

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Findings

##### 1. Elements of film supporting students' critical thinking through English film analysis of "movie time" program at Al-falah for girls

###### a. Story Element – Interpretation and Inference

Based on the classroom observation conducted on Friday, 26 September 2025 during the Movie Time activity, students demonstrated their ability to interpret the storyline of *The Ron Clark Story* through spontaneous verbal reactions that occurred naturally while they were watching the film, indicating that the students were actively processing and making sense of the narrative as it unfolded. At the beginning of the film, when the main conflict was introduced, S1 instinctively responded with "Oh, it's about a teacher who faces tough students in a new school." (S1)

This remark reflects the student's initial interpretation of the plot, showing an ability to identify the core narrative structure. Such spontaneous recognition demonstrates that the student was not merely watching passively but was actively constructing

meaning from visual and contextual cues. As the story progressed and the teacher's efforts became more evident, S2 provided a deeper, more evaluative reaction "I think the main story is about how a patient teacher can really change his students." (S2)

This comment shows not only comprehension but also inference, as the student connected the teacher's behavior to the broader moral message of the film. The ability to infer underlying themes without explicit instruction reflects an emerging capacity for higher-order thinking. Toward the end of the movie, during the resolution phase, S3 responded to the transformation of the students with another spontaneous observation "It ends with Ron's students changing for the better." (S3)

This indicates the student's understanding of the consequences of earlier events and their ability to infer character development from the storyline. The recognition of this transformation shows that the student was able to track the narrative progression and understand its outcome.

b. Plot Element – Analysis and Evaluation

Based on the classroom observation conducted on Friday, 26 September 2025, the plot element of the film played an important role in strengthening students' analytical and evaluative thinking during the Movie Time activity. The development of the plot from

the introduction of Ron Clark, the rise of conflict, the climax, and the resolution enabled students to identify cause – effect relationships and judge the significance of key events. S4 demonstrated analytical thinking when commenting on the climax of the story. When the class discussed the turning point of the film, S4 stated “The climax happens when Ron gets sick but still comes to teach.” (S4)

This response shows the student’s ability to identify which event carries the highest emotional and narrative tension. Recognizing the climax requires understanding how earlier events build toward a central turning point. S4 connected the character’s perseverance with the film’s dramatic structure, showing an awareness of how plot elements work together. S5 reinforced this analysis by adding “We think that’s the most emotional and powerful part of the movie.” (S5)

This illustrates evaluative judgment, as the student did not merely state what happened but assessed the emotional weight and importance of the scene within the overall storyline. It also reflects the ability to justify why a moment stands out as significant. Furthermore, during the evaluation stage, S6 expressed “The ending is so strong because it shows the real result of Ron’s hard work.” (S6)

This demonstrates a higher level of evaluation linking the film's resolution directly to the protagonist's struggles and perseverance. The student recognized that the ending was meaningful *because* it paid off earlier conflicts and efforts shown throughout the plot. Similarly, S4 responded with "The ending part gave me goosebumps." (S4)

Although emotional, this reaction still reflects evaluative thinking, as the student's response indicates awareness of how narrative resolution influences viewer interpretation and emotional engagement.

c. Character Element – Evaluation and Explanation

Based on the classroom observation conducted on Friday, 26 September 2025 during the Movie Time activity, students demonstrated their ability to evaluate the characters in The Ron Clark Story and explain the motivations behind their actions. Their spontaneous comments and responses during guided questioning reflected an active engagement with the characters' development, showing that they were able to recognize personality changes, moral qualities, and behavioral transformations throughout the film. As the film presented Ron Clark's persistent efforts in managing the class, S3 expressed an

evaluative remark that highlighted the teacher's character quality  
“Ron is such a patient teacher.” (S3)

This spontaneous comment reveals that the student was able to judge Ron Clark's personality based on his repeated actions in the film. S3's recognition of “patience” as a defining trait indicates evaluative thinking, in which the learner connects observable behavior with a moral or character-based judgment. Another student, S4, gave an evaluative response regarding the character development of Shameika “Shameika used to be stubborn, but now she's confident.” (S4)

This observation shows the student's ability to track a character's transformation over time. S4 did not merely describe the character but evaluated the change, demonstrating awareness of cause-and-effect relationships specifically how Ron's influence contributed to Shameika's shift from resistance to confidence. A more interpretive evaluative remark came from S2, who commented on the emotional and inspirational aspect of Ron's relationship with his students “Ron is really inspiring, and Shameika changed because he trusted her.” (S2)

This reveals a deeper evaluative understanding, where the student connected Ron's belief in Shameika to her behavioral improvement. S2 recognized trust as a motivational factor,

indicating the ability to understand not only what changed, but *why* it changed a key aspect of evaluation in critical thinking.

During the observation, explanation skills also emerged clearly when students connected specific scenes to character motivations. In one moment, S5 explained Ron's caring behavior after witnessing a significant gesture in the film "The scene where Ron visits Tayshawn's house shows that he really cares." (S5)

This explanation reflects the student's ability to justify reasoning by citing evidence from the story. S5 demonstrated understanding of how character actions communicate internal values such as compassion and dedication. When the teacher prompted students to articulate Ron's motivation more explicitly, the following exchange occurred:

**Teacher:** "Why do you think Ron cares about his students?"

**Student:** "Because he even visits their homes to help them."

(S5)

This response further demonstrates explanatory thinking. The student clearly linked Ron's behavior (visiting homes) to a deeper motive (caring for students), showing an ability to provide justification and interpret character intention based on observable evidence from the film.

d. Conflict Element – Analysis and Inference

Based on the classroom observation conducted on Friday, 26 September 2025 during the Movie Time activity, students showed clear analytical and inferential thinking when responding to the conflict presented in *The Ron Clark Story*. Their spontaneous remarks and reactions reflected their ability to identify the source of the conflict, understand its progression, and infer its resolution based on what they observed on the screen. As the conflict became more visible in the early part of the film, particularly when the students rejected Ron Clark's expectations, S1 expressed a natural analytical response "When Tayshawn refused Ron's rules, the conflict became clear." (S1)

This reaction demonstrates the student's ability to detect the central problem of the story. S1 recognized that the refusal of rules marked a turning point that revealed the primary tension between the teacher and the class. This aligns with analytical thinking, where students identify and clarify the core issue in a narrative. Later in the film, as the students' resistance intensified, S6 gave another analytical observation "The biggest conflict happens when the students openly reject Ron." (S6)

This shows that S6 was aware of the escalation of the conflict. The student could distinguish the peak of tension in the story, demonstrating the ability to evaluate when the conflict

reached its most critical stage. Such a response reflects an understanding of how conflict functions within narrative structure. When the storyline moved toward resolution, students were also able to infer the underlying meaning behind the events. S3 articulated this by highlighting the central struggle of the story “The main conflict is between Ron and the students who refuse to learn.” (S3)

This comment indicates that the student was able to interpret not just the surface-level conflict, but the deeper, more conceptual tension involving motivation, discipline, and willingness to change. The ability to infer the essence of the conflict shows an emerging capacity for higher-level reasoning. Finally, as the film portrayed the students gradually opening up to Ron’s guidance, S4 provided a clear inference regarding the resolution of the conflict “The conflict ends because Ron’s patience makes the students start trusting him.” (S4)

This shows that S4 understood the cause-and-effect relationship between Ron’s consistent efforts and the students’ behavioral transformation. The student was able to infer that patience and persistence were the key factors leading to the resolution of the conflict. This reflects a meaningful level of

critical thinking, as the student connected actions with outcomes in a logical and coherent way.

e. Setting Element – Analysis

Based on the classroom observation conducted on Friday, 26 September 2025 during the Movie Time activity, students showed their ability to analyze the role of the setting in *The Ron Clark Story* through spontaneous comments and guided questioning. Their reactions indicate that the students were not only observing the physical environment in the film but were also interpreting how that environment shaped the characters' behavior and influenced the storyline. Early in the film, when the school environment was introduced, one student immediately reacted to the visual depiction of the neighborhood and classroom conditions. S6 spontaneously commented “The school looks really rough, and the students are hard to handle.” (S6)

This remark demonstrates the student's analytical ability to connect the physical appearance of the school with the behavioral challenges faced by the teacher. S6 recognized that the setting was not neutral; instead, it contributed to the difficulties within the narrative. This shows an emerging understanding of cause–effect relationships within a film's context. As the film continued to depict the chaotic classroom atmosphere and the students'

resistance, S2 provided another analytical response “The environment clearly affects the students’ behavior.” (S2)

This comment indicates that S2 was making connections between external conditions and the characters’ actions. By recognizing that the environment influenced student behavior, the student moved beyond surface-level observation and demonstrated the ability to analyze how setting contributes to the development of conflict in the story. During a teacher-guided question toward the middle of the activity, students were asked to think more deeply about the significance of the setting. The teacher prompted:

Teacher: “How does the setting influence the story?”

Student: “The tough school makes it harder for Ron, but also more meaningful.” (S3)

This answer shows inferential thinking, as S3 connected the challenging environment to both the teacher’s struggles and the ultimate emotional impact of the story. The student inferred that the harsh setting intensified Ron’s challenges, thereby making his efforts and eventual successes more significant. This demonstrates an ability to interpret the narrative beyond what is explicitly shown and to infer how setting affects the characters’ motivations and the story’s overall meaning.

f. Theme Element – Evaluation and Inference

Based on the classroom observation conducted on Friday, 26 September 2025 during the Movie Time activity, students demonstrated their ability to evaluate and infer the theme of *The Ron Clark Story* through spontaneous remarks and guided teacher-student questioning. Their responses reflected an active engagement with the moral messages embedded in the film and showed that they were able to interpret the broader meaning behind the events and characters' struggles. During one scene that strongly emphasized the teacher's perseverance, S4 expressed an evaluative reaction "I think the theme is about a teacher's struggle." (S4)

This response indicates that the student recognized the central message of perseverance reflected in Ron Clark's continuous efforts despite facing rejection and challenges. S4 showed evaluative thinking by identifying the struggle as a core thematic element, demonstrating an ability to judge what the story communicates on a deeper level. As the film progressed and more scenes highlighted Ron Clark's commitment, S1 provided another evaluative comment "This movie teaches us to never give up." (S1)

This statement reveals that S1 moved beyond describing the story and instead evaluated its message by interpreting what viewers should learn from it. The student identified the value of persistence as a key takeaway, showing the ability to reflect on the message conveyed through the film's events. Near the end of the activity, S5 expressed an emotionally engaged evaluative response “The theme is really inspiring, it shows dedication and belief in students.” (S5)

Here, S5 connected the film's theme to emotional and motivational elements, demonstrating evaluative thinking by recognizing how Ron Clark's dedication forms the core inspiration of the narrative. The student also articulated the significance of belief in students as a thematic component, showing a deeper interpretation of character motives. During teacher-led questioning, the instructor asked students to reflect on the moral message of the story:

**Teacher:** “What’s the moral of the story?”

**Student:** “The theme is never giving up in teaching.” (S4)

This response shows inferential thinking. The student inferred a moral lesson that was not directly stated but implied throughout the film. By highlighting perseverance in teaching, S4

demonstrated the ability to draw a broader conclusion from repeated narrative patterns.

g. Narrative Structure – Interpretation

Based on the classroom observation conducted on Friday, 26 September 2025 during the Movie Time activity, students showed the ability to interpret the narrative structure of *The Ron Clark Story* by recognizing how the events were organized and how the structure contributed to the coherence of the film. Their spontaneous comments reflected a clear understanding of the sequence of events, including the introduction, conflict, climax, and resolution. Early in the activity, as the story unfolded from Ron's decision to move to New York to the beginning of classroom challenges, S1 interpreted the overall structure by commenting "The structure's clear, first Ron moves, then the class conflict, then a happy ending." (S1)

This statement reflects the student's ability to identify the major stages of the narrative. S1 demonstrated an understanding of the chronological flow and recognized how the storyline develops in a structured way. The remark shows that the student perceived the film as having a logical sequence, which is a key component of narrative interpretation. Later in the activity, as the film reached the climax where Ron Clark nearly reaches his

breaking point, S2 offered another interpretative observation “The story has a neat structure, with the climax when Ron almost gives up but stands back up again.” (S2)

This response indicates a deeper awareness of how narrative structure is shaped by emotional turning points. S2 identified the climax not only as a key event but also as a moment with heightened emotional intensity, showing understanding of how narrative structure builds toward a pivotal moment. Recognizing this turning point demonstrates an ability to interpret the story’s progression beyond surface-level events.

## **2. The Students’ difficulties in analyzing elements of film in “movie time” program at Alfalah for girls**

This section discusses the difficulties faced by students in using film analysis as a medium to develop their critical thinking skills during the Movie Time at the English Program Dormitory. The data obtained from interviews reveal several types of challenges that hindered students’ learning process. These challenges were mainly related to language comprehension, analytical ability, and motivation. To provide a clearer understanding, the students’ difficulties are categorized and discussed in detail in the following sections.

### **a. Difficulty in Explanation**

Based on the interview conducted on Friday, 17 October 2025, several students also experienced difficulty when asked to explain their ideas clearly during the film analysis activity. Although they could understand the film's content, they often struggled to express their understanding in a coherent and detailed way when analyzing scenes or discussing film elements. This difficulty appeared when they were required to explain the meaning of particular scenes or connect the film's events with its moral message. As S1 mentioned that she could understand the material but found it challenging to explain it using her own sentences "I could understand it, but when I had to explain it in my own words, I often got confused." (S1)

Her statement indicates that she had sufficient comprehension but lacked the linguistic ability and confidence to transform her thoughts into clear verbal expression. Similarly, S4 admitted that she often understood the main idea but could not provide detailed explanations "I knew the meaning, but sometimes I couldn't explain it in detail." (S4)

This shows that while students could grasp the general meaning of the film, they had difficulty elaborating on their thoughts and supporting their explanations with evidence or reasoning. The challenge was not only linguistic but also

procedural, as students were unsure how to organize their ideas systematically during the analysis process.

b. Difficulty in Understanding Film Elements

Based on the interview conducted on Friday, 17 October 2025, one of the most common difficulties faced by students in using film analysis was understanding the main elements of the film such as plot, characters, setting, and theme. Many students admitted that they were not familiar with how to analyze these components systematically. Instead of examining how each element contributed to the overall message, they tended to focus only on the surface meaning of the story. This limited their ability to organize ideas and recognize the deeper connections between events and moral values. S1 mentioned that she often enjoyed watching the film but found it difficult to identify the key elements that supported the story's meaning "I liked the film, but sometimes I didn't really know which part was the plot or which one showed the theme. I just followed the story." (S1)

Her statement shows that while she understood the story in general, she lacked awareness of how the film's structure built its message. Similarly, S2 explained that she found it hard to analyze the relationship between the story elements "I could understand

the story, but I didn't know how to connect the characters and the setting with the main idea." (S2)

This response indicates that she understood the content but struggled to analyze how each component interacted to create meaning. The students' statements reveal that without a clear analytical framework, they tended to view the film only as entertainment rather than as material for deeper reflection.

c. Difficulty in Identifying the Main Message or Moral Values

Based on the interview conducted on Friday, 17 October 2025, students also encountered challenges in identifying the main message or moral values of the film. Since many films include implicit meanings, emotional nuances, and cultural references, several students found it difficult to interpret what the film was trying to convey beyond the surface story. They admitted that they sometimes misunderstood the purpose of certain scenes or characters' emotions because they relied only on literal understanding rather than deeper reflection. This limited their ability to extract moral lessons and connect them with real-life contexts. As S5 explained that she sometimes struggled to understand the film's main message because it was not directly stated "The message was not always clear for me. Sometimes I couldn't tell what lesson the film wanted to teach." (S5)

Her statement shows that she expected explicit moral messages, which made it hard for her to interpret implicit meanings or symbolic scenes. Similarly, S6 mentioned that he often focused on what happened in the film rather than what it tried to communicate “I could follow the story, but I didn’t always understand what the film actually wanted to tell us.” (S6)

This response indicates that while she understood the sequence of events, she found it challenging to infer the broader message behind them. Both students’ experiences reveal that identifying a film’s moral or thematic message requires critical observation and inference skills that are still developing among the participants.

d. Uncertainty about the Procedure of Film Analysis

Lastly, based on the interview conducted on Friday, 17 October 2025, a few students expressed uncertainty about the procedure of film analysis itself. They were unsure about what steps to take after watching the film whether they should summarize the story, identify its elements, or share personal reflections. This lack of clarity made some students hesitant and less confident in completing the analysis task. The absence of a structured framework caused them to focus more on retelling the story rather than analyzing it critically. S1 admitted that she often

felt confused about what the teacher expected after the film ended  
“After watching, I didn’t really know what to do first, should I  
tell the story again or write what I think about it?” (S1)

Her statement shows that she was uncertain about the steps required in the analysis process, which made her approach the task in an unstructured way. Likewise, S6 shared that she sometimes guessed what to include in her analysis because there was no fixed pattern to follow “Sometimes I just wrote what I understood from the film because I wasn’t sure how to analyze it properly.” (S6)

This response suggests that she recognized the importance of film analysis but lacked guidance on how to organize her ideas systematically.

## **B. Discussion**

### **1. Elements of film supporting students’ critical thinking through English film analysis of “movie time” program at Al-falah for girls**

#### **a. Story Element – Interpretation and Inference**

The observation showed that students demonstrated strong interpretation and inference skills when engaging with the story elements of *The Ron Clark Story*. Their spontaneous remarks

such as those expressed by S1, S2, and S3 indicated that they were actively processing the narrative rather than watching passively.

These reactions demonstrate two core components of critical thinking identified in P. Facione (2015):

- 1) Interpretation, which involves understanding and clarifying meaning based on available information
- 2) Inference, which includes drawing logical conclusions from patterns, events, or observed behaviors.

In the context of film, interpretation requires the viewer to integrate visual cues (e.g., gestures, setting), auditory cues (e.g., tone, dialogue), and narrative information to form coherent understanding (Kozma, 1991).

Furthermore, students' inferences about the moral or deeper message of the film are consistent with Rosenblatt (1994) theory, which posits that viewers construct meaning through an interactive process between text (in this case, film) and personal experience.

b. Plot Element- Analysis and Evaluation

The observation showed that students demonstrated clear analytical and evaluative thinking when engaging with the plot structure of *The Ron Clark Story*. Their spontaneous comments,

particularly from S4 and S6, revealed that they were actively identifying how the sequence of events built toward the climax and resolution.

These findings align with P. Facione (2015), explanation that critical thinking involves the ability to analyze information by detecting relationships and breaking down complex ideas, as well as evaluating the importance and impact of events within a given context.

The results also correspond with Serafini (2015) multimodal literacy theory, which argues that visual texts like films enhance learners' analytical and evaluative reasoning by presenting meaning through integrated modes such as visuals, sound, dialogue, and emotional cues. Because films depict plot development clearly through multimodal signals, learners can more easily recognize rising action, climax, and resolution.

c. Character Element – Evaluation and Explanation

Students demonstrated strong evaluative and explanatory thinking when engaging with the characters in *The Ron Clark Story*. Their spontaneous reactions and guided responses indicated that they were able to make judgments about personality traits, recognize behavioral transformation, and explain motives based on evidence from the film.

These findings align closely with P. Facione (2015), conceptualization of critical thinking, particularly in the domains of evaluation and explanation. Facione emphasizes that evaluation involves making reasoned judgments about actions, intentions, and moral qualities, while explanation requires the articulation of reasoning supported by clear evidence. The students' comments evaluating Ron's patience, recognizing Shameika's transformation, and citing film scenes to support their interpretations illustrate the application of both cognitive skills within an authentic learning context.

The results are also supported by Serafini (2015), multimodal literacy theory, which highlights that films provide learners with layered visual, auditory, and contextual cues that deepen their understanding of character motives and emotional states. Because films present dialogue, facial expressions, gestures, and situational context simultaneously, they create ideal conditions for students to infer why characters behave as they do and to evaluate how they change over time. The evaluative remarks and explanatory responses from students in this study reflect the kinds of interpretive opportunities described by

Serafini, demonstrating how multimodal storytelling can support the development of complex reasoning processes.

d. Conflict Element – Analysis and Inference

Students' responses during the Movie Time activity demonstrated clear development of analytical and inferential thinking when engaging with the conflict in *The Ron Clark Story*. Throughout the observation, students were able to identify when the central conflict emerged, recognize how it intensified, and infer the underlying causes of its resolution. This indicates that the student could distinguish a significant narrative problem from general plot progression an ability that aligns with Ennis (2015) description of early-stage analytical thinking, where learners must detect and articulate the presence of a central issue within a broader context.

The student was able to determine which moment represented the height of tension in the story, showing a clear understanding of narrative structure and the progression of struggle between teacher and students. This reflects the ability to observe patterns of behavior, evaluate shifts in emotional intensity, and interpret how repeated resistance contributes to increasing conflict skills that correspond to higher-level analytical processing.

Inferential reasoning became particularly evident when students interpreted the cause of the conflict's resolution. Instead of merely stating that the conflict ended, the student identified a causal relationship between the teacher's actions and the students' eventual willingness to cooperate. This form of reasoning is consistent with P. Facione (2015) concept of inference, which emphasizes drawing logical conclusions from evidence and understanding the relationships between actions and outcomes.

These patterns of student responses align closely with Ennis (2015) conceptualization of analytical and inferential reasoning. According to Ennis, critical thinking involves recognizing problems, identifying relevant factors that influence those problems, and tracing logical consequences that emerge from individuals' actions. In this study, students demonstrated these abilities when they detected the central struggle between Ron and his students, evaluated how the conflict intensified throughout the narrative, and inferred the underlying causes of its resolution. The students' ability to articulate these elements indicates that the film provided a meaningful platform for practicing analytical observation and logical interpretation, contributing to the development of their overall critical thinking skills.

e. Setting Element – Analysis

Students' analytical reasoning became evident when they interpreted the setting in *The Ron Clark Story*, showing that they did not perceive the environment merely as a physical background but as a meaningful element that shaped character behaviour, conflict dynamics, and the overall progression of the narrative. That response shows that the student was not simply describing the setting, but was interpreting it as an influential factor that created tension and shaped the challenges faced by the characters. Such awareness reflects the ability to identify contextual relationships an essential analytical skill.

Rather than viewing the setting as neutral, the student recognized it as a condition that shaped the emotional tone of the film and affected the unfolding of events. This aligns with P. Facione (2015) conceptualization of analysis as the ability to examine contextual influences, recognize relationships between elements, and break down complex situations into meaningful components.

This analytical engagement deepened during the guided questioning phase. This indicates that the student understood how the setting intensified the protagonist's journey and contributed to the thematic weight of the narrative. S3's response reflects the

processes described by P. Facione (2015) as interpretation and inference, where learners derive meaning from contextual cues and draw logical conclusions about the implications of a narrative element.

These findings are supported by Fiorella & Mayer (2015) work on multimedia learning, which explains that settings in audiovisual media serve as “contextual organizers” that help learners construct deeper understanding by integrating visual cues with cognitive processing. According to Mayer, contextual visuals allow students to observe cause–effect relationships more easily, helping them link environment with behaviour and narrative outcomes. In this study, the film’s depiction of the deteriorated neighbourhood, crowded classrooms, and disorganized school atmosphere provided rich contextual information that students used to analyze how the setting shaped character actions and story tension. The responses from S6, S2, and S3 illustrate this process clearly, demonstrating that students were actively interpreting environmental cues as part of their meaning-making.

Taken together, the students’ ability to identify the influence of the setting, interpret its significance, and infer its connection to character behaviour demonstrates that the Movie Time activity

successfully facilitated analytical thinking. Through the combination of visual context offered by the film and guided reflection provided by the teacher, students engaged in the types of analytical processes described by both theories, showing that they were not merely watching the film but actively examining the relationship between environment, conflict, and character development.

f. Theme Element – Evaluation and Inference

Students' ability to articulate the thematic messages of *The Ron Clark Story*—such as perseverance, dedication, and belief in students—demonstrates their capacity for evaluative and inferential thinking. Instead of merely describing what happened in the film, the students interpreted the underlying moral meaning communicated through character actions and narrative development. This indicates that they were engaging in deeper cognitive processing, moving from surface-level comprehension toward the evaluation of values, lessons, and broader implications embedded in the story.

The student was not simply recounting events but was extracting a central message through interpretation. Similarly, S1's statement that the film teaches viewers “to never give up”

reflects inferential thinking, as the student drew a generalizable principle from multiple scenes of perseverance.

These forms of reasoning align with Rosenblatt (1994), which argues that meaning emerges through a transaction between the text and the reader (or viewer). According to Rosenblatt, thematic understanding is not passively received but actively constructed as the viewer interacts with emotional, moral, and symbolic cues within the story. Students' thematic interpretations show this transactional process: they responded to scenes emotionally, cognitively, and personally, and these responses enabled them to derive broader meanings such as perseverance and dedication. In other words, their interpretations reflect a merging of textual evidence and personal reflection—exactly the kind of meaning-making Rosenblatt describes.

The findings are also supported by P. Facione (2015), particularly the skills of evaluation and inference, which are central components of higher-order reasoning. Facione states that evaluation involves assessing the credibility or significance of information, while inference refers to drawing logical conclusions from evidence. Students demonstrated both skills: they evaluated which aspects of the story were important enough to represent its theme, and they inferred moral lessons by

synthesizing character actions, emotional turning points, and narrative outcomes. For instance, identifying the theme of perseverance required students to weigh the importance of Ron Clark’s challenges, and concluding that the film teaches viewers “not to give up” required inference based on observed patterns across the narrative.

Combining these two theoretical perspectives illustrates how students’ thematic reasoning developed during the Movie Time activity. Rosenblatt explains *how* students derive meaning—from personal engagement and reflective interaction with the narrative—while Facione explains *what type* of cognitive skills are demonstrated: evaluation, inference, interpretation, and reasoning. Together, these theories support the finding that film analysis provided students with meaningful opportunities to practice constructing, judging, and justifying thematic interpretations, demonstrating clear development of critical thinking skills.

g. Narrative Structure – Interpretation

Students’ ability to recognize the narrative sequencing of *The Ron Clark Story* including the introduction, rising conflict, climax, and resolution demonstrates a clear capacity for interpretative thinking. Their responses reflected not only

awareness of what happened in the film, but also an understanding of how the structure shaped meaning and emotional progression.

This type of reasoning reflects interpretative skills as defined in P. Facione (2015), particularly the sub-skills of categorization, decoding significance, and clarifying meaning. When students recognized that the story begins with Ron Clark's move, escalates through conflict, peaks at the emotional climax, and ends with meaningful resolution, they demonstrated categorization by organizing segments of the narrative into coherent structural units. They also engaged in decoding significance by understanding the importance of each structural stage, such as why the climax functions as the emotional high point and how the resolution brings closure. These cognitive processes indicate that students were interpreting the story in a holistic, structured way rather than processing each scene in isolation.

The finding is further supported by Canning & Wilson (2000) who argues that films are highly effective in teaching narrative structure because they present events in a clear temporal and causal sequence. Unlike written texts, where students must imagine the flow of events, films visually and audibly represent the progression from one stage of the narrative to the next. This

multimodal presentation helps learners understand how scenes connect to create continuity and how narrative tension is built and resolved. The visual nature of film enhances students' comprehension of sequencing, pacing, and structural coherence, making narrative interpretation more accessible for language learners.

In this study, students' understanding of narrative structure suggests that the Movie Time activity successfully supported their ability to interpret how events are organized and how each narrative stage holds significance within the whole film. By identifying the introduction, conflict, climax, and resolution, students were not only following the story but were also demonstrating structured interpretative thinking an essential component of critical thinking outlined by Facione. This indicates that engaging with narrative films can foster students' ability to analyze story progression, understand causal relationships, and interpret the function of key narrative moments.

## **2. The Students' difficulties in analyzing elements of film in “movie time” program at Alfalah for Girls**

### **a. Difficulty in Explanation**

Students' difficulty in explaining their ideas, reflects a clear gap between their ability to understand the film internally and their ability to articulate that understanding verbally. Although they demonstrated adequate comprehension of the film's events and messages, they struggled when required to express that comprehension in a coherent, detailed, and structured manner. This challenge became especially evident during tasks that demanded interpretation such as explaining the meaning behind particular scenes, interpreting character motivations, or connecting events to the film's broader moral message. Their struggle suggests that the limitation they faced was not related to understanding the story itself, but to transforming that understanding into clear verbal reasoning.

This aligns with P. Facione (2015) description of the cognitive skill of *explanation*, which he defines as the ability to communicate one's reasoning clearly, justify interpretations, and support conclusions using relevant evidence. According to Facione, explanation is one of the most demanding components of critical thinking because it requires learners to make their implicit thought processes explicit. In the case of S1 and S4, their comprehension remained internalized; they were able to understand what they watched, but they could not clearly

articulate *how* they interpreted the information or *why* they arrived at certain conclusions. Their difficulty indicates that they had not yet developed the ability to structure their thoughts, select the key details needed to support their ideas, or verbally communicate the logical connection between evidence and interpretation.

This issue is further supported by Alatalo et al. (2017), who explain that many learners struggle to construct coherent explanations because they lack experience in organizing ideas and forming logical relationships between them. According to their findings, students often understand content at a surface level but struggle to express deeper reasoning due to limited practice in generating structured arguments. Their confusion reflects a lack of confidence and a limited ability to sequence ideas, both of which are essential for effective explanation.

Alatalo et al. also emphasize that explaining an idea requires both cognitive clarity and linguistic proficiency. Students must select relevant observations, connect these observations to a broader interpretation, and express these connections fluently. The interview data show that the students had not yet developed these skills fully, which explains why they tended to give general statements rather than detailed justifications. The absence of a

structured approach to explanation further contributed to their difficulty, indicating that they would benefit from explicit instruction, modelling, and guided practice in explaining their reasoning.

b. Difficulty in Understanding Film Elements

Students reported having difficulty identifying and analyzing key film elements such as plot, character, setting, and theme which indicates that they tended to perceive the film as a single continuous story rather than a structured narrative composed of interconnected components. This challenge significantly limited their ability to engage in deeper critical thinking, as analysis requires the ability to deconstruct a text into meaningful parts and examine how those parts function individually and collectively.

The difficulty aligns with Serafini (2017) explanation that learners often struggle to interpret multimodal texts because such texts combine visual, emotional, linguistic, and spatial elements simultaneously. Unlike traditional print texts, films present information through multiple channels at once images, gestures, expressions, dialogue, soundtrack, pacing which can overwhelm learners who do not yet possess explicit strategies for organizing these layers of meaning. According to Serafini, students need structured guidance to learn how to interpret multimodal

elements, because without explicit instruction they tend to process only the surface storyline.

Arslan (2021) further supports this finding by arguing that learners frequently struggle to analyze narrative components because they are unaccustomed to examining how these elements interact to produce thematic meaning. Arslan explains that comprehension alone is not sufficient for analysis; students must understand how narrative elements function in relation to each other. This includes recognizing how the setting influences characters' decisions, how conflicts arise from character motivations, and how themes emerge from the progression of events. The students' remarks show that they lacked this analytical perspective. Instead of examining the internal structure of the narrative, they engaged with the story only as a sequence of events, which prevented them from interpreting its deeper significance.

The alignment between the students' experiences and these theoretical perspectives suggests that their difficulty did not stem from a lack of interest or inability to understand the story itself, but rather from the absence of an analytical framework that would help them dissect the film. Without explicit instruction on how to analyze film elements, the students were unable to move beyond

basic comprehension to more sophisticated forms of reasoning such as categorizing narrative functions, identifying relationships between elements, or generating thematic interpretations. This difficulty underscores the need for structured teaching strategies such as graphic organizers, guided questions, and modelling of film analysis to help students develop the analytical skills necessary for critical engagement with narrative media.

c. Difficulty in Identifying the Main Message or Moral Values

Students experienced notable difficulty when attempting to identify the main message or moral values conveyed in *The Ron Clark Story*, particularly when these messages were implied indirectly through character development or symbolic moments. Their responses reveal that they tended to rely heavily on literal information observable actions, dialogue, and plot events rather than engaging with deeper layers of meaning that required interpretation and reflection. As a result, they struggled to infer the film's underlying moral lessons, indicating a gap in their ability to transition from basic comprehension to inferential thinking.

This difficulty directly aligns with P. Facione (2015) description of inference as a core component of critical thinking. According to Facione, inference involves drawing reasonable

conclusions from evidence, identifying hidden assumptions, and interpreting meaning beyond what is explicitly stated. Their reliance on literal understanding suggests that they had not yet developed the habit of examining patterns, emotional cues, and contextual elements that contribute to moral interpretation.

The students' struggle is further supported by Yasin & Yusuf (2020), whose research demonstrates that learners often find it challenging to interpret thematic meaning in audiovisual texts. According to their study, students tend to understand films at the surface level because audiovisual media present a continuous flow of visual and auditory information. Although this makes the storyline easier to follow, it can simultaneously distract students from recognizing deeper symbolic messages or implicit values embedded in the narrative. Yasin and Yusuf argue that without guided questioning or reflective prompts, learners rarely make the cognitive shift from "What happened?" to "What does this mean?".

Taken together, the perspectives of those theories highlight that identifying moral messages requires students to integrate both inferential reasoning and thematic interpretation. In this study, students' difficulty arose not because they lacked interest in the film, but because they lacked the cognitive and strategic

tools needed to interpret meaning beyond literal events. Their challenges emphasize the importance of explicit instruction in thematic analysis and reflective discussion, which can guide learners toward deeper engagement with the moral and emotional dimensions of narrative texts.

d. Uncertainty About the Procedure of Film Analysis

Students reported uncertainty regarding the steps involved in conducting film analysis, which significantly hindered their ability to engage in higher-order thinking. Their confusion about whether they were expected to summarize the story, identify narrative elements, or offer personal reflections illustrates a lack of procedural knowledge an essential foundation for effective analytical work. Because they did not know how to approach the task systematically, they defaulted to simply retelling the film's events rather than examining them critically. This tendency to focus on surface-level recounting rather than deeper analysis shows that the students were unsure about how to translate observations into structured critical responses.

Rahimi & Soleymani (2021) explain that learners working with multimodal materials, such as films, often require explicit scaffolding to help them move through the stages of comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation. Unlike written

texts, which present information in a linear form, films present simultaneous streams of visual, auditory, and emotional information. Without procedural guidance such as “first identify the conflict,” “then explain character motivation,” or “support your interpretation with evidence from scenes” students struggle to determine what aspects of the material should be analyzed and how their ideas should be organized.

This challenge is further supported by Kress & Bezemer (2015), who argue that multimodal texts require structured analytic frameworks to help students navigate the complexity of interpreting multiple modes of meaning at once. Because films combine image, sound, gesture, tone, and narrative progression, learners need guidance to distinguish which elements are meaningful for analysis and how those elements work together. Without such structure, students tend to revert to the simplest task summarizing because it is the most familiar and least cognitively demanding. This pattern was evident among the students, who recognized the importance of film analysis but felt unsure about how to organize their ideas into a coherent response.

When students do not understand the steps of analysis, they cannot progress to deeper levels of reasoning such as inference, evaluation, or thematic interpretation. Thus, providing a clear

analytical framework is essential for enabling learners to transform passive viewing into active, structured critical thinking.

Although the findings show that several film elements successfully elicited critical thinking indicators such as interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, and explanation, the study also reveals that not all critical thinking indicators emerged across all elements of the film. The data indicate that students primarily demonstrated cognitive processes related to understanding and interpreting the narrative, analyzing conflicts and settings, evaluating characters, and making inferences about thematic messages. However, the indicator of self-regulation, which involves monitoring one's own thinking, questioning personal assumptions, and evaluating the credibility of one's reasoning, did not appear during the Movie Time activity. Students did not explicitly demonstrate metacognitive awareness or reflective monitoring of their thought processes, which is consistent with P. Facione (2015) explanation that self-regulation is the most advanced and least observable component of critical thinking, typically requiring structured metacognitive prompts or reflective tasks for it to surface.