CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher describes a number of important components related to the research, such as background of study, problem of study, objectives of study, scope of study, and significances of study.

1.1 Background of Study

Speaking skill in English is essential for a student to master, as it enables the expression of idea, opinion, and information in a direct and effective manner (Cao et al., 2024). state that EFL learners who receive instruction based on World Englishes show significant improvement in their speaking confidence. In addition, (Fauzi, 2022) explain that the use of chunking and pausing techniques helps students organize their speech more fluently and coherently. With proper practice and appropriate strategies, students can develop better speaking skills for both academic and everyday communication contexts. Nevertheless, many students still encounter several challenges in developing their speaking performance. One of main challenges students face when delivering English monologues is the strong influence of their regional accents, which can indirectly affect their pronunciation, intonation, and overall speech clarity. For many students who are accustomed to using local dialects in their daily lives, shifting to standard English pronunciation requires significant effort, especially when they are expected to speak spontaneously and continuously without pauses, as in often required in monologue tasks. This challenge not only impacts phonological aspects but also tends to undermine students' confidence, as they may perceive their accents as "foreign" of inconsistent with the expected norms of English pronunciation. This is consistent with the findings of (Novrianti, 2022), who observe that local accents such as Bugis can lead to deviations in the articulation of specific phonemes, thereby affecting speech intelligibility. Similarly, (Xue, 2023) found that the influence of students' mother tongue often leads to deviations in English pronunciation, particularly among learners who are required to speak continuously without scripted guidance, as is common in monologue tasks.

A monologue is a form of verbal communication in which a speaker conveys ideas, opinions, or narratives continuously without immediate response from listener. In the context of English language learning, monologic speaking skills are important for training students' ability to organize their thoughts, convey information coherently, and enhance their fluency. (Lokteva, 2022) explains that speaking in a foreign language is a complex type of speech activity because it involves an internal structure (such as the analytical-synthetic stage for selecting and structuring words from memory) and an external structure (such as the motivational-incentive phase to establish the need and goal of the statement) that must be developed in a balanced manner for effective communication. Therefore, monologue speaking skills require not only

linguistic competence, but also cognitive and affective skills that support successful communication in a foreign language. The focus on monologue speaking performance was chosen because this format allows researchers to assess students' speaking abilities both individually and comprehensively. In a monologue, students are required to convey ideas, construct coherent sentences, select appropriate vocabulary, and maintain fluency without any intervention or assistance from the other speaker. This offers a more objective representation of their speaking proficiency. Moreover, monologues mirror real-life situations such as presentations, speeches, and storytelling, which are commonly encountered in both academic and professional settings. Therefore, evaluating speaking performance through monologues is considered relevant and representative in measuring students' overall English-speaking competence. Engaging students with personalized and meaningful topics, such as "future dreams," can positively impact their self-efficacy. "Developing emotional intelligence in the learning process enables students to manage their feelings towards the subject matter, which in turn can increase their motivation to learn and their self-efficacy. When students feel motivated and confident in their abilities, emotional barriers such as anxiety about speaking can be reduced, so that they are more courageous in expressing their ideas and producing better performance" (Salamah, 2024).

Students' success in speaking English is influenced not only by their mastery of vocabulary and grammatical structures, but also by psychological factors, particularly self-efficacy, or the belief one's own ability to use the language effectively. Learners with high self-efficacy are generally more willing to speak in public, take those with low self-efficacy often hesitate, fear making errors, and may avoid speaking tasks altogether, which can hinder their speaking development. Research by (Albert Bandura, 1997) and (Aslan, 2020) supports the idea that higher self-efficacy is significantly correlated with improved oral performance in foreign language learning contexts. This suggests that there is a positive correlation between self-efficacy and English-speaking performance: the more confident individuals are in their abilities, the more likely they are to excel in speaking tasks.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform a specific task or achieve a particular goal. This belief influences how individuals think, feel, motivate themselves, and behave, especially in challenging situations. Although the concept was originally introduced by (Albert Bandura, 1997), recent studies have continued to validate and expand its application within educational contexts. For instance, a study by (Han & Hamzah, 2024) found that students with high self-efficacy were more engaged and performed better in English learning within a flipped classroom environment. Therefore, self-efficacy plays a crucial role in determining students' persistence, autonomy, and success in foreign language learning.

This study is relevant as it highlights the relationship between self-efficacy and students' speaking performance in monologue contexts, which reflect

authentic communication tasks such as presentations and speeches. By understanding this relationship, teachers can design instructional approaches that not only emphasize linguistic development but also foster students' confidence. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the improvement of English language teaching quality, particularly in enhancing students' speaking skills in a more effective and meaningful way.

1.2 The Problem of Study

1. How is the level of students' self-efficacy in learning English?
2. How is the students' speaking performance in delivering monologue?
3. Is there any significant correlation between students' self-efficacy and their speaking performance in delivering monologue?

1.3 The Objectives of Study

The objective of this study is to investigate the level of students' self-efficacy in learning English, based on Bandura's (1997) theory. In addition, this study aims to assess the students' speaking performance in delivering a monologue, with a specific focus on pronunciation. Finally, the study seeks to examine whether there is a significant correlation between students' self-efficacy and their speaking performance, in order to explore how psychological factors may influence their oral communication skills.

1.4 The Scope of Study

The present study will be confined to examining the correlation between students' self-efficacy and their English-speaking performance in delivering a monologue on the topic of future dreams. The research will involve ninth-grade students of SMP PGRI 1 Medan during the 2025/2026 academic year. In this study, speaking performance will be limited to the pronunciation aspect only, which will be assessed using the ELSA Speak application that provides pronunciation scores on a scale from 1 to 5 based on students' monologue presentations.

The measurement of self-efficacy will focus exclusively on students' personal judgment of their ability to complete the speaking task effectively and with confidence, taking into account their perceived preparedness, motivation, and ability to handle potential challenges during the performance. This study will not investigate other psychological constructs or language skills beyond speaking, and its findings will be limited to the specific context and participant group under investigation.

1.5 The Significances of Study

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the field of English language education, particularly in improving students' speaking performance in EFL contexts. Theoretically, it is expected to enrich

the body of knowledge by offering empirical evidence on the role of students' self-efficacy, defined as their belief in their ability to successfully complete speaking tasks, which has been shown to strongly predict oral performance ((Albert Bandura, 1997); (Wang & Sun, 2020)).

Practically, the results of this study may serve as a valuable reference for English teachers in designing instructional approaches that build students' confidence, stimulate their intrinsic motivation, and improve their oral fluency—thereby encouraging more active and meaningful participation in speaking activities. Furthermore, this study is expected to raise students' awareness of the importance of psychological readiness in achieving speaking success, while also providing the researcher with meaningful pedagogical insights and experience to support professional development in English language teaching.