
***Implication as an Instrument of
Communicating Themes in Thomas Hardy's
Jude the Obscure***

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Abstract;

The focus of the current study is to explore the implicated and obscure meaning of Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* by revealing the concealed message of different struggles that Jude, the eponymous characters, has experienced. Throughout relying upon the reader-response theory, the paper attempts to provide a better understanding of the novel. It explores the different views of readers, and it looks at the deep meaning rather than the surface meaning of the text. It allows the reader to have a better understanding of the events, the struggles, issues, and the message of the story. It reflects the confrontations and hardships of modern life after the massive industrial innovations. All of these issues will be investigated by declaring the implicated meaning of the themes conveyed in *Jude the Obscure*. In this respect, the present study enables the reader to acquire an accurate knowledge about Hardy's thoughts and values of his society. Therefore, it makes the reader understand the obscured and concealed connotations. To achieve this aim, the study will conduct the reader- response theory. Furthermore, the study will tackle certain issues like women's plight in the modern age, marriage, religion, science, education, and class division.

Key words: *Internal meaning, marriage, religion, implication, reader- response theory.*

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Introduction

1.1 The Adaption of Reader-response Theory and Implication Technique

Reader-response theory and the implication are the essential points the current study is counting upon to examine Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*. As for the implication in its simplest definition, it refers to as hidden meaning that is not expressly stated but rather deduced, entailed, or inferred. It is sometimes adapted to explain issues and themes in a literary work through indirectly indicating an issue to infer explicit significance. The aim behind relying on such technique as the implication is to send a message through depicting a profound view of the text. It is apparent that the implication is intended to make the readers think deeply about what the author wants to convey. It is thus an inference, or something which can be understood, though not expressed in words and not directly mentioned it.

The implication ought to be realistic in the description since it reflects a reality of certain conditions and issues in the society in which the writer lives. It depends on the period in which the writer lives as it is a realistic in rendition. It enhances the role of the reader via his reaction towards the story. Since the reader-response theory is concentrates on the readers and their skills to interpret and recognize the interned meaning that the author wants to convey and express it indirectly, it is necessary to explore this theory and show its relationship with the implication.

The real roots of reader-response theory can be detected further back to 1938 when Louis Rosenblatt published *Literature as Exploration*. Rosenblatt deals at length with how the reader's response to a text which is fundamental to the comprehension of a literary work, and encourages the reader to look at the profound message rather than the surface meaning. This theory highlights the role of the readers and allows them to interpret and see the story with the profound sense and combine it to circumstances in which they live. The readers as much as the text play an active role in a reading experience as the main argument of the reader-response theory (Rosenbalt, 1994, 64).

Obviously, this theory opposes other theories of criticism, which merely concentrate on the form, author, and content of the work. It is based on the supposition that literary work takes place in the mutual relationship between the text and reader. According to this theory, the meaning is formulated through a transaction between the reader and the text within a particular context. Words in a text raise images in reader's minds and readers carry their experiences to this encounter. As the method of developing responses makes detective and meaningful reading and raises emotional and intellectual participation in the text, it eventually supplies learners with better understanding and consciousness of the text and interprets the implied.

This study attempts to adopt the implication as a means to communicate several themes in *Jude the Obscure*, and explores the role of the readers in understanding the issues and subjects conveyed in the novel. The implication is used to entail the concealed meaning that the author and text endeavor to express, simply by telling us the story which is a reference of vital issues in the community where the writer lives (Whitely, 2017, 37).

According to this theory, the real idea and the profound meaning of a text is declared through a bargain between the text and the reader within a specific context. The importance of reader in literary works lies in the role of raising the real understanding of the text through the reader's interpretation, and of having an emotional and intellectual participation in the text. It provides the learners with a better understanding of the story and text rather than merely depending on the texts and the story.

2. The employment of implication technique in *Jude the obscure*

In *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy adapts different ways to convey his understanding of the values and norms of his society and the condition of the human beings. The novel gains immense contemplation in a critical world at that time as it was the age of paradoxes, and conflicts due to the radical changes that accompanied the beginning of the 20th century.

To investigate the conflicts and hardships in his society, Hardy turns to implication making the reader, as part of the novel, learn and analyze these issues. From the title of the novel, the readers notice the ambiguity of the word Jude, and ask about the reason for obscure, and about the author's intention behind forming the title as *Jude the Obscure*. He further asks about how nature functions and being described in the novel. It leads the reader to wonder whether he is religious or not?: "Who could be this Jude? Why is he "the obscure"? Is Jude is a riposte to the biblical Jude (the saint of the lost causes)? And what the writer aims to convey through this character? Dose Jude represent a spiritual man? Or perhaps he is a sort of mockery?" (Ben Ali, 2016, 47)

The above questions are originated in the reader's mind through the surface reading of the novel. But Hardy intends by employing the technique of the implication of meaning to make his readers think and draw a combination with their societies. He criticizes the education system and the aim of marriage as well as the dissimulation of religion that concentrates only on materialism and capitalistic system. Ian Gregor highlights Hardy's construction of the plot of *the novel*, he expressed that his story is relatable to the readers' time and it is an image of the reality of society in which they live. He stated,

The plot is less a narrative line made up of interlocking events than a series of significance but isolated moments: the ideas debated seem integral to the character rather than on the loan from

the author. If Jude prompts up to think of 'the novelist as sage ' it prompts us to no less to think of the novel as a process, and with that description , we think of the fiction of our own time, with its multiplicity of techniques, its interior landscapes, its careful irresolution " (Draper, 2009, 288).

The moment Hardy starts the novel, he makes the reader think deeply, and indulges in events of the story as it represents a view of their lives and gives a moral tone. Mrs. Margaret Oliphant (1896: 162) observes that the novel makes the reader realize the fact of their life although it contains a huge number of suppressed issues which have not been analyzed yet. She shows the greatness of Hardy's novel as a masterpiece of his works and the most controversial and debatable work which contains valuable issues that deals with human life,

"I don't know for what audience Mr. Hardy intends his last work....How could the most shameful portion be suppressed understand....The present book by following Tess accentuates its own grossness, indecency, and horror – There may be books more disgusting, more impious". (Cox, 1985, 257)

Consequently, *the* involves the ambiguous and hidden meaning implied in the superficial first view of the novel. However, it shows a simple story describing a modern life that reflects the most important issues in the society which are depicted by using words which they imply their connotations.

2.2 Hardy's Exploration of Class Division and Education

By adapting implication technique, Hardy endeavors to convey the predicament of the poor people who are deprived of the right of education because of their lower social class. He uses the

suffering of the protagonist of the novel, Jude, whose working class stands as an obstacle in his way of pursuing his higher education and achieving his dream. Being from the working class, he can not develop himself or even get high in his class. Hardy demonstrates the importance of education, and how the upper class exploits it to enhance their positions in the society. Education is a means to obtain power which is viewed by the upper class a challenge, that enables the working class survive in the extremity. This may reveal the fact that, Jude was refused to enter to the University of Christminster. This issue of denying the working class people in higher education or being in higher positions is a plan to save the positions of the middle class and not disallow the working class to grow. (*Jude the Obscure*, 1985, 197) Jude, in the process of applying to complete his education, sent a letter asking for recommendation to Christminster. He focused on his state as being a working class -man , his statement of being a working class ends his dream since his boss and he rejected him, "I venture to think that you will have a much better chance of success in life by remaining in your own sphere and sticking to your trade than by adopting any other course" (236). This reply implies that the working-class should remain where it is and should have no any higher position in the society.

Through depicting this issue, Hardy implicitly succeeds in portraying the condition of the lower class in modern society, its poor state having few luxuries, chances, and opportunities. The lower-class people should work many hours, however, they were unable to secure their living or a respectful accommodation. Many children lost their lives suffering from severe illness that receives little care. He also manages to make the readers feel sympathy since they are depicted as victims of inequality. They live in a miserable condition, and have neither chances nor opportunities to improve their lives and positions.

The name of the university –Christminster- is a fictional name for Oxford University which stands for such a greedy society that was against the growth of the working class. At that time, Oxford University desires a certain contact with Greek and Latin languages,

which are taught at high- priced schools. Though Jude studied these two languages by his own, he has no chance to get an access to college and to be set equal with those who have been graduated from costly schools. Through the implication approach used to depict the plight of Jude, Hardy shows the struggle of lower class people that goes in vain to pursue education. This makes the lower class remain in their positions with no growth and change. (Ben Ali, 2016, 31)

2.3 The Exploration of Marriage problem and Woman's plight

The eminent point declared in Hardy's *Jude the obscure* is the condition of women's plight and marriage in the modern society. It focuses on the quest for a successful marriage and the appropriate husband. Although marriage is approved over sexual relationships out of marriage, is criminated by the church and the society itself. Hardy presents a critique against marriage in the 19th century, because it is used as a means to gain financial security rather than love. In the novel, Arabella represents this woman who is searching for a husband to secure her life by providing refuge and financial security since she has no job. According to Arabella, who represents an example of women in Hardy's time, marriage is regarded as a means of achieving financial security and rising in her social class, so to remain without marriage means to permit social devaluation and disrespect which causes her unhappy life.

Hardy shows the character of Arabella as a sort of woman who is intelligent but uneducated, scheming and a born survivor woman; she seeks to achieve materialistic life rather than achieving spirituality and security. Arabella is internally and emotionally destroyed by restricting her goal to materialistic goals. Although she is an educated person, she uses her body as a means to attract men and gains what she could. Readers look to Arabella as an important and significant character; she stands for a malicious person with materialistic desire. Arabella represents the type of woman who merely seeks for sexual life without passion and love. This reflects the state of women in the 19th century, who only search for shelter and economic safety (Slack, 1957, 269).

Sue is completely the opposite of Arabella. He aims to show the two different kinds of women in his society: "Sue's original role is that of counterpoint to Arabella spirit against the flesh, Sue and Arabella are meant to represent different sides of Jude, [they are] mutually exclusive opposites "(Draper, 2009, 209). Havelock justified in his article the behaviour of both Arabella and Sue. He accuses the circumstances they lived. He points out that "Jude and Sue are represented as crushed by a civilization to which they were not born, and civilization may in some respects be regarded as a disease and as unnatural" (311). Arabella views Jude as an unsuitable man and unable to protect her living. She leaves Jude and seeks to find a man who can fulfill her dreams and ambitions. Therefore, she travels and marries in Australia to a man for the same reasons that have forced her to marry Jude.

Hardy tries to involve the readers and make them participate and imagine the character's life like Arabella. Despite her arguable character, Hardy manages to arise the readers' sympathy with Arabella and her predicament as a woman in a male society. The readers consider the society responsible for her behaviour as it does not provide her with a living source and respectful life. Since she belongs to the working class and she has neither money a nor career, she is deprived of choosing a suitable life and husband. Hardy also succeeds, through implying the situation of Arabella, in drawing the attention of his readers to the problem of marriage and how it is arranged due to interests, and to women' plight being in a society dominated and powered by men.

Consequently, the readers justified her attitude by a plea that her society was responsible to put her in such a wrong path to seek only for financial security. J Herold seems to support this idea; she asserts that she is a human being and she is a villain and her aim was only to gain a man to be her financially secure,

Arabella is a human pig Quite
without shame or any consciousness of
any occasion for shame, Arabella is
an outstanding and determined woman,

she is not complicated character, and her ambitions are quite simple, to find a husband, and economic secure to remain in a harsh society. (Herold, 1982, 304)

Irving Howe, on the other hand, stands against Arabella by saying that she represents all women in their society and all feminine charm. She depicts a bad image of women in general:

Arabella is one of the great triumphs of psychological portraiture in the English novel. Sue is that terrifying specter of our age, before whom men and culture tremble...She is all feminine charm, but without body, without flesh or small, without femaleness. Lacking focused sexuality; she casts a vaguely sexual aura over everything she touches" (Howe, 1985, 205).

Through the character of Arabella, Hardy implies to his readers that the social conventions force women to a find husband and halt social talk and questioning. The woman is not seen as an active creature; she is instead considered as an inferior in her society, and should be subjected to the domination of men. Her role is to be a good wife, raise her children, and obey her husband. Hardy shows that the social convention of the society was the main reason that forced women to take the wrong path. The society restricted women's roles only to be active in their society.

Sue aims to break the limitations imposed on her by social conventions. She is a symbol of the emancipated woman in the 20th century who is rejected severely by her community for she broke the traditional and conventional image of the submissive woman (Nagamori,2018,259). She seeks love and passion that opposes Arabella who wants to get married out of love. She fell in love with Jude and made an illegal relationship with him ignoring the religious and social convention of her society. Her tragic end shows that Hardy intentionally rejected such kind of relationship that

gathered both Sue and Jude. It is obvious to the readers that Hardy implies these issues by making the reader sympathize and criticize the characters at the same time. He, accordingly, manages to make the readers understand and sympathize with these characters despite their shortcomings.

Many scholars like Keegan Idler appreciate the novel as the most powerful picture of human life. He states that critics consider the novel against the marriage but, in truth, it reflects their lives and the issue of the marriage in their society:

Too many reviewers have treated Jude as a polemic against marriage. Nothing could be more unjust. It is true that the tragedy of Jude and Sue was partly brought about by marriage laws, but their own weakness of character was mainly responsible for it. (Cox, 1985, 177-78)

2.4 Hardy's demonstration of science versus religion

A drastic change occurred in the late Victorian era, as Darwin's theory examined the controversial issue of existence. Hardy made the readers perceive and rethink of religion as religion in his time is considered paradoxically. People moved by Darwin's theory, after he published "On the Origin species" in 1859 in which he expressed that species and human beings advance over time through the operation of natural selection. This theory shocked people and the human's belief, because it rejected and challenged the conventional religion (creating vs. evolution) and the idea of idealism and optimism, which herd people into a limitless pessimism. According to Darwin life is a type of culmination and quarrel between species, and is meaningless, therefore it has ruined the ideal statue of romanticism (Ben Ali, 2016, 37). The new Darwinian society turned later into battle-field, materialistic and passionless world. Mr. Philloston and Arabella as are the best examples of such a society that portray the struggle between those

two separate existences. Jude seems to be allotted to romanticism, though life was not clement with him, and nature didn't offer him opportunities.

Hardy wants to portray the importance of religion in the modern age and how people neglect the spirituality and divinity due to the scientific inventions and innovation at the beginning of the 20th century. Although Jude did not have any familiar support, and suffered from poverty and scarcity condition. He was unable to achieve his dreams to enter the college, his faith and belief that God would never leave him, keep him strong. As the readers analyzed as a sort of people's thinking in such miserable society, it becomes like a kind of solace in his life by having a little bit of hope.

One the other hand, Sue is presented against religion and favored to conserve a free-spirited life where women can control her own life and not as stated in the bible. Hardy presents this character whose her faith in God was gradually minimized until her children died, murdered by Little Father Time. She had this rebellious attitude, she was troubled by people's thought and society, especially when she bought two pagan statues (Venus & Apollo) and cloaked them in a piece of paper, she has to recline as well to the landlady who appeared to be very Christian, and supposed that they were statue of saints. By presenting these characters, Hardy declares, how the influence of the modern world affects people's minds and guides them in to a fight between science and religion as he wants to assert such a truth throughout this conflict (Ben Ali, 2016, 38-39).

However, Sue is able to gain her belief in God when her children have been murdered by little Father Time. She then dedicated her life to gain the forgiveness of God, she even returned to her first husband Mr. Philloston. She realizes her sins when she lived with a man without marriage and deceiving her legal partner. Hardy wants to deliver the idea that these characters are victims of their society and modern life which encouraged them to take the wrong path. He also depicts the struggles and despair of modern people with the scientific inventions and the new religious doctrines.

Hardy further presents Mr. Philloston and Arabella as examples of greedy and materialistic ones who devalue concepts as love, humanity, and spirituality. Mr. Philloston uses his money and his position to attract Sue's attention though he is much older than her, he still stuck on his desire to marry her, offering her the reliable opportunity to be a teacher, and a wife of a humble man.

Thus, Hardy's novel asserts that the ignorance of religion and the involvement of scientific inventions made up scary conditions. He is able to make the readers communicate with these issues as a realistic mirror of their lives. It was the period of the opening school of thought and the age of liberation of individuals' minds. These facts reflect their life by depicting such truths, Hardy invites the readers to be part of the narration by giving judgment and criticism.

Conclusion

This study attempts to clarify the implied meaning of *Jude the Obscure* by concentrating on the main issues and subjects that concern his society. In this sense, the writer shows a moral lesson behind his story and makes readers participate in the story by raising sympathy and rejection towards many issues. It is a splendid fictional and true image of modern life by showing a story that mirrors the character's lives. Finally, *the novel* leaves a huge space for readers to reveal the deep and intense idea which reproaches their realities and their lives. This paper shows the importance of implicated meaning by presenting various issues behind writing this story, such issues as the condition of women and marriage in his age and how they perceived it. In addition, the importance of religion in the character's life, and the influences of science upon them, the impact of class distinction on the psychology of the working class in that age and the chance of education for the lower state are all portrayed implicitly. This shows the importance of the implicated meaning in modern time by making the reader think and seek for solutions.

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التضمين أداة لإيصال الموضوعات الرئيسية في رواية جود المغمور للكاتب توماس

هاردي

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المستخلص

ينصب التركيز الأساسي للدراسة الحالية على استكشاف المعنى الضمني والمبهم في رواية (جود المغمور بطل الرواية) للكاتب الروائي الإنجليزي (توماس هاردي) من خلال كشف وتوضيح الرسالة المقنعة والمخفية للصراعات المختلفة التي مر بها جود ، في الشخصيات التي تحمل الاسم ذاته. يحاول البحث تقديم فهم أفضل للرواية من خلال الاعتماد على نظرية استجابة القارئ والذي يستكشف وجهات النظر المختلفة للقراء. كما يبحث في عمق الأفكار بدلاً من الاعتماد على المعنى السطحي للنص، إذ يسمح للقارئ بالحصول على إدراك عميق وواعي للأحداث والصراعات والقضايا ورسالة الكاتب في قصته. يُبين البحث مجابهة صعوبات الحياة الحديثة بعد الاختراعات العلمية الكبرى والابتكارات الصناعية. يتم التحقيق في كل هذه القضايا من خلال إعلان المعنى الضمني للعديد من الموضوعات المنقولة في الرواية قيد البحث. في هذا الصدد ، تضع الدراسة القارئ بمكانة تمكنه من اكتساب معرفة كاملة لأفكار هاردي وقيم مجتمعه الذي يعيش فيه وينتمي إليه. وهكذا يظهر المعنى الداخلي للقصة من خلال الأفكار العميقة التي تُمكن القارئ من فهم الدلالات الغامضة والمخفية لموضوعات عديدة. ولتحقيق هذه الغاية، ستجرى الدراسة في ضوء نظرية استجابة القارئ والتي تنتهي في العثور على إجابات لهذه الأسئلة فيما يتعلق بمثل هذه المشاكل والصراعات التي يعاني منها الناس في الواقع، مثل محنة المرأة، والزواج ، والدين ، والعلوم ، والتعليم ، والانقسام الطبقي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المعنى الداخلي، الزواج، الدين، التضمين، نظرية استجابة القارئ .

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