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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **Close Family Ties: A Discourse Analysis on the Select Poems of the Young Dr. Jose P. Rizal during his Stint at Ateneo Municipal De Manila**

**John Cavin M. Sabonsolin**

*Biliran Province State University, Philippines*

**Corresponding Author:** John Cavin M. Sabonsolin, **E-mail:** [jcsabonsolin@bipsu.edu.ph](mailto:jcsabonsolin@bipsu.edu.ph)

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**| ABSTRACT**

This literary study assumes the select poems of Dr. Jose Rizal written at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila reveal close family ties. Using critical discourse analysis, the researcher explores the local colors, figurative languages, and poem messages that reveal family relations. The researcher anchors the formalism and mimetic literary theories on analyzing the selected poems. Results indicate that the poems show family relations through local colors, figurative language, and the messages of the literary pieces. The study confirms that the select poems of Dr. Jose Rizal, written during his stint in Ateneo Municipal de Manila, have family relations values embedded in their literary elements.

**| KEYWORDS**

Jose Rizal, poems, sociopolitical, Marxism, discourse analysis

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**1. Introduction**

The life of Dr. Jose P. Rizal, the Philippine National Hero, is a living example among Filipinos to live with their intelligence and help bring the country to the pedestal through intelligence and abilities. He was considered an outstanding Filipino author who made essential contributions to the nation's birth through the ease he wrote. (Ocampo, 2012) Two of Rizal's notable literary masterpieces are his novels, "Noli Me Tangere" and "El Filibusterismo," which spark the flame of the revolutionary Filipinos to fight for their freedom under 333 years of Spanish rule.

On June 19, 1861, Rizal was born in Calamba, Laguna, into a cultured family with an extensive library, unusual in the colonial Philippines. His mother taught him to read and write and introduced him to the world of books and literature (Ocampo, 2012). Rizal enrolled in the Ateneo Municipal de Manila at 11 and excelled in several subjects, including history, philosophy, and physics. On their official website, the now Ateneo De Manila University (formerly Ateneo Municipal de Manila) recognized the young Rizal as their "greatest Ateneo's student." In his graduating class of twelve from the Ateneo Municipal, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree and was recognized as one of the nine "sobresalientes". This recognition manifested the excellence of the national hero even in his younger years.

While studying at Ateneo Municipal de Manila, Rizal wrote several poems as a student. These moving poems by Rizal, which were centered on his childhood memories and his experiences and perceptions of education, showcased his poetical brilliance (Bueno, 2012). Filipinos also embedded family relations in their social sphere, translating its relational quality outside the family. It is emphasized that Filipinos are family-centered, child-centric, and have close family ties (Medina, 2001; Miralao, 1994). Thus, the researcher pushes to study the selected poems of the young Rizal that reveal insights into family relations.

It is noted that there is a lot of existing literary research on the poems of Rizal- analysis of literary pieces of Rizal such as poems by Bueno (2012) and Bayron (2018), and also the study on Anglo-American elements of the selected poems of Rizal by Pajares et al. (2014). However, there has yet to be research to study the selected poems of Rizal during his education at Ateneo Municipal de Manila. The researcher selected three poems of the young Rizal: *Mi Primera Inspiracion* (1874), *Felicitacion* (1875), and *Un Recuerdo Ami Pueblo* (1876). This study explores these selected poems and looks after the local colors, figurative language, and messages of the young Rizal on close family ties.

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

This literary research investigates the family relations of the select poems of Dr. Jose Rizal written at Ateneo Municipal de Manila.

Specifically, it looks into the following:

1. local colors;
2. figurative languages; and,
3. messages for the youth.

### **2. Theoretical Background**

This study assumes that the selected poems of Dr. Jose Rizal written at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila reveal close family ties.

This literary research is anchored to two critical literary theories: Formalism and Mimetic literary theories. Formalism, also known as Russian formalism, was formed by two groups: OPOYAZ, which stood for Society for the Study of Poetic Language and was created in 1916 in St. Petersburg (later Leningrad) and led by Viktor Shklovsky, and the Moscow Linguistic Circle, which created in 1915. Osip Brik, Boris Eichenbaum, Yury Tynianov, and Boris Tomashevsky were among the group's other members. (Britannica, 2016)

Formalism is a critical approach in which the text under consideration is primarily viewed as a structure of words. (Matterson, 1990) It stresses the importance of literary form (organization, structure, and verbal nuances) to the meaning of a work.

A critic can demonstrate how the various pieces of a work are welded together to form an organic whole in formalism. This method analyses a text as a self-contained item, ignoring biographical information about the author, outside-of-the-story historical events, literary allusions, mythical patterns, and psychoanalytical features of the characters. (except those aspects explicitly described in the text.)

A formalist critic evaluates the overall form of the work, as well as the state of each portion of the text (individual scenes and chapters), the characters, settings, tone, point of view, diction, and any other components of the text that come together to form a single text. After studying each piece, the critic describes how they interact to give the text meaning (theme).

In this study, the researcher analyzes the local colors and figurative language present in the selected poems of Dr. Jose Rizal. The local colors reveal the social relevance, and the figurative language creates the themes.

Meanwhile, mimesis is the basic theoretical principle in the creation of art. The word is Greek and means "imitation." Plato and Aristotle described mimesis as the representation of nature. According to Plato, all artistic creation is a form of imitation. Everything that exists (in the "world of ideas") is an ideal type that God created, and the material objects that man sees in his daily life are dim reflections of this ideal type. As a result, the painter, tragedian, and musician are imitators of mimics, two steps distant from the truth. Thus, by skilfully selecting and presenting his material, an artist may purposefully seek to "imitate" the action of life. (Britannica, 2011)

According to Plato, all art is mimetic by nature; art is a copy of life. He believed that the 'concept' was the highest form of reality. Since art mimics ideas, it also mimics reality. However, Plato rejected poetry as it is mimetic on moral and philosophical grounds. Aristotle, on the other hand, favored imitative poetry. A poem, he claims, is a copy of action, and his tool is neither philosophical nor moral. He considers poetry a work of art rather than a book of preaching or instruction.

According to Plato, the arts are a profession beneath science and philosophy and can lead to corruption. Although it changed over time, his idea of imitation caused him to adopt a more dogmatic and intolerable stance toward artistic creation (Juan-Navarro, 2007).

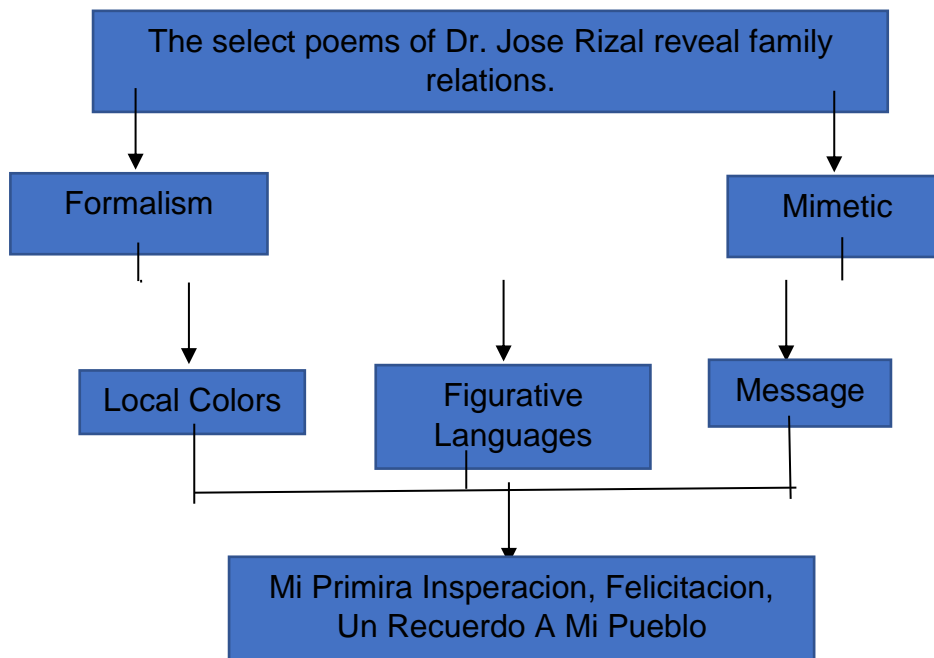


Figure 1. A Schematic Presentation of a Theoretical Background of the study

### 3. Methodology

This literary research employs a critical discourse analysis, a subpart of the qualitative research method. Qualitative research is gathering, analyzing, and interpreting non-numerical data, such as language. It can be used to comprehend someone's subjective perception of and interpretation of their social reality. Additionally, non-numerical data such as text, video, pictures, or audio recordings are considered qualitative data (McLeod, 2019). On the other hand, critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a qualitative analytical methodology for describing, interpreting, and explaining how discourses build, perpetuate, and legitimate social inequalities. CDA is based on the idea that we use deliberate language, whether conscious or unconscious discursive choices are made (Mullet, 2018).

The primary information sources are obtained from the online poetry portal Our Happy School. On April 29, 2014, the website's administrator posted the poetry mentioned above. On March 20, 2021, the website was accessed. The secondary sources used in the study were found online, in unpublished works, theses, and dissertations.

The data analysis of the select poems of Dr. Jose Rizal in his Ateneo Municipal de Manila are limited to three styles of revealing formalism and mimesis in poetry's use of local colors, figurative language, and messages using the tables. The researcher uses formalism to look into the local colors of the selected poems. The researcher also uses it in the second sub-problem to look into the figurative language of the selected poems. Furthermore, the researcher uses mimesis to explore the messages of the selected poems.

#### 3.1 Ethical Considerations

This literary research adheres to ethical standards in conducting research. It does not include physically or psychologically harming human participants and animal subjects because it is not related to the undertakings of this study. It is also important to note that the chosen poems of Dr. Jose Rizal are publicly available online. In addition, the works are used for academic purposes only; thus, no copyright infringement is intended since all poems are credited to their rightful owner. Moreover, no part of the literary pieces is altered in any form or way.

**4. Results and Discussion**

**4.1 Local Colors**

| <b>Title of the Poems</b> | <b>Local Colors</b>                             | <b>Family Relations</b>  |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| My First Inspiration      | Festive (setting)                               | Appreciate a member of your family through celebrations.   |
|                           | Dear mother (character)                         | Always respect and show love to your parents. Be thankful to them.   |
|                           | Grove (topography)                              | Hold a moment to bring the family members together and express how they feel about each other.                               |
| Felicitation              | high hill or overhanging mountain (topography)  | Be someone your family members can rely on.  |
|                           | Dear Antonino (character)                       | Not just your parents and direct family members but also show respect to your relatives and elders.                          |
|                           | all your sisters and your other kin (character) | Support your family members in their endeavors in life.  |
|                           | loving Father (character)                       | Despite the trials of life and work, always remember to put your family first, especially if you are the head of the family. |
| In Memory of My Town      | Town (setting)                                  | Your family is your comfort. Express your challenges and problems to them. And look back to them whenever you needed.        |
|                           | Mother (character)                              | Our mother is our foundation. She builds our childhood, attitude, and identity.  |

The first poem, "My First Inspiration," tells us the importance of appreciation, respect, and the social presence of our family members. According to Manebog (2014), the poem is written by Jose Rizal in honor of his mother's birthday. The word "festive" in the poem symbolizes the family's celebration of Rizal's mother's birthday. Moreover, the words "dear mother" implies respect for the parents. It tells us constantly to show our respect and love to our parents and be thankful to them.

Furthermore, a "grove" is a small group of trees with minimal or no undergrowth. This word is portrayed as a silent place where family members gather and express their emotions towards them and their lives. This local color allows us to live a moment with our family members.

The second poem implies the support that you should give and that you could have to your family. The "high hill or overhanging mountain" signifies that we could have a family to rely on behind the problems and challenges in life. On the other hand, the words "loving Father" in the poem symbolize looking after your family members first despite the struggles and challenges of life. The stanza in the poem reminds the readers to have a family-first policy in their life. Moreover, "Dear Antonino" and "all your sisters and your otherkin" imply supporting and respecting your family members.

The last poem identifies the words "mothers" and "town" as local colors. The town signifies the comfort that we could get in our family. We need to look back to them whenever we need them. On the other hand, the mother implies its natural context as the foundation in our childhood that shapes our attitude, knowledge, and identity. It shows the importance of our mothers in our family.

The data show that the family relations through the local colors, namely characters, settings, and topography, encompass the words: festive, dear mother, grove, high hill or overhanging mountain, dear Antonino, all your sisters, and your otherkin, loving Father, town, and mother conveys the appreciation, respect, and love that we must show to our family members.

#### 4.2 Figurative Languages

| Title of the Poems   | Figurative Language   | Family Relations   |
|----------------------|---|--|
| My First Inspiration | hear sweet measures ringing that seems to be the singing of a choir of nightingales? (simile) | Support and be joyful to your family members   |
|                      | the dawn's enchanting face (personification)  | Be the reason for the joy and hope of your family members.   |
|                      | The spring that rings with laughter (onomatopoeia)  | Celebrate achievements with your family members  |
| Felicitation         | your very noble saint (hyperbole)   | Do good to your fellowmen, especially your family members.   |
|                      | clamorous vivas (hyperbole)   | Appreciate the good deeds of your family members   |
| In Memory of My Town | murmurous lagoon (personification)  | Remember your past moments with your family that could serve as an inspiration and motivation for your endeavors |
|                      | The flowers exude when the dawn is smiling on the land (personification)                      | Get inspiration from your family members.  |
|                      | I pray heaven your innocence to keep! (personification)                                       | Pray for the safety of your family members.  |

The first poem, "My first Inspiration," tells us to be part of the happiness of the family members by supporting and celebrating with them in their endeavors. The researcher identifies simile, personification, and onomatopoeia as figurative language in the poem. The lines "hear sweet measures ringing that seems to be the singing of a choir of nightingales?" are a simile because they seem to be similar to "like." It tells us to be joyful with our family members by supporting them in their respective endeavors in life. Moreover, the researcher recognizes the phrase "the dawn's enchanting face" as personification because it personifies the dawn. It signifies to be a reason for the joy and hope of your family members. The researcher also classifies the phrase "the spring that rings with laughter" as onomatopoeia because the word sound imitates a person's laughter. It could also be personification; however, the term "rings" conveys imitation of the sound. In the said stanza, Rizal also uses "Live happily ever after!" that tells us to celebrate achievements with our loved ones; it may be small or milestone success in our lives.

The second poem conveys us to be good and do good with our fellowmen, especially our beloved family members. The researcher identifies hyperbole for both phrases in the poem. The term "your very good saint" is a hyperbole because the word "saint" alone could already signify a good person, but the young Rizal uses the adjective "very good" to describe the saint. Rizal is describing his uncle Antonino in the poem for his good deeds. It signifies that this specific phrase tells us to do good with our fellowmen, especially to our family members and those in need of our help and support.

On the other hand, the phrase "clamorous vivas" is also a hyperbole because it implies exaggeration. The word "clamorous" already means making loud and confused noise. Meanwhile, "vivas" is cheer and expression meaning "long live." The loudness of the two words made it hyperbole. This phrase embarks us to appreciate the good deeds of our family members.

Lastly, the third poem signifies cherishing the moments of our family members as we remember them moments and pray to have more moments with them. This statement could also give us inspiration and motivation to do more. The researcher identifies personification in the three figurative languages. The phrase "murmurous lagoon" gives a persona of a talking lagoon. The poem

tells us to remember our family members' past moments and experiences to get inspiration and motivation in our endeavors in life.

This line of the poem inspires us to inspire our family members. Moreover, the line "the flowers exude when the dawn is smiling on the land" acts as dawn smiling on a specific place. Furthermore, the line "I pray heaven your innocence to keep!" is a personification because the young Rizal addresses the town as a person. He prayed to keep the town safe, which could lead to the researcher's interpretation of praying to pray to protect our family members concerning family relations.

The data show family relations through simile, personification, onomatopoeia, and hyperbole on selected poems of Dr. Jose Rizal. It deals with the happiness that our family members could bring into our lives, to be good and to do good for them, and to cherish moments with them as an inspiration and motivation in our endeavors in life.

**4.3 Message Analysis**

| <b>Title of the Poems</b> | <b>Message</b>   | <b>Family Relations</b>  |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| My First Inspiration      | This poem was written in honor of his mother's birthday.   | Love and appreciate our mothers  |
| Felicitation              | The 14-year-old Rizal wrote this poem to congratulate his brother-in-law, Antonio Lopez, husband of his sister Narcissa. | Recognize the deeds of your relatives as well.                             |
| In Memory of My Town      | Rizal wrote this poem to express his love and appreciation for where he grew up, Calamba, Laguna.                        | Reminisced moments with your family even if you are not with them already. |

The young Rizal wrote his first poem, "My First Inspiration," which the young Rizal wrote to honor his mother on her birthday. The former shows his eternal love and appreciation to her mother as a tribute to all his efforts. (Manebog et al., 2014) The poem teaches us that our first inspiration shall be our mother. She is our foundation in bearing and supporting us from the start of our lives. (Ph.D. Essays) The researcher interprets this simple message as the value of loving and appreciating our mothers. According to Valdez, some scholars noted that Rizal's poems are prophetic. This poem was written by Jose Rizal, not just as a tribute to his mother but a message and reminder for us to love our mothers. They are the foundation of our lives- the first to appreciate, care for, and look after us.

On the other hand, the second poem, "Felicitation," was written by Dr. Jose Rizal to congratulate his brother-in-law, Antonino Lopez, husband of his sister, Narcissa (Manebog et al., 2014). This poem tells us to appreciate and recognize the good deeds of our fellowmen, especially our family members. It is also conveyed that Filipino families need simple felicitations, even for their small accomplishments in life.

Furthermore, the third poem, "In Memory of my Town," was written by Dr. Jose Rizal to express his love for Calamba in Laguna, his hometown. He remembered his memories in the said town. (Manebog et al., 2014) The poem is written to remind Filipinos that we should not forget our fatherland, where we came from, the cultures we are used to, and the values we are taught. (Ph.D. Essays) However, it does not end there. This poem reveals that the young Rizal wanted us to remember the values, memories, and moments with our family members and pull off inspiration and motivation. According to Bayron Jr., Rizal's poems implied social awareness to the youth. It is not just nationalistic but goes beyond being devoted to his country. (Valdez) It also reveals values and insights into family relations. Rizal's poetical genius transpired in his literary works. (Bueno) To Rizal, literature is there to push away the culture of moral blindness and rampant selfishness as it secures glory to moral and intellectual predominance. (De Leon) It gives us insights and messages about our family obligations and responsibilities as it reveals how to deal with our relationship with them.

The data reveals that family relations through the messages of poems of Dr. Jose Rizal deal with the love and appreciation for our mothers, recognition of the deeds of our fellowmen, especially family members, and inspiration and motivation by our family members. We reminisced back on the moments with them.

## 5. Conclusion

This literary study assumes the select poems of Dr. Jose Rizal written at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila reveal close family ties. Using critical discourse analysis, the researcher explores the local colors, figurative languages, and poem messages that reveal family relations. The researcher anchors the formalism and mimetic literary theories on analyzing the selected poems. Results indicate that the poems show family relations through local colors, figurative language, and the messages of the literary pieces. With the application of Viktor Shklovsky's formalism and Plato's mimetic theory on the data, the study confirms that the select poems of Dr. Jose Rizal, written during his stint in Ateneo Municipal de Manila, have family relations values embedded in their literary elements.

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