Linguistic and non-linguistic communication strategies employed by English non-native speaker hosts in talk shows and on-location interviews on SEA Today TV

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ABSTRACT

English non-native speaker (NNS) hosts in television broadcasting often face communicative pressures where maintaining fluency, accuracy, and audience engagement is critical. These challenges require the use of compensatory strategies, that is, techniques to overcome gaps in linguistic proficiency and sustain interaction. This study investigates the linguistic and non-linguistic communication strategies employed by NNS hosts on SEA Today TV across two formats: talk shows (TS) and on-location interviews (OL). Using a mixed-methods content analysis, 20 purposively selected broadcast episodes (2021–2025) were examined to represent program variety and host diversity. Data were coded using an adapted version of Farrahi's (2011) taxonomy, with 20% of the corpus double-coded; inter-rater reliability (Cohen's κ TS = 1.000; Cohen's κ OL = 0.875) confirmed coding consistency. The findings identified two main groups of strategies (linguistic and non-linguistic) comprising sixteen subcategories, of which fourteen were observed. Eight strategies, including approximation, elaboration, and body gestures, emerged as a shared "core repertoire." Contextual contrasts were also evident: talk shows displayed higher reliance on appeal for help and circumlocution due to their collaborative studio setting. At the same time, on-location interviews emphasized elaboration and environmental gestures in response to real-time unpredictability. These results demonstrate that NNS hosts flexibly adapt a stable repertoire of strategies to context-specific demands. Pedagogically, the results

Alya Afifah Izwandi; Ira Maisarah; Safnil Arsyad; Alamsyah Harahap

suggest that broadcaster training and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) instruction should explicitly incorporate communication strategy practice. For instance, training modules could simulate on-location unpredictability to help hosts practise elaboration and approximation strategies, while studio-based exercises could focus on appeals for help and interactional alignment with co-hosts and guests. Such targeted activities would strengthen broadcasters' strategic competence, enabling them to manage linguistic limitations more effectively in diverse communicative settings.

INTRODUCTION

In television broadcasting, effective communication is especially critical when programs are hosted by non-native English speakers, who often face unique challenges in ensuring clarity, accuracy, and audience engagement. Unlike native speakers, they must strategically manage both linguistic and non-linguistic resources to maintain fluency and credibility in high-stakes, real-time interactions. This issue is particularly relevant in English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) contexts, where broadcasters serve multilingual audiences and miscommunication can undermine both viewer comprehension and institutional credibility. Yet, despite the growing prominence of ELF in global media, little research has examined how non-native English-speaking hosts employ communication strategies in television settings, leaving a substantial gap that this study seeks to address.

Television programs are not homogeneous. They vary in purpose, format, tone, and intended audience, each requiring tailored communication techniques. Talk shows often feature informal and spontaneous exchanges that foster a conversational bond with the audience. On-location interviews, on the other hand, demand structured, professional communication to maintain credibility in reporting from real-world contexts (Daysh, 2018). For non-native English speakers functioning as TV hosts, these challenges are even more complex. They must balance fluency and clarity with cultural appropriateness, all while performing under the pressures of live or semi-scripted media environments (Chupoo & Prayong, 2021).

In recent years, the rise of English as a global lingua franca has further complicated the communicative demands placed on media professionals in non-English-speaking regions. Broadcasters now face the dual imperative of

maintaining local identity while aligning with international standards, particularly in multilingual and multicultural societies like those found in Southeast Asia. English-language broadcasting has become a gateway to global relevance. Yet, it often places additional cognitive and social pressures on non-native hosts who must manage spontaneous interaction in a second language while meeting professional expectations. The convergence of live television with digital platforms, where content is often clipped, subtitled, and redistributed globally, adds further urgency to understanding how communication strategies are used and adapted across formats.

SEA Today TV offers a concrete context in which these challenges become visible. As a 24-hour English-language network based in Indonesia, SEA Today is distinct from most local broadcasters in that it aims to serve both domestic and international audiences through exclusively English programming. Its hosts, the majority of whom are English non-native speakers, face the dual challenge of maintaining linguistic accuracy and sustaining engaging delivery while navigating diverse formats such as talk shows and on-location interviews. In an ELF setting where viewers' English proficiency levels vary widely, the hosts' ability to employ communication strategies effectively is critical. This makes SEA Today TV an ideal site for examining how non-native English-speaking hosts adapt their strategies to ensure comprehension and maintain audience engagement (Abah et al., 2024; Qabilovna, 2020).

In this study, communication strategies refer to the verbal and non-verbal tactics used by speakers, especially non-native English speakers, to prevent, manage, or overcome communicative difficulties and sustain interaction (Tarone, 1981; Dörnyei & Scott, 1997). These may include linguistic strategies such as approximation, self-repair, and appeal for help, as well as paralinguistic actions like gestures or facial expressions. The study draws on Kanoksilapatham's (2005) classification of strategy entrenchment (obligatory, optional, and unnecessary) to examine how frequently and flexibly these strategies are employed across different TV formats.

Research on communication strategies has long emphasized how non-native speakers employ compensatory techniques to overcome linguistic limitations in interaction. Foundational studies by Tarone (1981) and Dörnyei and Scott (1997) highlight strategies such as circumlocution, approximation, and appeals for assistance as key resources in sustaining conversation when proficiency gaps arise. These insights are crucial for understanding the repertoire available to English non-native speaker (NNS) television hosts, whose on-air performance often requires real-time negotiation of meaning under public scrutiny.

Within media contexts, communication strategies extend beyond linguistic repair to include situational adaptability. Studies of television

discourse have shown that talk show hosts rely on humor, rhythm, and interpersonal style to maintain audience attention Rakhmawati and Sulistyorini (2021), while non-verbal cues such as gestures, eye contact, and vocal clarity enhance credibility and engagement during interviews (Deng, 2023; Nabi & Hendriks, 2003). Other research emphasizes the challenge of live broadcasting, where spontaneity must be balanced with structured delivery (Oyeleye & Olutayo, 2012), and the pressures of cross-platform convergence that demand continuous adaptation of communicative style (Li, 2023; Zhang, 2021). Together, these studies underscore that effective hosting requires not only language proficiency but also strategic competence in managing interactions across various media formats.

Despite these contributions, prior scholarship tends to privilege either native English-speaking hosts or classroom-based NNS interactions, leaving the specific case of NNS broadcasters underexplored. While some research on Indonesian talk shows (Rakhmawati & Sulistyorini, 2021) and digital broadcasting (Zhang et al., 2023; Chebunet et al., 2024) provides insight into engagement techniques, they rarely consider the added complexity of hosting in English as a lingua franca (ELF) for international audiences. Consequently, little is known about how NNS television hosts in multilingual Southeast Asian contexts strategically deploy both linguistic and non-linguistic strategies in real-time, high-stakes programming. This study addresses that gap by examining SEA Today TV, where non-native hosts operate at the intersection of ELF communication, live broadcast demands, and media convergence.

Despite the growing body of literature, there is limited research on the strategic communication behaviors of non-native English-speaking hosts operating in multilingual broadcast environments, especially within Southeast Asia. Very few studies have explored how these hosts may manage the challenges of limited language proficiency, cultural awareness, and professional expectations while engaging in real-time English-language broadcasting. SEA Today TV presents a unique context in which non-native English-speaking hosts must perform across multiple formats, studio-based talk shows, and on-location interviews while addressing both local and international audiences.

Moreover, existing research has focused mainly on either language learners in academic settings or trained professionals in monolingual, native-dominated environments, leaving a research gap in understanding how trained non-native professionals adapt communication strategies in media institutions. This is particularly relevant for countries aiming to boost their global media visibility through English-medium channels. Therefore, examining the communication strategies of SEA Today TV hosts offer valuable theoretical insights into second-language acquisition and use within

high-stakes, multimodal, and multicultural broadcast environments, particularly by highlighting how communicative competence is adapted in real-time by non-native speakers. Practically, the findings can inform media training programs and professional development initiatives for broadcast practitioners operating in multilingual contexts, equipping them with practical strategies to enhance audience engagement and clarity of message.

To address this gap, the present study investigates the linguistic and non-linguistic communication strategies employed by non-native English-speaking hosts on SEA Today TV, an Indonesian English-language news network. By focusing on two contrasting interactive formats, studio-based talk shows and on-location interviews, this research explores how strategic behaviors are employed, adapted, and compared across different production settings within the same institutional context. Unlike prior studies that often focus on general media communication or single formats, this study offers a comparative analysis grounded in a Southeast Asian media environment, providing empirical insight into the real-time adaptability of professional second-language users. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on non-native English-speaking hosts navigating English-medium broadcasts for diverse local and international audiences, thus contributing to our understanding of strategic competence, media professionalism, and multilingual communication in global broadcasting contexts.

Accordingly, the research is guided by the following questions:

1. What communication strategies are most frequently employed in talk show programs on SEA Today TV by English non-native speaker hosts?
2. What communication strategies are most frequently employed in on-location interview programs on SEA Today TV by English non-native speaker hosts?
3. How are the communication strategies between the two programs on SEA Today TV employed by English non-native speaker hosts similar or different?

METHOD

Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods content analysis to examine the communication strategies used by English non-native speaker hosts on SEA Today TV. The quantitative dimension allowed for systematic coding of the frequency and distribution of both linguistic and non-linguistic strategies across two formats: talk shows and on-location interviews. To capture variation beyond mere presence or absence, strategies were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = rare, 5 = constant), allowing for the analysis of their intensity and consistency (Neuendorf, 2017; Krippendorff, 2018).

Complementing this, the qualitative dimension involved thematic analysis of contextual deployment, focusing on *how and why* particular strategies were employed within the flow of interaction. For example, elaboration was examined in relation to moments of audience misunderstanding, while gestures were interpreted in terms of emphasis, clarification, or rapport-building.

The unit of analysis consisted of utterances and interactional segments produced by the hosts. These included spoken turns that reflected strategic behavior (e.g., approximation, circumlocution, appeal for help) as well as observable non-verbal cues such as gestures and the use of physical objects. Conversational turns and the functional role of strategies within discourse guided segmentation.

This mixed-methods approach was selected for its capacity to combine empirical rigor with contextual sensitivity. It not only quantifies measurable features but also accounts for the interactional functions of strategies, producing a more comprehensive understanding of how English non-native speaker hosts navigate communication in professional broadcast settings.

Instruments and Procedures

A structured observation checklist adapted from Farrahi (2011) served as the primary research instrument. It categorized communication strategies into two major types: linguistic (e.g., elaboration, approximation, topic avoidance) and non-linguistic (e.g., gestures, use of objects or visuals). Each strategy was marked for presence (✓) or absence (×) using a binary measurement format based on the Guttman scale, which is commonly applied in categorical content analysis to determine the occurrence or non-occurrence of specific features (Guttman, 1950; Brown, 2011).

A total of 20 video episodes (10 talk shows and 10 on-location interviews) were selected through purposive sampling. The decision to focus on this number was based on the feasibility of in-depth content analysis while still allowing for a meaningful comparison across formats, following precedents in similar discourse studies. Episodes were drawn from a single programming quarter to ensure temporal consistency in production and hosting style, while acknowledging that this approach may not capture longer-term seasonal or historical variations. To minimize content-based bias, the selection prioritized episodes with consistent hosts and comparable themes such as culture, tourism, education, or policy, thereby ensuring that variations observed could be attributed more confidently to communication strategies rather than topic differences.

Each video was reviewed three times to ensure accurate capture of verbal utterances and non-verbal cues. Verbatim transcripts were manually

prepared to preserve prosodic, lexical, and interactional features relevant to the identification of communication strategies.

To establish intercoder reliability, a co-rater independently coded 20% of the total data, a proportion commonly applied in content analysis research to balance consistency checks with coding efficiency (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). This subset was sufficient to identify discrepancies and validate the reliability of the coding scheme. Additionally, host consistency was partly controlled by prioritizing episodes anchored by recurring hosts across both formats. Where different hosts appeared, selection emphasized individuals with comparable English proficiency and hosting experience to minimize variation attributable to skill differences, rather than communication strategy.

Cohen's Kappa coefficient (κ) was used to measure agreement, indicating a substantial level of consistency (Cohen, 1960; McHugh, 2012). Discrepancies were resolved through discussion. This process ensured not only reliability in coding but also minimized subjective bias, a critical consideration when identifying strategies that may appear similar, such as approximation versus generalization or elaboration versus exemplification. High κ values supported the validity of the instrument and reinforced confidence in the replicability of the findings.

Data Analysis

All coded data were organized using Microsoft Excel, which allowed for classification, timestamping, and frequency counting. The following section outlines the specific formulas used to compute each statistical measure:

Cohen's Kappa Formula

$$\kappa = \frac{\{P_o - P_e\}}{1 - P_e}$$

Note:

κ = Cohen's Kappa coefficient

P_o = Raters' observed agreement (two raters percentage of agreement)

P_e = Expected chance of agreement

Table 1. Interpretation of Cohen's Kappa Values (Landis & Koch, 1977)

Kappa Value (κ)	Agreement Level
0.01 – 0.20	Slight Agreement
0.21 – 0.40	Fair Agreement
0.41 – 0.60	Moderate Agreeement
0.61 – 0.80	Substantial Agreement
0.81 – 1.00	Almost Perfect Agreement

In this study, a Cohen's Kappa value of 0.82 was achieved, suggesting near-perfect agreement between the two raters. This reinforces the internal consistency of the coding framework and supports the trustworthiness of the classification system used.

To interpret the frequency of strategy usage, this study adopted the categorization model from Kanoksilapatham (2005), which groups strategy occurrences into three typical patterns based on their accuracy levels, as shown below.

Table 2. Communication Strategy Patterns Based on Kanoksilapatham's (2005) Model

Accuracy	Category
100%	Obligatory/Compulsory
90%	Conventional
50-70%	Optional

This categorization, guided by Kanoksilapatham's (2005) move-based analysis model, enabled a structured comparison of strategy use across program formats. It provided insights into how non-native English-speaking hosts adapt their communication strategies in different broadcast settings. The percentages reported reflect the frequency of each strategy relative to the total number of strategies observed, rather than the number of hosts using them. This approach allowed the researcher not only to identify the most prevalent strategies but also to assess their degree of entrenchment and context-dependency across the two formats.

FINDINGS
Inter-rater Reliability
To ensure the reliability of the data analysis, a co-rater independently coded 20% of the dataset (4 out of 20 videos), applying the same structured observation checklist as the primary researcher. The agreement between the researcher and co-rater was measured using Cohen's Kappa (κ). The results are presented in the table below:

Table 3. Inter-Rater Reliability between Researcher and Co-Rater Using Cohen's Kappa

Interactive Programs	Number of Videos Rated	Percentage of Agreement	Cohen Kappa's Value (κ)	Interpretation
Talk Show (TS)	2	93.3%	0.875	Almost Perfect Agreement
On-Location Interview (OL)	2	100%	1.000	Perfect Agreement

Table 3 shows a high level of consistency between the two raters. In this study, an average Cohen's Kappa value of 0.82 was achieved across the dataset, indicating near-perfect agreement. Following Landis and Koch's (1977) interpretation scale, a κ value of 0.875 for talk shows suggests "almost perfect agreement," while the κ value of 1.000 for on-location interviews reflects "perfect agreement." These findings validate the reliability of the coding procedure and reinforce both the internal consistency of the coding framework and the trustworthiness of the classification system used in this study.

Communication Strategies in Talk Show Programs (RQ1)

Table 4 presents the types and frequency of communication strategies employed by English non-native speaker hosts in the talk show programs.

Table 4. Communication Strategies Employed by English Non-Native Speaker Hosts in Talk Show Programs

Communication Strategy	Total	Percentage %
Use of Body Gestures (UBG)	10	100
Appeal for Help (AFH)	9	90
Use of All Purpose Words (UPW)	9	90
Approximation (App)	7	70
Circumlocution (Cir)	5	50
Explicitation/Elaboration (Exp)	5	50
Exemplification (Exe)	5	50
Use of Opposites or Negatives (UON)	5	50

Based on Table 4, the most frequently used strategies in talk show programs were Use of Body Gestures (100%), Appeal for Help (90%), and Use of All-Purpose Words (90%). According to Kanoksilapatham's (2005) framework, UBG is classified as Obligatory, as it appeared in all observed talk show segments. Meanwhile, AFH and UPW, each used by 90% of the hosts, fall into the Conventional category, indicating they are commonly but not universally employed.

All observed talk show hosts employed hand gestures, facial expressions, or head movements to support spoken messages. These non-verbal cues often accompanied moments of hesitation or explanation, serving to clarify meaning or emphasize points visually.

> **Extract (TS07)**: Host 1 used hand gestures while searching for words, while Host 2 nodded in agreement to signal shared understanding.

The Appeal for Help strategy, classified as Conventional, was frequently observed when hosts encountered lexical difficulty and sought verbal assistance. It included phrases like "how do you say it…" or indirect signs of uncertainty, inviting the co-host or guest to offer a word or clarification.

> **Extract (TS07)**: The host says, "…how do you say it, to a certain…," followed by the co-host's helpful response, "like strength?"

Likewise, the Use of All-Purpose Words, also Conventional, involved vague, flexible terms such as "stuff," "thing," or "kind of" to keep conversations flowing, particularly in informal contexts.

> **Extract (TS06)**: The host uses phrases like "stuff like that" and "kind of" to describe activities in a generalized manner, maintaining spontaneity and engagement.

Other strategies, such as Approximation (70%), fall within the Optional category, as they were employed in only 50–70% of cases. Similarly, Circumlocution, Explicitation/Elaboration, Exemplification, and Use of Opposites or Negatives (each at 50%) are also categorized as Optional, suggesting that while these strategies are helpful, they are more context-dependent and not essential across all episodes.

Communication Strategies in On-Location Interview Programs (RQ2)
The following table summarizes the communication strategies used by English non-native speaker hosts in on-location interview programs.

Table 5. Communication Strategies Employed by English Non-Native Speaker Hosts in On-Location Interview Programs

Communication Strategy	Total	Percentage %
Use of Body Gestures (UBG)	10	100
Explicitation/Elaboration (Exp)	9	90
Approximation (App)	6	60
Exemplification (Exe)	6	60
Use of All Purpose Words (UPW)	6	60

According to Table 5, the most frequently employed strategies in on-location interviews were the Use of Body Gestures (100%), Explicitation/Elaboration (90%), and Approximation, Exemplification, and Use of All-Purpose Words (each 60%).

The Use of Body Gestures (UBG) was once again used in all episodes, classifying it as Obligatory. Its consistent presence in both talk shows and on-location interviews confirms its essential role in multimodal communication, particularly when environmental distractions or real-time constraints exist.

> **Extract (OL09)**: The host presents a snack tray and points to the items, visually reinforcing the welcoming message to the guest.

Explicitation or elaboration was the most commonly observed strategy in the on-location format, appearing in 90% of the segments. This strategy enabled hosts to reformulate or expand their utterances for clarity, especially when handling abstract or sensitive content. Its prevalence in outdoor settings, where spontaneity and limited support (e.g., no teleprompter) are typical, suggests its central role in maintaining communicative precision.

> **Extract (OL07)**: The host repeatedly rephrases a complex question about Ireland's decision to recognize Palestine moving from vague references like "administrative process" to more defined terms such as "legislative process" and "official enforcement."

Although linguistically imperfect, this iterative restatement exemplifies strategic elaboration aimed at ensuring guest comprehension and effectively managing the sensitive topic.

Approximation, present in 60% of the episodes, involves the use of near-synonymous or generalized terms when exact vocabulary is inaccessible. This strategy allowed hosts to maintain fluency while discussing broad or technical subjects such as international policy or economic programs.

> **Extract from OL03**: The host uses general terms like "health issues" and "geopolitical issues" in reference to the Bali Leaders Declaration. These umbrella terms substitute more precise phrases (e.g., "non-communicable diseases" or "regional conflict resolution"), thus maintaining verbal flow without loss of message comprehensibility. Then, the use of "summit" to cover various high-level diplomatic activities reflects intentional lexical generalization to support fluency.

Exemplification was observed in 60% of the programs. This strategy enabled hosts to provide concrete examples that supported abstract points, particularly when explaining policies or institutional efforts.

Extract from OL08: When discussing "triangle work cooperation," the host elaborates with, "for example, we already provided some capacity building in trade and services." This move grounds the abstract concept of intergovernmental cooperation in real-world action, aiding both guest response and audience understanding.

Use of all-purpose words, such as "thing," "stuff," or "kind of," occurred in 60% of the segments. These general terms are often used when the speaker cannot retrieve a specific word or wants to maintain conversational momentum under pressure.

Extract from OL09: Although the utterance "we do have quite a bit of a story with that" includes "do" for emphasis, its use doesn't qualify as a strategy. However, phrases like "kind of story" or "this stuff" (if used elsewhere) would fall under UPW.

Therefore, care must be taken to distinguish stylistic usage from compensatory communication. In the episodes where UPW was coded, such terms helped speakers navigate moments of lexical uncertainty with ease.

Comparison Between Talk Shows and On-Location Interviews (RQ3)
To answer the third research question, this section compares the communication strategies employed by English non-native speaker hosts across two interactive formats, talk shows and on-location interviews, based on their presence or absence in each. As visualized in Figure 1, the analysis directly juxtaposes the two formats to highlight both overlapping strategies and those used exclusively in one format.
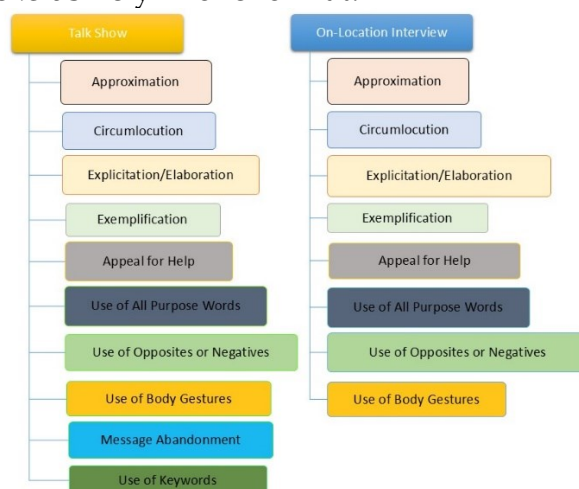

Figure 1. Comparison of Communication Strategies Used by English Non-Native Hosts in Talk Shows and On-Location Interviews

Figure 1 reveals that most strategies appear in both formats, indicating a shared foundation of communicative techniques across SEA Today TV programs. These commonly used strategies include approximation, circumlocution, explicitation/elaboration, exemplification, appeal for help, use of all-purpose words, use of opposites or negatives, and use of body gestures. Their recurrence in both talk shows and on-location interviews suggests that SEA Today TV hosts prioritize communicative clarity, message effectiveness, and real-time adaptability regardless of the broadcast setting. These findings reinforce the idea that strategic competence in second-language contexts involves versatile use of both linguistic and non-linguistic tools.

However, two strategies, message abandonment and use of keywords were observed only in talk shows, not in on-location interviews. The exclusive presence of these strategies in the talk show setting may be attributed to the more structured and controlled nature of studio-based interactions. Talk shows typically allow for conscious reformulation, brief hesitations, or deliberate simplification using key words to manage communication breakdowns. In contrast, the spontaneous and dynamic atmosphere of on-location interviews often demands uninterrupted speech and immediate responsiveness, limiting the use of such metalinguistic strategies.

Strategies such as word coinage, word-for-word translation, topic avoidance, the use of sounds, and the use of pictures, paintings, or drawings, as previously listed in the research instrument, were not found in either format during data analysis. Their absence may reflect the formal and professional nature of broadcast discourse, which often discourages overly informal or improvised strategies. These findings further support the notion that SEA Today TV hosts are trained to maintain broadcast standards that emphasize clarity, conciseness, and appropriateness for a broad audience.

This comparison demonstrates that while a core set of communication strategies is consistently employed across both program formats, specific strategies emerge uniquely depending on the context. Talk shows afford greater opportunities for repair and simplification through message abandonment and keyword usage, whereas on-location interviews emphasize uninterrupted flow and responsiveness to the environment. This suggests that SEA Today TV hosts, as non-native English speakers, demonstrate a high degree of adaptability in tailoring their strategic language use to meet distinct situational demands.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide comprehensive insights into the communication strategies employed by non-native English-speaking hosts on

SEA Today TV across two program formats: talk shows and on-location interviews. Drawing on a content analysis of 20 selected episodes, the results revealed distinct patterns in the types, frequency, and context-based deployment of both linguistic and non-linguistic communication strategies. These patterns resonate with and extend existing literature on second language (L2) strategic competence in professional broadcast settings.

In response to the first research question, which examined linguistic communication strategies, the findings show that hosts consistently employed approximation, circumlocution, explicitation/elaboration, exemplification, and appeal for help. These strategies were especially prominent in on-location interviews, where the absence of teleprompters and the unpredictable flow of conversation required greater communicative flexibility. Among these, elaboration and exemplification (90%) were most frequently used, indicating that hosts often relied on expanding utterances and providing concrete examples when they lacked precise vocabulary. This frequent reliance suggests that hosts strategically compensated for lexical gaps by reformulating questions or offering multiple explanations to sustain conversational flow. Such a pattern aligns with McCarthy's (1991) view of elaboration as essential in spontaneous spoken discourse, while also highlighting the particular challenges faced by non-native hosts in high-pressure, unscripted settings. These findings extend previous research on communication strategies by demonstrating that elaboration and exemplification are not only frequent but also function as critical tools for reducing miscommunication and maintaining host authority in live television contexts, an aspect that has received limited attention in earlier studies.

In talk show formats, hosts more frequently employed all-purpose words and approximations (90% and 70%), such as "thing," "stuff," or vague modifiers. These choices enabled them to maintain fluency under lexical pressure while sustaining a relaxed, conversational tone suited for studio interaction. This supports Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) concept of strategic competence, which frames compensatory strategies not merely as signs of linguistic deficiency but as pragmatic tools that allow speakers to preserve interactional goals and rapport with the audience. In this sense, the SEA Today hosts demonstrate how strategic competence operates in real broadcast contexts, where the priority is to maintain dialogue flowing smoothly and engagingly, rather than to achieve precise lexical accuracy. Moreover, the use of opposites and negatives in both formats illustrates what Faerch and Kasper (1983) describe as lexical approximation, highlighting how hosts adapt meaning through semantic flexibility when exact terms are inaccessible. By demonstrating that such strategies function less as emergency repairs and more as deliberate interactional choices, this finding extends prior theoretical accounts by showing their value in professional, public-facing discourse.

In sum, the observed pattern, namely the situational adaptation of different linguistic strategies depending on the format, demonstrates that these are not random tactics but deliberate, context-sensitive choices. In the talk show setting, the emphasis was on maintaining interpersonal rapport and fluency. At the same time, in on-location interviews, the focus shifted to clarity, credibility, and descriptive adequacy in unpredictable environments.

The second research question examined non-linguistic strategies; the data highlight the vital role of gestures and contextual cues in supporting verbal communication, especially in on-location interviews. Hosts frequently utilized referential gestures, such as pointing to surroundings or manipulating objects (e.g., maps, reports, or visible landmarks), to enhance the comprehensibility of their spoken message. These gestures served not only to supplement speech but to anchor abstract explanations in physical context, echoing Gullberg's (2006) and McNeill's (1992) claims about the compensatory and integrative functions of gestures in second-language interaction.

In contrast, non-verbal strategy use in talk shows was more subtle and primarily used for emphasis and turn-taking, for instance, through hand movements, nodding, or changes in posture. Such gestures served interactional functions rather than referential ones, helping to manage conversational rhythm and rapport with co-hosts or guests.

These findings suggest that multimodal competence, the ability to coordinate verbal and non-verbal modes of expression, is essential for non-native hosts in media discourse. Effective communication in both formats depended not just on linguistic accuracy but on the strategic orchestration of gesture, context, and interactional awareness. As such, strategic competence in media broadcasting extends beyond verbal fluency and includes the ability to adapt multimodal resources to suit different communicative demands.

The third research question compared communication strategies between talk shows and on-location interviews. Despite differences in format, the results revealed a shared core of eight strategies across both genres, including approximation, circumlocution, elaboration, and the use of gestures. This cross-format overlap is consistent with findings by Wei & Llinares (2020), who emphasized the development of a core strategic toolkit among bilingual TV presenters. However, variations emerged in the frequency and contextual function of these strategies. For example, appeals for help were more frequent in talk shows, where interaction with co-hosts or guests provided immediate opportunities for support, mirroring findings by Ziegler (2016) on peer-assisted interaction. Conversely, elaboration was dominant in on-location interviews, likely due to environmental unpredictability and the absence of scripted cues. As suggested by Nguyen and Boers (2019), elaboration in such contexts functions as a compensatory

mechanism to reinforce clarity and manage potential breakdowns in comprehension.

Furthermore, while the use of gestures was significantly more frequent in on-location interviews compared to studio settings, Use of Body Gestures (UBG) emerged as the most frequently employed non-linguistic communication strategy overall across both program types. This suggests that body gestures play a crucial role for non-native English-speaking hosts in enhancing message clarity, regardless of the broadcast setting. These gestures were often referential, grounding the spoken message in the physical context. The increased use of gestures in on-location interviews suggests that non-native English-speaking hosts relied more heavily on visual modalities to enhance message delivery when verbal expression alone might be insufficient. This strategic shift appears to be a direct response to the spontaneous and less structured nature of field reporting, where environmental distractions, absence of prompts, and limited verbal feedback can hinder clarity. By employing referential gestures, such as pointing to surroundings or objects, hosts were able to anchor their speech in the visible context, thus facilitating listener comprehension and maintaining engagement. This supports Ishikawa's (2022) study on public speaking in L2 contexts, which found that gestural reinforcement enhanced message comprehensibility and speaker confidence. Meanwhile, circumlocution appeared more frequently in talk shows, likely due to the structured pacing and environment that allowed hosts greater flexibility in reformulating their speech. However, based on the findings, circumlocution, along with explicitation/elaboration, exemplification, and use of opposites or negatives (each at 50% occurrence), falls into the "Optional" category, indicating that while these strategies are helpful, they are more context-dependent and not consistently employed across all episodes.

Interestingly, several strategies, such as message abandonment, keyword highlighting, coining, topic avoidance, the use of sounds, and drawings, were either exclusive to a single format or entirely absent across both formats. This pattern suggests that non-native English-speaking hosts do not arbitrarily select from a fixed repertoire of strategies; instead, they make deliberate choices based on perceived appropriateness within the professional broadcast setting. The exclusive use of message abandonment and keyword highlighting in talk shows may indicate that studio-based communication allows for greater flexibility in discourse management, where co-hosts or production cues can help salvage or redirect stalled utterances without disrupting the flow of the interaction.

The absence of coinage and topic avoidance in both formats reflects a professional ethos that prioritizes linguistic precision and topical relevance. As television broadcasting demands clarity and credibility, hosts who are

aware of institutional expectations may consciously avoid improvised or evasive strategies. Similarly, the lack of mimicked sounds and drawing strategies often observed in informal or pedagogical environments further emphasizes the formal, performative nature of news media discourse. These strategies, while effective in more flexible or face-to-face settings, are less compatible with the rigid conventions of televised journalism, where visual professionalism and verbal coherence are paramount.

These interpretations reinforce Khany and Khosravian's (2021) assertion that environmental, contextual, and task-based variables significantly shape L2 speakers' strategic behavior. While the range of potential strategies may be broad, their actual deployment is guided by situational constraints and communicative goals. Thus, assessing strategic competence in media contexts requires not only identifying which strategies are used but also understanding how speakers adapt their use based on genre, audience expectation, and institutional norms.

CONCLUSION

The findings highlight that communication strategies serve not only as compensatory mechanisms but as purposeful tools of interaction that reflect the hosts' adaptability and professional competence. Across both studio-based talk shows and on-location interviews, the interplay of linguistic strategies, such as elaboration, approximation, and the use of all-purpose words, with non-linguistic resources like gestures, demonstrates how strategic competence operates in practice. Rather than indicating linguistic deficiency, these strategies reveal how non-native English-speaking hosts actively manage meaning, sustain audience engagement, and negotiate the demands of different communicative settings.

Theoretically, rather than merely confirming Dörnyei and Scott's (1997) notion of strategic competence as compensatory, the findings highlight its performative and adaptive dimension in professional broadcasting. In this context, strategies such as approximation and elaboration were not primarily deployed to repair breakdowns, but to shape audience engagement and sustain institutional communicative goals across contrasting formats. This suggests that in media discourse, strategic competence extends beyond individual problem-solving and functions as a professional resource for interactional management, a perspective less emphasized in earlier models. The use of elaboration in field reporting and appeal for help in studio settings reflects how non-native English speakers tailor their communication to meet the dynamic demands of audience engagement and message delivery. These insights contribute to the broader literature on L2 discourse by illustrating how communication strategies serve both interactional and stylistic functions in real-world, high-stakes media contexts.

Practically, the findings suggest the value of incorporating broadcast-simulation activities into ESP and Media English instruction. For example, role-playing formats such as talk shows or on-location interviews can train learners to employ approximation, elaboration, and multimodal strategies (e.g., gestures) under time pressure. Unlike traditional speaking tasks, these simulations replicate the demands of professional broadcasting, including managing live interactions, engaging an audience, and striking a balance between fluency and clarity. By foregrounding strategies as performative resources rather than mere repair tools, this approach offers a more authentic and transferable framework for developing communicative competence in professional media settings. This reinforces the need for communicative language teaching that prioritizes fluency, adaptability, and strategic competence in authentic discourse environments. Educators can draw upon these findings to design classroom activities such as simulated talk shows or real-time reporting tasks, equipping learners with practical tools for fluent and adaptive communication. Furthermore, television networks could benefit from using these insights to support the ongoing training and development of their non-native English-speaking hosts.

Although this research offers meaningful insights, several limitations shape the interpretation of its findings. First, restricting the analysis to 20 episodes from a single broadcaster may have created patterns that reflect institutional style rather than broader norms of professional second-language broadcasting. Second, the absence of introspective data from the hosts could have led to over-reliance on observable behaviors, leaving their intentional or unconscious choices underexplored. This gap raises the possibility that specific strategies interpreted as deliberate compensatory tools might instead reflect spontaneous, unplanned responses. Third, the cross-sectional design captures a strategy used only at one moment in time, which limits understanding of how hosts' competence may develop across different career stages, program types, or sociocultural shifts. Future research could address these issues by examining multiple broadcasters for cross-institutional comparison, combining observational data with host interviews or think-aloud protocols to capture intentionality, and employing longitudinal or experimental designs to trace how communication strategy use evolves across contexts.

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APPENDIX 1
Cohen's Kappa Findings Comparing Researcher and Co-Rater for Talk Show Programs

Communication Strategy	Frequency		Agreement
	Researcher	Co-rater	
Approximation (App)	1	1	1
Circumlocution (Cir)	1	1	1
Explicitation/Elaboration (Exp)	2	2	1
Word Coinage (WC)	0	0	1
Exemplification (Exe)	2	1	0
Word for Word Translation (WWT)	0	0	1
Topic Avoidance (TA)	0	0	1
Message Abandonment (MA)	0	0	1
Appeal for Helo (AFH)	2	2	1
Use of All Purpose Words (UPW)	2	2	1
Use of Opposites or Negatives (UON)	1	0	0
Use of Key Words (UKW)	0	0	1
Use of Sounds (US)	0	0	1
Use of Body Gestures (UBG)	2	2	1
Use of Picture Paintings or Drawings (UPD)	0	0	1
Use of at Hand Objects Facilities or Equipment (UHO)	1	1	1
Total			0.875

Cohen's Kappa Findings Comparing Researcher and Co-Rater for On-Location Interview Programs

Communication Strategy	Frequency		Agreement
	Researcher	Co-rater	
Approximation (App)	2	2	1
Circumlocution (Cir)	1	1	1
Explicitation/Elaboration (Exp)	2	2	1
Word Coinage (WC)	0	0	1
Exemplification (Exe)	1	1	1
Word for Word Translation (WWT)	0	0	1
Topic Avoidance (TA)	0	0	1
Message Abandonment (MA)	0	0	1
Appeal for Helo (AFH)	1	1	1
Use of All Purpose Words (UPW)	2	2	1
Use of Opposites or Negatives (UON)	0	0	1
Use of Key Words (UKW)	0	0	1
Use of Sounds (US)	0	0	1
Use of Body Gestures (UBG)	2	2	1
Use of Picture Paintings or Drawings (UPD)	0	0	1
Use of at Hand Objects Facilities or Equipment (UHO)	1	1	1
Total			1.000