Abstract

Title: There is a difference between taking the gold and taking the women gold
– A qualitative study of the athletes in the Olympic games from a gender perspective

This essay investigates articles from the newspaper Expressen focusing on the athletes participating in the Olympic games in Barcelona 1992 and in London 2012. The investigation is done from a gender perspective to see whether Expressen endorses or challenges the gender roles and power structures existing in today’s society. The research questions aim to assist the study of how the male and the female athletes are portrayed in the articles, what definitions and attributes are associated with them and the credibility of their statements. Moreover, the articles from the two different time periods are compared to examine potential differences or similarities between the different decades, and if there has been a possible evolution over the twenty years. The theories that have been utilized during the analysis is agenda setting, framing, the performative sex and the stereotypical gender contract. It is a qualitative study with analytical linguistics as the method.

In the results it is found that the male athletes and their performances are more positively portrayed than the female athletes in both time periods. Stereotypes and gender roles are commonly used in the coverage from the Olympic games of 1992. However, in the coverage from 2012 many of the articles are challenging the issue, although the use of stereotypes is still visible. The results show that people who read Expressen during the Olympic games of 2012 were not as exposed to gender roles and power structures as the readers of 1992.

Keywords: Olympic games, Expressen, analytical linguistics, framing, gender roles