

CHARACTERISTICS OF CZECH JOURNALISM AND ITS
INTERPRETATIONS OF SPORT
A collection of research studies

Associate Professor Thesis
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by

Alice Němcová Tejkalová

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1 Introduction

This Associate Professor thesis is a collection of my published scholarly texts representing my two main research interests: firstly, the journalistic environment in the Czech Republic and secondly, the position and specific features sports journalism has within this environment. These texts in both research areas have been innovative and some of them even pioneering, often analysing under-researched or unexplored topics based on empirical research and comparing the theoretical approaches with my professional experience as a long-time sports journalist. In recent years, the younger generation of PhD. students from my research group has been following my path. I have also begun to include other colleagues from my home institution, the Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University (hereafter FSV UK), in my research for the world's most extensive comparative research project in the field of journalism studies, *Worlds of Journalism Study* (<http://www.worldsofjournalism.org>).

Let me briefly introduce the context for my research. In the 1990s, new communication studies were established in the Czech Republic, and their main theoretical approach was that of mass communication (Köpplová, Jiráková, Němcová Tejkalová 2018). At that time, scholarly attention was focused upon the issues that most interested the primary personalities in the field: namely the history of journalism in Czechoslovakia (mapped in: *History of the Czech Media in Dates: Radio, Television and Media Law* (2003) by a team of authors from FSV UK, and later in the *History of the Czech Media in 20th Century* (2010) written by authors from the three universities where media history has been predominantly studied: Jakub Končelík, Pavel Večeřa and Petr Orság and *History of the Czech Media* (2011) by Petr Bednařík, Jan Jiráková and Barbara Köpplová). As new communications studies took root in the Czech Republic, scholars were also preoccupied with the structure of media systems described early on primarily by Milan Šmíd (1992 and 2000), and theoretical studies were mostly represented by translated, summarized works and dictionaries (e.g. McQuail's *Mass Communication Theory* translated by Jan Jiráková and Marcel Kabát (1999), *An Introduction to Media Studies* by Graeme Burton and Jan Jiráková (2001), *The News* by Tomáš Trampota (2006) and the *Dictionary of Media Communication* (2004) by a team of authors led by Irena Reifová).

Gradually, in subsequent decades, the classic content and discourse analyses of the Czech media (both historic and contemporary media as well as TV series) began to appear and were published as articles in scholarly journals or in books (e.g. Bednařík 2013 or Nečas and Trampota 2016). From a theoretical perspective, these works can be categorized as belonging to media or cultural studies.

A group of independent studies that were aimed more at journalism in praxis also began to appear. These studies were authored by scholars gathered mainly around the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University (e.g. *The Encyclopedia of Practical Journalism* edited by Barbora Osvaldová and Jan Halada (1999) or *The News in the Media* by a team of authors led by Barbora Osvaldová, published for the first time in 2001). Authors from Masaryk University in Brno made important contributions to the literature regarding regional and local journalism (e.g. Waschková Císařová, Macek and Macková 2018), and the research of Jaromír Volek and his colleagues (in cooperation with Jan Jiráček from FSV UK) dealt systematically for the first time with journalists themselves, examining their personal background and their profession in the early 21st century (Volek and Jiráček 2006 or Urbániková and Volek 2018). The research and publications of these two groups of authors laid the foundation of the field of journalism studies that has been slowly developing in the Czech Republic (Němcová Tejkalová and Hájek 2016) and my analyses and works presented in the first part of this collection of studies belong there.

While we can find hundreds of scholarly texts in the Czech Republic about journalists specialised in politics or culture and the media content produced by them, media analyses of TV series and other more artistic television programmes—whether students' theses from the departments at Charles University, Masaryk University, Palacký University Olomouc and even the private Metropolitan University in Prague, or journal articles, and books—the field of study of sports journalism and its producers is in a position like that of Cinderella: its potential is, as of yet, unrealized. Even though the situation has been slowly improving in recent years and we can find dozens of scholarly texts, especially BA and MA theses, but also book chapters and a few books (e.g. Děkanovský 2008 or Němcová Tejkalová 2012), only a few scholars systematically dedicate their work to sports journalism. This situation mirrors worldwide trends in media and journalism studies wherein sports journalism was for many years considered not to be a serious analytic topic (just as sports journalism itself is often considered not to be a serious form of journalism). The groundbreaking texts on sports journalism did

not begin to appear until the late 1980s (e.g. Wenner et al. 1989, Wenner et al. 1998 or Rowe 2004) and the causes for this worldwide neglect were very similar to those in the Czech media and communication science.

But there are many reasons why sport and sports journalism should be rigorously studied. People consume and watch sport mostly through the media and it is interesting not only to compare the TV ratings of a sports event with its real “physical” attendance, but also to analyse, as e.g. Andrew C. Billings (2014) did, how exactly people consume and watch sport. Billings (2014) realised that some people spent the whole days consuming only mediatized sports results through their smartphones or computers without watching actual live broadcasts of events.

If we admit that the media do not only mirror the world “as it is”, and consider instead the ways in which the media constructs reality (Hall 2001, Němcová Tejkalová 2012)—how the media mediate only certain parts of reality, according to the individual interpretation of journalists, influenced by the personal, procedural, economic, politic and other institutional factors (Hanitzsch and Mellado 2011)—then it is clearly important to study who and what creates the media image of sport: sports journalism and its producers (sports journalists embedded in media institutions) and the influences affecting them.

While in the case of a written text in which only certain events are highlighted, or in the case of a photograph as a single moment selected from a 90-minute-long soccer match, the audience can perceive the mediatization and the selection of moments, in the case of live sports coverage it is not as easily perceived. In fact, these types of coverage are also impossible to call simple mirrors of reality. As Jan Děkanovský (2008) reminds us, there exists a phenomenon known as the “authentic sports narrative” wherein the authenticity of the sports performance and the narrative are joined together. “Seemingly objective mediatization of the event is in fact the subjective mediatization. Live coverage is not unbiased, contrary to that: from the early days of television broadcasting it has been clear that a live coverage is also the question of selection and manipulation. Television cameras shooting the sports event are selecting its aspects, omitting some of them, concentrating on the other, they change the perspective, etc. Thus, the event is presented to the audience as the director of the live coverage can see it. Therefore, the audience does not get the objective mediatization, but *the interpretation* of the event,” (Děkanovský 2008: 35). It is also impossible to leave out the creativity of experienced camerapersons who offer various types of shots to the directors and bring the directors’

attention to (according to their opinion) interesting moments which happen around them and within their sight.

According to data from the research and opinions of some of the scholars analysing sports journalism (e.g. Toney 2013), even though sports pages have been very important for print media circulation after the financial crisis in 2008, and even though live sports coverage brings great advertising revenues, sports journalism has been, as mentioned, under-researched compared with other fields of journalism.

But we can also find many other differences in the attitude toward sports journalism when we compare it to the texts that may be found in the political pages of newspapers or in the political sections of websites. Some theorists, journalists and audiences—for example in reference to suggestions that business and sport are deeply interconnected—are willing to overlook in sports media content what might otherwise be minimally tolerated in other forms of journalism. Raymond Boyle (2006: 4) remarks on this issue: “The sports industry now regularly involves major media and financial institutions as well as government intervention. This process has helped blur the boundaries between traditional notions of sports journalism and journalism about sports-related activity. The increased centrality of the market in the media industries has helped propel the expansion of a celebrity culture, into which sports stars increasingly find themselves drawn.”

Journalistic standards such as the necessity of distance or objectivity applied (even though often only as an ideal) in the previously mentioned political columns, are often omitted in sports journalism (for example during live coverage of the national teams’ performance or in reports about their results) without it being considered ethical misconduct.

Regarding this issue, it is also interesting to observe how the increased fandom in sports journalism is connected to the partisanship in journalism and the distinct political parallelism described in the theory of media systems by Hallin and Mancini (2004). Like the authors of political articles, French or Italian sports journalists are generally much more emotional and supportive (often not only in the case of their national teams, but also in the case of regular league matches and casual sports events) in comparison to North-European countries with the media system described by Hallin and Mancini (2004) as democratic corporatist. Czech sports journalists stand somewhere in the middle, with more of an inclination toward objectivity while conducting their jobs.

In addition to important descriptions of the state of sports journalism (as e.g. Rowe, 2004), in recent decades, authors dealing with sports journalism have gradually also begun to conduct analyses of its various aspects, such as media coverage of ethnicity (Gardiner 2003, Hermes 2005) athletes' gender (Bernstein 2002, Bruce 2016, Fuller 2018), or the job perspective and experience of female sports journalists (O'Neill and Mulready 2015, O'Neill and Franks 2016), etc. The texts concerning sports journalism from this presented Associate Professor thesis belong to this category of research.

1.1 Commentary to the presented collection of studies

The common thread for the majority of my research work (excluding the summarizing papers about the issues not yet described) is that I am uninterested in simple descriptions of a given situation, brief sketches of a trend or basic content analyses of brief time periods. I am interested in the context, both current and historic. If I become aware of patterns, while conducting research on the media environment, professionals or content, or I witness some new development, I want to know what the reasons for it are and then I do my best to expound it to readers and colleagues in my texts in the most comprehensible and thought-provoking way. I am much more focused on things beyond the visible or obvious issues, I am interested in what is hidden under the surface.

Long-time work with athletes with disabilities and comparison of what happens at their sports events with how it is later mediatized- which parts of events are covered by the media and which are not—inspired my interest in the processes of media stereotyping and framing (Němcová Tejkalová 2012) and their manifestation in various thematic areas. Thus, it is very important for my work analysing sports journalism to enter other fields of study, namely the history and sociology of sport as the sub-disciplines of kinanthropology. There is evidence for this interdisciplinary research in the cooperation between me and my PhD. students with colleagues from the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport and sociologists from the Faculty of Arts within the Progress Q19 research scheme, and previously in my cooperation with colleagues from the Faculty of Physical Culture at Palacký University Olomouc on the development of sport for people with a disability.

For the first article, *The Relationship Between Journalism Studies and Media Professionals in the Czech Republic* (Tejkalová and Láb 2011, pp. 27–38 of this thesis), my co-author Filib Láb and I were inspired by our teaching experience at the Faculty of Social Sciences and our journalistic practice in the media, where we had been repeatedly

confronted with the doubts of others regarding whether graduates of journalism or media studies know anything about professional life. At the same time, our colleagues in the Faculty perceived media professionals who lacked journalistic or media education as insufficient. Therefore, we decided to conduct structured interviews with media professionals both with and without education in journalism or media studies and we were interested in what they acknowledged as the advantages and disadvantages of their education and the education of their colleagues. We wondered if they saw any differences between the work of media professionals who received an education in their field and those who did not. We tried to find out if they had ever encountered arguments that showed a bias towards those either with or without this education or even outright instances of discrimination, etc. We interviewed people in various positions and from different types of media. The findings can be divided into three thematic clusters.

Firstly, we obtained information about the journalists' editorial staff composition relative to the constituents' achieved level of education, and their competent estimations of the percentage of their colleagues with journalism or media education. Our respondents reported that the majority of media professionals working in tabloid, lifestyle and technically-oriented media lacked formal education in journalism. At the same time, it was perceived that the majority of those working within so called serious, hard-news oriented media, especially those under 40 years old, had received a journalistic education.

Secondly, we acquired information about the interviewees' attitudes regarding the usefulness of their education to their jobs. The graduates of journalism and media studies programs tend to see the main advantage of their education as having the deeper perspective on the news making process, on media discourse, etc. The following statement from a technically-oriented journalist working in online media is a typical example of media professionals' attitudes regarding their journalistic education: "I can see a lot of advantages of journalistic education: the important ones are deeper knowledge of the Czech language, improving of the expression abilities, training creativity, getting to know the basics of ethics and copyright law or knowledge of case-studies. Media studies help to understand further concepts of communication," (Tejkalová and Láb 2011: 40, p. 33 of this thesis). Some of the journalists, both those with and without an educational background in the media, considered journalistic education to be particularly important for younger people, especially those searching for their first job. At the same time they did

not see a need for such education among older journalists with considerable media experience and useful contacts in the majority of the media on the market.

Finally, the interviewees did not perceive any major differences between the work routines of people with and without journalistic or media education. Once again, they highlighted the deeper, theoretical perspectives of their colleagues with a degree from schools of communication and journalism. On the other hand, they saw less of an advantage to journalistic education the more years of professional experience a journalist had (more about our results can be found on pp. 39–43 of the article *The Relationship Between Journalism Studies and Media Professionals in the Czech Republic*, pp. 32–36 of this thesis).

We tried to offer a possible interpretation of our results and the situation based upon the historic context of journalistic education in the Czech Republic, and to offer further possibilities of development in journalistic education, in order to reflect upon some of the relevant objections against its form and assure that journalism remains essential and professionally enriching. Thanks to the pilot study conducted for this article, which results we presented to very positive feedback, at a conference about journalism studies in Winterthur in 2009, we were approached by Thomas Hanitzsch from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich and were included as the principal Czech investigators for the second wave of data collection for the *Worlds of Journalism Study* (hereafter WJS).

We also dealt partially with the topic of journalistic education in our second article: *Czech Journalists in the 21st century: Who are They?* (Tejkalová and Láb 2016, pp. 39–59 of this thesis). It was the first complex introduction of the results from interviews with 291 Czech journalists, conducted during the second wave of data collection for WJS. The complete data are unique by their scale and comparability. In this survey we realised that among the professional journalists, approximately half of those with a university education studied journalism or media studies and half of them graduated from other fields of study.

From the other findings we presented in this article, I would like to mention several idiosyncrasies of Czech journalism, based on both historic and social contexts. First of all, the population of Czech journalists and the state of the journalism were strongly influenced by the transition between political regimes after 1989. After 1989 many older journalists in executive positions had to leave their jobs because they had become compromised by various levels of collaboration with Communist elites. The

Czech media therefore lost many of its most experienced journalists. Their places were taken by very young people—often students of journalism—or, during the period immediately following regime change, their positions were filled by dissidents. These were former journalists who had been forced to leave the profession mostly after 1968 due to their negative attitudes toward Soviet occupation (Končelík, Večeřa and Orság 2011; Tejkalová and Láb, 2016). When the situation began to improve slightly at the end of first decade of 21st century, simply due to the aging of these young journalists, the financial crisis came, reducing the numbers of experienced journalists once again. Media management replaced them with younger individuals—again university students in many cases—who were willing to work for lower wages or sometimes for no wage at all in so-called “internship” positions. This resulted in a situation in which the most highly-represented age cohort of journalists within our sample were people between the ages of 24 and 40.

At the beginning and in the conclusion of our article we relate the overall results gained from these interviews to the dramatic change of the media environment, especially the onset of local media moguls and the exit of Western European media owners (Hájek, Štefaníková, Láb a Tejkalová 2014), that occurred during the time the data were gathered. The article was published in the special issue of *Journal of Central European Political Studies* as the result of a common V4 (Visegrad 4) grant project called ROPE with colleagues from Poland, Hungary and Slovakia under the leadership of Agnieszka Stepinska from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan and Gabriella Szabo from Hungarian Academy of Sciences Centre of Excellence.

The third text, *In Media We Trust: Journalists and Institutional Trust Perceptions in Post-authoritarian and Post-totalitarian Countries* (Tejkalová et al. 2017, pp. 60–76 of this thesis), is the follow-up to my work within WJS and it has been the result of the largest team effort I have ever led for one paper. It has been my most internationally quoted article, and was published in *Journalism Studies*, one of the best journals in the respective field of research. The success of the whole special issue dedicated to the results of WJS led the publishing house *Routledge* to publish this collection of texts as a book, called *Comparing Journalistic Cultures* (Hanusch 2019) in the autumn of 2019.

The idea to write this article emerged in Munich in 2015 when I realised during the presentations of results by authors from countries with totalitarian or authoritarian experience at the WJS colloquium that there are many similarities in the

level of journalists' perceived (mis)trust of various societal institutions. After working with people from the Central European region during the V4 ROPE project, I was quite aware of the similarities within the region, but the fact that these features were widespread in the media systems in countries from other continents was quite surprising not only to me but also to colleagues from these respective countries. Scholarly literature in English about the media systems of these regions had been quite limited, so the dispersal of this knowledge throughout the world had therefore been difficult. Thus, I initiated cooperation and we analysed the topic in depth while controlling multiple variables and with regard to both historic and societal contexts. This study is unique in terms of its topic and in its regional representation of countries from various continents (more about the sample of countries and their social and historical similarities and differences can be found in Tejkalová et al. 2017: 629–634, pp. 61–66 of this thesis).

Our main conclusions were influenced by the situation within the analysed countries which we characterised in our article as follows: “In the sampled countries, democratization is a transitional process where elites and authorities still maintain cultural patterns of the recent past. An authoritarian legacy persists in convenient relationships between politics and the media market, showing that media pluralism, as a democratic condition, is not entirely achieved,” (Tejkalová et al. 2017: 637, p. 69 of this thesis). Therefore, the level of perceived trust among journalists in political and regulative institutions (e.g. police, military and justice) in all sampled countries was significantly lower than the trust they had in their own institution: the media. Even though a certain level of distrust in political actors has been considered to be conducive to the critical stance necessary for conducting the journalistic profession (Hanitzsch and Berganza 2012) and was also noted in the WJS results from countries with a more established democratic tradition like the United Kingdom or Germany, there were striking differences between these nations and the countries within our sample. These differences were particularly apparent in the position of judicial systems which received a high ranking and scored first in importance among journalists from countries with longer democratic traditions, while people from our sampled states adhered more (and in the cases of Indonesia and Tanzania even much more) to the media (tables with the results can be found in Tejkalová et al. 2017: 635–636, pp. 67–68 of this thesis).

When moving from “classic” journalism studies toward what can be called sports journalism studies or, more generally and inclusively, sports communication studies, we need to bear in mind all the aforementioned

idiosyncrasies of Czech journalism, while also defining the conditions and discourse of sports journalism. There is only one difference between the population of Czech sports journalists, and the journalistic population in the Czech Republic as a whole, and that is the very low number of women working as sports journalists, ranging from less than 10% in print media to approximately 25% on public TV. The Czech Republic shares this situation with the rest of the “Western” world (Boyle 2006).

Additionally, there is one issue regarding the analysis of sports journalism in the Czech Republic: as I already mentioned, while in the field of “classic” journalism studies it is possible in the Czech Republic to follow existent research and to develop it, when I started to conduct research in sports journalism, it was necessary to describe the majority of phenomenon and aspects from the ground up. The fourth text in this collection, *Sports Reporting from a Slightly Alternative Perspective* (Tejkalová 2010, pp. 77–85 of this thesis), is from this time. It is a translation of a chapter published in Czech in the book *About the Reporting, about the Reporters* which I also co-edited. The book was intended not only as a monograph, addressing the features of the report (or reportage) as a genre in a scholarly perspective for the first time since the fall of Communist regime in the Czech Republic in 1989, but also to partially combine this theoretical approach with examples from the practical experience of the co-authors.

My chapter deals with the language of sports reporting and its thematic bias towards big sports from the commercial point of view (like soccer) and men’s sport. It leans primarily on my personal experience as a TV sports reporter and anchor, using examples from my career and setting them into the theoretical context of journalism studies and concepts like news values (Galtung and Holmboe-Ruge 1999 or Brighton and Foy 2007). Besides the importance of covering the so-called minor sports in a professional manner with experienced and specialized journalists, if we want those sports to catch the interest of the audience, I highlighted the necessity to report on women’s sport in an appropriate, equal and unbiased way. This resonates with the approach of Bernstein (2002), Bruce (2016) or (Fuller 2018).

The thematic bias partially described in the aforementioned chapter led me to further thoughts about the content of sports coverage and its links to societal discourse, construction and deconstruction of myths, and the highlighting of some events and suppression of others. The results of the analyses based on those theoretical approaches are the last two papers presented in this collection of texts.

The first of them, the article *Twenty Years After: Czech Heroes and Fallen Heroes of the Nagano 1998 Olympic Games* (Tejkalová 2019, pp. 86–103 of this thesis), maps the thus far uninvestigated continuation of the greatest Czech sports narrative of the end of the 20th century: the victory of the Czech ice-hockey team at the Winter Olympic Games in Nagano. This event has been a subject of sports mythology, books, documentary movies, and even an opera. But I was more interested in the broader historic context (why exactly such an event resonated so much in Czech society), and primarily in the stories of those selected as heroes, because their careers, both real and mediated, differed. Sometimes they evolved in a very unheroic manner and the media played an important role in the construction of these stories and their transmission to the audience. This article for the special issue *Wintersport und Medien* of *Medien Journal* published by *Österreichische Gesellschaft für Kommunikationswissenschaft* was based on my invited presentation at the conference of Austrian and German sports journalism scholars *Tagung Mediensport & Sportkommunikation 2018* organized by Universität Salzburg.

The article presents the results of qualitative media frame analysis of the three famous Czech ice-hockey players who were covered extensively by the media during the Nagano Olympic Games—the goalkeeper Dominik Hašek, the team captain Vladimír Růžička and the young NHL star Jaromír Jágr. The texts from six Czech print media outlets within the time span of 20 years from the 1st February 1998 until 31st March 2018 were analysed (for more detailed information about the sampling and a final sample go to Tejkalová 2019: 88–89, pp. 91–92 of this thesis).

The three media narratives were very different. In the case of Jaromír Jágr the media framing became mostly positive and heroic after the Nagano Games. Previous to Nagano, his image was more that of the genial “enfant terrible” of Czech ice-hockey. But over the years his image gradually turned into the news myth called a “good mother” by Jack Lule (2001) (more details about Jágr’s media framing can be found in Tejkalová 2019: 91–92, pp. 94–95 of this thesis, compare also to Suchan 2015).

Out of the trio, Vladimír Růžička received the most diverse media coverage. This once admired and celebrated player and coach had a strong heroic media framing until his image was turned into the reversed trickster and fallen heroic media framing when he was accused and later found guilty of fraud. On the other hand, the media gave him a second chance when he started to coach the provincial team Pirates Chomutov,

and sometimes even celebrated him again in their articles (more about Růžička's framing can be found in Tejkalová 2019: 92–94, pp. 95–97 of this thesis).

The media image of Dominik Hašek was a mixture of the two previous ones. In 1998 people shouted at the Old Town Square that he should have run for a president and that he was more god than human. Journalists cheered him enormously in their texts, and he was definitely the biggest hero of the three analysed ice-hockey players. But after an incident during an inline hockey match with Martin Šíla Hašek's media image has never been the same. The ambivalence in his media framing, represented by both the heroic and slightly fallen heroic frames can still be detected today (more details about Hašek's media framing can be found in Tejkalová 2019: 89–91, pp. 92–94 of this thesis).

The last article from this collection of studies follows my interest in gender in sport and its coverage by sports journalism, sketched more from the empirical and professional point of view in the chapter *Sports Reporting from a Slightly Alternative Perspective* (Tejkalová 2010). As we write in the article *Anything Can Happen in Women's Tennis, or Can It? An Empirical Investigation Into Bias in Sports Journalism* (Tejkalova and Kristoufek 2019, pp. 104–122 of this thesis), published in the prestigious journal *Communication & Sport* by Sage, many content and discourse analyses of sports coverage have been published in both the past and in recent years, which clearly proved that media all over the world dealt differently with similar achievements and results in men's and women's sport, and this approach strengthens or even naturalizes the hegemony and the privileged position of men's sport. Women's performance has frequently been marginalized and their mistakes overestimated and journalists sometimes play into stereotypes regarding the so-called "unpredictability" of women's sport due to their allegedly psychological instability and physical insufficiency. As Messner, Duncan and Jensen (1993) posed it, female athletes are "more likely to be framed as failures due to some combination of nervousness, lack of confidence, lack of being 'comfortable', lack of aggression, and lack of stamina," (Messner, Duncan and Jensen 1993: 130).

After again witnessing the unequivocally biased voice-over of a women's tennis match on Czech TV, a disappointed sigh from the commentator that "anything can happen in women's tennis", my co-author Ladislav Krištoufek and I decided to verify the (un)justification of such generalizing statements with the help of scientific data analysis instead of dependence on personal beliefs and experience.

Tennis results are accessible in great detail and for a long period of time, therefore, thanks to the database of Jeff Sackmann (<https://github.com/JeffSackmann>), we were able to analyse almost 225,000 results (matches ranging from futures for men and WTA international for women up to the Grand Slams and the Olympics), from 1968 up to April 2018. To minimize the possibility of bias we worked with this wide range of data, then set up two control samples: the first one being a sample for the years 2000–2018, the second being from the same time period, but working only with results from “special tournaments” like Grand Slams and the Olympic Games.

To operationalize the “anything can happen effect”, we decided to study the probability that the player with the better rank at the beginning of the match is going to win, assuming that the greater the ranking difference between the players, the higher the probability for the higher ranked athlete to win the match will be. And we observed and compared the distinctions between male and female players. “As explanatory variables, we include the rank difference as the main variable of interest and then we also include other control explanatory variables that are expected to play a role in the likelihood of winning a match, specifically the age difference between players, the tournament level, surface, round of the tournament, and whether at least one of the players is ranked in the Top 5, Top 10, or Top 100 of the respective ranking. The selection of control variables is not random and is based on prevailing expectations about tennis match dynamics and data availability,” (Tejkalova and Kristoufek 2019: 8, p. 111 of this thesis).

Our analysis proved the conviction that in women’s tennis the higher-ranked players lose to lower-ranked players more often than in men’s tennis, so “anything can happen” has no support not only in the whole cohort of the almost 225,000 results but also in the control samples. On the contrary, we realised that the men’s results are less predictable with respect to the rank difference between the players compared to women’s matches (Tejkalova and Kristoufek 2019: 15, p. 118 of this thesis).

This article also gained attention from non-scholarly audiences. After it was mentioned on social networks, the article’s results were described in a full-page article in the serious Czech newspaper *Daily N* (Janeczek 2019) and its results were also referenced in a prime-time news session of Czech TV *FTV Prima* on 6th December 2019.

1.2 Opportunities for future research

As it is visible from this collection of presented texts, in both the area of “classic” and sports journalism studies there are many blank spots waiting to be mapped and analysed. I believe that with the help of colleagues from various Faculties of Charles University and also those from Masaryk University and Palacký University Olomouc, we will gradually manage that.

As a recent example of good collaborative practices I would mention the cooperation of researchers from the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Faculty of Social Sciences and Faculty of Arts under the umbrella of *Progress Q19 Social Science Aspects of Human Movement Research II*, already having the first published outputs (Czech Kinanthropology, 2018). For example, in the aforementioned special issue of *Czech Kinanthropology* edited by Marek Waic from the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, dedicated to the anniversary of the foundation of Czechoslovakia and the role of sport in it, my PhD. student Marta Chladová published a paper about the famous Czech radio sports journalist Josef Laufer (Chladová, 2018). And we plan to add to this cooperation a monograph about the history of Czech—later Czechoslovak and then Czech again— sports journalism, using the expertise of other internal and external members of the Department of Journalism at FSV UK, Robert Záruba (Záruba 1989) and David Lukšů (Lukšů 2011).

The articles of my other PhD. students Veronika Macková, Ondřej Trunečka and Kateřina Turková (Macková and Trunečka 2015, Macková and Turková 2019) researching various aspects of sports of athletes with a disability use similar approaches to the work of colleagues at the Faculty of Physical Culture at Palacký University Olomouc (e.g. Kudláček and Ješina 2013, Zelenka and Kudláček 2016), and through the combination of sports journalism studies and sports sociological perspective (e.g. Fialová, Macková and Tejkalová 2016) follow also the work of Aleš Sekot from the Faculty of Sports Studies at Masaryk University (Sekot 2008). Therefore, the way has been opened for various interdisciplinary research projects and future cooperative efforts.

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