Turn-Taking Strategies in Talk Show Interviews: A Qualitative Study of K-Pop Idol BTS on *The Tonight Show*

[1] Eko Purwanti*, [2] Ananda Pramesti Regita Cahyani, [3] Wistri Meisa, [4] Dedi Suryadi, [5] Mariska Intan Sari, [6] Sittie Noffaisah Pasandalan

Email: [1] ekopurwanti@umy.ac.id*, [2] ananda.p.fpb20@mail.umy.ac.id, [3] wistri.meisa@umy.ac.id, [4] dedisuryadi@umy.ac.id, [5] mariska.intan@umy.ac.id, [6] sittie.pasandalan@g.msuiit.edu.ph

[1,2,3,4,5] Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia
[6] Mindanao State University - Iligan Institute of Technology, Philippines

*Correspondent

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Turn-taking plays a vital role in managing and structuring conversations, making it especially important in both everyday interactions and educational environments. While much research has explored turn-taking in classroom or casual settings, limited attention has been given to how it operates in bilingual or multilingual media interviews. This study seeks to fill that gap by examining the turn-taking strategies used during interviews between Jimmy Fallon and K-Pop Idol BTS (Bangtan Sonyeondan), a globally recognized Korean boy band, on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon. Employing a qualitative method, the study analyzed three interview videos through transcription and manual coding, guided by Stenstrom's framework of turn-taking strategies. The analysis identified three main strategies: Taking the Turn (TTS), Holding the Turn (HTS), and Yielding the Turn (YTS). Among these, Taking the Turn (TTS) emerged as the most dominant, appearing in 47% of instances—emphasizing its key role in shaping the dynamic flow of K-Pop Idol interviews. These findings offer valuable insights for language learners and educators by demonstrating authentic conversational strategies in multilingual contexts. Furthermore, these findings may also serve as practical references for media professionals and interviewers aiming to manage turn-taking more effectively during live interactions.

Introduction

Communication plays a vital role in human interaction and can be broadly categorized into verbal and non-verbal forms. As Badi (2023) states, verbal communication involves the use of spoken or written words to convey messages. Among these, verbal communication—particularly through conversation—is often considered more effective because it fosters personal connection, allows for immediate feedback, and helps achieve mutual understanding (Prabavathi et al., 2018). Unlike written communication, which can delay feedback and cause ambiguity, spoken interaction

enables participants to negotiate meaning more dynamically. A successful conversation occurs when speakers understand each other's intentions and take turns appropriately, allowing the dialogue to flow naturally (Ashidiq & Sariyati, 2022; Hanafiah et al., 2021;) and effectively (Ramadiro, 2023; Zano, 2022)

In a conversational setting, turn-taking is a key strategy that allows speakers to manage the flow of discussion and avoid interruptions. This strategy is evident in various contexts, including interviews, where both the host and guests contribute to a collaborative exchange of ideas (Zein et al., 2021; Hasriani, 2019; Nurjamin et al., 2023). Turn-taking becomes even more interesting to analyze when the interaction involves speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

One such context is *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, a long-running American late-night talk show that features a variety of guests, games, and performances. Among its international guests, the show has hosted BTS (Bangtan Sonyeondan), a South Korean boy band with global fame. The group consists of seven members: Jin, Suga, J-Hope, RM, Jimin, V, and Jungkook. While their worldwide popularity is well-documented, what makes their interviews particularly notable is the linguistic dynamic—BTS members are non-native English speakers, with RM often acting as both spokesperson and informal interpreter.

During their appearances on the show, RM frequently translates questions posed by the host, Jimmy Fallon, and invites his fellow members to respond. This dynamic presents a compelling example of turn-taking strategies in action, especially in a multilingual setting without a professional interpreter. RM's leadership style, which emphasizes participation and encourages his group members to speak, further contributes to the richness of the interaction. These moments offer valuable insight into how turn-taking can be negotiated across language barriers in high-profile, real-time conversations.

While previous studies have examined turn-taking in interviews—such as Aulia's (2022) analysis of native English speakers in *Spider-Man: No Way Home* interviews and Astutiningsih's (2022) study of NCT 127 in *BUILD Talk Show*—these investigations focused primarily on native speaker dynamics or general conversation analysis frameworks. In contrast, this study focuses on turn-taking strategies used in an English-language interview between a native-speaking host and non-native English-speaking guests, specifically BTS, using Stenstrom's (1994) theory. Unlike previous studies that examined turn-taking among native English speakers, this study investigates how non-native speakers, particularly BTS, employ turn-taking strategies in a high-profile interview without an interpreter. This distinction allows for an exploration of how linguistic barriers impact conversational flow.

By examining how BTS members navigate conversation with Jimmy Fallon, this study aims to identify the types of turn-taking strategies employed, determine which are most frequently used,

and explore why certain strategies are more dominant. The research contributes to a deeper understanding of how non-native speakers manage spoken interaction in real-world settings, offering practical insights for English language learners, educators, and media professionals alike. In particular, it highlights how turn-taking strategies can empower language learners to participate more confidently in authentic conversations, much like BTS members do in English-speaking media environments.

A. Literature Review

1. Communication in Daily Life

Effective communication enables people to share ideas and thoughts clearly. According to Wibisono & Haryono (2022), successful communication requires mutual understanding between the sender and the receiver. One key to achieving this is managing turn-taking during conversation (Inoue et al., 2024), which helps prevent dominance and interruptions. Zein et al. (2021) emphasized that signals such as pauses, eye contact, body language, and tone indicate when a speaker is ready to yield or take a turn. For instance, a speaker may pause to show they have finished speaking, while the listener may nod or make eye contact to indicate readiness to speak. In interviews, where clarity and structure are essential, turn-taking ensures each participant has the opportunity to contribute without confusion or overlap. Recent research by Dewi et al. (2018) also suggests that learners' personal traits and perceived power in interaction can influence turn-taking behavior in educational contexts. Similarly, Nurjamin et al. (2023) highlight how silence and hesitation can function as meaningful cues in turn negotiation, especially in virtual EFL settings. This aligns with earlier observations by Clift (2016), who noted that even minimal speaker overlaps can signal subtle conversational negotiation.

2. Conversation Analysis (CA)

Conversation Analysis (CA) is a method of examining verbal interactions to understand how social interaction is structured (Sinaga et al., 2021). It focuses on the patterns and organization of talk, particularly how people manage turns in conversation. CA involves collecting real data, transcribing interactions, and analyzing how speakers take, hold, and yield turns. Originating in the 1960s with scholars such as Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson, CA has become widely used across disciplines including linguistics, psychology, and communication studies. In the context of interviews, CA is especially useful for analyzing how participants manage their speech turns, respond to each other, and maintain conversational flow (Kelterer & Schuppler, 2025)

3. Turn-taking Strategy

Turn-taking refers to the way participants manage their speaking turns during a conversation (Sinaga et al., 2021). In daily conversation, people should understand the basic rules of conversation so that they can have a great conversation and do the turn-taking appropriately

(Agustianto et al., 2020). Turn-taking begins when one person starts the conversation as the first speaker starts talking while the other person is listening. Then, another person or the second speaker also gets an opportunity to start talking after the first person is done (Sinaga et al., 2021). According to Bearis et al., (2023), one of the ways to recognize the movement of a discourse is when they get interested in it by taking a turn; it is one of the components of an oral language that needs to be researched. The basic rule and form of this strategy is to deliver or transfer from the first speaker to the second speaker.

Turn-taking strategy could be found in several fields and one of them is in the interview. One of the examples of turn-taking strategy which is repetition in an interview is presented below:

> *A: "It means, the person behind the stage prepared the next plan if if if the worst case happened."*

The more precise and straightforward the answers, the more concise and effective the conversation could be due to the limited audience's attention span. Therefore, TTS is frequently found in this interview (Dewi et al., 2018; Syafar et al., 2023)

Turn-taking is also basic research of dialogue. The importance of dialogue is because it could be a fundamental part of a turn-taking strategy. Stenstrom (1994) designed a turn-taking strategy and divide it into three, namely 1) taking the turn (starting up, taking over, interrupting), 2) holding the turn (verbal fillers, silent pauses, lexical repetition, and new starts), and 3) yielding the turn (prompting up strategy, appealing up strategy and giving up strategy). Each of the strategies is explained as follows.

a. Taking the Turn Strategy (TTS)

  1) Starting Up

   Before starting a conversation, most people tend to make silent speeches in their environment, and there should be someone to start and open the conversation. It is not easy to start, and it could be difficult for most people. In the other case, some people are also good at starting the conversation, and they have prepared what they want to say and make sure the start of the conversation flows nicely. Jufadri (2018) stated that the starting strategy is about how the first person starts the communication and conversation. Jufadri (2018) also mentioned that the conversation could go well if the speakers are hesitant and start cleaning

  2) Hesitant start

   Hesitant start is a strategy where the speaker has yet to finish talking at once but also takes advantage of the conversation through a filled pause. This also can be used when the first person needs to prepare fully and needs some time longer to continue the flow of conversation.

3) Clean start

Clean start could be used when the speaker is already prepared for the conversation; it is also often used by most speakers before they take their turn to make a clean start. It has the aim of attracting the listener's attention to them.

4) Taking Over

After small talks from the first speaker, they must be followed by the other listeners. The listeners in the conversation should take the role of the current speaker by giving reactions, comments, and feedback. Those things mentioned are called a take-over strategy, which obligates the listeners to uptake the first speaker's talk. Take-over also includes the Uptakes or Links by Stenstrom (1994). By using uptaking, the listener could acknowledge what the speaker said and interpret giving responses.

5) Interrupting

While doing the conversation, sometimes the first speaker did not finish their talk, so that most of the listeners often doing an interruption during the speech and discussion.

6) Overlapping

Stenstrom (1994), defines overlap as a scenario where multiple speakers engage in simultaneous speech, disregarding the conventional rule of allowing only one speaker to be active at a time. Depending on the intention behind the simultaneous talk, overlap can be categorized as either competitive or cooperative. Competitive overlap involves interruptions and attempts to dominate the conversation. In contrast, cooperative overlap involves both speakers contributing to the conversation simultaneously, showing interest or agreement, and helping to maintain the flow of communication.

b. Holding the Turn Strategy (HTS)

Holding the turn has a meaning to carry the conversation while talking; it could occur when the first speaker cannot control their turns all the time as the conversation goes on because of the difficulties of planning what to say at the exact time and if there are any devices to help the speaker. The four devices are verbal filler, silent pause, repetition, and a new start.

1) Verbal Filler

Verbal filler mostly can be used to denote and make sure that the speaker has no purpose to yield the conversation but planning what is the next.

2) Silent Pause

Silent pause is a sign that the opponent tries to keep the listener waiting until the

first speaker is done talking.

3) Repetition

Repetition is an action to repeat a single word uncounted because the speaker wants to continue the conversation.

4) New Start

New start is used to avoid stagnant conversation and make a new start in conversation.

c. Yielding the Turn Strategy (YTS)

Yielding the turn consists of three strategies such as:

1) Prompting turn strategy

Prompting strategy is a technique to get a response from the listener. To elicit a response from their partner, the speaker typically greets, offers, invites, questions, requests, objects, and apologizes during a conversation.

2) Appealing turn strategy

Appealing turn strategy is when the speaker gives a signal during a conversation, the listener is asked to respond using this technique. Tag queries and phrases like "you know," "you see," "okay," and "Al right" are typically employed in an enticing manner.

3) Giving up turn strategy

It takes place when the speaker gives the listener enough time to respond. It might be that the speaker runs out of things to say and gives the floor to one of their listeners. In summary, people use the turn-taking strategy to organize the flow of conversation so that each person in a conversation will not dominate the conversation with the help of turn-taking strategies. Thus, they can enjoy their interaction with each other (Habibi et al., 2020).

B. Review of Related Studies

Previous studies have examined turn-taking in various interview contexts. Noval et al. (2022) analyzed turn-taking in a variety show interview with Zendaya and Andrew Garfield, using Stenstrom's theory. Overlapping was found to be the most frequent strategy. Similarly, Aulia and Simatupang (2021) studied turn-taking in the *No Way Home* cast interview on YouTube. Their qualitative analysis revealed frequent use of repetition (25%), interruption (17%), and silent pauses (13%).

Ashidiq and Sariyati (2022) analyzed turn-taking in a business interview with Warren Buffet. They found 45 instances of taking the floor, 15 of holding it, and 17 of yielding it. Agustianto et al. (2020) examined *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, finding that "Taking the Turn" was the most dominant strategy.

While these studies focused on native speakers in highly produced media settings, the current study investigates turn-taking among non-native English speakers in an interview setting without an interpreter. This context presents a unique opportunity to observe how speakers manage turn-taking in a second language, making the findings particularly relevant for understanding cross-cultural communication dynamics.

Method

This study aims to identify the types of turn-taking strategies used in interviews between Jimmy Fallon and K-pop idol BTS, and to determine which strategies appear most frequently. A qualitative approach was selected for this research because it enables a deeper exploration of social interactions, such as conversational dynamics, in their natural context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Qualitative research is especially appropriate when investigating nuanced behaviors like turn-taking, which are best understood through rich, detailed observation rather than numerical data alone. While other methods like conversation analysis or discourse analysis could also be applicable, this study specifically employs Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) because of its strength in systematically categorizing and interpreting communication patterns within naturally occurring talk (Schreier, 2013). The steps included data preparation, defining the unit of analysis, developing categories and coding schemes, and drawing conclusions (Patton, 2002).

A. Data Collection and Sampling

The data were drawn from three interview videos featuring BTS and Jimmy Fallon on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, all published on the show's official YouTube channel. The selected videos are:

1. *"BTS Dishes on Touring and Working with Ed Sheeran"* (6:55 minutes)
2. *"BTS Responds to Rumors About Their Fan Base and Potential Stage Names (Extended)"* (8:31 minutes)
3. *"The Best of BTS on The Tonight Show (Vol. 1)"* (19:38 minutes)

These videos were chosen purposively based on their relevance (all focus on direct interview interactions), popularity (high view counts and engagement suggest meaningful dialogue), and variety of speech patterns (each video features a different type of interview format, including Q&A, humorous banter, and reflective discussion). The total duration of analyzed footage is approximately 34 minutes and 27 seconds.

B. Data Analysis

The primary technique used was document analysis, specifically analyzing video transcripts of the interview segments. The researchers transcribed all conversations between Jimmy Fallon and BTS members, excluding interactions with other **participants**. Each turn in the conversation was then categorized into one of three main turn-taking strategies, following Stenstrom's

(1994) framework:

- Taking the Turn (TTS): starting up, taking over, interrupting, overlapping
- Holding the Turn (HTS): verbal fillers, silent pauses, repetition, new starts
- Yielding the Turn (YTS): prompting, appealing, giving up

The researchers developed categories and coding by labelling each part of the data systematically with codes such as TTS, HTS, and YTS, and coding the participants as Jimmy Fallon (JF) and BTS members (RM, JIN, JM, SG, JH, V, JK). The data were then described to determine the function of each turn-taking strategy in the interview.

C. Coding and Inter-Rater Reliability

To improve the trustworthiness and consistency of the analysis, a coding scheme was developed collaboratively by the research team. First, all researchers reviewed a small portion of the transcripts together and agreed on how to apply the coding categories. Then, two researchers independently coded the full data set. Any discrepancies in categorization were discussed and resolved through peer review and consensus. This process helped ensure a high degree of reliability in identifying and labeling turn-taking strategies. In addition, inter-coder agreement was established through repeated discussion and double-checking of coded excerpts. This peer-checking process also functioned as an informal validity check.

D. Trustworthiness and Triangulation

To further strengthen the credibility of the findings, the study used methodological triangulation, including: 1) Reviewing and analyzing three different video sources to ensure consistency across varied contexts, 2) Re-checking the transcript multiple times to ensure accuracy, 3) Seeking peer review from fellow researchers or language experts to validate both the transcript and the coding scheme, and 4) Consulting relevant literature on turn-taking and qualitative analysis to align the findings with established theories. These steps ensured that the interpretations remained grounded in both empirical data and theoretical understanding.

In summary, by using a qualitative content analysis approach with systematic coding, peer review, and careful data selection, this study seeks to provide a reliable and insightful look into the turn-taking strategies employed in interviews between a native English-speaking host and non-native English-speaking guests.

Discussion

This study aims to find out three objectives; 1) the types of turn-taking strategies used in the interview between Jimmy Fallon and BTS, and 2) the most dominant type of turn-taking strategy, and 3) the reason why this type of turn-taking strategy happened. The findings were taken from the analysis of the interview between Jimmy Fallon (JF) and BTS in "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon."

Based on the observation of the interview between JF and BTS, the findings showed that 1) Taking the turn (TTS), Yielding the turn (YTS), and Holding the Turn (HTS) were used as their turn-taking strategy in the interview, and 2) Taking the Turn (TTS) became the most dominant type of turn-taking strategy used in the interview. The reasons why taking the turn (TTS) became the most dominant type of turn-taking strategy were elaborated. Finally, in order to justify the finding, the references were used.

A. Finding 1. The Types of Turn-taking Strategies

Based on the observation of the interview between Jimmy Fallon and BTS, 576 utterances indicating the turn-taking strategies were found. Of these 576 utterances, 270 are classified as Taking the Turn (TTS), 82 are Holding the Turn (HTS), and 224 are Yielding the Turn (YTS). The summary of findings are shown below:

Table 1. Types of Turn-Taking Strategies

Basic Strategies	Sub Strategies	Words Total	Percentage
Taking the Turn (TTS)	Starting up (SU)	13	2.2%
	Take over (TO)	136	23.6%
	Interrupting (IN)	41	7.1%
	Overlapping (OV)	80	13.8%
	Total	270	47%
Holding the Turn (HTS)	Verbal filler (VF)	34	5.9%
	Silent pause (SP)	17	2.9%
	Repetition (RP)	19	3.3%
	New start (NS)	12	2.1%
	Total	82	14.2%
Yielding the Turn (YTS)	Prompting (PS)	91	15.8%
	Appealing (AS)	133	23%
	Give up (GU)	0	0
	Total	224	38.8%
Total all strategies		576	

The findings show that the three types of turn-taking strategies were used in the interview, and each type had its own sub categories. To give clear ideas about how these turn-taking strategies were used in The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon, the detailed explanation of the findings is presented below.

1. Type 1. Taking the Turn (TTS)

Some utterances of TTS occurred in the interview. In this context, TTS is used to get a good flow of communication during the process of conversation. The data of TTS are divided into four subcategories: starting up, taking over, interrupting, and overlapping. Examples of the four sub categories of TTS are explained below.

a. Starting up

The first strategy used by Jimmy Fallon and BTS is *starting up*. A *starting up* strategy is used by the interviewer to open the conversation and greeting to start the interview (Aisyah, 2021).

Datum 4.1.1 BTS Dishes on Touring and Working with Ed Sheeran |

(00:01-00:18) JF: "*My first guests are global pop music icons. They've had four number-one songs on the Billboard Hot 100 in less than a year. Their latest song, "Permission to Dance," is out now, and it's available on the "Butter" CD single. Ladies and gentlemen,* (↗)*please welcome BTS!*"

(00:40) RM: "*What's popping? How you doing?*"# [response]

In this conversation, Jimmy Fallon opened the interview session with a greeting and introduced BTS to the audience. It indicates that starting up was happening because he used a clean start with his rising intonation (↗), "Please welcome, BTS!" that had no verbal filler or silent pause in the conversation. This was followed by RM responses with, "What's popping? How are you doing?" indicating that uptakes were used in this utterance. Stenstrom (1994) defined uptakes as actions taken in reaction to earlier statements or actions. In this context, the following speaker indicates that they have received and understood what the preceding speaker stated and then examined it before continuing. It shows that RM is waiting for his turn to answer after JF finishes his greetings.

b.   **Taking over**

The second strategy is the *taking-over* which dominated the whole interview session between JF and BTS. The scene of the *take over* strategy is discussed below.

Datum 4.1.2 The Best of BTS on The Tonight Show (Vol. 1)

(01:57) JF: "*But what is, what is, your message? What is the BTS message?*"
(02:00) RM: (↗)"*It's about speaking yourself.*"
(02:02) JF: "*What is speak yourself?*" (↘)
(02:05) RM: (↗) "*It's mainly about speaking yourself instead of letting other people speak for you, 'cause to truly know ourselves, it's important to firstly know who I am and, you know, where I'm from and what my name is, and what my voice is, kind of like that.*"

In the conversation, Jimmy Fallon discussed the latest BTS album 'Love Yourself.' Then, Jimmy Fallon asked a question, "What is your message? What is the BTS message?" which indicated a question to RM as a prompting strategy. Then, RM performed a taking-over strategy by waiting for Jimmy Fallon to finish with his question marked with falling intonation (↘) so that RM knows when to answer, and he answers Jimmy's questions without any interruption from Jimmy Fallon nor the other members. To take his turn, RM answered directly with a straight answer to the question by using rising intonation (↗): "It's mainly about speaking yourself instead of letting other people speak for you..." to indicate that he began to take the turn. It's clearly shown that both the host and interviewees know the right timing to speak, ask, and answer.

c.   **Interrupting and Overlapping**

Interrupting is used by raising the voice louder than the other speakers to get everyone's attention and have the right time to speak or start a new conversation (Sinaga et al., 2021). It

is in contrast with overlapping strategy because overlapping was used in the middle of the conversation at the same time as the other interlocutors' speaking. The data of interruption and overlapping are shown below.

> **Datum 4.1.3 The Best of BTS on The Tonight Show (Vol. 1)**
> **(06:39) JF:** "*Welcome to the New York City subway. What do you think?*"
> **(06:50) RM:** *"New Yorkers, like, scarfing, like, "I'm so busy for the business, and you know…"*
> **(06:51) JH: *"I love the movie 'Home Alone.'"***

In the utterances, the host asked BTS members about their first impression when they were in New York by using a prompting strategy and signaling the interviewee with, "What do you think?" to open a new conversation. Jimmy Fallon was curious about their first impressions during their visit to New York. RM, as the leader of the BTS began to take turns in the conversation after Jimmy Fallon completed his question with a gesture and falling intonation to indicate the turn that welcomed BTS to answer. When RM answered Jimmy Fallon's question, J-Hope interrupted him by saying, "I love the movie 'Home Alone.'" In this case, J-Hope used an interrupting strategy. While RM was responding to the topic related to "Home Alone," another BTS member echoed JH with the same answer at the same time as JH's interruption with "Home Alone?" which indicates an overlapping strategy is used in their responses to JH.

2. Type 2. Holding The Turn (HTS)

The second type of turn-taking strategy is Holding the Turn (HTS). When the interlocutors do not know how to carry out the conversation or to answer, this strategy is often used. The following are four findings of HTS used by Jimmy Fallon and the members of BTS.

a. Verbal Fillers

Verbal fillers typically imply that the speaker has no plan of giving up their moment to speak, but rather is actively considering what to say next.

> **Datum 4.2.1 The Best of BTS on The Tonight Show (Vol. 1)**
> **(02:42) JF:** *"That's how you shop?"*
> **(02:27) V:** [ə](m) *"**Uhm** … New York's trip. New York view. On my way to working the morning…"*

JF prompted the conversation by asking questions about their New York highlight "Any highlights in New York?" to signal the rest of BTS members to answer his question. For a few seconds, in a minute of 02:47, V is answering the question "Uhm..". This utterance shows that a filled pause is used by V by taking a few seconds with "Uhm.." before answering Jimmy's question to think and hold the answer, meaning that he is on his way to finish what he is about to say about New York. According to Stenstrom (1994), filled pauses or verbal fillers typically

imply that the interlocutor has no plans of giving up their turn but rather is actively considering what they might say next. It indicates that verbal filler is used by V to hold his answer in order to secure his turn before the other members interrupt, and he continues his answer with, "On my way to working in the morning … New York street hot dogs … Perfect." and ended his answer with falling intonation (↘) and hand gestures to show that he is done talking.

b. Silent Pause

The second strategy in HTS is *silent pause*. 16 *silent pauses* were found in the interview. One of the findings is described below.

Datum 4.2.2 The Best of BTS on The Tonight Show (Vol. 1)

(13:13) RM: (↗)*"You know, we've been through all these paths with shadows and lights at the same time, but we admit all of it, and, you know, bring it on and bring the pain and we're gonna stand it, and -- Yeah."*

This utterance started with a question from Jimmy Fallon about their latest single entitled "ON" and what the album represents. To keep up the conversation, a new start is used in this utterance by asking, "The lead single is 'ON'; what does that represent?" right after, RM did his turn by answering the meaning behind their latest single and in the middle of his speaking, he took a few second and used silent pause to think of what he wanted to say next sentence by doing silent pauses (--) before and close the answers with "Yeah" as the signal that he is done talking so the host can take the floor. A silent pause is used when the speaker does not know what they are going to say and to prevent misinterpretation of their words (Agustianto et al., 2020). Right after that, JF, as the host, started to do the prompting again.

c. Repetition and New Start

Repetition is used when the interlocutors use a single word repeatedly, while a new start is used to start a new conversation, and the first speaker throws a new question to the other speakers (Ashidiq & Sariyati, 2022).

Datum 4.2.3 The Best of BTS on The Tonight Show (Vol. 1)

(12:49) JF: *"What does that represent?"*
(12:50) RM: *"**We, we,** we've been having our reboots, so, like…"*

In this context, JF used a new start to bring up the new topic of their latest single entitled 'ON' as he signaled RM by his eye-gaze and hand gestures as verbal feedback that was replaced with gestures. Right after that, RM used rising intonation to signal the BTS members and the host to signal his turn by answering JF's question, but he needed some time to think and got a bit confused about his answer or what he had to say by using repetition of "We" before he continues his answer in order to prevent any interruption and also wants to continue his talk by repeating the word in order to gain time and make the conversation clear.

3. **Type 3. Yielding Turn Strategy (YTS)**

Yielding the turn (YTS) is the strategy that is used among the interlocutors in the interview to give the turn to the interviewee and vice versa. It could be done by prompting, appealing, and giving up when the speaker gives up the turn to other speakers until they are done speaking (Ashidiq, 2021). The findings of the sub-categories of YTS are presented below.

a. **Prompting**

According to Stenstrom (1994), *prompting strategy* means that the interviewer gives a new question or greetings to invite the interviewee in order to attract a strong answer from the next speaker.

> **Datum 4.3.1 BTS Dishes on Touring and Working with Ed Sheeran |**
> **(05:30) JF:** (↗) ***"Which one of you guys is wearing the sunglasses in the darkest room I've ever seen in my life?"*** (↘)
> **(05:37) RM:** (↗) *"Wow. Actually, it's me.., It is very hilarious."*

The conversation above is about JF asking BTS about their old pictures. JF invited them to reminiscence their old photo wearing sunglasses by raising his intonation and using a question to attract a strong answer from BTS members. A question is often used in prompting because it requires responses from the next speaker (Stenstrom, 1994). Right after JF finishes his question by falling his intonation, RM answers with, "*Wow, actually, It's me …"* as the response to the prompting strategy used by Jimmy Fallon.

b. **Appealing**

The next strategy that was found is an *appealing strategy*. Appealing strategy used when the listener got a signal to answer the questions briefly and answer the question clearly (Noval et al., 2022).

> **Datum 4.3.2 BTS Responds to Rumors About Their Fan Base and Potential Stage Names (Extended): The Tonight Show**
> **(03:34) JF:** *"What happened to your friend?"*
> **(03:36) V:** (↗) *"He failed."* (↘)

JF, as an appealer, used question tags to signal V to answer his question by asking, "What happened?" according to his previous question, and he got feedback from him. An appealing strategy is used by Jimin to get appropriate feedback from V who used a rising tone (↗) to answer the question, and closing his answer by falling his intonation (↘).

B. **Finding 2. The most dominant type of turn-taking strategies**

The findings of the study reveal that three types of turn-taking strategies were found in the interview of "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon", comprising 1) Taking the turn strategy (TTS), 2) Holding the turn strategy (HTS), and 3) Yielding the turn strategy (YTS). As shown in Table 1, the most dominant type of turn-taking strategy used in the interview is TTS, with 270 utterances (47%).

C. Finding 3. The reason behind the most frequent use of taking the turn strategy (TTS)

The phenomenon in which TTS becomes the most frequently used type of turn-taking strategy in the interview is quite interesting and, therefore, encourages the researchers' curiosity. Based on in-depth observation of the interview of "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon," the researchers found two reasons underlying the reasons why TTS dominated the conversation in the interview.

1. The show is a semi-structured interview

The in-depth observation of the interview of "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" video indicates that a semi-structured interview is used by the host, JF. It can be seen clearly from the "cue-card" held by JF, and he also used a teleprompter to read the question to BTS members. Indeed, semi-structured interviews are often used in entertainment fields. It is the type of interview that refers to one open question and allows the interviewer to ask further questions based on the interviewee's answers, and it is carried out to dig deeper into the information that is being questioned. It makes communication more weighty, dynamic, effective, and efficient (Hasriani, 2019), as Jimmy Fallon did to BTS, and they already know the right timing to speak in order to make the conversation go smoothly and naturally. Indeed, as a professional talk show host, Jimmy Fallon holds the "cue-card" and teleprompter to make sure the interview is on the right track. In the first interview video, "The Best of BTS on The Tonight Show (Vol. 1)", in the minutes 01:37-01:52, JF used a new start to open the conversation by asking the members of BTS about their feelings after attending the United Nations conference. JF started to ask a question by using a prompting strategy to get feedback from BTS: *"What was that like? Was that amazing?"* and RM answered directly by saying, *"You know, I was like … I was like so nervous."* TTS could happen when the interlocutor says, "*You know," "You see*," and other phrases to signal the first speaker that they are ready to take the turn. This situation is found when RM started his answer with "*You know*" to JF. When RM responded with a statement, JF stopped talking and listened to RM in order to give him some time to answer. It indicates that TTS is used in this utterance.

2. There is good communication control among the host and the interviewees

Further observation on the interview of "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" video also indicates that JF and BTS have good control over changing roles in their conversations. They conveyed what they wanted to say clearly and efficiently so that the interview could go smoothly. It could be seen in minute 08:38 when JF asked BTS about the career they wanted to pursue if BTS did not exist. He used prompt strategy to lead the conversation and signaled BTS by using falling intonation and gestures, saying, "*Before BTS existed, what did you want to be*?" After the question and the signal were given, they knew when it was time to speak. Right after that, RM took his turn and immediately answered with "*Businessman*." At 08:40, after JF had finished his question, JF continued his question to the other BTS members. This case could be defined as evidence that TTS occurred in "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon," which made the conversation go smoothly

by giving feedback to the first interlocutor (Zein et al., 2021). The more precise and straightforward the answers, the more concise and effective the conversation could be due to the limited audience's attention span. Therefore, TTS is frequently found in this interview.

The implications of these findings in the context of media interviews and conversational control will be further explored in the discussion section below.

D. Discussion

Turn-taking strategy is an essential part of human interaction, especially in an interview, which requires the right timing to speak so that no one overlaps while talking. Thus, the turn-taking strategy has a significant impact on making the conversation flow well. This study aims to find out the types of turn-taking strategies and the most dominant type of turn-taking strategy used in the interview for "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" talk show. This talk show consists of several BTS videos, and the duration of the interviews was approximately 34 minutes and 27 seconds.

Regarding the first research objective, the finding reveals three types of turn-taking strategies used in "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" talk show, comprising the Taking the Turn strategy (TTS), Holding the Turn strategy (HTS), and Yielding the Turn strategy (YTS). Of 576 utterances, 270 are TTS, 82 are HTS, and 224 are YTS. The findings in which three types of turn-taking strategy were used effectively in the "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" talk show are in line with Stenstrom's (1994) who stated that "Turn-taking refers to the practice of both the speaker and listener actively attending to each other and smoothly transitioning between speaking roles." In addition, according to Stenstrom's theory, turn-taking is a conversation strategy when the speaker and listener are engaged in the discussion with a tidy and neat system of conversation by waiting for each other's turn. The implementation of the turn-taking strategy in this interview has effectively facilitated a smooth flow of communication with minimal distractions (Noval et al., 2022). A turn-taking strategy was used during the interview, as Jimmy Fallon maintained the conversation in order to make it run smoothly with fewer silent pauses or 'dead-end topics.' This study shows that the turn-taking strategy is maintained by JF and BTS members, including using the right timing to speak, reasonable control of communication between them, and keeping them engaged in the conversation. The right timing to speak is often used in the interview when both JF and BTS give a signal toward each other in the interview; it could be shown by the 'back signal' used when the listener passively listens while the speaker is speaking (Rashid, 2020).

Regarding the second research objective, the researcher found that TTS dominated the conversation, with a total of 270 data points (47%). The interviewer and BTS used this strategy consciously because the questions were prepared before, and both parties paid attention to the

person talking until it was done to respect their interlocutor (Noval et al., 2022).

This case indicates the third research objective informing that TTS was dominantly used in the show because the interview was semi-scripted, and the answers were spontaneously replied based on their personal experiences, according to the question. This TTS strategy has enabled the host to maintain the conversation effortlessly. This is in line with Ashidiq and Sariyati (2022), who found TTS to be the most dominant type in the interview because applying turn-taking in a conversation ensures smooth flow and accurate delivery of information, minimizing misunderstandings among participants. In addition, Ashidiq Ashidiq and Sariyati (2022) suggested that TTS often dominated an interview if it was a semi-structured interview. This means that all the questions were prepared before. In this context, this is evidenced by the "cue-card" held by the JF on this talk show. These prepared questions enable JF to be more accessible to handle the interview because usually, it is necessary for the host to allocate the speaking time (Habibi et al., 2020) for the interlocutor; in this case, JF has to allocate time for each member of BTS to present and answer the questions. Therefore, both interlocutors know the right time to speak, which makes TTS frequently occur in this interview.

Conclusion

This study highlights the important role of turn-taking strategies in promoting smooth, organized, and meaningful communication, particularly in semi-scripted interview settings. By analyzing the interactions between Jimmy Fallon and BTS on *The Tonight Show*, the research identified three core types of turn-taking strategies—Taking the Turn (TTS), Holding the Turn (HTS), and Yielding the Turn (YTS**)**—with TTS emerging as the most dominant, accounting for 47% of the 576 utterances.

These findings contribute to the broader field of discourse analysis by illustrating how conversational order is maintained through specific linguistic behaviors. They also provide insight into language learning, as understanding how and when to take turns in conversation is a key component of communicative competence—especially for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The orderly and responsive exchanges between Fallon and BTS demonstrate how structured turn-taking supports mutual understanding, even across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

From a pedagogical perspective, this study recommends that EFL teachers explicitly incorporate turn-taking strategies into classroom practice. In particular, Taking the Turn (TTS) can be fostered through role-playing, structured dialogues, and interactive speaking activities that encourage students to initiate and manage turns effectively. Teacher training programs could include modules on how to teach these strategies, including the use of visual or verbal cues, timing awareness, and active listening. For future research, it is suggested that

scholars examine turn-taking in more spontaneous, unscripted contexts, such as casual conversations among peers or classroom discussions. These less-controlled environments may reveal different dynamics and challenges in conversational management, offering a richer understanding of how turn-taking functions in everyday language use. By deepening our understanding of turn-taking strategies, educators and learners alike can improve communicative fluency and foster more engaging and effective interaction in both academic and real-world settings.

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