

## Use of Oral Communication Strategies: A Study of Bangladeshi EFL Learners at the Graduate Level

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**Abstract :** This paper reports on an investigation into the use of specific types of oral communication strategies, namely 'topic avoidance', 'message abandonment', 'code-switching', 'paraphrasing', 'restructuring', and 'stalling' by Bangladeshi EFL learners at the graduate level. It chiefly considers the frequency of using these strategies as well as the students and teachers attitudes toward such uses. The participants of this study are 66 EFL students and 12 EFL teachers of Jahangirnagar University. Data was collected through questionnaire, oral interview, and classroom observation form. The findings reveal that the EFL students tried to employ all the strategies to various extents due to the language difficulties they encountered in their oral English performance. Among them, the mostly used strategy was 'stalling' or the use of fillers, followed by 'code-switching'. The least used strategies were 'topic avoidance', 'restructuring', and 'paraphrasing'. The findings indicate that the use of such strategies was related to the contexts of situation and data-elicitation tasks. It also reveals that the students were not formally trained to use the strategies though the majority of the teachers and students acknowledge them as helpful in communication. Finally the study suggests that an awareness of the nature and functions of these strategies can contribute to the overall improvement of the learners' communicative competence in spoken English.

**Keywords :** communicative strategies, competency, attitude, frequency

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