



CULTURAL MESSAGES IN *NAWĀDIR JUHA LI AL-ATHFĀL*'S SHORT STORY: AN IMPLICATURE ANALYSIS OF A CHILDREN'S LITERATURE TEXT

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ABSTRACT

There are utterances in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* that contain implied meanings representing various situations. Therefore, this short story needs to be studied with an implicature perspective to describe the forms of implicature and its form to reveal the implied things represented. This study uses a qualitative design. Data are taken from the lingual features of the conversations between characters in the story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* by Syaūqi Hasan. The data collection technique used involves careful reading and recording of the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* that contains indications of implicature. The data analysis technique is the matching method by referring to Paul Grice's implicature theory. The results of the study show that conventional and conversational forms of implicature are found that represent meanings that are relevant to the social and cultural values of the general public. The functions of the implicature forms found include 7 assertive functions, 4 expressive functions of insinuation, 2 directive functions of command, and 1 directive function of requesting help, which tend to represent culture and tradition in the lives of the general public. The dominance of these functional findings strengthens the research implication that implicature can help reveal meanings that tend to have been stated, but are still implicit.

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INTRODUCTION

In classical Arabic literature, which has become a folklore, there is the story of *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl*, which is almost famous throughout the world, especially in Muslim-majority countries (Zahra & Basid, 2017). The story of *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* is a short story that was originally famous in the Middle East. In the story of *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl*, there is a character Juha who has a variety of traits or characters. Sometimes he can be a clever person, sometimes he can also be a cunning person (Hasan, 2011). The story of *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* is known as an anecdote that contains a variety of humor and humor. However, in the hypothesis of reaching the implied, this story not only entertains its readers, but also contains criticism, messages, and morals. The humor contained in the story of *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* contains implicit meanings that need to be explored more deeply. For example, in one of the story's dictionaries, "already gray" is interpreted not only as a physical form, but also as an implicit meaning of old age (Saifudin, 2020; Suhartono, 2020). Therefore, an implicature perspective is needed to examine it because it contains one of the stories that requires explicit meaning. This is because implicature will reveal the implied meaning expressed by the speaker to the interlocutor, both verbally and in writing (Grice, 1989), whether depending on the conversational context in the story or depending on certain words and expressions (Rahmawati et al., 2020).

Ulam, et al. (2018) study, from the perspective of the principle of cooperation, revealed that the characters in the story of *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* violate the principle of cooperation through their humorous actions. In another perspective, Juhana (2012) revealed that the humor actually contains many moral messages that serve as references for life values. In line with the persistence of moral values in the story, Hidayah (2021) revealed that even though *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* was adapted into a humorous comic format, the referential meaning contained still has the essence of educating morality, intelligence, and wisdom. In this case, it is illustrated through the specific language as explained by Nurwahid et al. (2021) that in the *Nawādir Juha* comic, *balaghah* techniques such as metaphors and comparisons are used to convey moral messages in a way that is easily understood by readers.

Another study by (Phuong, 2024) examined the story of *Nawādir Juha* from the perspective of moral education, a story that is not merely entertaining. Their findings indicate that the story of Juha retains the characteristics of classical Arabic literature, such as the use of dense and meaningful language. Meanwhile, Alsibli & Kaddum (2022) examine from a cultural perspective, specifically Turkey, that subtle social criticism is maintained, even in contemporary adaptations of the story of Juha. They emphasize that despite the change in media form (from a full-text story to a visual form), the moral meaning and professional aesthetics of the story remain alive and function as a tool for cultural education. This is in line with the study of Fikri & Septiyatik (2023) who found the persistence of morality through positive politeness strategies (e.g., attending addresses, avoiding disputes, optimism) and negative (e.g., apologizing, sparing the requester from the burden) contained in the characters' speech. These findings support that despite being in comic form, the use of language in the story of Juha remains complex, meaningful, and maintains social and moral values.

Based on the above studies, it can be identified that examining the implicatures in *Nawādir Juha li al Athfāl* offers a distinction that has previously received less attention in existing studies. Although many studies have discussed the moral messages, humor, and language use in the story, implicatures provide a new dimension in understanding the

deeper and hidden meanings in each plot of *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl*. In this case, the implied meanings that will be studied are more than just humor, but also implied meanings that contain social and moral criticism relevant to everyday life. This is similar to the implicature analysis conducted by [Damayanti et al. \(2022\)](#) that the discourse function of digital comic strips also contains satirical implicatures, social criticism, and other implied messages relevant to the dynamics of the readers' social lives. Likewise, [Santuso & Sukarno \(2025\)](#) explain that comic strips are not just visual entertainment, but can convey social criticism related to government policies if viewed implicitly. Implicature studies are studies that interpret language more openly, such as studies ([Ali, 2023](#); [Saffanah et al., 2024](#)) which also see comics as representing social perceptions in implicature studies.

METHOD

This type of research is qualitative research because the data in this study were obtained from narratives, monologues, and dialogues between characters in the story. The data source is the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* written by Syauki Hasan which can be accessed through <https://www.jarir.com/bh-en/arabic-books-23545> ([Hasan, 2011](#)). The data collection method used in this study was reading *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl*. Then, carefully selecting data from the story of *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* which generally contains implicit narratives. Data assumed to be in accordance with the problem formulation were then recorded on a data card for analysis. The data analysis technique used was the matching method by referring to Grice's implicature theory. Data analysis was conducted by classifying the data into the types and functions of implicatures contained in the short story "*Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl*." The stages involved identifying implicatures, which were then classified into several forms. Then, a functional analysis of these implicature forms was conducted. Data interpretation was carried out using the equivalence method, which connects the context beyond language. Finally, conclusions were drawn.

RESULT

Types of Implicature

Based on the analysis, two types of implicatures were found in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* in that fill the meaning of the story's narrative choices. These types consist of 12 narrative forms or expressions containing conventional implicatures and 11 data containing conversational implicatures.

Conventional Implicature

Conventional implicature is an implicature that is derived directly from the meaning of the word itself and is generally known ([Grice, 1989](#)). The form of conventional implicature found in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* will be explained below:

Data 1. Conventional Implicature

فَرَأُوا جُحًا وَاقِفًا أَمَامَ بَابِ شَقَّتِهِ الْمُغْلَقِ فِي حَالَةٍ يُرْتَى لَهَا، يَتَصَبَّبُ عَرْقًا، وَحَجَلًا. فَقَالُوا: "كَيْفَ تَفْعَلُ
هَذَا فِي زَوْجَتِكَ يَا جُحًا، وَقَدْ نَالَ الشَّيْبُ مِنْكَ."

The neighbors saw Juha standing in front of his closed door, wailing, sweating profusely and blushing. They said, "How could you do this to your wife, Juha? You're already gray-haired."

The data above contains an implicature utterance in the sentence "you're already gray." This utterance occurred in front of Juha's house in an angry state and the one who uttered this utterance was Juha's neighbors and his interlocutor was Juha. The purpose of the utterance was to remind Juha of his aging age. This utterance was delivered verbally. The utterance "you're already gray" is a conventional implicature. Gray hair is hair that undergoes a transition from black to gray and then changes to white and is common with age. This is because melanin production in the body will decrease, which results in the appearance of gray hair. Therefore, the meaning of "beru gray" contains the meaning of being old or aged and is a conventional implicature because the meaning of gray hair is generally known by the community.

Conversational Implicature

Conversational implicature is one type of implicature that appears in everyday conversation (Grice, 1989). In this case, what is studied is the "intention of an utterance" based on its context. Conversational implicature is used to explain the implicit meaning behind "what is said or written" as "something that is implied". The form of conversational implicature found in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* is as follows.

Data 2. Conversational Implicature

وَبَعْدَ أَيَّامٍ تَصَادَفَ أَنَّ الرَّجُلَ كَانَ جَالِسًا فِي نَافِذَةِ دَارِهِ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى الْمَطَرِ الْغَزِيرِ، وَفَجْأَةً رَأَى جُحَا يَجْرِي مُسْرِعًا وَقَدْ مَسَكَ عِمَامَتَهُ وَرَفَعَ جُبَّتَهُ فَنَادَاهُ جُحَا قَائِلًا: أَنْسَيْتَ مَا قُلْتَهُ لِي؟ هَلْ يَفِرُّ الْإِنْسَانُ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ؟ تَوَقَّفَ جُحَا لِحُظَّةٍ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: "كَلَّا وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا مُسْرِعٌ لِكَيْلَا أُدْوسَ الرَّحْمَةَ بِرِجْلِي، ثُمَّ أَسْرَعُ إِلَى دَارِهِ."

A few days later, the man happened to be sitting at the window of his house. Suddenly he saw Juha hurrying while holding his turban and lifting his robe. He called him and said: "Have you forgotten what you said to me?" "Is there anyone who runs away from Allah's mercy?" Then Juha stopped for a moment and said: "Of course, I was in a hurry so as not to step on mercy (rain) with my feet." Juha immediately went to his house.

The above data is taken from an oral conversation between Juha and his stingy neighbor. The sentence above occurred in front of Juha's house, when Juha saw his stingy neighbor running to avoid the rain. The purpose of the above utterance is to advise Juha's stingy neighbor, this utterance was delivered by Juha verbally. The meaning of the above utterance of mercy is rain. Rain in the context of the above utterance is a mercy sent down by Allah for His creation. The conversational implicature utterance contained in the above data is "I was in a hurry so as not to step on mercy with my feet." The word mercy becomes a conversational implicature because it can only be understood through the context of the conversation. By using this expression, the speaker seems to want to express that rain is a very valuable form of mercy, and he tries to avoid actions that could be considered disrespectful or damaging this mercy, even though in essence the purpose is only to provide shelter. In this case, the utterance can only be understood by referring to the storyline and the context that accompanies it before and after.

The Function of Implicature in Short Story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl*

The function of implicature is evident from the intended meaning of the utterance conveyed by the speaker to the interlocutor during the conversation. The implied implicature function found in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* is found in 4 forms which can be observed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Implicature Function

No	Implicature Function	Frequency
1	Assertive function: stating	7
2	Expressive function: insinuating	4
3	Directive function: ordering	2
4	Directive function: asking for help	1

The Assertive Function States

The assertive implicature function refers to when a speaker conveys information to the interlocutor, with the aim of giving them a clearer understanding of the speaker's expectations (Syavira et al., 2024). The data of the assertive implicature function in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* will be explained below.

Data 3. The Assertive Function States

وَبَعْدَ عِدَّةِ أَيَّامٍ صَادَفَ جُحَا صَدِيقَهُ فِي الطَّرِيقِ، قَالَ الصَّدِيقُ: لَقَدْ ائْتَمَرْتُكَ فِي دَارِي طِبْلَةَ الْأَيَّامِ
الْمَاضِيَةِ لِأَرْدَ لَكَ مَا عَلَيَّ وَهَذَا أَنَا الْآنَ، أَدْعُوكَ لِلْحُضُورِ مَعِي. قَالَ جُحَا: يَا صَدِيقِي لَيْسَ لَدَيَّ وَقْتُ
الْآنَ، سَأَحْضُرُ فِيمَا بَعْدُ.

A few days later, Juha happened to meet his friend at a crossroads and said, "For the past few days, I've been waiting for you at home to repay your debt. Well, I happen to be here now, so come stop by." Juha replied, "Yes, I'll visit another time."

The data above is a dialogue between Juha and Juha's friend's wife, the dialogue took place at Juha's friend's house, the speaker in the data excerpt above is Juha and his interlocutor is Juha's friend's wife and Juha's friend as the listener. The purpose of the above utterance is to inform Juha's friend's wife that the one who came was Juha, her husband's friend, Juha came to his friend's house to collect a debt, but Juha's friend avoided him because he knew that Juha went to his house to collect a debt from him. His utterance above was delivered verbally in the form of a dialogue. The data excerpt listed above is included in the assertive implicature function of stating because in the dialogue between Juha and his friend's wife there is a sentence that contains an element of stating as expressed by Juha when he said "Yes, I will visit another time". The sentence uttered by Juha has the meaning that Juha stated to Juha's friend's wife that the one who came to his house was Juha, her husband's friend. Juha's intention in stating the utterance is for Juha's wife to open the door of his house because the one who came was her husband's friend.

The Expressive Function Insinuates

The expressive implicature function of satire means that the speaker in a conversation makes a satire about something (Saifudin, 2020). The directive implicature function of requesting in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* will be explained below.

Data 4. Expressive Function Insinuates

اشْتَدَّ بِجُحَا الْجُوعُ، وَلَمْ يُطْلِقْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا، وَأَرَادَ أَنْ يُشْعِرَهُمَا بِحَاجَتِهِ إِلَى الطَّعَامِ دُونَ أَنْ يَطْلُبَ شَيْئًا،
وَأَخَذَ يُفَكِّرُ فِي وَسِيلَةٍ.
قَالَ جُحَا: إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ يَشْعُرُ بِالْجُوعِ فِي الشِّتَاءِ أَسْرَعَ مِمَّا يَشْعُرُ بِهِ فِي الصَّيْفِ، وَلَكِنَّهُمَا تَجَاهَلَا
قَصْدَهُ.

Juha's hunger was becoming unbearable, and he decided to tell them both that he needed food without asking. Juha began to think frantically about a solution. Juha said, "People get hungry more quickly in winter than in summer." They both pretended not to understand what Juha meant.

The sentence above occurs in the hut of a stingy husband and wife, the speaker of the sentence above is Juha who is very hungry and his interlocutor is the stingy husband of the house owner and the listener is the wife of the stingy husband. The purpose of Juha's utterance above is to inform the stingy homeowner that he is very hungry and wants the husband and wife to give him food. The above utterance occurs verbally and in the form of a dialogue. The data quote is included in the conversational implicature function which is expressive and satirical. This is because it occurs in a conversation between the speaker and the interlocutor, namely Juha and the stingy husband and wife. The expressive implicature function of satire contained in the data above is the utterance "People get hungry more quickly in winter than in summer". The purpose of Juha's utterance is to inform the stingy husband and wife that Juha is feeling hungry and wants the husband and wife to give him food. Juha uses satire sentences to convey his desired meaning. Juha conveys the meaning of his utterance in the form of satire to the stingy husband and wife. Juha satirizes a stingy husband and wife who are reluctant to feed Juha when Juha visits their house.

The Directive Function Commands

The function of the commanding directive implicature is that the speaker commands or orders something to the speech partner (Saifudin, 2020). The function of the commanding directive implicature in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* will be explained below.

Data 5. Directive Function Commands

قَالَ الْكَاتِبُ لِلرَّجُلِ: اذْهَبْ أَنْتَ وَأَحْضِرْ لَنَا الدَّرَاهِيمَ لِيَأْخُذَهَا جُحَا، وَكَأَنَّهَا يَدْعُوهُ لِلْهَرَبِ.
وَهَكَذَا الْكَاتِبُ أَفْسَحَ الْمَجَالَ لِفِرَارِ صَدِيقِهِ، وَأَنْتَظَرَ جُحَا سَاعَاتٍ عَلَى غَيْرِ فَائِدَةٍ.

Then he said to the man: "Go get money for Juha." He seemed to tell him to run away. That was the secretary's trick to give his friend a chance to escape. In the end, Juha waited several hours in vain.

The data above is a conversation between the judge's secretary and the judge's friend. The conversation was told in court. When Juha was at the market suddenly a foreign man came and immediately hit Juha. Juha also felt that he did not accept the treatment of the foreign man, so he took the foreign man to court. However, the man who hit Juha earlier did not mind because now the judge was his friend (the judge's secretary) who was definitely on his side. While in court, the judge's secretary asked Juha to hit the foreign man in return, but Juha refused. Then, the judge's secretary ordered his friend (a foreign man) to take money for Juha, the aim was to tell him to run away. The sentence

that has a commanding element in the data above is the sentence uttered by the judge's secretary "go get money for Juha". The intention stated by the judge's secretary was to order his friend to run away from court, but with the pretext of ordering him to take money for Juha. The judge's unfair secretary tricks Juha so that his friend can escape from court.

The Directive Function Asks for Help

The function of the directive implicature of asking for help is when the speaker in a conversation expresses a request sentence to the interlocutor, so that the interlocutor is willing to provide assistance (Saputro, 2023). The function of the directive implicature of asking for help in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl* will be explained below.

Data 6. Directive Function Asks for Help

وَمَا إِنْ وَصَلَ جُحَا إِلَى حَيْثُ الطَّارِقِ حَتَّى ارْتَمَى عَلَى الْأَرْضِ قَائِلًا بِصَوْتٍ لَاهِيٍّ: "مَاذَا تُرِيدُ يَا هَذَا؟
فَأَجَابَ الرَّجُلُ: "أَنَا فَقِيرٌ الْحَالِ وَأُرِيدُ حَسَنَةً يَا سَيِّدِي."

When he arrived at the person who knocked on the door, he lay on the ground and said in a breathless voice: "What do you want?" The man then replied: "I am poor and want (good) charity, my lord."

The speaker in the data above is a beggar who came to Juha's house and the interlocutor is Juha. The above utterance took place at Juha's house. The purpose of this utterance is to ask for alms from Juha. The above utterance is a dialogue between Juha and the beggar spoken verbally with the speaker in a pleading and breathless state. The function of the directive implicature asking for help in the data above is the utterance "I am poor and want (good) charity, my lord." The function of the beggar's utterance is to ask Juha for help so that he gives alms to the beggar. The kindness referred to in this utterance is alms if it is adjusted to the context of the usual request by a beggar.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings above, two types of implicatures can be found in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl*, namely conventional implicatures and conversational implicatures. It has been identified that conventional implicatures arise in utterances whose meanings are generally understood by many people without requiring a specific context. This is related to implicit meanings commonly found in the traditions and culture of society. For example, the diction "beruban" to indicate age to indicate old age and "god's grace" to figure rain are forms of speech that have become cultural in the traditions of society in general (Khairullah, et al., 2023). Meanwhile, conversational implicatures become clear when the meaning of an utterance depends on the context of the ongoing conversation. These findings confirm that implicature plays a role as a primary meaning-making strategy in the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Athfāl*. Meaning is not always conveyed explicitly, but is guided through shared knowledge (conventional) and context-based reasoning (conversational).

In line with Wilson et al., (2024), their study also places pragmatic inference as the key to understanding narrative and conversational discourse, while also showing that story texts tend to combine implicatures that rely on reader habits that link situational contexts. Folklore narratives and traditional dictions as conveyed (Wu et al., 2023; Zhetessova et al., 2025) generally carry the function of inheriting values, so it is common

for the pragmatic strategies used to lead to the formation of meanings that are easily recognized by readers through the same cultural scheme (*shared cultural schema*). In the context of Juha, a study of the short story *Nawādir Juha li al-Aṭḥfāl* also shows the strength of linguistic strategies that adapt to politeness norms and social expectations of readers, which ultimately encourages the emergence of implicatures based on local cultural customs (Rahmawati & Pamungkas, 2025).

The implicit messages in the findings also appear to act as engines of humor and social criticism. Characters twist meaning through context, so that readers perceive irony, satire, or pseudo-justifications targeting certain social behaviors (stinginess, debt-credit relations, and so on). This pattern is consistent with findings (Floyda et al., 2025; Giyatmi et al., 2025) that position implicature as a strategy for conveying social evaluations indirectly, because readers are directed to interpret "what is meant" from the incongruity of the utterance with the situation. Similarly, studies (Sitorus et al., 2025) also show that the choice of implicit diction accompanied by humor often serves as a social medium for negotiating norms and reducing tension. This is evident in the representation of everyday portraits of ordinary people who are familiar with neighborly etiquette, small transactions, and sensitivity to maintaining face, so that criticism of stinginess or the manipulation of debt-credit is more effectively conveyed through satire and humor (Fikri & Septiyatik, 2023). This kind of implicit speech construction with humor also functions as a "safe mechanism" to question deviant behavior without damaging social harmony, because readers are directed to evaluate the characters through the gap between the speech and the reality of the situation presented in the story (Siregar & Zawawi, 2025).

By positioning implicature in children's short stories as a pragmatic mechanism, this can theoretically bridge literature (narrative and humor analysis), value education, and socio-cultural studies as a medium for reading the norms of ordinary society through language practices. Theoretically for the science of pragmatics in children's stories, mapping the types, forms, and functions of implicature in *Nawādir Juha li al-Aṭḥfāl* also strengthens the argument that the pragmatic inference skills of child readers are not only related to conversation, but are also developed through narrative texts. This is in line with the study of Wilson et al., (2024) who called for the integration of the study of conversational inference and reading inference for a more complete understanding of the development of children's pragmatic competence. As for readers, this finding can strengthen the understanding that traditional/folklore stories transmit cultural values and orientations through communication strategies that guide readers to grasp the meaning subtly. These include humor, satire, social judgment, so that meaning becomes easily recognized without always having to be stated explicitly. Practically, this research contributes to any reader to respond to social situations in children's reading materials which then become a vehicle for character formation from implicit values.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study confirm that the implicatures in *Nawādir Juha li al-Aṭḥfāl* operate through two main mechanisms, namely meaning based on socio-cultural conventions and meaning that depends on the context of the conversation, so that the story's message can be understood beyond its literal meaning. The results of the analysis also confirm that the dominance of implicatures related to the culture and traditions of ordinary people arises because the short story utilizes a common knowledge scheme (common ground) that is familiar in everyday life as an entry point for the meaning of values and norms. The dominance of the assertive function indicates that the story's pragmatic strategies are more often directed at confirming information, building

narrative coherence, and guiding child readers to grasp moral messages and social evaluations clearly but still subtly through humor and satire. Implications for society, these findings can strengthen readers' pragmatic literacy to be more sensitive to reading implicit messages and wiser in responding to social criticism conveyed indirectly in children's reading. The limitations of this study lie in its focus on one work so that the generalization of the findings to other Arab children's short stories and variations in the readers' social contexts is still limited. Recommendations for further studies include expanding the corpus across genre writers and adding reader reception studies to examine how implicatures are actually understood across different age groups and cultural backgrounds.

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