
Danish Sport News Broadcastings - News Criteria and Discourses

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Type: Scientific

Category: 10: Sport Media and Journalism

Abstract

AIM: This study investigates Danish sport news broadcastings. It investigates what news criteria that frame the sport news broadcastings and it investigates which discourses the media organizations articulate in their sport news broadcastings. The two largest Danish media organizations, DR (the Danish public service broadcaster) and TV2 (now a fully commercial station) are included in the study. Each station broadcast sport news in connection with their regular news broadcastings. From the establishment of TV2 in 1988, DR and TV2 have competed fiercely for viewers and market shares, and two of the main areas in this competition have been the sports broadcastings and the regular news broadcastings (Frandsen, 2013; Hjarvard, 1999). However, no studies have targeted the specifics of the media texts that sport news broadcastings are. The aim of this study is to understand the particularity of sport news broadcastings and to investigate how the two stations use them in their struggle to position themselves in the media competition.

LITERATURE REVIEW: Danish media coverage of sport is generally dominated by an uncritical focus on soccer, handball and cycling (Horky and Nieland, 2013). The coverage is characterized by a polarization as it focuses on a few well established teams. This has come about as a consequence of the fierce competition within the media market. Today, high audience ratings together with strategic concerns regarding the organizations' placing in various subscription packages appear to be the 'reasons d'etre' for the media organizations that are involved in sports broadcasting (Storm and Brandt, 2008).

Frandsen, (2013) and Hjarvard (1999) have illustrated how TV2 in the early 1990s, as the 'new kid on the block', had great success in positioning its regular news programs and magazine programs on sport in opposition to DR's news and sport programs. TV2 placed their

programs in a more experience oriented frame that had previously not been seen on DR. Such a dramaturgical choice turned out to be tremendously successful in term of positioning TV2 as the market leader in the Danish TV market during the 1990s. However, today DR is catching up and the situation is now somehow turned upside down. The question is then, how the hybridity of sport news broadcastings (they are located in connection with each regular news hour, without ever being regarded as 'hard news') contributes to the two stations positioning within the competition and how they are strategically evolved to gather the highest audience ratings.

RESEARCH DESIGN: The study is designed as a multiple case study including the sport news broadcasted on DR1 and TV2. It is structured around three points of impact in time, spanning over a time period of 18 years. A total of a100 broadcasted sport news (ranging from 3 minutes per broadcasting to 8 minutes per broadcasting) are included in the study. The sport news included have been broadcasted in the first two weeks of April 1994 (N=20), of April 2003 (N=40), and of April 2012 (N=40). These points of impact have been chosen as they differ in the amounts of daily sport news broadcastings aired and as the sport profile of each station differ for each point of impact. The research design allows for both a longitudinal analysis that discovers the changes and the evolution of each station's sport news outlet as well as allowing for a comparative analysis that focuses on possible similarities and differences between the two media organizations.

The broadcastings have been transcribed using a guideline that takes into account the dramaturgical tools of the news broadcastings. The analysis will focus on two main points of impact. First, it will analyze which news criteria that frame the broadcasted stories throughout the period. Second, it will analyze which discourses (Fairclough, 1992) that are articulated and thus frame each media's understanding of what news mediated sport is and how it has developed over time.

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS: This paper represents work-in-progress. The preliminary analysis reveals a striking similarity in the news criteria deployed by both DR and TV2. Seemingly, the different strategies deployed by DR and TV2 in their regular news broadcastings and in their weekly magazine programs on sport are not deployed to the same extend in their sport news broadcastings. Thus, the sport news broadcastings represent a specific media representation of sport that differs from the other televised sport broadcastings. A representation that, despite the two stations' wishes to deliver content that is unique to its competitors, seems to be guided by a shared perception of what broadcasted sport news is and how sport should be framed.

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