EMOTIONAL STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE IN ENGLISH AND SLOVAK MEDIA DISCOURSE: POINTS OF LINGUISTIC INTERSECTION

Inna Zabuzhanska* ID

Vinnytsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University, Vinnytsia, Ukraine

Ľuboš Greguš ID

University of SS Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Trnava, Slovak Republic

*Corresponding author

Abstract: The present study examines the phenomenon of storytelling in modern English and Slovak media discourse. The aim of the analysis is to cast some light on linguistic means utilized to convey emotions. The main findings present similarities and differences of the lexicalization of emotions in American and Slovak TV shows. The results complementarily indicate a plethora of future investigations in this sphere.

Keywords: storytelling, media, positive emotions, negative emotions, comparative analysis, TV show.

Facts tell, stories sell
(Social media storytelling 2022)

1. Introduction

Storytelling technique derives from narrative and discourse studies, being defined as one of the oldest forms of human communication and simultaneously one of the most productive techniques to realize pragma-communicative purposes of discourse. "Stories are everywhere around us, from the ads on TV or music video clips to the more sophisticated stories told by books or movies. Everything comes wrapped up in a story, and the means employed to weave the narrative thread are just as important as the story itself" (Handbook of research…2021: xviii). The term "storytelling" is prestigious in many spheres since narrative techniques allow for particularly efficient and sustainable communication. Stories catch our attention, move us, teach us to empathize, and create strong memories (Friedmann 2021).

A range of empirical studies investigates its effectiveness as a pedagogical tool in the development of language skills (Digital storytelling… 2020; Ihnatova et al. 2022; Lichtman 2018; Lucarevschi 2016; Moradi & Chen 2019; Prätor 2018). Thus, clearly there is a vast range of data in the field that addresses the impact of storytelling on L2 learners. Through storytelling, one can communicate experiences, values, and viewpoints, as well as express feelings toward politics (Maynard 2005). However, media storytelling has been a matter of rare discussion and controversy (Friedmann 2021; Handbook of research 2021; Humeniuk 2022; Rehm et al. 2019). Researchers generally believe that storytelling plays a crucial role in modern media (Gilliam & Flahertyb 2015). The reason for this is its simplicity yet also its powerful persuasive if not implicit manipulative power. Narrative science has established that stories should always communicate in a meaningful way (Friedmann 2021: 41).

There is much empiric research highlighting the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural features of English and Slovak (Hudíková et al. 2020; Stashko et al. 2022; Zabuzhanska et al. 2022). Yet, to date, expressive linguistic forms of Slovak and English emotional media storytelling have been studied less intensively. We believe that cultures may vary in the degree of emotional expressivity, verbally and non-verbally and the present research will help shed light on it.

The structure of this paper is as follows: **Section 2** describes the aims, material, and methodology of the research. **Section 3** provides an overview of the data on emotional storytelling in discourse. **Section 4** focuses on the difference between emotion and emotional talk. **Section 5** presents a comparative analysis of the most frequently used verbal and nonverbal means in American and Slovak TV storytelling programs. Finally, **Section 6** summarizes the results of the research and highlights the potential future research areas in this field.

2. Research design

The **aim** of the paper is to investigate the storytelling techniques of American and Slovak TV programs as a means to realize pragma-communicative purposes of the given discourse. The **textual data** comprise recorded fragments of American and Slovak TV shows containing storytelling.

Taxicab confessions (1995–2006) is a show that deals with the lives of everyday people when they share their most intimate thoughts and secrets while riding in a taxi. With the help of hidden lipstick-sized cameras and microphones, Taxicab Confessions featured unscripted and mostly uncensored intimate nocturnal conversations with actual NYC taxicab passengers – often capturing tearful and emotional moments. Since the show set the stage for unfiltered and reality-based storytelling, it was among the first in its genre. By revealing the personal stories, confessions, and unique experiences of

people from all lifestyles, Taxicab Confessions allowed viewers to connect with the human experience (The 20 best reality shows of all time 2023). For research purposes, we investigated 16 episodes, randomly selected from the Internet (Taxicab confessions 2013). The length of individual episodes ranged from eight to ten minutes – the average value was nine. In terms of the number of reports within one episode of the show, the average number is three reports per episode.

The television show **Reflex** is transmitted by the most viewed commercial television broadcaster in Slovak Republic – TV Markíza. It is broadcast every work day in the afternoon at 17:25. As the broadcaster itself explains, the show "brings interesting reports through stories, emotions, and civil cases" (Reflex 2023). As part of the analysis, we focused on 5 episodes broadcast during the week of 10/23/2023 to 10/27/2023. The length of individual episodes ranged from 17 minutes 27 seconds (Monday 23/10/2023) to 19 minutes 57 seconds (Friday 27/10/2023) – the average value was 18 minutes 22 seconds. In terms of the number of reports within one episode of the show, the average number is 3.4 reports per episode – there were 3 reports in 3 episodes, 4 reports in the remaining two episodes.

Relying on the methodological tools of media linguistics, we use the following **methods** to process the data: quantitative content analysis, namely frequency analysis accompanied by electronic analysis. For the latter we used the corpus processing and grammar editor environment NooJ (Silberztein 2012). Besides being able to process and annotate corpora, NooJ allowed us to efficiently combine lexical, morphological, and syntactic features. Furthermore, the aim of our research demanded using valency analysis (Panasenko & Greguš 2022) with the subsequent comparative analysis of storytelling means in English and Slovak.

3. Storytelling: Basic notions

The widespread interest in storytelling arose in the 1960s and can be explained by the fact that structural analysis of narratives and narrative grammars, which were at that time emerging in the fields of the analysis of tales, literary and biblical texts as well as oral narrative covered elements going beyond the limits of the sentence (Boyd 2018). Some linguists, sociolinguists, and psycholinguists were driven to take a closer interest in storytelling due to the manifest lack of thinking about the text, common not only to discourse analysis and linguistics in general but to psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics as well (Adam 2019).

Researchers in the field of language teaching generally define storytelling in terms of how it works or what it does to promote communication between storytellers and story listeners. Dyson and Genishi

in "*The need for story: Cultural diversity in classroom and community*" (1994) advocate that storytelling is a process where a teller uses a narrative structure, vocalization, and/or dramatic and mental imagery to communicate with the audience, who also uses mental imagery to provide the teller with verbal and non-verbal feedback. In similar fashion, Hsu (2015: 14-15) emphasizes non-verbal elements of storytelling. The latter includes the use of voice, facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, and interaction to connect a tale with listeners. A tale is created through the interaction between the storyteller and the audience. Thus, while the storyteller uses his/her voice and gestures to convey a story, the audience physically reacts to it by either squinting, staring or smiling, providing the storyteller with feedback on how storytelling is being received. Typically, any story is created with emphasis on its structure with three main blocks: introduction (the initial part), the main part (the main body) and the final part (the end).

Storytelling is a face-to-face transmission of oral narrative in real time without text or additional media. However, its purpose and parameters change from century to century and from culture to culture; storytelling fulfills critical social and individual needs as human beings have an innate need to communicate their feelings and experiences through the story (Storytelling art and technique 2021: 3; Telling stories: Language, narrative… 2010).

Humeniuk views storytelling as one of the means for efficient discourse realization, which presupposes presenting information in the form of a story, narrative, which is the easiest form of perceiving information by the recipient and, thus, the most efficient form to convey information from the creator of information to the recipient; as well as its having manipulative potential, which may be used implicitly, without the recipient's knowing (2022: 110).

From a functional viewpoint, storytelling accomplishes different social actions like complaining, trouble telling, answering questions, expressing solidarity, and soliciting empathy. Telling stories about experiences or events fulfills numerous pragmatic, discursive, and interactional functions in discourse. In a similar vein, Mueller and Rajaram postulate that good stories burn into people's memories like emotional moments and real experiences (2022: 45). This happens in two ways: stories wire visuals to our brains and explain complex matters in simple stories. As Maynard (2005) mentioned, storytelling is so powerful that it can be utilized in political campaigns, awareness campaigns as well as social campaigns.

Norfolk and Ford generally agree that:

"*Oral storytelling is the original immersive technology. Human beings have used it to communicate knowledge about the world around us; to make or strengthen or sever ties, to recall the lineage of our people and our position in that lineage for millennia. After all this time, our brains are hard-wired for narrative. Story is the conduit through which we take in, remember and recount our experiences and their meanings in our life*" (Storytelling strategies … 2020: 45).

Linguists explain that story hooks its audience through "psychological realism" – recognizable emotions and believable interactions among characters. Additional studies show that the audience needs to be connected emotionally to the characters in an immersion state (Storytelling art and technique 2021: 6; Zabuzhanska et al. 2022). Human beings have the trait – the ability of empathy – a necessary trait that allows one to put oneself in another's shoes (Storytelling art and technique 2021: 7).

The aforementioned aspects of storytelling once more highlight its importance in the development of human civilization – it is the transmission of oral spiritual tradition, storytelling, stories based on experience and facts, tinged with mysticism, cautionary tales that have accompanied man from the earliest years of life. Storytelling can include fables, parables, anecdotes, modern Internet memes, and the functional range extends from the education of children in the family to the motivation of work teams and political image. The uniqueness and sustainability of storytelling as a genre are closely linked to archetypes – psychic structures that incorporate all human experience and transform it into universal patterns.

4. Emotion talk vs emotional talk in media storytelling

Research on language and emotion comes from many disciplines (Bamberg 1997; Cichmińska 2010; Johnson-Iaird & Oatley 1989; Izard 1991; LREC 2010; Panasenko & Greguš 2022; Panasenko et al. 2018; 2023; Theodoropoulous 2012). Despite its long and deep study history, scholars still argue about definitions of emotions, their sources and triggers, defining criteria, and classifications. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to give an extensive outline of emotion, a few key principles will be outlined due to their relevance in the discussion.

According to Foolen, the "emotional revolution", which took place in psychology more than two decades ago, has finally reached linguistics. He strongly believed in the mutual influence of emotions and language in the way that "linguistics cannot neglect the emotions anymore and, for that matter, that emotion research cannot neglect linguistics" (2012: 364). Moreover, deeper insight into the relationship between language and emotion can only be reached by the further strengthening of interdisciplinary contacts.

Foolen states that the relevance of emotion for language and linguistics is considered from three perspectives: (a) the conceptualization of emotions, (b) the expression of emotions and (c) the grounding of language (ibid., 349). Bamberg (1997: 309) claims that language and emotions are two concurrent, parallel systems in use, and their relationship exists in that one system (emotions) impacts the performance of the other (language). He believes that both of these systems share their functionality in the communicative process between people. Wierzbicka (2009), in her turn, highlights the importance of the language of emotion as "languages (including English) shape the emotion categories of their speakers and carry with them culture-specific emotional scripts" (ibid., 13). Similar to Wierzbicka's approach is Harre's and Gillet's "emotionology", according to which people use their emotion vocabulary (emotional lexicon) in commenting upon, describing and reprimanding people for emotional displays and feelings (1994: 148).

We generally agree with Foolen (2012: 349-350) that the expression of emotions takes place on all linguistic levels: phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic, and on the level of figurative language use (metaphor and metonymy).

In the present study, we utilize the theory put forward by Bednarek (2010). He states the difference between emotion talk and emotional talk in the following way: emotion talk is constituted by expressions that denote affect/emotion, for example love, hate, joy, envy, sad, mad, enjoy, dislike and so on (as well as fixed expressions such as *He had a broken heart*). Emotional talk relates to constituents (linguistic and non-linguistic) that conventionally express or signal affect/emotion (e.g., interjections, intensification, expletives). E.g., *I was absolutely terrified by having a baby.* (ibid., 10). The example demonstrates the emotion (*terrified*) and emotional talk (*absolutely*).

Notwithstanding the fact that there exist various classifications of emotions (e.g., eight basic emotions according to Izard (1991); six key emotions according to Ekman (The nature of emotion…1994, etc.), for the sake of ordering the obtained data in the research, we stick to a very simplistic division singling out two categories – positive and negative. The classification serves the purpose of organizing and analyzing the data. In some cases, the decision concerning how to classify a certain emotion was not an obvious one, and may be open to discussion.

Rocklage et al. (2018) assume that a persuasive message is always emotionally-loaded. The reason for this lies in people's subconscious or sometimes deliberate shift toward using more emotional language to increase their persuasive capacity.

5. Lexicalization of emotions in modern media storytelling

5.1. The English context

The obtained results indicate that out of 16 episodes, there were 12 negatively tuned contents and 4 positively tuned reports. The vast majority of episodes evolve around negative situations, to name just a few:

- off-duty trauma cop who recounts scenes of death he has witnessed;

- a homeless man who explains his decline;

- a young woman who talks about the joys of body piercing;

- a foul-mouthed young woman who admits to having shot her boyfriend in a fit of rage;

- a cocaine addict struggling with his yearning for drugs,

- a prostitute who claims she narrowly missed becoming the latest victim of a cab-driving serial killer;

- a couple with a (very) open marriage;

- a down-and-out woman who explains how she turned to heroin and prostitution after losing one of her legs in a car accident, etc.

The most common emotion vocabulary items were from various lexical fields: *shot, rage; cocaine addict, struggle, drugs, prostitute, victim, serial killer, heroin prostitution, car accident, lust, sex, loss, cheat, trap, collapse, run away, disappear, stranger, yell, bang, to kick, death, bisexual, porn, nervous, kill, crazy, careful, fight, dangerous, violence, bribe, carjacking, stabbed, dead bodies, demons, nightmare, bad dreams, poison, on fire, blame, break the heart, lie, bloody,* etc.

Conversely, the positively charged vocabulary consisted of such words as *hopefully, married, protected, perfect, love, gorgeous, awesome, open, friendly, proper, classy, pretty, fashionable, marriage, proposal, romantic, engaged, star, survivor, joke, ok, the right direction, beautiful, dating, save, my baby,* etc.

As the famous American film composer, Bernard Herrmann, once mentioned, "music can propel narrative swiftly forward, or slow it down. It often lifts mere dialogue into the realm of poetry. It is the communicating link between the screen and the audience, reaching out and enveloping all into one single experience" (The power of music in storytelling 2023).

Music is a powerful yet invisible tool in appealing to the subconscious and compelling people to act, one must form an emotional connection. Zabuzhanska et al. state that audiobranding (the use of music in business) significantly effects consumers' emotions – and ultimately guides their decisions (2022: 272).

Thus, the impact of music cannot be overestimated in storytelling as well since it gives one the opportunity to tell the story in a different way by influencing the amount of consideration consumers give the message. It increases the value of the content by steering storylines, driving audience engagement, and increasing consumer retention – making the story not only more interesting, but impactful (The power of music in storytelling 2023). In view of this, we additionally investigated the general sounding – musical accompaniment – of the stories. Our results testify to the fact that the storytelling of the studied TV show lacks musical accompaniment, and the expression of emotions takes place purely due to linguistic means.

5.2 The Slovak context

In terms of storytelling, out of 17 journalistic contents, we recorded 5 negatively tuned contents, 4 neutrally tuned and 8 positively tuned reports. Some journalistic contents included an appeal to two emotions as well, such as the joy of helping a little boy with health problems and hope for others who suffer from similar problems. Almost every report (13 out of 17) was based on a personal story presenting a specific life story, and in some, user generated contents (5 contributions) were also used to achieve authenticity. In five reports, the focus was also on the effort to empathize with the depicted person, and in three contributions, an appeal on a shared experience was pointed out. The authors did not avoid using the "call for an action" method, which they applied in five contributions to support people in taking care of their mental health and the health of their loved ones, to take care of safety when travelling and when behaving in road traffic.

Within the framework of the language used, we can say that the means of expression were at the level of ordinary news language, while only occasionally non-literary or emotionally charged words were used. If we were to look at the linguistic elements used, we had several words or phrases expressing negative connotations, or negative emotions – these were linguistic means:

Strach (fear), *otrasy* (vibrations), *zemetrasenie* (earthquake), *zomrel* (died), *nedotýkať sa* (not to touch), *nefotiť* (not to take pictures), *nehovoriť* (not to talk), *ukradne* (steals), *uťať ruku* (to cut off a hand), *nevera* (infidelity), *tresty* (punishments), *hrozba* (threat), *náročné podmienky* (difficult

conditions), *hrozný* (terrible), *vojna* (war), *teroristické útoky* (terrorist attacks), *masové protesty* (mass protests), *stupeň bezpečnostného rizika* (level of security risk), *výhražné telefonáty* (threatening phone calls), *napätie* (tension), *útok* (attack), *zabiť nožom* (to kill with a knife), *vlna strachu* (wave of fear), *bomby* (bombs), *poplašná správa* (alarm message), *vyhýbať sa* (to avoid), *nebezpečné stiuácie* (dangerous situations), *stovky zranených* (hundreds of injured), *depresia* (depression), *samovražedné myšlienky* (suicidal thoughts), *šikana* (bullying), *mánické stavy* (manic states), *nárast prípadov* (increase in cases), *sebapoškodzovanie* (self-harm), *psychózy* (psychoses), *zabiť sa* (to kill oneself), *ublížiť* (to harm), *predaj dieťaťa* (selling a child), *obchod s ľudskými orgánmi* (trafficking human organs), *čierna adopcia* (black adoption), *mreže* (prison bars), *obchodovanie s deťmi* (child trafficking), *sexuálne vykorisťovanie* (sexual exploitation), *nútené sobáše* (forced marriages), *zneužívanie* (abuse), *nehody* (accidents), *tragický* (tragic), *zranenia* (injuries), *neopakovať* (not to repeat), *nepozornosť chodcov* (inattentive pedestrians), *nedisciplinovaní* (undisciplined), *invalidný vozík* (wheelchair), *jazyková bariéra* (language barrier), *nerozumieť* (not to understand), *psychické problémy* (psychological problems), *detská psychiatria* (child psychiatry), *pokus o zabitie* (attempted murder), *nereprezentovanie rodičov tak, ako by sa malo* (not representing parents as they should), *zlyhania* (failures), *hanbiť sa* (to be ashamed), *hospitalizácia* (hospitalization).

In the same way, there were also words or phrases with positive connotation in individual reports, or positive emotion – specifically, such linguistic means as:

Sebavedomie (confidence), *vďačnosť* (gratitude), *chuť do života* (zest for life), *zázrak* (miracle), *neuveriteľný príbeh splneného sna* (incredible story of a dream come true), *slávna veršované čokoláda* (famous verse chocolate), *poézia v čokoláde* (poetry in chocolate), *pomoc* (help), *liečba* (treatment), *starostlivosť* (care), *totálne dojalo* (totally moved), *dar* (gift), *dobrí ľudia* (good people), *podarilo sa vyzbierať* (managed to collect), *ochota* (willingness), *prekvapenie* (surprise), *ekologický* (ecological), *možnosť* (possibility), *šťastie* (happiness), *šťastný život* (happy life), *hodnota života* (value of life), *na pochmúrne myšlienky nemá čas* (no time for gloomy thoughts), *pomáhať ľuďom* (to help people), *pomáhať* (to help), *všetko je možné* (everything is possible), *byť vzorom* (to be a role model), *byť inšpiráciou* (to be an inspiration), *cítiť sa ako bohyňa* (to feel like a goddess), *kreatívna duša* (creative soul), *zisk politických práv* (gain of political rights), *zásluha spojenia* (merit of connection), *pozitívny krok* (positive step), *vďačná* (grateful), *byť ľudský* (to be human to others), *pochopenie* (understanding), *plne otvoriť* (to fully open), *radosť zo života* (joy of life), *úprimný* (sincere), *par excellence* (par excellence), *krásna* (beautiful), *krémová* (creamy).

In addition to the use of linguistic elements, the emotions were amplified in every single report using musical elements. The results indicate that dynamic, dramatic music dominated the most (11 contributions), melancholic music (5 reports), playful music full of life (5 reports), calm music (4 reports) and romantic music (1 report) were also used. Of course, in some contents, the authors used several moods within the music, but they were always related to the effort to evoke a greater emotional response in the audience. In two posts, we even noted the use of popular songs in their acoustic textless form, namely by Imagine Dragons "Believer", One Republic – "I ain't worried" and Ed Sheeran "Bad habits".

6. Discussion and conclusions

Though new media have changed the way we create, present, and understand stories, emotional storytelling remains one of the most powerful techniques used in modern media discourse for the fact that humans are generally empathy-attuned. For the purposes of this research, we have collected and graphically presented instances of emotion vocabulary both in English and Slovak contexts (Fig.1).
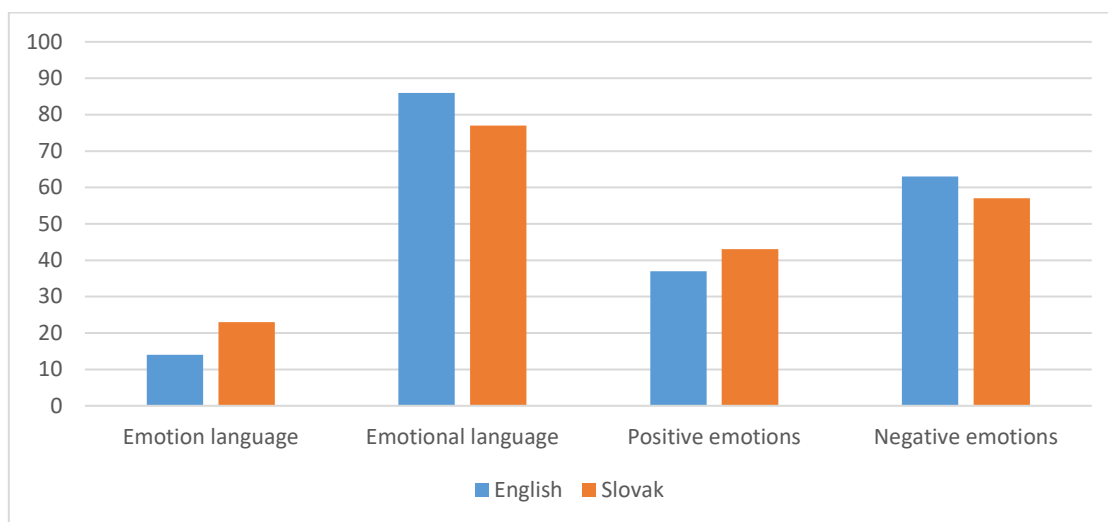

Figure 1. Positively and negatively tuned emotion vs emotional language
in English and Slovak storytelling. Source: own processing

As the analysis of the data has revealed, our emotional repertoire encompasses a wide range of emotional responses together with their blends, nuances and shades; probably there exist more such states than we have words. In particular, in terms of emotion vs emotional language the diagram presents that 14% of the vocabulary denotes emotions (mostly such as love, anger, fear) in the English context while emotional language makes up 86% of the words (the bulk includes a lot of expletives). Somewhat similar are the results for the Slovak context with 23% of emotion language (denoting such emotions as love, happiness, fear) and 77% of emotional language (the bulk includes mainly words that conventionally express or signal affect/emotion).

With regard to its positive vs negative emotion dichotomy, 37% of the words denote positive emotions and states, while 63% stand for negative ones in English. The analysis of Slovak examples testifies to the dominance of negative (57) over positive (43) emotions. Emphasis was placed on the emotion of fear (5 reports), hope (4 reports) and joy (4 reports), while the reports also featured elements to evoke feelings of sadness (2 reports), admiration (2 reports) and excitement (1 report).

The following example demonstrates the emotion and emotional talk in Slovak (where the blue colour indicates emotion while the green one – emotional talk):

"*My sme dostali v podstate niekoľko takých pravidiel, ktoré máme dodržiavať – nefotiť ľudí bez povolenia a vôbec nie ženy, nedotýkať sa žien, nenadviazať s nimi rozhovor, pokiaľ teda nenadviažu rozhovor ony samy, nefotiť si kontrolné stanovištia a nehovoriť o hnutí Taliban zle. Jeden z tých pracovníkov sa pýtal: "A máte u vás v Bratislave nočné kluby?". Hovorím, že máme. "Ja by som tak išiel do nočného klubu." Vlastne úplný opak, čo sme čakali. Keď človek niečo ukradne, je mu proste uťatá ruka – zhruba odtiaľto. Takže tam keď si proste necháte vrece zlata na zemi, tak buďte si istý, že vám ho nikto nezoberie, pretože nikto nechce mať odťatú ruku. Za neveru sú tam tresty, za alkohol sú tam tresty. Deje sa to. Väčšinou sa to teda deje na nejakých štadiónoch, kde sú ľudia kvázi pozvaní, aby to videli. Aby to bola hrozba pre ostatných, že toto sa nerobí. Nevieme si predstaviť, v akej krajine oni žijú. Nevieme si predstaviť, čím všetkým si prešli, aké náročné podmienky sú tam a že tí ľudia sú jednoducho iní. A tí ľudia nedokážu pochopiť náš systém fungovania. Táto cesta mi predovšetkým ukázala samého seba. Ako sa dokážem v postate správať v náročných cestovateľských podmienkach*". (Reflex 2023).

Eng. Basically, we were given several such rules that we have to follow – not to take pictures of people without permission and not women at all, not to touch women, not to start a conversation with them unless they start a conversation themselves, not to take pictures of checkpoints and not to speak badly about the Taliban movement. One of the workers asked: "Do you have night clubs in Bratislava?". I say we have. "I'd rather go to a nightclub." Actually, the complete opposite of what we expected. When a person steals something, his hand is simply cut off – from about here. So there, if you just leave a bag of gold on the ground, be sure that no one will take it from you, because no one wants to have their hands cut off. There are penalties for infidelity, there are penalties for alcohol. It's happening. So it mostly happens in some stadiums where people are quasi invited to see it. To be a threat to others that this shall not be done. We cannot imagine in which country they live. We cannot imagine what they went through, how difficult the conditions are there and that those people are simply different. And those people cannot understand our system of operation. Above all, this journey showed me myself. How I can behave in difficult travel conditions.

Likewise, the following example illustrates the dominance of emotional talk over emotion in an English storytelling context:

"*I am in the rescue squad next door to the precinct. I really like it. All the job today is ok. You have got to be a regular_cop first. I have been at least five years on that job and then you try out for the rescue squad. It is all that SWAT rescue stuff for jumping out of helicopters. It is ten times better than being a regular cop. I want to forgive everything. I am busy. We are just shooting some killings around here and every UV. If I can destroy this guy…he was driving on one of his motorbikes and they tried to rob him and started shooting up right after 14 times I think the guy was dead. I mean I have seen every conceivable way a person could die. It was the most upsetting thing to see them die. Once the guy got hit by the train, he lost his life*".* (Taxicab confessions 2013).

The obtained results also confirm Rojková's et al empirical research that in the Slovak cultural space, media content frequently contains negatively tuned reports. Negative emotions are more attractive than positive emotions since people remember them better and longer (2016: 238).

The quantitative analysis of the collected data also revealed the following interesting fact: Slovak emotional storytelling makes use of various linguistic means employed to convey the emotions. Namely, in the examined episodes there were two euphemisms ("leave" – die; "when I'm not here, people will be better off" – when I die, they will be better off), two diminutives of "little legs" ("nožičky" in Slovak) and "little beer" ("pivko" in Slovak), one simile ("sweet as poetry"), three metaphors ("poems scattered all over Slovakia"; "shout to the whole world"; "the world will turn upside down") and one established expression ("school of life"). Conversely, there were no other linguistic means, as opposed to the wide variety of emotion nouns spotted in the English context.

The conducted comparative analysis of Slovak and English media storytelling techniques has revealed some similarities and differences.

We observed such similarities:

1. Storytelling is an environment loaded with emotions that facilitates communication and social-emotional support, though negative emotions dominate in both discourses allowing one to state that modern media storytelling is a powerful arena for venting negative emotions.

2. Both the English and Slovak emotional storytelling contexts consist of emotional talk rather than the explicit use of linguistic means denoting various emotions.

Our findings also demonstrate the differences, in particular:

1. In contrast to the English context, Slovak storytellers make use of various linguistic means employed to convey the emotions (metaphors, similes etc.). The analysis of examples taken from Taxicab Confessions confirms the statement that the storytelling technique is able to influence the recipient by presenting information in its easiest form.

2. Up to date music is utilized to accompany storytelling, intensify the emotions expressed, and evoke a greater emotional response in the Slovak audience.

The aforementioned points cannot be treated as conclusive, as they would require a more rigorous analysis, which will be the subject of our further research. Linguists can study storytelling from a plethora of perspectives. They may concern storytelling in different languages; multimodality and embodiment of the joint social action of storytelling (including gestures, gaze, body posture, body language); and storytelling prosody or the story-telling trance (e.g., storytelling mode, voice-related recontextualization of reported speech etc.). Truly, research on storytelling can focus on any of these strata: phonology/phonetics, lexicogrammar, discourse semantics, and register.

Note

Translation from Slovak into English was done by Ľuboš Greguš.

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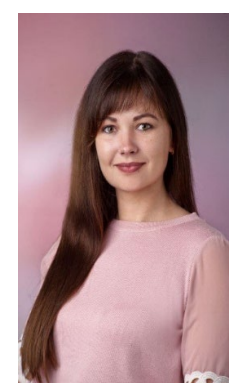1. Adam, J.-M. (2019). Linguistics – narratives – narratology. In *Pratiques – linguistique, littérature, didactique*, p. 181-182. Available at: https://journals.openedition.org/pratiques/ DOI: 10.4000/pratiques.10303

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Contact data
Author#1

	name:	**Inna Zabuzhanska**
	academic title / rank:	CSc. (Philology) Associate Professor
	department:	Department of English Language
	institution:	Vinnytsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University 32, Ostrozkoho St., Vinnytsia, 21001, Ukraine
	e-mail:	izabuzhanska@vspu.edu.ua
	fields of interest:	Phonostylistics, media linguistics, phonetics, postmodernism studies, political discourse.

Author#2

	name:	**Ľuboš Greguš**
	academic title	PhD. in Media and Communication Studies
	department:	Department of Mass Media Communication
	institution:	University of SS Cyril and Methodius in Trnava Nám. J. Herdu 2, 917 01 Trnava, Slovak Republic
	e-mail:	lubos.gregus@ucm.sk
	fields of interest:	Electronic media, television, audience, news production, news values and gatekeeping, media research.