Horizon of Expectation of Mandarin Students Towards the Novel *Huo Zhe* (活着): Literary Reception Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the horizon of expectations of the students in the novel *Huózhe* (活着) by Yu Hua. This research aims to measure the horizon of expectations that readers have regarding the ideas conveyed by the novel *Huo Zhe* (活着), so it is hoped that this can contribute to the development of literary reception theory. The theory used is the literary reception theory which focuses on exploring the form of a horizon of expectation, so that the presence of a literary work can be accepted in society. The methodology used is qualitative descriptive method as a basis for determining variables, problem formulation, data collection techniques, data classification and data analysis. The research informants were 35 students majoring in the Mandarin Language from 6th and 8th semesters who had taken the concentration in literature. Informants will be asked to read Yu Hua's novel *Huózhe* (活着) and provide their responses through a questionnaire. The results of this study indicate that the novel *Huózhe* (活着) fulfils the 3 criteria carried in the Jauss theory, namely the values depicted in the text, the knowledge and experience of the readers, and the conflict between fiction and reality. Thus, it can be concluded that the reading informants from the 6th and 8th-semester students majoring in Chinese accept the novel *Huózhe* (活着) positively, The results of acceptance positively influence new views that are built into the reader's horizon of expectations in interpreting the meaning of the ideas conveyed by the novel.

Keywords: Literary Reception, Horizon of Expectation, Chinese Literature, *Huo Zhe, Yu Hua*

1. Introduction

The globalization era has made people increasingly aware of the importance of learning foreign language. However, foreign language learning often makes mistakes due to the influence of mother tongue or local dialects (Malayu, 2019, p. 2). This can also happen when learning Mandarin. Over the last two decades, there has been a growing demand for Chinese language teaching and learning all over the world and more than 180 countries and regions globally, with over 20 million learners of Chinese as a foreign language (Gong et al., 2023; Gong et al., 2020; Gong et al., 2018). Success in mastering Mandarin is inseparable from the role of literary learning. Literature rises as one of the media to convey human experience into the form of aesthetic experience which functions as the mirror to reflect and to ponder upon life (Wardana, 2019, 31). Literature has an important role to strengthen the knowledge of a language and even the origin of a nation. Literature as a result of human artwork offers various images of life, such as customs, culture, history and politics, which can stimulate readers to respond and react to something. According to Kurniawan (2012, p. 2), literature is a cultural system that functions as a representation of the human mind that represents its collectivity in the social life of society. Literature cannot be separated from social life in that literature has the power to express and imagine pain and oppression or everything about an imbalance in social life (Nur, 2021, p. 10). Based on this opinion, it can be said that literature has a unique relationship with the sociocultural system as the basis of life, and consequently, literature will always live and be created by society. Therefore, the relationship between literature and readers in society is like a link that can advance as well as respond to the development of both factors.

Literary works and their readers always influence each other. Literary work is a path that can be taken by every reader to understand the real life (Harsana, 2017, p. 142). The readers act as consumers who always try to devour the meaning and value contained in literary works (Kadir, 2017, p. 52). The readers have an important position in the world of literature, especially in Chinese literature. Chinese literature is one of the oldest in the world of literature that has a long journey in describing Chinese civilization. Its ancient to contemporary literary works have been read and studied by the students of Mandarin study program in the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of North Sumatra University. The students are introduced to literary works from China through literature courses provided by the Mandarin study program. Since then, the literary works that describe the culture of Chinese society have been read, studied, and interpreted by students.

However, plenty of students experience obstacles in understanding the purpose of the content in the story while in the process of interpreting literary works. One problem in the observation results is that understanding complex literary structures causes students often ignoring essential things in assessing literary works. In addition, differences in cultural background and ethnic diversity of each student also cause the process of putting meaning to literary works with Chinese culture to be less well understood. Moreover, students ' cultural understanding has been formed by the local environment which resulted in differences regarding the horizon of expectations in assessing a literary work.

Pradopo (2013, p. 218) defines literary reception as the science of aesthetics that is based on readers' responses to literary works. The horizon of expectation is a popular term in the study of literary reception. It defines as the expectation from the reader of literary works before reading the work itself. The readers will tend to easily accept the literary works if their expectations are met when reading them. On the other hand, the readers will react with enthusiasm or rejection when they're disappointed by their expectations. Based on that explanation, this research will focus on discussing the problems of horizon of expectations found in the students of the Mandarin Study Program in the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of North Sumatra University toward the novel *Huo Zhe* (活着) by Yu Hua. This novel was written in 1998 by Yu Hua and received awards from Grinzane Cavour Price in 1998 and the Order of Arts and Letters from the French Ministry of Culture in 2004. This novel was chosen as the analytical object for the readers because it tells in detail about the twists and turns experienced by Chinese people in dealing with and surviving a monumental event in their history, the Cultural Revolution. Moreover, this story has diverse characters with elaborate storylines that are interesting to be analyzed from the horizon of expectations perspective.

This research is not the first to review the horizon of expectations in the scope of literary reception. This paper found three journal articles with similar issues. One of related researches with similar issues is the one conducted Dermawan (2014) entitled "The Responses of Readers toward a novel titled Ayat-Ayat Cinta by Habiburrahman El Shirazy: a Review of Literary Reception." This research focuses on the readers' response and horizon of expectations toward the novel 'Ayat-Ayat Cinta'. This research uses the information from contemporary readers taken from December 2004 to July 2011. The research finds that most readers (80% - 100%) respond to or positively assess the novel's theme, plot, characterization, setting, point of view, stylistics, title, storytelling techniques, spelling, solutions, language, and extrinsic elements of Ayat-Ayat Cinta. The expectations of most readers before reading the novel are in accordance with the twelve elements found in it, so the readers easily accept this novel with praise. Another research is done by Sungkowati (2011) entitled "The Readers' Reception on Tjerita Njai Dasima." This research focuses on readers' reception structure and transformation toward Tjerita Njai Dasima. It applies the diachronic literary reception theory involving readers from every time period. It reveals the fact that since the colonial to reformation era, Tjerita Njai Dasima has been accepted and turned into different works such as poems, proses, play texts, film scripts, movies, soap operas, and musical dramas. Moreover, the transformation of reception develops through generations along with the changing times and the transformation of the horizon of expectations of its readers. Another research is by Sari (2013) entitled "The Response of Adolescent Readers toward a short story titled 'Robohnya Surau Kami' by A.A. Navis and Its Implication to Literary Learning." It employs questionnaires as its method of research. The finding shows that language and emotional attachment are the most interesting factors in this short story. Eighty percent of informants agree that it presents skillful language with clear and convincing attitude. While 65% agree that the story has emotional impact to its readers. Other than that, it also presents an implication on literary learning with teachers finding out what their students want and need. This research article contributes to the author as a basic reference in research methods with data collection instruments through questionnaires and presenting data analysis using descriptive statistical methods.

In contrast to the aforementioned related studies, this research aims at dismantling the problem with the horizon of expectations found in the readers of the novel *Huo Zhe* (活着). The readers selected to provide their horizon of expectations are the students in the 6th and 8th semester of Mandarin Study Program, with a total of 35 people majoring in Literature. These students are selected based on the fact that the students in the 6th

and 8th semester usually read more books and have taken introductory literature class, read Chinese literature, and analyzed a novel before.

Therefore, this research aims to serve as a reference in evaluating the structure of students' reading abilities, so that the ideas conveyed through literary works originating from China can increase the reader's source of knowledge about Chinese culture as a whole. This research utilizes literary reception theory to explore the hopes brought by the idea of a novel that can be channeled optimally to readers. This theory can reveal what expectations are expressed in readers regarding literary works.

This research uses literary reception theory to unveil the problems found in the horizon of expectations. Hans Robert Jauss introduces a concept named *erwartungshorizont* or horizon of expectations. Horizon of expectation is the expectations found in readers before reading literary works. To identify the readers' horizon of expectations, Jauss focuses on the history of literature. Jauss (1974, p.15) states that the history of literature does not examine the permanence value of a literary work, but rather focuses on its changes that occur continuously. All the changes that continue to happen in the history of literature place literary works not as inanimate objects, but as objects that can be lived, experienced, and enjoyed as aesthetic objects. In other words, the literary text is dynamic so its meaning depends on how the readers concretize (alignment or filling of meaning by the reader as termed by Vodicka) it.

While concretizing, the readers apply a number of thoughts and ideas. The readers then bring a number of ideas in the form of knowledge and experience of past cultures when dealing with literary works. This knowledge then shapes the horizon of expectations. This set of knowledge is also what determines and directs the readers. In other words, the readers' knowledge builds the horizon of expectations in reading literary works.

In addition, the readers' experience also affects the expectations they have about the text they will read in the future. The readers' expectations are then divided by Jauss (in Siegers, 2000, p. 36) into three criteria, firstly, by the popular generic norm presented by the text read by the reader, secondly, the reader's experience and knowledge of all the texts that have been read before, thirdly, the contrast between fiction and reality, which is the readers' ability to accept the new text within the "narrow" horizon of expectations and the "wide" horizon of knowledge in their lives.

Furthermore, Jauss as quoted by Endaswara (2013, p.123) also explained that the horizon of expectations allows the inner acceptance and processing toward literary texts. The readers' horizon of expectations are divided into two, (1) one is aesthetically related to the acceptance of structural elements of literary works, such as themes, plot, and language style while (2) the other is unaesthetic (outside the literary text) regarding the attitude of the reader, the readers' experience and situation. Both are essential factors in understanding literary works. Thus, the understanding of literary works that build the reader's horizon of expectations is able to direct judgment, response, and acceptance.

Correspondingly, literary reception theory also focuses on a third subject, the reader (Boker, 1995, p.41). According to Ratna (2008, p. 168-169), the role of the reader, as mentioned before, is a total paradigm reversal with the readers who do not know at all about the creative process are bestowed with the main function because it is the readers who enjoy, evaluate, and utilize it, while the author as the origin of the work must be set aside, even considered as anonymity. In other words, the readers are the main key to exploring the comments and even criticism of literary works written by the author.

According to Iser (Endaswara, 2008, p. 125), literary reception also divides the readers in terms of methodology. The first is the synchronic reader which exists in a one-time period and the second is the diachronic reader which shall be found in each time period throughout history. In this research, the targeted readers, who will be the subject of research, are the implicit readers with language skills, semantics, and literary competence. Hence, the implicit readers in this research are the 6th and 8th-semester students of the Mandarin Department of North Sumatra University majoring in literature who have attended introductory literature and semantic courses, read several works of Chinese literature, and studied prose. Implicit readers to be studied are the synchronous type; readers within one period of time.

Therefore, the problem formulation discussed in this research is the readers' horizon of expectations found in 6th-and-8th-semester students of the Mandarin study program in the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of North Sumatra University toward the novel *Huo Zhe* (活着) by Yu Hua. The objective of this research is to focus on discussing the issue of the horizon of expectations. This research hopes to provide benefits by contributing. Data related to reader's horizon of expectation are obtained through the questionnaires that have been prepared.

2. Method

Qualitative research, conducted thoughtfully, is internally consistent, rigorous, and helps us answer important questions about people and their lives (Tomaszewski, p.2020). This research uses qualitative

descriptive methods from Sugiyono (2014). The qualitative descriptive method is the basis for determining variables, formulating problems, data collection techniques, data classification and data analysis.

Primary data are collected from the answers related to horizon of expectation given by the sixth and eighth-semester-students, in the questionnaires, who have read the novel of *Huo Zhe* (活着) by Yu Hua. The research informants are selected based on Iser's views on literature reception theory which views readers synchronically by researching the literature reception using readers either for a certain period of time or for an era. Synchronic approach is chosen because the research informants are today's readers who are active students in Mandarin Study Program of Cultural Science Faculty in Universitas Sumatera Utara. Secondary data source includes literatures that can support the interpretation of primary data.

Data collection technique used a questionnaire with 35 informants to read *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel by Yu Hua. Then the informants are given questionnaires that have been designed to explore how the horizon of expectation is built before and after reading the novel. Data obtained from questionnaires are then collected, recorded, and classified by using the theory of literary reception which is based on three criteria proposed by Jauss.

In the data analysis technique, the data that has been collected from respondents will then be analyzed using descriptive statistical methods to detail the data without intending to make generally applicable conclusions or generalizations. The descriptive statistical method is a method used to describe and provide an overview of the frequency distribution of variables in a study. The aim of this method is to provide an overview of the distribution and behavior of research data by looking at the minimum value, maximum value, average (mean) and standard deviation of each variable used. Data tabulation based on descriptive statistical methods will analysed by describing the percentage of reader's answers from questionnaires on the basis of 4 scoring options, namely score 1 for disagree, score 2 for less disagree, score 3 for agree, and score 4 for strongly agree. This assessment score uses a Likert scale. According to Sugiyono (2018, p. 93), the Likert scale is a scale used to measure attitudes, opinions and perceptions of a person or group of people regarding social phenomena that occur. Lastly, the result of percentage is divided to obtain average score which later is interpreted based on the perspective of literary reception in the form of qualitative descriptive presentation. Thus, the application of this method aims to measure the extent to which readers' horizons of expectation can provide assessments, responses and expectation for *Huo Zhe*'s novel (活着), so that Chinese literary works can be understood correctly.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Reader's Horizon of Expectation toward the Huo Zhe (活着) Novel by Yu Hua

Horizon of expectation defines as knowledge or insight about life which includes reader's literary knowledge. Horizon of expectation does not only reveal the reader's insights, but also its historical outline. The analysis is divided into three parts in accordance with Jauss theory on horizon of expectation, namely values depicted in the text read by the informants, their knowledge and experience toward all texts that have been previously read, the contradiction between fiction and reality which is the reader's ability to comprehend new ideas depicted in the novel, both from the view of horizon of expectation found on the novel and the vast horizon sourced from the reader's knowledge about life. Therefore, to find out these three parts comprehensively, the discussion is divided into three sub-chapters.

3.1.1. Values Depicted in the Text

This sub-chapter discusses about reader's assessment toward the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel in relation to ideas and values obtained by the informants after finishing the novel. In this matter, the ideas that have been existed in the reader's mind cannot be separated with the process of recognizing the message of the literary text along with various of values that can be used as inspiration by the reader. This process, furthermore, develops the horizon of value when the readers understand the message and purpose of the new idea found in the literary work.

Questionnaire contains questions related to horizon of expectation starting with the correlation between the title of the novel and the character's personality. The title of novel as a keyword can represent the whole ideas that will be delivered by the author. On the other hand, the title attracts readers to guess how the storyline played by the characters in a literary work. Thus, title is chosen in this research since it is a representation that can form horizon of character's value which are imagined by the readers. The title of *Huo Zhe* (活着) which can be translated into Indonesian as "life" contains a very sensitive meaning toward the description of society life. Therefore, the questionnaire of tittle assessment focuses on the correlation between expectation imagined by the readers and the character's role depicted in the novel. This can be seen on the table as follows:

Table 1. Reader's Questionnaires Result

Assessment Scale	1	2	3	4	Total
Number of informantss (person)	0	0	26	9	35
Percentage (%)	0	0	74.3	25.7	100

Based on Table 1, all informants give their assessment on the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. The total number of informants who give assessment is 35 informants. The informants do not put score 1 and 2 in their assessment. The lowest score given by the informants is 3 and the highest score is 4. It indicates that 26 informants or 74.3% of the informants give score 3 indicating that they feel that the title of the novel can represent the ideas and value of the novel characters. In addition, from the total number of informants, 9 informants or 25.7% give score 4 indicating that they feel that novel title strongly interprets the value and ideas through characters in the story.

Data obtained are then processed to find out the average score of informant assessment toward the novel. This can be seen in the following table.

Table 2. Result of Score Average

	N	Minimal	Maximum	Mean
General Criteria of Validity N	35	3	4	3.26

The table indicates that the minimum score given by the informants is 3 and maximum score is 4. The average score obtained is 3.26. Based on the average score, it is interpreted that when the informants finish reading the novel, they understand that the title of the novel is the representation of the character's description.

In addition, the values received by the readers after finishing the reading is not only seen from the perspective of character, but also from the title which is the representation of the idea of the story itself. An author has his own reason when he creates a title for his novel which is to attract the reader's curiosity toward the content of the novel. Therefore, the questionnaires of title assessment focuses on the content of the novel. This is seen in the table as follows:

Table 3. Reader's Questionnaires Results

Assessment Scale	1	2	3	4	Total
Number of informants (person)	0	0	21	14	35
Percentage (%)	0	0	60	40	100

Based on Table 3, all informants give assessment on the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. The total number of informants who give assessment is 35 informants. Informants do not give score 1 and 2. The lowest score given by the informant is 3 and the highest score is 4. It indicates that 21 informants or 60% of informants give score 3 indicating that the reader's expectation toward the title after reading the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel is strongly correlated with the content of the novel. Furthermore, 14 informants or 40% of informants give score 4 indicating that the reader's expectation toward the title after reading the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel is significantly correlated with the content of the novel.

Data obtained are then processed to find out the average score of informant's assessment. This can see in the table as follows:

Table 4. Result of Average Score

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
General Criteria of Validity N	35	3	4	3.40

The table indicates that the minimum score given by the informants is 3 and maximum score is 4. The average score obtained is 3.40. Based on the average score, it is interpreted that the informant's expectation is built during the reading process. Thus, when the process ends the informants feel that the title has a strong correlation with the idea of the story.

Furthermore, after the informants finish their reading, the horizon of expectation built can also be seen from the human values found in the novel. Human values are things correlated with human action, behaviour, and attitude which are accordance with the norms in everyday life. Human values are universal so the application can be interpreted by every society from various generation. They are depicted in the literary works through the character's action, behaviours, and attitude based on how the character views the norms. Accordingly, readers can obtain important lesson from the message and advice correlated with human values. Therefore, the questionnaire of human values focuses on the message of the novel through the character's action and behaviours. This can seen in the table as follows:

Table 5. Reader's Questionnaires Result

Assessment Scale	1	2	3	4	Total
Number of Informantss (person)	0	0	15	20	35
Percentage (%)	0	0	24.9	57.1	100

Based on Table 5, all informants give assessment on the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. The total number of informants who give assessment is 35 informants. Informants do not give score 1 and 2. The lowest score given by the informant is 3 and the highest score is 4. It indicates that 15 informants or 24.9% of informants give score 3 indicating that human values depicted in the novel is in accordance with the reader's horizon of expectation when they finish the reading. Furthermore, 20 informants or 57.1% of informants give score 4 indicating that human values depicted in the novel is strongly accordance with the reader's horizon of expectation on human values.

Data obtained are, then, processed to find out the average score of informant's assessment. This can seen in the table as follows:

Table 6. Result of Average Score

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
General Criteria of Validity N	35	3	4	3.57

The table indicates that the minimum score given by the informants is 3 and maximum score is 4. The average score obtained is 3.57. Based on the average score, it is interpreted those human values depicted in the novel is accordance with values expected by the readers.

3.1.2. Reader's Knowledge and Experience before Reading the Novel

This sub-chapter discusses the readers' assessment in relation to their knowledge and experience before reading the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. In this regard, the knowledge and experience of every informant can be used as the basis to know of to what extent the horizon of expectation built in the readers' mind. Therefore, it is required to dig the reader's experience regarding other types of literary works. Then, those experiences can also reveal how deep the informants' knowledge and experience about literary works before reading the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. Therefore, the questionnaire focuses on the informant's experience in reading other types of literary works. This can be seen in the table as follows:

Table 7. Reader's Questionnaires Results

Assessment Scale	1	2	3	4	Total
Number of Informants (person)	0	25	6	4	35
Percentage (%)	0	71.4	17.1	11.4	100

Based on Table 7, all informants give assessment on the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. The total number of informants who give assessment is 35 informants. Informants do not give score 1. The lowest score given by the informant is 2 and the highest score is 4. It indicates that 25 informants or 71.4% of informants give score 3 indicating that informants seldom read literary works in the form of poems or prose.

The informants gave the lowest score of 2 and the highest score of 4. There are 25 people (71.4%) who give a score of 2, indicating that they rarely read poetry or plays. In contrast, 6 people (17.1%) give a score of 3, indicating that informants occasionally read literary works such as poetry and plays. 4 of the total informants, or 11.4%, give a score of 4, indicating that the informants read poetry and plays frequently.

All data are analyzed to determine the average score of assessment given by the informants for the novel. The result of the average score is described on the table below:

Table 8. Result of Average Score

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
General Criteria of Validity N	35	2	4	2,40

This table describes that the minimum and maximum scores given by the informants are 2 and 4, respectively. The average score is 2.40, indicating that the informants have less experience in reading literary works such as poetry and plays. As a result, it has an impact on the informants' narrow horizon of expectation as well as the limited experience of the dynamics in literature.

Furthermore, the horizon of expectation on experience and knowledge of the informants can be seen from the similarities of the previous literary works they have read. Literary works tend to become representative of societal events that indicate symptoms and similar events. As a result, readers will recognize the events occurred in the literary work. This is why the questionnaire is focused on the similar symptoms of the novels which are read by the informants to the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. The outcome of the questionnaire is shown in the table below:

Table 9. Reader's Questionnaires Results

Assessment Scale	1	2	3	4	Total
Number of Informants (person)	15	18	2	0	35
Percentage (%)	42,9	51,4	5,7	0	100

Table 9 shows that each of the 35 informants provides their opinion on the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. No informants provide a score of 4. However, the lowest and greatest scores are 1 and 3, respectively. 15 informants (42.9%) give a score of 1, indicating that they have never found any similarities between their reading experiences and the ideas and events in the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. There are 18 informants (51.4%) who give a score of 2, which indicates that occasionally, what occures in the informants' reading experiences is resembled in the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. On the other hand, 2 informants (5.7%) give a score of 3, indicating that they frequently find identical incidents in the novel they have read and the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel.

All of the data are analyzed to determine the informants' assessment about the novel. The data can be seen on the table below:

Table 10. The Result of Average Score

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
General Criteria of Validity N	35	1	3	1,63

In this table, we can see that informants gives a minimum score of 1 and a maximum score of 3. The average score is 1.63, suggesting that informants occasionally find the identical events in the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel; as a result, the horizon of expectation built in informants' thoughts do not match to those in this novel.

Besides, the horizon of expectation on experience and knowledge of the informants can be seen from the willingness of the readers to read the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel repeatedly. The intriguing plot of the novel that give the new horizon to the informants that they never experience or imagine before, is what motivates their willingness to read. As can be seen in the table below, the main focus of the questionnaire is on the informants' willingness to read the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel again.

Table 11. Reader's Questionnaires Results

Assessment Scale	1	2	3	4	Total
Number of Informants (person)	0	4	24	7	35
Percentage (%)	0	11,4	68,6	20	100

Table 11 shows that each of the 35 informants give the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel a score. No informant provides a score of 1. However, the lowest and greatest scores are 2 and 4, respectively. 4 informants (11.4%) give the score 2, indicating that they are not particularly interested in reading the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel again. 24 informants (68%) give the score of 3, indicating that they would be interested in reading the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel again. In addition, 7 informants (20%) give the score of 4, indicating that they read the book more than once.

The data are analysed to determine the assessment score of the informants about the novel. The result can be seen under the table below:

Table 12. The Result of Average Score

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
General Criteria of Validity N	35	2	4	3,09

The table describes that the minimum score given by the informants is 2 and the maximum is 4. The average score is 3.09. meaning that the willingness of the reader in reading *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel repeatedly is pretty high.

3.1.3. The Conflict Between Fiction and Reality

This section elaborates the conflict between the horizon of expectation of the readers and the novel. In this case, the conflict refers to the ability of reader's knowledge in understanding the new ideas described in the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. The convergence of the two paradigms can serve as a starting point for determining the readers' horizon of expectation before and after reading the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. Additionally, this foundation can also be utilized to identify if the readers' horizon of expectation is broad and/or do not accept those described in the novel. As a result, the focus of this questionnaire is on how the reader would build new expectations after reading the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel.

Table 13. Reader's Questionnaires Results

Assessment Scale	1	2	3	4	Total
Number of Informantss (person)	0	0	20	15	35
Percentage (%)	0	0	57,1	42,9	100

Table 13 shows that each of the 35 informants give the *Huo Zhe* (活着) a score. None of the informants give this section a score 1 and 2. The greatest score is 4, while the lowest is 3. 20 informants (57%) give the score of 3, indicating that after reading the novel *Huo Zhe* (活着), their mind has successfully expanded their horizons of expectation. Additionally, 15 informants (42.9%) give a score of 4, showing that the informants'

mind has successfully expanded their horizons of expectation and are able to accept the novel's new thoughts and notions.

The data are analyzed to determine the score given by the informants towards the novel. The result can be seen on the table below:

Table 14. The Result of Average Score

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
General Criteria of Validity N	35	3	4	3,43

The table indicates that the minimum score given by the informants is 3 and the maximum score is 4. The average score is 3.43. It indicates that the readers' horizon of expectation creates a new horizon well through the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel, leading to the creation of it as the new horizon to characterize the problem encountered in life.

Furthermore, the conflict between the readers' horizon of expectation and that of the novel can be seen from the problems outlined in the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. In this novel there are various types of life problems encountered by the characters, namely the obstacles in their life or the issues they face. Therefore, the primary focus of this questionnaire is on the life problems that inspire the readers that build the conflict of the horizon of expectation after and before reading the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. This condition is described in the table below:

Table 15. Reader's Questionnaires Results

Assessment Scale	1	2	3	4	Total
Number of Informants (person)	0	0	17	18	35
Percentage (%)	0	0	48,6	51,4	100

Table 15 indicates that all the 35 informants provide their score of judgment to the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. The informants do not give the score of 1 and 2. However, the lowest score given is 3 and the highest score is 4. There are 17 people (48.6) give the score of 3 indicating that the informants' horizon of expectation can build a new horizon when the life problems offered in the novel become an inspiration and lesson to the readers. Besides, there are 18 people (51.4%) give the score of 4 meaning that the informants agree to the notion that the horizon of expectation creates a new horizon when the problems encountered by the characters become a valuable experience for them.

The data are analyzed to determine the average score provided by the informants towards the novel. The table below indicates the outcomes.

Table 16. The Result of Average Score

	N	Min	Max	Mean
General Criteria of Validity N	35	3	4	3,51

The table indicates that the minimum score given by the informants is 3 and the highest score is 4. The average sore is 3.51 indicating that the horizon of expectation is renewed to be a new horizon of expectation when the readers get the inspiration from the problems y the main character experiences.

Additionally, the main character's life after all of his or her family members have passed away illustrates

the conflict between the novel's and readers' horizon of expectations. Since losing loved ones is an inevitable part of life, the novel's sad moments serve as an opportunity for introspection. The main character's reaction when faced with this situation serves as another example of this issue in the novel. The questionnaire is therefore focused on the informants' horizon of expectation that matches that of the novel with relation to the main character's experience of losing his or her closest friends. The table below shows the findings of the analysis.

Table 17. Reader's Questionnaires Results

Assessment Scale	1	2	3	4	Total
Number of Informants (person)	0	1	13	21	35
Percentage (%)	0	2,9	37,1	60	100

Table 17 shows that the novel *Huo Zhe* (活着) receives ratings from all 35 informants. None of the informants, however, assign a score of 1. The informants give a range of scores, with 2 being the lowest and 4 being the highest. Only 1 informant (2.95) provides a score of 2, which shows that the informant's horizon of expectations do not align with the events that the main characters go through. Additionally, 13 informants (37.1%) give a score of 3, indicating that the expectation and the actual events surrounding the death of the main character's family members has matched the horizon of expectation of the readers.

The data are analyzed to determine the average score of judgment provided by the informants towards the novel. The outcome is described on the table below:

Table 18. The Result of Average Score

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
General Criteria of Validity N	35	2	4	3,57

This table indicates that the minimum score given by the informants is 2 and the maximum score is 4. The average score is 3.57, indicating that the horizon of expectation of the informants can accept other ideas and expectations described by the events experienced by the main character.

4. Conclusion

It is clear from all of the analyses that the informants' horizon of expectation is open to the new ideas as they are presented in the *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel. The *Huo Zhe* (活着) novel, which raises the issue of Fugui's (the main character's) life's twists and turns along with all the sad and depressing circumstances, has met the three requirements outlined in Segers' theory, namely the text's values, the reader's knowledge, and the reader's experience, which includes the conflict between fiction and reality.

In terms of the criteria of values in text, according to the informants the novel is very well accepted by the readers due to its humanity values. Meanwhile, the personality values reflected by the characters and topics in the novel is aligned to the representation of the title, *Huo Zhe* (活着) which means life. The informants preferred reading the prose over other types of literary works since they had limited expectations and knowledge before reading this novel, particularly in comparison to plays and poems. The informants discover similarities between certain incidents in the novel and various literary works that are full of interesting perspectives.

The readers feel that this book has given them a fresh viewpoint in terms of the conflict between fiction and reality. For instance, this book encourages readers to adopt a positive outlook when dealing with situations like losing loved ones and Chinese residents' societal issues. The three criteria ultimately lead us to the conclusion that the informants or readers, the sixth and eighth-semester Mandarin study students have a positive opinion of the *Huo Zhe* (活着). This fact creates a fresh, distinct perspective that alters the horizon of expectation.

5. Acknowledgment

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