



Gender Representation in Tennis

Research on British Newspaper Coverage of Wimbledon

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English III – Linguistics Option
Bachelor Thesis
15 Credits
Spring 2018
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Abstract

Throughout the history of society, women have fought hard to have equal rights in relation to men in all aspects of life. This demand for equality goes on until today and even though feminists around the world have made progress in relations to right to vote, to hold political offices and equal salary there are still advances to be made. The world of sports is no different. In fact, one of the recent achievements of the feminist movement has been to point out that sport is a strong cultural sphere where male dominance still stands solid. This study is based on a corpus linguistics analysis of British newspaper articles from the Wimbledon tennis Grand Slam tournament. Texts from both men's and women's tournaments from 2007 to 2017 were selected randomly from UK tabloids and broadsheets. This investigation tries to identify whether male and female players are still represented differently in sports media and furthermore attempts to categorise and classify which linguistic features writers employ. In addition, the relation between power, gender and language is analysed to perform a qualitative analysis of the texts and the reasons why these linguistic techniques were used.

Keywords: *gender, sports, tennis, media, representation and corpus linguistics*

1 Introduction

Feminism is a range of social, political and ideology movements that are in the centre of several key discussions today. However, this is not an exclusive aspect of the present, but something that society has been dealing with for centuries. Throughout all years a common goal has been very clear: equal rights for women in relation to men. Unfortunately, the world of sports is no different. Gender inequality is everywhere and probably in every sport. Men are not just better paid, but also have more opportunities to succeed by receiving more coverage from the media, resulting in more sponsors and consequently more financial rewards (Cooky 2006; Nelson 1996; Pirinen 1997). Furthermore, the relationship between women and sport goes well outside their demand for space and money: when it comes to representing it, the media approaches more the female body and looks as well as their emotions at the expense of their sports technique (Sage, 1998). Tennis is an example for this different gender representation from the media and in tennis television coverage for instance, it is very common to see female players described by their looks and outfits, marital status, celebrity gossip and side modelling careers (Bissell, 2006). On the other hand, male players are more often labelled by their physical and technical abilities (Duncan, Messner, Williams & Jensen, 1994).

While some 'equality' improvements have been made in tennis, for example all four Grand Slam Tournaments now pay equal prize money for men and women, has the way that the media characterises male and female players changed over the past decade? Moreover, are the media, in a supposedly modern world of the twenty first century we live in, describing female athletes by their looks and not their technical abilities and accolades? After a quick online search for photos of the most famous professional tennis players a clear difference can be identified. For example, when searching for pictures using just the names of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, the first forty photographs for each man demonstrate them playing tennis. Yet, after the first five examples when searching for Maria Sharapova and Serena Williams, who are equally successful and famous as their fellow male peers, bikini and gala dress photos appear.

The aim of this paper is to analyse and compare tennis news articles from nationwide British newspapers. The articles selected were written and published around the days of the finals of the Wimbledon Grand Slam, one of the four most important tennis tournaments

worldwide. Using Corpus Linguistics as a methodology, this study will perform a quantitative and qualitative analysis of two separate corpora; one corpus containing articles from the men's final and one from the women's final. Focusing on tennis' gender representation in newspapers to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How do British newspapers represent male and female tennis players differently and what are the linguistic characteristics of this different representation?

RQ2: What are the reasons for the different representation between male and female tennis players?

2 – Background

This section of the study will be divided into three sub categories: First, in the situational background, the history of women's participation in sports and the history of tennis will be discussed. Second, in the theoretical background, theories of representation and gender as well as Corpus linguistics as a theoretical framework for data analysis will be presented. Lastly, the specific background will approach previous works on gender representation in sports.

2.1 Situational Background

2.1.1 Women in Competitive Sports

In this section, the history of women in competitive sports will be presented with an analysis of their participation in the Olympic Games as an example to illustrate the development of female sports participation. The Olympics were select because the summer games, in this case, are the pinnacle of competitive sports. The games of the modern era, which are staged every four years in a different city, attract immense amounts of spectators, viewers, media attention and widespread support from people all over the world (Young & Wamsley, 2005).

Although sport is a phenomenon whose social dimension encompasses the cultural values of several groups of society, women have struggled throughout history to be inserted in this reality. In the first Olympic Games of the modern era in 1896, held in Athens, women were not allowed to participate. Baron Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the games and of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), excluded women from participating in the games

because those were the rules in the ancient games (Nelson, 1996). Furthermore, Coubertin described the creation of the Olympic Games as something for men to compete, to show their ‘manliness’ as a form of ‘art’ where women could only watch and applaud (Fuller, 2007).

However, women competed for the first time in the next games in 1900 in Paris. According to official numbers from the IOC’s *The Games of Olympiad*, out of the entire 997 participants, twenty-two were women (2013). An additional factsheet from the IOC, *Women in Olympic Sport*, shows that female athletes competed in five sports: sailing, croquet and equestrian, where both genders competed together, as well as tennis and golf, where women only events were staged (2016). Following this edition of the games, the number of female participants regularly, but slowly, increased over the years together with the addition of other sports in which they could take part. Furthermore, in London 2012 there were 5.892 men and 4.675 women participating in the games and with the introduction of women’s boxing, women could compete in all events (“Women in the Olympic Movement”, 2016). Recently, in the last edition of the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro in 2016, forty-five percent of the total number of participants were women (“Women in the Olympic Movement”, 2016). Table 1 has detailed statistics of women’s participation in the Olympic Games of the modern era.

Table 1. Women’s participation over the years in the Summer Olympic Games (“Women in the Olympic Movement”, 2016).

Year	Sports	Women's Events*	Total events	% of women's events	Women participants	% of women participants
1900	2	2	95	2.1	22	2.2
1904	1	3	95	3.1	6	0.9
1908	2	4	110	3.6	37	1.8
1912	2	5	102	4.9	48	2.0
1920	2	8	156	5.1	63	2.4
1924	3	10	126	7.9	135	4.4
1928	4	14	109	12.8	277	9.6
1932	3	14	117	12.0	126	9
1936	4	15	129	11.6	331	8.3
1948	5	19	136	14.0	390	9.5
1952	6	25	149	16.8	519	10.5
1956	6	26	151	17.2	376	13.3
1960	6	29	150	19.3	611	11.4
1964	7	33	163	20.2	678	13.2
1968	7	39	172	22.7	781	14.2
1972	8	43	195	22.1	1,059	14.6
1976	11	49	198	24.7	1,260	20.7
1980	12	50	203	24.6	1,115	21.5
1984	14	62	221	28.1	1,566	23
1988	17	72	237	30.4	2,194	26.1
1992	19	86	257	33.5	2,704	28.8
1996	21	97	271	35.8	3,512	34.0
2000	25	120	300	40	4,069	38.2
2004	26	125	301	41.5	4,329	40.7
2008	26	127	302	42.1	4,637	42.4
2012	26	140	302	46.4	4,676	44.2
2016	28	145	306	47.4	~4700	~45

*: including mixed events

2.1.2 Tennis History and Women's Participation

This section will present and discuss some of the key historical aspects of Tennis. The sport was selected to be the subject of this study's analysis since it is one of the first in which women officially competed. Today an equal number of players, male and female, compete in the professional circuit with the same quantity of tournaments for both sexes. (Bissell, 2006)

The sport known as tennis today was introduced in the later part of the nineteenth century. At its core lies a simple rectangle with dimensions of seventy-eight by thirty-six feet separated by a net in the middle, where two or four players battle for victory in a best-of-three or five sets match. Adapted from similar activities that were played previously, Major Walter C Wingfield patented a game called 'lawn tennis' in 1874 (Morley, 2011). Thereafter, in 1877 the All-England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club held its first tournament in the grass courts at Wimbledon, in the south west region of London (Morley, 2011). In this first contest, however, women did not participate in a similar scenario as the Olympic Games. According to former professional sportswoman and now author Mariah Burton Nelson, women were

only allowed to participate in Wimbledon in 1884 because men were threatened by the women's involvement in sports during that time. Indeed, men tried to counter-attack this threat by coming up with several 'dangers' that might happen to athletic women (Nelson, 1996). In a response to these popular beliefs, for instance in 1902 women's tennis matches were officially reduced from best-of-five to best-of-three sets (Nelson, 1996). This decision, which stands until today, applies only in the four Grand Slams: Australian Open, Roland Garros, Wimbledon and US Open, which are the most famous tennis tournaments in the professional circuit. Throughout the rest of the year in minor tournaments, both male and female players compete in best-of-three sets. Indeed, this aspect led to a huge debate whether the duration of matches between men and women should influence the prize money for Grand Slams. Australian tennis legend and former Wimbledon champion Pat Cash argued in 2015, during an interview for the BT Sport television channel, that women should play five sets to receive the same money as men (BT Sport, 2015). Consequently, some female players have publicly stated that they would prefer to play best-of-five set matches (Nelson, 1996).

In 1970, tennis as a sport was controlled by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and during that time female players were unhappy with the lack of support and media attention received. Thus, American tennis player Billie Jean King created the Virginia Slim Series and the birth of professional women's tennis was established (Billie Jean King, 1987). In 1972, leading male professional players came together to create the Association of Tennis Professionals, known as ATP (History, 2018). In response to the creation of the ATP, King and the other female athletes who signed the professional contracts with the Virginia Slim Series founded the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) in 1973, which until today is the principal organising body for women's professional tennis (McKenzie, 2015).

Indeed, 1973 was a pivotal year for gender equality in professional tennis. After the creation of the WTA, the US Open Grand Slam decided for the first time to offer equal prize money for both men's and ladies' tournaments ("About the WTA", 2018). Weeks later, an event that brought the issue to the attention of millions of people took place in the United States. King decided to participate in an exhibition match against Bobby Riggs, a fifty-five years old former top-10 player, after he publicly uttered several demeaning comments towards female players ("How Bobby Runs and Talks", 1973).

The match which King won with an emphatic three sets to zero victory was a success with the public. Around thirty thousand people watched the game in the arena in addition to fifty million television viewers (McKenzie, 2015). Moreover, Nelson suggests that with King's triumph over Riggs 'women learned [...] that we can exceed male expectations – and often our own. That we can [...] dismantle the Gender Wall the men have constructed to keep women out.' (1996, p. 45)

Following these important achievements, women's professional tennis finally developed significantly in the next decades. By the nineties, women's tennis was already as popular as the men's. In the 1991 US Open final, the ladies' final attracted more television viewers than the men's match the following day, a feat also achieved in the following year's Roland Garros ladies final (Nelson, 1996). In 2007, the Wimbledon's Championship decided to offer equal prize for women and men (Clarey, 2007). It was the last Grand Slam to adopt this measure thirty-four years after the US Open, following repeated appeals by King and other former and current players. Currently, the situation of professional tennis demonstrates a more balanced environment between male and female pro-athletes. Indeed, it is still not completely equal, but most of women tennis players are competing for the record prize money of 118 million US dollars ("About the WTA", 2018).

2.2 Theoretical Background

2.2.1 Patriarchy, Hegemony and Feminism

Patriarchy is a social phenomenon where male individuals have a dominant role over female individuals. There are numerous theories that explain this social system and one of the most used ones is the Marxist theory which claims that patriarchy is a pecking order whereby men control women (Keith, 2017). This power order is a result of capitalism, since in the past men went to work and had financial rewards while most of the time women stayed at home.

Although it was recognised as important work, taking care of the house and raising children was undervalued compared to the capitalist structure of economics. Men had the money and consequently the power. Furthermore, professor of gender studies Dr. Thomas Keith explains in his book *Masculinities in Contemporary American Culture* that 'men possessed land and controlled the means of cultivating the land, leaving women in the subordinated category of domestic servant. The land owners became the forbearers of the bourgeoisie class, and patriarchy was established as a fundamental outgrowth of capitalism.' (2017) This power-

structure became the norm in which men went to work, earned money and consequently had a dominant role over women in private and public life.

Moreover, another theorist adds that there is an additional important aspect in gender power dynamics. Australian sociologist R.W. Connell suggests that although patriarchy still is the main power in the contemporary gender relations, male hegemony also plays a key role (2005). In addition, Cranny-Francis, Waring, Stavropoulos and Kirby assert in their book *Gender Studies* that male hegemony consists of ‘the current practices and ways of thinking which authorise, make valid and legitimise the dominant position of men and the subordination of women. This hegemony exists through institutions such as family, corporate business, government and military’ (2003, p. 16). This means that patriarchy exists because there is a leadership or dominance, in this case by men over women, in which all men benefit from this privilege. Even though men do not commit any direct act of aggression or oppression towards women, most are comfortable with the male hegemony and do not act to change that.

These patriarchal and hegemonic power dimensions have been challenged by feminist theorists since the eighteenth century. Simone de Beauvoir suggests in her book, *The Second Sex* – that women are not the ‘norm’ (2011). An essential element in thinking about gender issues, which she reflects on, is this idea of the women as the ‘other’, as opposed to the ‘one’. According to Beauvoir, men are considered the default or ‘the one’, the primary thing, the more important and the default thing while women are considered the ‘other’, the exception, the secondary and the dependent thing (2011). In other words, women come after and are dependent on a primary, more important thing, the men. Men act as a subject that acts, who has preferences, who has goals and autonomy. On the other hand, women are the object, who is acted upon, who is passive and inert and in fact, plays a role in the life of the subject. She claims that ‘the other is passivity confronting activity, diversity breaking down unity, matter opposing form, disorder against order.’ (2011, p. 114) Moreover, she explains that women are in this situation because of two factors, ‘the convergence of [...] participation in production and freedom from reproductive slavery.’ (2011, p.171) Indeed, Beauvoir disagrees with the ideas of patriarchal and hegemonic power structure and suggests that every individual ought to be a subject and not object (2011). Additionally, French linguistic Emile Benveniste argues that ‘it is through language that man constitutes himself and a subject’ (as cited in Cranny-

Francis et al., 2003). Lastly, this idea is relatable to feminism. In its essence, feminism argues that women are not better than men, but equal and that society must be structured in a way that a person's gender should not by itself be a reason to keep someone from doing something.

2.2.2 Media and Representation

Representation refers to the idea that everything one sees or hears in media has been constructed. Representations themselves can take many forms such as radio segments, films, photographs and most importantly for this study, newspaper articles. The concept of *representation* had in Marxist sociologist Stuart Hall one of the most important contributors to the academic and public debate. Hall defined representation as the 'production of meaning through language' (Hall, Evans & Nixon, 2013, p.10). Hall suggests that this definition, 'carries the important premise that things – objects, people, events in the world – do not have in themselves any fixed, final or true meaning. It is us – in society, within human cultures – who make things mean, who signify.' (Hall et al., 2013, p.45) Everything one can see or hear in the media is a representation of something and according to Hall the word *representation* suggests that something was already there and has been *Represented* – as in presented again – by the media (Hall et al., 2013). Furthermore, Hall adds that to explain how representation through language works there are three necessary approaches: reflective approach, intentional approach and the constructionist approach (Hall et al., 2013).

In the reflective approach, language acts like a mirror reflecting the meaning of something. In other words, representation merely mirrors reality. Indeed, in his own words he asserts that meaning 'is thought to lie in the object, person, idea or event in the real world, and language functions like a mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exists in the world.' (Hall et al., 2013, p.10) On the other hand, the intentional approach does not exactly represent the reflection/reality. Hall et al. (2013) claims that it is 'the speaker, the author, who imposes him or her unique meaning on the world through language.' (p. 10), What Halls states is that the intentional approach to representation proposes that all representations are filled with the intent of the authors. They are presenting their own view where the words and images used mean what they want them to mean. Lastly, the constructionist approach is the one where meaning is contextual. It is mainly a mix between the reflective and intentional approaches and seems to be a response to the weakness of the two. According to Hall, neither

the things/objects nor the users of language can fix meaning in language and representation is constructed in the mind of the audience (Hall et al.,2013). This approach works with a combination of few aspects: first, is the thing (image, object, text or sound) that will be presented. Second, there are the views of the authors (writers, directors, etc) on the thing and his/her representation. Third, is the representation reaction of the receiver and last is the context of the society in which the representation is taking place. In fact, Hall writes that ‘things don’t mean: we construct meaning, using representational systems – concepts and signs.’ (Hall et al., 2013, p.11) It is important to remember that everyday society is inundated with representations of people, events and ideas. While some media representations, for instance news and documentaries, may seem realistic, one must consider that they are just constructions. At its best, the media can only represent reality and what we see on the front page of a daily newspaper is someone else’s – the writer, author or editor – representation of reality.

The systems of representation suggested by Hall owes a lot to the work of Swiss linguist and semiotician Ferdinand de Saussure, who is considered one of the founding fathers of modern linguistics. Although Saussure’s importance for linguistics is pivotal, this essay will focus only on his general view of representation and language. For Saussure ‘the production of meaning depends on language’ and language is ‘a system of signs’ that are basically things that stand in for something else (Hall et al.,2013, p,16). Signs can be found anywhere - sounds, images, books, videos; and in fact, the linguistic signs work the same way. According to Saussure, signs are two sided: first is the signifier, which is the sign we use to refer to the things we are talking about, or as he argued the *form* (Hall et al.,2013, p,16). Second is the signified, which are the things we talk about, our ideas and concepts, or as he suggests the *idea or concept* (Hall et al.,2013, p,16). In other words, for Saussure representation is the method in which signs are used to compose meaning.

2.2.3 Corpus Linguistics

Corpus Linguistics (CL) is a branch of Linguistics that allows the electronic analysis of bodies of text to perform a more quantitative study. The word *corpus* comes from the Latin and means body, in this case a body of texts. McEnery and Wilson describe CL as ‘the study of language based on examples of real life language use.’ (as cited in Baker, 2006, p. 1) Some of the beneficial aspects of CL for linguistic research are for instance that it deals with

relatively objective data and can be easily carried out with huge quantities of texts as well as being a descriptive method. CL has improved immensely in the past decades with the introduction of powerful computers that allows a very quick analysis. Professor Paul Baker in his book *Using corpora in discourse analysis* sums up this argument:

corpora are generally large (consisting of thousands or even millions of words), representative samples of a particular type of naturally occurring language, so they can therefore be used as a standard reference which claims about language can be measured. The fact that they are encoded electronically means that complex calculations can be carried out on large amounts of text, revealing linguistic patterns and frequency information that would otherwise take days or months to uncover by hand, and man run counter to intuition. (2006, p. 2)

In a quantitative study, as the name suggests, a researcher counts things to ‘describe language and formulate hypotheses and theories’ (Lindquist, 2009, p.25). Nevertheless, CL is not just a quantitative procedure. In order to perform an in dept analysis of language, a qualitative methodology is also needed. As Biber claims, ‘functional (qualitative) interpretation is also an essential step in any corpus based analysis’ (as cited in Baker, 2006, p. 2). Without a qualitative approach, the researcher would have only numbers, but would not be able to have a clear understanding of the context in which the language is used. In a qualitative method, a researcher ‘arrive at theories about language by induction, or test hypothesis which you have set up in advance’ (Lindquist, 2009, p.25).

In fact, in the past decades language and gender have developed into an active ground for investigation since feminists pointed out that inequality in society was reflected in language (Lindquist, 2009). Moreover, CL can be an important method to study language and gender, more specifically male and female differences in language use. According to Baker, ‘corpus linguistics arguably has a great deal of untapped potential to offer the field of language and gender’ (2008, p.74).

2.3 Specific Background

In this section, previous works done of linguistic analysis on sports gender representation will be presented.

Throughout history, women have been faced with negative stereotypes regarding their involvement in sports. Phrases such as ‘girls who play football are tomboys or lesbians’, ‘real women don’t spend their free time sliding feet-first’ and ‘sports are unfeminine’ or ‘this is a

men's sport' (Nelson 1996) have perhaps been heard in every corner of the world. Nowadays, feminists point to sport as a major influence in constructing the ideology and practice of male privilege and dominance (Fuller 2007). Furthermore, Segrave, Mc Dowell and King III assert in their academic journal *Language, gender and sport* that women in sports are 'often trivialized and marginalized, and female athletes themselves frequently stereotyped as feminised women rather than competitive athletes.' (2006, p. 31)

In fact, language is one of the main tools used to diminish women in sports. One feature of gender representation inequality in sports is gender marking. In a study conducted by Messner, Duncan and Jensen (1993), verbal commentaries from television coverage of both men's and women's US Open tennis and NCAA College Basketball tournaments were analysed. They reported that 'gender was constantly marked, both verbally and through the use of graphics' (1993, p.125). During the coverage of the women's competitions, examples of gender marking such as *Women's Final Four* were counted seventy-seven times. On the other hand, the men's coverage did not give a single example. In the men's competition, marking was universal such as *The Final Four*. In this way, women's sport is minimised through language by characterising male as an unmarked category and female as a marked one.

In addition, naming conventions such as calling players by their first name is another key point in gender representation in sports. As the name suggests, naming conventions is a general arrangement for naming things. When people name things, there is usually a meaning that allows them to manipulate our experiences. In a research made by Duncan et al. (1994), television coverage of the NCAA 'Final Four' women's and men's basketball tournaments; and the women's and men's singles, and doubles, and the mixed doubles of the US Open of tennis were analysed. The results showed that female players were called more often and regularly by their first names compared to the male players. In 304 occasions, women were called by their first name against only forty-four for the men (Duncan et al., 1994). Furthermore, other naming conventions used to infantilize and demean women were the use of terms such as *girls* and *young ladies*. According to Segrave et al, naming 'is neither a neutral nor random process but is, rather, a linguistic operation that encodes biases and prejudices, and those who have the power to name and rename retain a powerful cultural

prerogative.’ (2006, p. 33) In other words, the use of naming conventions has contributed with the derogative and patronizing ways in which the media depict some female athletes.

Moreover, to degrade and play down women in sports, the media focus on things that are not related to their athletic performance, but rather to their personal lives. In fact, Gina Daddario analysed the Winter Olympic Games television portrayal of female athletes in 1992 and noted common comments direct to women diminished female athletes to childlike qualities, to family roles as mothers or daughters, or as competing for others instead of themselves (1994). She claimed that commentators ‘diminished the sexuality of some athletes by reducing them to adolescent, often prepubescent, status, despite the fact that some of the athletes were in their mid- late 20s’ (1994, p.282). Furthermore, Segrave et al. assert that by focusing on personal lives ‘women are not only symbolically denied athleticism but they are also forced to conform to standard, stereotypical, and ultimately constraining ideals of femininity’ (2006).

3 Design of the Present Study

3.1 Data

This study has collected words from British newspapers’ articles during their coverage of the men’s and women’s Wimbledon tennis tournament finals from 2007 to 2017. The Grand Slam played in the grass courts in south west London is the world’s premier tennis tournament (Wagg, 2017). The 2018 edition has not taken place yet, so therefore was not selected for this study. These finals were played in Wimbledon’s centre-court between nineteen different players – eleven women and eight men – from ten different countries. Among the nations represented were USA, United Kingdom, Russia, Spain, Serbia, Germany, Canada, France, Croatia and Czech Republic.

Table 2. Finals selected for this study.

Year	Gender	Player	X	Player	Result
2017	W	Garbine Muguruza	X	Venus Williams	7-5,6-0
2017	M	Roger Federer	X	Marin Cilic	6-3,6-1,6-4
2016	W	Serena Williams	X	Angelique Kerber	7-5,6-3
2016	M	Andy Murray	X	Milos Raonic	6-4,7-6,7-6

2015	W	Serena Williams	X	Garbine Muguruza	6-4,6-4
2015	M	Novak Djokovic	X	Roger Federer	7-6,6-7,6-4,6-3
2014	W	Petra Kvitova	X	Eugenie Bouchard	6-3,6-0
2014	M	Novak Djokovic	X	Roger Federer	6-7,6-4,7-6,5-7,6-4
2013	W	Marion Bartoli	X	Sabine Lisicki	6-1,6-4
2013	M	Andy Murray	X	Novak Djokovic	6-4,7-5,6-4
2012	W	Serena Williams	X	Agnieszka Radwanska	6-1,5-7,6-2
2012	M	Roger Federer	X	Andy Murray	4-6,7-5,6-3,6-4
2011	W	Petra Kvitova	X	Maria Sharapova	6-3,6-4
2011	M	Novak Djokovic	X	Rafael Nadal	6-4,6-1,1-6,6-3
2010	W	Serena Williams	X	Vera Zvonareva	6-3,6-2
2010	M	Rafael Nadal	X	Tomas Berdych	6-3,7-5,6-4
2009	W	Serena Williams	X	Venus Williams	7-6,6-2
2009	M	Roger Federer	X	Andy Roddick	5-7,7-6,7-6,3-6,16-14
2008	W	Venus Williams	X	Serena Williams	7-5,6-4
2008	M	Rafael Nadal	X	Roger Federer	6-4,6-4,6-7,6-7,9-7
2007	W	Venus Williams	X	Marion Bartoli	6-4,6-1
2007	M	Roger Federer	X	Rafael Nadal	7-6,4-6,7-6,2-6,6-2

Using the Access World News database, 330 articles in total were collected to form a corpus for analysis. – fifteen articles per event, totalling 165 articles each for men’s and women’s finals. The search dates used as filters were Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday in the final weekend of the tournament. Without any weather or external interference, the women’s final is usually on the Saturday; and the men’s one the day after on Sunday. As this essay analyses printed newspapers, Monday is of high importance since the newspapers report on the men’s final the day before. Moreover, the search words used in the database to collect the desired articles were the surnames of the athletes involved in the finals. In fact, both surnames for the players involved on each final were searched together. For example, in the 2017 edition *Williams* and *Muguruza* were the search terms for women; and *Federer* and *Cilic* were used for the men.

The selected British newspapers were: The Daily/Sunday Mirror, The Daily Star, The Daily/Sunday Telegraph, The Express/on Sunday, The Guardian, The Independent/on Sunday, News of the World, The Observer, The Sun and The Times/Sunday Times. These sources were selected as they are all nationwide newspapers with a larger reach and readership numbers than small local ones. Yet, one notable absence in the list is The Daily Mail, the second biggest daily newspapers in the country (Press Gazette, 2012), which unfortunately was not available for selection in the database. Another reason behind the selection of these newspapers was that when no specific sources were designated, several repetitive articles would appear as results, even though they were from diverse sources. This occurs because news agencies, such as Press Association and Reuters, write these articles and sell them to small, local newspaper.

The articles were selected randomly in order of appearance. However, since there is a well-known difference in the language used in tabloids and broadsheets, a balance in the quantity of examples between the two styles was pivotal. Therefore, seventy-seven examples for tabloids and eighty-eight for broadsheets for each genre were selected. Since the search filters were very specific – surnames, dates and sources – the search result was roughly the appropriate quantity for the size of this study.

Table 3. Number of articles by each newspaper

Newspaper	Style	Men's articles	Women's articles
The Sunday/Times	Broadsheet	25	24
The Daily/Sunday Mirror	Tabloid	24	19
The Independent/on Sunday	Broadsheet	22	21
The Express/on Sunday	Tabloid	17	23
The Sun	Tabloid	21	20
The Daily/Sunday Telegraph	Broadsheet	19	20
The Guardian	Broadsheet	16	16
The Daily Star	Tabloid	6	12
The Observer	Broadsheet	6	7
News of the World	Tabloid	9	3

After collecting the articles above, the data was divided into two different corpora according to the gender of the finals. The corpus with the articles from the women's finals was named WW (Women's Wimbledon) and the articles with the men's finals MW (Men's Wimbledon). In total, both corpora had 264,949 word tokens (two hundred and sixty-four thousand, nine hundred and forty-nine).

Table 4. Numbers for each corpus

Corpus	Articles	Word Types	Word Tokens
WW	165	8,092	119,694
MW	165	8,869	145,255

3.2 Method

Corpus Linguistics is being used as a method to analyse the gender representation in both corpora of Wimbledon's newspaper articles. After organising and compiling the corpora, the data was analysed using the AntConc (2018) software to produce both a quantitative and qualitative investigation. Then, the results will be discussed with the support of the theories of patriarchy, hegemony and feminism. In addition to Hall's representation theory and specific linguistic features, such as gender marking and naming practices.

Both corpora were examined with the aid of tools like frequency, clusters and concordance. 'Frequency' helps the researcher to check how often a word appears in the text. It is one of the most essential tools of corpus analysis (Baker, 2006). This tool is important for this research as it provides a way of comparing how many times a word appears in the women's and men's corpora. The search words in this case are *girl/s* and *boy/s*. Also, with the 'frequency' tool, the players' first names will be inspected and compared to verify if the different naming practices occur.

To analyse gender generics such as *men's tennis*, *women's tennis*, *men's finals* and *women's finals*, frequencies beyond one word must be measured. For this occasion, the 'clusters' tool is ideal. This tool provides fast and precise examples of words that are more likely to occur before or after the search word. Yet, the analysis of frequencies and clusters ought to be done carefully since '[they] do not explain themselves: concordance-based

analyses are therefore required in order to explain why certain words are more frequent than others.’ (Baker, P., Hardie, A., & McEnery, T., 2006, p.76).

After using ‘frequency’ and ‘clusters’ to examine the numbers of occasions a certain word or group of words occur in the text, the ‘Concordance’ tool was used to determine in which context the words were used. ‘Concordance’ allows the corpus analysis to see a list of all the words that appear around the search term. One, two or more words next to the search term to the left or to the right. With this tool, the relation between words can be spotted and context can be analysed as it ‘provides information about the company that a word keeps.’ (Baker et al., 2006, p. 43)

4 Results

This section of the essay will be divided in two parts. First is the naming conventions and second is the gender marking.

4.1 Naming Conventions

Names are extremely important in the construction of social reality. When someone names something, it is never a neutral nor random procedure, but in fact one that carries biases and preconceptions. In the table below is the frequency number of *boy/s*’ and *girl/s*’ inside their respective corpus. *Boy/s*’ was searched in the MW corpus and *girl/s*’ for the WW one. The search words were *boy** and *girl**.

Table 5. Frequency of boys in MW and girls in WW

Word	Frequency
girl	35
girls	19
boy	14
boys	9

The frequency differences demonstrated above between both genders are evident. However, when the concordance tool is used, an even clearer contrast can be noted.

Table 6. Examples of concordance for *boy/s*’ in MW

(1)	Then he took a mouthful of the grass and, <i>boy</i> , did it taste like caviar.
(2)	He won on Saturday thanks to sheer power. Oh <i>boy</i> , does he hit the ball
(3)	The girls, wearing matching dresses, and the <i>boys</i> , dressed in smart blue blazers
(4)	over 19 years, from the day he won the 1998 <i>boys'</i> singles title in this parish
(5)	the tournament he dreamed of winning as a small <i>boy</i> . Nadal came into the final

In the men corpus, there was not to a single occasion where the players were named *boy* or *boys*. Instead, the term was used to refer to children (the players in the past (5) or their sons in the crowd (3)), the boy's tournament (junior Wimbledon competition for under-17 years old (4)) and informal expressions such as 'Oh boy!' (1) and (2).

On the other hand, the examples of the women's corpus describe female players as girls almost all the time. Actually, all fifty-four times the word *girl/s* was used in the WW corpus, were to diminish the players to a teenage status.

Table 7. Examples of concordance for *girl/s* ' in WW

(6)	Marion Bartoli that the French <i>girl</i> revealed that her wrists were aching
(7)	quiet <i>girl</i> Petra has everything to be a great champ
(8)	and hoping - that the <i>girl</i> named after our own Princess Eugenie
(9)	She had become the poster- <i>girl</i> of the ladies' draw by her easy grin
(10)	her only real moment of alarm. The Russian <i>girl</i> cracked in the deciding
(11)	Just 20, this tall, blue-eyed, long legged <i>girl</i> with blonde tresses down to her
(12)	RESULT!: Daddy's <i>girls</i> are heading for another get-together
(13)	The little French <i>girl</i> - a 50-1 outsider - had produced the shock of

In all the eight examples on Table 7 and all the additional ones encountered in the women's corpus, one can note that these terms were used to diminish adult female professional players to girls. According to Segrave et al. 'the inferiorization of women's sport and [...] performance' is accomplished with these naming conventions such as patronizing is demeaning names (2006, p.33). Furthermore, Daddario claims that the media help enforce hegemony with their representation of women athletes as girls (1994).

Next, one other naming practice on gender representation in tennis is when female players are referred on a first name basis. Duncan et al. suggest that these naming conventions are a form of ‘infantilize and demean women athletes by referring to them as girls and young ladies and calling them by their first names’ (1994).

To analyse this aspect of the articles, we will examine the frequency of the players’ first name alone in addition to the ‘clusters’ name + surname. To avoid any misleading results, the cases of both Williams’ sisters – Venus and Serena, will not be used in this analysis since they are siblings with the same surname. Hence, they must be named on the first name basis in the articles to be differentiated from one another. The same principle applies in the men’s corpus, since both Murray and Roddick have the same first name, Andy.

Table 8. First name frequency and name + surname on WW corpus

Player	Number of finals	first name frequency	name+surname cluster	Difference
Petra Kvitova	2	73	58	15
Garbine Muguruza	2	70	46	24
Maria Sharapova	1	68	42	26
Marion Bartoli	2	56	46	10
Angelique Kerber	1	55	54	1
Sabine Lisicki	1	43	37	6
Eugenie Bouchard	1	38	29	9
Agnieszka Radwanska	1	34	32	2
Vera Zvonareva	1	32	21	9

Table 9. First name frequency and name + surname on MW corpus

Player	Number of finals	first name frequency	name+surname cluster	Difference
Roger Federer	6	363	275	88
Novak Djokovic	4	204	160	44
Rafael Nadal	4	120	117	3
Tomas Berdych	1	47	41	6

Marin Cilic	1	46	43	3
Milos Raonic	1	41	35	6

The numbers in the ‘Difference’ column in the tables above, were reached by subtracting the frequency number of the first name by the cluster name+surname (for example, Maric Cilic, $46-43 = 3$).

Sadly, the outcome of this study’s part was not very convincing. When compared to each other, the first name basis marks were relatively discreet. The only two stand out examples were of Sharapova for the women, with twenty-six times mentioned by her first name; and Nadal who was only referred by Rafael three times. In Sharapova’s case, I would argue that she is so famous, so recognisable around the sports world, that writers feel that she is someone already known to the public and consequently worth of a first name basis. The same case applies for Federer and Djokovic. Nadal on the hand, equally famous and one of the most recognized names in tennis, is also called by a nickname, Rafa. In fact, the frequency of *Rafa* in the MW corpus was of 86 hits and the cluster *Rafa Nadal* was used 30 times, leaving the difference between both of 56 times where Nadal was called only by the nickname.

4.2 Gender Marking

Gender marking is a linguistic form which characterises the male version as an unmarked category and the female as the marked, or the other. To find examples of these marking in the corpora, we will compare ‘clusters’ from both corpus. More specifically, the words *tennis*, and *finals*. The clusters searched on both corpora were for three to five words and the search term position was on the right.

Table 10. Clusters for *tennis* in MW corpus

Rank	Frequency	Cluster
1	11	The best tennis
3	9	Men’s tennis
8	4	In men’s tennis
24	2	Best male tennis

Table 11. Clusters for tennis in WW corpus

Rank	Frequency	Cluster
1	35	Women’s tennis
2	9	Of women’s tennis
9	4	For women’s tennis
12	4	On women’s tennis
17	3	The women’s tennis

27	2	Of female tennis
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Table 12. Clusters for *final* in MW corpus

Rank	Frequency	Cluster
1	62	In the final
2	51	Grand slam final
3	31	A Wimbledon final
8	29	Men's final

Table 13. Clusters for *final* in WW corpus

Rank	Frequency	Cluster
1	90	In the final
2	62	Grand slam final
3	39	Women's final
4	31	To the final

As seen in tables 11 and 12, a significant difference can be noted. *Women's tennis* was not just the number one in frequency on the WW corpus, but also with a marginal difference to *Men's tennis* in the MW corpus. In addition to the other examples in the WW corpus, the numbers increase even more. When comparing tables 13 and 14, the difference between *men's final* and *women's final* is smaller, but also noticeable. As Messner, Duncan and Jensen point out, this is a way that the women's tournament is presented 'as the other, derivative, and by implication, inferior the men's' (1993, p.127). Furthermore, Segrave et al. asserts that 'asymmetrical gender marking is a commonplace component of the gendered language of mass-mediated sport' (2006, p.32). In other words, one can suggest that with the smaller frequency for *men's tennis*, the articles' writers assume that the men's tournament is the norm and consequently the women's tournament inferiority is implicated and increased. In relation to De Beauvoir's thinking in *The Second Sex*, male players and tennis are considered the default, 'the one', whether women are the other.

5 Discussion

Following the corpus analysis of this study, the differences in the way men and women were represented by the media were small, but important. Linguistic conventions such as gender marking and naming were implemented to patronise professional female tennis players. First and foremost, regarding naming conventions and the use of *boy* and *girl*, a staggering difference was showed by the comparison between both corpora. Daddario claims that this childlike status given to female players does not come as a shock, 'since sport for female is an adolescent preserve' (1994, p.282). In other words, boys and girls are used to compete

together in their childhood, since there is not a lot of differences in their bodies. Furthermore, Daddario claims that after puberty sports are divided into both genres but most of the boys continue to be involved and the girls dropout, leaving a bigger number of male participants and consequently an idea that girls are still the 'other ones' (1994). I argue that the constant use of the term *girl/s* is a result of the male hegemony surrounding the world of sports. As Connell (2006) asserts, male hegemony is the widespread domination of men in social, cultural and economic aspects of society (as cited in Cranny-Francis et al., 2003, p.16). Indeed, sports is a world dominated by men and Nelson adds that although improvements have been achieved in most aspects of life, sports 'clings to its all-male status, resisting women's attempts to participation as players, coaches, administrators, or reporters' (1996).

On the other hand, the practice of naming female players on a first name basis to diminish them seems to be in a smaller scale. The results presented were not significant and showed equal numbers regarding to the use of the first name alone for men and women in the articles. This issue was initially pointed out by Duncan et al. and in the same study, the scholars already presented some levels of improvements in this practice with a decrease from 52.7% of references to women on a first name basis in 1989 to 31.5% in 1993 (1994).

Moreover, the aspect of gender marking showed a strong indication of men's tennis as the norm. With the high frequency of *women's tennis* and *women's final* in the clusters tables, I will argue that the author considers the men's game and final as the norm. This means that female athletes are often compared to male athleticism and male sports is considered the one that 'really counts'. As N. Theberge argues, 'by constructing men's sport as the standard, and male athleticism as the dominant, indeed defining, expression of physical ability and accomplishment, the language of sport becomes a subtle means through which men's separation from and control over women becomes naturalised and institutionalised' (as cited in Segrave et al., 2006, p. 34). Segrave et al. claim that when the media depicts some events as for instance women's Wimbledon final as the 'Ladies Final' and the men's as only 'The Final', there is an implication that the women's game is the other and consequently inferior to the men (2006, p.32). This point can be associated also with De Beauvoir line of thought that women are considered the 'other' and men, the one. On the other hand, according to Stanley (1977) 'although asymmetrical gender marking tends to mark women as 'other', symmetrical gender marking is not necessarily oppressive. In fact, she argues that the move towards a

totally gender-neutral language may serve to further render women invisible.’ (as cited in Messner et al., 1993, p. 126)

These examples of the different gender representation in this study I will argue are a result of couple of social aspects. First, is the aspect of male hegemony and patriarchy which dominate not just society but also the sports scenario. Competitive sports as it is known today, was established in the end of the nineteenth century by white, middle class men and according to Dworkin and Messner ‘to bolster a sagging ideology of ‘natural superiority’ over women and over race-and class-subordinated groups of men (as cited in Scraton & Flintoff, 2004, p.17). Second, although some improvements have been made in society and sports, male hegemony is obvious when one examines the gender of the writers that composed the corpora articles. Out of the 330 articles that were randomly selected to compose the corpora, only twenty-seven were written or co-written by women. Evidently, when someone reads an article written by a male author, the reader is guided by the writer biased views. This falls into Hall’s intentional approach of representation suggested, in which ‘the author [...] who imposes his or her unique meaning on the world through language. Words mean what the author intends they should mean’ (2013, p.10). When the author imposes his intentional approach through his articles, he is setting descriptions of male and female athletes side by side as well as men’s and women’s sport, ‘the language of sport naturalise a gender hierarchy that translates into male supremacy.’ (Segrave et al., p. 34) Women in sport are in this case perceived as the other, when juxtaposed with men.

However, Segrave et al. claim that there are positive sides in the sports media coverage nowadays with ‘many media commentators and reporters...consciously strive to counter the apologetic with a more assertive discourse and to present women...more fairly’ (2006, p. 37). Furthermore, they also argue that only changing the language from sexist to non-sexist will not change immediately the structure of inequality, but of course it will help (2006).

6 Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, there is a subtle but evident difference on gender representation in the British newspaper articles selected by this study. The first main characteristic was the way the in which the term *girl/s* was used to diminish adult female players into a teenage, childlike status. When compare to the male alternative, *boy/s*, the frequency results already

demonstrated a significant difference, which were even more evident when a qualitative approach was used. Analysing the context on which both terms were employed, *boy/s* was not used a single time to diminish the male players. The examples were in fact, to describe the players in the past, actual children in the crowds, the junior tournament and an informal exclamation expression.

Furthermore, the analysis to prove that the practice of naming female players on a first name basis still exists unfortunately failed. This common linguist technique to diminish women in sports in the past was not proven by this study. The results in the quantitative analysis showed equal numbers between male and female players. This may be the beginning of a transformation to a more equal representation, especially after scholars suggested that there are heartening signs in which advances are being made to represent women more fairly in sports media.

Moreover, another difference in the media gender representation that showed significant results was the use of gender marking terms. Terms such as *women's tennis* and *women's finals* were in used in a higher frequency in the women's articles when compared to *men's tennis* and *women's finals* in the men's corpus. According to scholars, these terms are used to mark the female version of Wimbledon, as the other and consequently inferior to men. The men's tournament here, similar to De Beauvoir's theory, is considered the norm, the one, and the women's 'the other'.

These two differences, gender marking and the constant use of *girl/s* to diminish players is a result, I argue, of the male hegemony and patriarchy that surrounds the world of sports. Male players receive more money and more coverage, consequently having power and control in the sports scenario. As a reflection of these social and economic power dynamics, men exercise their point of view and biased in the way they represent genders is sport. Only twenty-seven out of 330 articles were written by women. Most of the texts analysed were written by men and as these male authors employed what Hall suggests as an intentional approach to representation. Such approach is achieved when the author represents the meaning of things throughout his own view, bias and prejudices.

Lastly, sports media has always been dominated by men. Indeed, I would like to suggest further researches to be made regarding female writers in sports media. These

researches would have the aim to study whether there are differences in gender representation when a comparative analysis is made between articles written by women and men.

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