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**ARTÍCULO CIENTÍFICO:**

**“FEAR OF MAKING MISTAKES AND ITS EFFECT ON PRE-SERVICE  
ENGLISH TEACHERS' ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS”**

**AUTORA:**

MARTHA ELIZABETH CABRERA MERA

**DIRECTOR DEL ARTÍCULO CIENTÍFICO:**

LIC. JARDEL COUTINHO DOS SANTOS, MSC.

**QUEVEDO – LOS RÍOS – ECUADOR**



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**MARTHA ELIZABETH CABRERA MERA**

**C.I: 1729447597**



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## **Fear of Making Mistakes and its Effect on Pre-Service English Teachers' Oral Communication Skills**

*Miedo a cometer errores y su efecto en las habilidades de comunicación oral de los futuros profesores de inglés*

**Martha Elizabeth Cabrera Mera**

[mcabreram3@uteq.edu.ec](mailto:mcabreram3@uteq.edu.ec)

<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-1543-9059>

Universidad Técnica Estatal de Quevedo - Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación  
Ecuador - Quevedo

**Jardel Coutinho dos Santos**

[jcoutinhod@uteq.edu.ec](mailto:jcoutinhod@uteq.edu.ec)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8626-7229>

Universidad Técnica Estatal de Quevedo - Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación  
Ecuador – Quevedo

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates how pre-service English teachers' oral communication abilities are affected by their anxiety about making mistakes. Data were gathered via surveys, interviews, classroom observations, and visual narratives using an explanatory sequential mixed techniques methodology. The results show that students' confidence and willingness to participate in oral activities are greatly impacted by their fear of making mistakes, which can result in anxiety, mental blocks, and avoidance strategies. Peer and instructor presence was found to be a significant contributing element to this fear, as students feared being mocked or criticized. As a result, they had fewer possibilities for practice and development because their speaking abilities were hindered. The study emphasizes the necessity of a supportive classroom setting where errors are accepted as a necessary learning component. Promoting group projects and scaffolding methods. Promoting teamwork and using scaffolding strategies would help pre-service teachers become more confident and improve their oral communication abilities. The results highlight the significance of addressing anxiety in teacher preparation programs and advance our understanding of emotional barriers in language acquisition.

*Keywords:* communication, fear, mistakes, speaking

### **RESUMEN**

Este estudio investiga cómo las habilidades de comunicación oral de los docentes de inglés en formación se ven afectadas por su miedo a cometer errores. Los datos se recopilaron mediante encuestas, entrevistas, observaciones en el aula y narrativas visuales, utilizando un enfoque

metodológico mixto secuencial explicativo. Los resultados muestran que el miedo a cometer errores afecta significativamente la confianza de los estudiantes y su disposición a participar en actividades orales, lo que puede provocar ansiedad, bloqueos mentales y estrategias de evitación. La presencia de compañeros e instructores se identificó como un factor significativo que contribuye a este miedo, ya que los estudiantes temen ser ridiculizados o criticados. Como resultado, sus habilidades para hablar se vieron obstaculizadas, reduciendo sus oportunidades de práctica y desarrollo. El estudio destaca la necesidad de un entorno de aula que apoye y acepte los errores como una parte necesaria del aprendizaje. Fomentar el trabajo en equipo y el uso de estrategias de andamiaje ayudaría a los futuros docentes a ganar confianza y mejorar sus habilidades de comunicación oral. Los resultados resaltan la importancia de abordar la ansiedad en los programas de formación docente y contribuyen a la comprensión de las barreras emocionales en la adquisición de un idioma.

*Palabras clave:* comunicación, miedo, errores, hablar

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## INTRODUCTION

In the twenty-first century, the importance of suitable forms of communication has been rising quickly due to the world's increasing interconnectedness and globalization (Dash & Gandhi, 2022). The necessity of a common language for communication cannot be disputed. In this context, English has become the universal language among speakers of thousands of various languages due to its shared traits. As English is the most commonly used language in the world, it is considered the first global lingua franca due to its status as the first world language (Rao, 2019)

In English, there are four skills or abilities; speaking and writing are regarded as productive abilities, whereas reading and listening are regarded as receptive abilities. In this framework, speaking is the act of conveying thoughts or information from the speaker to the listener (Al Nakhalah, 2016), and is frequently regarded as one of the most crucial abilities that affect human existence (Armanzo, 2019). To meet this competency, students must be able to express their ideas, feelings, and thoughts vocally. During this process, there are challenging factors EFL students face, such as lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, the influence of their mother tongue, and anxiety as they feel anxious if people criticize them when they are performing (Pratolo et al., 2019).

The Ecuadorian Minister of Education admits that the main objective of the current English curriculum design is to support students in improving their conversational language skills (MinEdu, 2014). Despite this, EFL learners in Ecuador experience different emotions that hinder the development of their oral communication skills. Among these factors, the fear of making mistakes is a significant obstacle for students to overcome (Santos et al., 2020) According to Suparlan (2021), EFL students struggle with speaking anxiety due to ten different factors in which fear of making mistakes is highlighted, provoking learners to avoid speaking both within and outside of the classroom, hindering their oral communication development. Regarding this issue, researchers mentioned that the students' fear of making mistakes concerning EFL learning is strongly related to correction and unfavorable assessment (Anwari, 2019).

Effective communication abilities among EFL teachers are essential for successful language instruction and students' academic and professional success. Students receive more verbal instructions from the teacher in the classroom, furthermore, a teacher with inadequate communication skills may hinder learners' learning and academic progress (Xie & Derakhshan, 2021). In this context, pre-service EFL teachers need to know the effect of the fear of making mistakes on the development of oral communication skills to deal with and overcome their own fear and in the future help students cope with their fear and motivate them to develop their speaking skills, so that they can navigate in real life situations in their personal and professional lives.

According to research carried out by Santos et al. (2022) until January 2020 in Ecuador, there was a lack of research regarding the influence of emotions in the English learning process and, therefore, on the influence of fear on pre-service EFL teachers' speaking skills. Consequently, this study tries to fill this gap in the literature. Thus, this research aims to investigate the effects of the fear of making mistakes on developing oral communication skills in pre-service EFL teachers.

## **Literature review**

### **Fear**

Fear is a fundamental human emotion viewed as a mental state and an instinctive response to danger stemming from the need for self-preservation. Fear is highly valued in society and it is recognized that it can affect how people behave (Gulmira, 2022). Cambridge Dictionary defines fear as “an unpleasant emotion or thought you have when you are frightened or worried by something dangerous, painful, or bad that is happening or might happen” (Cambridge University Press, 2024). Therefore, fear can be defined as an unpleasant feeling that people experience for certain causes.

According to Gulmira (2022), fear is a universal and dominating emotion that has existed since prehistory. For instance, humans have always feared natural events, battles, their own lives, the lives of their loved ones, and the future.

### **Fear in EFL**

Although fear is essential for existence, it can also take forms that obstruct learners' development. Fear of making mistakes is one of these manifestations (Santos et al., 2020). In a context where English is being used as a foreign language (EFL), fear of making mistakes refers to the anxiety and worry that teachers and students feel when they have concerns about making mistakes when speaking or using the language (Al-Saidat et al., 2023); consequently, one major psychological barrier preventing learners from actively participating in speaking events is this insecurity (Al-Saidat et al., 2023; Gannoun et al., 2023). The majority of students avoid speaking during English lessons because they are nervous about talking and worried about making mistakes (García & Vaca-Cárdenas, 2022). Thus, learning a second/foreign language is not enjoyable for certain students due to anxiety that emerges when participating in speaking activities. (Rahmat, 2020).

According to Santos et al. (2020), it is typical to experience feelings of insecurity when trying anything new. Similar circumstances arise for learners attempting to learn and speak English in class. This leads to a fear of making mistakes, which can inhibit or block some of them. In their study, fear of making mistakes arises as the principal factor that obstructs learners from speaking in class. Haidara (2016) demonstrated in his study that certain psychological issues, like feelings of indecision, distrust, fear of making mistakes, and insecurity, had a negative influence on students' ability to learn and practice speaking.

Making mistakes is one of the many things that might negatively impact students' participation in speaking exercises during the teaching process. Students often hide their deficiencies and mistakes to avoid being made fun of. They consequently refuse to communicate in English. Therefore, the less people practice, the less proficient they get in speaking, and the more they fear doing so (Riadil, 2020). Santos et al. (2022) found that until January 2020, there was a deficit of research on the role of emotions in the English learning process, consequently on the impact of fear on the speaking abilities of pre-service EFL teachers in Ecuador. This study thus attempts to explore how pre-service EFL instructors' oral communication abilities are affected by their fear of making mistakes.

### **Speaking skills**

Speaking is the ability to generate sounds and express concepts in one's mind. Learners need to be able to convey language meaning in a way that makes sense for the subject matter, creating basic sentence structures and speaking in comprehensible terms (Miranda & Wahyudin, 2023). According to Thornbury (2005) speaking is “so much a part of daily life that we take it for granted. The average person produces tens of thousands of words a day, although some people like auctioneers or politicians may produce even more than that”(p. 1)

Speaking is essential for all aspects of life because it enables people to build positive relationships with others, express their objectives effectively, get information immediately, and take part in productive conversations (Daguiani, 2022; Rao, 2019). Consequently, it is the most crucial ability for EFL learners because it enables them to demonstrate their communication abilities in various scenarios. Students must speak English as much as they can in order to become accurate and proficient speakers. (Rizqiningsih & Hadi, 2019). To become proficient in spoken English, individuals must master speaking components, including vocabulary, grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and comprehension (Syakur, 2007; Rizqiningsih & Hadi, 2019). Every component has a specific function: grammar organizes sentences, vocabulary expresses ideas, pronunciation guarantees clarity, fluency permits natural speech, and understanding serves as the cornerstone.

Even though speaking is one of the most challenging parts of learning a language, it is an essential component of every language program, EFL language learners struggle to express themselves well in the target language, and teachers have traditionally had a hard time coming up with effective speaking lessons (Dang & Nga, 2022). Sirisrimangkorn (2021) carried out a study that confirmed that presentation activities and scaffolding helped EFL undergraduate students improve their speaking skills, providing them with the necessary tools to expand their speaking abilities. Additionally, the students' perceptions of project-based learning with presentations were favorable as they believed it had enhanced their speaking skills. The study's findings demonstrated that a cooperative learning environment was crucial for the development of speaking skills since it motivated the students to work together to finish the assignments. Additionally, technical skill integration was mentioned as a crucial factor too.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, which entails gathering and evaluating quantitative data in the first phase and then conducting a qualitative phase to elaborate on and clarify the quantitative results, gaining more detailed insights for the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The first phase included a questionnaire to collect quantitative data about the effect of the fear of making mistakes on pre-service EFL teachers' oral communication skills and the results informed the selection of participants for the qualitative phase.

### **Context and Participants**

The study was undertaken in a public university in Los Rios province, Ecuador. The participants in the quantitative phase included 28 pre-service EFL teachers, 20 females and eight males whose ages range between 20 and 25 years. The pre-service EFL teachers were in their fifth semester and doing their practicum.

For the qualitative, a purposive sampling was employed, and four pre-service EFL teachers were selected based on their responses in the quantitative phase, particularly focusing on individuals whose questionnaire answers showed significant challenges with fear of making mistakes in oral communication. This selection ensured a diverse and representative sample to provide in-depth perspectives and richer insights into the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### **Data Collection Instruments**

This study employed many instruments to collect the data to permit triangulation (Donkoh & Mensah, 2023). Data were collected in two phases, both of them conducted in Spanish to guarantee precise answers and resolve any misunderstandings among the participants. The qualitative phase used in-method triangulation by applying observations, interviews, and visual narratives. to obtain rich and in-depth information about the effect of the fear of making mistakes on oral communication skills (Donkoh & Mensah, 2023).

### **Survey**

A survey that consisted of 11 questions using a four-point Likert scale (1 totally agree - 4 totally disagree) and two categories, one regarded gender, age, and time learning English, and the other about the effect of the fear of making mistakes on their oral communication skills was sent via Google forms. To increase the reliability and accuracy of this instrument, first it was revised by two experts in the field, and then, it was piloted with another group of students. It is essential to highlight that the questions were in Spanish, the participants' target language, and they had one week to complete it.

## **Interview**

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the survey results in detail. The interviews included five main questions and follow-up questions concerning participants' feelings during oral activities, their preparation for speaking in English, experiences avoiding oral activities due to fear of making mistakes, reactions to mistakes, and comparisons between oral communication and other language skills, providing insights into the impact of this fear on their performance and learning experiences. Each session lasted 10 minutes.

## **Visual Narrative**

Visual narrative is a type of data collection that in education has the potential to be a very potent tool since it allows one to examine several points of view within a dynamic setting or circumstance while also making the many storylines or pieces of a story visible (Lemon, 2006). For that reason, the four participants were asked to draw how they see themselves when speaking in English in front of others. However, a visual narrative is incomplete without language and dialogue to accompany it (Lemon, 2006) so after that, they were requested to write an explanation of their narratives describing their experiences, feelings, and thoughts related to speaking in English in front of others.

## **Classroom Observation**

Observations were carried out over 2 weeks to monitor the four individuals in action as they express themselves in a variety of contexts and activities in order to learn about their thoughts and behaviors when speaking English (Pandey & Pandey, 2021). A checklist was used, along with notes, to document their responses and actions.

## **Data Analysis**

### **Quantitative Data**

The analysis was done using the statistical program SPSS 25, one of the most popular statistical software programs in the world for qualitative research in the social sciences and other fields, enabling the use and execution of computer languages to collect and interpret the analyses of the data entered by classifying and analyzing the data (Pacheco et al., 2020). Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequencies, were calculated to summarize the effect of the fear of making mistakes on participants' oral communication skills.

### **Qualitative Data**

This analysis followed the grounded theory, which allows to find and conceptualize the hidden social and communal patterns and constructs behind the fear of making mistakes through rigorous data analysis processes (Noble & Mitchell, 2016). Following the three stages of data analysis during this research, interviews were first transcribed and read the data while searching for connections, then relationships were identified between the categories, and connections were made to understand how different aspects of the fear of making mistakes were related to one

another. Finally, the core category related to the fear of making mistakes was identified and linked to the other categories.

### **Ethical Considerations**

This study followed the procedures of ethical considerations (Hasan et al., 2021). The research was socialized with potential participants sharing the aim of the study and procedure. Participants were given clear information about their voluntary participation. Then, a consent letter was signed by all the participants showing their understanding and voluntary participation. All data collected was kept private and used just for the study, assigning pseudonyms to every participant, guaranteeing their privacy.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Quantitative Data**

To address the aim of the research about analyzing the effects of the fear of making mistakes on pre-service English teachers' oral communication skills, the questionnaire focused on the fear of speaking. The responses were measured using a Likert scale consisting of four levels: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree.

**Table 1**  
*Social and Teacher - Related Anxiety*

<b>Social and Teacher-Related Anxiety</b>						
<b>Statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev.</b>
I feel anxious when I have to speak in English in front of my classmates.	2	9	13	4	7	4,97
I get nervous when the teacher asks me a question in English.	3	9	14	2	7	5,60

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree.

As observed in Table 1, the participants' responses indicate that both classmates and teachers can be significant sources of anxiety and nervousness during speaking activities. Specifically, 60.7% agreed with the statement, 'I feel anxious when I have to speak in English in front of my classmates. Additionally, 57.1% agreed with the statement, 'I get nervous when the teacher asks me a question in English.' These findings suggest that both the presence of classmates and the authority of teachers contribute to increased anxiety. The high percentage indicates that anxiety and nervousness provoked by the presence of classmates and teachers may be a common barrier that prevents students from fully participating in oral activities, ultimately impacting their language learning progress (Riadil, 2020).

**Table 2**  
*Fear of making mistakes and avoidance*

<b>Fear of Making Mistakes and Avoidance</b>						
<b>Statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev.</b>
I avoid speaking in English because I fear making mistakes.	3	11	9	5	7	3,65
I feel embarrassed when my pronunciation is incorrect while speaking in English.	2	7	17	2	7	7,07
I hesitate to speak English during class discussions because I fear being judged.	3	8	11	6	7	3,37

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree.

According to table 2, fear of making mistakes significantly affects students' oral performance. 67,8% of the participants agreed that they feel embarrassed when their pronunciation is incorrect, which in turn affects the confidence of 60.7% of the participants during class discussions. In addition, 50% of participants stated that they avoid speaking in English due to the fear of making mistakes. The findings suggest that the fear of making mistakes and overall oral performance are directly related since learners who fear making mistakes may have reduced speaking abilities, which can result in avoidance behaviors and a refusal to engage in verbal activities. The hesitation to speak or the avoidance of English can significantly hinder the development of pre-service English teachers as communicators, a key skill for teaching effectively (Xie & Derakhshan, 2021).

### **Qualitative Data**

#### **Emma**

Feelings of insecurity are common while attempting something new. Similar situations occur when students try to learn and speak English in class (Santos et al., 2020). According to Emma, lack of confidence is the main reason that prevents her from developing her speaking skills. She pointed out: "It's hard for me and it's like my brain is blocked and I lose what to say at that moment" (Interview). Pabro-Maquidato (2021) asserts that when speaking English, students experience mental and emotional stress, for Emma mental blocks arise when she needs to talk in English, and being judged by the instructor is another of the reasons for her fear "It's not so much the fear of being judged by my classmates, no, it's more about the professor's opinion (Interview)".

The impact of the fear is evident in students' performance and overall learning experience (Riadil, 2020). As a result, Emma's participation in class is hidden by her nervousness, leading her to obtain a grade of three out of ten in her performance in class in the first term. During class discussions, she avoids participating even though she knows what to say. In her words "I have knowledge about what to say but the nerves are treacherous. Then that moment comes and it's like magic and I lose that confidence" (Interview). Beshir & Yigzaw (2022) state that English language learners employ various self-correction techniques that help and encourage efficacy, accuracy, and fluency, particularly in student-centered activities.

However, Emma avoids self-correcting her mistakes when speaking, fearing that doing so may disrupt the flow of conversation and draw attention to her errors "I try to improvise at that moment to conceal a little my mistake and try to make it clear and obviously as I mentioned hide this small error (Interview)". She illustrates her feelings about speaking English using the visual narrative (Fig.1)

**Figure 1**

*Visual narrative 1: Emma speaking English*



From her drawing, we can interpret that Emma sees her audience as an intimidating presence represented as black shadows, which makes her feel nervous and shaken. In the description of her visual narrative, she remarks that she fears speaking in public. She is afraid of being judged by her teachers, and she forgets everything.

### **Sophie**

According to Sultana & Jamin (2021), because of the professors' unpleasant attitude, the majority of learners struggle to communicate in English in front of them. Additionally, students' speech in the classroom is impacted by the teacher's and audience's facial expressions and interruptions. For Sophie, her willingness to participate in class is greatly affected by her fear of being judged by her peers and the teacher. She shared: "many times I avoid speaking in class because I think I'm going to make a mistake and the professor is going to look at me with a face,

I don't know, a bad one. Also, I think that the other classmates will look at me with a face of dislike, as if they don't like my answer" (Interview).

The consequences of this fear and anxiety are significant. For Sophie, the pressure to avoid judgment from both the professor and her classmates leads to a noticeable resistance to engage in class discussions and also produces mental blocks during oral presentations (Pabro-Maquidato, 2021). For her, the nervousness to make mistakes in front of others is a barrier to speaking. She stated, "when I'm too nervous because I've made a mistake, that's when I freeze, and I can't say anything else" (Interview). During the presentations, Sophie was observed getting frustrated and losing her train of thought after making a mistake. However, she does not correct her mistakes during oral presentations: "If I make a mistake, I skip that part to avoid getting more confused" (Interview). In Sophie's words, speaking is the hardest English skill since for her expressing ideas orally is difficult due to her fear of making a mistake, which causes her to struggle when speaking. According to Pratolo et al., (2019) anxiety produced by the fear of making mistakes is one of the factors that prevents learners from expressing their thoughts and feelings vocally. Sophie uses the visual narrative to express how she feels when speaking English (Fig. 2).

**Figure 2**

*Visual narrative 2: Sophie speaking English*



Based on her illustration, we can say that Sophie experiences different emotions when speaking in English such as fear and nervousness. Her facial expression shows uncertainty and anxiety. She portrayed herself with raised eyebrows and an open mouth, suggesting that she feels pressured or overwhelmed. In the description of her visual narrative, she confirmed that by expressing that all the time she has to speak in public in English she experiences various emotions. She goes from feeling fear to experiencing anxiety.

**Anne**

Anne experienced a range of fears during her oral presentations that highly impacted her participation in oral activities during classes. She is primarily afraid of making mistakes when speaking and being laughed at for what she says. She mentioned, "I usually stay silent because

I'm afraid of expressing myself badly or maybe saying the structure of the sentence wrong, and when I speak, everyone starts to make fun of me” (Interview).

The fears Anne experiences have several effects on her English learning process and classroom participation. Firstly, the fear makes her nervous and makes her lose confidence (Yuhong & Xiaoli, 2021). This was confirmed during observations since her hands were constantly shaking while she spoke in front of the class and her tone of voice was low. During the interview, she highlighted, “when it's an oral presentation, as if suddenly without having planned it, I feel really nervous, I think that, like, I'm going to make a mistake” (Interview). When she doesn't have an external motivation to participate in class she remains silent: “When they talk about class participation and if they don't look at me, I don't participate. If they don't see me and don't say anything, sometimes I just stay quiet” (Interview). As a result, she struggles with active class participation (Dewey, 1913, as cited in Paudel, 2023), which is reflected in her low-class participation in a curriculum subject grade of three out of ten.

This can be confirmed in her visual narrative where she portrayed two black shadows behind her, symbolizing the fears she experiences during oral activities. A face of confusion, sadness, and worry can be seen. We can say that fear leads her to block and prevent speaking in class.

### **Figure 3**

*Visual narrative 3: Anne speaking English in class*



When describing her drawing Anne wrote: “In my drawing, I show how my fears begin to take over me in the moments when I have to express myself in English, these fears make me nervous and cause my presentations not to turn out as I had planned (Visual narrative)”.

### **Lily**

Lily struggles when expressing her ideas orally in English. The reason behind this is because she is afraid of making mistakes. During the interview, she mentioned, “Yes, I have avoided speaking in English because I don't know, I say, 'What if this is wrong?’” (Interview). This corroborates the point made by Suparlan (2021), who mentioned that students who are afraid

of making mistakes refrain from speaking both within and outside of the classroom, which impedes the development of their oral communication skills. According to Lily, frustration is one of the principal effects of this fear as she cannot control her body and voice when speaking, and nervousness emerges, even though she knows. Students' anxiety about speaking and their fear of making mistakes lead them to avoid speaking during English classes. Consequently, many students find learning a second or foreign language unpleasant due to the nervousness they experience when speaking (García & Vaca-Cárdenas, 2022; Rahmat, 2020). These can be proven by Lily's drawing (Fig. 4).

#### **Figure 4**

*Visual narrative 4: Lily speaking English in class*



Lily's illustration represents her experience when speaking in English in front of the class, she drew herself in a way that reflects the emotions and tension she feels. Her drawing conveys her discomfort and frustration. As well as Emma's visual narrative (Fig. 1) Lily's picture shows that the presence of teachers and classmates is a factor that influences her emotions and actions when speaking. When describing the visual narrative, Lily expressed that when she speaks English, she feels her body react in a way that she cannot control, and similarly to Emma nervousness takes control of her body, but in Lily's case it provokes her voice to tremble. Additionally, she stated that frustration also emerges, making her forget everything even when she was prepared for the task. This confirms that students experience similar emotions and physical reactions when speaking English, struggling with nervousness, frustration, and the pressure of being in front of others.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

This study investigated the effects of the fear of making mistakes on developing oral communication skills in pre-service EFL teachers. By applying an explanatory mixed method design, diverse data collection tools were administered to gather data, including a survey,

classroom observations, interviews, and visual narratives. The results indicate that fear manifests itself in different ways, and the fear of making mistakes is one of the most prominent factors among pre-service English teachers. This fear affects students' confidence, and willingness to participate in oral communication activities, often provoking anxiety and mental blocks. As a result, it hinders the development of their speaking abilities, as the less they practice, the less proficient they become. This emotion is primarily triggered by the presence of the teacher and classmates, as students fear making mistakes and being judged by the teacher or mocked by their peers.

Therefore, Ecuadorian teachers should aim to create a safe and non-judgmental classroom environment that minimizes fear. They should also be aware of their students' emotional well-being. With this insight, teachers can foster a positive atmosphere that encourages students to gradually build their speaking skills in each class by using different strategies like promoting collaborative work where students can interact in small groups rather than speaking to the whole class. Furthermore, using scaffolding in the classroom can be an effective way to give students direction and continuous support so they can participate in speaking exercises without fear of making mistakes and being judged, build confidence, and gradually develop their speaking abilities.

This investigation contributes to the educational field because it provides insights into the reasons and effects of the fear of making mistakes in pre-service English teachers' oral communication skills. Thus, it promotes awareness of the challenges students face and highlights the importance of addressing these issues so that future English teachers can develop effective communication skills and help their students face real-life challenges.

This study encountered limitations, primarily because students were not used to talking about their emotions, so we could have missed some crucial information. However, this investigation used different instruments to overcome this problem and confirm the data collected. Also, the qualitative phase of this study worked with four female pre-service English teachers. Research on investigating the causes of fear in male participants to check the differences and similarities is suggested.

The investigation revealed that fear of making mistakes is common among students. On this basis, future research should propose concrete strategies to help students overcome this situation.

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