and students' self-efficacy in foreign language skills.

The Average Relationship Between Students' Perception of Teachers' Professional Identity and Their Level of Confidence in Speaking English

To determine the extent to which students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity affect their level of confidence in speaking English, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. This analysis aims to test the causal relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, as well as to see the strength of the contribution of the perception variable towards teachers' professional identity in predicting students' self-confidence. The regression test results are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Regression Test Results Between Students' Perceptions of Teachers' Professional Identity and Their Confidence Level in Speaking English

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	218.678	1	218.678	6.014	.028 ^b
	Residual	509.072	14	36.362		
	Total	727.750	15			

Based on the results of the linear regression test in Table 4, a significance value of 0.028 is obtained which is below the threshold of 0.05. This shows that there is a significant influence between students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity (X) on students' confidence level in speaking English (Y). Thus, the more positive the students' perception of their teachers' professional identity, the higher their confidence level in using English orally.

This discussion supports the theory in the framework which asserts that students' perceptions of teachers' professional competence play a role in shaping their motivation and self-confidence (Bandura, 1997; Hattie, 2009). This result is also in line with Arslan's (2021) findings which show a correlation between the quality of teacher-student relationships and increased student confidence in the context of foreign language learning. On the other hand, this finding emphasizes the importance of the teacher's role not only as a material deliverer, but also as a figure who forms a positive psychological climate in learning. However, this study has limitations in terms of the relatively small number of respondents, so further research with a wider scope is recommended to measure the impact more generally. The novelty of this study lies in the specific focus on the aspect of perceived teacher professional identity as a predictor of self-confidence in the context of spoken English learning.

Furthermore, to find out how much the variable of students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity contributes in explaining variations in their confidence level in speaking English, the coefficient of determination (R Square) analysis is used. This value illustrates the percentage of influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable in the regression model. The results of the calculation are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Coefficient of Determination (R Square)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.548 ^a	.300	.251	6.030

Based on Table 5. Coefficient of Determination (R Square), the R Square value is 0.300. This figure shows that 30% of the variation in students' confidence level in speaking English (variable Y) can be explained by students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity (variable X). In other words, students' perceptions of teacher professionalism have a 30% contribution in influencing their self-confidence. Meanwhile, the remaining 70% is influenced by other factors outside the model that are not explained in this study, such as personal experience, learning environment, social support, or other psychological factors. This R Square value indicates that although the effect of perceptions of teacher professionalism is significant, there are still many other factors that also play a role in shaping students' self-confidence, which could be the focus of further research.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity and their level of confidence in speaking English at Zain Academy. The Pearson correlation test results show a coefficient value of 0.548 with a significance level of 0.028, which means that the relationship is in the medium category and statistically significant. The simple regression

analysis further strengthened these results by showing that students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity contributed 30% to the variation in students' self-confidence, as reflected in the R Square value of 0.300. Thus, it can be concluded that students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity-including pedagogical competence, interpersonal relationships, and affective support-play an important role in building students' confidence in speaking English. This finding shows that the problem formulation in the study has been well answered, and the research hypothesis is empirically proven. In addition, this study provides strong evidence that teachers' professional identity development not only affects the quality of learning, but also the psychological aspects of students, especially in increasing their courage to speak English.

The practical implications of this study emphasize the importance of strengthening teachers' professional identity in the context of non-formal education, such as English language course institutions. Educational institutions and managers of teacher development programs can use the results of this study as a basis for designing training that focuses on improving pedagogical competence, skills in building positive interpersonal relationships, and providing effective support to students. Teachers who are able to demonstrate their professional qualities as a whole can create a learning atmosphere that supports the growth of students' confidence, which in turn has an impact on improving their performance in communication. However, this study has limitations in terms of the limited number of respondents and the scope that only covers one course institution. Therefore, it is recommended that future research be conducted by involving a larger sample from various other non-formal education institutions. Future research is also expected to explore additional variables that influence students' self-confidence, such as previous learning experiences, individual learning strategies, as well as the role of the social environment and family, in order to expand the scope and relevance of the findings academically and practically.

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