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Feminism and gender in the equality debate: A corpus-assisted discourse analysis of gender representation in three key British newspapers

Abstract – This article draws on corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS), and critical discourse analysis (CDA) to explore the linguistic, political and ideological peculiarities of discourse on gender equality in the British press. To this end, a specialized corpus consisting of 376 articles published between 2012 and 2020 by three broadsheet newspapers in the UK, The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph and The Times is analysed. Along with this main object of study, two minor, politically-marked subcorpora are scrutinized so as to detect potential correlations between the journalistic embodiment of two broad socio-political stances and their related perspectives on gender equality. These goals are achieved by examining key lexical units via collocational and concordance inspection. Results show that, while the main corpus presents the issue as an essentially political debate with recurring actors and areas of intervention, an overarching, quasi-victimizing portrayal of gender prevails over differential, politically-driven representative practices in the two subcorpora.

Keywords: Corpus linguistics, Corpus-assisted discourse studies, Feminism, Gender Equality, Gender