

## A Stylo-Thematic Analysis of Rivalry in the Anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona

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### ABSTRACT

The linguistic analysis of anthems of football clubs is a growing area of linguistic research. This paper therefore contributes significantly to literature on the linguistic analysis of anthems of football clubs by exploring the rivalry ties between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona through the prism and lens of the translated English language versions of their anthems. The study examines how stylistic devices are used to project, construct and reflect various themes in the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona towards deepening the rivalry ties between them. The study is underpinned by the linguistic and stylistic categories framework by Leech and Short (2007). The translated English versions of the anthems of Real Madrid and Barcelona are sourced from the official websites of the clubs. The findings of the study show that stylistic devices such as repetition, co-referencing, metaphors, personification, and parallelism are aesthetically used in the anthems to project the themes of identity, solidarity, resilience and praises in order to further deepen the rivalry ties between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona especially during El Clásicos. The theme of solidarity is dominantly projected stylistically to present FC Barcelona as a club that calls for internal solidarity in order to champion its Catalan ideologies while Real Madrid is projected as a club that seeks to establish external solidarity through canvassing for a worldwide fan base. The findings of the study would help fans and players of the two clubs and all lovers of football to better appreciate the content of the lyrics in the anthems. The study concludes that, the rivalry between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona is not only sourced from political and historical antecedents but can equally be sourced from anthems of the clubs since these anthems encode the ideologies of the clubs.

### INTRODUCTION

Football has become one of the popular sports enjoyed by majority of people transcending age, gender, nationality and social status. People watch football live at the stadia, via television or through varied social media platforms. The rise in technological inventions serves as a major boost on the increasing patronage of football since most fans and supporters may be constrained in travelling to watch live matches. The FIFA audit results for the 2018 world cup indicates a rise in the number of viewers in the world cup from 3.2 billion in 2014 to 3.5 billion people in 2018 which represents almost half of the global population (FIFA, 2018). The increasing patronage of football is not only limited to the World Cup but also to premier leagues, Champions' League, continental competitions and other competitions. One element that makes the game of football unique from other sporting activities is the massive competition and rivalry it creates amongst players and fans of clubs or teams. Guzuru and Ndimande (2015, p. 3) clarify the element of competition and rivalry in football when they proffer that 'Football involves two opposing teams who have different identities,

strips, playing styles, ethos and philosophy and are in competition against each other'. The game of football therefore serves as a symbol of unity on one hand and an epitome of division on the other hand. The competition and rivalry among clubs is mostly evident between topnotch traditional football clubs within countries, continents and the world at large. One of such traditional rivalries worth looking at is the rivalry between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona which is set in the context of the Spanish football league. The La Liga which refers to the Spanish premier league is one of the topnotch leagues patronized by football fandom around the world. Real Madrid and FC Barcelona are undeniably the two giant football rivals in Spain (Ball, 2001; Kassimeris, 2012; Lopez-Gonzalez, Frederic and Richard, 2014; Lopez, 2015). The rivalry between the two clubs is popularly known to the world as *el clasico* which creates an identity conflict whenever the two clubs meet. The genesis of the rivalry is mainly based on a politico-geographical antecedent where General Franco wanted to centralise the state of Spain under Madrid but met resistance from Catalunya which wanted to maintain its unique identity. Madrid represents the Castilian identity

and was the favorite of the Fascist leader Franco who tried to quash Cataluña but faced a strong opposition from the region of Cataluña which gave rise to Barcelona. Ranachan (2008) avers that the slogan of Barcelona which says *mes que un club* when translated means *more than a club* represents Cataluña, its identity, culture, language and independence. This presents Barcelona not just as a club but a nationalistic movement hence, their intensified rivalry with Real Madrid. Guzuru and Ndimande (2015, p. 5) establish that ‘apart from the political dimension to the rivalry, there is the economic and social rivalry where the working-class from Cataluña play the wealthy from Madrid’. The overall rivalry between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona could be attributed to a plethora of other factors which include but are not limited to ethnic, religious, social, economic and jingoistic factors. Lopez (2015) explains the complicated nature of the rivalry between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid when he proffers that ‘it is a sporting rivalry rooted not only in two opposing football identities, but also in historical tensions between Castilla and Catalunya, Spanishness and Catalanism, and central nationalism and peripheral autonomy’. The rivalry between the two clubs is therefore a complex one because it is multifaceted in nature. This rivalry creates a fighting mentality in the players and a die-heart spirit in the fans whenever the two clubs clash be it in the Spanish football league or in UEFA champions’ league matches.

Language is a vital vehicle that affects all aspects of human life. It has varied and multifaceted functions that are inevitable to human existence. Society generally becomes the setting of language use since human beings have to communicate with one another in order to survive socially. The varied functions of language are manifested in its use in various aspects of society such as in the media, health, education, law, politics, and in other fields. One of such fields where language is most appropriated is in the field or area of sports. Football is one of the sports that relies heavily on communication. Players communicate among themselves, officials communicate among themselves and with players, the management team communicates among its members and with players and most importantly, fans communicate among themselves and with players through the cheers, chants and songs they sing. One very potent means through which football teams communicate is through the singing of their anthems. The lyrics of football club anthems employ the avenue of language to speak volumes of ideas. These ideas mostly represent the ideologies of such football clubs. Just as logos and crests of football clubs identify them visually, so do anthems of football clubs also identify them lyrically and rhythmically (Mwinwelle, 2020). The need for the translation of anthems of football clubs is predicated on the grounds that football is a universal game whose anthems need to be understood universally. The specific need for the translation of the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona from Spanish and Catalonia respectively into English is influenced by the fact that English is the most widely spoken language in the world (Morrison, 2002) which therefore gives the anthems a universal relevance. Huang (2008, p. 28) in his study on the translation of anthems, identifies

‘rhyming scheme, rhythm and syllable as factors that influence the translator’s choices’. Translators of anthems therefore try their best to maintain the stylistic features in the source language in their translations in order not to mutilate the literary aesthetics of translated lyrics in anthems. There exist a vital symbiotic relationship between football and language yet this relationship has received minimal linguistic research attention. The linguistic study on football anthems is therefore a relatively green area of linguistic research. One ground-breaking study on the linguistic analysis of football anthems is by Krizan (2015) who conducts an analysis of the use of linguistic resources in anthems of Slovenian and British football clubs to express attitudes, form bonds and create identities. In his study, he finds out that various linguistic features which include repetition of pronouns, commands and denials, stating names of clubs, colours and stadiums are used to express attitudes, form bonds and create identities. The current study therefore differs strongly from Krizan’s (2015) study in terms of theoretical framework, data source and main analytical objectives.

The rivalry between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona is explicitly confirmed by literature as presented earlier. For instance, Kassimeris (2012, p. 6) studying the rivalry between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid expounds that, ‘the gigantic Nou Camp of Futbol Club Barcelona and the impressive Santiago Bernabeu of Real Madrid Club de Futbol, both renowned for their enormous size, regional divisions never produced the necessary grounds to solidify the Spaniards’ national identity’ To simplify his views, he says football was employed as an epitome of unity to unite the regional diversities in Spain but on the contrary, it has caused separatism dovetailing into other forms of division. Benkwitz (2013) establishes that there is a limited but growing academic focus on football rivalries. In terms of the analysis of the rivalry between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona, existing studies such as (Lopez, 2011; Kassimeris, 2012; Benkwitz, 2013; Lopez, 2015; Lowe, 2014) have concentrated on analyzing the rivalry from the perspectives of politics and fandom. This study fills a vital lacuna by specifically analysing the rivalry between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona from the perspective of the translated English lyrics of their anthems. The paper also contributes to the existing literature by further demonstrating that football rivalry can also be sourced from the use of linguistic resources in anthems of football clubs thereby, highlighting the importance of the use of language in football. The use of the English language would immensely help supporters of Real Madrid and Barcelona who are not Spanish and Catalonia speakers to better understand the encoded meanings in the anthems beyond the mere meaning of the translated lyrics. The study employs the linguistic and stylistic category framework by Leech and Short (2007) to analyse how the themes in the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona are projected stylistically in order to deepen the rivalry ties between the two clubs. Specifically, this study seeks to: (i) highlight the dominant themes in the anthems of the two clubs; (ii) identify the stylistic devices that are used to project the themes in the anthems and (iii) examine how the stylistically projected themes deepen the rivalry ties between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Stylistics is one of the modern perspectives used in conducting linguistic analysis that seeks to examine the idiosyncrasies in a work or text. It basically helps identify the peculiarities of a writer. Leech and Short (2007, p. 9) define stylistics as the study of ‘the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose’. It investigates language usage and supplies adequate information regarding the encoded communicative implications of such usage in a particular context. To examine the style of a text, some tools or devices need to be used. These devices are called stylistic devices. Stylistic devices are the various linguistic devices used to project the style of a text or work. These devices are so important to linguistic research because they encode latent communicative implications that unearth deeper meanings. Aside boosting the meaning of a text, stylistic devices also elevate the aesthetics or beauty of a text. The term *stylo-thematic analysis* as used in the study refers to the analysis of themes from the stylistic perspective. This paper conducts a thematic analysis of rivalry in the anthems of FC Barcelona and Real Madrid from the stylistic perspective using the checklist for linguistic and stylistic categories by Leech and Short (2007). The framework is selected because it serves a heuristic purpose which enables linguistic researchers to gather data on a fairly systematic basis. The framework also presents a useful checklist of stylistic devices which cut across all the levels of language usage. The stylistic devices in the framework are grouped under lexical, grammatical, figures of speech, and cohesion and context categories. Leech & Short (2007) postulate that in the use of the framework, there is no harm in mixing categories because the various stylistic devices may overlap in their categorization. The framework is therefore used in identifying and analysing the stylistic devices used to project various themes that contribute to the deepening of the rivalry ties between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid in their anthems.

## METHOD

The paper is a qualitative descriptive study based on the use of stylistically projected themes to investigate the phenomenon of rivalry in the anthems of FC Barcelona and Real Madrid. The study is underpinned by Leech and Short’s (2007) linguistic and stylistic categories framework using the translated English versions of anthems of FC Barcelona and Real Madrid as data. The data is sourced from the official websites of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona respectively. The general choice of anthems as data for the study is influenced by Oyeyemi’s (2018) postulation that anthems are characterised by few words expressing inexhaustible meanings. The anthems of FC Barcelona and Real Madrid are sampled purposively based on the rivalry ties between them in the Spanish La liga and in other competitions. The anthem of FC Barcelona is composed of twenty-one (21) lines while that of Real Madrid contains twenty (20) lines. Each line is made up of a minimum of two words and a maximum of eight words. The researchers employs the manual code-recode strategy to check the dependability of the coding process. The lyrics of

the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona are presented as Appendix at the end of the paper. Four main steps are employed to code and analyse the data. First of all, the lines in the anthems are coded and numbered for the purposes of identification. In the second step, the researchers study the lines closely and carefully in order to categorize them under the emerging themes in the anthems. In the third step, the checklist for linguistic and stylistic categories is used to identify the various stylistic devices in the lines of the anthems. Finally, the discussion anchors on how the stylistically projected themes help to reveal rivalry in the anthems of the two clubs.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the analysis are discussed and presented first by identifying the lines that contain the themes and stylistic devices in the anthems followed by an examination of the communicative functions encoded in the identified lines. The discussion further details how the stylistically projected themes aid in the deepening of the rivalry ties between the two clubs.

### Theme of Identity

The theme of identity is very important in football anthems in that, it helps to identify the names of clubs in their anthems (Krizan, 2015). The lines illustrated below are used in the stylistic projection of the theme of identity in the anthems.

My Madrid is attacking! (*Madrid line 14*)  
 Madrid! Madrid! Madrid! (*Madrid line 17*)  
 Hala Madrid! (3) (*Madrid line 18*)  
 Hala Madrid! (*Madrid line 20*)  
 Barça, Barça, Baaarça! (*Barca 11*)  
 Barça, Barça, Baaarça! (*Barca 21*)

The theme of identity is strongly represented in the lines above from the translated English versions of the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona. The identity of the club, *Real Madrid* is revealed in lines 14, 17, 18 and 20 of the club’s anthem as presented above. The name of every institution or club, usually serves as the first mark of its identity. The name of the club *Madrid* is therefore presented in these lines to identify the club uniquely. It is same in the anthem of FC Barcelona. The name of the club, *Barca* is also identified through the repetition of its name *Barca* in lines 11 and 21 as presented in the lines above. The use of the names of the clubs in their anthems therefore serves as a mark of identity that distinguishes them from each other. The clubs are also identified with the names of the towns where they were formed which identify them geographically. Real Madrid is geographically located in the city of Madrid whilst FC Barcelona is to the city of Barcelona. The theme of identity is stylistically projected through the use of repetition in the anthems.

Repetition is a powerful stylistic device used in the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona to highlight the theme of identity. The strategic repetition of the name of the club *Real Madrid* three consecutive times in line 17 and that of Barcelona which is also repeated three consecutive times in lines 11 and 21 of its anthem. These repetitions come in the form of chants to cheer up both clubs before, during

and after matches. The rivalry between these clubs would undoubtedly deepen especially if they happen to play against each other as confirmed by Lopez (2015, p. 4) who postulates that ‘El Clásico ... has gained a special importance, and that special something can be felt permeating the air and intensifying the atmosphere by anyone fortunate enough to witness a live match between the two sides’. Aside cheering the clubs to victory, the use of repetition also seeks to foreground the names *Madrid* and *Barca* in the minds of their fans and players to remind them of their duty to the club as corroborated by Amenorvi (2018) who avers that, repetition can serve a dual purpose of serving as a memory aid and as a point of emphasis. The lines that contain the repetition of the names of the clubs were not translated because the names of clubs remain same in every language which confirms Huang’s (2008) assertion that translators of anthems try to maintain the aesthetics of language use in translated versions of anthems. The repetition of the names of the clubs also helps to boost the musicality in the anthems in order to make them memorable since anthems are meant to be sung off head (Mwinwelle, et al. 2019). The repeated names of the clubs are strategically positioned in the middle and the last lines in both anthems. The anthem of Real Madrid is composed of twenty lines and the name of the club, *Madrid* is mentioned in line 14 which is in the middle of the anthem and subsequently repeated in lines 17, 18 and 20 which are the last three lines in the anthem. In FC Barcelona’s anthem too, the name *Barca* is strategically repeated in the middle, i.e. in line 11 and in line 21 which is the last line of the anthem. This strategic repetition of the names of the clubs in the middle and last lines of their respective anthems carries a latent stylistic significance of trying to ingrain the names of the clubs in the minds of their fans and players during and after singing the anthems. The identification of the names in relation to the geographical locations of the clubs in their anthems present Real Madrid and FC Barcelona as different from each other. Hence, the need to compete for prominence and victory which fuels the already existing rivalry. The stylistic projection of the theme of identity therefore foregrounds the uniqueness of each of the clubs which invariably deepens the rivalry ties between them.

### Theme of Solidarity

The theme of solidarity is another theme that is used dominantly in the English translated versions of the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona. It is not surprising that the theme of solidarity predominates the other themes because anthems are meant to establish solidarity among a group of people towards achieving particular goals. The instances below are used to advance the discussion on the theme of solidarity and how it is stylistically projected to deepen the rivalry ties in the anthems.

**We’re the blue and claret supporters (Barca line 3)**

It matters not where **we** hail from (Barca line 4)

Whether it’s the south or the north (Barca line 5)

Now **we** all agree, **we** all agree, (Barca line 6)

One flag unites **us** in brotherhood. (Barca line 7)

**We’ve** got a name that everyone knows: (Barca line 10)

Players, Supporters (Barca line 12)

United **we** are strong. (Barca line 13)

**We’ve** achieved much over the years, (Barca line 14)

**We’ve** shouted many goals (Barca line 15)

And **we** have shown, **we** have shown, (Barca line 16)

That no one can ever break **us**. (Barca line 17)

**We’ve** got a name that everyone knows: (Barca line 20)  
you gather **us** all here! (Madrid line 8)

The theme of solidarity is visibly spelt out in the lines above. The discussion of solidarity in the anthems is considered from the perspectives of internal and external solidarity. Internal solidarity is strongly revealed in the anthem of FC Barcelona, in line 7 as illustrated above, where the flag of the club is said to unite its members in brotherhood. The use of the term *brotherhood* narrows the solidarity appeal here to only those who are committed and loyal to the club. This call for internal solidarity is confirmed by Guzuru and Ndimande (2015) who say that ‘teams are often based or have their roots within locales and identify with certain classes and groups within society’ (p. 4). The theme of internal solidarity in the Barca anthem is further corroborated by O’Brien (2013, p. 319) in his study of the rivalry between Barca and Madrid where he posits that ‘football was quickly embedded as a metaphor for the complexities surrounding the developing constructions of ethnicity, with distinctive traditions emerging in Barcelona itself to establish FC Barcelona as Pro-Catalan, Anti-Centrist’. The call for internal solidarity is further unearthed in line 4 of the Barca anthem which says that ‘It matters not where we hail from’. Barcelona subtly plays around the theme of internal solidarity to champion their nationalistic (Catalonian ideology) agenda of uniting Catalonia against Spain through the game of football as corroborated by Ranachan (2008) who avers that the slogan of Barcelona which says *mes que un club* when translated means *more than a club* represents Cataluña, its identity, culture, language and independence.

External solidarity on the other hand is very important in football because football is a game of general solidarity that unites people regardless of their differences. It seeks to unite players, management of teams and fans all over the world in order to attain collective victory. The use of the pronoun *we*, and its variant, *our* represent, what Adegoju (2005:140) refers to as, ‘the Coalescence of the voice of the person with the voice of the people’. The anthems therefore call for solidarity not only in Spain but beyond the borders of Spain to the whole world which is made evident in lines 5 and 6 of the anthem of FC Barcelona which say *Whether it’s the south or the north (Barca line 5)* and *Now we all agree, we all agree, (Barca line 6)*. The support base of Barcelona all over the world far outweighs its support base in Spain, hence the invite to all and sundry to join them. In line 8 of the Real Madrid anthem, the phrase ‘all of us’ is used to signal an extended composition of people. The generic use of the phrase ‘all of us’ is explained by Bramley (2001) who says that “the use of ‘all of us’ and ‘us all’ invokes an inclusivity of every one. ‘All’ is a mass universal pronoun enabling the ambiguity of who is included in ‘us’ to be dissolved” (p. 115). The anthem of Real Madrid just like the anthem of

Barcelona, is projecting the club as one with a worldwide fan base. The stronger the internal and external solidarity ties within traditional rival clubs, the stronger the competition and rivalry ties between/among them. The theme of solidarity is therefore very important in football. Hence, the appeal for solidarity in anthems as confirmed by Mwinwelle (2020, p. 16) who postulates that 'Institutional anthems therefore create homogeneity in the midst of heterogeneity'.

The stylistic devices used to project the theme of internal and external solidarity in the anthems are repetition and co-referencing. The repetitive use of *we* in the anthem of Barcelona establishes their resolve for a regional and a worldwide solidarity in order to champion their nationalistic agenda through football. The pronouns *we* and *us* are also used as a stylistic devices to serve as a co-reference to players and supporters as seen in line 12 of the Barca anthem. In line 8 of the Madrid anthem, the club is presented as a unified and strong force that is prepared to attain victory in their matches through the use of the phrase *all of us*. The call for solidarity within the clubs prepares them as formidable forces ready to face each other in the ongoing rivalry especially during El Clásicos which further deepens the rivalry ties between them.

### Theme of Resilience

Another theme worth examining in the English translated versions of the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona is the theme of resilience. Running continuously for ninety (90) minutes is not an easy thing to do. One requires fitness, tenacity and resilience to accomplish that. The lyrics of the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona are geared towards psyching the minds of its players and supporters to persevere to victory notwithstanding the circumstances that bedevil them. The illustrations from the lines of the anthems below are used to advance the discussion on the stylistic projection of the theme of resilience.

United we are strong. **(Barca line 13)**

That no one can ever break us. **(Barca line 17)**

Because no one can resist **(Madrid line 3)**

your willingness to win! **(Madrid line 4)**

My Madrid is attacking! **(Madrid line 14)**

And nothing more! And nothing more! **(Madrid line 19)**

The theme of resilience and tenacity is encoded in the lines of the two anthems. In line 13 of the Barca anthem, a declaration is made about the physical and possibly, the psychological state of the club. The club is said to be strong which therefore identifies it as a club that is ready for the game since football requires strength to run, attack, defend, dribble and ultimately score. In line 17 of the Barca anthem, the theme of resilience is reiterated by presenting club as a team that is strong. To break something implies to defeat or destroy it, so Barca, in line 17 presents itself as a team that cannot be broken, in other words, a team that cannot be defeated. On the other hand, in line 3 and 4 of the anthem of Madrid, the declaration is made that no one can resist the club's willingness to win. This presents the club as one that is charged for action and is ready to face any team that comes its way. The use of the present progressive verb phrase *is*

*attacking* in line 14 in the Real Madrid anthem shows that the club plays continuously to ensure its victory. In football, the yardstick for determining victory is based on the goals scored and goals are only scored through attacking. By the use of the phrase, *is attacking* Real Madrid is again presented as a team that is bent on scoring goals in order to win its matches. In line 19 of the Madrid anthem, the statement *And nothing more! And nothing more!* is used to indicate that, the club does not cherish any other thing aside victory.

The stylistic devices used to realise the theme of resilience in the anthems are repetition and metaphor. The use of metaphor is encoded in line 17 of the Barca anthem which says *That no one can ever break us*. The statement is a metaphor comparing the club to an item that cannot be broken. In this metaphor, the strength of the club is literally compared to an entity (possibly, a rock) that cannot be broken by anyone. Repetition is also employed in line 19 of the Madrid anthem to foreground the fact that, the club cherishes victory over all other things. The theme of resilience is therefore projected stylistically in the anthems to psyche up the minds of players and supporters to withstand any force of opposition in the game thereby preparing both clubs for competition right in their minds even before the actual action on the pitch. This deepens the rivalry ties since both clubs get psychologically poised for action through the singing of these lines of their anthems.

### Theme of Praises

Aside creating identity, solidarity and resilience, one other way of fuelling rivalry is by showering praises and positive qualities on clubs in order to distinguish one club as the best over others. The theme of praises is a very important theme that runs through the composition of anthems ranging from national anthems (de Souza, 2008; Mwinlaaru, 2012; Wang, 2018) to institutional anthems (Mwinwelle et al., 2019; Mwinwelle, 2020) and to anthems of football clubs (Krizan, 2015). This theme is used in the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona to shower praises on the respective clubs in order to distinguish themselves as the best among the rest. The lines below cited from the anthems are used as illustrations to detail the discussion on the theme of praises in the anthems.

We've got a name that everyone knows: **(Barca line 10)**

We've achieved much over the years, **(Barca line 14)**

We've shouted many goals **(Barca line 15)**

And we have shown, we have shown, **(Barca line 16)**

We've got a name that everyone knows: **(Barca line 20)**

The history you've made **(Madrid line 1)**

the history you'll make! **(Madrid line 2)**

The stars are now coming out! **(Madrid line 5)**

I wear your shirt **(Madrid line 9)**

right next to my heart! **(Madrid line 10)**

are everything I am! **(Madrid line 12)**

I am struggle! I am beauty! **(Madrid line 15)**

Personifying and indicating the positive qualities and impacts of the institutions on their members and people in general is one of the latent but potent means of praising and eulogising institutions as sacred entities (Grancea and Blaga,

2013). Just like institutions, football clubs also praise and personify their clubs in their anthems. In praising and personifying clubs, football anthems resort to recapping the past achievements of their clubs. This is evident in the anthem of Barca where the anthem dominantly recounts the past achievements of the club as seen in lines 10, 14, 15, 16, and 20 in order to shower praises on the club. Specifically, in line 10 of the anthem of Barca, a declaration is made that the achievements of FC Barcelona are no secret but known to everyone. The postulation that the successes of the club are known to everyone seeks to establish the veracity of the club's achievements in that, its achievements are known by everyone, which implies that, these achievements are true but not fabrications. Line 14, 15 and 16 of the Barca anthem continue to emphasise the past achievements of the club. The anthem of the club was composed on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the club which implies that the club had chalked much achievements in the past already before the composition of its anthem. In the case of Real Madrid, its anthem in lines 1 and 2 refers to its past achievements in history and the achievements it hopes to chalk in the present and future. The Madrid anthem also makes a dominant use of the second person pronoun *you* and its variant *your* in order to personify the club as though it were a human being. The pronoun *you* is also used to address the club directly, hence creating a closer contact between the fans and the team/club (Krizan, 2015). The dominant use of the first person singular pronoun *I* also signals personal or individual commitment to the club by its members. The heart is the seat of emotions in the human body and so in line 9 and 10 of Madrid's anthem, there is an expression of the closeness of the shirt of the club to heart of the speaker (possibly the players). This shows an emotional commitment to club since the shirt of the club which represents the club is close to the heart of its players and fans. It is not only players who wear the shirts or jerseys of their clubs, supporters also do as well. So the commitment could be coming from players and/or supporters. In line 5, the Madrid anthem compares the team to the stars possibly because their traditional colours are white which glow as the stars. The star also is a symbol of uniqueness since it distinguishes itself from other heavenly bodies through its shiny lights at night.

The stylistic devices used to project the theme of praise are metaphor, personification and parallelism. The use of metaphor, personification and parallelism as stylistic devices in the anthems is corroborated by Mwinwelle (2020, p. 29) who identifies these stylistic devices as figures of speech which are used to 'reveal a strong correlation between sound and lyrics to boost the musical aesthetics and enrich the literariness' of anthems. Metaphor is used in line 5 to compare Madrid's players to stars. The uniqueness of stars in appearance is transferred to the club through the use of the metaphor *The stars are now coming out!* The comparison of Real Madrid to stars seeks to shower praises on the club since stars have positive connotations. There is also a dominant use of personification in the anthem of Real Madrid to personify the club as a human being through the use of the pronoun *you* and its variant *your* in lines 1, 2, and 9. This

is carried out to hail and praise the club as though it were a human being. The use of parallelism in the anthems also seeks to help project the theme of praise. Lines 10, 14, 15, 16, and 20 are instantiations of parallel structures used in FC Barcelona's anthem to foreground the achievements of the club through the use of the verbs *got*, *achieved*, *shouted*, and *shown*. These verbs have a paradigmatic relation because they are all past tense verbs. The verbs also have a semantic relation of synonymy where they all reiterate the club as one that has chalked past glories. The Real Madrid anthem also uses parallel structures as represented in lines 1 and 2 above to recount the club's achievement in the past, its expected achievements in the future and its positive qualities. In lines 1 and 2, the verbs *made* and *will make* in the parallel structures signal past achievements and expected future achievements. In line 15, the Madrid anthem uses another parallel structure to establish a paradigmatic relationship between the nouns *struggle* and *beauty*. These nouns are contextually conditioned as synonyms in the anthem where they both share the same semantic meaning which implies that, struggle in football brings out the beauty of the game, hence the use of the word *struggle* as a contextually conditioned synonym for the word *beauty* in the Madrid anthem. The elements of praise in the anthems therefore present both Real Madrid and FC Barcelona as accomplished clubs who in the quest to maintain and improve their accomplishments, are encouraged to achieve more thereby deepening the rivalry ties between them as they both struggle to occupy the number One slot as the best club(s) in Spain and the world at large.

## CONCLUSION

The study has aptly demonstrated that rivalry ties between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid are not only sourced from the perspectives of nationalism, politics and fandom but are equally revealed strongly in the lyrics of their respective anthems. The analysis centered on the use of stylistic devices in the anthems to project various themes that deepen the rivalry ties between the two clubs. The first aim of the study which sought to highlight the dominant themes in the anthems of the two clubs was accomplished through the identification of themes of solidarity, identity, resilience and praises as the dominant themes in the anthems. The second aim of the study which sought to identify the stylistic devices used to project the dominant themes in the anthems was also met by the identification of repetition, co-referencing, metaphors, personifications and parallelism as stylistic devices used in the anthems. Repetition was predominantly used as a stylistic device to foreground the names of the clubs in their respective anthems in order to establish the theme of identity among each of the clubs and also make the anthems lyrical and memorable. Co-referencing and repetition were used to project the theme of solidarity within each of the clubs' anthem to strengthen them as appositionally united individual forces in the rivalries that exist between them. Metaphor and repetition were used to highlight the theme of resilience while parallelism, personification and metaphor were employed to personify and eulogise the clubs in their anthems. Finally, in response to the third aim of the

study, the findings of the study established that the themes of identity, solidarity, resilience and praises in the anthems were stylistically projected to unveil the latent unique ideologies underpinning the establishment of Real Madrid and Fc Barcelona in order to create and deepen the rivalry ties between the clubs. The study concludes that stylistic devices such as repetition, co-referencing, metaphors, personification, and parallelism were meaningfully used in the anthems to project various themes which further deepen the rivalry ties between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona.

Future studies could consider working on the linguistic analysis of rivalry in the Spanish and Catalanian versions of the anthems of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona in order to confirm or contest the findings of this present study. Other studies could also be conducted using the transitivity framework to examine how competition is encoded in the lyrics of rival clubs in other countries such as Germany, Italy, England, France and the likes. Finally, further research could be conducted on the anthems of clubs who have ever won the Champions League in order to justify or otherwise if the encoded meanings or messages in their anthems have any bearing on their performance. The present study contributes enormously to the emerging literature on the linguistic analysis of rivalry in anthems of football clubs and fills a vital gap in research on the linguistic analysis of rivalry ties between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona from the perspective of their anthems.

The findings drawn from the study have a plethora of implications for research and practice. For research, the study is a modest contribution to studies on rivalries between traditional football clubs. In terms of theory, the study has demonstrated that stylistic devices are very relevant in the projection of themes in literary works. A close similarity between the two clubs was identified in terms of the number of lines, themes and stylistic devices used in their respective anthems. These similarities in the anthems could be attributed to some similarity in the backgrounds of Real Madrid and FC Barcelona as clubs in the La liga. This observation of similarity in the anthems therefore corroborates the assertion that most anthems with similar backgrounds have similar themes (Smith, 2009; Amenorvi and Grumah, 2019). In terms of practice, the study would help fans and players of the two clubs, Real Madrid and FC Barcelona as well as all lovers of football to better appreciate the content of the lyrics in the anthems aided by the themes that have been unearthed in the study. This would help them always sing the anthems with meaning and not just as a mere formality. The study would also be relevant to composers and song writers who may wish to compose and write anthems for football clubs in the future to be conscious of how to select lyrics that center on themes which are representative of the ideologies of the clubs for whom they wish to compose for. Finally, the study would serve as a significant reference material for researchers, teachers and students in the area of stylistic analysis.

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## APPENDIX

### Lyrics of English Translated Version of Anthem of FC Barcelona

The whole stadium (Barca line 1)  
 loudly cheers (Barca line 2)  
 We're the blue and claret supporters (Barca line 3)  
 It matters not where we hail from (Barca line 4)  
 Whether it's the south or the north (Barca line 5)  
 Now we all agree, we all agree, (Barca line 6)  
 One flag unites us in brotherhood. (Barca line 7)  
 Blue and claret blowing in the wind (Barca line 8)  
 One valiant cry (Barca line 9)  
 We've got a name that everyone knows: (Barca line 10)  
 Barça, Barça, Baaarça! (Barca line 11)  
 Players, Supporters (Barca line 12)  
 United we are strong. (Barca line 13)  
 We've achieved much over the years, (Barca line 14)  
 We've shouted many goals (Barca line 15)  
 And we have shown, we have shown, (Barca line 16)  
 That no one can ever break us. (Barca line 17)  
 Blue and claret blowing in the wind (Barca line 18)  
 One valiant cry (Barca line 19)  
 We've got a name that everyone knows: (Barca line 20)  
 Barça, Barça, Baaarça! (Barca line 21)

### Lyrics of English Translated Version of Anthem of Real Madrid

The history you've made (Madrid line 1)  
 the history you'll make! (Madrid line 2)  
 Because no one can resist (Madrid line 3)  
 your willingness to win! (Madrid line 4)  
 The stars are now coming out! (Madrid line 5)  
 My old Chamartín... (1) (Madrid line 6)  
 From far away and from nearby (Madrid line 7)  
 you gather us all here! (Madrid line 8)  
 I wear your shirt (Madrid line 9)  
 right next to my heart! (Madrid line 10)  
 The days you play (Madrid line 11)  
 are everything I am! (Madrid line 12)  
 "The Arrow" is running! (Madrid line 13)  
 My Madrid is attacking! (Madrid line 14)  
 I am struggle! I am beauty! (Madrid line 15)  
 The cry I learned: (Madrid line 16)  
 Madrid! Madrid! Madrid! (Madrid line 17)  
 Hala Madrid! (3) (Madrid line 18)  
 And nothing more! And nothing more! (Madrid line 19)  
 Hala Madrid! (Madrid line 20)