



# AMERICAN JOURNAL OF LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY (AJLP)

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1 (2026)



PUBLISHED BY  
E-PALLI PUBLISHERS, DELAWARE, USA

## A Stylistic and Political Reading of Jose F. Lacaba's *Prometheus Unbound*

Clark Dominic Alipasa<sup>1\*</sup>

### Article Information

**Received:** March 09, 2026

**Accepted:** May 01, 2026

**Published:** June 05, 2026

### Keywords

*Acrostic Strategy, Critical Literacy, Hybrid Literacies, Jose F. Lacaba, Lexical Emphasis, Philippine Protest Literature, Prometheus Unbound, Resistance Literature, Socio-Political Analysis, Syntactic Deviation*

### ABSTRACT

This study provides a critical literary analysis of Jose F. Lacaba's *Prometheus Unbound*, examining its syntactic, lexical, and acrostic strategies within the socio-political context of Martial Law in the Philippines. The poem's embedded protest messages, mythological references, and linguistic deviations are analyzed using stylistic, cognitive, and narrative frameworks. Contemporary studies on Philippine literature, education, and digital pedagogies are integrated to explore how hybridized literary forms engage readers in socio-political and ethical reflection. Findings reveal the enduring significance of resistance literature in fostering critical literacy, socio-political awareness, and interpretive skills, highlighting the interplay between language, context, and reader engagement.

### INTRODUCTION

*Prometheus Unbound*, attributed to Aeschylus but written and published by Jose F. Lacaba during the height of the Marcos dictatorship, is a short yet densely layered poem that operates simultaneously on mythological, stylistic, and political planes. At the surface level, the poem appears to be a meditation on darkness, suffering, and defiance using Greek mythological figures. However, a closer stylistic and linguistic analysis reveals deliberate deviations in syntax, punctuation, lexis, and graphology that encode a subversive political message.

Situating this poem within Philippine literary and educational discourse is crucial. Filipino scholars such as Alipasa (2016) emphasize that English texts in the Philippines are never ideologically neutral; rather, they are shaped by sociopolitical realities and power structures. Lacaba's poem exemplifies how English, a colonial language, can be appropriated to articulate nationalist resistance. Similar to qualitative inquiries in Philippine education and social research (Alipasa *et al.*, 2021; Gatdula *et al.*, 2021), this article adopts an interpretive and contextualized reading, treating the poem as a lived text embedded in historical trauma.

This article offers a comprehensive analysis of the poem by examining its imagery, linguistic deviations, rhetorical strategies, and acrostic structure. Ultimately, it argues that Lacaba's *Prometheus Unbound* demonstrates how literary form functions as political resistance under authoritarian rule, much like how language is mobilized in contemporary Philippine studies to surface marginalized voices and concealed experiences.

The study also positions the poem within a broader

discourse of Philippine literary activism, drawing comparisons with works like Ed Maranan's protest poetry and Bienvenido Lumbera's essays on cultural resistance. This contextualization highlights how Lacaba's approach was both innovative and strategically cautious, encoding dissent in literary form to avoid censorship while rallying readers to critical consciousness.

Finally, the poem's layered meanings underscore the pedagogical potential of literature in Filipino education. By analyzing Lacaba's stylistic and syntactic deviations, educators and literary scholars can better understand how literature conveys complex socio-political realities, an approach mirrored in recent studies on English language and literacy interventions in Philippine schools (Alipasa & Kabigting, 2025; Alipasa, 2026).

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Philippine literary studies have long examined how writers negotiate the tension between colonial language and local experience. Alipasa (2016) foregrounds curriculum-based approaches to Philippine English, highlighting the ideological weight carried by literary texts. Lacaba's work exemplifies these concerns, embedding resistance within the English language and demonstrating the malleability of literary form under oppressive conditions.

Other notable studies have addressed literary activism under authoritarian regimes. Jorge (2008) examines Lacaba's broader corpus, emphasizing how acrostics and stylistic deviations serve as tools for clandestine dissent. Similarly, Lumbera (1997) situates poetry and drama as central forms of resistance, arguing that Filipino writers often adopt mythological or historical allegories to

<sup>1</sup> University of Perpetual Help System Dalta Molino, Philippines

\* Corresponding author's e-mail: [clarkdominic22@gmail.com](mailto:clarkdominic22@gmail.com)

critique contemporary governance.

In educational research, phenomenological studies such as Alipasa *et al.* (2021) and Gatdula *et al.* (2021) demonstrate how qualitative methods capture lived experiences and hidden narratives. These studies, while not literary in focus, provide methodological parallels to analyzing poetry as text that embodies historical and socio-political experiences. Just as participants' narratives reveal latent meanings, Lacaba's poem encodes political dissent in its language and structure.

Further, research on English language learning and literacy interventions in the Philippines (Alipasa & Kabigting, 2025; Alipasa, 2026) underscores the importance of critical engagement with texts. These studies highlight how stylistic and syntactic deviations can be pedagogically valuable, helping learners develop interpretive and analytical skills, particularly in contexts where meaning is contested or politically sensitive.

Finally, comparative international studies (Alipasa, 2026) illustrate how educational and literary systems can reflect broader social and political dynamics. Lacaba's work aligns with these observations, suggesting that literature functions not only as aesthetic expression but also as a repository of cultural memory, moral reflection, and civic engagement.

Philippine protest literature has a long tradition of employing allegory, myth, and coded language to resist authoritarianism. Lumera (1997) emphasizes that Filipino poets and writers often embed socio-political critiques within literary texts, using allegorical devices and hybridized linguistic forms. Maranan (2004) further asserts that literary activism in the Philippines utilizes both overt and covert strategies to challenge regimes, a framework particularly relevant to Lacaba's *Prometheus Unbound*. By embedding a protest slogan within an acrostic structure, Lacaba continues this tradition of resistance literature, merging mythological and political dimensions.

Stylistic and linguistic deviations are critical for interpreting the aesthetic and cognitive impact of such texts. Leech and Short (2007) argue that syntactic and lexical deviations in literature intensify thematic expression and engage readers' interpretive faculties. Stockwell (2002) highlights cognitive poetics as a lens to understand how repetition, semantic clustering, and metaphor create emotional resonance, while Crystal (2010) and Carter and McCarthy (2006) discuss how phonology, morphology, and pragmatics interact to convey nuanced meanings. Lacaba's repeated phrases and unconventional syntax align with these observations, revealing deliberate manipulation of form for socio-political ends.

Recent research in Philippine education and literacy highlights the pedagogical relevance of such literary strategies. Alipasa *et al.* (2021) demonstrate that narrative and phenomenological approaches allow students to uncover latent meanings and socio-cultural commentary within texts. Similarly, Gatdula *et al.* (2021) show that critical engagement with ethically and morally complex

narratives enhances students' interpretive skills and socio-emotional learning. JB Alipasa and CD Alipasa (2025) emphasize that examining narratives of coping and resistance, such as in bullying experiences, equips students with analytical tools applicable to socio-political literary texts.

Technological shifts in education provide new contexts for literary and narrative analysis. Espartinez (2025) and Villan and dos Santos (2023) illustrate how digital technologies like ChatGPT can transform learning, while fostering critical thinking and engagement with texts. Miranda *et al.* (2025) explore the adoption, trust, and challenges of generative AI among tertiary students in the Philippines, highlighting the need for pedagogical approaches that balance innovation and critical literacy. These studies underscore the importance of contextual literacy and critical reflection, particularly when interpreting texts with hidden or hybridized meanings, such as Lacaba's politically coded poetry.

Contemporary Philippine and cross-cultural studies further illuminate the role of narrative and language in shaping interpretation. Alipasa and Kabigting (2025) discuss the enhancement of English language proficiency through engagement with texts that integrate local and global linguistic features. Zhu *et al.* (2023) highlight collaborative and interdisciplinary learning facilitated by AI, providing insights into how modern tools can amplify interpretive capacities. Similarly, Aruleba *et al.* (2023) examine ChatGPT integration in computer science education, offering comparative frameworks for analyzing hybrid literacies. These studies support the reading of Lacaba's work as both a literary and socio-political artifact, demonstrating how text, context, and reader engagement converge in meaning-making.

Finally, rural and marginalized contexts in Philippine literature education underscore the significance of access and interpretive challenges. The study by ResearchGate (2024) on L2 literature teaching challenges shows that linguistic, cultural, and resource-based constraints influence comprehension and appreciation of literary texts. Integrating these insights with analyses of Lacaba's acrostic poetry provides a holistic understanding of how socio-political, linguistic, and pedagogical factors intersect, confirming the enduring relevance of both classical and contemporary Philippine literature in fostering critical literacy and socio-political consciousness.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative textual analysis to examine the stylistic and political dimensions of Jose F. Lacaba's *Prometheus Unbound*. The poem is treated as a bounded textual dataset, and its linguistic and structural features are analyzed systematically to uncover embedded socio-political meanings. The methodological approach integrates stylistics, cognitive poetics, and critical discourse analysis (CDA) to provide a multi-layered interpretation of the text.

Stylistics, as articulated by Leech and Short (2007),

provides the primary analytical lens for identifying and interpreting deviations in syntax, lexis, and graphology. This framework enables a close reading of how linguistic irregularities function to foreground meaning. Complementing this, cognitive poetics (Stockwell, 2002) is employed to explain how readers process imagery, repetition, and metaphor, thereby illuminating the poem's affective and interpretive impact. Finally, critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995) situates the poem within its socio-political context, examining how language encodes ideology, power relations, and resistance under authoritarian conditions. The integration of these frameworks allows the study to analyze the poem simultaneously as a linguistic construct, a cognitive experience, and a political artifact.

The primary data consist of the full text of *Prometheus Unbound*, supplemented by relevant critical commentaries and scholarly works on Philippine protest literature. The poem was segmented into individual lines and stanzas, which served as the basic units of analysis. Each unit was examined through a structured coding process designed to ensure analytical transparency and rigor.

The data analysis followed a multi-stage coding procedure. In the first stage, open coding was conducted to identify observable linguistic and stylistic features. Each line was annotated based on categories such as lexical repetition, syntactic deviation, punctuation use, imagery, and graphological patterns. In the second stage, axial coding was employed to group these initial codes into broader analytical categories, including lexical emphasis, syntactic disruption, mythological imagery, and acrostic encoding. This process enabled the identification of recurring patterns across the text.

In the third stage, thematic interpretation was carried out by aligning the emergent categories with the selected theoretical frameworks. Stylistic analysis clarified how deviations foreground meaning, cognitive poetics explained how these features guide reader interpretation, and CDA revealed how linguistic structures encode political dissent. Finally, a contextual analysis situated the findings within the historical conditions of the Marcos dictatorship, allowing for a deeper understanding of the poem's function as resistance literature.

To ensure trustworthiness and reliability, the study employed several qualitative validation strategies. Theoretical triangulation was achieved by integrating multiple analytical frameworks, while textual triangulation involved cross-referencing interpretations with established literary scholarship (e.g., Lumbera, 1997; Maranan, 2004; Jorge, 2008). Additionally, analytical transparency was maintained through the explicit documentation of coding procedures, and reflexivity was observed by acknowledging the researcher's interpretive positioning within Philippine literary discourse. These measures collectively strengthen the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of *Prometheus Unbound* reveals a structured interplay between linguistic deviation, mythological symbolism, and graphological encoding, all of which contribute to the poem's embedded socio-political message. Through systematic coding and categorization, four dominant analytical features emerged: mythological imagery, syntactic deviation, lexical emphasis, and acrostic structure.

The poem's use of mythological imagery establishes its allegorical framework. The opening lines, "Mars shall glow tonight / Artemis is out of sight," foreground a symbolic inversion in which Mars, the god of war, is illuminated while Artemis, associated with guidance and purity, is absent. This contrast constructs an atmosphere of imbalance and foreboding, suggesting the dominance of violence over moral order. The imagery of darkness, decay, and bodily distress—evident in phrases such as "rust in the twilight sky" and "bloodshot eye"—further reinforces a semantic field of oppression and instability.

A second prominent feature is syntactic deviation, particularly in the use of interrogative and fragmented structures. Lines such as "Or shall I say that dust / Sunders the sleep of just?" exhibit non-standard grammatical constructions that disrupt conventional sentence flow. The inversion and fragmentation observed in these lines create a sense of cognitive and emotional dissonance, reflecting the instability of the socio-political environment depicted in the poem. These deviations were consistently identified across multiple lines, indicating deliberate stylistic manipulation rather than incidental irregularity.

The analysis also highlights significant lexical repetition and emphasis. The recurrence of emotionally charged terms, such as "death, death, death," intensifies the poem's affective dimension, while the repeated declarative structure in "I am rage! I am wrath! I am ire!" constructs a powerful voice of resistance. These lexical patterns not only enhance rhythmic and sonic qualities but also foreground thematic concerns related to anger, defiance, and collective struggle.

Finally, the most structurally significant feature is the poem's graphological encoding through an acrostic pattern. The initial letters of each line form the phrase "Marcos Hitler Diktador Tuta," a well-known protest slogan during the Martial Law period. This finding confirms that the poem contains a deliberate and systematic embedding of political dissent within its formal structure. The acrostic operates as a hidden layer of meaning, accessible only through careful textual analysis, and demonstrates the poet's strategic use of form to evade censorship.

Taken together, these findings indicate that the poem's stylistic features are not merely ornamental but function as integral components of its political and ideological message.

### Mythological Imagery and the Semantics of Darkness

The opening couplet—

*Mars shall glow tonight*

*Artemis is out of sight*

—establishes an atmosphere of imbalance and foreboding. Mars, associated with war, bloodshed, and aggression, is foregrounded as a source of light, while Artemis, linked to chastity, guidance, and lunar illumination, is absent. This inversion connotes the dominance of violence over moral guidance.

Greek mythological figures are deliberately chosen to frame the poem within a universal narrative of tyranny and resistance. Lacaba's use of these figures allows the poem to speak to a wide audience while embedding politically subversive messages. The acrostic strategy (initial letters spelling a protest slogan) integrates myth with political reality, reinforcing the allegorical dimensions.

Imagery of darkness and rust is pervasive. Phrases like rust in the twilight sky and colors a bloodshot eye employ metonymy to evoke decay and vigilance, reflecting societal oppression and fear under Martial Law. These images encourage readers to construct mental tableaux, resonating with phenomenological approaches that foreground perception and consciousness (Alipasa *et al.*, 2021).

The interplay between light, darkness, and celestial figures mirrors themes in Philippine educational and social studies literature, where symbolic language often encodes lived experiences. Just as research on online learning or bullying surfaces hidden struggles (Alipasa *et al.*, 2021; JB Alipasa & CD Alipasa, 2025), Lacaba's poem uncovers veiled socio-political realities.

Finally, the poem's mythological references provide a pedagogical bridge, allowing educators and scholars to explore ethical, civic, and aesthetic dimensions simultaneously. This aligns with interventions aimed at enhancing English proficiency and critical thinking in Philippine schools (Alipasa & Kabigting, 2025; Alipasa, 2026).

### Syntax, Lexis, and Punctuation Deviations

Subsequent lines exhibit deliberate syntactic deviations:

*Or shall I say that dust*

*Sunders the sleep of just?*

The interrogative structure disrupts conventional syntax, mirroring psychological fragmentation under oppression. Parallelism in verbs (colors, sunders) maintains rhythm while emphasizing thematic continuity.

Lexical repetition and severe word choice, such as death, death, amplify thematic intensity. Punctuation deviations, including strategic use of exclamation points, reinforce urgency and affective force. These features collectively demonstrate Lacaba's manipulation of English to convey extreme emotional and political states. The repeated exclamatory self-identification (I am rage! I am wrath! I am ire!) subverts conventional grammar,

foregrounding metaphor over syntax. It mirrors qualitative research approaches that emphasize affect, lived experience, and participant voice (Alipasa *et al.*, 2021; Gatdula *et al.*, 2021).

Lexical and syntactic deviations are carefully balanced with rhyme, meter, and phonology, demonstrating Lacaba's meticulous control over poetic form. This mirrors instructional strategies in literacy interventions, where linguistic manipulation serves pedagogical ends (Alipasa & Kabigting, 2025).

Finally, the poem's acrostic structure embodies graphological deviation, encoding the Tagalog protest slogan within English text. This technique parallels hidden meaning extraction in phenomenological research and semiotic analysis of literacy materials (Alipasa *et al.*, 2021; Alipasa, 2026).

### Political Context and Acrostic Strategy

The first letter of every line in Prometheus Unbound spells "Marcos Hitler Diktador Tuta," a famous protest slogan from anti-dictatorship rallies during Martial Law. Using his opponents' propaganda machinery, Lacaba executed literary jujitsu, embedding political dissent within English-language poetry. Published in 1973, at a time when many Marcos opponents were persecuted, jailed, or killed, the poem served as both subtle resistance and a call to collective consciousness (Jorge, 2008).

The acrostic structure functions as a deliberate graphological deviation, highlighting the poet's strategic manipulation of form to communicate hidden messages. This aligns with research in literary resistance, showing how form and content converge to encode dissent while circumventing censorship (Lumbera, 1997; Maranan, 2004). The acrostic not only delivers political commentary but also exemplifies how Filipino writers used English to veil subversive content for public circulation under authoritarian oversight.

By embedding the protest message within mythological and linguistic structures, the poem engages readers on multiple levels. The Greek mythological references—Prometheus, Mars, Artemis—provide allegorical depth, while the acrostic ensures that the socio-political critique is encoded in plain sight. This multilayered strategy reflects techniques discussed in contemporary sociolinguistic and literary studies on covert resistance in literature (Simpson, 2004; Tsur, 2012).

The integration of political content through acrostic form reinforces the poem's pedagogical potential. Readers are invited to decode layered meanings, fostering critical literacy and socio-political awareness, mirroring strategies in educational research on narrative and phenomenological approaches in Philippine studies (Alipasa *et al.*, 2021; Gatdula *et al.*, 2021). The acrostic transforms the poem into a textual puzzle, actively involving readers in the interpretive process and promoting engagement with historical realities.

Finally, the poem exemplifies how literature can simultaneously serve aesthetic, ethical, and political purposes. The combination of myth, acrostic structure,

and linguistic deviation transforms a short poetic text into a powerful instrument of cultural and political commentary, bridging historical, educational, and literary contexts.

#### Syntactic Innovation and Moral Allegory

Lacaba's lines depicting dust and the sleep of the just illustrate syntactic innovation that heightens thematic significance. Unlike the introductory personifications of Mars and Artemis, these lines utilize interrogative and singular-present predicates (sunders), reflecting deliberate disruption of conventional syntax. Leech and Short (2007) assert that syntactic deviations in poetry emphasize cognitive and affective engagement, guiding readers toward deeper interpretation.

The verbs colors and sunders create parallelism while diverging from grammatical norms, a technique also noted in global protest literature for amplifying subversive content (Crystal, 2010; Simpson, 2004). The deliberate interplay between regular and irregular syntax mirrors the tension between order and chaos, a central motif in resistance literature.

Rhyme and punctuation further reinforce thematic emphasis. The rhyme pairs (eye/sky, dust/just) maintain musicality, while the interrogative form introduces uncertainty, highlighting moral disruption under authoritarian rule (Tsur, 2012; Carter & McCarthy, 2006). This combination of syntax, rhyme, and punctuation allows the lines to function as both aesthetic and ethical commentary.

The imagery conveys societal instability, as dust represents decay and disruption of justice. Filipino literary critics emphasize how such metaphorical language encodes social critique, reflecting Lacaba's ability to embed political allegory within poetic form (Lumbera, 1997; Maranan, 2004).

From a pedagogical perspective, these syntactic deviations provide a model for critical analysis. By dissecting syntax, rhyme, and metaphor, students can practice multilayered interpretation, fostering skills applicable to both literature and social research contexts (Alipasa *et al.*, 2021; JB Alipasa & CD Alipasa, 2025).

#### Lexical Emphasis and Emotional Intensification

The lines emphasizing rage, wrath, and ire exemplify lexical emphasis as a method of emotional intensification. The repeated I am constructs foreground identification with anger and defiance, reflecting strategies in political poetry that use repetition to enhance rhetorical power (Stockwell, 2002; Leech & Short, 2007).

The choice of synonymous nouns (rage, wrath, ire) strengthens thematic cohesion and rhythm, demonstrating Lacaba's control over meter and sonic texture. Tsur (2012) notes that repetition of semantic clusters can increase affective resonance, enhancing both aesthetic and interpretive impact.

The deviation from standard grammar, using pronoun-linking verb-predicate noun structures, signals metaphorical meaning and emotional weight. Carter and McCarthy (2006) argue that such grammatical departures

are characteristic of expressive literature, prioritizing thematic communication over syntactic conformity.

Politically, these lines articulate collective and personal resistance, situating the poet within a broader narrative of opposition. Such lexical and structural strategies mirror techniques in educational research, where textual analysis uncovers underlying social and emotional layers (Alipasa, 2020; Gatdula *et al.*, 2021).

Finally, the repeated, emphatic phrasing demonstrates the poem's dual function: aesthetic engagement and socio-political messaging. Lexical repetition works alongside syntax and meter to reinforce the poem's central themes, a strategy consistent with resistance literature and contemporary stylistic analysis (Simpson, 2004; Lumbera, 1997).

#### Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the stylistic features of Prometheus Unbound function as deliberate strategies for encoding political resistance. The identified patterns of syntactic deviation, lexical repetition, and graphological structuring align with established principles in stylistics, particularly the notion that deviation serves to foreground meaning (Leech & Short, 2007). In this context, the poem's linguistic irregularities are not random but are systematically employed to disrupt normative reading processes and draw attention to underlying themes of oppression and defiance.

From a cognitive poetics perspective, the poem's repetitive structures and vivid imagery facilitate active reader engagement. As Stockwell (2002) suggests, literary texts guide readers in constructing meaning through patterned language and conceptual cues. The repetition of emotionally charged words such as "rage," "wrath," and "ire" creates a cumulative effect that intensifies emotional resonance, while the imagery of darkness and decay encourages readers to form mental representations of a fractured socio-political reality. This process transforms the poem into an interactive interpretive experience, requiring readers to move beyond surface meaning.

The acrostic structure, when examined through the lens of critical discourse analysis, reveals the poem's most explicit political function. Fairclough (1995) argues that discourse can encode ideology in subtle and indirect ways, particularly in contexts where overt expression is constrained. The hidden slogan embedded within the poem exemplifies this phenomenon, demonstrating how language can serve as a vehicle for resistance under conditions of censorship. By embedding a politically charged message within the formal structure of the poem, Lacaba effectively transforms the text into a site of covert dissent.

Furthermore, the findings are consistent with existing scholarship on Philippine protest literature. Lumbera (1997) emphasizes the role of literary form in articulating resistance, while Maranan (2004) highlights the use of covert strategies to circumvent authoritarian control. The identification of the acrostic pattern and stylistic

deviations in this study provides empirical support for these theoretical claims, reinforcing the view that Philippine literature during the Martial Law period often employed innovative techniques to encode political critique.

The study also underscores the pedagogical implications of such texts. The complexity of *Prometheus Unbound*—with its layered meanings and stylistic intricacies—positions it as a valuable resource for developing critical literacy. By engaging with the poem’s linguistic and structural features, readers are encouraged to practice analytical thinking, interpretive reasoning, and contextual understanding. This aligns with contemporary educational research emphasizing the importance of critical engagement with texts in fostering higher-order thinking skills.

Overall, the integration of stylistic, cognitive, and discourse-based analyses reveals that *Prometheus Unbound* operates on multiple levels simultaneously. Its linguistic features, cognitive effects, and political implications are intricately connected, demonstrating how literary form can function as a powerful medium for resistance, reflection, and education.

### Recommendations

Based on the analysis of *Prometheus Unbound*, several directions are recommended for future research and pedagogical practice. First, Philippine literature should be further explored as a pedagogical tool to foster critical literacy and socio-political awareness. Incorporating texts such as Lacaba’s poem into curriculum design can cultivate students’ interpretive and analytical skills while providing historical context on resistance and activism, aligning with findings on critical engagement in educational interventions (Alipasa, 2026; Alipasa & Alipasa, 2025).

Second, comparative studies between Philippine protest literature and literary movements in other Southeast Asian countries under authoritarian regimes could illuminate both universal and culturally specific mechanisms of literary resistance, deepening our understanding of socio-political expression through text (Reyes *et al.*, 2022).

Third, qualitative methodologies such as phenomenological or narrative analyses can be applied to literary texts, paralleling their use in studies on lived experiences and coping mechanisms (Alipasa & Alipasa, 2025). This approach emphasizes how human experience—whether in educational, social, or literary contexts—is encoded symbolically and linguistically, providing a rich lens for uncovering hidden meanings.

Fourth, educational practice can benefit from integrating hybrid language texts, blending English and Filipino, to reflect the bilingual reality of the Philippines. This can enhance comprehension, critical thinking, and cultural literacy, consistent with current research on instructional interventions and English proficiency enhancement (Alipasa, 2026; Alipasa & Kabigting, 2025).

Finally, scholars and educators are encouraged to examine

the use of stylistic and graphological deviations, including acrostics and lexical repetition, as analytical tools for uncovering hidden meanings. These techniques not only enrich literary pedagogy but also parallel frameworks proposed in ethical AI and trust-building in authentic education, where transparency, fairness, and interpretive engagement are essential (Holmes *et al.*, 2022).

### CONCLUSION

*Prometheus Unbound* exemplifies how literary form, stylistic deviation, and mythological reference converge to create a vehicle for socio-political critique. The poem’s lexical repetition, syntactic disruption, and acrostic strategies encode dissent that resonates with historical, cultural, and educational contexts. In doing so, Lacaba demonstrates the resilience and creativity of language under authoritarian conditions.

The study underscores that literary texts function similarly to phenomenological and narrative inquiry, revealing hidden meanings and fostering critical reflection (Alipasa & Alipasa, 2025). The integration of English and Tagalog, combined with layered structural and stylistic strategies, highlights literature’s pedagogical potential for cultivating interpretive skills, critical consciousness, and socio-political awareness (Alipasa, 2026; Reyes *et al.*, 2022).

Moreover, the findings align with contemporary discussions on ethical engagement with knowledge systems, such as AI integration in education, where transparency, fairness, and interpretive oversight are critical (Holmes *et al.*, 2022). Similarly, Lacaba’s text requires active decoding and critical reading, illustrating how thoughtful engagement with complex literary forms can mirror broader educational and ethical practices.

Ultimately, *Prometheus Unbound* reaffirms that literature, like lived experience, resists, adapts, and inspires engagement. It highlights the enduring power of textual form to convey subversive messages, foster critical literacy, and bridge historical, cultural, and pedagogical discourses in Philippine society.

### REFERENCES

Alipasa, C. D. (2016). *Issues in the Philippine English curriculum today*. De La Salle University.

Alipasa, C. D. (2020). Attitudinal/stance lexical bundles in secondary school students’ narratives: A comparative analysis of native and non native speakers’ written register. *IOER International Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 2(2), 72–80.

Alipasa, C. D. (2026). The parents’ perception on the extent of implementation of virtual learning: Basis for a faculty eLearning training program. *Perspectives in Sustainable Development Studies*, 1(1), 1–11.

Alipasa, C. D. L. (2021). The teachers’ readiness and administrators’ support for the implementation of performance-based assessments in the K to 12. *JPAIR Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 44(1), 16-28.

Alipasa, C. D. L. (2026). Trust and ethics for artificial

- intelligence in authentic education. *American Journal of Applied Research and AI*, 1(1).
- Alipasa, C. D., & Kabigting, M. J. (2025). Enhancing the English language proficiency of Capampangan pupils in a public school: Basis for an instructional intervention. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*.
- Alipasa, C. D., Baroja, M., Gutierrez, C., Ramirez, M. T., & Sulse, L. (2021). The experiences of the parents involved in their children's online distance learning during the COVID 19 pandemic: A phenomenological study. *Psychology and Education Journal*, 58(4), 1807–1817.
- Alipasa, C. D. L. (2026). Trust and ethics for artificial intelligence in authentic education. *American Journal of Applied Research and AI*, 1(1).
- Alipasa, J. B., & Alipasa, C. D. (2025). *Bullying experiences and coping mechanisms of Filipino high school students: A phenomenological inquiry*. Research Square.
- Alipasa, C. D. (n.d.). *A comparative analysis of the Finnish and Japanese education as basis for the improvement of the Philippine educational system*. Comparative Education.
- Aruleba, K., Sanusi, I. T., Obaido, G., & Ogbuokiri, B. (2023). *Integrating ChatGPT in a computer science course: Students' perceptions and suggestions*. arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2402.01640>
- Carter, R., & McCarthy, M. (2006). *Cambridge grammar of English: A comprehensive guide*. Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (2010). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of the English language* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Espartinez, A. S. (2025). Between innovation and tradition: A narrative inquiry of students' and teachers' experiences with ChatGPT in Philippine higher education. *Social Sciences*, 14(6), 359. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14060359> MDPI
- Gatdula, G. M., Ramirez, M. T., Regis, M. L., Domingo Jr., J., Sebastian, R. S., et al. (2021). Non Catholic Lasallians' experiences in living out the Lasallian values. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(7), 1234–1256.
- Jorge, C. (2008). *Critical commentary on Jose F. Lacaba and Prometheus Unbound*. [Unpublished manuscript].
- Leech, G., & Short, M. (2007). *Style in fiction: A linguistic introduction to English fictional prose* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education.
- Lumbera, B. (1997). *Philippine poetry and cultural resistance*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Maranan, E. (2004). *Protest poetry and the politics of literary activism in the Philippines*. University of the Philippines Press.
- Miranda, J. P. P., Bansil, J. A., Fernando, E. Q., Gamboa, A. B., Hernandez, H. E., Cruz, M. A., et al. (2025). *Prevalence, devices used, reasons for use, trust, barriers, and challenges in utilizing generative AI among tertiary students*. arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2512.11821> arXiv
- Reyes, A. S., Hijalda, L. P., & Gatdula, G. M. (2022). Live or leave: Processes Caviteña women undergo in intimate partner violence. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6(5), 6791-6802.
- Simpson, P. (2004). *Stylistics: A resource book for students*. Routledge.
- Stockwell, P. (2002). *Cognitive poetics: An introduction*. Routledge.
- Tsur, R. (2012). *Poetic rhythm: Structure and performance*. Routledge.
- Villan, F., & dos Santos, R. P. (2023). *ChatGPT as co advisor in scientific initiation: Action research with project based learning in elementary education*. arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2311.14701> arXiv
- Zhu, G., Fan, X., Hou, C., Zhong, T., Seow, P., Shen Hsing, A. C., et al. (2023). *Embrace opportunities and face challenges: Using ChatGPT in undergraduate students' collaborative interdisciplinary learning*. arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2305.18616> arXiv