

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE INTERVIEWS: A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

### СТРАТЕГІЧНА КОМУНІКАЦІЯ В АНГЛОМОВНИХ ІНТЕРВ'Ю: ЛІНГВІСТИЧНИЙ АНАЛІЗ

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The study undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the interview as a communicative genre in contemporary media discourse. The interview is conceptualised as a dialogic encounter in which participants exchange information, opinions, emotions, and ideas of social relevance. A typology of interviews is presented, encompassing classifications by textual structure, communicative purpose, organisational format, and mode of information delivery. Each type is shown to require different levels of preparation, with television interviews identified as the most complex and time-consuming. Their distinctive advantage lies in the visibility of non-verbal cues – facial expressions, gestures, and emotional reactions – which enrich the communicative process and enhance audience engagement. The research outlines the structural stages of interview preparation and execution, emphasising the interviewer's role as the initiator and the necessity of combining organisational, technical, and psychological skills to achieve a productive dialogue. Beyond logistics, the interviewer's ability to employ communicative strategies determines the quality of the exchange. The second part of the study focuses on the notion of image, understood as a constellation of recognisable traits and associations that shape public perception. Case analyses illustrate how celebrities deliberately construct their image to enhance their reputation and visibility. Communicative strategies are further explored through examples from Alan Carr's *Chatty Man*. The analysis reveals that Carr relies on strategies of inquiry and contact to guide the conversation, while respondents typically adopt informative strategies to promote their careers and projects. Within these strategies, tactics such as direct response, explanation, humour, and anecdotal storytelling are employed to sustain audience interest and build rapport. The study demonstrates that language functions as the central instrument of interview discourse: carefully chosen words and tactics not only shape the character of the dialogue but also ensure that the interaction fulfils both journalistic and promotional purposes.

Overall, the findings underscore the growing relevance of interviews as a form of media communication. They highlight the interplay between image construction and communicative strategy, showing how both interviewer and respondent pursue distinct yet complementary goals. The research points to new questions for further exploration, including the evolving role of interviews in digital platforms and the impact of shifting audience expectations. In this way, the interview remains a dynamic and fertile ground for scholarly inquiry, balancing entertainment, information, and interpersonal connection.

**Key words:** communicative tactics; media interaction, image construction; media discourse, talk shows

У дослідженні здійснено ґрунтовний аналіз інтерв'ю як комунікативного жанру сучасного медіадискурсу. Інтерв'ю розглядається як діалогічна взаємодія, у межах якої учасники обмінюються інформацією, думками, емоціями та ідеями, що мають суспільну значущість. Запропоновано типологію інтерв'ю, яка охоплює класифікації за текстовою структурою, комунікативною метою, організаційним форматом та способом подання інформації. Кожен різновид інтерв'ю потребує різного рівня підготовки; при цьому телевізійні інтерв'ю визначено як найбільш складні та тривалі. Їхня особлива перевага полягає у можливості спостерігати невербальні засоби комунікації – міміку, жести та емоційні реакції, що збагачують процес спілкування та підсилюють залученість аудиторії. У роботі окреслено структурні етапи підготовки та проведення інтерв'ю, наголошено на ролі інтерв'юера як ініціатора та на необхідності поєднання організаційних, технічних і психологічних навичок для досягнення продуктивного діалогу. Важливим чинником є використання комунікативних стратегій, які визначають якість обміну. У другій частині дослідження увагу зосереджено на понятті «імідж», що трактується як сукупність упізнаваних рис та асоціацій, які формують суспільне сприйняття. На прикладах показано, як знаменитості свідомо конструюють власний імідж для підвищення репутації та видимості.

Комунікативні стратегії докладно проаналізовано на матеріалі ток-шоу Алана Карра *Chatty Man*. Виявлено, що ведучий застосовує стратегії запиту та встановлення контакту, тоді як респонденти здебільшого використовують інформативну стратегію для популяризації своєї творчості та проєктів. У межах цих стратегій реалізуються тактики прямої відповіді, пояснення, використання гумору та анекдотичних історій, які підтримують інтерес аудиторії та сприяють формуванню довіри. Доведено, що мова є головним інструментом інтерв'ю: ретельно підібрані слова та комунікативні прийоми визначають характер діалогу й забезпечують виконання як журналістських, так і промоційних завдань. Загалом результати дослідження підтверджують зростаючу актуальність інтерв'ю як форми медіакомунікації. Вони демонструють взаємозв'язок між конструюванням іміджу та застосуванням комунікативних стратегій, показуючи, що інтерв'юер і респондент переслідують різні, але взаємодоповнювальні цілі. Окреслено перспективи подальших досліджень, зокрема щодо ролі інтерв'ю на цифрових платформах та впливу змінних очікувань аудиторії. Таким чином, інтерв'ю постає як динамічний і багатограничний об'єкт наукового аналізу, що поєднує інформативність, розважальність та міжособистісну взаємодію.

**Ключові слова:** комунікативні тактики; медіавзаємодія; конструювання іміджу; медіадискурс; ток-шоу; невербальна комунікація; публічне сприйняття.

**Introduction.** The significance of this research lies in the growing prominence of the interview as a primary method of information gathering across diverse domains of social life. Within contemporary communicative practices, the interview functions not merely as a journalistic genre but as a complex discursive event in which linguistic resources are strategically mobilised to construct identities, negotiate meanings, and influence public perception. This study analyses image formation and communicative strategies through linguistic means in the context of interviews. The **topicality** of the article is further underscored by the need to examine the dynamic interaction between interviewer and respondent, which shapes behavioural patterns and elicits emotional responses.

**The research aims** to investigate and explicate the linguistic mechanisms employed in constructing the public image of representatives of the English-speaking entertainment industry within interview discourse. To achieve this aim, the study pursues the following objectives: to define and critically analyse the concept of the “interview” and its functions in contemporary communicative practice; to examine existing classifications of interviews and identify the most prevalent types in modern media; to describe the structural organisation of interviews and elucidate the principles underlying successful interview performance; to conceptualize the notion of “image” and explore its discursive realization within interview settings and to identify and analyse communicative strategies conducive to effective interviewing, with particular attention to their manifestation in the talk show *Alan Carr: Chatty Man*.

To achieve the aim and objectives of the paper, several complementary **methods** were applied. Descriptive and comparative methods were used to identify and classify different types of interviews, providing a clear picture of their variety and usage. Discourse analysis was employed to examine the interaction between interviewer and respondent, with a focus on communicative strategies and the ways they shape meaning within the interview format. Analytical methods helped to explore the specifics of how interlocutors interact not only with each other but also with their audience, highlighting the mechanisms through which image and communicative intent are constructed. Together, these methods form a coherent framework that allows for a thorough investigation of linguistic tools, communicative strategies, and the role of image-making in interviews.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Recent scholarship on communicative strategies in English language interviews reveals a dynamic inter-

play between linguistic choices, power relations, and intercultural competence. For instance, Mu-Hsuan Chou demonstrates how learners of English employ message reduction, fluency-oriented strategies, and negotiation for meaning during interviews, highlighting the importance of lexical and grammatical knowledge in building confidence [6]. Complementing the educational perspective, Olena Buzdugan, Nataliia Oskina, and colleagues analyse communicative models, emphasising the role of sociocultural communicative competence and intercultural communicative language teaching in shaping effective interview discourse [4]. From a discourse-analytic standpoint, Gianmarco Vignozzi provides a corpus-based study, showing how interviewees strategically deploy epistemic stance adverbs to project certainty and reliability, while interviewers rely on hedging and structured questioning to maintain control [10]. Similarly, Morad Alshafi identifies discursive devices such as interruption, topic control, and formulation as central to managing authority in news interviews [2]. Taken together, these studies illustrate that communicative strategies in English interviews are multifaceted: they encompass cognitive-linguistic adjustments by learners, educational models for competence development, and discourse mechanisms for negotiating power and stance.

**The study.** The interview represents one of the most complex yet widely practised genres of contemporary journalism. Its very nature brings it close to the format of a “conversation,” most often realised as a dialogue – either spontaneous or carefully prepared – between a presenter and a figure of public interest [3; 7; 8]. Such interlocutors may include political leaders, cultural representatives, social activists, celebrities, or even ordinary passers-by whose perspectives acquire relevance in a given moment.

In today’s media landscape, interviews permeate virtually every platform: they can be read in newspapers, heard on the radio, or viewed on television. What remains largely invisible to the general audience, however, is the considerable effort required to produce a high-quality interview. To achieve effectiveness, the presenter must draw upon the full range of professional skills and accumulated experience. The essential condition for a successful interview lies in adherence to its structural conventions, while simultaneously recognising the specific features of each interview type. In this process, the interviewer relies not only on methodological competence but also on subtle communicative strategies and rhetorical techniques [5].

Thus, although the interview is both demanding and inherently creative, a well-executed and infor-

mative exchange can significantly enhance the presenter's professional reputation and career trajectory. Once an interviewer gains recognition, public figures themselves often seek opportunities to be interviewed, viewing the encounter as a means of amplifying their own visibility and prestige [2; 8].

A vivid example of communicative strategies in practice can be observed in the British talk show *Chatty Man* hosted by Alan Carr [1]. The programme exemplifies how interview discourse in entertainment contexts blends information seeking with humour, rapport-building, and audience engagement. A. Carr frequently employs contact strategies – such as establishing immediate rapport through compliments or light banter – to create a relaxed atmosphere that encourages openness from celebrity guests. His questioning style demonstrates a deliberate mix of direct inquiries (eliciting factual details about projects), indirect prompts (framed as humorous anecdotes or references to social media), and provocative questions designed to spark playful tension without undermining the guest's comfort. These tactics illustrate how the interviewer strategically balances the dual aims of informing the audience and entertaining them. Moreover, Carr's reliance on non-verbal cues – gestures, laughter, exaggerated facial expressions – reinforces the conversational tone and sustains the rhythm of interaction. As such, *Chatty Man* serves as a practical case study of how communicative strategies are adapted in media interviews to achieve both journalistic and performative objectives, demonstrating the fluid interplay between structure, spontaneity, and audience expectations.

The realisation of communicative strategies is shaped by a variety of contextual factors, including the degree of familiarity between interlocutors, their social status, gender, and national-cultural or ethnic identity. By analysing these variables, speakers select the strategy most appropriate to the situation. Importantly, strategies are not static; they may shift during the course of interaction depending on the evolving character of the conversation [7; 9].

The strategy of inquiry is employed when the interviewer seeks to learn more about the respondent or to clarify ambiguous points. Tactics within this strategy include:

- Direct questioning: How long did that take to film?
- Indirect questioning: Did you know there's an Instagram page dedicated to you? Have you seen this?
- Provocative questioning: Are you a dangerous woman? Have you ever killed someone?

- Secondary or casual questioning (to create comfort): What can I get you to drink?

- Complimenting the respondent: I love your hair. Such a good song!

- Clarification: He does all your stuff, doesn't he?

- Commentary leading to information: We need to talk about your new film. Explain what the crazed work was.

- Prompting or guiding: On your last album you had ballads and dance tracks. What's on this one?

Beyond the strategies outlined above, a host employs every available communicative resource to steer the interview in a direction that is both informative and entertaining. Since talk shows are designed for mass audiences, the conversation must balance factual content with lightness and humour. To guide the interaction effectively, interviewers often begin with contact strategies, including establishing rapport, introducing the topic, providing communicative support, and appropriately closing the exchange [2; 9]. These strategies ensure that the interview remains coherent, engaging, and aligned with audience expectations.

At the beginning of an interview, the host typically employs the tactic of establishing contact – greeting the guest and introducing them to the audience. The interviewer immediately creates a friendly and relaxed atmosphere so that the respondent feels at ease.

- **Alan Carr:** *It is so good to have you back. Tom Hardy: Thanks for having me.*

- **Alan Carr:** *Go nuts! Go wild! For the woman who's quite simply the biggest thing in pop right now! Give it up for the brilliant Taylor Swift! Well, hello. Taylor Swift: Hello.*

- **Alan Carr:** *He's quite simply one of the hottest movie stars on the planet. I tell you, if I were wearing any pants, I'd throw them off. Ryan Reynolds. [1]*

The tactic of establishing contact relies on the use of exclamatory sentences, double greetings, and an informal conversational style to create a positive emotional tone [3].

A distinctive feature of Alan Carr's show is that immediately after greeting the celebrity, he offers them a drink. This idea is designed to help the guest relax and momentarily forget about the upcoming questions.

- **Alan Carr:** *What can I get you to drink, my love?*

- **Alan Carr:** *What do you want to drink, my love?*

- **Alan Carr:** *Let me get you a drink. Come on. What do you want, my love?*

• **Alan Carr:** *Now listen, it's my last show of the series and all these drinks have to be used. Whatever you want, please.* [1]

What is particularly interesting is that Alan does not simply offer every celebrity the same beverages – he selects drinks according to each guest's personal preferences. This demonstrates that the host prepares thoroughly for his interviews and researches all available information about his guests.

• **Taylor Swift:** *What are you having?* **Alan Carr:** *Well, I heard that you love cider.*

• **Alan Carr:** *What can I get you to drink?*[1]

After greetings and initial contact, the interviewer immediately moves to the tactic of introducing the topic. At this stage, both the audience and the respondent are informed about the subject of the meeting and the focus of the discussion. This tactic is typically characterised by declarative sentences with direct word order, followed by questions that develop the theme.

• **Alan Carr:** *Now, you're performing your new single for us in a day.*

• **Alan Carr:** *Now, you're back with a new album 1989...*

• **Alan Carr:** *Now, listen, we've got to talk about your new film Legend...* [1]

The tactic of communicative support is realised through the interviewer's confirmation of the respondent's statements and the addition of his own arguments. The presenter agrees with or reinforces the guest's opinion, thereby influencing the respondent's emotions and building trust. As a result, the guest may begin to share more personal details without even noticing.

• **Selena Gomez:** *Basically, I did. I feel I've worked on this album for over a year and there was so much nonsense happening publicly. I just couldn't wait for people to hear it. So yes, I wanted it out already. That's how I feel. I'm excited.* **Alan Carr:** *Oh, that's good. You're more confident. That's great.*

• **Ryan Reynolds:** *I do some running. I like to run. That's about it.*

**Alan Carr:** *Yeah, I'm fit when I'm not on the telly, yeah.* [1]

The tactic of concluding the conversation is equally important. Ending the interview on a positive note is crucial, as the interviewer may wish to invite the celebrity again in the future. The closing remarks typically emphasise politeness, gratitude, and encouragement.

• **Alan Carr:** *All right, it's so lovely to speak with you.* **Ryan Reynolds:** *Thank you so much. Thank you for having me here.* **Alan Carr:** *Good luck.*

• **Alan Carr:** *Good luck with the album.* **Selena Gomez:** *Thank you.* [1]

Alan Carr often ends his conversations with exclamatory remarks and heartfelt wishes, reinforcing a celebratory tone and leaving the audience with a sense of closure:

• **Alan Carr:** *"Selena Gomez, everybody."*

• **Alan Carr:** *"Bring it up for Tom Hardy, everyone."*

• **Alan Carr:** *"Good luck with the series. It's absolutely brilliant. Karl Pilkington, everyone."* [1]

Such endings are typically characterised by enthusiastic intonation and genuine encouragement. Although Carr may vary his strategies throughout the interview, the opening and closing stages remain relatively stable, as they frame the encounter and ensure a memorable finish.

Celebrities provide extended answers, often adding engaging details to capture the audience's attention. Humour is a common device, with anecdotes from filming or recording sessions serving to humanise the star and entertain viewers.

• **Alan Carr:** *"How much say did you have in how the characters were drawn, because you do come off quite well in it?"* **Ryan Reynolds:** *"I think I came away luckier than some of the others. It changed many, many times. I see that they've eliminated the hairy shoulders, which I enjoyed."*

• **Alan Carr:** *"Could you actually say not give you birth?"* **Selena Gomez:** *"Yes, I could say that. I didn't even need to say it – that was so awkward. So yes, I did say randomly that I felt like I was nine months pregnant."*[1]

Ultimately, language is the principal tool for achieving communicative goals in interviews. The deliberate use of linguistic strategies enables the interviewer to guide the conversation, elicit information, and shape the tone of interaction. Carefully chosen words and tactics not only determine the character of the dialogue but also ensure that the exchange fulfills both journalistic and promotional purposes. In this way, interviews become a dynamic interplay of discourse strategies – balancing entertainment, information, and rapport-building – and demonstrating how language itself structures the success of media communication.

**Results.** Image and communicative strategies are indispensable for conducting an effective and successful interview. An individual's image is shaped by recognisable features – branded clothing, manner of speech, a distinctive accent, habitual gestures, or even a loud laugh – all of which allow the public to identify and differentiate them.

In the sphere of show business, celebrities deliberately construct their image in order to enhance fame and appear fashionable and contemporary in the eyes of their fans. A star who combines stylish attire with etiquette and politeness strengthens their reputation and gains greater respect.

Communicative strategies, in turn, are employed throughout the interview process. Both interviewer and respondent rely on specific tactics to ensure the quality of the exchange. Each

tactic is distinguished by its linguistic means, its level of emotionality, and its communicative purpose.

The interviewer typically employs a wider range of strategies, since their primary goal is to guide the conversation and obtain information of social relevance. The respondent, however, also makes use of strategies – not only to increase their influence on the audience but also to safeguard and reinforce their public reputation.

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*Дата першого надходження статті до видання: 30.04.2026*  
*Дата прийняття статті до друку після рецензування: 22.05.2026*  
*Дата публікації (оприлюднення) статті: 29.05.2026*