

On-Air, Off-Balance: Detecting and Examining Media Biases in Filipino Sportscasting

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Abstract

With sports gaining global acclaim and recognition, media outlets have extensively covered a myriad of sporting events with a particular emphasis on international tournaments. In the digital age, media is crucial for disseminating news and shaping audience perspectives especially in sportscasting where local sportscasters tend to show affection and allegiance to their home nation by providing more airtime and positive commentaries to athletes representing their country. Such an approach shortchanges the viewers' right to unbiased and diverse perspectives. Hence, it is imperative for media outlets, particularly during live sports broadcasts, to adeptly navigate and manage biases, given the significant impact of nationalistic positioning on sports media. In this study, the researchers analyzed the language employed by sportscasters in the local media coverage of the games of the Philippines Men's Basketball Team, also known as Gilas Pilipinas, during the FIBA World Cup 2023. Following a mixed-method approach, the study sought to understand how sportscasters detect and manage media biases through corpus analysis. The investigation involved identifying prevalent forms of media biases within the study corpus, focusing on lexico-semantic, discourse, and pragmatic constructions that serve as indicators of these biases. The study findings indicated that all the analyzed sports broadcasts contained evident manifestations of media biases. Moreover, it was revealed that Filipino sportscasters exhibited a range of media biases favoring Gilas Pilipinas, and that the media biases in their utterances were affected by the phenomenon of nationalistic positioning that raises concerns about fairness and impartiality. Consequently, the frequency of these biased expressions in sportscasters' utterances was found to be contingent upon the specific context, varying with the situation. Furthermore, these biases can be identified through specific linguistic cues and features. This paper underscores the importance of fostering a more equitable sportscasting environment while simultaneously fortifying language and media education initiatives.

Keywords

sportscasting, media biases, corpus analysis, broadcasting, sports linguistics

Introduction

Sports have gained worldwide popularity and international recognition. It has also long been appreciated as a sociocultural activity valued by millions of people across the globe (Coalter, 2007), and its popularity has led to a significant increase in the number of athletes, fans, sponsors, viewership of matches and other sporting events (Varmus et al., 2022). Moreover, the population of sports enthusiasts continues to increase in the digital era, where people enjoy listening to the radio, watching television and increasingly accessing information via the Internet (Clifford, 2008). Indeed, digital technology has significantly altered the way sports are observed.

With the help of technology, extensive coverage of international sporting events is already being offered and provided by various media outlets (Raney, 2006). Undeniably, these innovations and technological advancements have produced content that is more accessible and flexible for sports fans (Kariyawasama & Tsai, 2017), and these sports contents have a substantial impact on how audiences will perceive media (Kim, 2021). However, it must be noted that digital technologies such as Internet streaming on mobile phones, tablets, and other Internet-enabled devices have overshadowed traditional methods of viewing sports content on television via specific sports channels (Kariyawasama & Tsai, 2017). Undoubtedly, live streaming featuring game coverages, which has been heralded as the dawn of a new era in sports broadcasting, has drastically changed the transmission of sporting events (Kariyawasama & Tsai, 2017).

The media also plays an indispensable role in society, particularly in the dissemination of news and information (Benson & Powers, 2011), as they can also shape how their audience views and recognizes a topic through their choice of words (Grefenstette et al., 2004). Given these circumstances, it is of paramount importance for public broadcasters, who hold a pivotal position in delivering news, to uphold the responsibility of offering objective and trustworthy content. With the established positive impact of public broadcasting on citizens' knowledge and its role in fostering an informed society (Fraile & Iyengar, 2014; Soroka et al., 2013), it is imperative that the media prioritize the delivery of impartial and unbiased content, for these biases in the media are flaws in news production (Park et al., 2009).

Media bias refers to the intentional and persistent presentation of information in a biased manner. According to Williams (1975), it is characterized by two key characteristics: First, it must be deliberate, that is, the result of a deliberate decision or choice; and second, it must be sustained, which signifies that it is not a one-time occurrence but rather a consistent and systematic pattern over time. Moreover, media bias is not just limited to regular news coverage; it can also be seen in sports and game reporting, particularly when sportscasters resort to employing stereotypes, making unfair assumptions and generalizations about a sports team, coach or player, and then using those ideas to predict and explain the behavior of every individual in that group (Davis & Harris, 1998). In addition, numerous studies have also demonstrated that sports announcing frequently contains concealed racism and sexism, which also results in media bias (Whannel, 2000).

Furthermore, there are various types of media bias that can influence the presentation and perception of information, particularly in the realm of sports and athletics. Common types of bias include confirmation biases, where information is selectively chosen to confirm pre-existing beliefs; absence of fairness and balance in reporting; story selection that prioritizes certain topics; tone biases that convey a particular viewpoint; neutrality and false balance issues that may treat unequal arguments as equal; demographic biases that affect how certain groups are portrayed in the media; partisan biases that align with a particular political viewpoint; biases based on perceived superiority; and biases that marginalize certain sports. All these types and forms of bias can have an impact on public opinion and perceptions in the sports industry.

Common Types of Biases

Confirmation Bias

Confirmation bias, which was first identified back in 1948, refers to the tendency of various individuals to seek or interpret information that confirms their preexisting beliefs. It was defined as the phenomenon in which people select or spend disproportionately more time with messages that align with their preexisting opinions as opposed to information that challenges those ideas and thoughts (Westerwick et al., 2017). In addition, it must also be noted that the opinions of others are especially susceptible to confirmation bias, and this is possibly because people tend to disregard them as subjective (Kappes et al., 2020). In simpler terms, confirmation bias occurs when individuals seek only information that confirms their views and ignore anything that contradicts their existing beliefs (Kappes et al., 2020).

In the field of sports, confirmation biases are also evident. For instance, these biases can be observed when sports fans and supporters only entertain and remember positive information about the team and players they support, while dismissing and ignoring any negative thoughts that can lead to biased perceptions of sports figures and personalities. Confirmation bias also takes place when fans are extremely passionate about their team, they tend to pay more attention to information that confirms their preexisting beliefs, while disregarding any information that contradicts them (Sherman et al., 2000). For instance, if a die-hard fan believes their team will be successful and the stadium will be packed, they will focus on statistics and news that support this belief and disregard any information that contradicts it (Dwyer et al., 2018). They can even disagree with the referee's decision to be in favor of their favorite teams and athletes.

Absence of Fairness and Balance

In media reporting, balance and fairness are regarded as fundamental principles of ethical journalism (Benham, 2020). In fact, fairness and objectivity are also viewed as crucial factors in determining media bias (Fico & Cote, 1999) given that the absence of these concepts in a straight news report often results in the failure to present a well-rounded and impartial portrayal of the event or issue. In journalism, the concepts of fairness and balance, though closely related, pose a challenge due to their interchangeable use without a clear understanding of their distinctions (Benham, 2020).

To differentiate these two concepts, balance refers to the treatment of each side relative to the others whereas fairness focuses on representing both sides in a single narrative; however, it is important to note that simply being fair does not guarantee balance, as giving one side more space or emphasis can still result in an unbalanced narrative (Fico & Cote, 1997). On the other hand, fairness can still be achieved even if individual stories appear to be biased, so long as each side receives a proportional share of coverage overall (Fico & Cote, 1997).

In the realm of sports and athletics, although there are only a few studies that have examined the absence of fairness and balance in sports media coverage, it is expected that some sports writers and broadcasters may not realize they are inadvertently displaying bias in their articles and game reports. Given that some of them are more exposed to reading news about a particular team than others, and that some sports industry icons are more well known than others, it may be more advantageous for media outlets to feature these individuals and discuss their activities on and off the court.

Story Selection

Story selection is the process by which news organizations choose which topics and events to cover in their reporting. It occurs when only a small number of events are observed and reported, while the vast majority of other possible events are omitted (McCarthy, 1996). In selecting stories or angles to cover, media outlets consider several factors such as the significance of the subject, its potential impact on the audience, its relevance to the target audience, available resources, time constraints, and the media organization's institutional goals. In addition, story selection is also considered as a form of media bias that can potentially compromise the accuracy and general applicability of various information being presented.

In sports and athletics, media story selection bias manifests itself through unequal coverage of certain sports, events, or athletes relative to others, as news organizations have a tendency to prioritize well-known sports, teams, and athletes, while ignoring lesser-known events and figures. Such bias can perpetuate inadvertently unequal representation and recognition in the sports industry, which necessitates a more balanced and inclusive approach to sports media coverage. Certainly, this type of media bias impedes a comprehensive understanding of complex topics and demonstrates the inherent difficulty of achieving objectivity in media coverage.

Tone Bias

Tone is an important aspect of journalism that influences how individuals perceive and comprehend the news. It encompasses the writer's emotions, language choices, and it also refers to how writers establish credibility as they present their own opinions. In 2019, Li et al. also defined it as the distinction between positive and negative news coverage.

In the realm of sports, media tone bias is frequently seen in the expressions of sportscasters and journalists. This bias may manifest itself if they have personal ties to particular players or teams, or if they admire particular sports figures. Furthermore,

sensationalism in sports commentary can contribute to tone bias that influences how the public perceives events, teams, and players. To gain a deeper understanding of sporting events, it is essential for media consumers to be aware of tone bias and to approach information critically.

Neutrality, False Balance or Both-sidesing

Neutrality, also known as "false balance" or "both sides," occurs when media outlets take a neutral stance by giving well-supported evidence and opposing viewpoints equal weight that can mislead the audience (Thomas et al., 2017). For experts and scholars, it refers to the media's presentation of scientific claims with unequal validity (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004; Lewis & Speers, 2003). This media practice is viewed negatively, as it legitimizes false claims by placing them on equal footing with genuine ones (Thomas et al., 2017), especially in areas where scientific consensus is widespread (Corbett & Durfee, 2004). In addition, false balance takes place when some news organizations and media outlets present scientifically dubious claims and fringe ideas as having the same credibility as the scientific consensus (Thomas et al., 2017). Moreover, given that false balance is a form of media bias in which opposing viewpoints are presented as equally valid despite the absence of evidence to support such claims (Benhamu, 2016), it is no longer a surprise that this media practice is observed by journalists across various disciplines and sectors.

In the field of sports and athletics, sportscasters and sportswriters may also feel obligated to provide equal coverage to opposing sides, even if the information presented lacks equal weight and significance. To avoid being labeled as biased by sports fans, sportscasters may avoid sensationalism and provide fair commentary, equal criticism, and balanced reviews regardless of the game's outcome. Unfortunately, this media practice can unconsciously perpetuate false balance and mislead audiences by giving equal importance to less substantiated viewpoints which may potentially distort the accurate portrayal of sports events and coverages. In light of these considerations, the media must be able to control the widespread use of false balance in diverse settings.

Demographic Bias

Demographic media bias occurs when news organization employees, such as journalists and editors, have similar backgrounds and perspectives. Consequently, they may not fully comprehend or accurately represent the experiences and perspectives of various groups of people in their writing and reporting. To avoid this type of media bias and provide more comprehensive and balanced coverage, newsrooms must be diverse and inclusive, with a wide range of perspectives and voices.

In the world of sports, schools and colleges also have a demographic bias, which is evident in their recruitment programs. Even in professional sports, teams may favor athletes of different races and demographic profiles because they believe these individuals will excel on the field. Typically, taller recruits receive more offers and playing time than those with physical limitations. This bias is also evident in various sports media coverage, where sports writers and commentators frequently give more attention and

praise to winning teams and famous athletes who fit the stereotypical image of successful players, while ignoring those who do not conform to these stereotypes.

Partisan Bias

Partisan bias is another type of media bias that occurs when news coverage favors a particular political party, viewpoint, or group. It takes place when the media's objectivity and accuracy are being put into question, and this form of media bias can heavily influence how people perceive events and ideas which significantly impacts public opinion by restricting their exposure to diverse perspectives and distorting reality and disproportionately favoring one party over the other (Groeling, 2013). Partisan bias in media also means that they often focus on the positive aspects of an individual, party, events, or a particular topic while ignoring or downplaying any negative or critical information about them (Shultziner & Stukalin, 2021).

In the field of athletics, partisan bias may also be present in distinct ways, such as coverage discrepancies, framing and narratives, selection of storylines, sponsorship and advertising of sports events, and sports analysis and commentaries. In addition, partisan media bias can also influence and affect how sports stories are presented and perceived by the readers and viewers, which can lead to creating divisions within the sporting community. Indeed, partisan media bias illustrates the significant impact the media has on public opinion and numerous fields. With this, addressing partisan bias in the current media environment becomes more crucial for making informed decisions. Additionally, recognizing the complexities of partisan bias will be very helpful in lessening its negative impacts in shaping discourse and decisions.

Perceived Superiority

Perceived superiority bias, also known as illusory superiority, above average effect, and leniency error (Pietroni & Hughes, 2016), influences how individuals perceive themselves, causing them to overestimate their positive qualities and abilities while underestimating their negative traits in comparison to others. This bias arises when individuals believe they are superior to the norm (Alicke, 1985; Zell et al., 2020) and can affect numerous facets of life, such as believing they are greater than the average person (Greenwald, 1980); thus, anticipating more favorable outcomes (Weinstein, 1980). While some individuals may be truly exceptional, it is unlikely that the majority of the population is superior to the average (Taylor & Brown, 1988).

In the field of sports and athletics, perceived superiority can be traced and observed among sports journalists and commentators when they use positive language and imagery to highlight the achievements and skills of various sports teams and athletes and portray them as exceptional and superior in their respective fields. Fans and viewers may therefore view these sports personalities as vastly superior to the average person in terms of their physique and skills. Additionally, the competitive nature of sports coverage can also contribute to the perception of superiority among fans and supporters of different teams or athletes. Whenever fans have high admiration towards sports teams and athletes, they then believe that these people are highly superior over rival

teams or athletes in any case. However, only a few studies have examined how illusory superiority influences and impacts the sports community.

Sportscasting

With sporting events providing the grandest of stages and offering entertainment that still captivates the masses (Billings, 2009), the emergence of sports media has also made it an area of research interest (Pilar et al., 2019). The roles of the media in propagating and promoting sports have also piqued the interest of scholars who wish to research the subject, particularly sports broadcasting considering that it is essential for delivering live sports content and providing analysis to millions of sports fans around the world.

Through sports broadcasting, people can easily engage with live sports events (Hwang & Lim, 2015), and access game-related information (Larkin & Fink, 2016). Additionally, it enables individuals to connect with athletes through various social media platforms (Smith & Sanderson, 2015). Undeniably, sports fans aim to address and provide their needs through sports broadcasts (Hawkins et al., 2001).

Not only that, in broadcasting sports games, it is also vital to keep in mind that the information presented during the game coverage must genuinely arouse a sports fan's interest for them to access sports content frequently and persistently (Cavalier, 2011). Additionally, in watching these sports broadcasts, sports fans seek to fulfill their desires (Hawkins et al., 2001), which means that sportscasters must satisfy both the entertainment and informational needs of the sports fans. Sportscasters achieve this by employing various techniques to engage their audience and by employing dramatic language to make the experience more exciting for less enthusiastic viewers. However, this approach has been proven to be divisive, with individuals either loving it or strongly disliking it (Rowe, 2004).

In addition, research also indicates that sportscasters are susceptible to biases that can affect the quality and objectivity of their reporting despite their prominent role in sports broadcasting. With this, the media must be careful in choosing the sports content that they will deliver and must be critical in deciding which content is newsworthy (Pilar et al., 2019) especially because sports broadcasts, similar to athletes' performances during sporting games and events, are irrevocable and immutable once they are already shown (Rowe, 2004). As a result, its complicated nature, particularly its unique difficulties and potential for both entertainment and mistakes, receives much attention and discussion in the world of sports media (Rowe, 2004).

Roles of Sportscasters

The broadcasting industry relies heavily on commentators (Kim, 2021), which best explains why sportscasters play a vital role in making sports broadcasts successful and effective. During these game coverage and sporting events, sportscasters are responsible for providing play-by-play and color commentary to viewers, thereby enhancing their understanding of the action on the field or court. The in-game commentaries and analysis they give not only contribute significantly to the broadcast's

appeal to viewers, but their abilities and skills in delivering sports commentaries also quantify a sports broadcast's overall quality (Chen, 2010).

Considering that the job of professional sports broadcasters, which includes providing information and entertainment in real time on high-tech grounds, is challenging, sportscasters would need a variety of techniques to prove their credibility and boost their popularity as commentators (Kim, 2021). They must also be able to deliver audio and video to media consumers, particularly to sports spectators, given the technical aspects of broadcasting, the intricate game flow, and the drama behind the athletes and the games (Kim, 2021). Moreover, it must be noted that unlike most media productions that allow for editing and refining, live sports coverage provides a real-time account of the action, which means that any errors or revisions are not possible, adding an extra layer of complexity to their roles (Rowe, 2004). With this, it may be posited that the job of sportscasters is challenging and unique.

Furthermore, sportscasters are also expected to deliver messages and sports content clearly and generate discussion effectively to facilitate interaction with the sports spectators. This discussion and interaction, together with the appeal and flow of sports broadcasts (Chen, 2010), should increase listeners' and viewers' confidence and reliance on the content producer, as they frequently return to this source for reliable information (Berger & Calabrese, 1974). In addition, sportscasters are also expected to establish online communication channels to make themselves reachable to a community of contributors (Cavalier, 2011). In addition to validating the global nature of the Internet, Tewksbury (2005) suggests that a local sportscaster can build a local audience for on-air broadcasts by regularly posting creative content online. Indeed, in the digital age, it is a must for these sportscasters to adapt to the changing media landscape and assume a wider variety of responsibilities than just fulfilling their traditional roles (Fuller, 2008). They must be capable of multitasking across multiple platforms, and they must also be skilled in promoting themselves, copywriting effectively and pleasing management and advertisers (Fuller, 2008).

Nationalistic Positioning of Sportscasters

In sportscasting, sportscasters tend to provide more airtime and positive commentaries to the athletes playing for their home country (Billings & Eastman, 2003). This is because even in the field of sports and athletics, the formation of national identities is closely intertwined with the way members of that nation perceive themselves and the manner in which those from outside the nation interpret this perception (Tervo, 2002). In addition, nationalism is crucial in sports reporting because it helps highlight the pride and identity associated with a nation and bring together diverse groups in the public sphere (Dixon, 2000). This phenomenon in which sports journalists and broadcasters exhibit a nationalistic bias in their reporting is referred to as nationalist positioning.

Nationalistic positioning pertains to the way sportscasters and journalists exhibit affection and allegiance towards their native nation (Altwater, 2012) and showcases their love and loyalty for their own country (Bairner, 1996). In addition, nationalistic positioning does not only foster a deeper sense of national pride and unity, but also

enriches the overall viewing experience of the sports fans and spectators. As Malcom (2009) emphasized, this sense of national affiliation is fundamental to the notion of national identity, which best explains why nationalistic positioning is very common to international sports broadcasts (Billings & Eastman, 2003). Although it may sound biased for others, nationalistic positionings are welcomed in the field of sports and athletics, as it helps connect the sporting events to the audience (Morgan, 2000). Undeniably, it exerts influence over the narrative and forges an intimate rapport with the sports viewers and fans. In addition, it must be noted that nationalistic positions among sportscasters and sports journalists are also virtually inevitable, given that media institutions exert influence over how journalists approach this aspect (Altvater, 2012).

With the power that sports media have, they must acknowledge the significant impacts of nationalistic positioning to the way they mold the perceptions of their audiences during sports broadcasts (Bairner, 1996). Considering that they influence the actualities of the sports world, sportscasters and sports journalists must recognize the crucial roles they play in constructing and depicting the identities of nations, teams, and athletes through their sports narratives (Hall, 1997). Unfortunately, sportscasters and sports journalists seem to lack awareness of the extent to which they influence national stances, resulting in a rise in nationalistic methodologies when covering sports (Bruce, 2004; Schlegel, 2007).

Research Gap

In the digital era, amidst the widespread popularity of sports and the surge in sports media, there is a discernible knowledge gap concerning the nuanced impact of sports media on both sports consumers and sports personalities. Specifically, there is a dearth of studies revolving and examining the realm of sports broadcasting and delving into the linguistic intricacies employed by sportscasters and the inherent biases shaping their language and linguistic choices. In addition, the challenges, and opportunities inherent in the real-time and dynamic nature of sportscasting necessitate more scholarly investigations.

Moreover, although there are numerous studies that have been conducted on media biases in various fields, the field of athletics, particularly sports game coverage, has been overlooked. With this, recognizing these media biases is essential for ensuring fair and accurate sports journalism and creating a more inclusive media portrayal of sports. Consequently, this study aims to address this knowledge gap by analyzing latent biases that may influence the media portrayal of athletes and sporting events in sportscasting through an in-depth analysis of the language used in sports media.

Research Objective

This study examined the different forms of biases in Filipino sportscasting and the constructions that reflected these biases. Specifically, this study answered the following questions:

1. What forms of biases are perpetuated in Filipino sportscasting?
 - a. confirmation bias;
 - b. absence of fairness and balance;
 - c. story selection bias;
 - d. tone bias;
 - e. neutrality, false balance, or both-sidesing;
 - f. demographic bias;
 - g. partisan bias; and
 - h. perceived superiority bias
2. What lexico-semantic, discourse and pragmatic constructions hint at these biases?

Method

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-method approach to provide a comprehensive understanding on how sportscasters can detect and manage media biases whenever they are commentating on various sporting events and games. Additionally, this methodological approach enabled the researcher to engage in research inquiries using both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms (Combs & Onwuegbuzie, 2010).

Moreover, this approach also helped enhance the interpretation of quantitative findings by employing qualitative insights (Berman, 2017) and elevated scholarly discourse by maximizing on the strengths inherent to both quantitative and qualitative research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Furthermore, this study involved using qualitative transcripts of sportscasts as data, which will be subsequently analyzed quantitatively through the tabulation of its features, particularly lexico-semantic, discourse and pragmatic constructions that indicate and imply biases. A visual illustration of the study's research design is provided below.

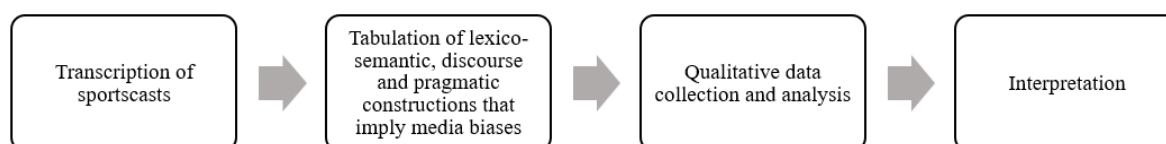


Figure 1. Research Design of the Study

By using this research design, the study was expected to produce a holistic analytical approach that transcends the limitations of singular methodologies, yielding not only exhaustive results but also greater insights.

Study Corpus

In this study, the corpus were the transcripts of the local media coverage of the games of the Philippines Men's Basketball Team, also known as Gilas Pilipinas, in the FIBA World Cup 2023. Specifically, these games were taken from the media coverage of One Sports+ that served as one of the official FIBA World Cup 2023 broadcasters in the Philippines, alongside TV5 and Cignal TV. Known for its meticulous curation of its content, One Sports+ effectively solidifies its status as a sports channel that seamlessly bridges the domains of entertainment and information, thereby redefining the landscape of sports broadcasting especially for die-hard fans (Bryman, 2016).

Moreover, FIBA World Cup 2023 was chosen in this study since it is a highly prestigious basketball tournament where top national teams from around the world participate. In addition, this league is also an Olympic qualification event, which means that the best performing teams have a huge chance of booking their tickets to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. Furthermore, the sports event was hosted by the Philippines, which means that there is a huge tendency and high likelihood that local sportscasters were more biased. All the five games of Gilas Pilipinas in the said tournament were analyzed in this study. The list of games analyzed in the study is provided below.

Table 1. Games of Gilas Pilipinas During the FIBA World Cup 2023

Participating Teams	Final Score	Date	Venue
Dominican Republic VS Philippines	87-81	August 25, 2023	Philippine Arena
Philippines VS Angola	70-80	August 27, 2023	Araneta Coliseum
Philippines VS Italy	83-90	August 29, 2023	Araneta Coliseum
South Sudan VS Philippines	87-68	August 31, 2023	Araneta Coliseum
Philippines VS China	96-75	September 2, 2023	Araneta Coliseum

Data Collection

During the data collection, the corpora of the study were prepared and transcribed for the data analysis. After thoroughly analyzing each game, two transcribers were tasked with creating precise transcripts. They achieved this by meticulously reviewing recorded sports broadcasts of Gilas Pilipinas games during the FIBA World Cup 2023, accessible through the Pilipinas Live application. Developed and launched by Cignal TV, this OTT streaming platform supports multiple screen viewing and allows its users to seamlessly access diverse sports coverage, including the FIBA World Cup 2023 events on OneSports+.

Following the completion of the transcription process for sports broadcasts, the researchers performed a comprehensive validation procedure on the prepared transcripts in order to ensure the accuracy of the corpus. Specifically, the researchers conducted an in-depth review of the transcripts during the verification process by comparing them with the primary sources. This process of double-checking with the original source included a detailed comparison with the recordings of the sports broadcasts to identify any discrepancies, errors, or misinterpretations that may have been overlooked by the initial transcribers, thereby ensuring the accuracy of the depicted content.

Moreover, intelligent verbatim transcriptions were produced to create a clearer and more easily comprehensible set of transcriptions. In addition, this helped the researchers achieve readability, time efficiency, and reduced distractions by excluding filler words and non-essential elements. Moreover, the live coverage of One Sports+ during the FIBA World Cup 2023 were streamed from the Pilipinas Live application and were completely transcribed. Checking of transcripts were also done to assess if the transcriptions were accurate. After that, corpus analysis was manually conducted by examining and evaluating the transcribed data to uncover linguistic features, discourse structures, and media biases in sportscasting.

Data Analysis

In this study, data was analyzed through corpus analysis, a well-established area for language description and analysis (Aijmer & Altenberg, 1991). Corpus analysis, which refers to the systematic examination and study of large, structured collections of written, spoken, or electronically transcribed texts or utterances, was performed by the researchers to identify the media biases that are apparent in Filipino sportscasting. In this study, corpus analysis will be conducted after completing the transcription of all sportscasts. This procedure involves the manual counting of media bias occurrences, followed by their classification according to their respective forms. In addition, corpus analysis was performed by the researcher to identify lexico-semantic, discourse, and pragmatic constructions that illustrate media biases.

In this study, the exploration of media biases in sportscasting involved a meticulous process of deconstructing transcripts into smaller units, with a keen focus on identifying utterances expressing biases. In delving into lexico-semantic constructions, particular attention was given to scrutinizing word choices that signaled biases, alongside an examination of how figurative language, narrative flow, and style contributed to bias indicators. The study also encompassed pragmatic analysis by employing contextual scrutiny to unveil implicit meanings, speech acts, and other elements, aiming to elucidate their roles in shaping media biases. A visual illustration of the study's corpus analysis procedure is shown in Picture 2.

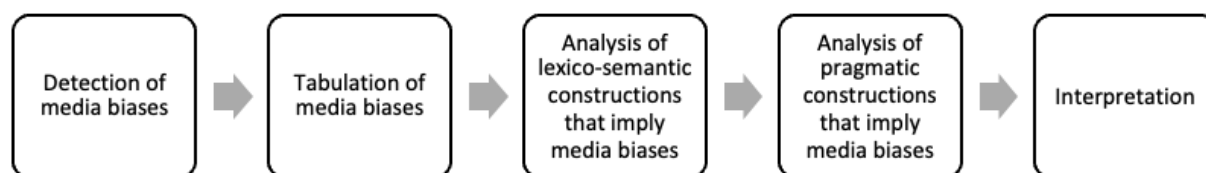


Figure 2. Corpus Analysis Procedure

Recognizing the crucial role of data reliability in strengthening confidence in findings, the study implemented a rigorous intercoder agreement procedure, exceeding the 30% norm by meticulously analyzing 60% of the dataset. Specifically, a collaborative approach known as joint inter-coding was employed. This involved simultaneous engagement

between the primary researchers and inter-coders as they collectively scrutinized and analyzed the data. Consequently, this approach strengthened the reliability of the study's results, ensuring a robust and validated outcome. The two inter-coders were Ph.D. students who have fulfilled their academic requirements and are currently engaged in writing their dissertations in English Language Studies. They examined the process of identifying media biases in the corpus, along with the tabulation and frequency count.

Units of Analysis

In this study, the focus of the investigation and examination is on the utterances of the sportscasters taken from the transcripts produced from select sports broadcasts. In contrast to simple sentences, utterances serve as the fundamental unit of analysis in spoken communication. Scholars including Brown and Yule (1983) and Clark (1992) assert that the investigation of spoken communication shifts its attention towards the understanding of utterances. Baufield (1926) suggests that an utterance should be conceptualized as an "act of speech" rather than a mere sequence of words. To put it simply, utterances highlight the interactive and dynamic qualities of spoken language; they are not mere sentences, but rather dynamic expressions of thoughts and emotions during conversation. These critical analyses considered tone, context, and speaker interaction, thereby offering significant perspectives on the complexity of human communication. Some examples of utterances are provided below:

- S1: *You heard the crowd reaction in the background because Rhenz Abando has come in, played three minutes in game one, five minutes in game two.*
S2: *You know, when Rhenz comes into the game, his one rebound feels like five. He's really a crowd favorite.*
S1: *He is. We need that.*
S2: *And his two points feel like four.*
S1: *Yup, yup.*
S2: *Especially if it's a dunk.*

In addition, the transcripts used in this study served as rich repositories of textual data that captured the nuanced narratives articulated by sportscasters during live sports event coverage. The analysis encompasses the linguistic and language choices of sports media, particularly of sportscasters, as it investigated the intricate details of specific words, phrases and sentences used during the sports broadcasts.

Results

Media Biases Favoring Gilas Pilipinas and their Opposing Teams

After a thorough analysis and examination of five sports broadcasts aired by OneSports+, featuring the games of the Philippine Men's Basketball Team during the FIBA World Cup 2023, the study found that the local sportscasters have a discernible bias in favor of their national team players, the Gilas Pilipinas. The bias was evident in the language and emphasis employed by the broadcasters, as Filipino athletes were subjected to considerably more instances of media favoritism than their opponents. A clear disparity in the frequency of utterances demonstrating media biases became apparent when

contrasting the positive portrayals of Filipino athletes with those of their opponents from the Dominican Republic, Angola, Italy, South Sudan, and China. The imbalance not only indicates an increased focus on highlighting the favorable attributes, accomplishments, and special events of the home team, but also implies a possible tendency to construct a narrative that primarily supports the Gilas Pilipinas. The number of occurrences of media biases observed by the local sportscasters are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Occurrences of Media Biases Favoring Gilas Pilipinas and their Opponents

Types of Media Bias	No. of Occurrences of Media Biases Favoring Gilas Pilipinas	No. of Occurrences of Media Biases Favoring the Opposing Teams
Confirmation bias	5	2
Absence of fairness and balance	19	1
Story selection bias	53	19
Tone bias	73	11
Neutrality, false balance or both-sidesing	1	5
Demographic bias	9	20
Partisan bias	275	0
Perceived superiority bias	25	40
Total	460 (82.44%)	98 (17.56%)

Table 2 presents the occurrences of various media biases observed by local sportscasters during live broadcasts of Gilas Pilipinas games on OneSports+, with a specific focus on the number of utterances favoring both Gilas Pilipinas and their opposing teams. As can be seen, 82.44% of the media biases were in favor of Filipino players, whereas 17.56% were directed at their opponents. It is important to highlight, nevertheless, that sportscasters observed a higher frequency of demographic bias and perceived superiority bias in support of opposing teams, notwithstanding the fact that the majority of biases favored the host country. It is likely that this may be attributed to the sportscasters' attention to individual players from these opposing teams, who are more known for their notable physical attributes, particularly their massive height and size, along with extensive experience in playing and participating in major international basketball leagues and tournaments, notably the National Basketball Association (NBA). This heightened focus contributes to the perception of these players as more dominant compared to many local Filipino players.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the sportscasters consistently showed partisan bias in favor of Gilas Pilipinas in their commentary. These utterances showcasing partisan bias reflect their strong nationalistic positioning by demonstrating their pride and identification as Filipinos.

Occurrences of Media Biases

Results of the study showed that all the sports broadcasts that were analyzed in this study contained and demonstrated manifestations of media biases. After analyzing the five Gilas Pilipinas' game coverages of OneSports+ during the FIBA World Cup 2023, it was uncovered that the sportscasters delivered narratives tilted towards partial

commentary. Moreover, quantifying this imbalance revealed a deliberate, or at least subconscious, effort to prioritize pro-Philippines narratives, even when factual neutrality was warranted.

However, it must be noted that although not all types of biases were consistently observed in every game analyzed, the overall results emphasize the critical need for sportscasters to consciously acknowledge the significant consequences and effects of their nationalistic positioning during live commentaries. Additionally, even if the imbalanced narratives facilitated a collective experience with the home team, engrossing spectators more profoundly in their victories, sportscasters still failed to establish and forge the same emotional connection with people watching the broadcasts from other countries. Indeed, sportscasters must understand that nationalistic positioning transcends verbal communication and has the potential to shape the dynamics of sports and greatly affect the audience's perception of the game's complexities. As a result, this enhances the sports spectators' ability to develop impartial opinions of the games, thus cultivating a sporting atmosphere characterized by fairness and honesty. Table 3 shows the total number of occurrences of each type of media biases in the study corpus.

Table 3. Occurrences of Media Biases Observed by Sportscasters During Gilas Pilipinas Games in FIBA World Cup 2023

Types of Media Bias	Total No. of Occurrences of Media Biases
Confirmation bias	7 (1.25%)
Absence of fairness and balance	20 (3.58%)
Story selection bias	72 (12.90%)
Tone bias	84 (15.05%)
Neutrality, false balance or both-sidesing	6 (1.08%)
Demographic bias	29 (5.20%)
Partisan bias	275 (49.28%)
Perceived superiority bias	65 (11.65%)
Total	558

Table 3 shows the frequency of the different types of media biases that are observed by local sportscasters during the live sports broadcasts of the games of the Gilas Pilipinas, which were aired by OneSports+. The data reveals that partisan bias emerged as the most prevalent form of media bias, constituting 49.28%, followed by tone bias at 15.05%, and story selection bias at 12.90%. Conversely, neutrality, false balance or both-sidesing, confirmation bias, and absence of fairness and balance exhibited lower occurrences, with 1.08%, 1.25%, and 3.58%, respectively, securing the lowest rankings in the observed media biases.

Confirmation Bias

As presented earlier, there were manifestations of confirmation bias in the sports broadcasts as presented in Table 4 although it is not as much compared to the other type of media bias.

Table 4. Occurrences of Utterances Showing Confirmation Bias

Type of Media Bias	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4	Game 5
Confirmation bias	1	3	2	1	0
Total	7 occurrences				

Table 4 presents the number of utterances in the study corpus that showed manifestations of confirmation bias. As can be seen, it was noticeable that there was no confirmation bias observed during the last game of the Philippine Men's Basketball team where the team won in contrast with the sportscasters' minimal use in the other four games where the team lost. This may be because, in challenging situations, confirmation bias expressions may have been employed to reassure viewers and commentators amid less favorable outcomes, framing the performance within established expectations. On the other hand, the victory made emotional scaffolding unnecessary, thereby permitting the commentary to adopt a more impartial and impersonal stance.

While not the most pervasive form of media bias the researchers have observed, confirmation bias still played a subtle yet notable role in shaping the narrative of the Gilas Pilipinas games. The presence of confirmation bias became apparent when sportscasters expressed preconceived notions regarding the abilities of specific players, especially those affiliated with the NBA.

S4: We know that we want to keep Jordan as much on the floor as we can.

In addition, confirmation bias was subtly evident in the commentators' amplification and interpretation of fan responses. The sportscasters utilized confirmation bias to align with the sentiments of fans, gauging and reinforcing their beliefs through reactions, especially expressions of frustration or fascination during the games.

S4: Can feel the murmuring of the crowd here? Now, the fans that went here really came here hoping for a victory.

On another note, as confirmation biases involve affirming pre-existing beliefs, the researchers also discovered linguistic cues that can help its existence during sports broadcasts. In the provided utterance below, the sportscaster committed confirmation bias after displaying and endorsing unwavering confidence in Ramos' basketball skills, supported by an array of accolades and past achievements. The strategic inclusion of assertive terms, which are underlined below, not only amplifies the sportscaster's conviction but also reinforces the positively framed image of Ramos. In addition, these expressions further reinforce and amplify the confirmation bias by solidifying the sportscaster's belief in Ramos' abilities while potentially overlooking any contrasting perspectives.

S2: We definitely know that Ramos is capable, as he's shown it time and time again on the international stage.

Likewise, an examination into the pragmatic structures of utterances that exhibit confirmation bias was also performed and results disclosed that sportscasters

consistently utilize a substantial degree of certainty and indicate the presence of a collective comprehension among the broadcasting staff. This is apparent in the given statement above, where the underlined convey certainties with assurance concerning Ramos's prowess in basketball. Furthermore, the phrase "time and time again" also suggests a recurring pattern of success for Ramos on the international stage. Simultaneously, the deployment of "definitely know" exemplifies an assertive speech act that showcases the speaker's unwavering confidence in Ramos's basketball skills.

Consequently, in some cases, the sportscaster indirectly communicates earlier statements and predictions using specific language, as seen in the provided utterance below. These underlined expressions not only enhance the positive portrayal of Tonut's basketball skills, especially in the highlighted game, but also use metaphorical language to suggest persisting excellence. This reliance on metaphorical language is an example of confirmation bias that further solidifies the positive narrative as regards Tonut's performance in the game.

S6: *Oh, nice fake by Tonut, and a nice finish for him, too. Told you, this Tonut is a thorn.*

Correspondingly, upon looking at the pragmatic constructions of the aforementioned utterance, the study identified that emphatic assertions, forceful declarations and metaphorical expressions could indicate a confirmation bias. As mentioned earlier, the underlined words above reinforced the idea that Tonut poses a challenging presence for the opposing team. In addition, the expression "told you" functions as a speech act that underscores a previous prediction and firm assertion. In addition, the utterance above about Tonut's performance is enriched through implicatures. When the commentator mentioned Tonut's moves as a "nice fake" and a "nice finish," there's an underlying implication of approval from the sportscaster. These expressions convey a positive evaluation of Tonut's impressive basketball skills.

In simpler terms, the language used by the sportscasters goes beyond straightforward descriptions, giving the audience a sense of Tonut's ongoing and challenging influence throughout the game. Finally, after scrutinizing the utterances manifesting confirmation biases, the study found that sportscasters frequently employ phrases such as "we know," "told you," "definitely," and "as expected" when exhibiting this form of media bias. Although seemingly unnoticed, these expressions are laden with the consequences of preconceived notions and anticipations.

Absence of Fairness and Balance

In the examination of Gilas Pilipinas' local game coverage during the FIBA World Cup 2023, the researchers identified a significant dearth of fairness and balance, markedly favoring the Philippines as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Occurrences of Utterances Showing Absence of Fairness and Balance

Type of Media Bias	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4	Game 5
Absence of fairness and balance	9	2	2	6	1
Total	20 occurrences				

The frequency of utterances in the corpus under examination that contained absence of fairness and balance is presented in Table 5. Upon closer examination of the games featuring this form of media bias, a noticeable pattern becomes apparent. Significantly, this type of media bias was least apparent in the solitary match in which the Philippines achieved triumph. It is most likely that when the Philippines faced defeat, the sportscasters seemingly felt the need to compensate by offering additional insights into their performance. Extra airtime was designated in order to present a comprehensive account of the Gilas Pilipinas' performance, encompassing explanations of the players' actions and insights into their strategies. However, after the Philippines secured victory, it appears that this demand for additional clarification diminished. This suggests that impartiality might not be entirely absent, but rather emerge strategically in response to the demands of the situation.

Additionally, the commentary stressed information that were specific to the Philippine players, such as signature moves honed in the local league and composure under pressure. This personalized approach fosters a strong emotional connection with viewers, placing them almost within the athletes' inner circle. Furthermore, the analysis provided by the sportscasters predominantly highlighted aspects related to the Philippines, such as player minutes, bench time, and emotional reactions from players and coaches.

S4: Chot Reyes, I think did a good job of bringing out Clarkson at certain moments of the game not to guard against the fouls, but more to rest him, actually.

As presented in the utterance below, the linguistic features of the sportscaster's statement exhibited an absence of fairness and balance as he opted to present comprehensively only the positive statistics regarding Dwight Ramos. These underlined words thereby emphasized Ramos's outstanding abilities in the field. However, this presentation omitted any reference to potential shortcomings or neutral information, which may contribute to an imbalanced portrayal.

S1: We talked about Dwight Ramos's experience, the only player from the roster who has played all the 10 games of the Asian qualifiers, with averages of almost 13 points, 6 rebounds and 3 assists and 2 steals.

Similarly, the pragmatic elements of the statement suggest a favorable assessment of Ramos by emphasizing his performance in the recent sports league. Additionally, the above utterance acts as an assertive speech act that provides positive information about Ramos with confidence and a positive tone.

Meanwhile, the study also discovered that the language chosen by sportscasters can also contribute to absence of fairness and balance. In the utterance below, the underlined words signify an exceptionally positive evaluation of Ramos's on-court behavior and highlighted his calmness even in crucial moments of the game. Conversely, from a pragmatic standpoint, this statement also subtly implies a positive critique that presents Ramos in a favorable manner.

S1: He is so composed, isn't he? I'm talking about Dwight Ramos. When he does his stuff on the court, there's never a panic.

Furthermore, the sportscaster's choice to pose a question as a speech act conveys the commentator's perspective on Ramos's composure. The use of "so," which is an intensifier, further amplifies the conveyed idea.

However, when it came to the opposing teams, the bias was discerned in a more selective manner. It only exhibited an absence of fairness and balance favoring the opponents when the sportscasters featured stories primarily about well-known players with high-caliber performances, often drawing attention to their participation in the NBA. Undeniably, the analysis provided for opposing teams often remained superficial, lacking intimate details.

Story Selection Bias

Results of the study also emphasized the prevalence of story selection bias among local sportscasters in every game aired by Gilas Pilipinas throughout the FIBA World Cup 2023 as reflected in Table 6.

Table 6. Occurrences of Utterances Showing Story Selection Bias

Type of Media Bias	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4	Game 5
Story selection bias	12	16	13	16	15
Total	72 occurrences				

Table 6 summarizes the occurrences of story selection bias in the study corpus. As can be seen, the persistent manifestation of story selection bias during the games reveals a consistent language pattern adopted by sportscasters, and the persistent occurrence of this media bias, which constantly reach double digits for every game, suggest that a purposeful and strategic effort was made to mold the narrative surrounding Gilas Pilipinas' performance.

Furthermore, the sportscasters demonstrated story selection bias during the FIBA World Cup 2023 by employing a range of prevalent practices that influence their narrative during the broadcasted games. One of the common strategies observed by the researchers entails external validation where the sportscasters emphasized the support of prominent individuals, particularly local basketball players, for the host team, thereby fostering a sense of national unity and support. Furthermore, the commentary would at times center on possible justifications for the team's lackluster performance, including the coach's in-game decision or the players' unfamiliarity with one another, with an emphasis on the late arrival in the Philippines of some players playing in the international arena prior to the FIBA World Cup 2023.

S7: He joined us late. You know to think about it coming off so many injuries, ACL. And for him to play like this, remember, they were teammates with Kai.

Another prevalent example of story selection bias is the considerable emphasis placed on the personal lives and collegiate careers of Gilas Pilipinas players, the background of the coach, and the team's preparations for the tournament.

S6: *Let's go, Rhenz. What a story for him, no? I mean, think about where he came from. Seen in the province, worked his way up, and went overseas.*

Although emphasizing player and team biographies, along with crowd sizes are inherent elements of sports broadcasting, their consistent emphasis in these reports also suggested a purposeful intention.

S2: *We were winless in 2019. That was Andre Blatche's Gilas Squad.*

Additional factors that contribute to the story selection bias include pre-game perspectives and comments made by the coaching staff of both teams, the progression of the players from their debut match to the most recent, as well as their present and past athletic injuries. Finally, in terms of linguistic cues, the researchers found that whenever sportscasters observe story selection bias, they are more likely to use narrative framing and selected storytelling techniques to structure their commentaries in a way that aligns with their preferred storyline.

Examining the linguistic features of the sportscasters' utterance below, the lexico-semantic choices of the broadcasters revealed that their narrative around AJ Edu's journey contributed to a storyline that emphasizes adversity. In addition, it also overshadowed other aspects of the player's overall performance and contributions.

S1: *I think it's safe to say that these might be AJ Edu's biggest free throws up to this date. What a journey for him, the young Gilas boy, a part of this team, overcoming some injuries, some big injuries.*

Conversely, in the pragmatic analysis of the aforementioned statement, the strategic use of the emphasized words highlight a pivotal phase in Edu's career. Furthermore, the narrative detailing Edu's triumph over injuries redirects the audience's focus toward a compelling storyline of resilience and personal development. Moreover, this particular statement also operates as a speech act that conveys the commentator's perspective.

Similarly, in the statement posted below, a demonstration of story selection bias is evident, notably through the extensive background information about Bruno Fernando. The linguistic features of his narrative specifically emphasizes his personal journey, achievements, and the responsibilities he holds as the first Angolan in the NBA. Although the statement remains highly informative, it fails to encompass broader perspectives associated with the team, overall competition, and the ongoing events within the game.

S5: *When you talk about Angola, you need to talk about Bruno Fernando. As the first Angolan to be selected into the NBA, it is not lost on Bruno that for a lot of people, he is their first glimpse into Angolan basketball. To him, it's an honor to be in this position. It's a very gratifying feeling for him to be able to carry the image of what hard work truly means for Angolans, and he understands the expectations that come along with being the first and only Angolan in the NBA.*

Consequently, the pragmatic constructions used by the sportscaster detailing the background information about Bruno Fernando also creates an implicature that his narrative is essential when discussing Angola. It not only highlights his cultural importance as a symbol of hard work for Angolans in the field of sports and athletics, but it also carries a broader cultural resonance. Additionally, the underlined expressions in the statement serve as a speech act that purposefully steer the audience's focus towards Bruno Fernando's story when the topic revolves around Angola.

Tone Bias

The study revealed that tone bias frequently emerges in the sportscasters' coverage of Gilas Pilipinas games during the FIBA World Cup 2023 as displayed in Table 7.

Table 7. Occurrences of Utterances Showing Tone Bias

Type of Media Bias	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4	Game 5
Tone bias	14	12	22	14	22
Total	84 occurrences				

Table 7 reveals the number of occurrences wherein the utterances of sportscasters displayed tone bias. Upon careful examination of the data, it becomes apparent that the sportscasters demonstrated the highest frequency of tone bias in Game 3, which was a crucial must-win match for the Philippines in order to advance to the quarterfinal, and in Game 5, in which the Gilas Pilipinas emerged victorious in the classification round against China. This suggests that sportscasters exhibited a greater propensity to deliver positive analysis and become more expressive of their emotions in situations involving exceptional basketball performances and heightened significance, particularly when success was vital for upholding Filipino viewers' hopes.

Consequently, the sportscasters consistently exhibited tone bias when providing commentary on exceptional plays, regardless of the team involved. Although the bias was evident among all teams, discussions regarding plays involving the Philippines tended to have a more positive tone.

S2: Kiefer, oh what a beautiful looking move! Oh my goodness!

S2: Beautiful block up there by Jordan Clarkson, demonstrating that world class elite athleticism.

Tone bias was also additionally emphasized by the presentation of noteworthy game statistics, particularly those pertaining to players who surpassed expectations. The sportscasters also had a tendency to embrace a positive demeanor when analyzing critical moments characterized by a heightened degree of enthusiasm in the commentary.

S2: Oh, there you saw that beautiful play there between Scottie and June Mar. They know how important this game is.

S7: They're pushing the pace. They're looking. They're moving the ball. Love it!

Moreover, in terms of the linguistic cues that sportscasters use in their utterances containing tone bias, the study found that these lines frequently employ a variety of modifiers, including adjectives and adverbs, to magnify feats of athleticism as reflected in the underlined word below. Additionally, in the given utterance, Edu's performance was praised and described as "great," while the enthusiastic description and lively portrayal of the crowd's reaction also contributed to a positive tone bias, as it highlighted the excitement and success in the play.

S4: *Great pass. Edu, woah! And the crowd erupts!*

As demonstrated in the utterance below, the underlined metaphorical language reflects a genuine appreciation for Fajardo by emphasizing the player's assertiveness and significant impact on the game.

S2: *And the Kraken right there carving out real estate saying, "You know what, I want to buy this property. I want to buy this piece of property."*

Consequently, through the lens of pragmatics, the metaphorical expression "carving out real estate" suggests Fajardo's dominance and assertiveness. Additionally, the direct quotation, "You know what, I want to buy this property. I want to buy this piece of property," operates as a speech act which playfully expresses the player's confidence and dominance. Furthermore, the combination of these terms creates a tone bias that accentuates the player's formidable performance.

There are also occurrences in which sportscasters repeat themselves, as shown in the utterance below, in an effort to attract the audience's attention. There are also occasions when sportscasters become so enthralled during the game coverage that leads them to even contemplate possible statements that the players might make, particularly in reaction to extraordinary basketball maneuvers. As displayed in the given statement, the repetition of the underlined words, along with the positive assessment of Dwight Ramos created a tone bias that emphasized admiration for Ramos's physical style of play.

S6: *Love the physicality. Love the physicality of Dwight Ramos.*

Here, the linguistic features contribute to a positive tone bias by using enthusiastic and appreciative language. The commentary expresses admiration for the players' assertiveness and physicality, shaping a positive narrative that highlights specific aspects of their performance. This positive tone bias can influence the audience's perception by emphasizing the strengths and positive qualities of the players involved.

Finally, looking at the pragmatic elements of the utterance, the researchers found that the use of linguistic expressions that manifest a positive and appreciative tone bias such as "love" and "admire" was also noticeable in the lines of the sportscasters. These linguistic expressions convey a speech act showing admiration, and the repetition of the word "love" also reinforces an enthusiastic tone. Indeed, these words convey a distinct emotional stance, departing from neutral reporting and contributing to the overall tone of the commentary.

Neutrality, False Balance or Both-Sidesing

The researchers revealed a conspicuous absence of neutrality, false balance, or both-sidesing in the local coverage of Gilas Pilipinas games during the FIBA World Cup 2023 as stated in Table 8.

Table 8. Occurrences of Utterances Showing Neutrality, False balance or Both-sidesing

Type of Media Bias	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4	Game 5
Tone bias	0	1	1	3	1
Total	6 occurrences				

The number of utterances within the corpus under investigation that exhibited indications of false balance is depicted in Table 8. After careful examination, it becomes apparent that local sportscasters, notwithstanding their inherent partiality, rarely express utterances exhibiting this type of media bias, and it is most likely because the coverage is pro-Filipino already. Additionally, in light of the media's demand that they adopt a biased stance that reflects national support, the perceived value of pursuing false balance seems to be minimal.

Moreover, these utterances expressing false balance were predominately distinguished by succinct and short statements that momentarily emphasized opposing teams, subsequent to comprehensive narratives that revolved around Filipino athletes. In some instances, sportscasters also try to include geographical information and background details about an opposing team, leading to an observance of false balance in the broadcasted games.

S4: The country of Angola is at the west central coast of South Africa. It's had a number of years with difficulties and strife, but it's stable now.

Consequently, looking at it from the pragmatics point of view, the researchers noted that this extensive background about Angola created an implicature that this set of information is relevant to the sports commentary even if the inclusion of comprehensive historical and geopolitical information into the sports commentary lacks direct relevance and clear connection to the sports context, as it introduces extraneous information that may potentially disrupt viewers' perception of the game.

Furthermore, when the opposing team's superiority demanded greater airtime, sportscasters displayed a noticeable inclination to interject references to Filipino athletes, notwithstanding the fact that such allusions were no longer timely or pertinent to the ongoing discourse.

Examining the lexico-semantic structure of the utterance below reveals the sportscaster's tendency to mention individual players, along with their respective points in the game. However, the provided statement below deviates from this practice by failing to provide comparable information about the opposing team. This imbalance in presentation unfairly accentuates the contributions of one side over the other.

S8: *Majok Deng with 6 points, Kacuol with 5, Acouth, Deng, and Omot – those are the five for South Sudan. We have Malonzo, Pogoy, Ramos, Ravena, and Sotto.*

Similarly, a pragmatic analysis of this utterance unveils the sportscaster's deliberate effort to employ a speech act of emphasis. This is evident in the meticulous listing of players' names along with their corresponding points and contributions during the game.

Undoubtedly, through an analysis of linguistic cues, the study discovered that sportscasters demonstrated false balance by showing limited acknowledgment and engaging in forced inclusion of the opposition. In such cases, the acknowledgment of opposing teams was brief and lacked depth or genuine analysis. Furthermore, the study highlighted occurrences where these utterances were not directly relevant to the ongoing game or narrative, indicating a tendency to superficially address the presence of the opposition without offering meaningful insight or context.

Demographic Bias

Results of the study displayed that demographic bias was prevalent in all the broadcasted games of Gilas Pilipinas during the FIBA World Cup 2023 as shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Occurrences of Utterances Showing Demographic Bias

Type of Media Bias	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4	Game 5
Demographic bias	8	12	5	1	3
Total	29 occurrences				

Table 9 shows the number of utterances showing demographic bias in the broadcasted games. Notably, the first and second games of Gilas Pilipinas stand out with a higher frequency of occurrences of demographic bias. This can be attributed to the discernible height advantage held by the leading scorers and players of the opposing teams during these matches, which ultimately resulted in the home team's losses.

Furthermore, the researchers identified instances of demographic biases stemming from the sportscasters' excessive recognition of exceptionally tall and big players. In the utterances posted below, it can be observed that the lexico-semantic features of the sportscasters contributed to the formation of demographic bias. The underlined words below highlighted physical attributes, particularly the height and size of the players.

S2: *Yeah, we talk about a big big stumbling block right there named Karl Anthony Towns and another one named Eloy Vargas that they go 6-11 and 6-1 sending side-by-side.*

S3: *#13, João Fernandes, standing 6'7. Such an ordinary common height for them, 6'7, 6'8, 6'10.*

S11: *Just looking at China also, they're massive. They are.*

These utterances also suggest that height holds considerable importance in sports, especially in basketball. They imply that being tall confers a distinct advantage on the playing field, which may potentially result in a demographic bias.

On another note, this bias is also extended to young athletes who showcased exceptional skills in highly competitive sports leagues such as the NBA. Additionally, sportscasters utilized demographic biases to underscore the strengths of the teams, particularly emphasizing the Philippines' agility, especially when employing strategies like the small ball tactic, considering the relatively shorter stature of the squad compared to other teams.

This feature is also evident in the statement below, where the sportscaster placed emphasis on age and achievements by highlighting Quiñones' accomplishments in the G League that may potentially contribute to a demographic bias. This is particularly notable due to the sportscaster's use of the underlined words.

S2: *And then you have another G-League veteran there in Lester Quiñones, only 22 years old, already the NBA G League most improved player.*

Correspondingly, this utterance also creates an implicature that Quiñones' accomplishments at his age are genuinely remarkable, particularly as it serves as a speech act demonstrating acknowledgment.

To sum up, demographic bias is observed by sports media whenever sportscasters utilize descriptors that emphasize the physical attributes of athletes, such as "tall," "big," "giant," "young," and "massive," while conducting live broadcasts. Furthermore, there are situations in which sportscasters mention the specific height of the players, highlighting the advantageous nature of these characteristics during gameplay.

Partisan Bias

With the notion of nationalistic positioning, partisan bias, as seen in Table 10, was strongly observed by sportscasters during live broadcasts of Gilas Pilipinas games during the FIBA World Cup 2023.

Table 10. Occurrences of Utterances Showing Tone Bias

Type of Media Bias	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4	Game 5
Partisan bias	37	61	72	50	55
Total	275 occurrences				

The occurrences of partisan bias in the study corpus are outlined in Table 10. Upon analyzing the prevalence of partisan bias throughout all games, it becomes evident that sportscasters consistently employ it during live broadcasts. Nevertheless, this inclination becomes especially evident when Gilas Pilipinas played their crucial matches during the tournament. It is worth noting that partisan bias was most prevalent during the third game, which was a do-or-die game in the elimination round.

The increased prejudice is also ascribed to the sportscasters' steadfast promotion of the home team, regardless of the final score. Likewise, the interplay of audience expectations, patriotism, and representation also serves to heighten the manifestation of partisan bias in the sportscasters' commentaries. Furthermore, the manifestation of

partisan bias was evident in both moments of triumph and defeat, as well as during instances of commendable plays and errors by the players.

Notably, manifestations of partisan bias were observed when sportscasters employed possessive language through the use of the underlined words below. This language choice persisted even when players made mistakes, particularly when the team needed to correct their game decisions. Intentionally or unintentionally, the sportscasters are manifesting their support for the Philippine team through the use of these personal pronouns when describing the team, and this suggests a shared identity and a vested interest in the group's performance.

S3: *Every game is very important, like we said, but when you look at that schedule, this is the game that we felt is a must-win for us.*

S9: *We are down by 9, but you like the intensity. You like the body language of our team right now.*

Undoubtedly, the utilization of personal pronouns such as "we," "our," and "us" implies a sense of membership, as if the sportscasters were integral members of the team or shared a strong connection with the players. This is exemplified in the statement earlier where the underlined words indicate a partisan bias by expressing satisfaction with the turnover and favoring the team the commentator supports. These expressions emphasize the strong sense of affiliation that exists between the sportscaster and the home team.

S1: *Nice turnover. Nice for us, of course.*

Hence, through a pragmatic lens, the sportscaster's linguistic choices suggest a clear preference for plays that benefit his team, exposing a noticeable partisan bias. Meanwhile, the study also detected partisan bias in instances where sportscasters engaged in discussions related to spirituality, and in conversations featuring the enduring spirit of not losing hope, and highlighting the team's resilient "never-die" attitude as a manifestation of the sportscasters' unwavering support for the home team.

S6: *Never lose hope. We gotta keep fighting.*

S7: *Prayers, of course, offered and said for a miracle here.*

As demonstrated earlier, the lexico-semantic structures in the given utterances showcase emotionally charged language and unveil the sportscaster's profound emotional attachment and support for Gilas Pilipinas. Consequently, examining these statements from a pragmatic perspective, it becomes apparent that the expressions imply an intimate connection between the sportscaster and the team. They also convey emotional investment by promoting the idea of resilience and unwavering hope, even in the face of apparent defeat. These instances unambiguously demonstrate the presence of serious partisan bias.

Perceived Superiority

For perceived superiority bias, results of the study displayed that it was detected in all the games of Gilas Pilipinas during the FIBA World Cup 2023 as reflected in Table 11.

Table 11. Occurrences of Utterances Showing Perceived Superiority

Type of Media Bias	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3	Game 4	Game 5
Perceived superiority	18	11	12	14	10
Total	65 occurrences (11.65%)				

Table 11 presents the occurrences of utterances expressing perceived superiority. Although the number of its frequency in each game are almost equal, data showed that this form of media bias manifested more prominently during Game 1. This heightened occurrence is likely attributed to the presence of the highest profile player in the FIBA World Cup 2023, as acknowledged by the sportscasters. As emphasized by the underlined words in the given statement below, their belief in the exceptional contributions of this player during that particular game led to an elevated expression of perceived superiority, emphasizing the perceived excellence of his performance compared to others.

- S2: *And I think, right now, Karl Anthony Towns is probably the highest profile player in this tournament.*
- S9: *He is an NBA vet Boom, six teams in the NBA. He's the guy we're gonna have problems with because he's their main center and he operates from the outside going in. He's a hard matchup for June Mar and Kai.*

Moreover, this statement creates an implicature that playing in the NBA gives a clear advantage over the local Filipino players. The utterance below also supports this idea, and this recurring pattern reinforces a narrative that contributes to an imbalanced perception of players' abilities based on their basketball backgrounds and profiles. Undeniably, perceived superiority bias was mainly apparent when showcasing NBA players expected to dominate on the court or when highlighting perceived mismatches between players.

- S9: *These guys may be the youngest team in this World Cup, but you know, you look at Carlik Jones, he's been very experienced, and he's played all around. He was the MVP of the G League.*

In addition, the use of the definite article "the" before a player's name also served as a linguistic cue, indicating respect for the way they play their sport. Consequently, sportscasters frequently utilized figurative language to emphasize the exceptional qualities of players deemed superior. In the given utterance below, the underlined words contribute additional layers of meaning beyond their literal definitions.

- S2: *That's why they call him the flamethrower. He gets buckets in a hurry.*
- S3: *That guy's in the biggest storm, Goncalves.*
- S7: *Tonut is so deceptively quick, isn't he, coach? He's a thorn.*

Looking at these statements and focusing closely on the pragmatic constructions, the term "flamethrower" suggests the player possesses exceptional scoring ability. Likewise, the phrase "the biggest storm" conveys that opponents facing Goncalves are in a highly challenging and difficult situation. Additionally, the use of "thorn" signifies that Tonut presents a significant obstacle for his opponents. Certainly, the use of figurative language in these sportscasting utterances consistently emphasizes the superiority of

certain players and teams, and the frequent deployment of metaphors and positive language constructs a narrative that underscores the perceived dominance and excellence of these sports personalities, which contribute to an overall image of superiority in the commentary.

Discussion

Following an in-depth analysis and scrutiny of five sports broadcasts which featured the Philippines Men's Basketball Team during the FIBA World Cup 2023 streamed by OneSports+, the findings of this study unveiled a discernible bias in favor of Gilas Pilipinas. Local sportscasters clearly demonstrated a clear preference for Filipino players through their language and linguistic choices. In addition, this was also observed with the way they gave emphasis to various events that consistently favored the home team over their opponents from the Dominican Republic, Angola, Italy, South Sudan, and China.

Moreover, it is essential to acknowledge that not all types of media biases were consistently observed in every game analyzed. However, the overall findings emphasize the need for sportscasters to consciously understand the consequences of their nationalistic positioning during live commentaries. In the digital age, sportscasters must understand that nationalistic positioning extends beyond verbal communication as it shapes the dynamics of sports and influences audience's perception.

These findings align with the study of Billings and Eastman (2003), who observed that in international sports broadcasts, local broadcasters tend to highlight and provide more positive commentary for athletes from their home country. Additionally, this also supports the result of Bairnier's (1996) research, which suggests that journalists, including sportscasters, express their love and loyalty to their own country through their nationalistic positioning.

In addition, within the domain of sportscasting, the language used by sportscasters play a crucial role in detecting and managing different types of media bias that may appear both subtly and clearly in the language sportscasters choose. They can be implicit, which means that they are subtly embedded in the tone, the words chosen, or the framing of the utterances. On the other hand, biases can also be explicit, where sportscasters openly show favoritism or disfavor towards certain teams or players.

Similarly, certain expressions and terms utilized by sportscasters act as channels for the emergence of these biases. Unraveling the complexities of these linguistic nuances is paramount for a comprehensive understanding of the nature and repercussions of media biases in sports broadcasts. By looking closely at both the hidden and obvious aspects of language, researchers can understand the intricacies that contribute to biased portrayals. This helps create a smarter and more critical way of looking at sports media.

Furthermore, these findings also underscore the need for heightened awareness and proactive measures to ensure a more balanced and unbiased portrayal of sports events within the media landscape as this discernible pattern of bias has the potential to

influence fan engagement, possibly favoring the home team and compromising the overall fairness of sports broadcasting. Sports media organizations and institutions must acknowledge the identified biases in the study and help spread awareness. In addition, they should start to encourage sportscasters to express more diverse perspectives that can contribute to a more inclusive portrayal of the realm of sports and athletics. Consequently, they should also assist the viewers and sports spectators to learn how to critically assess sports commentaries and how to recognize various forms of biases that are consistently upheld across sports media platforms. Finally, sports media must explore possible collaborations with academic institutions and sports experts to discover new approaches that can strengthen fairness and inclusivity in the field of sportscasting.

Conclusion

The study provides a comprehensive analysis of the media biases observed by the sportscasters in the five sports broadcasts featuring the Philippine Men's Basketball Team during the FIBA World Cup 2023 on OneSports+. Findings of the study underscores the critical importance for sportscasters to recognize the repercussions of persistent presence of media biases in live commentaries, which are influenced by their nationalistic positioning. Moreover, the study also raises concerns about fairness and impartiality in broadcasting, as it may impact the audience's perception of the game. Undeniably, further studies must be conducted to understand the numerous factors, including nationalistic positioning, that affect objectivity and impartiality in sportscasting.

In addition, a variety of contextual elements, including the importance of the game, the identity of the opposing teams, and the ambiance of the arena, was found to be influential in the frequency of biases in the sportscasters' remarks. These diverse elements contribute to the ever-changing presence of media biases in the sportscasts. This dynamic nature emphasizes the complexity of sports broadcasting, where media biases are not fixed but intricately linked to the evolving dynamics of each game.

On another note, after examining the occurrences of media biases in sportscasts, the study also unveiled discernible linguistic cues that serve as hints for recognizing different types of media bias observed by sports media. These linguistic attributes associated with each form of media bias provide valuable insights into the way in which sportscasters express their preferences through their commentaries.

In conclusion, the study's findings highlight the complex interplay between linguistic choices and media biases in the field of sportscasting. Furthermore, it emphasizes the significance of increased consciousness and proactive strategies in guaranteeing a media environment that presents sporting events in a more impartial and balanced manner. By understanding the impacts of the language used by the sportscaster, particularly how media biases were constructed, this study asserts the importance of strengthening initiatives related to understanding the intricate relationship between language, sports and media. Indeed, it is of the utmost importance to manage these media biases in order to foster an environment in the realm of sports and athletics that is marked by integrity and fairness, enabling spectators to form unbiased viewpoints and appreciate the game without any form of prejudice.

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