



Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes

Critical Discourse Analysis of Western Sports Journalism

Authors: Yuan Yuan & Yang Pan

Supervisor: Fredrik Sunnemark

Examiner: Ann Towns

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Department of Economics and Informatics

University West

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to collect and analyze stereotypes of Chinese athletes in Western sports journalism. The thesis employs a single case study of the construction of Chinese athletes in Western media. This study is based on the assumption of Social constructivism and it is combined with media representation theory. Furthermore, racial stereotypes and Orientalism theory are applied to collect and explain the stereotypes of Chinese athletes in Western media. The finding shows that Chinese athletes as a threat to West are constructed not only in the competition of the Olympics, but also in other social aspects such as institution, economy and population. Moreover, through critical discourse analysis (CDA), the analysis proves that racial stereotypes (physical and mental) of Chinese athletes have been represented in Western sports journalism. Additionally, the analysis of power relations which is drawn from Orientalism contributes to the understanding of the presence of these stereotypes. This research contributes to the existing literature by filling the gap in research on racial stereotypes of Chinese athletes in Western sports journalism.

Key Words: stereotype, Western media, Chinese athletes, Olympics, Orientalism, sports journalism, critical discourse analysis, power relations

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1. Introduction and General Aim

“More than just the games”, the modern Olympic Games have been considered one of the most important global events because of its social and political influence (Bianco, 2006b). This enormous human celebration attracts not only thousands of athletes, but also a mass of media which is a vigorous component of the Olympics. In the era of information, millions of audience through the Internet or TV witness every precious moment such as victory, new record, teardrop and failure in the competition.

Let us trace back to London Olympic Games in 2012 and enjoy the amazing motto “Inspire a Generation”. In this Olympic Games, there were around 25 world records broken by the best athletes from different countries. For example, Ye Shiwen, a 16-year-old swimmer from China, who won the women’s 400m individual medley and also set a new world record, sparked a fire-storm in Western media. During that time, different words such as “phenomena”, “unbelievable” and “doubtable” emerged in the relevant report about Ye. What’s more, two different sounds can be found on the Internet, some groups believed Ye Shiwen made a historical breakthrough and inspire a lot of young people, but other groups argued that the Ye has the possibility about doping and cheats.

Through observing the public discussion on Ye’s outstanding achievement, the discussions can be divided into two opposite positions. On the one hand, the remarkable performance of Chinese athletes in recent years has manifested a tendency that traditional images are being challenged. On the other hand, “Rome wasn't built in a day”, the fact is, those traditional and innate images still dominate Westerners’ mind and somehow even influence their judgment. A good example is that BBC host Clare Balding who was suspicious and questioned Shiwen’s incredible swim. Broadly speaking, Chinese athletes are being recognized as good at playing sports like table-tennis, badminton and diving instead of swimming. With time going by, these

traditional pictures of Chinese athletes have been implanted deeply by the chronic influence of media.

To the researcher, it seems like a puzzle which is worth studying. So far, there are much existing research that examine the relationship between media and sports, they focus on how the media represent athletes in different ways. Same here, an explosive debate on Ye Shiwen's performance invoke the curiosity to find other relevant issues which happed in recent Olympics and thus we are motivated to write a relevant thesis, so the aim is to find and analyze how Chinese athletes were constructed by Western mass media.

The rest of the thesis is systematically constructed through a series of chapters. First it examines the existing literature on the relevant research which studies the relationship between media, racism and sports. There is a gap due to the fact that lots of scholarship focus on the stereotypes of black athletes but only few of research examines the stereotypes of Chinese athletes. The following chapter is the theoretical approach which is on the basis of social constructivism. After that, media representation and racism theory are applied as the main analytical tool in this study. According to the gap and theoretical concerns, the specific aim and the research questions are presented. In order to answer the research questions, research design of single case studies and critical discourse analysis (CDA) plays a vital role. The analysis chapter is treated as the core part of this thesis. It is done bi-directionally by testing the existence of stereotypes as well as examining the power structure behind the stereotypes. At last, the conclusion chapter summarizes the research finding as the answer to the research questions. Further, a discussion on the implications of the finding is made in the final chapter, and makes a further discussion on the implications of the finding.

2. Literature Review: Stereotypes in Sports

Journalism

Nowadays there is much research on media, sports and racial stereotypes (Farrington et al, 2012; Wenner, 1998; Rowe, 2004; Boyle, and Haynes 2010). This chapter aims to manifest this previous research. First, a section represents the interaction between media, sports and racial stereotypes according to the existing literature. Second, the next section concentrates on the current racial discrimination with a focus on black athletes. Moreover, the typical stereotypes of black athletes are also examined. Following is to show the representation of Asian athletes in previous research. And in conclusion, it summarizes the problem and deficiency in the current scholarships, and defines the gap that no academic studies have looked at the stereotypes of Chinese athletes.

Since this study focuses on racial stereotypes, the definition of "race" is necessary to be clarified prior to reviewing previous research. The concept of "race" here is which attempts to draw boundaries between different people. And historically, the notions of 'race' distinguish people based on 'color of skin' such as Black, White and Yellow (Farrington et al, 2012:14).

Racial stereotypes in the media have become a popular part of culture and therefore discussed widely (Farrington et al, 2012: 25; Hoberman, 1997; Wenner, 1998). Within this discussion, the research is mainly related to two aspects. One focuses on chasing down either the evident or underlying stereotypes of a certain racial group. The other aims to answer how these stereotypes influence the racial group.

In existing research, a series of racial stereotypes which represented by the media have been depicted, and most of them extensively examine black athletes' racial stereotypes (e.g. Farrington et al, 2012; Hoberman, 1997; Wenner, 1998; Marie et al,

2010). As the book “Mediasport” points out, the recent research mostly focuses on African-American athletes which have already been widely disseminated to the world over the past two centuries (Hoberman, 1997: XV). And the core stereotype which has been demonstrated by previous research is that Blacks are “natural athletes” (Marie et al, 2010).

Additionally, Wenner claims that media discourse implies that race is related to the ability of controlling certain kind of sports. For example, as Rainville and McCormick (1977) suggest, the NFL announcers they studied believe the performances of Black are due to uncontrollable external forces while the performances of Whites are due to controllable internal forces (Wenner, 1998:158). In more detail, the stereotype which occurs most frequently in the study is “naturally quick and good at jumping” (e.g. Jackson, 1987; Farrington et al, 2012). This stereotype has already become a dominant image of black athletes (e.g. Farrington et al, 2012; Hoberman, 1997; Wenner, 1998). Besides the physical stereotypes, there are some mental stereotypes as well such as “lazy” (Davis, 1990), “seldom credited for intellect” and “self-centered, selfish and arrogant” (Wenner, 1998:159). By contrast, the media representation of White athletes is that White athletes are always constructed as “hard-working” and “team players” (Farrington et al, 2012:28).

According to this discussion, a difference between White and Black has been established. Actually, in the most relevant study of racial stereotypes, White athletes are usually treated as a reference substance instead of a research object. As one previous research dedicated, when athletes are White, racial thinking becomes invisible (Farrington et al, 2012:27; Wenner, 1998:158). One primary cause of this phenomenon, as some scholars mentioned, is that the media is generally white-dominated and very few blacks write about sports (Boyle and Haynes, 2010). Thus, under this controversial situation, the stereotypes of black athletes are continuously released into public discourse on sport and gradually acquired racial meaning which may damage black athletes by reinforcing some damaging social

myths even it looks like they somehow are beneficial to them (Hoberman, 1997; Farrington et al, 2012:49). Another cause is that black coaches and racial typologies that usually imply the difference between Black and White (Hoberman, 1997:49).

Both these two causes display the White hegemony which is vital in the second aspect of research that how these stereotypes influence the construction of athletes of certain racial groups. As Hoberman elucidates, “while Black dominance has done much to challenge this racial hierarchy, the unofficial white supremacist ethos of the modern American sports world is still evident in its colonial power structure” (Hoberman, 1997:49). Thus the stereotypes created in such environment may damage black athletes. In the light of this, the damaging social myths which are also the way of stereotypes affect the Black could be summarized as following. First, White would accept Black’s athletic superiority instead of moral or intellectual superiority. Second, the misbehaviors of the Black’ athletes are enlarged by “tabloid style”. Third, those stereotypes could mislead the Black to believe that sports are the only way to change their lives (Hoberman, 1997; Farrington et al, 2012).

This previous literature contributes to an understanding of the racial stereotypes of athletes and examining its impacts. Despite the mainstream research which choose black athletes’ stereotype as a target, some researchers focus on another ‘race’ like Yellow which is the biggest racial group in Asia. Hence, in the next section the existing research on Asian stereotyping is discussed.

Asian athletes have been less of a concern of the media, especially when mainstream sports are dominated by the Black or White (Hoberman, 1997). In the book “Race Racism and Sports Journalist”, Asian athletes have been described as “exclude-race” in British football because of colonial stereotypes (Farrington et al, 2012). Besides, due to the myth of the orient, several findings of the research suggest that most representation of the Asian athletes drew on the cultural stereotypes and the influence of post-colonialism (Farrington et al, 2012; Sabo et al, 1996). Some key words such as “Obsessive hard workers”, “Conformists”, and “Extremely self-disciplined” have

been revealed as the Asian stereotype (Sabo et al, 1996). And in the physical stereotype, the idea of physical inferiority, for instance ‘small and slight’ still dominates the consciousness of journalists and media consumers (Boyle and Haynes, 2009, Farrington et al, 2012).

As we know, Chinese population is the majority of Yellow in Asia. Hence in the Western view, the representation of Chinese athletes more or less is included in the stereotypes of Asian (Manzenreiter, 2010). What’s more, according to the great performance of China in recent Olympics, some research began to study the Chinese athletes through analyzing Chinese strategy of the Olympics like elite sports system (funding support and institution) (Manzenreiter, 2010; Hong et al, 2007).

However, in general terms the research discuss the stereotypes of Yellow without detailed and intensive analysis of a single case study. What’s more, the existing research study the representation of Asian athletes from the economic or institution perspective rather than from the racial perspective.

In sum, the discussion above has shown the existing scholarship and literature focus on the racial stereotypes in sports journalism. More specifically, based on the Western view, the stereotype of Black is the mainstream of previous relevant studies. Compared to black athletes, other racial stereotypes are relatively unnoticed. For instance, there is a gap in previous research since the research about the stereotype of Chinese athletes in the Western sports journalism is almost missing. It is worth writing a thesis to explore it in detail and help people gain the knowledge about the stereotypes of Chinese athletes. Accordingly, this thesis contributes to understanding the stereotypes of Chinese athletes through analyzing Western sports journalism.

3. Theoretical Approach: from Racism Perspective

The purpose of this chapter is to explain and define the theoretical concepts and assumptions which are used in this thesis. At the beginning, social constructivism is described as basic theory. Then representation theory and racism theory which includes stereotype theory and Orientalism are regarded as two main theories of this thesis. These theoretical approaches are useful tools for making a systematic analysis. At the end of this chapter, correlation between the theories and propositions are displayed through an analytical framework which involves Chinese development and racial stereotypes of Chinese Athletes.

3.1 Social Constructivism: as A Starting Point

Social constructivism explains the world as a function of ‘landscape’ of ideas, norms, and identities. As a famous constructivist, Max Weber argues that ideas and culture deeply influenced what people saw in the Western world (Stoker and Marsh, 2010). More specifically, constructivism essentially requires the researcher to consider that the social reality is an ongoing accomplishment of social actors rather than something on the surface and that totally constrains them (Bryman, 2008). But the social construction is not only about the power of ideas and norms, but also about a process by which people construct themselves in relation to those ideas and norms (Marsh and Stoker, 2010:87).

Additionally, constructivists claim that social world and its categories are not external to us, but are constituted in and through interaction, and there is a tendency in discourse analysis (Bryman, 2008). In this research, constructivism as a starting point provides a broad world view about the social reality. The social phenomenon is not only affected by the social interaction but it is also shaped by social actor’s idea and traditions which is presented through language. Thus, to follow the central concept of

constructivism, it needs the specific theory of representation to interpret how meanings and ideas are created through language.

3.2 Representation Theory: How Ideology is Represented by the Media

As said above, constructivism emphasizes the importance of ideas and norms which are used by social actors to construct the social reality. But the ideas and concepts cannot just stay in mind, it needs a vehicle to spread and show up in certain forms. Obviously, media is playing the role of the vehicle, because it can not only create the channel or floor for sharing ideas, but also as important social institutions or crucial presenters of culture, politics and social life reflecting how these are formed and expressed (Bell and Garrett, 1998). In addition, representation theory argues that language is the most crucial form of the culture and ideas. As the author Hall (1997) believes language has always been regarded as the key repository of cultural values and meanings, and representation is the production of meaning through language.

Accordingly, Hall developed three important approaches to explain how representation of meaning is created through language. They are the reflective approach, the intentional approach and the constructivist approach. The reflective approach tells that language functions are like a mirror, to reflect the true meaning in the world. But in current society especially nowadays, it is necessary to consider lots of elements which can impact the language or even change the meaning through the language. The intentional approach points out that the authors impose their own meaning on the world through language and the words mean what the author intends they should mean. But this flawed approach ignores that the essence of language is communication and ideas need to be shared. The constructivist approach states that social actors construct meaning by using representational systems-concepts and signs, and the social reality processes through representation and language operate. Constructionists believe that social actors use the conceptual systems of their culture

and the linguistic and other representational systems to construct meaning, to make the world meaningful and to share the ideas and concepts (Hall 1997).

Based on this understanding of constructivism and representation, media can be treated as a social actor which presents ideas and meanings. Namely, journalism usually constructs a great deal of social meanings and stereotypes through language, even though racism and stereotype is sensitive to be used in public discourse. The vital point for its reader is to think deeply behind the surface of news. Therefore, representation theory has been used in the content of the sports journalism and find out how media portray Chinese athletes and what kind of images or meanings that are created by Western media. Further, there are many researchers that have already found that news is far from simply reflecting the reality of an event, for instance, many scholars indicated that sport media contributes to reinforcing racial stereotypes (Wenner, 1998:157).

3.3 Racism- Stereotype Theory and Orientalism

The term “racism” could be a too ambiguous for it has multiple meaning (Fredrickson, 2002:151). Since this thesis focuses on the issue of racial stereotypes, racism can be defined as “an application of ‘race’ categories in social contexts with an accompanying attribution of invariable characteristics to category members” (Husband, 1982:19). The main effect of it is “assigning of fixed or permanent differences among human descent groups and using this attribution of difference to justify their differential treatment.” (Fredrickson, 2002:156). As two subcategories to the theoretical concept of racism, stereotype theory and Orientalism are chosen to be the approach of this study.

Stereotype theory is an approach to racial imagery which has been widely applied in contemporary media and cultural studies. There are two ways to use the notion of stereotype by social psychologists. One is to help understand the general public opinion on particular social categories (e.g. Katz and Braly, 1933). The other is to

develop an understanding of stereotyping as a general cognitive process (e.g. Allport, 1954; Dijk&Wodak, 1988:10).

Furthermore, the term “stereotype” was originally coined to cover a range of cognitive and linguistic phenomena (Lippmann, 1922; Dijk&Wodak, 1988:8), but now it has been used in many different ways, “with different meanings and associations of value, in various fields and disciplines” (Pickering, 2001:9). As one mainly accepted definition, Snyder explains stereotype as a process where the individual first categorizes other individuals, and then attributes a set of characteristics to all members of that category (Dijk&Wodak, 1988:4; Snyder’s, 1981:183). What’s more, “the characteristics which differentiate significant social groups (such as sex or race) are often physically prominent and hence salient to an observer” (Hamilton, 1979: 59).

However, a stereotype is not equal to a category. For avoiding the confusion, distinguishing stereotypes and categories is necessary. The crucial difference between them is that though stereotyping can be updated periodically, categories are more fixed (Allport, 1954: 191; Pickering, 2001:3). Social psychologists often regard the process of categorization as neutral observation. But as Pickering claims in his book “Stereotyping”, stereotypes are negative. In the classical view, the problems of stereotypes are simplicity and inaccuracy since the lack knowledge lead to exaggerations and homogenizations (Pickering, 2001:10).

Based on this categorization and attribution, Chinese athletes as the Yellow, become the “other” to white and black athletes and therefore they are attributed some “characteristics” which are the stereotypes. The common stereotypes of Chinese athletes are usually "congenital shortcomings" and "genetic differences" that created disadvantages against black and white athletes, such as “short”, “physically inferior to other athletes in jumping and sprinting”, " ‘suited’ to sports like table-tennis, badminton and gymnastics that require agility and technique” and so on (Yardley, 2004).

Further, as previous studies embodied, there is a basic assumption of stereotype theory which is stereotypes may lock a category which uses a particular stereotype into a settled hierarchy of relations (Pickering, 2001:4). For example, there is a famous stereotype that “Black is naturally quick and good at jumping” (Wenner, 1998:156) Due to this stereotype of superiority on jump and sprint, black athletes is locked by these stereotypes into a “higher” grade. Therefore, achievements of black athletes in basketball and track and field receive the heaviest coverage (Wenner, 1998:156) As a result, stereotype infiltrates the sports journalism and hence stereotype theory can be used in analyzing sports journalism.

Besides stereotype theory, there is another useful theoretical approach which is Orientalism. Generally, Orientalism is the study of the Orient or the East which focus on the inter-cultural problem of the West. There is a basis of the concept which is the distinction between “them” and “us” by an imaginary geographical line. Said claims that it is an idea which “based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and 'the Occident'” (Said, 1978:1).

The relationship between Occident and Orient is “a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony” (Said, 1978:5). Therefore, the Orient can be considered as representation of Western hegemony. For example, the hegemony can be presented by the fact that the European usually link oriental culture to Western’s. Based on this hegemony, the West people used to orientalize the orients and generalize these stereotypes to all orients which amount to creating a boundary at first sight (Said, 1978).

According to the myth of the orient, some scholars argue that most representation of the Asian athletes drew on the cultural stereotypes (Farrington et al, 2012; Sabo et al, 1996). This makes the stereotypes created by Orientalism different to those created by stereotyping theory. It becomes not only physical but also mental, such as “disciplined and smart”, “unemotional and machine- like”, “obsessive conformers”, “rigorously self-disciplined and excessively hard workers” (Sabo et al, 1996). These stereotypes

all dehumanizes “the Orient” and diminished their achievements. It reflects the superiority complex or the “hegemony” of “the Occident”.

Additionally, in the context of globalization, Chinese cultural globalization and economy develop rapidly. China has gone through a striking change. This causes the Western societies become to more and more attempt to understand oriental societies. Therefore, Orientalism also plays a valuable role in exploring the relationship between East and West (Turner, 1994:3). Upon that, the study on Orientalism has become more conspicuous in contemporary politics. It is usually concerned to reduce the complexity of the East by creating an explicit order of types, characters and constitutions (Turner, 1994:21).

The development of China is regarded as a threat to West. Under influence of this, Chinese athletes as a representative of China are accordingly regarded as a threat in western media. In the recent Olympics, Chinese athletes achieved many breakthroughs in a series of traditional “weak” events such as sprint and swimming which makes the “Occident” regard Chinese athletes as a threat. As Sartre argues in his book, comparing with Black, Chinese is more inscrutable which may lead to a threat (Sartre, 2001:18). Consequently, Chinese athletes are usually typed as “exotic” foreign enemies (Wenner, 1998:164; Sabo et al. 1996:15). This stereotype is kind of reinforcement of the distinction between “the Orient” and “the Occident”.

In sum, Orientalism can be used as an appropriate approach to Chinese stereotyping from the perspective of Western media. On the one hand, some specific propositions about Asian stereotypes of Orientalism can be tested in this thesis. On the other hand, Orientalism can also be applied to explore the power relationships between East and West.

3.4 Analytical Framework

In order to understand the stereotypes of Chinese athletes through analyzing Western sports journalism. In doing so, constructivism, media representation and racism are regarded as theoretical approaches. Primarily, constructivism is considered as the basic theoretical background to give a fundamental theoretical perspective. Based on that, media representation and racism are used conjunctively as two major theoretical concepts.

Furthermore, Orientalism and stereotypes as two subcategories to the theoretical concept of racism are chosen as two approaches to support the analysis by organizing and explaining the images of Chinese athletes. The way these theories interact is that stereotypes and Orientalism can permeate and influence media representation; whereas, media representation is able to reinforce and disseminate the ideas of stereotype theory and Orientalism. According to the assumption of stereotype theory and Orientalism, several relevant stereotypes of Chinese athletes, from Western viewpoint, have been discovered. And by dividing those stereotypes into three different categories (physical, mental and Chinese development), it is possible to cover the existent stereotypes completely and effectively as well as to constitute the theoretical framework (see Table 1).

Table 1 Chinese development and Racial Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes

Chinese Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is China regarded as a threat? - Is China portrayed as “Exotic” foreign enemies? - Other
Physical Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are they described small in physique? - Are they described physically inferior in jumping and sprinting? - Are they described “suited” to Ping-Pong, badminton? - Other
Mental Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are they described machine- like (unemotional, unreflecting)? - Are they described excessively hard workers and rigorously self-disciplined? - Are they described obsessive conformers? - other

4. Specified Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this thesis is to collect and analyze stereotypes of Chinese athletes in Western sports journalism. Prior claims about racial and Orientalist stereotypes of Asian are tested in the analysis of Western media coverage. To fulfill the aim, critical discourse analysis is applied to answer the following questions:

- 1). How has Chinese development influenced the construction of Chinese athletes in Western media?
- 2). What physical stereotypes of Chinese athletes are represented in Western media?
- 3). What mental stereotypes of Chinese athletes are represented in Western media?
- 4). How shall we understand the presence of the stereotypes from the perspective of racism?

5. Research Design and Methods

In order to solve the research questions, research design and method has been represented in this chapter. The aim is to analyze the stereotypes of Chinese athletes in Western sports journalism. Thus, a case study research is to analyze construction of Chinese athletes in Western media. What's more, textual material is only from major Western media such as the official website of BBC, NBC and New York Times. In the part of analytical method, critical discourse analysis is combined with the theoretical framework as the method to analyze the gathered material.

5.1 Research Design: A Single Case Study of Construction of Chinese Athletes

In this thesis, we choose case study as the research design. As researcher Robert K. Yin defines in her book, the case study research is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984:23). In this study, stereotypes as a phenomenon exists in daily journalism sometimes latent behind multiple material such as texts, pictures and videos which need to be found out. The case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case (Bryman, 2008). Consequently, case study is the optimal research design to answer research questions.

The single case of this thesis is the Western news reports' construction of Chinese athletes. Chinese athletes had lots of evident performances in two recent Olympics which drew considerable attention of Western media. It leads to many descriptions and discussions in Western news reports which interest us. This is the main reason why western news reports' construction of Chinese athletes became the single case. In this study, UK and US news reports are two samples taken from a population of all Western news reports. These two samples are not randomly selected. UK and US media become chosen samples mainly dependent on their predominant position with their global influence and well-known media such as BBC, NBC, New York Times and etc. And another significant advantage of these two Western news reports is language. There is no doubt that English has the largest amount of speakers and have been widely accepted in the world. Based on above considerations, UK and US news reports are regarded as the representative sample of all Western news reports. In this case, UK and US media are treated as a whole to be a sound sample so that there is no comparison between them. In this way, it expands the size of the sample and strengthens the possibility of generalization.

The relationship between theory and research is also a vital factor in the thesis. According to Bryman's book, deductive approach and inductive approach have been applied in social research. The explanation of deductive is that research design and collection of data are guided by theoretical concerns. And an inductive approach states that a theory is an outcome of the research (Bryman, 2008:9). As previous theoretical chapter made clear, lists of certain relevant stereotypes are derived from those basic assumptions. Thus, stereotypes in the framework guide the observation and finding of data. This can be seen as the deductive approach. But this thesis also apply an application of inductive strategies, since in the theoretical framework there is the open option "other", that means we may find some new stereotypes when analyze the material.

5.2 Method for Gathering Data: Sports Journalism about Chinese Athletes

Since this research design is qualitative, the collection of data is according to the nature of qualitative research. Generally, common qualitative methods for gathering data are interview, participation, observation or gathering documents and texts (Marsh&Stocker, 2010). In this study, the optimal data is text. Though the media resources are diversified nowadays which includes not only texts but also sounds, pictures and videos, the text is still the main medium that connects speaker and reader which can express the attitudes or perspectives of speaker immediately. By contrast, it is difficult to know whether a video is typical, and the meaning expressed by pictures is easy to be misunderstood for it is sometimes more abstract and obscure. And writing can be more considered and is possible to be modified several times before the text is published so that it could show the ideology more accurately. What's more, nowadays text is not only equal to "written document", but also has been applied to an increasingly wide range of phenomena. For example, one of the qualitative uses of texts and documentary primary sources is to make meaning from them by using them

to “tell the story” (Bryman, 2008). And this thesis tells a story about stereotypes of Chinese athletes in Western sports journalism.

The sports journalism data chosen for this research are derived from the official website of National Broadcasting Company (NBC), New York Times and British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Comparing with newspaper and TV channels, Internet has a significant advantage which makes website becomes a better material source of our survey. Newspaper and TV channel’s tradition usually classifies the discourse of athletes and their performances by event occurrence time. Instead, a website usually classifies it by countries or sports events. Since we particularly search the sports journalism about Chinese athletes in this thesis, collecting data from website is prefer.

NBC, New York Times and BBC with their prestige and influence in the US and UK allow them to become sources of news reports in this thesis. New York Times as one of the most influential US newspapers has long been accepted as a reliable news source. With the same influence, NBC is the biggest and most powerful Olympic network in the world (Andrew 2008). What’s more, in consideration of sample size and generalization of finding, some material outside US media is collected. BBC as one of UK mainstream media which also has strong influence and representativeness is taken into account. Furthermore, in the last London Olympics, BBC host Clare Balding questioned Chinese athletes Shiwen’s incredible swimming which captured wide attention. Thus, BBC may contain more material relate to this research.

Based on the above discussion, 12 news reports are selected as the analytical material. It includes 5 news reports from BBC, 5 news reports from NBC and 2 news reports from New York Times. And the time period of these news reports started from August 2008 to August 30 2012. More strictly speaking, the time period contains two Olympics events (BeiJing 2008 and London 2012) as well as the time of preparation in each Olympics. One thing to note is that there is no comparison between the two Olympics, since descriptive case study only focuses on relevant stereotypes of

Chinese athletes in news reports during that period. And in the choosing of search key words, the hotspot of media is taken into account for it immediately influences the quantity and depth of news coverage. Thus, the process of collecting data concentrate on some popular sports such as table tennis, diving, badminton and some breakthrough sports events during two recent Olympics.

We believe that in this case those news reports of each media are reasonable sample to answer the research questions. In qualitative study, the data collection should be detailed and in-depth description for better representation of certain unique meaning and the like (Marsh&Stocker, 2010). Thus, the collected material is able to contain enough kinds of angles of stereotypes such as mental, physical and others.

Furthermore, the reliability and validity are taken into account and basically follow four criteria about document selection which are authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning (Scott 1990:6). Without these criteria, data's trustworthiness would be limited. First, the media reports are usually unclear of the author or provenance. It is hard to estimate if the text is accurate without the impact from author's personal position. For solving this limitation, this study only chooses the reports with clear signatures of the author or publisher. Second, the credibility and representativeness are matter as well. For insuring the accuracy of data, the data are all selected from the official website of NBC (<http://www.nbc.com/>), BBC (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/>) and New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com/>).

5.3 Method for Analyzing Data: Critical Discourse Analysis

To examine research questions, analyzing the meaning of discourse is vital for this study. For avoiding the analysis becoming superficial, insightful thinking and systematical analysis through connecting texts with social culture is necessary. As Norman Fairclough argues, "the relationship between texts and society/culture is to be seen dialectically. Texts are socioculturally shaped but they also constitute society and culture, in ways which may be transformative as well as reproductive" (Fairiclough, 1995).Therefore, critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a multifaceted and in-depth

analytical method is applied in this analysis. Further, there are a variety of factions inside CDA. Among these factions, Fairclough's research approach is particularly chosen in this analysis since it is relatively complete, widely used, and pays more attention in the effect of social level instead of only staying at linguistic level.

Critical discourse analysis particularly tends to address the relation between language, power and ideology through its three-dimensional framework (see table 2) which includes text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice (Fairclough, 1995). Firstly, in the dimension of text, linguistic analysis plays an essential role. More specifically, the analysis of those words and sentences in samples can reflect the reaction and explanation of Chinese athletes. In doing so, the analysis through four main angles: 'vocabulary', 'grammar', 'cohesion' and 'text structure' (Fairclough, 1992). In the analysis part, wordings and metaphors are of more concern than other factors. These two factors guide the observation and extract the potential meaning of the material instead of only having a superficial understanding at its lexical level.

In the second dimension, discourse practice involves various aspects of the processes of text production and text consumption. And 'intertextuality' as a significant perspective is applied to analyze this process. It stresses that text producer absorb and transform sources such as an interview and speech from other texts to constitute their own texts. They select the appropriate news sources which can make reports seemingly objective and impartial. However, most of discourse which text producer cites in news is consistent with their ideology. In other words, the stereotypes of Chinese athletes can be seen as collective ideologies that give sense to producer's choice of news sources which represents their attitude and stance.

At last, the third dimension in CDA framework is called sociocultural practice. Difference to previous dimensional analysis, it emphasizes that the analysis should be linked to the analysis of wider social and cultural context, including relations between power and ideologies (Fairclough, 1995). In other words, it is a macro perspective to observe the immediate situational context of the news report. According to this perspective, the discourse in chosen material is seen as not only a discursive practice, but also a social practice which is able to reflect the effect of ideology and hegemony. Furthermore, previous two dimensional analysis provides an analytical foundation through supplying a map of strategies which are used to spread the media's ideology

in terms of sports journalism. This makes the ideological contradictions between West and China become obvious.

In addition, the previous theoretical framework (See Table 3) is organically combined with the three-dimensional framework. The former systematizes the collected stereotypes in the light of the theoretical approach. On this basis, the three-dimensional framework of CDA finds the particular power relations behind the stereotype in a relative complete way. Thus, the analysis is done in both horizontal and vertical angle which enhances the veracity of research findings.

Table 2 Three-dimensional Framework of CDA

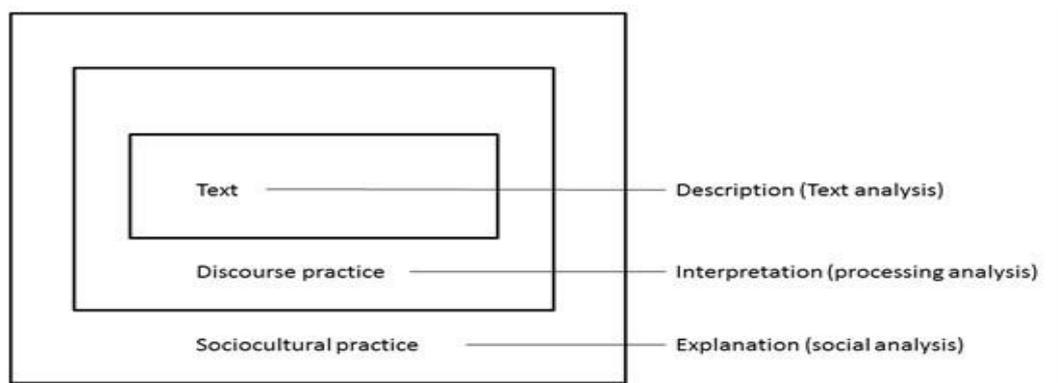


Table 3 Chinese development and Racial Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes

Chinese Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is China regarded as a threat? - Is China portrayed as “Exotic” foreign enemies? - Other
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Physical Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are they described small in physique? - Are they described physically inferior in jumping and sprinting? - Are they described “suited” to Ping-Pong and badminton? - Other
Mental Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are they described machine- like (unemotional, unreflecting)? - Are they described excessively hard workers and rigorously self-disciplined? - Are they described obsessive conformers? - Other

6. Analysis: Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes

The goal of this chapter is to answer four research questions from a comprehensive perspective. Its structure is based on the theoretical framework and CDA’s three-dimensional framework, and it is mainly divided into two sections. First, CDA is used to analyze description of Chinese development as well as to test the stereotypes of Chinese athletes in Western mass media. In the second section, there is a discussion about the application of theory and further analysis of the power relations behind those stereotypes through critical discourse analysis.

6.1 Background

From the perspective of racism, especially with traditions of stereotype theory and Orientalism, the problem can mainly be divided into two processes. First categorizing, then labeling. Chinese athletes as an “other” racial category to the Western athletes are prominently different in either physical or mental way. According to these

differences, they are easy to distinguish and categorize which provides the basis of labeling them. From this perspective, stereotypes of Chinese athletes in Western media as a cognitive and linguistic phenomenon are possible to be found. Furthermore, the stereotype may change with time, therefore the development of China is also taken into account in this analysis. The theoretical framework which includes physical stereotypes, mental stereotypes as well as Chinese development provides a comprehensive analytical method.

Furthermore, critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the other analytical framework plays a role in deepening the analysis with regard to not only the discourse dimension but also the social dimension. Within these dimensions, discourse and ideology matter bilaterally as two primary factors. On the one hand, stereotypes of Chinese athletes unconsciously infiltrate Western media discourse through news texts. On the other hand, the discourse as a fact leads to stereotypes, or plays a significant role in instilling, maintaining and changing those stereotypes. This enables CDA to reveal the stereotypes and analyze the inner relationships of the stereotypes and the construction of Chinese athletes.

6.2 Chinese Development: The Representation of A Threat

The Olympics is a global competition platform, almost every country in the world take part. In this context, China who was at the forefront of the medal table in the two recent Olympics is therefore seen as a threat. But further, in the light of one assumption of Orientalism which states that “Chinese is more inscrutable which may lead to a threat” (Sartre, 2001: 18), China also plays a threatening role which can be interpreted in a broader context than just “sports”.

In general, the way Western media represent China as a threat can be divided into two parts. One is the way it describes China with respect to the Olympics, the other is the way it discusses the successful Olympic performance of China. Through an analysis

of the relevant news text, a broader concept of the threat of China in Western media's perspective is able to be realized.

First, when Western media describe China in relation to the Olympics, the role of China is sometimes portrayed as more than just an Olympic competitor. This reflects a fact that the imagination of "threat" not only exists in sports aspect, but can also be found in a broader social context.

- (1) "While foreign coaches seem to have melded well, the meeting of cultures has not always gone smoothly, particularly in sports where athletes and staff had been least exposed to foreign methods. Rowing coach Igor Grinko raised hackles among some Chinese officials with changes to the training regime that included giving athletes two days of rest per week and separating the single and dual oar competitors into separate training groups."

- (2) "Where positive competition results followed, as in rowing, the changes were accepted. When the results were disappointing, they weren't. For instance, after drawing criticism for instituting reforms similar to Grinko's, German's Josef Capousek was fired as coach of the canoe and kayak team for what he called "political reasons," although the team still has three other Germans on its coaching staff."

The story in the text (1) can be briefly summarized as that due to drawing criticism for instituting reforms a foreign coach was fired by Chinese officials. Firstly, the words of this text such as "the meeting of cultures has not always gone smoothly", "raised hackles among some Chinese officials" and "was fired" all express one thing that "Chinese officials" and "foreign coaches" as the two characters of this story are set as opposites. The root of this opposition is described as "drawing criticism for instituting reforms". Moreover, from the context, the sentence "Where positive competition results followed, as in rowing, the changes were accepted. When the results were disappointing, they weren't" is presented as an idea of Chinese institution which is obviously opposite to the foreign coach's idea. And this opposition of idea is the real contraction behind the incident.

Through this description, China is portrayed as ambitious and threatening as it has a utilitarian medal fever. Re-interpretating the text on this basis, it represents China as a

threatening and in opposition to foreign coaches because of the differences in ideas, or as the coach says, “political reason”. Thus, China as an Olympic competitor is not only an opponent to the West in sports, but also in ideological and political aspects.

The way that Western media discusses the successful Olympic performance of China can also reflect a broader concept of the threat of China. As one news text argues, "it (the performance) is hard to name a single reason for the improvement. There are a lot of factors involved"(Fairclough, 1992). The news text aims at the fact that media tend to attribute the successful Olympic performance of China to certain factors other than sports such as population and economy.

(3) “Chinese athletes dominate in diverse sports

Increased funding, training behind major Olympic success for China”

(4) “After winning the gold on Saturday, Sun told the media: "What I did proved what the Chinese men are capable of." Why is different this time? According to Zhou, it is because of the growth of China's economy. "In a nutshell, sports is symbolised in economy," he said. ...After years of development, China is in a position to tap the talent and produce champions.”

The headline is an epitome of text. Namely, a headline is able to reflect main content and particular stance of text. Text (3) is normal quite a typical Olympics news headline on China. It argues that “increased funding” as one reason behind Chinese athletes’ dominative performance. Similarly in text (4), it claims that the Chinese breakthrough in swimming is based on “the growth of China's economy.” and that, “sports is symbolized in economy”. In according to intertextuality, the quote is about to reflect what the text stands for, especially when the quote here is not for arguing or comparing. In addition, in the end of this text, it points out that the development of China these years enables it to “produce champions”. In the context of the Olympics, one nation’s development immediately becomes a threat to other nations. Therefore, the situation can be interpreted in a broader context. The text reflects the idea that the threat of China is associated with an economic aspect rather than only belonging within the frames of sports.

Sometimes, population as a distinguishing feature of China is also represented when it comes to explaining Chinese' performance.

- (5) "I think the general public was very happy with the result, with China finishing second after the US," Dong Jun, a journalist with China Radio International (CRI), told the BBC...."China's 2008 delegation was huge," David Yang, editor of the China Sports Review website, pointed out. "The delegation for London was roughly 60% the size." "For a major sports nation like China, this was already a streamlined delegation - so their performance was splendid," Mr. Yang said."

Here have the same major premise that media has a function of representing the sound of its own country. And relate it to the Olympics, in which every country plays as a competitor, Western media stand for their country as well. Thus, it regards China as a threat within sports. However, when it represents the reason behind the threat, it actually depicts the reason of the threat as a threat in itself. The political and economic aspects as analyzed above are examples of this.

In text (5), BBC does the same thing. The logic of the explanation behind the performance that led to "China finishing second after the US" is clear. It can be shown with extraction of its quote words. "China's 2008 delegation was huge," and "the delegation for London was roughly 60% the size", "so their performance was splendid". Thus, the Chinese population offers backing for strong Olympic performance. In this sense, media represents China's huge population is a kind of threat as well.

In sum, this analysis shows that China is regarded as a various threat in the eyes of Western media. Chinese Olympic performance is related to other social aspects such as institution, economy and population. On this basis, Chinese athletes as one part or even a representation of China is regarded as a threat which penetrates into Western media.

6.3 Physical Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes

In general, height and weight are basic physical elements of athletes, and various factors such as different genes and different living condition can influence them. As a Western research claimed that due to inherited racial factors, Chinese were consistently smaller than the others (M. T. Ashcroft, 2005). In the Olympic Games, Western news reports are more likely to use physical description when introducing Chinese athletes than others. Sometimes they directly write the height or weight, in other cases they use other vocabulary like “small” to describe the physique of Chinese athletes.

(6) “The Americans then started forcing turnovers by China's smaller guards -- long the team's Achilles' heel -- and broke open the game with a series of layups and dunks. That helped the U.S. score 10 straight...”

(7) “Adrian Moorhouse, the British swimmer who took gold in the 100m breaststroke at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul,...He says Ye's "small and light" frame is a great physique for her event.”

This first quote (6) is NBC's news reports from a basketball game between China and the US at Beijing Olympics. The text (6) describes a process that how the US team builds its advantage. The text employs a causal explanation to describe how the American forced turnovers by China's guard because they are smaller compared to the American players and this disadvantageous physical factor lead to the American breaking open the game. Moreover, the metaphor “long the team's Achilles' heel” highlights the negative influence of small physique rather than the influence of skill or other factor.

However, the small physique of Chinese athletes is sometimes a benefit in certain sports events like the example (7) displays. There is a causal relationship being made also in this text. The advantage of Ye's swimming is due to her “small and light” physique said by Adrian Moorhouse. Here, Moorhouse is not only a spectator but also the speaker in this case. That is, a Chinese physical character is presented by a former

swimmer from Britain. It seemingly reflects a professional angle and objectivity in this news report. With this intertextual perspective, this text is constructed through useful news source which the opinion of Moorhouse. It also points out the small physique of Chinese athletes in Western media.

Consequently, the texts construct causal relationships to describe events in texts (6) and (7), and Chinese athletes are automatically related to small physique instead of skill, tactic or other factors. Put another way, this construction of Chinese athlete reveals a phenomenon that there is a stereotype of Chinese small physique and its meaning in Western media. Furthermore, in the text (6), there is a racial comparison between Chinese athletes and American athletes. This makes the physique stereotype connects with racial factor, and turns into a racial stereotype.

Moreover, the ability in jumping and sprinting is also a significant physical quality of athletes especially in track and field. For example, black athletes display their superior sprint in such sports events. In the tradition of Western research there has often been the belief believed that Black people are naturally quick and good at jumping (e.g. Jackson, 1987; Farrington et al, 2012). Although Liu Xiang became the first man from China to win an Olympic gold medal in track and field at the 2004 Athens Games, Chinese athletes have had few chances to occupy headlines of Western news reports about track and field. The two samples below show the perceptions of Chinese athletes in this respect:

(8) “What Liu proved was something many Chinese still cannot quite believe: that they can compete with anyone in sports that demand speed and power. Many Chinese assumed they were genetically disadvantaged in such sports”

(9) “At a news conference, Liu admitted out loud what his countrymen were thinking. “It is kind of a miracle,” he said. “It is unbelievable — a Chinese, an Asian, has won this event. It is a proud moment not only for China but for Asia and all people who share the same yellow skin color.”

These two texts are selected from one news report about a Chinese athlete, Liu Xiang, who is the only hope of China to win a medal in track and field. The text (8) starts with “What Liu proved was something many Chinese still cannot quite believe”. First, “Still” and “quite” are utilized to stress following clause “Chinese athletes are not good at speed and power”. And this can be one reason to explain the “miracle” in text (9), when Liu Xiang won a golden medal in Olympics 2004.

Furthermore, in the end of text (8) it argues that “Many Chinese assumed they were genetically disadvantaged in such sports”. Note that the subject of this sentence is “Many Chinese” instead of Western voice. And this sentence makes a tricky situation that Chinese has two roles which is actor and target at the same time. Through this, it not only reinforces the truth-claim in the following part “they were genetically disadvantaged in such sports”, but also obfuscates the stance of Western media in this text. More importantly, this sentence seems to categorize Chinese athletes as genetically disadvantaged in speed and power, and this is a process of stereotyping.

Turning to the text (9), key words such as “a Chinese”, “an Asian” and “yellow skin color” are worth noticing. These words would implicitly influence this text move into a racial perspective. Text (9) seems to tell a surface story of how Liu Xiang, a Chinese with yellow skin, won the golden medal is a miracle. However, if connected with text (8), this expresses further information. Through using the arguments of the Chinese people, the text (8) reinforces the representation that “Chinese are genetically disadvantaged in running”, and text (9) connects this with a racial factor through Liu’s speech. Based on this, Liu’s great achievement is just a mirror which reflects an underlying racial stereotype on physical side that Chinese athletes are physically inferior in jumping and sprinting.

Differently from track and field, table-tennis and badminton require agility and quick response speed. In Western media, table tennis has been considered the national sport of China. What’s more, Western reporters repetitively portray how Chinese athletes

dominate in table tennis and badminton. With time, that Chinese athlete are “suited” for table tennis and badminton become a stereotype step by step rather than just being the fact that Chinese traditionally are good at table-tennis.

(10) “Americans generally think of it as a rainy day game for the basement, but table tennis (it's actually called Ping-Pong here) is an integral part of China's identity, right up there with the pandas, the distinctive food and the Great Wall.”

(11) “This is a lonely sport in America,” said Linda Shen, 57, of the Orange County Badminton Club, where Bach and Malaythong train, along with the other three members of Team USA. “Everyone thinks it's a backyard game, not a real sport.”

Both above texts indicate that, in American opinion, badminton is a backyard game and table tennis is a rainy day game for the basement. Put in another way, both actors of text are American, they reflect an American desire to stay at a higher position when calling table-tennis a “game for the basement” and badminton a “backyard game”, which depresses these two sports position in U.S society.

In text (10), as the sentence shows “table tennis is an integral part of China's identity” which create a strong comparison between America and China to stress the different cognition of table tennis. Through this sentence, China is placed in a passive position to be described. It reflects a process that table tennis has been embedded in China’s identity. Thus, table tennis is not just a popular sport in China, but also a fixed image or stereotype of the Chinese athletes in Western media. With the influence of Orientalism, the completely different cognition of table tennis and badminton make Chinese athletes as “the other” who are “suited” for table tennis and badminton. Based on this stereotype, the achievement of Chinese athletes in table tennis and badminton is diminished.

6.4 Mental Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes

Other than physical stereotypes, stereotypes of mental attributes usually express the tendency that Western media describe Chinese athletes and explain for Chinese

athletic performance through particular mental feature or ideology. In the Western media's construction of Chinese athletes, mental stereotypes can be mainly divided into three aspects: excessively hard workers, machine-like and obsessive conformers. They are analyzed thematically in the following.

Excessively hard working is one of the most widely existing mental stereotypes in Western media's construction of Chinese athletes. Rigorously self-disciplined can be seen as the other form of representing excessively hard working. An analysis of two paragraphs below shows how the representing works.

(12) "In April last year two Chinese divers told World Olympic Dreams of their training regime which allows them half a day off each week. This week the pair picked up a gold and silver medal at the Diving World Cup in London. Sunday is normally a day of rest in China - but not for the country's top divers."

(13) "Ye has repeatedly said hard work, not a banned substance, has made her a champion."

Both texts above involve references from athletes themselves. This helps to enhance the objectivity of the explanation of the athletes' performance. However, in the light of intertextuality, the intertextual material are rarely just simply inset into text, but are reused through the internal logic relationship and semantic structure. In the text (12), Western media distributes the intertextual material "half a day off each week" next to "the pair picked up a gold and silver medal at the Diving World Cup in London." Through this structure, these two single sentences are endowed a causal relationship. Thus it implies some extra semantic meaning of each sentence that the pair of Chinese athletes' triumph is due to their working which with only "half a day off each week". As is the case within the text (12) but with a different approach, the text (13) use "repeatedly" with Ye's saying of "hard work" which express the logic that what "made her a champion" is "hard work".

Besides quoting the athlete's words, in the last sentence of text (13), the media as a direct speaker contrasts "normal Sunday for rest" with "Chinese athletes are still working" which label Chinese athletes as "excessively hard workers". In

classification analysis, the behavior that media chose “the country’s” to describe the athletes emphasizes the Chinese identity of the athletes. As a conclusion, “Chinese athletes are excessively hard workers” as stereotype is found in the media explanation of Chinese athlete's performance.

Furthermore, the stereotype of “Chinese athletes are excessively hard workers” is not always represented in an immediate way, sometimes it emerges in form of “rigorously self-disciplined”, of which the following is an example:

(14) “If the coach asks me to practice 10,000 meters,” she (Ye Shiwen, the Chinese swimmer in the 2012 Olympics) told The Beijing Morning News, “I would never be lazy to swim 9,900 meters instead.”

Through this text, a hard working image of Ye who is a Chinese Olympic athlete is constructed. This choice of words also has a feature which makes it possible to differentiate rigorously self-disciplined from general hard working. This feature is the representation of one’s own intention of training. This text reflects this feature well from two aspects. One is the angle of quoting, the text uses Ye’s own words to describe her. This indicates that the intention of training is Ye’s own. The other is the use of words. For example, the practice of “10,000 or 9,900 meters” reflects a very hard training which requires a strong intention of athlete. Related to this, the words “I would never” has a relatively strong tone that is used to emphasize this intention. Consequently, an imagination of rigorous self-discipline emerges which reflects the stereotype.

Similar to “excessively hard workers”, “machine-like” as the other common stereotype in Western media construction of Chinese athletes has multiple representation angle as well. These angles can be classified into unreflecting character and unemotional character.

Firstly, unreflecting character which is represented by Western media is mainly embodied in its description of Chinese athletes’ life style as monotonous and unthinking. This description can contain either monotonous or unthinking character,

or both. Unreflecting portrayal as a way of constructing Chinese athletes is typically exists in Western media's representation of Chinese athletes in a variety of forms.

(15) “(Jan-Ove Waldner) challenged generations of Chinese players with his creative style of play during a career that has spanned more than 25 years ...Waldner's success in table tennis stems from his ingenuity in changing tactics and playing styles during a match. “I think if you take the Asian players compared to me, they are more like machines when they play. They always do the same things when they are playing,” he said”

(16) “Ye began swimming at 7 and was placed in a sports school in Hangzhou in eastern China...Last year, Ye won a world title in the 200 I.M. She has also trained in Australia, where Chinese swimmers say they are free from grinding monotony. “In China, we are always used to just train, train, train, study, study, study and get some rest Machine like,” said Lu Ying, who won a silver medal Sunday in the women's 100 butterfly. “Our way of thinking has many limits”

In the sample (15), the text sets Waldner as the speaker with his evaluation of Chinese table tennis athletes as “they are more like machines when they play. They always do the same things when they are playing”. With a classification analysis, Waldner as a speaker here uses “like machines” and “always do the same things” in his discourse to describe and classify the Chinese athletes. Obviously, “like machines” belong to “machine-like” stereotypes, besides this, “always do the same things” as a merely repetitive process can be associated with unthinking which is “machine-like” oriented as well. Thus, this reflects Waldner's personal image of China. However, in intertextuality perspective, it is more than just a personal image. The text's choice of quoting these specific words shows an underlying stereotype, which is “machine-like”.

Text (16) is able to reflect the existing stereotype of “Chinese athletes are machine-like” in multiple angles. The key word here is the “monotony”. Actually, multiple parts of speech can be chosen to describe this status, but here the text applies noun “monotony” particularly. In classification analysis of CDA, using noun “monotony” can be seen as a behavior which label Chinese swimmers permanently instead of using verb or adjective which tends to describe character temporarily. Thus it manifests that the Chinese swimmers is regarded as a group which has already been

classified by the text by the label “monotony”. Hence, stereotype of “Machine-like” emerges.

After the analysis of vocabulary, the quote “just train, train, train, study, study, study” is valuable to the analysis for it has an interesting feature on vocabulary which is the repetition. It almost equals to monotony which is associated with a repetitive process of action, especially with a “just” which enhances this effect. What’s more, after representation of monotonous part, “Our way of thinking has many limits” also points towards “machine-like” immediately and with an unthinking perspective.

Besides unreflecting character, unemotional character usually appears in sport journalism as an angle of machine-like.

(17) “They eat, sleep and train at facilities in Beijing run by the China State General Sports Administration. They have few friends in the city outside. “For people like us who live in a small circle, we meet people from similar backgrounds and have very simple lives,” said Wu Minxia, who has already won two Olympic gold medals. “People who live outside, who have to work, have a more complicated relationship with society.”He Zi is 20, Wu Minxia is 26, but neither has a boyfriend.”

There is a typical contrast in text (17). The text puts “people like us who live in a small circle,” and “people who live outside” as two opposite life style side by side. On this basis, “have very simple lives” and “have a more complicated relationship with society” are contrasted. Moreover, “few friends” is a negative description, especially when it is put in a contrast which reinforces this negativeness. This way of description implies the stance of text. In summary, the text highlights the isolation of Chinese athletes in social relations aspect after contrast.

Turning to the personal aspect, the text chooses to describe both mentioned Chinese athletes with “He Zi is 20, Wu Minxia is 26, but neither has a boyfriend.” There are multiple profile angles of athletes, the “relationship status” however seems not very significant in an athletic profile, but is here chosen as a description. In sum, both angles of description, social and personal aspect, are done in negative way. This leads

to a portrayal of unemotional character of Chinese athletes which can be understood as a stereotype of “machine-like”.

Compared with previous stereotypes, “obsessive conformers” as a stereotype usually appears in a relative hidden way.

(18) “I’d like to take my family on holiday,” said He, who does not visit her distant home even once a year.” But that is in the future. For now these two divers have their sights set firmly on London, where they are expected to compete together in the women’s 3m synchronized diving event.”

According to the context of sample (18), the story which is told by BBC consists of two main parts. On the one hand, He as representative of Chinese athletes expresses a wish which “I’d like to take my family on holiday”. On the other hand, they “are expected to compete” in the event. Thus it creates a contradiction between “holiday” and “competition” which cannot be handled simultaneously, a contradiction which can be transformed into a contradiction between “self-interest” and “collective interest”. The solution of this contradiction, “now these two divers have their sights set firmly on London” tells that “group interest” wins.

Furthermore, in this story’s description, the passivity of “are expected to compete” plays an important role in revealing the stereotype of “obsessive conformers”. In transitivity analysis, the use of passivity indicates a kind of passive relation between the action agents and the passives. Therefore, Chinese athletes are portrayed as passives which reflect that Chinese athletes are located in a lower position in the power structure between collectivity and them within Western media’s mind. As an analytical result, the construction of Chinese athletes in this text endows them two features which act as passives and put collective interest first. Based on this, this text can be seen as an evidence of the stereotype that Chinese athletes are “obsessive conformers”.

As a conclusion, the existence of excessively hard workers, machine-like and obsessive conformers which are listed in the theoretical framework as three primary

mental stereotypes are demonstrated in this chapter. In doing so, the critical discourse analysis is used in text and discourse dimension which enable the elusive text features such as the internal logic behind language structure, the classification made by text and the power structure hidden in grammar.

6.5 The Power Relations behind Stereotypes

The aim of this thesis is to understand the stereotypes of Chinese athlete in Western media. As Fairclough claim, “ideologies are propositions that generally figure as implicit assumptions in texts, which contribute to producing or reproducing unequal relations of power, relations of domination”(Fairclough, 1995:14). Through this definition, the stereotype here works as the “ideology” in dual aspects. Thus, this study is done with a bidirectional analysis. Both directions of analysis are based on critical discourse analysis of news text. One direction is to test stereotypes. The other is to understand the power structure behind the stereotypes.

In the analysis of first direction, the stereotypes of Chinese athlete in Western media are verified. The existence of these stereotypes can be seen as a result of that the media unconsciously construct the text ideologically. The constructionist approach of media representation theory is able to explain this fact. In light of constructionist perspective, Western media use its conceptual systems of their culture and the linguistic and other representational systems of its own to construct meaning through text and hence share the ideas and concepts (Hall 1997).

More specifically, from the perspective of stereotype theory the construction of meaning is a process. And in combination with the perspective of Orientalism, this process is able to be interpreted. First, Chinese athletes are categorized by some “physically prominent” characteristics, for example their yellow skin. In this process, the Chinese athletes are regarded as a representation of “the Orient”. Then, the Western media as a representation of “the Occident” attributes a characteristic of “exotic foreign enemies” to Chinese athletes. And based on this characteristic, a

variety of labels are affixed on Chinese athletes through the actual discourse, such as aspects of physical, mental and threat.

Simultaneously, the power structure emerges from those stereotypes. The texts are not only rooted in social practice, but also react upon social practice. It contributes to construction of certain power relations which is “unequal and relations of domination.” Therefore, this part of the analysis focuses on studying the power relations behind the texts.

This power structure is embedded in the ideology to establish the discursive order which is a specific combination of various genres, styles and discourse. And on this basis, the power relations decide actual discourse (Fairclough 1989: 17). Thus, in this study, the understanding of the power relations can be analyzed from the texts which correspond with the actual discourse in the Western media. Firstly, a oppositional power structure is observed.

(17) “In China, we are always used to just train, train, train, study, study, study and get some rest,” said Lu Ying, who won a silver medal Sunday in the women’s 100 butterfly. “Our way of thinking has many limits. And we are bound by them. But in Australia, I can be invited to a barbecue or a breakfast. In China that never happens.”

In this text, through a Chinese athlete as a speaker, Lu Ying, she describes that in China her life is constituted by training, study and rest. The influence of those descriptions reflects that Chinese athletes have an exotic life experience. But in Australia, she can go barbecue and breakfast which can be associated with life of Western athletes. Obviously, there is a conflicting contrast between Chinese athletes’ life and Western athletes’ life. Hence, through the introduction about exotic life in China, it shows how Chinese athletes are in an opposite position in this text structure.

According to Orientalism, China has been treated as exotic in Western ideology. And this ideology reflects on texts, Western athletes and Western social cognition are always regarded as an implicit reference or criterion, when making a comparison with Chinese athletes. In this way, Chinese athletes always been placed at oppositional

position in the power structure. Besides, a top-down structure between Western media and Chinese athletes is also represented in the news texts.

(16) “Jan-Ove Waldner challenged generations of Chinese players with his creative style of play during a career that has spanned more than 25 years.....Waldner's success in table tennis stems from his ingenuity in changing tactics and playing styles during a match. "I think if you take the Asian players compared to me, they are more like machines when they play. They always do the same things when they are playing," he said.”

In text (16), “creative style” is used to describe Waldner’s playing. On the other hand, in terms of describing Chinese athletes’ playing, there are two steps created within the discourse. Firstly, Waldner is described as a “success” character. And after that, Waldner’s evaluation of Chinese athletes’ playing, “more like machines”, is quoted. Contrasting “creative style” with “more like machines”, the former being more positive than the latter, and this text can be interpreted as stating the fact that Waldner is relatively superior to Chinese table tennis athletes. This fact leads to an ideology with a top-down power structure.

(19) “Liu Yandong, a top Communist Party official, had called Liu to "express sympathy and concern", state media reported...The official told Liu that "his spirit, will and attitude have deeply moved and highly inspired the whole nation", said the Xinhua news agency...Some netizens questioned why Liu, who is one of China's top sporting icons, was competing despite his injuries..."Liu Xiang was carrying too heavy a burden. Chinese sports officials know nothing about the Olympic spirit. For them, athletes are just machines and pawns," one comment said.”

There are two speakers that express opinion in this text (19). One speaker is described as “a top Communist Party official”, and sources of these discourses are specified precisely by the words of “state media reported” and “said the Xinhua news agency”. This implies that the speaker plays a role in representing the “official” voice of China in this intertextuality context. In relation to this, the other speaker, “some netizens” and “one comment”, are unclear. Besides the speaker’s identity, the meaning of these discourses is also different. The former two quotes show a highly affirmative attitude to the behavior that Liu participated in Olympics with injuries. By contrast, the latter one holds the complete opposite view of this incident through its radical rhetoric.

Especially, the words “Chinese sports officials know nothing about the Olympic spirit” immediately contrapose the Chinese official who is also a speaker in this text.

Through this contradiction, the stance of BBC can be analyzed from the subtitle, the 'Heavy burden'. Title of news always has a characteristic of showing the stance of text. This subtitle is highly corresponding with the last quote in which "Liu Xiang was carrying too heavy a burden". Moreover, in the view of intertextuality, the choice of quotes is not produced randomly which can reflect underlying ideology. In the light of that, the correspondence implies that the last discourse represents BBC's view. Namely, BBC as real speaker behind the text, saying that Chinese athletes are just regarded as “machines and pawns” by “Chinese sports officials” who “know nothing about the Olympic spirit”. Through the discourse, a reprehensive attitude is manifested. And in combination with the words of the Chinese official, it reflects a superior position of West. More specifically, a top-down power structure between the West and China in Western media's ideology is reflected.

Through the critical discourse analysis above, the power relations behind the stereotypes is found. And it fits the power relations from an Orientalism perspective. In the tradition of Orientalism's, the relationship between Occident and Orient is “a relationship of power, of domination” which reflects an oppositional and hierarchical structure. It differentiates the West and East as well as indicates that the West define themselves as superior (Said, 2003). And when this differentiation infiltrates into the discourse of Western media, its news texts tend to implicate a relation of hierarchy between Western and Chinese athletes, as well as a construction of “exotic” foreign enemies of Chinese athletes. As a result, the power relations between Western media and Chinese athletes are oppositional and top-down which is explained by the Orientalism perspective.

7. Conclusions: A Better Understanding of Stereotypes of Chinese Athletes

The aim of this study is to collect and analyze stereotypes of Chinese athletes in Western sports journalism. To fulfill the aim, four relevant research questions have been answered. 1). How has Chinese development influenced the construction of Chinese athletes in Western media? 2). What physical stereotypes of Chinese athletes are represented in Western media? 3). What mental stereotypes of Chinese athletes are represented in Western media? 4). How shall we understand the presence of the stereotypes from the perspective of racism?

Regarding the first question, Chinese achievements in the recent two Olympics are seen as a threat in Western media. The finding connects the Chinese threat with the Chinese development. The inscrutable development not only emerges in the Olympics, in sports, but can also be related to broader aspects such as Chinese institution, economy and population. And these aspects as external factors closely connect with Chinese athletes. Chinese athletes as one part or even a representation of China is regarded as a threat which is represented by Western media.

Besides external factors, in research question 2 and 3, Western media depict Chinese athletes from physical and mental perspective. However, the finding provides that those descriptions of Chinese athletes are accompanied by racial stereotypes. On the one hand, physical stereotypes of Chinese athletes contain three aspects which are small physique, physically inferior in jumping and sprinting and suited to table tennis and badminton. On the other hand, mental stereotypes invariably relates to machine-like (unemotional, unreflecting), excessively hard workers, self-disciplined and obsessive conformers. With the influence of Orientalist ideology, news reports represent those stereotypes. And hence the representation reveals the superiority or the hegemony of “the Occident”.

The last question is answered in two steps with a focus of the power relations which work as an important component of the stereotypes of Western media. It provides an analytical angle for understanding the power structure behind the stereotypes. And hence it makes the analysis of the presence of the stereotypes more in-depth instead of just testing the existence of stereotypes. Firstly, an oppositional and top-down structure of power relations is found from the news text by critical discourse analysis. And then the perspective of Orientalism is applied to explain the power relations. Orientalism has two main actors which are “the Occident” and “the Orient”, Western media and Chinese athletes are considered standing for each in this study. Therefore, the power relations between Western media and Chinese athletes are similar with what between “the Occident” and “the Orient”. On this basis, the power relations between Western media and Chinese athletes are confirmed as oppositional and top-down.

In this qualitative research, single case study has been chosen as the research design and Critical discourse analysis (CDA) selected as analyzing method. As a consequence of two choices, the study encountered a number of limitations, which need to be mentioned. First, in the light of different backgrounds of knowledge, culture and attitude, some subjective judgments were applied when making the critical discourse analysis. Second, as one of standard criticisms of the case study, the findings come from two predominant Western media (non-random) cannot completely represent stereotypes of Chinese athletes in all Western media. For the future research, researcher can expand the size of sample to picture a completely image of Chinese athletes on the basis of this thesis.

In previous studies, the main focus is stereotypes of black athletes. However, the stereotypes of other races are relatively unnoticed. This study which focuses on the stereotypes of Chinese athletes contributes to filling this gap. More specifically, this study analyzes news text on recent two Olympics in Western media. In doing so, the stereotypes are presented in the theoretical framework, demonstrated with critical

discourse analysis and explained with perspective of racism. Through this, it systemizes the understanding of the stereotypes.

This research finding can support further studies. In the future, a new research angle of how stereotypes impact the athletes may be a focus. For example, in the previous study of black athletes, it indicates that the stereotype of “Blake can jump” has an impact that black athletes prefer joining a track and field team instead of joining a swim team since they believe they have an advantage in track and field. Likewise, an analysis of this angle is interesting to be done on Chinese athletes as well. And this requires a basis of confirmed and systematical understanding of the representation of Chinese athletes, which is offered by this thesis.

The understanding of the stereotypes and the power relations, which is the finding of this study, can play a role of a proper starting point of promoting social cultural meeting. In the classical view, the problems of stereotypes are simplicity and inaccurate for the lack knowledge of other category can lead to exaggerate and homogenize (Pickering, 2001:10). And this study indicates what knowledge is lacking in some extent by analyzing the stereotypes of sports. On this basis, the exaggeration and homogenization between Western media and China is able to be reduced. As a result, proceeding from the increase understanding of the stereotypes, the culture meeting between the West and China may go more objectively and smoothly which is particular meaningful in the era of globalization.

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8.1 Material

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Appendix

Code of texts	Headline of news report	Publisher	Release time
(1) (2) (3)	Chinese athletes dominate in diverse sports	NBC	25 August, 2008
(4)	Olympics swimming: China's long road to glory	BBC	31 July 2012
(5)	London 2012: China assesses Olympic 'journey'	BBC	August 13, 2012
(6)	U.S. beats China 101-70 in Olympic opener	NBC	August 10, 2008
(7)	Why teen athletes can make big improvements	BBC	Jul 31, 2012
(8),(9)	The State Requests That Citizen Liu Win Gold	New York Times	Aug 3, 2008
(10)	When second is failure	NBC	July 14, 2008
(11)	America's 'lonely sport'	NBC	Aug 13, 2008
(12)(17) (18)	London 2012: Inside China's Olympic 'factory'	BBC	Feb 24, 2012
(13) (14) (16)	China Pool Prodigy Churns Wave of Speculation	New York Times	Jul 30, 2012
(15)	Swede is big celebrity in China	NBC	August 13, 2008
(19)	China mourns hurdler Liu Xiang's Olympic exit	BBC	August 8, 2012