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LINGUISTIC MARKERS OF EMOTION IN JUSTYNA MAZUR-KUDELSKA'S PODCAST SERIES "DROGA PO KRES"

Abstract. The article examines lexical markers of emotion in Justyna Mazur-Kudelska's true crime podcast series "Droga po Kres." The analysis aims to explore which emotions dominate in the author's speech, whose emotions are expressed, how these emotions are linguistically shaped, and what function emotional marking serves in a true crime program. To achieve this objective, the content analysis method and the pragmalinguistic method were employed. The research material consists of the author's statements containing linguistic references to her own emotions, those of the story's protagonists, and of the people they encounter. Special attention was paid to the strong connection between emotions and value judgements. The study confirmed that expressively marked utterances serve to shape the author's image, capture the audience's attention, and create a virtual community of communication. The analysis showed that negative emotions, mainly fear and surprise, predominate in the material, while references to positive feelings are rare. This emotional profile aligns with the subject matter of the podcast. The conclusions note a low degree of variety in the means of expressing emotion and emphasize the need for further research on emotionality in true crime podcasts.

Keywords: expressiveness, language of emotions, true crime discourse, true crime podcast.

1. Introduction

The issue of linguistic markers of emotion in texts of various styles has long been a subject of interest to linguists. Emotionality manifests itself in language in a wide variety of ways. The most fundamental operation used to identify the experiencer's feelings is the act of naming them; however, it is not only lexis (and phraseology) that enables the disclosure of an emotional state. Morphological units (for instance, formatives used to create diminutives or augmentatives), inflectional forms (such as archaic ones), syntactic operations (including unusual word order) (see Skubalanka 1972: 124–125),

orthographic choices (e.g., capitalisation for reasons of politeness), as well as – present in spoken discourse – linguistic and extralinguistic phonic elements, all contribute to this process. Some of these forms through which a speaker's emotions become manifest can be observed in the true-crime podcast *Droga po kres*, authored by Justyna Mazur-Kudelska, which is analysed in the present article.

Expressiveness is a crucial element in podcasts, a format that has grown significantly in popularity in recent years. Creators of such recordings, regardless of their subject matter, are well aware that emotional colouring, manifested both in the speaker's outward displays of feelings and in evoking such emotions in the audience, strongly influences how the content is received. It engages the listener, evokes keen interest in the story, and perhaps even in the author. The emotional quality of the content helps the host achieve promotional (or self-promotional) goals and also serves to shape their image and stand out among other content creators producing podcasts on similar topics.

The aim of the study is to determine which emotions are predominant in the author's statements, whether they are negative or positive, and to what category they may belong, as well as whose emotions are being expressed, be that those of the creator herself or of the protagonists of the stories she narrates. Most importantly, the question is how these emotions are shaped linguistically. I also attempted to answer the question what function emotional colouring serves in a crime-themed program.

The research material consists of linguistic markers of emotion present in one of the podcasts created by the well-known Polish content creator, Justyna Mazur-Kudelska. The program is composed of eight episodes, each dedicated to a single criminal case. The host presents events that took place both in Poland and abroad, and what unites the series is the fact that each tragic incident occurred during a journey.

The research method used in the study is content analysis, understood as a set of various techniques for the systematic analysis of streams or collections of messages, involving: the most objective (in practice this usually means intersubjective consistency) identification; distinguishing formal or content-related elements defined as clearly as possible; the most precise possible (in practice: usually quantitative) estimation of the distribution of these elements; and mainly comparative inference, aimed at understanding the elements and conditions of the communication process, through comprehension of the content of the messages (Pisarek 1983: 45).

The analysis of the collected material also requires the inclusion of a pragmlinguistic methodology. I consider the pragmatic dimension – asso-

ciated with language use and the broadly understood communicative layer – to be essential in the context of the present study. This dimension is embedded in the interpretation of the recordings that constitute the empirical basis of the research, as they serve as evidence not only of the author's conceptualisation of the selected fragment of reality, but also of the relationship established with the audience¹ (see Gorlewska 2020). What I consider to be significant in the context of the conducted analysis is the pragmatic dimension, which fits within the interpretation of the content of the podcasts that forms the basis of this research. I pay attention not only to the linguistic manifestations of emotionality, which constitute the foundation of this analysis, but also to such elements as the communicative code (which is particular to the analysed media sphere), context, the role of the sender and receiver, and the sender–receiver relationship. Pragmalinguistic research pertains primarily to “language in action, in use, in its functioning as a highly complex means of interpersonal communication” (Grzegorzczkova 2013: 6). In this context, two issues appear particularly noteworthy: the pragmalinguistic characterisation of the sender and the receiver, and the use of the linguistic system in a specific communicative situation (see Grzegorzczkova 2013: 7–8).

Pragmalinguistic analyses are inseparably linked to the study of the semantics of linguistic signs, which is necessarily reflected in the present article as well. Although pragmatics and semantics are typically approached in the literature as distinct levels of linguistic inquiry, it seems that calls for their integration are increasingly prominent. Within such an approach, “the meaning of linguistic expressions should be understood as a continuum established (negotiated) in the process of communication between the sender and the addressee of the utterance” (Bugajski 2013: 9).

Podcasters, by gathering around themselves audiences interested in the topics they present, create a virtual communicative community specific to internet (Gorlewska 2020: 197–213; Gorlewska 2022: 109–134), which exists mainly due to the need to obtain information on a given subject, to share opinions with other users, and to belong to a group with similar interests. Also important in this context, in my view, is the possibility of getting closer to the content creator, who may perhaps respond in some way² to a message posted in the comments section under the recording.

Studying the emotional layer of the content of true-crime podcasts allows us to observe not only the affective attitudes presented by the content creator and conveyed to the audience but, perhaps more importantly, the values underlying the expressive form of the message.³

2. The language of emotions⁴ – a reconnaissance

The language of emotions, expressiveness of language, linguistic expressions of emotions – have been the subject of in-depth linguistic research for many years.⁵ Linguists analyse texts of various genres and styles in terms of their expressiveness, examining how it manifests and what functions it serves in a particular utterance or within specific types of utterances. Their inquiries include, among others, the classification of emotions, the names of positive and negative emotions, expressively marked vocabulary, modal elements expressing emotions, non-lexical indicators of emotion (including phonetic, inflectional, and syntactic markers), the translation of expressive vocabulary, and iconic representations of feelings that accompany or substitute for verbal communication.

Another important issue is understanding of emotionality in language. In this context, it is worth quoting Teresa Skubalanka, who saw emotionality as the affective evaluation of objects in reality (Skubalanka 1972: 131). Lucyna Sopolińska also makes note of the connection between emotionality and evaluativeness, referring to the emotive-evaluative function of operators when they express the speaker's subjective attitude towards the presented state of affairs. Most generally, this relates to presenting the sender's axiological stance, that is, their emotive and evaluative attitude, which is why she also uses the term "axiological function" (Sopolińska 2004: 231). Later in the article, she explains that evaluation is not identical with emotionality, that is, the evaluation of an object does not have to be related to the expression of emotion. However, every act of emotive speech is always an act of evaluation (Sopolińska 2004: 231). Stanisław Grabias commented on the topic in a similar spirit, though without including the axiological component, stating that emotionality is the expression of an emotional attitude towards reality by means of linguistic and non-linguistic devices⁶ (Grabias 1981: 9).

Karolina Ruta and Marta Wrześniewska-Pietrzak, in turn, observe that emotionality is sometimes equated with expressiveness and at other times is considered its component. As the researchers note, this is therefore an element interpreted in various ways by linguists. Due to the difficulty of clearly distinguishing between the two terms, the linguists regard "emotionality" and "expressiveness" as synonymous (Ruta, Wrześniewska-Pietrzak 2017: 72).

Another set of key terms includes "expressiveness" and the "expressive function." The aforementioned Teresa Skubalanka describes expressiveness as "a certain property of linguistic elements" (Skubalanka 1972: 124). Sta-

nisław Grabias, on the other hand, considers those semiotic signs to be expressive by means of which the sender expresses their attitude toward surrounding phenomena, or in which, regardless of the sender's intention, features of their personality are revealed (Grabias 1978: 107). These reflections are complemented by the opinion of Teresa Smólkowa, who notes that expressive components of the meaning of lexical units carry two kinds of information:

1. Information about the sender's emotions (this is expressiveness in the narrower sense),
2. Information about the stylistic features of expressive linguistic signs (Smólkowa 1989: 36).

Another linguist, Monika Krzempek, asserts that expressiveness as a semantic category pertains to such problems as the emotive function of the language, range of emotive linguistic means, and the discursiveness of emotions, i.e. the issue of emotional competence, verbal and non-verbal emotional codes, the power of emotions and the means of expressing them, as well as types of emotional texts (Krzempek 2021: 307).

The expressive function, as defined in the *Encyklopedia Językoznawstwa Ogólnego*, entails expressing (i.e. revealing through speech) certain qualities of the sender. It is connected with the fact that certain features of utterances align with particular physiological and psychological qualities of the speaker in a cause-effect pattern, thus serving as a signal revealing their physical and psychological state to the listener. These features of speech include the tone, strength, and pitch of the voice, as well as the way particular sounds are enunciated, etc. These are natural qualities of utterances and as such do not form a part of the linguistic system. Apart from natural elements, there are also conventional (systemic) forms of expression, such as exclamations, requests, and hypocoristic forms (EJO 1993: 168).

In this context, it is also worth invoking the ideas of Kalina Kosacka on linguistic expression. In her opinion, linguistic expression should be understood as the revealing of the sender (Kosacka 2017: 93). Furthermore, she asserts that the most conscious form of expression is communicating emotions, which is done with the use of names for emotional states and for behaviours associated with them (Kosacka 2017: 94). These reflections are well supplemented with those of Leszek Tymiakin, who states that expression, which belongs to the pragmatic edifice of an utterance, is the communication of emotions and feelings of the person issuing a message (Tymiakin 2017: 207).

Modal elements of an utterance may also serve to express emotions. Modality is understood as "the speaker's attitude toward the dictum of the utterance, revealing the purpose of the speech act [...] the expression of vari-

ous speaker attitudes (intellectual, emotional, volitional) toward the content of the utterance” (Wolk 2024: 235). The function of conveying the speaker’s emotional stance is attributed to modal expressions, among others, by Anna Wierzbicka (1971a: 179; cited in: Wolk 2024: 236). However, as Mariola Wolk observes, “there is no unified position among linguists as to whether pragmatic elements [E.G.] should be included within the scope of modality – including, for instance, evaluative and emotional markers of utterances – or not” (Wolk 2024: 237–238).

Ewa Jędrzejko articulates a position close to that of Anna Wierzbicka: “Directly or indirectly – the speaker’s stance is [...] always ‘inscribed’ in the text; it exists as an explicit or implicit ‘modal-illocutionary frame’ of every utterance. By virtue of this frame, a text, addressed ‘for someone’ or ‘to someone’, simultaneously constitutes a discursive ‘sign’ (whether conventionalised or not) of the speaker’s intentional attitude toward that segment of reality to which it refers and which the utterance interprets through language” (Jędrzejko 2000: 115). The linguist also includes emotive-evaluative utterances within the scope of modality (Jędrzejko 2000: 136–138). Furthermore, she distinguishes between the modality of the text and modality in the text, the latter referring to “linguistic signs of modalisation present in a particular utterance/work at its various levels, treated as facultative modalities” (Jędrzejko 2002: 58).

Another scholar, Henryk Wróbel, includes only certain forms of expressivity within the category of modal expressions: the expression of “the speaker’s desire concerning the occurrence of the event communicated in the sentence [...] (e.g. *oby*, *niechby*, *bodajby*, *byle*)”, “the expression of various emotions” through the use of such words as *jaki(ż)*, *jakże*, *ależ*, *że też*, and “the expression of a state of consciousness in connection with the facts communicated in the sentence” (here, exclamatory sentences apply, e.g. *O, śnieg spadł!*, *Któż nie lubi pochwał?!*) (Wróbel 1991: 266). He excludes from the repertoire of modal devices those forms that express “so-called pure emotions, which do not constitute the speaker’s affective attitude toward the event communicated” (Wróbel 1991: 266).

The lack of consensus among linguists regarding modality and its exponents was described decades ago by Bożena Boniecka (1976). She identified several key issues that still appear to remain unclear in the literature. The first of these is “the insufficient distinction between logical and linguistic modality.” Boniecka discusses, in this context, the connection between linguistic definitions of modality and its logical characterisations. Another difficulty lies in defining the concept of modality itself, which, as she notes, has dozens of competing definitions. A further con-

tentious matter is the classification of modality. Interestingly, among the typologies cited by the linguist, expressive modality does not appear, which may indicate the instability of expressive means within the modal frame of an utterance. “Most scholars – writes Boniecka – are inclined to separate the modal dimension from the emotional components of an utterance. [...] Despite the prevailing number of positions excluding expressive-emphatic markers from the domain of modality, there are nonetheless many researchers who readily view exponents of expression and emotion as modal, at least in certain situations” (Boniecka 1976: 108–109). The remaining problematic issues she identifies concern the delimitation of modality, the role of affirmation and negation, and lexical markers of modality.

The instability of expressive markers within the context of modality is likewise discussed by Romana Łapa, who notes: “The divided opinions pertain primarily to the inclusion of emotional stance within modality. Polish linguists – participants in the mid-twentieth-century debate and subsequent discussions – tend to advocate its separation from the modal category” (Łapa 2021: 29–30).

In view of the numerous divergent linguistic positions on modality in general – especially with regard to the so-called expressive modality, which is of particular interest here – I do not undertake an analysis of such linguistic devices present in the collected material. They represent only a marginal subset in comparison with the broader range of lexical means identified.

In the aforementioned scholarly considerations, there is frequent mention of linguistic means of expressing emotion, but it is hard to delineate a common repertoire of them. Linguistic means of expressing emotions are an elusive matter, changing over time, and dynamically evolving. Furthermore, some lexical elements can take on an expressive quality in a given text, or even be perceived as emotionally loaded by the receiver, even if it was not the intention of the sender to elicit such a reaction.

In her paper on emotions in language, Elżbieta Laskowska (2004: 213–221) lists three categories of means of identifying emotions:

1. Lexical and phraseological
2. Names of actions, states, and processes inscribed in a semantic structure
3. Names of processes and activities which may be a symptom of an emotional state (i.e. indirect signifying of emotions; Laskowska 2004: 215).

The division of lexical means proposed by the linguist is mostly adequate for the collected research material. Therefore, I will be referring to it in the analytical part of this work.

3. The Function of Emotionality in (not just) True Crime Podcasts

Although true crime podcast creators follow, as it would seem, the structure of communication typical of a journalistic reportage,⁷ and therefore, try to present facts in an objective manner, in particular avoiding extremes of emotions and value judgements, they are not always able to limit themselves to a factual report, perhaps subtly signalling their opinions, and reach for unequivocally expressive forms of speech. As I will try to demonstrate in a further part of these deliberations, the use of emotion in a podcast is not necessarily meant to expose the creator's inner life or build up their image. It may also be an element of the story being told, in particular when podcasters describe the feelings of the victim or their close ones. Although it remains doubtful how they gain access to these emotions: by talking to the victims' close ones, their memoirs, testimonies, or are they merely using poetic license to project their own feelings.

It is worth noting here that appealing to emotions – both the creator's own and those of the subjects discussed in the material – has a strong impact on how a recording is received. It should be remembered that the most crucial link in the process of publishing materials online, including true crime podcasts, is the audience. Without their active participation, watching or listening to the recordings, giving “likes,” posting comments, or sharing the material with others, the content creator would not become popular and would ultimately disappear from the online space. For a publication to attract the interest of internet users, it should be engaging, unique, characteristic of its creator, and thus recognizable; it should move the audience, motivating them to respond, for example by leaving a comment. One possible way to reach listeners is to evoke emotions in them, which in turn can be achieved by sharing one's own feelings and “reporting” on the emotions of people connected to the case at hand.

A characteristic feature of online communication is the reduction (or even complete elimination) of the distance between the audience and the sender, who reveals their “self” to the audience. This is achieved by infusing speech with emotional expressions, which allow for a controlled insight into the content creator's internal state and emotions and expose their attitude and evaluations of the discussed reality (Saniewska 2016: 331).

The emotional aspect of the analysed material is strongly connected with the author's efforts to shape her image⁸ and build a relationship (and even a community of communication) with her listeners.

As for the first of these aspects, personal branding, it should be added, as noted by Anetta Bogusława Strawińska, that creating a personal brand in a world full of people, events, information is becoming an increasingly important tool for gaining recognition and uniqueness, as well as for building credibility. Interestingly, Strawińska also writes that every person has a brand, regardless of whether they build it consciously or not (Strawińska 2017: 371). Sharing emotions with the audience, externalizing what is personal (experiences, judgments), is a marketing element and constitutes a significant factor enabling the creator's presence in the online space, as well as strengthening their position within the community.

Regarding the second of the aforementioned aspects, the creation of a community of communication, we should highlight the role emotions play in forming bonds. As Lucyna Sopolińska emphasizes, they do not merely serve to inform that the sender is experiencing certain positive or negative feelings, but their purpose is more about establishing a mutual positive or negative stance together, which the author calls the principle of solidarity of feelings (Sopolińska 2006: 244). When a creator shares their emotions, the intention is, beyond simply conveying information and solidifying a certain emotional stance, also to shape the audience's attitudes toward the described aspect of reality.

The use of emotionally charged linguistic elements in speech also conveys information about the speaker's evaluation of the subject being discussed.

The connection between emotions and value judgements in terms of good and bad is strong, although it should not be assumed that the latter can be equated with emotionality. At the same time, it is worth agreeing with Lucyna Sopolińska that every emotive speech act is always a value judgement (Sopolińska 2004: 231). Emotions, as Leszek Tympiakin emphasizes, always naturally accompany the process of making one (Tympiakin 2017: 204). Because of the subtlety of the relationship between emotions and value judgements in their reception, it is not always possible (especially for an average recipient who may not have highly developed communication skills) to distinguish what is emotional from what is evaluative.

The commonality of values and shared experience can foster a strong bond between the audience and the content creator, ultimately granting the latter popularity and recognition. What the listeners get in return is engaging content, thoughtfully crafted by a motivated author, in the form of a program with a distinct theme.

4. Justyna Mazur-Kudelska's *Droga po Kres* Podcast Series – Presentation of the Research Material

The *Droga po Kres* podcast is created and produced by Justyna Mazur-Kudelska,⁹ a podcaster best known for her true crime show *Piąte: nie zabijaj* (The Most Popular Polish Podcasts on Spotify 2025; Spotify Podcast Rankings 2025¹⁰), published on platforms such as YouTube, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and TIDAL. The analysed material was made in collaboration with the Empik Go platform, which offers e-books, audiobooks, and podcasts. The *Droga po Kres* series consists of eight episodes, each titled with the episode number, preceded by the “#” symbol, and the name of the person the episode is about: #1 Urszula Olszowska, #2 Elisa Lam, #3 Ania Dybowska, #4 Lars Mittank, #5 Lyle Stevik, #6 The Isdal Woman, #7 The Eriksson Sisters, #8 Alicja Baran.

This is how Justyna Mazur-Kudelska introduces her original program: “For Empik Go, I have prepared an eight-episode special series entitled ‘Droga po Kres,’ in which I will tell you about the crime puzzles¹¹ from Poland and around the world that **fascinate me**¹² the most.”¹³ Even this announcement of the series includes expressively charged elements. The adjective *fascynujących* (“fascinating”) means “attracting attention by arousing strong interest, admiration, or awe” – a definition that itself points to the emotional involvement of the one experiencing it.

A common element in all the tragic stories presented in the series is that each of the protagonists met their end while traveling. As the author emphasizes, “all [events] took place during a journey, far from home. I invite you on this **very mysterious**¹⁴ journey, which will take us to different regions, showing us how varied the causes of disappearances and deaths can be.”¹⁵ By using the second person plural, Justyna Mazur-Kudelska addresses the listeners of her series directly, in a casual and straightforward, almost friendly manner. Shortening the distance between sender and recipient is one of the distinctive features of online communication.¹⁶ Additionally, the author creates a community of communication, one she includes herself in, as is revealed by her use of the first person plural. Joint participation in the process of telling and listening fosters familiar relations among the participants and serves a persuasive function, as audiences are more likely to remain in a relationship with a creator who does not act superior, but instead engages with them as partners.

5. Lexical Means of Expressing Emotions in Justyna Mazur-Kudelska's podcast *Droga po Kres*

In analysing the collected linguistic material, I draw on the theoretical framework established by Elżbieta Laskowska (specifically regarding the classification of linguistic markers of emotionality). The program I am examining is audio-based, so nonverbal signs of expression (which may occur during the recording) are inaccessible to the audience.

The collected research material allows us to distinguish two ways in which expressiveness manifests itself: the author's perspective (her feelings toward the content she presents) and the perspective of the protagonists – the victims and their loved ones (their emotions, communicated to us by the author or, at times, crafted by her to enhance the appeal of the program).

5.1. The Author's Feelings

As one might easily guess, the emotions expressed by the podcast's author and shared with listeners belong to the category of negative feelings: sadness, anger, and astonishment at the overwhelming misfortunes that have befallen the protagonists of the series.

Justyna Mazur-Kudelska tells her audience how she felt when she learned about the disappearance of Urszula Olszowska: “the information about her disappearance was **quite shocking** for me” (Pol. “informacja o jej zaginięciu była dla mnie dość wstrząsająca.”) She also adds that the case touched her personally (Pol. “sprawa Uli Olszowskiej jest mi szczególnie bliska,”) which may enhance such listener feelings as compassion, empathy, a sense of connection to the victim of what turned out to most likely be murder.

The author recalls information that may indicate her unease about the case, also emphasizing the mystery surrounding the protagonist: “Some of the things Ula said did not correspond to reality. They weren't lies or schemes, just **little details** that **seemed** intended to throw someone off the trail [...]”¹⁷

Another feeling the author shares is fear: “[...] this is one of those cases,” she says about the story of Elisa Lam, “that **makes your skin crawl**. It's a story whose images **burrow into your memory** and refuse to leave. It's the speculation that **keeps you up at night** [...]”¹⁸ Although Justyna Mazur-Kudelska speaks in very general terms in the quoted statement, I believe she is relying on her own experience while also speaking, in a sense, on behalf of all those who learn about this case. In doing so, she projects the sensation of sudden, intense fear, symbolized by the collocation “makes

your skin crawl” (pol. *cierpnie skóra*), onto the audience. This vivid portrayal of the emotions accompanying the unfolding of Elisa Lam’s fate is persuasive, capturing listeners’ attention and making them want to hear more of the story. The author, using the power of fear, continues: “it’s one of the **most terrifying** viral videos in the history of the Internet” (Pol. “to jeden z **najbardziej przerażających** virali w historii Internetu”) referring to the recording showing Elisa Lam behaving as if she were fleeing from or hiding from someone, although nobody else appears in the video. Fear is the dominant emotion in the description of what turned out to be the Canadian woman’s final moments. The feelings sparked by the revelation of the sad truth about Elisa Lam’s fate are commented on by the podcaster as follows: “[...] this information **electrifies** everyone” (Pol. “ta informacja **elektryzuje** wszystkich”). It is difficult to say whether she’s referring only to those directly involved in Elisa Lam’s death or also to her audience consuming the story.

Regarding another of the presented stories – the tragic fate of Anna Dybowska – the author states: “This is one of those **blood curdling** stories” (Pol. “To jedna z tych historii, która **mrozi krew w żyłach.**”) In other words, it provokes strong, paralyzing fear and horror. What captivates Justyna Mazur-Kudelska, beyond the crime itself, are the circumstances of the event and the fact that the victim seemingly had the chance to escape and save her own life. The podcaster says: “What is **most extraordinary**, though, is that Ania could have escaped her attackers, but she never did. [...] What is **most stunning** for me in this case is that this crime had witnesses”; “What is **most terrifying** in this case is that when the men [the perpetrators] were with Ania at the Warsaw Zachodnia train station, when they changed trains and sat at the station for an hour, imagine that they didn’t restrain Ania by force, they didn’t hold her down or tie her up, she simply sat on the bench next to them.” “Moreover,” the podcaster continues, “and what is **worst**, Ania did not die instantly – she was alive for several, maybe a dozen minutes after being thrown from the train. So, her **nightmare** went on and on.”¹⁹

What Justyna Mazur-Kudelska shares with her audience is not only her emotions towards the murder victim, but also towards her loved ones. “**Worst** of all,” she says, “Mr. Jerzy [Ania’s father] was present at the autopsy of his daughter.”²⁰ In doing so, she demonstrates, though she does not state it directly, empathy and compassion. As a public figure who may be considered an authority by some listeners, she projects these attitudes onto her audience. She subtly suggests how people learning of such an event “should” feel.

The dramatic end of Anna Dybowska's story is commented on by the author as follows: "Her death is a **completely senseless** tragedy" (Pol. "Jej śmierć to **kompletnie bezsensowna** tragedia.") In saying this, she indicates that the podcast protagonist's death was pointless and brought about no result. The event is thus accompanied by feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness, emotions not explicitly stated by the narrator, but semantically connected to the adjective "senseless" (Pol. *bezsensowna*) that she used.

Other emotions, falling into the category of astonishment, accompany the podcaster as she recounts the fate of Lars Mittank. Justyna Mazur-Kudelska describes this story as "one of the **strangest, most shocking** disappearance cases" (Pol. "jedną z **najdziwniejszych, najbardziej szokujących** spraw zaginięć.") Not without reason are superlative adjectives used here. They heighten the emotional temperature and further capture the attention of the listeners, who, I believe, will be intrigued by what happened to this young man, what is so unusual about his disappearance, and how it differs from other similar cases.

The author, speaking about Lars Mittank, also shares other feelings, falling under the category of surprise and sadness: "an **incredibly mysterious, incredibly sad** story" (Pol. "historia **niesamowicie tajemnicza, niesamowicie smutna**.") The adverb "incredibly" (Pol. *niesamowicie*) indicates that what is being discussed possesses this quality to such a degree that it catches the speaker's attention, since it is rare for it to be so intense (see WSJP n.d.). The adjective "incredible," semantically linked to the adverb "incredibly," denotes something unusual, evoking admiration or fear (see WSJP n.d.) When used in the context of negative emotions associated with a crime story, it amplifies the described sensations.

The author shares similar feelings – surprise, sadness, curiosity – with her listeners when she recounts the story of Lyle Stevik: "Until now unknown, **mysterious, dark, sad**, and at the same time **remarkable**, this story **fascinates** not only residents of the USA, but has reached Europe, Australia, Asia; in fact, it has spread across the entire world."²¹ In this statement, Justyna Mazur-Kudelska strengthens the sense of the case's uniqueness by highlighting its popularity beyond the country where the incident had occurred. Knowing this may further encourage audiences to explore the story and become emotionally invested in it.

Continuing the narrative about Lyle Stevik, the creator confides: "[...] I feel **great emptiness** after this case. [...] On top of it all, I feel a **deep sadness** that Lyle's story cannot serve as a lesson for any of us, a warning, something that might make us more **sensitive** to others."²² The

author is troubled by the fact that the tragic story of the man featured in the episode cannot offer any lessons for her audience. If it were otherwise, perhaps some moral sense could be found in this loss.

The way the author presents the story of the Isdal woman is somewhat less emotional in terms of variety and intensity of feelings. Justyna Mazur-Kudelska says that “**Unfortunately**, soot was found in the woman’s lungs, which indicates that she was alive while she was burning.” She continues, “**Unfortunately**, [...] the identity of this woman has still not been determined.” The podcaster encourages the audience to comment on the published material, also by referring to her own feelings: “I am **very curious** about your opinion [about who the Isdal woman was].”²³

Emotions from the category of surprise, which frequently appear in the analysed material, also accompany the creator while recounting the story of the sisters Ursula and Sabina Eriksson: “when I first heard about the case, I must have had the **most astonished** look on my face” (Pol. “kiedy po raz pierwszy usłyszałam o sprawie, miałam chyba **największe zdziwienie** na swojej twarzy”). Once again, the name of the emotion is paired with a superlative adjective, amplifying the emotional experience. Since this particular case, with its many unusual threads and the unpredictable behaviour of its protagonists, is indeed strange, the author addresses the audience: “let me tell you something that will really surprise you” (Pol. “powiem wam coś, co was **bardzo zdziwi**.”) This statement can be understood as an attempt to create an expressive community with the listeners: since the author herself was surprised by this story, as she openly states, she seeks to evoke a similar feeling in the audience.

One of the few signals indicating the author’s positive emotions – in this case, joy and relief – is the statement: “**Fortunately**, no one runs her [Sabina Eriksson] over” (Pol. “**Na szczęście** nikt jej [Sabiny Eriksson] nie potrąca.”) This perspective aligns with the podcaster’s consistent emotional attitude: she expresses negative feelings when recounting harm or tragedy, but shows satisfaction and happiness when someone manages to avoid an unfortunate experience.

All the author’s expressive statements conclude with a message in which Justyna Mazur-Kudelska encourages viewers to watch a program devoted to the case under discussion: “I **wholeheartedly** encourage you to watch this material [a recording of the Eriksson sisters’ behaviour from BBC’s *Madness on the Highway*]. [...] It’s **quite stressful** because, after all, we are watching something that actually happened; these are not reenactments, but real situations.”²⁴ However, she warns the audience (thus showing her concern for them) that the recommended program may evoke negative emotions.

This attitude demonstrates the creation of a community of communication around the show and its host, as well as an attempt to connect with listeners and reduce the distance to them, which could positively influence the podcast's popularity.

5.2. Protagonists' emotions

Justyna Mazur-Kudelska makes an effort to understand and recreate, although it might be more accurate to say "create," the emotions of the protagonists of her stories, both the victims and their close ones.

Regarding one of the protagonists, Urszula Olszowska, the author says that "no one knows what Ula **feels**, what she thinks, no one knows her private life," adding that "her friends described her as someone who would almost **bottle up her emotions** and it took her a very long time to share what she was **feeling** or thinking."²⁵ Thus, Olszowska appears as a reserved and enigmatic woman. This aura, in a sense, extends to the circumstances of her disappearance and death, and as can be assumed, they are meant to be perceived in the same way by the podcast's listeners.

As recounted by one of the girl's parents, she seemed sad and out of sorts: "Ula's father noticed," the author relates, "that his daughter is **listless and downcast**" (Pol. "ojciec Uli zauważa, że jego córka jest **osowiała, markotna**."). These are emotions from the category of sadness, signifying dejection and grief. A different image of Ula Olszowska is presented by a woman she met by chance in the mountains: "the woman is **delighted** with the young woman [Ula], who is not only **kind, smiling, and cheerful**, but above all possesses an incredibly deep knowledge of folk culture."²⁶ This characterization is rich in expressions and behaviours typical of the feelings of joy. Thus, the protagonist's image becomes dichotomous, contrasting, which may capture the attention of the podcast's audience.

By contrast, emotions from the realm of surprise and fear dominate in the episode devoted to Elisa Lam. As the author indicates, "Elisa behaves **strangely**; she looks as if she was **disorientated** or experiencing a **panic attack**;" "**she seems to be afraid**."²⁷

Similar experiences are recalled in the context of other protagonists, such as Anna Dybowska: "this **worries** the girl, making her **withdraw** and decide to switch compartments" (Pol. "to **niepokoi** dziewczynę, powoduje, że **zamyka się w sobie** i postanawia zmienić przedział"); Lars Mittank: "this information is **anxiety-inducing and disturbing** for Lars"; "Lars is **panicked**, behaving **strangely**"; "when Lars sees this man, he **panics** and runs out of the office [...]. He ran as if he **feared for his life**"²⁸; Lyle Stevik: "the man **avoids eye contact**, giving the impression of be-

ing **unsettled**" (Pol. "mężczyzna **ucieka wzrokiem**, sprawia wrażenie, jakby był **wytrącony z równowagi**"); the Eriksson sisters: "the men notice that Sabina is **anxious, frightened**, she looks as if she is **afraid** of something" (Pol. "mężczyźni zauważają, że Sabina jest **zaniepokojona, przestraszona**, wygląda, jakby się czegoś **bała**.")

Surprise and fear are powerful, profound emotions. Fear arises when the experiencer senses danger, while surprise accompanies encounters with phenomena that are unusual, deviate from the norm, and are, at the same time, unsettling [see SJP Doroszewski 1960; ISJP Bańko 2000; WSJP Żmigrodzki n.d.]. This is precisely how Elisa Lam's behaviour can be interpreted: "There [Elisa] carefully observes the corridor, but she appears to be **hiding from someone**, as if she wants to **stay out of sight** of someone who might be passing by or perhaps hiding; on the other hand, she looks as if she is **afraid** of someone." "**Suddenly, unexpectedly**, [Elisa] bursts into the corridor and starts **stomping her feet** in place, as if she wanted to scare someone away." Justyna Mazur-Kudelska concludes the recording with the words: "looks extremely mysterious."²⁹

A pervasive sense of sadness, on the other hand, permeates the story of the Isdal woman. The podcaster describes her eyes as "**sad, calling for help**" (Pol. "jej [kobiety z Isdal] wzrok był smutny, wołający o pomoc.")

The secondary protagonists in the podcast "Droga po Kres" are the people closely connected to the victims, as well as bystanders. The author weaves information about their emotions into her narrative as well. One such person is Urszula Olszowska's father: "something **worries** him" – Justyna Mazur-Kudelska relates – "so he tries to call her"; "Ula's father, **desperate**, sets out for the mountains himself and decides to look for clues"; "he is so **determined** that he calls all the mountain shelters"; "when Mr. Adam sees this – a tree that, for no apparent reason, had split in half – his heart **freezes**. He interprets it as a sign. His **anxiety** grows." The student's parents – in the author's account – "are **very worried**."³⁰

This is how the podcaster presents the feelings of the parents of another protagonist, Anna Dybowska: "even though it caused them great pain and suffering, they would go to all the court hearings" (Pol. "mimo że wywoływało to ogromny ból i cierpienie, jeździli na wszystkie rozprawy.")

Whereas the feelings of Lars Mittank's mom are dominated by fear and surprise: "Lars's mom is **anxious**, it [her son's behaviour] seems **weird** to her" (Pol. "mama Larsa się **niepokoi**, wydaje jej się to [zachowanie syna] **dziwne**").

The podcaster also references the emotions experienced by bystanders. Since she often repeats the names of emotions already analysed earlier in

this study, the discussion will be limited to quoting examples that illustrate this part of the narrative: “At that time, witnesses come forward who claim that Elisa behaved strangely in her last days [...]”; “Witnesses who saw her [Elisa Lam] at that time described her as odd and someone who evoked fear in them, so they tried to avoid her”; “Lyle doesn’t like this room. An hour after he had checked into the hotel, he appears at the reception. [...] The receptionist is a bit surprised, because all the rooms look the same, and she doesn’t quite understand what is bothering him”; “[The dispatcher] watches with their heart in their throat as the [Eriksson] sisters try to run across the street, and – worst of all – sees one of them being hit by a car.”³¹

The collected material shows that in describing the emotions of both the main characters (the victims) and the secondary ones (the victims’ relatives and witnesses), Justyna Mazur-Kudelska focuses primarily on negative experiences. The emphasis on the tragic aspects of the stories leaves little room to discuss the victims, their families, or witnesses in the context of positive emotions. It appears that this focus on negative feelings, mainly linked to fear and surprise, results in these emotions being heightened for the audience as well, which in turn may help capture the listeners’ attention and fulfil their desire for intense experiences.

Signals of positive emotions experienced by the protagonists are rare. Examples include statements such as: “Elisa was **very happy** about visiting this city [Los Angeles]”; “There [at the hotel] [Elisa Lam’s parents] learn that Elisa was seen in the hotel that morning, she was **cheerful, laughing**.”³²

5.3. Analysis

The collected and analysed lexical material can be divided into³³:

1) Lexical and phraseological units: adjectives: bezsensowny, bliski, ciekawa, dziwny, markotny, miły, mroczny, najdziwniejszy, niepokojący, nieznany, niezwykle, osowiały, piorunujący, pogodny, przerażający, przestraszony, roześmiany, smutny, spanikowany, stresujący, szokujący, tajemniczy, uśmiechnięty, wstrząsający, zachwycony; zaniepokojony, zdenerwowany, zdeteterminowany, zmartwiony; nouns: ból, cierpienie, drobnostka, koszmar, lęk, niepokój, przykrość, pustka, zdziwienie; verbs: bać się, chować się, cieszyć się, czuć, dziwić, elektryzować, fascynować, niepokoić, przegonić [kogoś], tłumić, uczulić [kogoś na coś], ukryć się, unikać, zamrzeć; przysłowki: dziwnie, nagle, niespodziewanie, serdecznie, tajemniczo.³⁴

2) Names of actions, states, and processes containing the name of a feeling in their semantic structure: [no lexical material in this category].

3) Names of processes and actions that may indicate an emotional state: [to have] *a panic attack, for one's skin to crawl*, [for something] *not to let one fall asleep, to have one's heart in one's throat, to make one's blood run cold, to stomp one's feet, to avert one's gaze, a look pleading for help, to bore into one's memory*, [to be] *thrown off balance, to withdraw into oneself*.

The form most often used by Justyna Mazur-Kudelska to infuse her statements with expressive elements is the use of emotional vocabulary. The author makes less use of metaphorical phrases indicating emotions. In the analysed material, however, there were no lexemes whose semantic structure contains the name of a feeling (Laskowska [2004: 2015] includes forms such as “walk joyfully,” “smile sadly,” or “look jealously” in this category). Nevertheless, the podcaster's statements did feature modal expressions (modifiers) indicating her attitude toward the presented content (e.g., unfortunately – *niestety*), as well as those used to intensify the expressiveness of the message (e.g., most – *najbardziej*).

6. Conclusions

The emotional quality of the message is very important in terms of capturing the audience's attention and creating a virtual community of communication. As Diana Saniewska writes, the bond with listeners is constituted within the framework of an “emotional pact,” the foundation of which is the division of statements into autobiographical, fictional [...] and autofictional, created on the basis of the emotional pact, according to which the blog reader [or podcast listener] assumes as obvious the authenticity of the emotions and judgments conveyed in the text” (Saniewska 2016: 328). The audience thus has the right to take both the information provided by the creator and the emotions expressed or named by them as genuine.

The emotional load of the podcast is also an element of the creator forming their self-image. Building a partnership-based relationship with the listeners plays a key role here. As is well known, the interactions which generate the most expression are those happening in settings with lasting and equal roles, that is, friendly, familial, and home interactions (Sopolińska 2006: 244). This is precisely the kind of familiar, homely atmosphere that the author of the analysed podcast is trying to create. As a result, she presents herself as someone who minimizes distance, is understanding and approachable, and wants to take care of the community that has formed around her program and persona.

The means of conveying emotion in the analysed material are not particularly varied. The following linguistic markers of emotionality appear in the podcast: adjectives indicating the arousal of certain emotions, nouns for emotions, verbs for behaviours that indicate experiencing emotions, metaphorical collocations, and modal expressions.

The author attempts to approach the lives of the people in her narratives with empathy. She says that she is trying to put herself in the place of the person being harmed, missing, or the victim. As she herself admits, her purpose in telling these stories is to evoke emotion and prompt reflection on one's own safety, as well as to increase vigilance. The author states that it is her hope that the stories she has told have made an impression on her listeners. As can be seen, the podcaster herself acknowledges that the expressiveness of her stories serves a persuasive function, aiming to attract listeners and hold their attention by evoking similarly strong feelings in them.

Further research into the expressiveness of true crime materials may yield interesting results in the context of studies on the linguistic framing of emotion. It may also prompt reflection on whether the creators sharing their own emotions, as well as their narration of the presumed experiences of protagonists and their loved ones, serves to make the presented stories more authentic and humane, or if it is instead a marketing strategy designed for self-promotion and capturing the audience's attention.

N O T E S

¹ Elżbieta Tabakowska links the pragmalinguistic aspects of communication research to the interpersonal function of language (Tabakowska 2001: 203). "Pragmatics is a discipline – writes the scholar – that examines how people influence one another by means of language. This implies that pragmatics conceives of language use as one of the components of interpersonal interaction" (Tabakowska 2001: 204).

² Reaction to a comment may take three forms: a response comment, a symbol attached to the listeners comment (signifying that the creator had read the comment and was not left indifferent) or a response in the following episode of the podcast concerning the comment (or comments). Regardless of form, a reaction is a distinction, a sign that the content creator noticed their followers' presence.

³ Value judgements underlying the linguistic signifiers of emotion deserves a separate analysis, so this work will only outline the topic.

⁴ The concept of the language of emotions is understood here as referring to a broad spectrum of phenomena, both linguistic/verbal expression of emotional states (i.e. naming them) and non-verbal; furthermore, it also encompasses metaphorical meaning (cf. Gawda 2018: 9).

⁵ An overview of works from the period 1997–2007, which I am interested in, is provided by Krystyna Wojtczuk (2009: 263–277). Noteworthy monographs and articles on the subject include: Nowakowska-Kempna, Dąbrowska, Anusiewicz (red.) 2000; Buczyńska-Garewicz 2003; Laskowska 2004: 213–221; Wojtczuk, Wierzbicka (red.) 2004; Wojtczuk,

Machnicka (red.) 2006; Wojtczuk, Machnicka (red.) 2009; Parobkiewicz-Jasielska 2013; Udzik 2014: 9–12; Saniewska (red.) 2015; Gorlewska 2015: 409–430; Saniewska (red.) 2016; Kuć (red.) 2017; Tymiakin 2017: 199–216; Gawda 2018: 9–15; Wanot-Miśtura, Wierzbicka-Piotrowska (red.) 2021; “Stylistyka” 2021, t. 30; Łukaszewicz 2022.

⁶ According to Diana Saniewska (2016: 323), this definition is not sufficient, as lexemes and phrases gain and emotional character only in context, in which they also attain positive or negative valuation.

⁷ Reportage (pol. *reportaż*) is understood here as a literary form of a journalistic retelling of real events, enriched with a detailed description of the environment, character descriptions, the reporter’s own impressions, which gives readers’ a sense (if not a literal explication) of the journalist’s attitude to the described reality (Kaliszewski, Wolny-Zmorzyński, Furman 2009: 56).

⁸ In the process of acquiring a new audience and retaining the existing one, it is important how the creator presents themselves, as they reveal themselves to the audience. It seems that self-presentation, which means consistently creating one’s image in such a way that it evokes unambiguous associations with oneself, is crucial in this case (Bronowicz 2013: 9; see Lewandowska 2018: 35–50).

⁹ More on her varied creative activities can be read on her website – Justyna Mazur, <https://justynamazur.pl/> [accessed: 22.06.2025].

¹⁰ The podcast “Pięte: nie zabijaj” was among the top ten most listened to materials on Spotify in 2024. The high rating of the programme is an indication of its great popularity and the affection that the audience had for the author. What attracts listeners to the podcast is, I believe, among other things, the emotional charge of the published content. The expressiveness of Justyna Mazur-Kudelska, represented in her recordings, also evokes emotions in the audience, thus engaging them in the reception of the stories.

¹¹ The word *zagadka* (“mystery” or “puzzle”) used by the author does not explicitly refer to the emotional space of a human being in its definition as a mysterious thing or event that we try to explain or understand, as well as a mysterious person (WSJP Żmigrodzki n.d.), but it does connote such feelings as, on the one hand, joy or satisfaction caused by finding a solution, and on the other hand, disappointment, impatience, anger – if such a solution is lacking.

¹² All highlights in the text – E.G.

¹³ Pol. “Dla Empik Go przygotowałam ośmioodcinkową, specjalną serię pod tytułem Droga po kres, w której opowiem wam o najbardziej fascynujących mnie zagadkach kryminalnych z Polski i ze świata.”

¹⁴ The description of the series contains emotionally charged elements, an example of which is the expression *bardzo tajemniczą* (‘very mysterious’). The adjective ‘mysterious’ is semantically related to the noun ‘mystery,’ as it means ‘enigmatic, difficult to understand’ (SJP n.d.). It thus connotes a sense of curiosity, perhaps uncertainty, as well as a desire to uncover this mystery. Meanwhile, the adverb ‘very,’ meaning ‘to a high degree, strongly, a lot’ (SJP n.d.), serves to intensify the feeling of mystery, heightens the recipient’s emotions, and also raises their expectations for the recorded material (its content and manner of presentation).

¹⁵ Pol. “wszystkie [wydarzenia] miały miejsce w podróży, z dala od domu. Zapraszam Was w tę bardzo tajemniczą drogę, która zaprowadzi nas w różne rejony, pokazując, jak różne mogą być przyczyny zaginięć oraz śmierci”.

¹⁶ Addressing others with the informal second person (*ty*) is a characteristic feature of online communication. “Netiquette [i.e. the set of politeness rules governing online interaction – E.G.] – as noted by Anna Dąbkowska (2024: 14) – usually recommends that

internet users employ forms typical of informal address when communicating with others. Social media users generally address both acquaintances and strangers in this way.”

¹⁷ Pol. “Część rzeczy, które Ula mówiła, nie miała pokrycia z rzeczywistością. Nie były to kłamstwa, nie były to intrygi, tylko były to takie **drobnostki**, które **tak jakby** miały zmylić czyjś trop [...]”

¹⁸ “[...] to jedna z tych spraw, od których **cierpnie skóra**. To historia, której obrazy **wwiercają się w pamięć** i już nie chcą jej opuścić. To domysły, które **nie pozwalają zasnąć** [...]”.

¹⁹ Pol. “Co **najbardziej** jednak **niezwykłe**, to to, że Ania mogła uciec swoim oprawcom, a nigdy tego nie zrobiła. Co jednak **najbardziej piorunujące** dla mnie w tej sprawie, to to, że ta zbrodnia miała świadków [...] Co **najbardziej przerażające** w tej sprawie, było to, że kiedy mężczyźni [sprawcy] byli z Anią na dworcu w Warszawie Zachodniej, kiedy przesiadli się z pociągu do pociągu i przez godzinę siedzieli na dworcu, wyobraźcie sobie, że oni nie przetrzymywali Ani siłą, nie trzymali jej, nie krępowali jej ruchów, ona po prostu siedziała na ławce obok nich [...] Co więcej i co **najgorsze**, Ania nie zginęła natychmiast, żyła jeszcze kilka, kilkanaście minut po wyrzuceniu z pociągu. Jej **koszmar** zatem wciąż trwał i trwał, i trwał.”

²⁰ Pol. “Co **najgorsze**, pan Jerzy [ojciec Ani] był obecny przy sekcji zwłok swojej córki.”

²¹ Pol. “Dotąd **nieznana, tajemnicza, mroczna, smutna** i jednocześnie przecież **niezwykła** historia **fascynuje** już nie tylko mieszkańców USA, bo dociera do Europy, Australii, Azji, ogólnie obiega cały świat.”

²² Pol. “**Czuję ogromną pustkę** po tej sprawie. [...] Do tego wszystkiego **czuję olbrzymią przykrość**, że historia Lyle’a nie może dla nikogo z nas być jakąś lekcją, nauką, czymś, co mogłoby nas w jakiś sposób **uczulić** na drugiego człowieka.”

²³ Pol. “**Niestety**, w płucach kobiety znaleziono sadzę, co świadczy o tym, że żyła, podczas gdy płonęła.” [...] **Niestety**, [...] nie udało się do dzisiaj ustalić tożsamości tej kobiety. [...] Jestem **bardzo ciekawa** waszej opinii.”

²⁴ Pol. “**Bardzo serdecznie** was zachęcam do obejrzenia tego materiału [nagrania zachowania siostr Eriksson zrealizowanego przez dziennikarzy z BBC *Madness on the highway*]. [...] On jest taki **dość stresujący**, bo jednak oglądamy coś, co się wydarzyło naprawdę, to nie są inscenizacje, tylko prawdziwe sytuacje.”

²⁵ Pol. “nikt nie wie, co Ula **czuje**, co myśli, nie zna jej życia prywatnego [...] jej znajomi określali ją jako osobę, która wręcz **tłumiła w sobie uczucia** i bardzo długo zajmowało jej, żeby powiedzieć, co **czuje**, co myśli.”

²⁶ Pol. “kobieta jest **zachwycona** młodą kobietą [Ulą], która nie dość, że jest **miła, uśmiechnięta i bardzo pogodna**, to przede wszystkim posiada niesamowicie głęboką wiedzę na temat kultury ludowej.”

²⁷ Pol. “Elisa zachowuje się **dziwnie**; wygląda na **zdezorientowaną** albo osobę, która doznaje **ataku paniki**”; “**sprawia wrażenie**, jakby się czegoś **bała**.”

²⁸ Pol. “te informacje są dla Larsa **stresujące i niepokojące** [...] Lars jest **spanikowany**, zachowuje się **dziwnie** [...] kiedy Lars widzi tego mężczyznę, **wpada w panikę** i wybiega z gabinetu [...]. Biegł tak, jakby **bał się o swoje życie**.”

²⁹ Pol. “Tam [Elisa] bacznie obserwuje korytarz, ale wygląda tak, jakby się **przed kimś chowała**, tak jakby [...] **chciała się ukryć** przed kimś, kto może gdzieś przechodzić czy gdzieś sam się chować; z drugiej strony wygląda tak, jakby się kogoś **bała** [...] **Nagle, niespodziewanie** [Elisa] wyskakuje na korytarz i zaczyna **tupać nogami** w miejscu, tak jakby **chciała kogoś przegonić** [...] [w]ygląda niezwykle **tajemniczo**”.

³⁰ Pol. “coś go **niepokoi**, dlatego próbuje się do niej dodzwonić [...] ojciec Uli, **zdesperowany**, sam rusza w góry i postanawia szukać jakichś śladów [...] jest tak **zdeteminowany**, że obdzwania schroniska górskie [...] kiedy pan Adam to widzi – mowa o drzewie, które bez wyraźnego powodu pękło na pół – jego serce **zamiera**. Odczytuje to jako znak. **Niepokój** w jego sercu wzrasta [...] [Rodzice studentki] są **bardzo zmartwieni**.”

³¹ Pol. “Zgłaszają się wtedy świadkowie, którzy twierdzą, że Elisa w ostatnich dniach **dziwnie** się zachowywała [...]”; “Świadkowie, którzy widzieli ją [Elisę Lam] w tamtym czasie, określali ją jako dziwną i osobę, która wzbudza w nich **lęk**, dlatego starali się jej **unikać**”; “Lyle’owi się ten pokój nie podoba. Godzinę później (odkąd zameldował się w hotelu) pojawia się w recepcji. [...] Recepcjonistka jest trochę **zaskoczona**, ponieważ wszystkie pokoje wyglądają tak samo, nie rozumie do końca, co mu nie odpowiada”; “[Dyspozytor] **z sercem w gardle** widzi, że siostry [Eriksson] próbują przebiec przez ulicę, a **co najgorsze** widzi, jak jedna z nich zostaje potrącona przez samochód.”

³² Pol. “Elisa **bardzo cieszyła się** na odwiedzenie tego miasta [Los Angeles]”; “Tam [w hotelu] [rodzice Elisy Lam] dowiadują się, że Elisa jeszcze rano była widziana w hotelu, była **pogodna, roześmiana**.”

³³ The proposed division corresponds to the classification of methods for naming emotions put forward by Elżbieta Laskowska (2004: 213–221).

³⁴ adjectives: senseless, close, curious, strange, gloomy, nice, dark, the strangest, disturbing, unknown, unusual, melancholic, electrifying, cheerful, terrifying, scared, smiling, shocking, mysterious, delighted; anxious, nervous, determined, worried; nouns: pain, suffering, trifle, nightmare, fear, anxiety, regret, emptiness, surprise; verbs: to be afraid, to hide, to be happy, to feel, to be surprised, to electrify, to fascinate, to worry, to chase away [someone], to suppress, to make [someone] alert to something, to hide oneself, to avoid, to freeze; adverbs: oddly, suddenly, unexpectedly, warmly, mysteriously.

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