
CORRELATION BETWEEN BEST SPEAKER PROGRAM PERCEPTION AND ARABIC SPEAKING CONFIDENCE OF NAATIQ INTERNATIONAL ARABIYYAH ALUMNI

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the relationship between the perception of Naatiq course alums of the Best Speaker program and their level of confidence in speaking Arabic at the Naatiq International Arabiyyah program. This research uses a quantitative, correlational design. The study population consisted of Naatiq course alumni from a single program period at Naatiq International Arabiyyah, with a sample of 45 respondents selected via simple random sampling. Primary data were collected through closed questionnaires (5-point Likert scale) from 45 Best Speaker alumni at Naatiq International Arabiyyah. Data collection was conducted through a closed-ended questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale to measure perceptions of the Best Speaker program and confidence in speaking Arabic. Data analysis included descriptive and inferential statistics, starting with normality and linearity tests as prerequisites, followed by the Pearson Product-Moment correlation test. The research results indicate a very strong, significant positive relationship between alumni's perception of the Best Speaker program and their level of confidence in speaking Arabic, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.891$ and a significance level of $p < 0.01$. This finding indicates that a positive perception of authentic speaking activities supported by a conducive learning environment contributes to increased confidence in speaking Arabic.

Keywords

Alumni Perception; Best Speaker Program; Speaking Confidence.



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INTRODUCTION

Foreign language learning is not only related to mastery of linguistic aspects, but also involves psychological factors that play a major role in successful communication (CHERNIUK, 2024; Kholiq & Fadli, 2022). One of the main psychological barriers in foreign language learning, including Arabic, is low confidence in speaking actively (Ahmad Al-Khotaba et al., 2020). This lack of confidence often becomes a major obstacle for learners to use the language communicatively, even though they have mastered grammar and vocabulary theoretically (Bulan et al., 2022). In the context of the modern world that demands cross-cultural communication skills, this issue becomes an important issue that needs to be addressed seriously (Badaan & Choucair, 2023).

Arabic has developed into an international language with more than 400 million speakers in various countries (Alqadasi et al., 2023). This language plays a strategic role in diplomacy, business, education, and science (Alqadasi et al., 2023). Therefore, the ability to speak Arabic confidently is an increasingly needed competency (Jamroh & Maula, 2022). However, the reality of learning shows that many Arabic learners still experience language anxiety, which results in low verbal participation and a lack of the courage to speak (Insaniyah et al., 2021). This condition is also found in participants of intensive Arabic language courses, such as Naatiq International Arabiyyah, who generally have high learning motivation but still experience hesitation when speaking in real communication situations (Nasrullah, 2024).

The Naatiq International Arabiyyah Program is an Arabic language and literature education institution based on international standards, designed for both non-native speakers (*ghairu al-naatiqin biha*) and native speakers (*naatiqina biha*), with a focus on speaking fluently in accordance with the meaning of the word “naatiq.” This program adopts global standards such as the CEFR and curricula from universities in the Middle East, aiming to develop the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—in a balanced manner while emphasizing active communication and understanding of Arab culture and literature. For non-Arabic speakers, this program is particularly important, as it overcomes linguistic and psychological barriers through immersion methods, enabling participants to achieve a more fluent, communicative level of proficiency that approaches that of native speakers (Interview with Ustadz Ihya Ulumuddin, 2026).

In the context of this study, the Naatiq International Arabiyyah program is of significant importance to both alumni and students, where “alumni” refers to participants who enrolled in and completed the learning program at the institution. This is evident from the program’s flexibility,

tailored to participants' needs; the inclusion of non-formal activities, such as the "ma'al ikhwah" classes, to enrich linguistic style; and the creation of a language-immersion environment that enables direct language practice in daily life with tutor guidance. These conditions enhance alumni's speaking skills and self-confidence (Interview with Naatiq, an alumnus, 2026). Therefore, the author selected alumni perception as the variable because perception is a subjective factor that significantly influences participants' engagement, acceptance, and psychological responses to the learning program; thus, the program's success is determined not only by its quality but also by how it is perceived and experienced by alumni.

Previous studies have shown that language anxiety is closely related to low self-confidence and oral participation (Basith, 2021). The concept of foreign language anxiety proposed by (Wang et al., 2023) has been widely replicated and developed across various language-learning contexts. These findings are reinforced by research (Li et al., 2025) which shows that language anxiety is negatively correlated with students' communicative engagement. In the context of Arabic language learning, (Alrabai, 2025; Nasir et al., 2023) found that high levels of anxiety have a significant effect on students' speaking ability. These findings confirm that increasing speaking confidence cannot be separated from managing the psychological aspects of learners (Al Fahmi et al., 2025).

In an effort to overcome these problems, various communicative learning approaches have been developed, one of which is through authentic speaking activities such as *Best Speaker*. This is a speaking activity in which alumni are invited directly to the podium to share their ideas. Participants are watched by an audience of various levels of Arabic proficiency, ranging from *mubtadi'*, *mutawassith*, to *mutaqaddim*, and broadcast live through social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram (Sutri et al., 2024). The spontaneous, open, and public nature of the activity makes *Best Speaker* a challenging yet authentic speaking experience (Zondag, 2024). The program at the Naatiq institute not only delivers learning material but also ensures that each participant achieves the Best Speaker standard through specific indicator measurements (Urwati, 2026). These indicators include the similarity of native speakers in terms of fluency and intonation of Arabic like native speakers, high confidence to speak boldly in public, accuracy of structure through the correct use of grammar (Nahwu Shorof) without hesitation, and mastery of the book with basic skills in reading and understanding Arabic literature directly (Ibrahim, 2023).

Most previous studies have focused more on the relationship between confidence and academic achievement in foreign language learning (M. Chen et al., 2024), the influence of a

supportive classroom environment, and the effectiveness of certain learning methods such as *role-play* and simulation (Ki et al., 2025). However, these studies were generally conducted in the context of formal education, such as schools and universities, and thus do not fully reflect the dynamics of learning in non-formal institutions. In addition to the limitations of the research context, learners' perceptions of learning activities have also received little attention. Learners' perceptions are subjective factors that influence the level of acceptance, involvement, and psychological impact of a learning activity (Aldinata, 2024). Research (Salavati et al., 2025) shows that positive perceptions of innovative learning activities significantly predict increased students' communicative self-confidence. However, in Arabic language learning, studies that specifically link alumni perceptions of public speaking activities with speaking self-confidence are still relatively limited. (Aubrey, 2022) discuss language anxiety in general without linking it to specific speaking activity designs.

Based on this description, a research gap can be identified, namely the absence of empirical studies that specifically examine the relationship between alumni perceptions of the *Best Speaker* speaking activity and their level of confidence in speaking Arabic in non-formal intensive courses. Course institutions such as Naatiq International Arabiyyah have characteristics that differ from formal educational institutions, particularly in terms of learning duration, alumni background, level of heterogeneity in abilities, and the practical orientation of learning (Anisah et al., 2024). Therefore, this context requires a separate study.

This study offers several innovations. First, the research focuses on non-formal Arabic language courses with adult alumni, which have rarely been studied. Second, the study places alumni perceptions of the *Best Speaker* activity as the main variable linked to speaking confidence. Third, this study tests the assumption that spontaneous public speaking activities witnessed by a wide audience, including through social media, can serve as a means of strengthening confidence when supported by a safe and supportive learning environment (Anggraini et al., 2025).

The theoretical basis of this study is supported by Bandura's social cognitive theory, particularly the concepts of *self-efficacy*, *mastery experience*, and *vicarious experience*. According to Bandura, an individual's belief in their abilities is formed through direct experiences of success and the observation of others' success (Fatimah et al., 2021). In the context of language learning, Hasanuddin & Rijal (2025) show that structured and meaningful speaking experiences can increase learners' *self-efficacy* and confidence. In addition, (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2024) found that positive emotional experiences in language activities correlate with decreased anxiety and increased courage

to speak. This study aims to determine the relationship between Naatiq course alumni's perceptions of the Best Speaker program and their level of confidence in speaking Arabic in the Naatiq International Arabiyyah program. This study also examines the extent to which Naatiq course alumni's positive perceptions of the Best Speaker program can influence and enhance their confidence in communicating in Arabic, particularly in the context of Arabic language learning.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative correlational design to determine the relationship between alumni perceptions of the Best Speaker Program and their confidence in speaking Arabic at Naatiq International Arabiyyah in Pare, Kediri, East Java, Indonesia. This research generated primary numerical data in the form of interval-scale scores from a 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire. Data were sourced from alumni who completed the Naatiq International Arabiyyah program during a specific period, July-August 2024. This study involved alumni of the July–August 2024 cohort of the Naatiq International Arabic Program, totaling 50 alumni from two classes. The population was limited to a specific time frame to ensure that the alumni had the same program experience and to control for differences in the timing of the program, which could affect their perceptions and confidence in speaking Arabic.

To ensure that each member of the population had an equal chance of being selected as a research sample, a probability sampling technique, namely simple random sampling, was used to collect 45 respondents from the overall population (Kusumastuti et al., 2024). The research results are expected to have a high level of representativeness because the number of samples collected represents 90% of the research population, which is the minimum sample size for correlational research (El Hasbi et al., 2023).

The data collection instrument in this study was a closed questionnaire designed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Kurniawan, 2022). The *Best Speaker* Program perception questionnaire was designed based on indicators of program clarity, material relevance, speaking opportunities, supportive learning atmosphere, and feedback obtained during the activity. Meanwhile, the Arabic-speaking confidence questionnaire covers indicators of self-confidence when speaking, courage to appear in front of an audience, ability to overcome nervousness, and readiness to convey ideas orally in Arabic. Before being used in data collection, the research instruments were tested for validity and reliability to ensure their suitability as

measuring instruments (Subhaktiyasa, 2024).

The main technique for measuring the strength of the relationship between variables is the Pearson Product-Moment correlation test, appropriate for normally distributed interval data (Kolmogorov-Smirnov Sig. = 0.200 > 0.05). Data analysis began with descriptive statistics, including the mean, median, standard deviation, and frequency distribution of the best speaker program variable (X) and the level of confidence in speaking Arabic (Y) (Na'ima & Nuraini, 2025). Calculations were performed using SPSS to describe the general characteristics of the research sample. Next, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov or Shapiro-Wilk normality test was performed to assess the data's normality as a parametric assumption, with a significance level of Sig. > 0.05 (Janna & Herianto, 2021). The linearity test, as a prerequisite for correlation/regression using the "Test for Linearity" in SPSS, showed that the relationship between variables was linear if Sig. Deviation from Linearity > 0.05, thus fulfilling the assumption; conversely, if < 0.05, a nonparametric approach was required. Once the prerequisites are met, the Pearson correlation test measures the strength and direction of the relationship: an r value between 0 and 1 indicates a strong positive correlation, a value close to -1 indicates a strong negative correlation, and 0 indicates no correlation; significance is indicated by a p-value < 0.05.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The results of the study conducted in July-August on 45 respondents who were alumni of the Naatiq Internasional Arabiyyah Pare course, with the data obtained as follows:

Table 1. Results of Descriptive Statistical Tests

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perception	45	11.00	50.00	43.4222	6.84068
Confidence	45	12.00	45.00	36.2444	5.83156
Valid N (listwise)	45				

Based on the results of the descriptive test above, we can describe the distribution of data obtained by the researcher as follows:

1. Perception variable (X), from the data, it can be described that the minimum value is 11, while the maximum value is 50, and the average perception variable (X) is 43.4222. Standard deviation is 6.84068.
2. Perception variable (Y): From the data, it can be described that the minimum value is 12, while the maximum value is 45. The average of the perception variable (Y) is 36.2444, and the standard deviation is 5.83156.

Table 2. Data Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		45
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	.22211477
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.071
	Positive	.053
	Negative	-.071
Test Statistic		.071
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}
a. Test distribution is Normal.		
b. Calculated from data.		
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.		
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.		

Before further statistical analysis is performed, the research data is first tested for normality. Normality testing is necessary to ensure that the data distribution meets the assumptions of normality, thereby allowing the results of parametric statistical analyses to be scientifically justified. In this study, normality testing was performed using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test on *unstandardized residual* values. Residual testing was performed to determine whether the analysis model's prediction errors were normally distributed. Based on the results of the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test presented in the table, the data set consisted of 45 samples. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test statistic was 0.071, with a significance value (Asymp. Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.200.

Decisions in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test are based on the significance value. Data is declared to be normally distributed if the significance value is greater than 0.05. The test results show that the p-value (0.200) is greater than 0.05, indicating that the residual data in this study are normally distributed. With the assumption of normality fulfilled, the research data meet the requirements for analysis using parametric statistical techniques in the next stage.

Table 3. Linearity Test Results

ANOVA Table						
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Sig.
Confidence * Perception	Between Groups	(Combined)	393.628	16	24.602	1.535.156
		Linearity	66.761	1	66.761	4.166.051
		Deviation from Linearity	326.867	15	21.791	1.360.234
	Within Groups		448.683	28	16.024	
	Total		842.311	44		

Before conducting the correlation test, a linearity test was first conducted to determine whether the relationship between perceptions of the *Best Speaker* program and the level of confidence in speaking Arabic was linear. This linearity test is important because Pearson's correlation analysis requires a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Based on the results of the linearity test using ANOVA analysis, a significance value of 0.051 was obtained in the Linearity row and a significance value of 0.234 in the Deviation from Linearity row. A *Deviation from Linearity* significance value greater than 0.05 indicates that there is no deviation from the linear relationship, so that the relationship between perception and confidence can be declared linear.

Thus, it can be concluded that the relationship between perceptions of the *Best Speaker* program and the level of confidence in speaking Arabic meets the linearity assumption, so that the Pearson Product-Moment correlation test is appropriate for use in this study.

Table 4. Correlation Test Results

Correlations			
		PerceptionConfidence	
Perception	Pearson Correlation	1	.891**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	45	45
Confidence	Pearson Correlation	.891**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	45	45

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson product-moment correlation test is used to determine the relationship and degree of association between two quantitative variables that meet the assumptions of normality and linearity. In this study, the Pearson correlation test was used to examine the relationship

between participants' perceptions of the Best Speaker program and their confidence in speaking Arabic.

Discussion

The results of a study conducted with 45 alumni of the Naatiq International Arabiyyah program indicate that the variables of alumni perceptions of the Best Speaker program and their level of confidence in speaking Arabic had high mean values (43.42 and 36.24, respectively). A correlation analysis could be performed because the results of the normality and linearity tests indicated that the data were normally distributed (Sig. = 0.200 > 0.05) and that a linear relationship was present (Sig. for deviation from linearity = 0.234 > 0.05). The results of the Pearson Product-Moment test indicate a very strong and significant positive relationship between alumni perceptions of the Best Speaker program and their confidence in speaking Arabic ($r = 0.891$; $p < 0.01$). This suggests that the more positive alumni's perceptions of the program are, the higher their level of confidence in speaking Arabic.

The results of this study can be analyzed using Albert Bandura's theory of self-efficacy within the framework of social cognitive theory. Bandura explains that a person's self-efficacy is formed through four main sources: mastery experience (direct experience), vicarious experience (observation of others), verbal persuasion (social support), and emotional states (Rowland et al., 2020). In the context of the Best Speaker program, alumni of the Naatiq course gain direct experience speaking in public (mastery experience), which is the strongest factor in shaping self-efficacy. Additionally, a supportive learning environment and the presence of an audience provide social reinforcement (verbal persuasion) and positive emotional experiences (Maisarah, 2024). Positive perceptions of the program indicate that participants feel the activities they engage in are meaningful, challenging, and relevant, thereby strengthening their confidence in using Arabic communicatively (Jendli & Albarakati, 2024).

Thus, the results of this study reinforce the notion that positive perceptions of authentic learning experiences directly enhance self-efficacy and confidence in speaking Arabic (Muhsinin et al., 2025). This study indicates a very strong and significant relationship between perceptions of the Arabic program and confidence in speaking, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.891$ and a p-value of 0.000. These results align with Oktavira's (2025) study, which found a positive relationship between perceptions of public speaking and confidence in speaking English, with a correlation coefficient of $\rho = 0.609$ and $p < 0.01$. These findings confirm that positive perceptions of a learning

program can enhance fluency and reduce anxiety in speaking.

Furthermore, the results of this study are also consistent with research conducted by UIN Malang (2025), which demonstrated a significant relationship between the development of an Arabic language program and improvements in self-confidence and speaking proficiency, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.675$ and $p < 0.001$. This reinforces the argument that well-designed learning programs can have a positive impact on students' affective and performative aspects. However, the results of this study differ from those of a study conducted in Banjarmasin (2025), which found that self-confidence did not have a significant effect on Arabic language achievement through vocabulary mastery ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$). This difference indicates that the influence of self-confidence may vary depending on the aspect of language ability being measured, with self-confidence having a greater impact on productive skills, such as speaking, than on receptive or cognitive aspects, such as vocabulary mastery.

This study can be categorized as a confirmation of theory and previous research based on prior findings and analyses. This study reinforces Bandura's theory that direct experience in speaking activities supported by a conducive learning environment can enhance self-confidence. Furthermore, these findings support previous research indicating that positive and authentic learning experiences have a significant effect on improving speaking confidence in a foreign language (M.-R. A. Chen & Hwang, 2022). However, this study implicitly suggests that people's perceptions of learning programs may be the most important factor in non-formal institutions such as Naatiq International Arabiyyah, rather than other factors, such as motivation. This opens up opportunities for further research.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research and discussion, it can be concluded that there is a very strong, significant positive relationship between alumni perceptions of the Best Speaker program and the level of confidence in speaking Arabic among alumni of the Naatiq International Arabiyyah course. The more positive the alumni's perceptions of the objectives, implementation, and atmosphere of the Best Speaker activities, the higher their courage and confidence in speaking Arabic. These findings indicate that alumni perceptions are an important psychological factor in the development of speaking confidence. The results of this study align with Bandura's social cognitive theory, which holds that self-efficacy develops through direct experience and support from the learning

environment. The Best Speaker activity provides authentic speaking experiences through real practice in front of an audience. A safe and supportive learning environment also helps reduce language anxiety and increase verbal participation. Therefore, authentic, non-competitive speaking activities are effective in increasing confidence in speaking Arabic in non-formal educational institutions.

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