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**NARRATIVE ELEMENTS IN DENTAL MEDICINE
CASE REPORTS**

**ЕЛЕМЕНТИ НАРАТИВУ В СТАТТЯХ – ОПИСАХ КЛІНІЧНИХ
ВИПАДКІВ У СТОМАТОЛОГІЇ**

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The clinical case report and case report series are integral components of medical literature that incorporate elements of literary and scientific discourse to describe and assign meaning to unusual or rare clinical phenomena [6; 12]. The major advantage of case reporting is probably its ability to detect novelties. It is the only way to present unusual, uncontrolled observations regarding symptoms, clinical findings, course of illness, complications of interventions, associations of diseases, side effects of drugs, etc. The growing importance of clinical case reports contributing to the evidence-base medicine had led to so-called a “renaissance of the case report literature” [10, p. 172].

Dentistry case reports belong to the genre of medical professional writing that concentrates on detailed individual presentation of oral health conditions ranging from a unique restoration of a single tooth to complex dento-facial surgical procedures. There exists a very extensive literature on the language, style, and genre characteristics of clinical case reports, as evidenced by research conducted by Nissen and Wynn (2014), Hung et al. (2010), Spafford et al. (2006), and Lysanets et al. (2017). However, there have been limited endeavors to outline a set of discourse and style peculiarities that distinguish them from other types of academic writing [5; 7].

Narrative is generally considered as a discursive format [10; 11]; it has traditionally been a popular format for transmission of knowledge, and for using the stories for insight and transformation [11; 12]. Nevertheless, the extensive analysis of relevant literature has revealed a scantiness of research about the narrative strategies and techniques in the dentistry discourse. As evidence emerges, it becomes apparent that presenting facts alone lacks the persuasive power that was once assumed. Therefore, doctors and researchers have sought alternative and more effective approaches to communicate

complex scientific information that do not solely depend on science literacy. The objective of this paper is to investigate the use of the narrative elements in the dental medicine case reports (DMCRs) in order to make scientific communication more effective.

This paper is explanatory and qualitative in its methodological and aims to uncover natural phenomena observed within texts and a particular context. The research material consisted of a corpus of 50 DMCRs obtained from dentistry journals for 2017 – 2023 with high (about 8 scores) and good (about 3–4 scores) impact factor rating.

Narrative is defined as "one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which actually occurred" [9, p.360]. Using narrative, people retell their experiences to inform others. DMCRs typically follow a standard format based on a narrative structure that includes a clear introduction, detailed case presentation, and discussion including conclusion. This structure is underpinned by communicative purposes that chains communicative events that make up a genre. The most predominant communicative purpose in the corpus studied is to report on the procedural aspects (treatment/methods) of the cases being describe that is consistent with previous findings in the literature [5, p. 145]. The narrative structure of dentistry case reports is designed to present the patient's dental problem, the diagnosis, and the treatment opted to solve the problem in a clear and engaging way. The format of DMCR takes the form of introducing known information, stating a specific issue or problem, and subsequently providing a solution to that particular problem that is known as A (*And*) B (*But*) T (*Therefore*) Narrative Template, a new tool for organizing the narrative structure of any amount of content. D. Hatcher and L.-M. Hatcher argue that with a clear story structure, an audience will all arrive at a similar version of events [3; p. 72].

Academic and scientific writings are often regarded as objective and impersonal kind of writing, but recent literature states that given the competitive nature of research articles, authors must effectively showcase their authorial identity using various linguistic means [2; 7], including self-mentioned markers, which are represented by the personal pronouns. In the DMCRs, we have found out the first person pronoun *we* and personal pronoun *our* as the most frequently used because the majority of research papers in dental medicine are co-authored that may be attributable to the multi-disciplinary approaches and collaborative behavior in the field. The pronoun *I* in this study is sporadic, and *my* or *me* pronouns have not been detected at all:

Herein, we report the new rare case of CGCOT in the anterior area of maxilla in a 39-year-old female. Subsequently, we provide a literature review of all published cases (51 cases) of CGCOT [4].

As a result of that variant of osteotomy we will receive few advantages:<...>[1].

The scholarly literature emphasizes that utilizing self-mention markers contributes to creating more engaging and personalized narrative.

Narratives follow a particular structure that describes the cause-and-effect relationships between events that take place over a particular time period that impact particular characters, and a writer may use markers that signal the progression of the plot, such as *meanwhile*, *in the end*, or *eventually*. Logical connectors, or discursive connectors, have been known as important linguistic tools to provide cohesion and coherence of scientific text, thus, facilitate comprehension, especially when used appropriately. Logical connectors intimately joining ideas that have a particular relationship, for instance, reason and purpose (*therefore*, *for*, *since*, *in order to*), result, cause and effect (*thus*, *then*, *therefore*, *it follows that*, *consequently*), condition (*in case (that)*, *provided that*, *supposing (that)*, *whether*), or frame markers mainly referred to sequences, text stages, or topic shifts (*first*, *then*, *next*, *to start with*) to keep the flow smooth of ideas in the DMCRs and to make them intelligible and persuasive to the target audience:

Thus, SMA requires radical surgical intervention. Recurrence is seen even after 5-10 years of surgery. **Therefore** thorough examination of surgical sites is needed for at least 10 years [8].

DMCRs possess lexico-grammatical peculiarities, which are specific to this genre and which shape a certain aspect of the dentistry case report as a narrative. These peculiarities encompass the employment past tenses (Past Simple and Past Perfect) that add some of the story-telling nature to this genre, and active sentences associated with the narrative style of the text.

Thus, genre serving as a macrostructure to group text together constantly evolves and genre conventions can be modified or subverted to create new and innovative narratives. In terms of DMCRs, the narrative elements are exploited not only to draw attention of a discursive community to an unexpected or unusual event in dental practice, but to share a lesson that the authors have derived from personal experience.

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