Are Specific Emotions Narrated Differently?

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Abstract
Two studies test the assertion that anger, sadness, fear, pride, and happiness are typically narrated in different ways. Everyday events eliciting these five emotions were narrated by young women (study 1) and 5- and 8-year-old girls (study 2). Negative narratives were expected to engender more effort to process the event, be longer, more grammatically complex, more often have a complication section, and use more specific emotion labels than global evaluations. Narratives of Hogan's (2003) juncture emotions anger and fear were expected to focus more on action and to contain more core narrative sections of orientation, complication, and resolution than narratives of the outcome emotions sadness and happiness. Hypotheses were confirmed for adults except for syntactic complexity, while children showed only some of these differences. Hogan's theory that juncture emotions are restricted to the complication section was not confirmed. Finally, in adults, indirect speech was more frequent in anger narratives and internal monologue in fear narratives. It is concluded that different emotions should be studied in how they are narrated, and that narratives should be analyzed according to qualitatively different emotions.

Are Specific Emotions Narrated Differently?

Emotional experiences in our lives create the urge to share them with others. We share them in the specific format called narrative which allows to recreate a series of events and to organize them causally. Narrating events may also help to cope with them. This paper sets out to extend the description of specific emotions to a description of how they are narrated differently in terms of the linguistic means used to express evaluations and in terms of overall narrative structure. The two general hypotheses to be tested are that negative events are evaluated more extensively than positive events, and that narratives focusing on the two emotions which define the valence of endings of stories, namely happy and sad narratives, are more static and more often end at the complication, while narratives of emotions which only mark complications, here anger and fear, involve more action. As this is a relatively unexplored field, we chose a young adult sample to establish emotion-specificity of narrative form and a sample of preschool and grade school children to explore the developmental dimension of emotion narratives.

Communication, Language, and Narrative in the Emotion Process

Although major emotion theorists have stressed narrative to be an essential part of the emotion process (e.g., Ekman, 2003; Lazarus & Lazarus, 1994; Oatley, 1992), most recently and eloquently Bernard Rimé (2009), to date narrative plays only a minor role in emotion research. Emotion is currently (Frijda, 1986) conceived of as a state of action readiness comprised of subjective feeling quality, somatic arousal, both peripheral and central, and mimic and postural expression.

These aspects of emotion are intentional in the sense of relating to the cognition of the present situation as not normal and as seriously affecting one's major concerns (primary appraisal) and therefore requiring immediate attention. Appraisal processes evoke emotion and create an action readiness which takes precedence over other concerns.

Most relevant situations are social in nature, and emotions are elicited by and directed towards others (Scherer, Walbott, & Summerfield, 1986) and have a communicative function (Darwin, 1872). Nonverbal expressions such as mimicking, posture, and movement communicate emotion (Ekman, 2003; Planalp, 1999), as does speech. In language emotion is communicated via an expressive lexicon, interjections, explicit naming of emotions, and the use of metaphors. Emotion may also be evoked verbally by speech acts such as threats and provocations, and by narratives (Fiehler, 1990).

Bruner (1986) suggested a duality of modes of thinking, the paradigmatic (argumentative) and the narrative mode. In the narrow sense, narrative is a highly specific kind of text. It imitates a past sequence of events by the order in which the events are recounted, typically in narrative clauses which might begin with 'and then …, and then …'. Their order may not be changed without changing their meaning. Narratives also evaluate what has happened in the past (Labov & Waletzky, 1967). Of the two major conceptions of the typical structure of narratives, the one by Labov is based on a collection of oral narratives of life-threatening events, while story grammars are used in studies presenting stories to participants. They concur in defining an orientation which provides background information, a complication which constitutes a breach of canonical expectations, and a resolution. Labov's approach adds an opening section, an abstract, in which the narrator announces that he or she wants to tell a story and anticipates the central aspect of the story, and a final section, the coda, leading back to the present. Labov stresses the construction of suspense up to a high point just before the resolution, which is often marked by a suspension of action through the insertion of a separate evaluative section, for example in the form of internal monologue (Labov and Waletzky, 1967). Story grammars stress the goal-directed nature of narratives, inserting a section of attempts to solve the complication between the complication and the resolution. The Labovian approach is more popular in studies of collected narratives, while the story grammar approach is used in experimental studies of story comprehension and has been introduced into emotion psychology by Oatley (1992). We believe a mixture of both models to be most useful for analyzing collected narratives, because Labov's stress on a high point may be specific to suspense stories, while goal-directedness is missing in stories of events that passively happen to someone. With Frijda (1986) we prefer the term concerns to that of goals to cover what is involved in both emotion-eliciting events and narrative complications.

Narrative and Emotion

Narrative is an essential part of the human emotion process because of three broadly defined functional relations between emotion and narrative. Although the prototypical eliciting situation for emotions is one which affects the individual's central concerns, we often react emotionally to events which happen not to ourselves, but to others. Thus a first functional relation between narrative and emotion is that narratives are a prime elicitor of emotions, because listening to or reading and telling a story as well as imagining a past or fantasized story (Ekman, 2003) involve the narrative form. Narrative is the most important means to transport an individual into the situation of someone else (Green & Brock, 2000). Fictional (Mar & Oatley, 2008) and everyday oral autobiographical narratives serve to share experiences, establish and maintain relationships (Bluck, Alea, Habermas, & Rubin, 2005), learn and teach (Pratt, Norris, Arnold, & Filyer, 1999), and also to entertain (McLean & Thorne, 2006).

A second functional relation between emotion and narrative is provided by the need for narratives to concern reportable events (Labov, 1997) which listeners find interesting enough to listen to. Reportability depends on the degree to which canonical expectations are breached by the main event (Ochs & Capps, 2001). Thus narratives have to refer to special, out-of-the-ordinary events (Bruner, 1990) which are therefore likely to arouse emotions. This points to the parallel temporal structure of the emotion process and of narrative (Ekman, 2003; Lazarus & Lazarus, 1994; Oatley, 1992; Voss, 2004), with the complication eliciting an emotion or narrative evaluation, inducing attempts to repair the situation, which if successful lead to the cessation of emotion and a happy ending of the narrative. Narrative starts earlier and ends later, but has at its core the emotion process, because abstract and coda relate the here-and-now of the narrator and listener to the then-and-there of the story-world.

If an emotion-eliciting situation cannot be altered satisfactorily in real life, the emotion will persist. Narratives, however, have to summarize events (Ricoeur, 1985), and the listener or reader expects them to have an end. Therefore Hogan (2003) proposed that narratives typically do not end with the emotion elicited by the complicating event, but either with happiness or sorrow. Hogan argues that these are long-lasting emotions which remain, whereas other emotions, such as fear and anger, are of shorter duration. Hogan defines two groups of emotions in terms of their function in narratives. Happiness and sorrow are the only two outcome emotions, and the resolution sections of narratives are reserved for these. Juncture emotions are all the other emotions which mark the evaluation of an agent's position in the course of a trajectory. Therefore, juncture emotions typically appear in the section of narratives containing the complication and attempts to solve it, but not in the resolution section.

A third functional relation between emotion and narrative is the need to share emotional events with others by narrating them. Bernard Rimé (2009) has developed a theory of the central role of sharing in the emotion process and has shown in a large number of studies that experiencing, or even simply being told about, an emotional event most often leads to narrating it to others (Rimé, Mesquita, Philippot, & Boca, 1991). Narrating emotional events serves a cathartic effect of

getting rid of negative emotions (Scheff, 1979), a cognitive effect of understanding the event by organizing it in a causal-motivational sequence (Pennebaker, Mayne, & Francis, 1997; Stiles, Honos-Webb, & Lani, 1999), and a social effect of establishing a shared reality with others and of strengthening social bonds (Rimé, 2009).

Are Events that Elicit Different Emotions also Narrated Differently?

Given the importance of narrative to the emotion process, we propose to extend the descriptive approach to qualitative differences between major emotions in terms of appraisal (Scherer, Walbott, & Summerfield, 1986), feelings, arousal patterns, mimic expression (Ekman, 2003), and action tendencies (Frijda, 1986) to narratives. We will compare structural aspects of negative versus positive emotions, juncture versus outcome emotions, and single emotions. We basically use a bottom-up approach, looking for average forms for each emotion, and will consider normative aspects of emotion-specific narrative form only later.

Negative versus positive emotions. Negative experiences usually engender an increased effort to understand and deal with them. This is apparent not only in the more differentiated vocabulary (Schrauf & Sanchez, 2004) and responses, but also in the more intense information processing and interpretational activities for negative than for positive events (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001). Stories of negative events are more interesting and are narrated more frequently to others (Finkenauer & Rimé, 1998).

The most pervasive difference is that negative narratives are longer. Narratives of traumatic events are longer than narratives of positive or neutral events in adults (Beaudreau, 2007; Gray & Lombardo, 2001; Peace, Porter, & ten Brinke, 2008; Pennebaker, Kiecolt-Glaser, & Glaser, 1988). Also narratives of non-traumatic negative events are longer than those of positive or neutral events in adults (Bohanek, Fivush, & Walker, 2005; Collier, Kuiken, & Enzle, 1982; Gray & Lombardo, 2001; Peace et al., 2008), and also 10-year-olds (Fivush, Sales, & Bohanek, 2008). In a study of 3-, 5- and 8-year-olds, there was no difference in length between narratives of angering, surprising, and happy events, although there was a trend for these differences to emerge with age (Peterson & Biggs, 2001).

Negative narratives are also more syntactically complex, although this may not be true for extremely negative, traumatic narratives. Thus negative narratives are more complex in terms of the integration of diverse social perspectives (Suedfeld & Pennebaker, 1997) and in terms of the Flesch measure of reading ease, which combines the mean number of words in sentences with the mean number of syllables in words (Amir, Stafford, Freshman, & Foa, 1998; Bohanek et al., 2005), although these differences disappeared once language abilities were controlled for (Gray & Lombardo, 2001). Negative narratives also contain more passive constructions (Bohanek et al., 2005; Collier et al., 1982) more embedded sentences, adverbial modifications, and negations (Collier et al., 1982). Complexity of negative and positive narratives has not been studied in children.

A third quality of negative narratives is that they tend to contain more evaluations. While very intense negative emotion can invoke a reduction of internal state language (Fivush et al., 2008; Habermas, 2006), moderately negative narratives contain more internal state language than positive narratives both in adults and children (Baker-Ward, Eaton, & Banks, 2005; Fivush, Hazzard, Sales, Sarfati, & Brown, 2003). This showed for children's narratives of angering compared to surprising or happy (Peterson & Biggs, 2001), sad versus happy (Gobbo & Raccanello, 2007), negative versus positive (Fivush et al., 2003), scary versus frustrating, and frustrating versus happy events (Fivush et al., 2008). A caveat is that some studies used absolute instead of relative frequencies so that differences might also have been due to varying lengths of narratives. Overall, the use of evaluative devices tends to increase in childhood, such as emotion names, verbs of cognitive processing, and reported speech (Bamberg & Damrad-Frye, 1991; Bamberg & Reilly, 1996; Ely & McCabe, 1993; Peterson & Biggs, 2001).

To sum up, an increased effort to understand and evaluate negative events in narratives is evidenced by an increased overall length, possibly more complex syntax, and an increased use of evaluations. While negative narratives only begin to be longer in late childhood, the higher presence of evaluations seems to have already emerged by middle childhood. However, this picture is based on very few and rather diverse studies.

In an earlier study, we have differentiated between the naming of specific emotions and global evaluations such as "it was just terrible" or "I thought it was just great" (Habermas, Ott, Schubert, Schneider, & Pate, 2008). Based on the findings that negative events evoke more effort at understanding and evaluating them, we hypothesize that negative narratives involve more specific emotion labels and less global evaluations than positive narratives.

Outcome versus juncture emotions. Although Hogan's (2003) categorization of emotions according to their presumed functions and positions in narrative structure, i.e. into juncture and outcome emotions, has not yet been tested, relevant inferences can be drawn from three sources. Hogan argues that happiness and sadness are more enduring emotional states compared to most other emotions, with fear being the emotion of the shortest average duration. This contention is supported by research summarized by Frijda (2007; Frijda, Mesquita, Sonnemans, & van Goozens, 1991; Scherer, Walbott, & Summerfield, 1986). In a pioneering study, Judith Hudson and colleagues (Hudson, Gebelt, Haviland, & Bentivegna, 1991) asked 4-year-olds for narratives of sad, angry, and frightening events. Hudson did not find differences in terms of frequency of evaluative devices or reported speech. She did, however, find differences in terms of overall narrative structure. Happy events were most frequently narrated in the form of static 'moment-in-time' narratives (e.g., simply lying happily in the sun) or in chronologies, i.e. briefly described sequences of events, while angering events and even more so scary events were more often narrated with a complete narrative structure. These results fit in nicely with Hogan's

observation, in that narrations of happy events seem to focus on more static end-states, while narratives of angering and especially frightening events are driven by a complication and attempts to solve it. Hudson's observation of moment-in-time happy narratives suggests that positive narratives more frequently lack a complication. If Hogan was right, then sad narratives should more frequently focus on end-states. However, as sadness presupposes a negative event, sad narratives might also end with the complication section if no attempts to solve the complication are undertaken.

Finally in a study of asthmatic children's and their mothers' narratives of frightening, frustrating, and positive events, Fivush used three ratings of coherence, which roughly correspond to the structural elements orientation, complication with attempts to solve it, and resolution. In the adults, fear narratives focused more on the orientation, while both fear and anger narratives had higher ratings of coherence based on complications and resolutions than did narratives of happy events. In children, there was a trend for a similar pattern, but weaker, with fear having more full narrative structure than anger narratives, and these more so than happy narratives (Fivush et al., 2008).

The preliminary evidence suggests that narratives of juncture emotions involve more action aimed at remedying the complication and a resolution which ends the emotion, while narratives of outcome emotions may be more static. These differences should show in less complete narrative structures for the narratives of outcome emotions. Furthermore, they should contain less narrative clauses and more static descriptive clauses.

Specific emotions. Little is known about formal aspects of narratives of specific emotions. Labov had developed his model of narrative structure with a sample of near-death narratives. Thus the dramatic quality of narratives in which suspense is increasingly created peaking at a high-point may be typical only for fear stories. Labov pointed out that one means to increase suspense was to insert an evaluation, often in the form of a thought worded in direct speech, right before the climax and resolution of the danger (Labov & Waletzky, 1967). Using the identical narratives, Schiffrin (1981) found that another means to dramatize a narrative, historical present, was to be found almost exclusively in the complication section. In another study of frightening narratives the use of dramatizing devices such as direct speech and historical present were again noted (Ulatowska, Olness, Samson, Keebler, & Goins, 2004). Possibly, these elements may substitute to some degree emotion words which were less frequent in fear than in anger and sad stories narrated by preschoolers (Fivush, Berlin, Sales, Minnuti-Washburn, & Cassidy, 2003).

Anger is usually elicited by a harmful offence by a responsible other who thereby violates obligations and rights (Ortony, Clore, & Collins, 1988; Russell, 1991). Anger narratives may aim at eliciting indignation in the listener. A central aspect therefore of anger narratives is the point of whether indeed the offence was morally wrong and the narrator entitled to react with anger and retribution. Thus as Hudson and colleagues (1991) pointed out, anger narratives lack the increase in suspense up to a climax, but contain longer segments which serve to evaluate events and narrate attempts at solving the complication (cf. Fivush et al., 2003). Anger stories may contain extended reporting of verbal exchange in order to justify the speaker's point of view.

Sad stories recount a loss, possibly the ensuing attempts to recover the loss, or simply the state of despair. In a study of loss narratives of widowers, the more grief-stricken narrators produced narratives with not only more negative thoughts, but also with more grammatical forms of diminished agency (Capps & Bonanno, 2000). Thus sad stories may contain less actions and more naming of emotions.

Hypotheses

We studied two hypotheses regarding the contrast between negative and positive emotions, and two hypotheses regarding differences between juncture and outcome emotions. The first hypothesis expects negative narratives to be longer and more syntactically complex as well as to more often contain a complication, while the second hypothesis expects them to contain more statements about specific emotions relative to global evaluations. The third hypothesis expects narratives of juncture emotions to have more narrative clauses relative to static descriptive clauses, while the fourth hypothesis expects them to more frequently contain the complete narrative structure. Finally we will explore specific characteristics of narratives of single specific emotions, especially the uses of reported speech. Although reported speech is a means for evaluating events, it is also often an action and part of the sequence of events. As we expected more specific evaluations in negative narratives, but more action-based clauses in the narratives of juncture emotions, we did not specify a hypothesis for reported speech.

We studied only female narrators, to create a more homogeneous sample. We used a young adult sample to test hypotheses for adults, and then continued to explore whether these differences have already emerged in childhood in a second sample of preschool and grade school girls. As the two studies complement each other, they will be discussed together.

Study 1

Method

Participants

About 100 female students between ages 20 and 35 were asked to participate in two 1.5- to 2-hour sessions. Of these, 34 agreed to participate, receiving ten Euro as compensation. Data from four participants were excluded from analysis because they did not provide all the requested narratives. The mean age of the remaining 30 participants was 25.7 years (SD = 4.1). Eleven had a major in psychology, eight in law, four each in economics and education, and three in the social sciences. All participants were fluent in German.

Procedure

Participants were approached on campus and interviewed in a quiet lab room twice by two different interviewers, with three months between interviews. Interviewers were roughly equally distributed across measurement times. At time 1, participants were informed that the study dealt with how people remember emotional events: "I am interested in how people remember events which arouse specific emotions. I will ask you for memories of a sad, an angering, a frightening, and a happy event and an event which made you feel proud". Participants were then asked to think back about a week and to think of one specific event each for the five emotions, and to take brief notes. Next they were asked to think back three months and to again think of one specific event for each emotion, and to note them briefly on a second piece of paper. Then participants narrated each of the ten events, in the sequence anger, sadness, pride, fear, and happiness, alternating the temporal distance, beginning with an angering event from a week ago and ending with a happy event from three months ago. Narratives were not interrupted by the interviewer and were tape-recorded. Interviews always ended with the happy event to conclude the session on a positive note. If the participant did not narrate a specific event or if she narrated for less than 30 seconds, she was asked to narrate the specific event or to narrate more extensively. Finally, participants answered a brief questionnaire for each memory. Data from a second interview three months later will not be analyzed here, leaving 300 narratives elicited at time 1.

Material

Emotion narratives. Narratives were transcribed literally and divided into propositions by a research assistant who, using the same manual, had achieved an interrater agreement based on 20 life narratives of 98.5% in an earlier study (Habermas & de Silveira, 2008). The coding manual for narrative structure and for clause type was developed by the first two authors and Nadine Berger, while the other codes were based on a manual developed earlier (Habermas & de Silveira, 2008). For each proposition the presence or absence of a specific code was judged. Interrater agreement was based on codes per proposition for 120 narratives. Once a good agreement was reached, one coder continued to code the remaining narratives. As a second check, another 20 narratives not known to the main coder were also coded by the second coder, and a second interrater agreement was calculated to control whether the coder remained true to the code. In a second step, relative frequencies of codes were calculated by dividing their absolute number by the number of propositions for each narrative.

In order to remain open to variations in narrative structure, we devised a coding system which is based on the commonalities between Labov's and the story grammar approach. Each proposition was assigned one of five codes: abstract announcing the central content of the narrative, orientation providing background information, complication representing the breach of normality and attempts to restore it, resolution with the successful or unsuccessful result of these attempts, and a coda leading back to the present (Labov & Waletzky, 1967). We deviated from Labov's scheme by not coding evaluations as autonomous narrative sections, because they may appear in any part of narrative structure and are logically a different category. To simplify coding and to follow the theoretical model, all propositions had to be coded, codes had to follow this order, and each code could only be assigned in an uninterrupted sequence. Thus, after a first complication, for example, all following propositions were coded as complication until the first proposition was coded as a resolution. Not all codes needed to be used for each narrative. If the participant did not narrate but only offered a general description with no specific complicating event, all propositions received the code "no narrative". Initial Cohen's kappa based on 120 narratives was K = .85, the second Kappa based on 20 narratives was K = .93.

Clause type also had to be coded for each proposition. Here we included reported indirect and direct speech, internal monologue, narrative clauses which report specific events in a temporal sequence, remarks regarding the narration or directed towards the interviewer, chronicles (Linde, 1993) which describe events in a summary fashion, descriptions which regard some atemporal state of affairs, and uncodable other clauses. Clause type achieved an interrater reliability of K = .85, and a follow-up K = .90.

The following codes were only assigned to some, not all, propositions. We coded all global positive and negative evaluations such as 'that was great!' or 'it was just terrible!'. Specific evaluations were all emotions insofar as they were explicitly named or clearly identifiable in an expressive movement or action. We coded anger, fear, sadness, pride, and happiness, as well as other positive and other negative emotions. Interrater reliability reached K = .90 and K = .88.

Length of narratives was measured in terms of number of propositions. The mean number of words per proposition was used as an indicator of complexity. Content of narratives was coded for descriptive purposes using categories created for this purpose.

Event importance and emotion intensity ratings. The ratings of event importance and intensity of the main emotion were rated on 5-point-scales by the participants.

Results

Hypotheses regarded differences in narrative form for different emotions. We therefore used analyses of variances (ANOVAs) for repeated measurement with two within-subject factors, emotion and temporal distance of event. Outliers deviating more than two standard deviations from the mean were corrected. Minor deviations from a normal distribution were tolerated, as groups were of equal size. If, however, a code was used in less than 50% of all narratives, the variable was dichotomized. The dichotomized variable was tested with ANOVAs if neither of the two values was less frequent than 20% in any emotion category (Lunney, 1970).

To keep the family-wise error rate at $p < .05$, we used Bonferroni-correction for multiple tests of one hypothesis. We specified two planned contrasts, one between negative (anger, sadness, fear) and positive emotions (pride, happiness), the other between juncture (anger, fear) and outcome emotions (sadness, happiness). We did not include pride in the latter contrast, because its status as juncture or outcome emotion is unclear, and to make the two contrasts as different as possible. Significant contrasts will only be interpreted, if they are stronger than the other contrast and if means differ in a very clear fashion, with all means of one group of narratives being higher than all means of the other group of narratives.

Content of narratives. The narrated events were mostly from the private sphere (57%), especially happy and sad events, some from work or study situations (28%), especially events to be proud of, and only 15% from other everyday contexts, especially fearful events. Angering events were mostly experiences of disrespect (25%), being verbally attacked (23%), achievement failures (13%), conflicts with institutions (10%), being disappointed or cheated (7%), and mishaps and others' lifestyle (5% each). Sad events were separations or being alone (20%), disappointments or being cheated (13%), illness and death (12% each), interpersonal conflicts and achievement failures (8% each). Scary events were dangerous traffic situations or accidents (23%), upcoming achievement situations (18%), illness (15%), being alone at night (12%) and existential worries (8%). Events to be proud of were achievements (75%) and other successes (13%). Happy events were being with others or getting closer to them (38%), reunions (27%), and getting an object (15%). Empathetic emotions regarding the concerns of someone else than the narrator were frequent for sad (25%) and scary events (12%, overall 10%).

Event importance and intensity. Both ratings differed between emotions (see Table 1). Also the interaction between emotion and temporal distance was significant both for importance, $F(4,116) = 5.47$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .16$, and for intensity, $F(4,116) = 2.99$, $p = .02$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$. Planned contrasts between outcome and juncture emotions were significant for importance, $F(1,29) = 5.56$, $p = .024$, but not for emotion intensity $F(1,29) = .10$, $p = .75$. Events evoking juncture emotions were more important and intense if older, while happy events were more important and intense if more recent. Temporal distance of the narrated events did not make a significant difference in any of the following tests.

Negative vs. positive emotions. In hypothesis 1 we expected for negative emotions longer (number of propositions) and more complex (number of words per proposition) narratives and more narratives with a complication section. The first part of the hypothesis was confirmed. The planned contrast between negative and positive narratives was significant, $F(1,29) = 40.48$, $p = .000$ (for the effect size, see Table 1, penultimate column). Angering, sad, and frightening events were talked about longer than events eliciting pride or happiness. The second and third parts of the first hypothesis, however, were not confirmed. Negative events were not narrated with more, but less complexity (shorter propositions), $F(1,29) = 9.21$, $p = .005$. Because only 32 of 300 narratives did not contain complications (see Table 2), we tested the percentage of positive versus negative narratives containing a complication non-parametrically with a Wilcoxon-rank-test for dependent samples. There were no significant differences, $z = .094$, $p = .925$. Surprisingly, fear narratives had the highest percentage of narratives without complications, with happy narratives ranking only second. Narratives of events from three months ago more frequently lacked a complication (n = 24) than those of events from last week (n = 8). Narratives lacking a complication regarded either extended or repeated events or referred to an event only in a summary fashion. Examples of events which were narrated without a complication are an ongoing unjust situation at work, the quality of holidays, fear of a room-mate falling in love with the narrator, and enjoying talking to a friend.

In hypothesis 2 we expected narratives of negative events to contain a higher percentage of specific emotion labels relative to the sum of emotion labels and global evaluations. Indeed all three negative emotions had a higher proportion of emotion labels relative to global evaluations (planned contrast $F(1,29) = 18.12$, $p = .000$; see Table 1). The difference was due to the less frequent use of global evaluations in the negative than in positive narratives.

Juncture vs. outcome emotions. Hypothesis 3 expected narratives of juncture emotions to have a more complete narrative structure. Because there were so few abstracts and even fewer coda, and because this may have been a result of the way we elicited the narratives, we tested for the presence of a core narrative structure in terms of the simultaneous presence of an orientation, complication, and resolution section. Averaging the number of complete stories each for the juncture and the outcome emotion categories, indeed 23 of the narrators told more complete, and only three told less complete stories for the juncture emotions, a significant difference in the sign test, $Z = -3.73$, $p = .000$. Narratives for outcome emotions most often lacked the resolutions section (see Table 2).

Accordingly, in hypothesis 4 we expected narratives of juncture emotions to be more event- and action-related, and narratives of outcome emotions to be more static. We compared the frequency of narrative clauses relative to the sum of narrative and descriptive clauses. A highly significant difference emerged in the expected direction, $F(1,29) = 12.32$, $p = .002$ (see Table 1).

We also explored Hogan's thesis of the unequal distribution of emotions across narrative segments by comparing for each segment the percentage of propositions in which either juncture- or outcome-emotions were named. There were no systematic differences in the relative frequencies of juncture and outcome emotions across the five elements of narrative structure. However, calculating mean relative frequencies across all narratives meant that we also included many narratives which have a complication but no resolution. These are especially frequent among the sad and happy narratives. In these narratives, it could be expected that sad and happy emotions are expressed in the complication because it is the final main segment. Therefore we again calculated relative frequencies of emotions named per section of narrative structure only for those 98 narratives which contained the three core elements orientation, complication, and resolution. Abstracts contained

a mean of 7.4% juncture emotions vs. 1.7% outcome emotions, orientations 2.2% vs. 1.6%, complications 14.3% vs. .7%, resolutions 19.1% vs. 12.4%, and coda 6.4% vs. 3.2% of propositions respectively. Thus contrary to Hogan's hypothesis, in structurally complete narratives juncture emotions are not excluded from the resolutions section. Rather outcome emotions are excluded from the complication.

Specific emotions. We explored differences in the use of reported speech between emotion narratives in a MANOVA. Overall there were no significant multivariate differences between emotions, but the contrast between juncture and outcome emotions was significant, $F(1,29) = 7.46$, $p = .011$ (see Table 1). Inspection of the means for the three kinds of reported speech revealed that the higher percentage of reported speech in juncture emotions was due to more indirect speech in the anger narratives and more internal monologue in the fear narratives.

Study 2

We tested the hypotheses again in a sample of pre- and grade school children to explore the timing of the emergence of the emotion-specific aspects of narrative found in Study 1. We chose these two age groups because preschool children are still in the process of learning the basic structure of narrative, while a majority of 8 and 9 year-olds has acquired it (Peterson & McCabe, 1983). Nevertheless the ability to understand (van den Broek et al., 2003) and to produce narratives (Bohn & Berntsen, 2008; Habermas & de Silveira, 2008; McKeough & Genereux, 2003) does continue beyond middle childhood, which is also true for emotion narratives, e.g. regarding the use of internal state language (Grazzani Gavazzi, Ornaghi, & Antoniotti, 2008).

Method

Participants

A total of 57 girls with fluent German language abilities were interviewed; 37 4- or 5-year olds and 23 7- or 8-year-olds. More of the younger girls did not provide all five narrations. The narrative about an event which had made them proud proved to be the most difficult. To be counted as a narration an utterance had to consist of at least three propositions. Elimination of participants who did not recount at least the sad, angering, frightening, and happy event led to a remaining sample of 20 participants in each age group, with mean ages of $M = 5.16$ ($SD = .51$, range 4;3 to 5;11) in the younger and $M = 7.74$ ($SD = .60$, range 7;1 to 9;0) in the older group.

Procedure

Parents of the 4- and 5-year old girls were approached in day care centers in the city of Bremen by the third author and asked for informed consent. Parents of the 7- and 8-year-olds who visited day-care centers for grade-school students after school were addressed by a letter asking for their informed consent. Interviews were conducted on an individual basis in separate rooms in the day-care centers and lasted about 30 minutes. Children were asked to recount a total of five events which had made them angry, sad, anxious, proud, and happy, and also a funny story. The order of the five emotions was varied systematically within each age group, and the funny story always came last, to end the session in a positive mood. Before each of the five narratives, instructions were repeated, asking for a detailed and complete narrative for each single specific event so that the interviewer could imagine all the things which had happened and what the child had felt. The exact wording of the instructions was formulated spontaneously to maintain a natural atmosphere. To improve communication, several emotion labels were offered for each emotion. If a child did not refer to a specific event or only replied very briefly, the interviewer asked the child to narrate in detail a specific event.

Material

Emotion narratives. The first narrative of a specific experience with at least three propositions was transcribed literally and divided into propositions. Two independent coders achieved 96.5% agreement on the basis of 6 longer adult emotion narratives from a different project and 20 emotion narratives from this study. In this study, only narrative structure, global and specific evaluations, and reported speech were coded. Interrater agreement between two coders based on all narratives from 4 participants from each age group was $K = .90$ for narrative structure, $K = .97$ for evaluations. Events were again categorized for content.

Emotion intensity ratings. After each narrative had been told, children were asked whether they had been "very" , "medium" or only "a little" angry, sad, anxious or happy. Values from 3 to 1 were assigned to the answers.

Results

Again hypotheses regarded differences between narratives for different emotions, and, in addition, age differences. We therefore used analyses of variance (ANOVAs) for repeated measurement with one within-subject factor (emotional quality of narrated event), and age as between-subjects factor. We followed the same principles of data analysis as in study 1. Again we specified two planned contrasts, one between negative and positive emotions, the other between juncture and outcome emotions.

Content of narratives. The specific events named differed from those named by the adults. Angering events were attacks (62%), interpersonal conflicts (13%) and being disappointed or cheated (10%). Sad events were being (left) alone (33%), attacks (20%), death (8%), accidents, illness, and mishaps (5% each). Scary events were scary shows or stories (30%), being alone at night (20%), being (left) alone (18%), and meeting an animal (13%). Happy events included being together with others (30%), getting an object (18%), activities (10%), and birthdays (8%). Emotion intensity differed by emotion, happiness being rated as more intense (see Table 3). No age differences were found.

Negative vs. positive emotions. In hypothesis 1 we again expected for negative emotions longer and more complex

narratives as well as more frequent complications. Narratives of negative events did not differ from those of positive events neither for length nor for complexity. Negative narratives more often had a complication section (see Table 4), with an overall significance for emotion, $F(3,36) = 15.80$, $p = .000$, $\eta_p^2 = .57$, and a highly significant specific contrast, $F(1,38) = 44.25$, $p = .000$, $\eta_p^2 = .54$. Neither of the variables differed by age, although there was a strong trend for complications to increase with age, $F(1,38) = 3.62$, $p = .069$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$.

In hypothesis 2 we expected narratives of negative events to contain more specific emotion labels relative to global evaluations, which was confirmed (see Table 3). Happy events were narrated with the lowest percentage of specific emotions and the highest percentage of global evaluations (see Table 3). There were no age differences.

Juncture vs. outcome emotions. Hypothesis 3 could not be tested, as we had not coded clause type. In hypothesis 4 we expected narratives of juncture emotions to have a more complete core narrative structure with orientation, complication, and resolution section than narratives of outcome emotions (see Table 4). Both emotion, $F(3,36) = 3.44$, $p = .027$, $\eta_p^2 = .22$, and age had significant effects, $F(1,38) = 5.63$, $p = .038$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$. Completeness of narratives increased by age and was more frequent in the negative than in the positive narratives, $F(1,38) = 5.55$, $p = .024$, $\eta_p^2 = .13$, but, contrary to expectations, no more frequent in juncture than in outcome emotion narratives, $F(1,38) = .24$, $p = .62$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$.

Again we explored Hogan's thesis of the unequal distribution of emotions across segments of narrative structure When analyzing the 63 narratives which contained the complete set of the three core sections orientation, complication, and resolution (24 from age 5, 39 from age 8), the abstracts contained a mean of 8.0% juncture emotions anger or fear vs. 3.2% outcome emotions sadness or happiness, orientations 0% vs. 2.0%, complications 7.1% vs. 8.9%, resolutions 2.3% vs. 3.7%, and coda 2.1% vs. 2.2% of propositions respectively. Thus again contrary to Hogan's hypothesis, in structurally complete narratives, juncture emotions are not excluded from the resolution section, nor, in contrast to the adult sample, are outcome emotions excluded from the complication. The only difference between juncture and outcome emotions regarded, in accordance with the adult pattern, the large preponderance of juncture emotions in the abstract.

Specific emotions. We again explored possible differences in the use of reported speech between emotion narratives, testing dichotomized frequencies. The use of reported speech differed neither between emotions ($p = .053$) nor between ages ($p = .206$; see Table 4). Internal monologue was used very little, as was indirect speech. The mean differences between emotions are due to differences in the use of direct speech, which was used most often in anger narratives.

Discussion

Comparison and Summary of Studies

Adults' narratives of negative events were, compared to narratives of positive events, longer and contained more specific emotion terms relative to global evaluations. Similarly, children's negative narratives also contained relatively more emotion labels, and although negative narratives were no longer than positive ones, there was an age trend for negative narratives to become longer relative to positive narratives. While the difference in length merely confirms earlier findings, the relative preponderance of emotion labels over global evaluations in negative narratives is a new finding confirmed in both studies. Children actually used relatively more emotion labels and only very few global evaluations, except in the happy narratives. The use of global evaluations seems to increase with age.

Syntactic complexity in terms of length of propositions did not vary across emotions. Although this apparently supports the notion that negative narratives do not differ in syntactic complexity, it must be borne in mind that we did not use the Flesch index of reading ease which uses the length of sentences, not of propositions, thus implicitly measuring the number of subordinate clauses. However, the index was construed for written, not for oral language, in which subordinate clauses are more difficult to define. Possibly, only written narratives of negative events are syntactically more complex than those of positive events.

Findings were somewhat contradictory for the presence of a complication. Adults more frequently provided a complication than children, whilst children showed a drastic difference between their many happy narratives without and the majority of negative events with complication. Fear narratives had the fewest complications among the negative narratives both in adults and children. The children's finding is in accordance with Hudson's (1991) study, while the adults' finding contradicts Frijda's findings on the brevity of fear, and calls for replication. Taken together, the trend of narratives of negative events to be longer confirms that negative events call for more effort to process them, and also for more differentiated evaluations.

The categorization of narratives into those concerning events eliciting juncture versus outcome emotions resulted in two clear differences in the adults, both pointing to a more action-focused style in the juncture emotion-narratives. They more frequently contained the complete core narrative structure of orientation, complication, and resolution, and they also contained more narrative relative to descriptive clauses, while narratives of happy and sad events often ended with the complication, without a resolution achieved by some action. This is a new finding confirming Hogan's dichotomy of emotions based on their roles in narrative. Overall children have structurally less complete narratives and do not yet evidence the structural difference between juncture and outcome emotions.

The distribution of juncture and outcome emotions across elements of narrative structure shifts the stress from Hogan's thesis that juncture emotions were excluded from the resolution to an underrepresentation of outcome emotions in the complication. The validity of Hogan's categorization of emotions is supported by the confirmation of our hypotheses regarding differences between juncture and outcome emotions. The findings regarding typical positions of juncture and

outcome emotions in narratives may have been influenced by the way in which the narratives were elicited, i.e. by asking for events of specific emotional qualities. This may have elicited narratives more focused on one emotion than occurs naturally, thereby inducing speakers to include the requested emotion also in the resolution section. Thus the distribution of juncture and outcome emotions needs to be studied also in spontaneously produced narratives or in narratives elicited with less specific prompts. Another possible explanation for our finding is that autobiographical narratives, especially narratives of very recent events, do not require or cannot offer the degree of closure that fictional stories have, on the basis of which Hogan developed his theory. Once one closes a book or leaves the movies, story-time is over, whereas in autobiographical narratives concerns may well continue into the present. This difference may explain why there were so many narratives without resolution sections, and it could also explain why juncture emotions continue to be present in resolution sections.

Finally an emotion-specific pattern emerged for reported speech, with adult fear narratives containing more internal monologue and anger narratives containing more indirect speech. In another study participants had been asked to describe past events which had elicited different emotions and were also asked to indicate what they themselves had said in that situation. Situations eliciting anger and happiness had included the most utterances, fear the fewest (Ricci-Bitti & Scherer, 1986). The authors explain this pattern with the social nature of situations that elicit anger and happiness, while fear is often elicited when alone. The spontaneous use of reported speech apparently does not match the remembered frequency of talk in the past situation, but may rather obey communicative requirements. Reported speech in the anger narratives mainly deals with verbal exchanges in an effort to justify the speakers' anger. Happy narratives, in contrast, need no justification. Fear narratives used more internal monologue to draw the listener into the perspective of the protagonist and increase suspense.

Children's pattern of specific kinds of reported speech differed significantly from the adult pattern. There are indications in the literature that preschool and younger grade school children use more direct than indirect speech (Ely, Gleason, Narasimhan, & McCabe, 1995; Goodell & Sachs, 1992; Hickman, 2004), which is in accordance with the much more frequent use of direct than indirect speech in emotion narratives. Given that children used no internal monologue, the distribution of the overall frequency of reported speech corresponded to that of the adults, with anger eliciting the most, and happiness eliciting the least direct or indirect speech.

Significant differences had quite large effect sizes, significant planned contrasts mostly explaining more than 30% of variance. In adults, complete core narrative sections were three times as frequent in juncture than in outcome emotion narratives.

Limitations

The two studies reported here are a first exploration of the emotion specificity of formal elements of narratives. When there are gender differences in narration, women are usually the better narrators, especially when emotions are concerned (Buckner & Fivush, 1998). We do not know whether the emotion-specific ways of narrating also hold true in men, who might minimize emotion and therefore also differences between emotions. Furthermore, the differences between young adults and children found in this study are tentative because we covered only small parts of the developmental age span. Ideally, future studies would sample more equally from an extended age range. However, the age groups used here did cover young adults who have mastered narrative skills, children at a younger age at which narrative skill is still developing and a middle range in which at least the basic narrative skills are in place. Nevertheless we used the same manuals and the three authors collaborated closely. We asked for narratives of everyday events, some of which were not very emotional. However, our results probably generalize to events with stronger emotional impact because these are more likely to deepen rather than to attenuate. Finally, using a quantitative approach to formal differences should be complemented by describing the typical characteristics of each emotion, e.g. how justification permeates the structure of anger narratives, suspense fear narratives, and immobility sad narratives.

Implications

The finding of emotion-specific formal structures of narratives has implications for three areas of research. First, the field of emotion psychology, and the study of differences between specific emotions can be extended to the study of the narration of emotion episodes. Narratives are not mere epiphenomena of past emotions which they transport into the present. Rather, narrating an emotional event is a central mechanism for interpreting and coping with an experience and the emotions it elicited (Pennebaker et al., 1997). While Pennebaker analyzed the frequencies of words used in written narratives of stressful experiences, we, besides counting emotion words and global evaluative expressions, also analyzed structural aspects of narratives, which are essential for understanding and communicating an event successfully.

If the typical differences between narratives of different groups of emotions, and of specific emotions, identified in this study were to be confirmed in other studies, a next step would be to study whether the average narrative forms for specific emotions are also their normative forms. Following McCabe and Peterson (1984) who found that complete narrative structure correlates with the rated 'good form' of stories, future research could compare the form of good versus poor stories for specific emotions. This aesthetic appeal of a story might influence listeners' propensity to engage in empathetic listening. Empathetic listening requires different emotions depending on the emotional quality of the event narrated, such as indignation for angering events, compassion for sad events, suspense and worry for threatening events, admiration for pride, and symhedonia for happy events (Royzman & Rozin, 2006). Therefore it may well be that a good form inviting an empathetic response may vary both with the emotional quality of the narrated event and of the

corresponding empathetic emotion of the listener. An empathetic response, in turn, is essential both for narrators' ability to produce coherent and memorable narratives (Pasupathi, Stallworth, & Murdoch, 1998) and for the bonding function of narratives (Rimé, 2009). The 'goodness' or aesthetic quality of a narrative might also influence how well a narrative can serve a coping function, both directly and mediated by the listener's response.

Narrative research, in turn, may become more specific by going beyond the dichotomy of positive and negative narratives by eliciting narratives of emotions of varying qualities. This study suggests that narratives of sad events are quite different from narratives of angering or frightening experiences, which in turn differ from each other. The results of this study suggest that Labov's assumption of a high point may not claim universal validity, as noticed by others before (e.g., Peterson & McCabe, 1983), but may actually be quite specific for fear.

Finally, research on the development of the understanding and regulation of emotions needs to take into account the emerging ability to narrate different emotions adequately. This may be a more advanced ability than to narrate at all, and it probably is also a more advanced skill than recognizing emotions correctly in others and recognizing which emotion is the correct one for a given situation (Saarni, 1999). Acquiring the ability to use the typical or even good narrative form for specific emotions could help children to engender more actively the help of adults for coping with emotional experiences (Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2005).

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Table 1

Study 1: Means and Standard Deviations of Length and Complexity and Relative Frequencies of Elements of Narrative Structure, Evaluations, and Reported Speech in Adult Sample

	Emotion										ANOVA Factor Emotion			
	Anger		Sadness		Fear		Pride		Happiness			global	VAL	NAR
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	$F(4,116)$	partial η^2		
Ratings Importance											5.97***	.17	ns	.16
one week	3.37	1.05	4.14	.88	4.31	.88	3.68	1.10	4.43	.68				
three months	3.97	.81	4.17	.70	4.43	.82	4.33	.96	3.93	.91				
Ratings emotion intensity											3.94*	.12	ns	ns
One week	4.39	.75	4.20	.92	4.28	.87	3.86	.96	4.73	.45				
Three months	4.45	.53	4.26	.66	4.46	.64	4.13	1.06	4.28	.77				
Number propositions	35.80	17.40	31.58	16.21	33.58	14.53	22.13	9.74	20.15	8.88	19.18***	.40	.58	.47
Words/proposition	8.25	1.08	8.24	.86	8.36	.76	8.52	.82	8.73	.94	4.19**	.13	.24	ns
Percent of propositions														
Emotion words (E)	12.87	6.85	12.90	7.97	12.04	5.98	12.60	8.56	11.20	8.82				
Global evaluations (G)	4.69	4.82	6.77	6.14	4.96	4.99	11.20	9.13	11.38	9.89				
E / (E + G) (%)	71.42	19.35	67.45	18.08	67.38	19.62	56.03	22.28	49.44	26.57	6.66***	.22	.43	.33
Narrative clauses (N)	18.39	8.59	11.75	6.30	14.14	7.27	13.61	7.18	12.31	8.01				
Descriptive cl. (D)	20.33	8.14	27.20	11.19	24.40	10.08	24.21	10.75	30.45	10.75				
N / (N + D) (%)	46.00	15.65	31.22	16.09	34.76	17.76	37.16	20.01	27.61	16.22	5.71***	.18	.18	.31
Reported speech	16.17	12.53	12.61	7.45	15.80	11.91	14.39	10.07	10.34	10.72	2.18	ns	ns	.21
Indirect speech	7.67	9.75	4.89	5.26	3.24	4.58	3.73	4.86	3.21	4.96				
Direct speech	4.22	6.29	4.05	5.40	4.40	6.40	4.96	7.50	3.52	8.31				
Inner monologue	4.30	5.70	3.68	4.57	8.16	7.56	5.70	7.04	3.61	5.44				

Note. ANOVAs with emotion and temporal distance as two within subjects-factors. The table reports only emotion effects, its overall effect size as well as the effect sizes for significant planned contrasts for VAL = emotion valence (negative versus positive emotions), and for NAR = narrative function of emotion (juncture vs. Ouctome emotions). Only variables for which F-values are provided were tested. E/(E+G) = Percentage of emotion words of the sum of emotion words and global evaluations. N/(N+D) = percentage of narrative clauses of the sum of narrative and descriptive clauses.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 2

Study 1: Percentage of Narratives for each Emotion that Contain Each of the Five Elements of Narrative Structure

	Emotion Elicited by Narrated Event				
	Angering	Sad	Frightening	Proud	Happy
Abstract	41.7	41.7	30.0	46.7	36.7
Orientation (O)	81.7	83.3	80.0	68.3	76.7
Complication (C)	95.0	90.0	83.3	91.7	86.7
Resolution (R)	51.7	23.3	56.7	43.3	16.7
Coda	21.7	25.0	28.3	28.3	28.3
O & C & R	41.7	21.7	56.7	30.0	13.3

Note. If a narrative contained no complication, narrative structure was understood to be absent and no other structural element was coded. O & C & R = orientation, complication, and resolution are present.

Table 3

Study 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Length and Complexity and Relative Frequencies of Elements of Narrative Structure, Evaluations, and Reported Speech

		Emotion								ANOVA Factor Emotion				Factor Age	
		Anger		Sadness		Fear		Happiness			global	VAL	NAR		
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*F*(3,36)	partial η^2			*F*(3,36)	partial η
Number of propositions		14.00	11.96	14.38	9.03	15.50	8.76	14.13	9.55	.78	.01	.00	.00	3.78	.09
Words/proposition		6.74	1.23	6.84	.85	6.85	.85	7.08	1.18	.88	.02	.04	.02	.64	.02
Emotion intensity (1-3)		2.23	.78	2.35	.77	2.25	.84	2.75	.59	20.19***	.36	.45	.42		
Percent of propositions															
Emotion words (E)	5 yrs	17.64	14.59	17.29	15.44	12.83	9.79	13.14	12.57						
	8 yrs	16.89	16.41	8.27	9.32	18.80	12.04	8.73	10.51						
Global eval. (G)	5 yrs	3.31	4.98	9.24	8.97	1.28	2.76	.90	2.77						
	8 yrs	3.70	5.66	5.23	7.38	2.29	3.22	2.41	4.04						
E / (E + G) (%)										9.61***	.20	.33	.20	1.11	.03
	5 yrs	78.52	30.61	61.18	34.91	88.26	24.49	93.01	15.37						
	8 yrs	75.68	32.20	61.71	32.73	88.66	14.40	70.02	32.66						
Reported speech	5 yrs	12.39	16.85	10.06	17.48	7.87	16.21	3.01	8.91	2.63	.07	.10	.05	1.65	.04
	8 yrs	21.00	20.82	7.48	12.48	5.08	9.07	6.24	13.81						

Note. ANOVAs with emotion as within subjects-factor and age as between subjects-factor. Effect sizes are provided for the global testing of both factors and for the planned emotion contrasts VAL = emotion valence (negative versus positive emotions), and NAR = narrative function of emotion (juncture vs. Ouctome emotions). Only variables for which F-values are provided were tested. E/(E+G) = Percentage of emotion words of the sum of emotion words and global evaluations. If both emotions and global evaluations were absent, missing values were substituted by means.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 4

Study 2: Percentage of Narratives for each Emotion that Contain Each of the five Elements of Narrative Structure, by Age

	Emotion Elicited by Narrated Event							
	Angering		Sad		Frightening		Happy	
Abstract	5	35	10	25	20	30	0	10
Orientation (O)	35	50	40	65	40	70	20	40
Complication (C)	85	90	90	90	65	90	25	50
Resolution (R)	55	45	45	60	45	55	15	25
Coda	20	50	45	60	25	50	20	30
O & C & R	20	40	45	65	35	55	20	35

Note. If a narrative contained no complication, narrative structure was understood to be absent and no other structural element was coded. The first percentage is for age 5, the second is for age 8. O & C & R = orientation, complication, and resolution are present.