

Rima vallbonas the secret world of grandmamma anacleta literature review examples...

[Family](#)



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An instantaneous glance at the first paragraph Rima Vallbona's "The Secret World of Grandmamma Anacleta" reveals several literary devices that the author has utilized to depict the themes behind the story. A comprehensive analysis of the literary choices used by the author especially the vocabulary brings into light the themes behind the words.

The first theme that is brought to light is that of wealth. From the first line of the first paragraph, one thing becomes crystal clear to the reader. The story is clearly set in a rich environment or the characters in the novel are relatively wealthy people. The first thing that makes the reader aware of this fact is the choice of descriptive vocabulary used by the author. In the beginning of the story, Grandmamma Anacleta is described as "lying shipwrecked in the oceanic immensity of her baroque bed, framed by its twisted, leaf colored columns, beneath the sheets and the fluffy leaf comforter". It is from this phrase that several aspects of wealth can be deduced. First, the "baroque bed" that is also described to be oceanic in terms of size is a clear representation of wealth. For one to acquire such a huge, classical and prestigious bed, he or she must obviously possess money. The author does not explicitly state that the protagonist's family was wealthy but through the use of clever vocabulary, it becomes easy for the reader to deduce the economic status of the family at a first glance. The theme of wealth is also brought into light later in the paragraph when the author makes references to items that would otherwise be considered luxurious. The protagonist in the story states that "when she muttered so little to us that we paid more attention to the T. V, to the radio, or even to the putt-putt of the lawn mower." The setting of the story is in the period

between the 1950's-70's. Possessing such items at such a period is sure indicator of wealth since these were items that were considered luxurious during that period and not everyone could afford them. The protagonist also talks about how the family bought Grandmamma Anacleta a "Walkman", another relatively luxurious item so as to silence her. In light of the above discussion, it is clear that the family in the story is wealthy and although the author does not explicitly use the term wealthy in the first paragraph to describe the family, it is an aspect that very sharp reader can easily deduce. The other theme that is depicted by the author's choice of words is that of family relations, particularly family dysfunctionality. It is clear to conclude that the antagonist of the story, that is Grandmamma Anacleta lives in a house with the rest of the family members. There is a vivid description of the events that take place on everyday basis in this house. The author states that "For many years, she had spent her days lying still, moving her lips insistently, as if she were talking to herself. No matter how hard we tried, none of us could decipher the infinite mumbling that issued from her lips". This phrase brings out the dysfunctionality of the family. Although all the characters belong to the same family, they seem to have trouble establishing effective communication with each other. This is particularly more pronounced with the Grandmamma who at this stage of the story cannot absolutely communicate meaningfully to the rest of the family. It is stated that the other members of the family got so tired of her mumbling that they even started paying more attention to gadgets such TV's and radios and even the noise made by the lawnmower. The dysfunctionality of this family is further made conspicuous by the fact that they ganged up to

buy their Grandmother a Walkman as a way of silencing her. The purpose of this walkman is clearly depicted by the author' statement that " We bought her a Walkman, a blessed modern apparatus that performed the amazing miracle of conclusively silencing Grandmamma Anacleta jabbering and cleared away the lowering clouds of our guilt". The fact that some of the family members would gang up against one of their own is also another illustrator of family disfunctionality and this unity is shown in the story by the author's constant use of the word ' we".

The final theme that is brought out in the effect of old age, From the first line of the paragraph, the author's choice of words seems to suggest that Grandmamma Anacleta appalling behaviour can be attributed to her old age. The author states that she was " just a little heap of bones and corrugated skin". The author makes this statement very early in the story to probably atone for her behaviour that is described later in the book that includes her endless mumbling, arrogance and her total disregard of human respect. Perhaps the author choice of words in describing the stature of Grandmamma Anacleta is so as to make the reader not to attach the behaviour of the old lady to her personality but to rather treat it as an effect of old age.

Works Cited

Rima Vallbona. *The Secret World of Grandmamma Anacleta*. Costa Rica.
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