

## **STORYTELLING IN TOURISM AND LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR TOURISM**

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The cultural aspect of tourism is considered as one of the strategic lines in the current tourism development and an integral part in business policies of travel companies. Tourism tends to integrate the natural, cultural and human environment and promote identity, culture and interests of local communities. It is necessary to develop the sense of culture as a foundation of common identity and recognizability to the outer world, and as a meeting place of differences [1]. Storytelling appears to be one of the efficient ways to keep on changing and developing tourism in this regard.

Taking into consideration the crucial role of language skills in working lives of tourism managers, storytelling can combine two important functions in this respect: to act as a good marketing tool in the travel industry and an efficient teaching tool in learning languages for careers in tourism. This paper aims to highlight the main ideas and benefits of storytelling in tourism, to outline the ways of its development in Ukrainian cultural environment, and to elucidate the efficiency of storytelling in learning English for tourism students.

People have always wanted to tell and listen to stories. In every culture stories have played key roles in constituting meaning, forming identity and preserving spiritual values. Stories can be either long or short, fact or fiction, script or real life incidents. They include components like characters, attitudes and problems which create emotions and ease the recollection of the subject. Stories provide themes for conversations by describing events and phenomena, explaining morals and sharing awareness, and feeding the imagination and creativity of people [2, p. 20].

Obviously, storytelling has become a necessary tool in designing a new tourism product or promoting a new destination, as going on a holiday is no longer an action of purchasing a tourism product. Instead, it is about a lifestyle and fulfilling one's aesthetic needs and tourism businesses need to develop and redevelop their products to meet the expectations of their discerning customers. For example, nowadays storytelling has become a constituent of any gastronomic tour.

Story is the element which can bind together all the components of the experience and makes it memorable and significant. Storytelling has to be carefully designed and executed to reflect the desired themes and values. So, Icelandic storytelling experience proves six key themes to be appropriate: adventurous, pure, creative, sustainable, mysterious and cultural. Instead of offering locations and attractions for their customers, Saga Travel tour operator

offers stories and legends, meaningful experiences and authentic connection to Iceland [2, p. 25].

Storytelling is a substantial resource in cultural tourism. Interdisciplinary cooperation between ethnologists, anthropologists and ethnomusicologists seems to be fruitful in the field, where the level of oral and folk tradition is heavily emphasized. Stories are often *the soul of the place*, that something special that makes the destination in this ever globalizing world differ from any other similar place [1]. Non-material heritage can become the right way to rebirth and renewal of Ukrainian cultural environment as it is a peculiar process of *returning to yourself* and becoming a community of happy people. Thereby Ukrainian mythology and demonology, folklore and literature can be a great resource for designing cultural tours and events in our country. The fact is that Ukraine is still *terra incognita* for the rest of the world. For instance, seasonal festivals and celebrations that date back to the pagan times, dramatization of fairy tales or Cossacks legends, traditional weddings, matchmaking or christening ceremonies could attract a great number of visitors from both inside and outside the country.

As for Ukrainian poetry, it keeps the field of undiscovered treasures and good ideas for designing events and promoting Ukrainian places. The question is that Ukrainian mentality originates in paganism and includes the features of pantheism and animism, lyricism and cordial centrism what is reflected in Ukrainian poetry and its translations as rich and diverse emotionality and moving character of lyrical experiences, merging with nature, using metaphor to describe the outer world and express the inner world of a person. Ukrainian lyrics in the texts of excursions, stories of people and places could have a great influence on the audience as a wonderful way to discover a different magic world full of dramas and tragedies, achievements and losses, naivety and bravery, beauty and mystery, enthusiasm and disappointment, strong will to win and live.

To illustrate the statement above let's take the poem 'Summer reclines' by Mykola Vorobyov which is the artistic interpretation of the calendar myth: *Summer reclines in the shade orchard // a past life toys with dew. // Fragrant gifts so fresh // eyes shine with tears. // Fretted light pales. // A rider canters across the horizon, – // as the evening trail erupts. // The earth's heart shudders* [3, p. 35]. The personified images of summer, past life, the earth, and a rider as the symbol of implacable time are so impressive in the poetic picture of autumn evening arrival.

Ukrainian lyrics are often rooted in folklore and give a new life to traditional songs, legends, proverbs and riddles. The main motive of metamorphoses in ancient times was a kind of misfortune, falsehood, disturbed harmony. For example, 'The Sibling Flower' by Vasyl Holoborodko is a new interpretation of the legend that touches the problems of human coexistence: *but fate had destined us // to fall to earth – a flower // with its neck cut // by a steel word // sharpened with human hands, // and to spill grassy blood from a mutual wound, // so we might know first what blood is, // and rise up from the earth –*

*and roam the earth // as brothers – brother and sister – // with a dew-memory about the summer meadow // where we were once one flower, // fearing that sharp steel blade // which would send us to earth a second time, // defamed by human slander. // But then who shall we rise as? // And will we rise at all? [4, p. 47].*

Storytelling creates a special atmosphere of a place where dreams, poetry and art meet, and stories take us back to our instinctive lives, to our deepest knowledge [1]. Successful storytelling designers have to be able to discover, develop and deliver remarkable stories; realize the power of storytelling as it attracts people to a place, person or event, brings intellect and emotions together, creates memories and makes sense of the world.

Storytelling marketing process consists of labeling the story, its advertising and organization. Storytelling in practice has shown that a number of topics can be in use, for example, myths and legends, personal stories, local characters, animals, natural environment, your building, history of your region etc. Storyteller's personality is undoubtedly a central one in this sophisticated performance. Drama, humor and a mixture of facts and fiction together with personal telling appear as the primary building blocks in creating a good story. Passion, enthusiasm, friendliness is also essential in order to capture listeners' attention and encourage them to participate by asking questions. Some storytellers intend to engage the visitors by involving other senses, such as sight, touch, taste and smell [ [5, p. 20].

Storytelling is a communicative activity that has always been applied in education to varying degrees, especially in language learning for careers in tourism. The method of storytelling seems to be fruitful in this field as it engages four core creativity skills: curiosity, open-mindedness, imagination and problem solving. Regular storytelling practice facilitates collaboration, creates culture of communication, confidence, understanding and respect [6]. Tourism students are highly motivated in storytelling activities because they realize the opportunities to apply their skills in professional sphere. It also stimulates their interest, research, improvisation.

A few simple approaches to storytelling in the classroom are offered by Jordan Catapano. They include, in particular, such tips: share your own stories, just for fun; use stories as introductions or illustrations; tie storytelling to learning goals; tell stories to engage reluctant students. They are a sharp contrast to a plain old presentation [7]. As for tourism students, the ideas for designing stories can cover a wide range of things: local lifestyles, origin of places and their names, natural attractions, buildings, monuments, legends and fairy tales related to places, travel and work experience etc.

The significance of storytelling in tourism proves the value of storytelling skills for professionals in the industry. Stories humanize learning, they touch our emotions and make us laugh, cry, fear and get angry. They teach to see and understand the world and people in its diversity. The learning practice of storytelling contributes to formation and development of emotional intelligence,

the ability to understand and control your own feelings and understand the feelings of others and react to them in a suitable way.

### **Conclusions:**

1. Storytelling in tourism is an efficient marketing tool that combines authentic cultural elements and storyteller's personality whose proper interpretation aims to satisfy aesthetic and cognitive needs of customers.
2. Ukrainian non-material cultural heritage is still underused and could become a good source for storytelling in order to create events, attract visitors, and promote places.
3. Storytelling is an excellent teaching technique which is aimed to train practical language and communication skills for careers in tourism, broaden the mind, and acquire cultural competence.

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### **Storytelling in tourism and language teaching for tourism.**

The article deals with storytelling which is considered as an equally efficient technique in tourism development and language teaching. The opportunities to develop and apply storytelling in Ukrainian cultural environment are also dealt with. The attention is focused on Ukrainian poetry as a resource for storytelling.

**Key words:** *story, storytelling, culture, heritage, tourism, language skills.*

### **Сторителлинг в туризме и преподавании языка для туризма.**

В статье рассматривается сторителлинг как в равной степени эффективное средство в развитии туризма и в обучении языку для работы в туризме. Возможности развития и

применения сторителлинга в украинской культурной среде также освещены. Внимание обращено на украинскую поэзию как ресурс для сторителлинга.

**Ключевые слова:** *стори, сторителлинг, культура, наследие, туризм, речевые навыки.*