Students' Reception of Social Phenomena in Tere Liye's Novels

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the influence of implicit readers in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* by Tere Liye on students' interpretation of social phenomena, explore how students fill the gaps in the text, and analyze the process of meaning actualization based on Wolfgang Iser's literary reception theory (1978). The method used was a mixed method involving 54 students of Makassar State University of Indonesian Language and Literature department. Data were obtained through closed questionnaires with Likert scale analysis and open questionnaires with thematic analysis. The results showed that the novel had a significant impact in shaping students' interpretations of social phenomena, particularly organized crime and corruption. The implicit reader in the novel encourages students to be more critical of social injustice. Text gaps allow students to actively fill in the narrative gaps through imagination and personal experience, enriching their understanding of the storyline and characters. In addition, the process of meaning actualization takes place continuously after the reading is completed, showing that the novel is not only an entertainment, but also a tool of reflection on complex social structures. This research confirms that literary works can be an effective medium in raising students' social awareness and critical thinking.

Keywords: *Literary Reception; Wolfgang Iser; Classy Bandits; Tere Liye*

Introduction

Literary works, especially novels, often become a medium that reflects society's social, cultural, and psychological dynamics. Along with that, authors as part of society create literary works that are inspired by the real world and influence and invite readers to reflect on these social conditions. For example, the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas 'Classy Bandits'* by Tere Liye describes social issues that often occur in society, such as social injustice, power, and the gap between social classes. In this case, the social phenomena reflected in this novel provide an in-depth picture of the problems that exist in society. Literary produced by authors have social problems that arise in society, because authors are members of society (Sasmika, et al, 2022). One of the literary works that has many similarities with the facts that exist in the real world is a novel. The content of a novel can certainly be inspired by the real world that the author dreams of. Experiences and environments that occur around the author are a source of inspiration in writing the creative process of making a novel (Harun, et l, 2022).

The novel '*Bandit-Bandit Berkelas*' by Tere Liye is one of the works that stands out in describing social phenomena. The novel not only offers an interesting narrative but also presents various social issues that challenge readers' understanding. A literary narrative

is closely related to how readers understand and interpret a literary work (Juanda & Anshari, 2022: 896). In the context of Wolfgang Iser's reception theory, readers have an active role in shaping the meaning of the text. Iser emphasizes the importance of the concepts of implicit readers, gaps in the text, and actualization of meaning in understanding how readers interact with texts.

Research on students' receptions of social phenomena in Tere Liye's novels is important because students are a group of intellectuals who are expected to be agents of social change. Their receptions of the issues raised in literary works can provide insight into how the younger generation understands, interprets, and responds to various social problems presented in literary narratives. The interpretation of meaning also creates an effect for the audience to have a great influence on society and culture, based on the fact that advertising has an influence on individual behavior, even social inequality (Ruslan & Haslinda, 2021). Furthermore, this study focuses on how university students interpret social messages in Tere Liye's works, which in turn can reflect their views on contemporary issues in Indonesian society.

This research focuses on how university students as a group of intellectuals interpret the social phenomena in this novel based on Wolfgang Iser's reception theory. Their understanding of the narratives and social messages in the novel is expected to provide insight into how literature can influence their perspective on social reality.

A study by Siahaan et al. (2021) aims to analyze the novel An Attempt to Forget by Boy Candra using a literary reception approach. This study shows that the novel succeeds in bringing readers into the author's emotional experience, which is about someone who feels betrayed by his loved ones. The results concluded that the novel was effective in conveying the author's feelings and responded well to readers.

Wardana (2021) examined the reception of SMAN 4 Banjarmasin students towards the novel Daun Yang Jatuh Tak Pernah Membenci Angin by Tere Liye. The study found that students' receptions of the novel's theme, plot, characters, and message varied greatly, depending on the individual judgment of the reader. Students also identified various character education values contained in the novel, such as religious values, honesty, and tolerance, although some values such as democracy and nationalism values were not found.

Nainggolan (2022) conducted a literary reception analysis of the novel Sang Pemimpi by Andrea Hirata. This research shows that the novel has a very interesting theme, characterization, plot, and moral values for readers. The descriptive method used found that all aspects of the novel were considered interesting and provided high educational value for readers.

Farhanah and Yanti (2022) compared readers' reception of the novel Dikta and Hukum by Dhia'an Farah on the Twitter and Goodreads platforms. The study revealed differences in readers' receptions between the two platforms, where receptions on Twitter tended to be dominant while those on Goodreads were more negotiated. This difference is related to the way users of both platforms responded to the novel.

Liana et al. (2022) examined readers' responses to the novel Mata di Tanah Melus by Okky Madasari using Hans Robert Jauss' theory of literary reception. The study found that readers gave positive and negative responses to various intrinsic elements of the novel, such as character, setting, and theme. The novel is considered suitable for children and teenagers to read, and is considered interesting and imaginative.

Ihsan et al. (2023) studied the reception of PGMI students towards the values and character education in the novel KKN in Desa Penari by Simpleman. The study concluded that students responded to values such as wisdom, courage, and gratitude

contained in the novel, indicating that the novel is effective in conveying character education messages.

Dewi et al. (2024) analyzed readers' receptions of teenlit novels on Goodreads application and its implementation in high school literature learning. The study found that readers' receptions of the novel's theme, plot, and characters varied, with dominant receptions on the theme and message. The results of this study are implied for the development of literature curriculum in high school, emphasizing on adjusting learning according to readers' receptions of literary works.

Agustina (2024) examined Tadris Bahasa Indonesia students' receptions of the novel Gadis Kretek by Ratih Kumala and their hope horizons. This survey research involved Tadris Bahasa Indonesia students with data collected through a Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed descriptively quantitatively. The results showed that students' receptions were generally moderate, with 32.8% able to understand and respond well to the novel. Students rated the quality of the novel as moderate. Most students (66.38%) had a high expectation horizon towards the novel, indicating a broad knowledge and understanding of the values in the novel.

Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser contributed to developing essential concepts related to reader reception, namely: 1. The Concept of Implicit Readers and Actual Readers Wolfgang Iser, one of the leading figures in the reader reception theory, distinguishes between implicit readers and actual readers. Implicit Readers: Implicit readers are a concept developed by Iser to refer to the "ideal reader" intended by the author through his text. Implicit readers can fill in the gaps in the text with knowledge, experience, and understanding appropriate to the existing social and cultural context. Implicit readers are considered to have the capacity to understand the message the author wants to convey. Actual Readers: In contrast, actual readers are involved in reading the text. These actual readers can have different backgrounds and perspectives, which affect the way they interpret the text. In other words, although there is an implicit reader who is the standard in the text, actual readers play an active role in filling in the gaps in the text according to their own experiences and contexts; 2. Gaps in the Text (Gaps) Iser argues that literary texts are never entirely complete or final. The reader must fill in some elements that are open or ambiguous in the text. These elements are called gaps. These gaps can be narrative elements not directly explained in the text, empty spaces in characterization, or meanings open to interpretation. Through their experiences, readers will fill in these empty spaces, which ultimately shape the meaning of the text. A simple example of this gap is the ambiguity in character or plot that requires readers to fill in and interpret for themselves. Different readers may fill in these gaps differently, resulting in unique understandings of the exact text; 3. Actualization of Meaning Actualization of meaning is the process by which readers, through their active role, interpret and give meaning to the text they read. According to Iser, readers do not simply accept the meaning already in the text, but they actively create that meaning. Therefore, the meaning of a text is never fixed or universal, but can vary depending on who is reading it and how they interact with it; 4. Reader and Text Interaction The reader reception theory emphasizes that meaning in a literary work is found in the text itself and in the interaction between the reader and the text.

Readers bring their own social and cultural backgrounds into the reading process and actively shape meaning based on their emotional and intellectual responses to the text. Readers interact with the text differently, influenced by their life experiences, knowledge, and social situation when reading. For example, readers who have experienced social injustice in real life may be more sensitive to the issues of injustice

raised in Tere Liye's novel Bandit-Bandit Berkelas. Readers who come from different backgrounds, for example, readers from a higher social class, may have different responses to the social messages contained in the novel; 5. Reader and Text Dynamics: Change Over Time. A critical aspect of reception theory is the idea that the meaning of a text can change over time. Readers in a particular era may interpret texts differently from readers in other eras. These changes occur due to social, cultural, and political changes. Thus, literary works can acquire new meanings or be reinterpreted according to the conditions in society when the text is read. For example, a novel initially considered a work of light fiction may have a deeper resonance and greater relevance to readers in the future, when social and political values have changed; 6. Relevance of Reader Reception Theory in Literary Studies Reader reception theory is very relevant in literary studies because it pays great attention to how readers, not just authors, form meaning. Using this theory, we can understand that understanding a literary work, such as a novel, is not objective and singular. Instead, it depends heavily on the reader's interaction with the text and how the reader fills in the gaps in the text. In addition, this theory also helps us understand that literary works are not static objects, but rather dynamic entities that can adapt to social and cultural changes. Readers

Furthermore, regarding the relevance of this research, this study is relevant because it provides a deeper understanding of how literature, especially novels, can influence readers' views on social phenomena. The results of this research are expected to enrich the study of Indonesian literature and contribute to the teaching of literature in higher education, especially in the context of building critical literacy among students. Research on this is important because it can reveal how the younger generation understands and responds to social issues raised in literature. Students are a critical group, and their responses to social phenomena such as injustice or moral conflicts in novels can provide an insight into their thoughts on social reality (May & Perry, 2022). It also helps in character education, as Tere Liye's works often contain relevant moral messages. In addition, this research contributes to literary reception studies, enriching the understanding of the relationship between readers and texts. Knowing how novels influence university students' social awareness shows the role of literature in shaping the opinions and thoughts of the younger generation towards society's issues.

Method

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach to explore the reception of social phenomena in Tere Liye's novel Bandit-Bandit Berkelas by university students. The research design combined both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather comprehensive data and analyze the students' interpretation and understanding of the social issues presented in the text. Participants: A total of 54 students from the Indonesian Language and Literature Department at Makassar State University participated in the study. Participants were selected purposefully to ensure that they had relevant exposure to the novel Bandit-Bandit Berkelas and were capable of engaging in reflective and critical analysis of the text.

Data Collection Instruments: Closed Questionnaires: The students were given structured closed questionnaires that included Likert scale items. These items measured the extent to which students agreed or disagreed with various statements related to their understanding of the social phenomena depicted in the novel. The Likert scale enabled the researchers to quantify students' perceptions and interpretations. Open Questionnaires: The open-ended questionnaire allowed for a deeper exploration of

students' personal insights, reflections, and interpretations of the novel. Thematic analysis was conducted on these responses to identify recurring themes and patterns related to how students understood and interacted with the text.

Data Analysis: Quantitative Analysis: The data from the closed questionnaires were analyzed using Likert scale analysis to quantify the extent to which students agreed or disagreed with statements regarding the influence of the narrative on their perceptions of social phenomena. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the findings, focusing on frequencies and percentages of students who strongly agreed, agreed, were neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the given statements. Qualitative Analysis: The data from the open-ended responses were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involved coding the students' responses to identify themes related to how they filled narrative gaps and interpreted social issues such as injustice, corruption, and abuse of power within the novel. This analysis allowed for a richer understanding of how students engage with the text beyond quantifiable responses.

Procedure: Step 1: Pre-reading: Students were introduced to the novel and asked to read it within a designated period. They were instructed to reflect on the social issues raised in the story.   Step 2: Data Collection: After reading the novel, students completed both the closed and open-ended questionnaires. The closed questionnaire measured their perceptions of how the narrative influenced their understanding of social phenomena. The open-ended questionnaire provided more detailed insights into their personal interpretations and experiences. Step 3: Data Analysis: The responses from the closed questionnaires were coded and analyzed using statistical methods, while the open-ended responses were analyzed thematically. Thematic coding was performed by identifying recurring ideas, patterns, and interpretations within the students' answers.

Results
The Influence of Implicit Readers in the Novel 'Classy Bandits' on Students' Interpretation of Social Phenomena in the Story Based on Wolfgang Iser's Theory of Literary Reception (1978)
The Influence of Narrative Direction in the Novel 'Classy Bandits' on Readers' Understanding
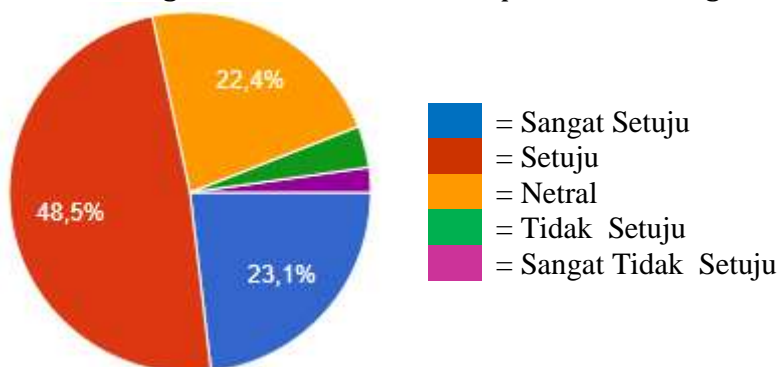
From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, the results showed that the majority of respondents felt that the narrative direction in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* influenced their understanding of the social phenomena in the story. A total of 29.9% of students strongly agreed, while 53.7% agreed, cumulatively accounting for 83.6% of all respondents. This shows that most students felt the directionality of the interpretation provided by the novel's narrative. In contrast, 13.4% of students were neutral, indicating that they may not be fully aware of or feel the influence of the narrative on their understanding. Only 1.5% disagreed and another 1.5% strongly disagreed, indicating that few students felt their interpretations were completely independent of the novel's narrative direction. This finding indicates that the novel has a fairly dominant narrative power in shaping students' interpretations of the story's content. This can be seen in Figure 1 below.
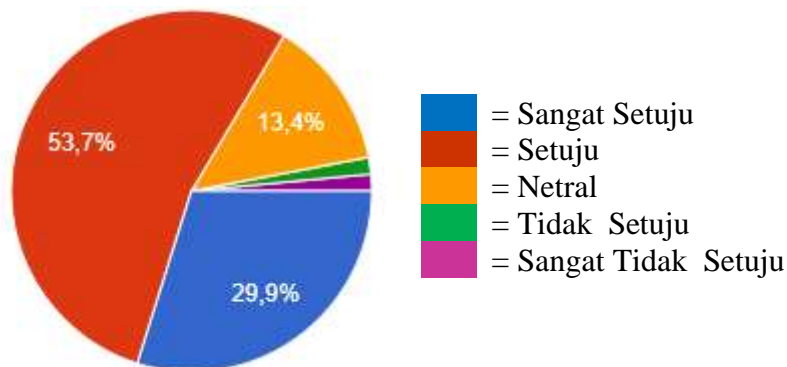
Figure 1. The Influence of Narrative Direction in Novels

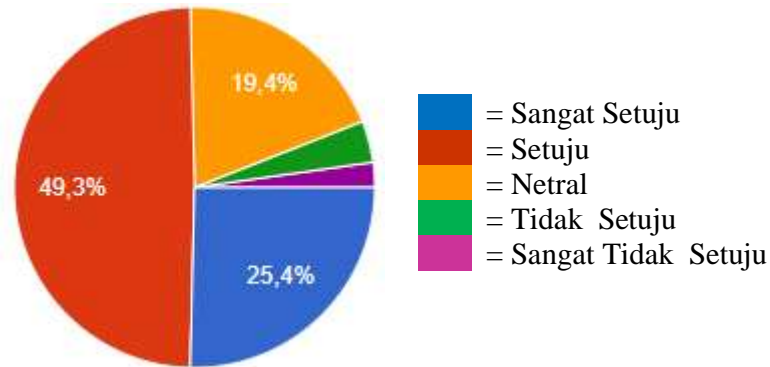**Inferred Social Messages in the Novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas***

From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, the results showed that the majority of respondents felt that the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* often led them to infer certain social messages. A total of 23.1% of students strongly agreed, while another 48.5% agreed, cumulatively accounting for 71.6% of all respondents. This shows that most students felt that the novel provided clear direction in drawing conclusions about the social messages contained in the story. On the other hand, 22.4% of students were neutral, indicating that they did not feel a strong influence or may have a freer interpretation. Meanwhile, 3.7% of students disagreed and another 2.2% strongly disagreed, indicating that only a few students felt that the novel did not provide clear clues regarding social messages. Furthermore, this is presented in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Social Message Concluded

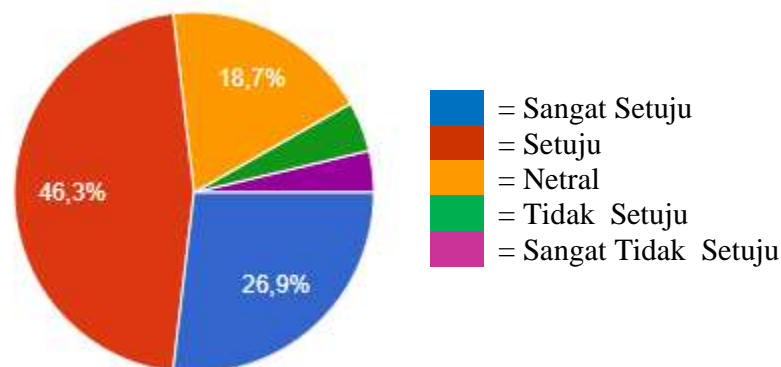**Representation of Characters Representing the Author's Views on Social Issues**

Of the 54 students who answered the questionnaire, the results showed that the majority of respondents felt that there were certain characters in *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* that represented the author's views on social issues. A total of 25.4% of students strongly agreed, while 49.3% agreed, cumulatively accounting for 74.7% of all respondents. This shows that most students feel that there are characters who clearly represent the author's views on the social issues raised in the story. On the other hand, 19.4% of students were neutral, indicating that they may not feel a strong connection between the characters and the author's views. Meanwhile, 3.7% of students disagreed and another 2.2% strongly disagreed, indicating that few students felt the characters in the novel did not represent the author's views. This information is further explained in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3**. Character Representation That Represents the Author's View

The Influence of Narratives in Novels on Perceptions of Social Phenomena

From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire regarding the influence of the narrative in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* on their perception of the social phenomena raised, the results showed that the majority of respondents recognized a strong influence. A total of 26.9% of students strongly agreed and 46.3% agreed, which cumulatively accounted for 73.2% of all respondents. These percentages indicate that most students felt the power of the narrative in shaping their views on the social issues presented in the story. Meanwhile, 18.7% of students were neutral, indicating that they may not be fully aware of the influence of the narrative or have a more open interpretation. On the other hand, 4.5% of students disagreed and another 3.7% strongly disagreed, indicating that a small proportion of respondents felt that the novel's narrative did not significantly influence their perceptions. This is presented in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4. The Influence of Narrative in Novels on Perception

Manipulation of Reader Emotions through Characters and Situations in the Novel

From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, the results show that the majority of respondents felt that the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* manipulated their emotions to feel sympathy or antipathy towards certain characters or situations. A total of 30.6% of students strongly agreed and 37.3% agreed, cumulatively covering 67.9% of all respondents. This shows that most readers experienced emotional involvement directed by the novel's narrative. Meanwhile, 25.4% of students were neutral, indicating that they might not have felt significant emotional influence or had a more free interpretation. On the other hand, 4.5% of students disagreed and 2.2% strongly disagreed, showing that only a few respondents felt the narrative did not affect their emotion. This is presented in Figure 5 below.
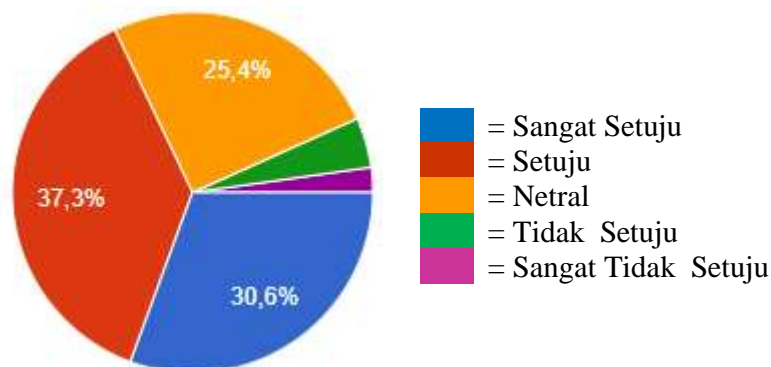
Figure 5. Manipulating Readers' Emotions through Characters and Situations

Injustice and Socio-Economic Inequality

The text encourages readers to confront injustice and inequality, in line with the role of the implicit reader who is expected to capture systemic issues in society. The students' statements related to this code are as follows:

"Yes, Bandit-Bandit Berkelas reflects social phenomena such as social inequality, corruption, and moral relativity in society. Through its story and characters, this novel critiques systemic injustice that forces individuals to act against norms. This work not only portrays reality but also encourages readers to reflect on the root causes of social problems and seek solutions to existing inequalities."

The data above confirms that the text encourages readers to identify and critique systemic injustice. The implicit reader is expected not only to recognize the social phenomena presented in the narrative but also to conduct deep reflection and consider solutions.

Abuse of Power

Students responded to the text by connecting the abuse of power in the novel with actual social conditions, highlighting how characters in the story reflect authority figures who misuse their positions for personal gain.

"The novel Bandit-Bandit Berkelas reflects social phenomena such as political ambition, power intrigues, and class disparities that frequently occur in society."

The data above shows that the implicit reader is directed to understand how power often becomes a source of conflict and injustice in the narrative. Readers see the novel as a reflection of larger social phenomena, emphasizing that the abuse of power is not just a personal conflict in the story but a relevant social issue.

Organized Crime and Legal Manipulation

Implicit readers are encouraged to interpret organized crime and corruption as representations of real-world injustice.

"This novel portrays organized crime within the context of characters operating in a world of manipulation and corruption that often hides behind a respectable facade."

According to the data above, students perceive that the novel depicts a world where the law does not function as a tool of justice but as a mechanism that can be exploited for the benefit of a few. Implicit readers are directed to question justice in society and

reflect on how gaps or inequalities in the legal system allow corruption and organized crime to occur.

How Students Fill the Gaps in the Text in the Novel '*Bandit-Bandit Berkelas*' Based on Wolfgang Iser's Reception Theory (1978)
Readers Interpreting Information Not Explicitly Stated in the Novel

From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, the results show that the majority of respondents felt that they often had to interpret information not explicitly conveyed in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas*. A total of 30.6% of students stated very often and 37.3% often experienced this, covering 67.9% of the respondents. This shows that the novel actively utilizes gaps in the text to engage readers in the interpretation process. Meanwhile, 25.4% of students chose neutral, which may indicate that they do not always realize this interpretive process or have a more passive reading experience. On the other hand, only 4.5% answered occasionally and 2.2% stated they never experienced this. This is presented in Figure 6 below.
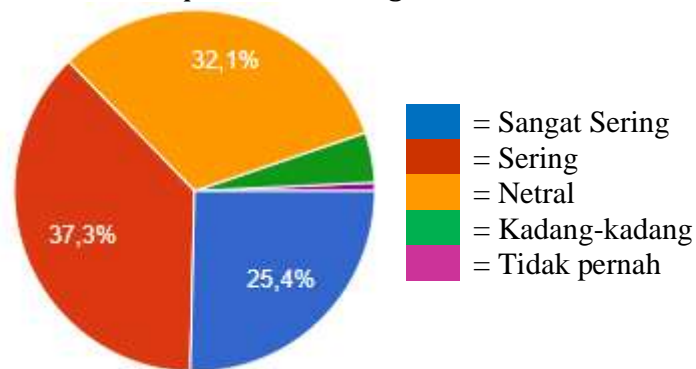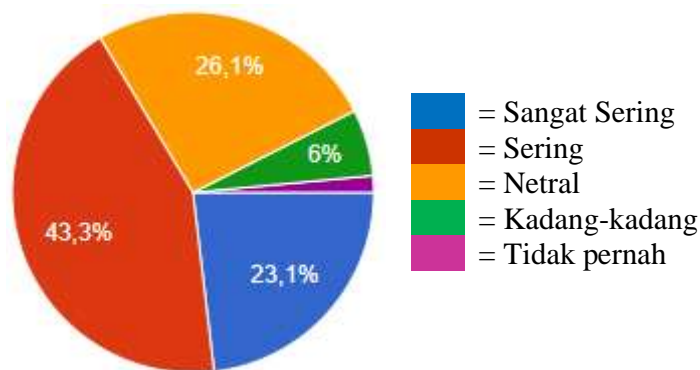

Figure 6. Readers in Interpreting Information Not Explicitly Stated

Use of Personal Knowledge and Experience in Understanding the Plot and Characters in the Novel
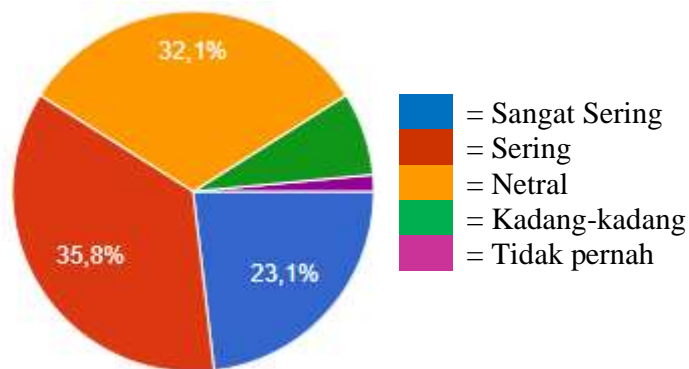
From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, the results shown in Diagram 4.7 indicate that the majority of respondents felt the need to use their personal knowledge or experience to understand the plot or characters in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas*. A total of 23.1% of students stated very often, while 43.3% answered often, cumulatively covering 66.4% of all respondents. This shows that most readers actively engage in the novel's interpretive process through their personal experiences and knowledge. On the other hand, 26.1% of respondents were neutral, which may indicate that they do not always feel the need to involve personal experience when reading the novel. Meanwhile, 6% of students answered occasionally, and only 1.5% stated they never felt the need to involve their personal knowledge or experience. This is presented in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7. Using Personal Knowledge and Experience in Understanding Plot and Characters

Personal Interpretation of Events or Character Motivations in the Novel

From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, the results shown in Diagram 4.8 indicate that most respondents felt that some events or character motivations in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* were not fully explained and required personal interpretation. A total of 23.1% of respondents stated very often, while 35.8% answered often, cumulatively covering 58.9% of all respondents. This percentage shows that most students actively engage in the interpretive process while reading the novel. On the other hand, 32.1% of respondents chose neutral, indicating that they may not pay much attention to elements requiring deeper interpretation. A small percentage of respondents, 7.5%, stated they only occasionally had to interpret the story's content, while 1.5% felt they never experienced the need.

Figure 8. Personal Interpretation of Events or Character Motivations

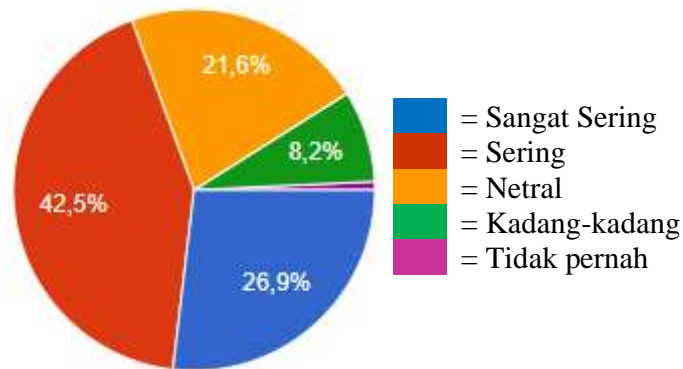**Room for Various Reader Interpretations in the Text**

From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, the results shown in Diagram 4.9 indicate that most respondents felt that some events or character motivations in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* were not fully explained and required personal interpretation. A total of 26.9% of students very often experienced this, while 42.5% stated often. This shows that more than half of the respondents felt that there were spaces in the text that required their own interpretation. Conversely, 21.6% of students were neutral, which may indicate that they did not fully realize the gaps in the narrative or felt the text was clear enough. A total of 8.2% of students chose occasionally, and only 0.7% stated they never experienced the need for personal interpretation.

Figure 9. Room for Multiple Reader Interpretations

Based on this data, it can be concluded that the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* effectively utilizes gaps in the text to engage readers in the interpretive process. With more than two-thirds of respondents stating they often or very often experience this, it is evident that the novel encourages readers to use critical thinking and imagination in understanding events and character motivations.

Readers Filling in the Background or Story Details Independently
From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, most respondents felt that they often had to fill in the background or certain details in the story of the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* independently. A total of 23.1% of students stated very often, while 35.8% chose often, cumulatively covering 58.9% of the respondents. This shows that more than half of the students realize there are narrative gaps requiring personal interpretation in understanding the story. Conversely, 32.8% of students were neutral, indicating that they may not always feel the need to fill in missing details or have a more guided reading experience by the narrative. Meanwhile, 7.5% of students admitted they only occasionally experienced the need to complete the story's details, and 0.7% stated they never felt it.
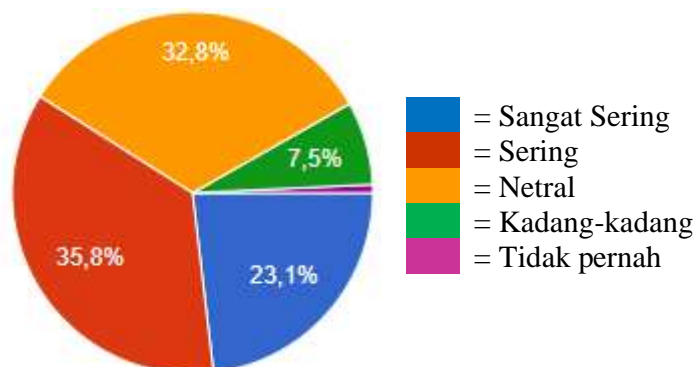
Figure 10. Readers Fill in the Background or Story Details Independently

Furthermore, for the open-ended questionnaire section, the researcher has generated several codes related to how students fill the gaps in the text. According to Iser (1978), Gaps in the Text indicate that literary texts are never entirely complete, so readers are expected to fill the empty parts through their interpretation. This process allows each

reader to have different meanings based on their experiences and personal background. The Related Codes created by the researcher are as follows.

Complexity of Social Life

Readers fill narrative gaps by connecting fragmented descriptions of social life with their own understanding of social dynamics.

> *"Bandit-Bandit Berkelas is not just an adventure story, but also a reflection of the complexity of social life. This novel invites us to think critically, reflect, and understand that each individual and situation has different nuances."*

Students use their understanding of social life to complete the existing descriptions in the text, enriching the interpretation through reflection and critical thinking. They understand that each character in the novel has different lives, backgrounds, and motivations, adding depth to the story not explicitly explained by the author.

Morality

Readers fill gaps by projecting their own views, values, and experiences. Literary texts that are not explicitly moral provide interpretative freedom allowing readers to create meaning based on their perspectives.

> *"The Moral Relativity in Life. Another character in this novel shows that what is considered right or wrong often depends on perspective. Some members of the bandit group have moral reasons for their actions, such as stealing to help the poor or fighting an unjust system. This example can be seen from a character who tries to justify his actions by claiming that he is actually 'doing good' despite breaking the law."*

Students highlight the concept of moral relativity, where the difference between right and wrong becomes blurred depending on the character's perspective and situation. The non-explicit narrative allows readers to fill moral gaps by justifying or criticizing the character's actions according to their personal values.

Generational Conflict

The ambiguity in the narrative regarding generational conflict directs readers to complete the story according to their perspectives and experiences with age conflicts.

> *"This novel portrays the clash between the older generation (Samad) and the younger generation (Bujang and Diego) in terms of life values and worldviews. This reflects the dynamics of families and societies that often experience change over time."*

Students fill narrative gaps by interpreting conflicts between characters as representations of generational differences in values and worldviews. The lack of explicit explanation of how these conflicts arise opens opportunities for students to relate the narrative to their personal experiences or understanding of generational phenomena.

Perspective on Characters

Students fill gaps in character descriptions by building personal understandings of social and moral views in society. Students' personal views on previously unrecognized social societies are now influenced by characters in the novel that show moral and human complexity often overlooked in social reality.

"In this novel, the term 'bandit' does not simply refer to an ordinary criminal. Tere Liye provides a more complex new definition. The characters referred to as bandits here have high ethics, principles, and loyalty. They are often involved in the underworld, but in ways different from the typical bandit stereotype."

Students fill gaps in the depiction of bandit characters by relating them to deeper moral characteristics than just criminal images. Students recognize that these characters not only operate in the criminal world but also have more complex morality, principles, and loyalty. This shows that readers can fill narrative voids by building their views on characters more nuanced and not limited to negative stereotypes.

The Process of Actualizing Meaning by Students When Reading the Novel '*Bandit-Bandit Berkelas*' Based on Wolfgang Iser's Reception Theory (1978)
Changes in Readers' Understanding of Social Phenomena in the Novel

From the total number of students who answered the questionnaire, Diagram 4.11 above shows that most respondents felt a change in their understanding of the social phenomena presented in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* after reading it. A total of 23.1% of students strongly agreed, and another 47.8% agreed, cumulatively covering 70.9% of all respondents. This indicates that the majority of students felt the novel successfully changed or enriched their understanding of the social phenomena depicted in the story. Meanwhile, 25.4% of students were neutral, indicating that some of them might not have experienced a significant change in their understanding after reading this novel. Only 3.7% of students disagreed, indicating that very few felt their understanding was not influenced by the story in this novel.

Depth of Reflection on Social Issues Raised in the Novel After Reading

From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, Diagram 4.12 above shows that the majority of respondents reflected on the social issues raised in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* quite deeply after reading it. A total of 22.4% of students felt they reflected very deeply, while another 48.5% felt they reflected deeply, cumulatively covering 70.9% of all respondents. This indicates that most students felt driven to reconsider the social messages conveyed in the story after reading it. On the other hand, 25.4% of students were neutral, indicating that they did not feel too compelled to reflect on these issues or might be more focused on other aspects of the story. Meanwhile, only 3% felt that their reflection on these social issues was not very deep, and 0.7% felt they did not reflect on it at all, indicating that a small number of students did not feel compelled to deeply reflect on the issues presented in the novel.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the majority of students felt compelled to reflect on the social issues in the novel to varying degrees. Although a small number did not reflect on the social issues or only reflected a little, this indicates that the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* successfully sparked deeper thoughts in many readers regarding the social phenomena depicted in the story.

Influence of the Novel Reading Experience on Views of Social Reality

From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, Diagram 4.13 above shows that the majority of respondents felt that the experience of reading this novel influenced their views on social reality in real life. A total of 25.4% of respondents strongly agreed with this statement, while another 43.3% agreed, cumulatively covering 68.7% of all respondents. This indicates that more than half of the students felt a

significant influence from the experience of reading the novel on how they view and understand the social issues presented in the story.

On the other hand, 23.9% of respondents were neutral, indicating that a group of students did not directly feel the change or might need more reflection to understand its impact. Meanwhile, 6.7% of respondents disagreed, and only 0.7% strongly disagreed, reflecting that only a few respondents felt the experience of reading this novel did not influence their views on social reality.

Relevance of Social Phenomena in the Novel When Facing Similar Situations in Everyday Life

From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, the results in Diagram 4.14 show that the majority of respondents often remembered the social phenomena in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* when facing similar situations in everyday life. A total of 22.4% of students felt they very often remembered, while another 36.6% felt they often remembered, cumulatively covering 59% of all respondents. This indicates that most students experienced resonance between the social phenomena in the novel and their real-life experiences. On the other hand, 35.8% of students were neutral, indicating that they did not actively relate the social phenomena in the novel to everyday life, although it did not completely rule out the possibility. A total of 4.5% of students felt they sometimes remembered, while only 0.7% stated that they never remembered the social phenomena in the novel in the context of real life.

Development of the Novel's Meaning Over Time After Reading

From a total of 54 students who answered the questionnaire, the results show that most respondents felt that the meaning they derived from the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* continued to develop after reading. A total of 27.5% of students strongly agreed and another 44.8% agreed that the meaning they took from the novel developed over time. Cumulatively, 72.3% of respondents felt that their understanding of this novel continued to develop after reading it. Meanwhile, 23.1% of students were neutral, indicating that they did not feel a significant change in the meaning formed after reading. Only 3% of students disagreed, and another 1.5% strongly disagreed, indicating that a small number of students felt that the meaning formed from this novel did not develop over time.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the majority of students feel that the meaning they obtained from the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* continues to develop after reading it, indicating that this novel can influence readers to reflect and reconsider the messages contained in the story over time.

Furthermore, for the open-ended questionnaire data related to the process of actualizing meaning during reading. Actualization of Meaning in Iser's theory (1978) indicates that the meaning of a text develops over time as readers engage in the process of reading and reflecting on the narrative. This meaning is not fixed but is continuously actualized through the interaction of readers with the text and their reflection after reading. The codes generated by the researcher are as follows.

Social Reality

Readers continuously reinterpret the novel as their understanding of social reality changes. Each reader brings a different background, so the meaning of the text can change over time and the reader's context. "This phenomenon can be linked to social

reality where individuals who feel marginalized or less fortunate may feel that they have few choices in life, except through unconventional means or even against norms."

In this statement, students connect the experiences of characters in the novel with the experiences of marginalized individuals in real life. The actualization of meaning arises from readers' empathy toward marginalized groups, encouraging them to reflect on the roots of injustice and social inequality faced by many people in the real world.

Manipulated Law

Students capture the social critique implied in the novel related to legal injustice. The phrase "sharp downward and blunt upward" shows that students internalize the issue of law that only ensnares the common people, while high-ranking officials and elites can escape the law. The process of actualizing meaning occurs when students link the narrative of the officials in the novel with real phenomena such as corruption and fictitious projects that harm society. "Critique of the Legal System. This novel also depicts how a weak or biased legal system can be manipulated by certain individuals or groups. Examples in the story show that the bandits can "buy" the law with their wealth and influence, while ordinary people often become victims of injustice."

Focusing on the weaknesses of the legal system shows that students interpret the fictional narrative as a reflection of the real-world legal system vulnerable to manipulation by the elite. The process of actualizing meaning is seen in how students link the novel's narrative with the reality of structural injustice, where the law tends to side with those who have power and wealth.

The researcher concludes that the process of actualizing meaning regarding the issue of legal manipulation in the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* shows that students are active in interpreting and linking fictional texts with social reality. This novel serves as a mirror reflecting the legal inequality occurring in society, allowing readers to reflect and critique a biased and unjust legal system.

Discussion

The Influence of Implicit Readers in "*Bandit-Bandit Berkelas*" on Students' Interpretation of Social Phenomena Based on Wolfgang Iser's Reception Theory (1978)

Based on questionnaire data collected from 54 students, results indicate that the narrative within Tere Liye's novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* significantly influences students' understanding, perception, and interpretation of social phenomena within the story. A total of 83.6% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the narrative direction of the novel affected how they interpreted the story. Additionally, 71.6% felt the novel actively guided them toward concluding specific social messages, while 74.7% agreed that the characters in the novel represented the author's perspectives on social issues. The narrative's influence on students' social perceptions reached 73.2%, and 67.9% stated their emotions were manipulated by the characters and situations depicted in the story.

These results demonstrate the novel's strong narrative power in shaping readers' interpretations of social phenomena and conveying moral messages through its characters and conflicts (Annuri, et al, 2024). The small percentage of neutral or disagreeing responses reflects variations in readers' experiences, likely influenced by individual backgrounds, levels of literary comprehension, and students' critical analysis skills.

Findings show that students actively engaged in the interpretation process while being guided by the narrative cues embedded within the novel. Readers thus serve not only as consumers of the story but also as contributors to its meaning creation (Efron, et al, 2019). Most students acknowledged the presence of social messages conveyed both subtly and explicitly, highlighting Tere Liye's effectiveness in presenting social issues through popular literary channels.

The relatively significant percentage of neutral responses (18.7% for social phenomena perceptions and 22.4% for social messages) indicates that some students might not grasp narrative cues with the same intensity or prefer more independent interpretations of the text. Conversely, the low percentage in the disagree category shows that the novel's narrative is sufficiently dominant, making it challenging for readers to entirely detach from its influence.

Findings align with Wolfgang Iser's Literary Reception Theory (1978), emphasizing the concept of implicit readers. This theory suggests that literary texts are designed to invite readers to fill gaps in meaning within the narrative, creating interpretative spaces leading to meaning actualization. Texts are never passive; rather, they offer cues guiding readers toward specific interpretations.

The research findings indicate that the majority of students experience directed interpretations through the novel's narrative and characters, reflecting the gap-filling process described by Iser. Students, as implicit readers, do not merely consume the story but actively contribute to shaping the social meanings presented in the novel (Yandell, 2013).

Characters representing the author's views highlight the novel's strategic text concept within reception theory, where characters and conflicts function as mediums for social critique. Thus, the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* serves not only as entertainment but also as a medium for social reflection, engaging readers in active interpretation processes.

Additionally, the study corroborates prior findings. Research by Siahaan et al. (2021) and Wardana (2021) revealed that readers actively interpret novels they read, deriving diverse values from elements such as characters, setting, and themes. These findings underscore the critical role of active readers in the meaning-making process in literary texts, influencing reading experiences and comprehension of the work. This study reinforces the notion that reader engagement is a key factor in shaping meaning and value within literary texts.

Regarding the first objective, open-ended questionnaire results show that *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* significantly influences students' interpretations of social phenomena presented in the narrative. Collected data indicate that most students highlighted themes such as injustice, social inequality, abuse of power, and organized crime as the novel's core messages. These findings align with initial expectations that literary texts have great potential for raising readers' awareness of social issues (Koeller, 1996).

However, some findings revealed variations in the depth of reflection. While some students interpreted the novel as a direct reflection of social phenomena, others delved deeper into moral meanings and dilemmas presented in the story. These results demonstrate diversity in how readers fill gaps within the text, as explained by Iser's reception theory.

This is consistent with Agustina (2024), who found that students' reception is highly varied. Agustina noted that differences in background, experience, and interests influence how students interpret and respond to literary texts.

Open-ended questionnaire data suggest that students' interpretations of social injustice, abuse of power, and organized crime reflect how texts shape critical and reflective implicit readers. Students not only understand the surface of the story but also conduct in-depth analyses of characters, conflicts, and settings within the novel.

Furthermore, students' responses to the abuse of power depicted in the novel show their ability to identify parallels between the story and actual social phenomena. These interpretations illustrate resonance between the text and students' social experiences, reinforcing the implicit readers' role in creating meaning through narrative interaction (Ghaith, 2021).

Findings align with Wolfgang Iser's reception theory (1978), which emphasizes that implicit readers are imagined figures by texts to interpret and fill gaps in narratives. Within the context of *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas*, implicit readers are guided to confront issues like injustice, corruption, and organized crime as forms of social critique.

These findings also align with research by Liana et al. (2022), which discovered that readers interpret various intrinsic elements in novels, such as characters, settings, and themes, with interpretations varying based on individual backgrounds, experiences, and preferences. This research reinforces the view that interactions between readers and literary texts are dynamic and subjective, producing diverse understandings and interpretations.

Based on comprehensive data analysis, it can be concluded that *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* consistently influences students' interpretations of social phenomena through the formation of implicit readers, as per Wolfgang Iser's reception theory (1978). These findings indicate that *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* not only successfully creates implicit readers responsive to social issues but also encourages active reader engagement in interpreting and reflecting on the narrative within the context of real-life experiences. The novel serves as a medium for enhancing students' social awareness, making them more sensitive to injustices around them.

How Students Fill Gaps in the Text of the Novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* Based on Wolfgang Iser's Literary Reception Theory (1978)

Based on questionnaire data collected from 54 students, findings reveal that the narrative in *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* by Tere Liye significantly influences students' understanding, perception, and interpretation of social phenomena in the story. A total of 82.4% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the characters in the novel play a crucial role in shaping their perceptions of the social issues presented. Additionally, 76.1% of students felt the novel provided space for them to interpret moral and social messages, while 69.8% agreed that the storyline guided them in understanding the meanings embedded in the novel. The narrative's impact on social perceptions reached 71.5%, with 64.7% of students stating that the novel's conflicts and resolutions reflected the author's perspectives on social issues.

These results demonstrate the novel's strong narrative ability to engage students in interpreting and understanding the social issues woven into the story. The small percentage of neutral or disagreeing responses reflects diversity in how readers interpret the text, influenced by varying backgrounds, reading interests, and literary analytical skills.

The majority of students actively engaged in the interpretation process but remained within the boundaries established by the novel's narrative. This aligns with Wolfgang Iser's concept of implicit readers, where literary texts provide narrative cues guiding readers to fill gaps in meaning within the story. Thus, readers are not merely passive

recipients but contributors to meaning creation through their interpretations (Regan, 2005).

A notable 73.4% of students recognized that the novel's characters reflect the author's views on social issues, showcasing how *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* effectively delivers social critiques through fiction. This finding aligns with the strategic text concept within reception theory, emphasizing how characters and conflicts serve as mediums for conveying social messages.

The relatively high percentage of neutral responses (21.3% for narrative interpretation and 19.7% for character influence) indicates a group of students who may prefer freedom in interpreting texts without being explicitly guided by the narrative. Conversely, the low percentage of disagreement underscores the novel's strong and dominant narrative direction, which significantly influences most readers.

These findings align with Wolfgang Iser's reception theory (1978), specifically the concept of implicit readers. Iser explains that literary texts are never passive or closed but provide gaps that invite readers to participate in the meaning-creation process. Readers are expected to fill these gaps using their own experiences and knowledge, making the interpretation process a collaborative effort between text and reader (Golden, 1986).

Thus, this study reinforces the notion that *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* functions not only as entertainment but also as a medium for social reflection, engaging readers in dialogue and deep interpretive processes.

Further data from the open-ended questionnaire for this section showed that students fill the gaps in *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* in ways highly influenced by their experiences and personal perspectives. This aligns with Wolfgang Iser's literary reception theory (1978), which posits that texts contain gaps that must be filled by readers, and these interpretations depend on the readers' backgrounds and knowledge. Researchers found that students offered highly diverse interpretations of social, moral, generational conflicts, and characters in the novel, demonstrating the depth of their interaction with the text. For example, students not only viewed characters as individuals within the story but also connected them to broader social dynamics, such as social complexities, moral relativity, and intergenerational conflicts.

These findings are consistent with previous research. A study by Siahaan et al. (2021) found that novels successfully immerse readers into the author's emotional experience, enabling them to interpret emotional values within the text. Similarly, students in this study connected characters to broader social dynamics, showcasing their deep engagement.

Unexpected findings emerged regarding how students interpreted the bandit characters in the novel as moral agents with values superior to individuals respected legally. For instance, students viewed characters committing crimes for the sake of "goodness" as morally justified. This provides deeper insights into how the text encourages readers to critically think about morality and justice rather than passively accepting what is presented in the story.

These findings show that readers are not merely passive recipients of the messages within the text; instead, they actively shape meaning through personal interpretations. The gap-filling process allows readers to integrate their personal experiences and knowledge for a deeper understanding of the text. Therefore, the meaning of the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* can vary among readers depending on their social, moral, and cultural perspectives.

Students' interpretations of characters in the novel, especially the bandit characters with moral undertones, reveal tensions between socially accepted values and their personal viewpoints. This leads to an understanding that morality in life is not always black-and-white but often relative and contextual. The novel challenges readers to look beyond character labels and understand the motivations and backgrounds driving their actions.

These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Ihsan et al. (2023), which discovered that students respond to values such as wisdom, courage, and gratitude presented in the novel. The study revealed that students not only understand these values on an individual level but are also able to connect them to the context of their own lives. This suggests that the values conveyed in the novel can have a significant impact on readers, influencing how they perceive the world and internalize valuable life lessons.

These findings are closely aligned with Wolfgang Iser's literary reception theory (1978), particularly the concepts of gaps in the text and implicit readers. The novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* is indeed rife with gaps, whether in terms of character depiction, moral conflicts, or social dynamics. This provides space for readers to fill these gaps based on their own experiences and perspectives. Iser emphasizes that literary texts are inherently incomplete and require readers' contributions to create a more comprehensive meaning.

For instance, students fill moral gaps by projecting their personal values onto the characters in the novel. When the text does not explicitly dictate how the characters should be judged, readers are expected to fill the void with their own interpretations. This aligns with Iser's concept of meaning actualization, wherein the meaning of a text is not fixed but evolves through the interaction between the reader and the text.

Furthermore, the concept of implicit readers is also evident in how students fill narrative gaps. These implicit readers are expected to connect various pieces of the story and fill in the blanks according to their knowledge and experiences. In this context, students demonstrate how they, as actual readers, interpret the text in ways that reflect their diverse perspectives on social and moral life.

Based on the study involving 54 students, researchers concluded that Tere Liye's novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* successfully encourages students to actively fill gaps in the text, in line with Wolfgang Iser's reception theory. The majority of students engaged in deep interpretation related to social issues, morality, and character development in the story. The characters and storyline provided students with space to interpret moral and social messages, illustrating the dialogue between the text and its readers. These findings also demonstrate that readers fill the gaps with personal perspectives, creating diverse meanings influenced by their backgrounds.

The Process of Meaning Actualization by Students When Reading the Novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* Based on Wolfgang Iser's Literary Reception Theory (1978)

The questionnaire results indicate that the majority of students experienced a shift in their understanding of social phenomena after reading *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas*. This aligns with Wolfgang Iser's core principles of reader-response theory (1978), which state that readers actively engage with texts to construct meaning by filling interpretative gaps. Findings reveal that 70.9% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their understanding of social issues evolved after reading the novel. This outcome was anticipated, as the novel presents complex social themes that encourage readers to reflect and reinterpret their perspectives. The significant percentage of

students reporting deep reflection (70.9%) highlights the novel's ability to resonate with their personal experiences and social contexts, reinforcing the interactive nature of reading as proposed by Iser.

However, 25.4% of respondents expressing neutrality suggests that while the novel stimulates reflection for many, a quarter of participants did not experience significant changes in their understanding. These findings, though slightly unexpected, can be interpreted through individual differences in reader engagement, background knowledge, and the personal relevance of the novel's themes.

The study results suggest that *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* serves as an effective medium for raising readers' awareness and understanding of social realities. The novel's narrative invites readers to engage in deep contemplation, fostering shifts in their perspectives on social issues. This process reflects Iser's notion that literary texts activate readers' interpretative abilities, guiding them to co-create meaning with the author. The substantial proportion of students acknowledging changes in their perceptions underscores the novel's role as more than mere entertainment; it functions as a reflective tool bridging the gap between fictional events and real-world social dynamics.

Data on the continual evolution of meaning over time further supports this. The fact that 72.3% of respondents felt their interpretation of the novel evolved post-reading emphasizes the lasting impact of literary engagement. This gradual revelation of meaning aligns with Iser's concept of the "implied reader," where understanding of a text matures over time and subsequent experiences.

These findings are consistent with Iser's reader-response theory, particularly the concept of "gaps" in texts that readers fill using their cognitive and emotional frameworks. Iser emphasizes that meaning is not static but dynamically emerges through interaction between the text and reader. *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* exemplifies this by presenting social issues in ways that require reader involvement, fostering subjective and personal interpretations.

The high percentage of respondents reporting deep reflection on the novel's themes directly supports Iser's assertion that literary texts are inherently incomplete, requiring active reader contributions for meaning-making. Furthermore, the dynamic nature of reader interpretation, as evidenced by the data, reflects the fluidity of meaning construction highlighted by Iser. The novel's success in encouraging sustained reflection and reinterpretation among readers illustrates the practical application of Iser's framework, reinforcing the symbiotic relationship between text and reader in co-creating meaning.

Additionally, open-ended questionnaire data shows that students actively engage in meaning actualization while reading *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas*. This aligns with Wolfgang Iser's literary reception theory (1978), which emphasizes that the meaning of a text evolves as readers interact with it. The responses indicate that students' interpretations are dynamic and shaped by their social awareness and personal experiences.

These findings were largely anticipated, as Iser's (1978) theory posits that literary works prompt readers to fill gaps and project their understanding into the text. The diverse backgrounds of students resulted in varied interpretations, reflecting the multi-layered meanings derived from the novel. This validates the assumption that literary texts, particularly those addressing social issues, resonate differently depending on readers' perspectives.

An unexpected yet profound finding is the depth of students' reflections on social inequality and systemic injustice. Their responses indicate that students are not merely

passive readers but actively connect the novel's narrative to real-world issues. The way students link character marginalization in the novel to broader societal struggles highlights fiction's power to foster critical thinking and empathy. This suggests that the novel serves as a catalyst for social critique, exceeding initial expectations of reader engagement.

The study findings suggest that the meaning actualization process enables students to bridge the fictional world with their real-life realities. By identifying parallels between the marginalized characters' experiences in the novel and social issues in their environments, students reflect on systemic issues such as economic disparity, legal injustice, and power dynamics. This reflective process enhances their understanding of both the text and their own social contexts, demonstrating that reading is not merely entertainment but a form of social commentary and personal growth.

These findings align strongly with Iser's framework of Meaning Actualization, where evolving interpretations underscore the concept of meaning as fluid and continuously shaped by readers. As students revisit the text, their understanding shifts, enriched by new insights and social contexts. This iterative process exemplifies Iser's argument that meaning is not fixed but actualized through reader-text interaction over time.

Open-ended questionnaire data reveals that students' meaning actualization processes are fully in line with Iser's literary reception theory. Their ability to interpret the novel through the lens of social realities and personal experiences highlights the transformative potential of literature. This study underscores the importance of promoting interactive reading practices that encourage critical engagement and deeper understanding of literary works.

The researchers conclude that the majority of students experienced changes in their understanding of social phenomena after reading the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas,* consistent with Wolfgang Iser's literary reception theory (1978), which emphasizes the active role of readers in filling interpretative gaps. Findings reveal that the novel is effective as a medium for enhancing social awareness and understanding, fostering deep reflection and reinterpretation of complex social issues. Furthermore, the process of meaning actualization enables students to bridge the fictional world with real-life realities, reinforcing Iser's concept of dynamic and evolving meaning. This study underscores the importance of interactive reading practices that encourage critical thinking and empathy, as well as the vital role of literary texts in helping readers comprehend and evaluate social realities.

The researchers further compared the study's findings with those of previous studies. Results demonstrate that *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* significantly influences students' interpretations of social phenomena, particularly organized crime and corruption. This aligns with Siahaan et al. (2021), who analyzed the novel *Sebuah Usaha Melupakan* by Boy Candra and found it successfully immersed readers in the author's emotional experience of betrayal, effectively conveying those emotions to the audience.

Additionally, this study found that textual gaps in the novel prompt students to fill narrative voids with their imagination and personal experiences. This finding is similar to Wardana (2021), who observed that students' reception of Tere Liye's novel *Daun Yang Jatuh Tak Pernah Membenci Angin* varied significantly depending on individual assessments. Both studies highlight the importance of reader-text interaction in building meaning and enriching the reading experience.

The study also uncovered that the process of meaning actualization continues post-reading, with most students experiencing changes and deepening interpretations over time. These results align with Nainggolan (2022), who found that *Sang Pemimpi* by

Andrea Hirata provided readers with long-lasting educational and moral values. Similarly, Dewi et al. (2024) noted varied reader receptions of teenlit novels on the Goodreads platform, which influenced the development of high school literature curricula.

However, this study also identifies a unique role of *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* in fostering students' critical awareness of social and legal injustices. This finding adds a new perspective compared to previous research, such as Ihsan et al. (2023) and Agustina (2024), which focused more on educational and moral values. This study emphasizes the importance of social critique conveyed through the novel.

Farhanah and Yanti (2022) highlighted differing reader receptions of the novel *Dikta dan Hukum* on platforms such as Twitter and Goodreads, where Twitter discussions were more dominant while Goodreads interactions leaned toward negotiation. This demonstrates the influence of platform context on how readers perceive and respond to novels, a concept relevant to this study's findings on how students fill narrative gaps with imagination and personal experience.

Liana et al. (2022) found that readers provided both positive and negative responses to various intrinsic elements in *Mata di Tanah Melus* by Okky Madasari, reflecting deep engagement with the novel's themes. These findings align with this study, which reveals that *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* facilitates profound reflections on the social realities readers encounter in daily life.

Overall, this study supports previous findings that literature can evoke emotional responses, foster critical reflection, and provide lasting educational values. However, it also introduces a new perspective on how novels can enhance critical awareness of social phenomena, particularly regarding injustice and corruption. This demonstrates that literature plays a crucial role in shaping readers' understanding and responses to relevant social issues.

Conclusion

Based on the conducted research, it can be concluded that the novel *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* has a significant impact on shaping students' interpretations of social phenomena, particularly related to organized crime and corruption. Using Wolfgang Iser's reception theory (1978), this study found that the implicit reader formed within the novel encourages students to be more critical of social and legal injustices. The characters and situations depicted evoke emotional engagement from readers and allow for reflection on the social realities faced in everyday life. The text gaps within the novel prompt readers, especially students, to fill the narrative voids through their imagination and personal experiences. Students actively interpret characters and social conflicts that are not explicitly explained in the text, thereby enriching their understanding of the storyline and characters in the novel. The process of actualizing meaning continues after the reading is finished. The majority of students experience changes and deepening of meaning over time, indicating that this novel not only serves as entertainment but also functions as a reflection on the socially manipulative and unjust structures.

Future researchers are encouraged to explore other literary works by Tere Liye or authors who also address social issues, as objects of study, to examine how the phenomenon of literary reception may vary across different texts and social contexts. Subsequent studies could involve respondents from diverse backgrounds to obtain more comprehensive results on how such novels are received by readers of varying ages, professions, and education levels. Additionally, future research could focus on a

comparative analysis between *Bandit-Bandit Berkelas* and other novels with similar themes, aiming to identify differences in narrative strategies and their impacts on readers.

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