Journal of English Educational Study (JEES)
Volume 9 Issue 2 November 2026 Page 121-130
E-ISSN: 2655-0776

THE ABILITIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF STUDENTS OF SMAN 8 BENGKULU CITY IN ANALYZING THE INTRINSIC ELEMENTS OF THE DISNEY MOVIE MUFASA: THE LION KING (2024)

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Submitted: 2025-12-25
Accepted: 2026-10-30

Abstract: This study aims to determine the abilities and difficulties of class XI.7 students of SMAN 8 Bengkulu City in analyzing elements in the film Mufasa: The Lion King (2024). This study involved 33 students and used qualitative methods. Data were collected through written analysis, interviews; observations; and documentation. The collected data were then analyzed by filtering, presenting, and drawing conclusions. The result showed that students were able to identify the film's theme well, but still had difficulty analyzing other elements such as characters; storyline; setting; and moral values in the film. Overall, students' abilities in analyzing film elements were still simple and not yet in depth.

Keywords**:** Film elements; Students analytical skills; Mufasa; The Lion King (2024).

INTRODUCTION

Literary work are a form of human expression that depicts ideas, values, life experiences, and imagination through language (Sagala et al., 2022; Ferniawan et al., 2025; Khalik et al., 2025; Purba et al., 2021; Putu et al., 2021). In Indonesian language learning, literature is not only for entertainment, but also very important to help students develop critical thinking and analytical skills and appreciate works (Awalia, 2025; Huda et al., 2022; Rosmiati, 2022; Sari et al., 2020). One of the main competencies in literary studies is the ability to analyze intrinsic elements, which include theme, characters and characterization, plot, setting, conflict, moral, and point of view (Sakanti & Widodo, 2020;Pandiangan et al., 2024). Mastery of these elements enables students to understand the structure of a work and interpret its meaning comprehensively (Sagala et al., 2022;Krismanto et al., 2023; Hirata, 2022; Ulina et al., 2021). However, in practice, many students still experience difficulty in recognizing and linking these intrinsic elements, especially when dealing with complex texts, such as films, which are considered a form of modern literature.

The problems in this study became increasingly apparent when students were faced with the task of analyzing films containing audio-visual elements, cinematographic techniques, and implicit symbols. The results of observations of the learning process at SMAN 8 Bengkulu City showed that some students were only able to recognize basic elements, such as main characters and important elements as a whole. This condition indicates an empirical problem in students' ability to understand multimodal texts as required by the applicable curriculum.

Research by Sakanti and Widodo (2020) states that the use of film in learning can help improve students' visual literacy. However, the use of film does not necessarily improve students ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of a film. The results of this study align with that research, although the film studied previously was more general in nature than Mufas: The Lion King (2024), which has a more complex storyline. Furthermore, Restianty (2024) also explains that films can increase students' learning motivation, but does not always impact students ability to analyze story structure. These two studies indicate that using films as a learning medium presents challenges, despite differences in assessing students' level of understanding of intrinsic elements.

Several studies have shown that film can be an effective learning medium to capture students' attention and help them understand the storyline. However, the use of film has not yet fully improved students analytical skills. This is because analyzing films requires a deep understanding of various visual elements (Ningrum et al., 2024; Hendrick, 2019; Hidayah, 2016; Amna, 2022; Firmansyah & Manesah, 2024; Wulandari et al., 2025). Several studies have also revealed that students still struggle with visual design, with the intended meaning of the film's story. Furthermore, previous research confirms that students at the secondary school level still need guidance in understanding and analyzing the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of modern films. These findings demonstrate the need for a more focused and in-depth analytical approach so that the use of film in learning is not merely passive viewing, but can function as a means of meaningfully strengthening students' analytical thinking skills.

Nevertheless, the body of existing research indicates that several gaps remain. Empirical studies that specifically focus on students' capacity to analyze intrinsic elements in films characterized by high visual and narrative complexity are still scarce. To date, research on film in education has focused primarily on older films or titles frequently used in the classroom. Consequently, newer films with more contemporary styles and artistic elements are rarely studied. Furthermore, film analysis studies at the secondary school level, particularly in the Bengkulu region, are still very limited. This leaves a stark picture of literature learning, particularly at SMAN 8 Bengkulu City, incomplete.

The selection of Mufasa: The Lion King (2024) as the research object was based on its comprehensive intrinsic elements and high cinematographic quality. The film presents a compelling story, well developed characters, and numerous meaningful visual symbols, as well as themes of power, betrayal, family, and the search for identity. The complexity of these elements makes it an appropriate film to assess students' ability to analyze and interpret multimodal text. In addition to offering challenges from an aesthetic and narrative perspective, this film also has a high level of popularity among teenagers, making it contextual and interesting for students at the secondary school level. The urgency of this research is further strengthened considering the still

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E-ISSN: 2655-0776

limited educational studies in Indonesia that use this film as a research object. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to the enrichment of scientific studies and the development of audiovisual-based literary learning approaches.

Thus, this study is directed to answer the question regarding how students of SMAN 8 Bengkulu City analyze the intrinsic elements of the film Mufasa: The Lion King (2024). Specifically, this study aims to describe the students' abilities and difficulties in recognizing and understanding the intrinsic elements of the film, as well as identifying the factors that influence the emergence of these difficulties. The uniqueness of this study lies in the use of modern films with a high level of complexity, the capture of local empirical contexts that are still rarely studied, and the examination of the relationship between intrinsic elements and audiovisual characteristics displayed in the film.

METHOD

This study applies a qualitative descriptive approach with the aim of describing students' abilities and difficulties in analyzing the intrinsic elements of the film Mufasa: The Lion King (2024). The research subjects consisted of 33 students of class XI.7 of SMAN 8 Bengkulu City. Data collection was carried out through a written test in the form of an intrinsic element analysis task, unstructured interviews involving a number of students and teachers, and documentation covering the results of assignments and learning activities in class. The research instruments included assignment sheets and documentation materials. The data obtained were analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The validity of the data was tested by applying triangulation of sources and techniques, as well as member checking. The research procedures included the preparation stage, implementation of learning and data collection, to the analysis stage and preparation of the research report.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

a. Finding

Students' Ability to Analyze Intrinsic Elements of Films

1. Ability to Identify Themes

The results of the written assignment show that students were generally able to identify the theme of Mufasa: The Lion King (2024) quite well. Almost all students succeeded in explaining the main theme in a way that was consistent with the storyline of the film. The students' answers indicate that they quite easily understood the story's main message. This is evident in the following students answer:

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Test Data 01:

" This film tells the story of Mufasa life journey until he find his true identity and grows into a wise leader"

Test Data 07:

"The theme that I got from this film is courage and steadfastness in family relationships"

From these two answers, it's clear that the students understood the film's main messages, such as struggle, leadership, and family values. They were able to identify the theme based on the entire story, not just one specific section. Furthermore, the theme was written in their own language, indicating that it included elements easily understood by the students.

To support the written test results, the Indonesian language teacher interviewed also stated the same thing. The teacher explained that students had little difficulty identifying the theme because the film's main message was clearly evident in the storyline and the main character's journey.

The teacher stated:

"Students usually quickly understand the theme because the main message is already clearly visible from the storyline"

From the teacher's explanation, it can be seen that the use of film helps students grasp the essence of the story more quickly. Strong imagery, clear conflict, and the main character's journey make it easier for students to grasp the story's meaning. Based on this, the students' ability to determine the theme can be said to be quite good. Theme is an intrinsic element that is relatively easier to understand than other elements. Furthermore, students are able to convey the theme accurately and in accordance with the film's content, in line with the teacher's observations during the learning process.

2. Students' Ability to Analyze Characters and Characterization

Students' abilities in analyzing characters and characterization still show varying levels of understanding. The written test results show that most students were able to name the main characters in the film "Mufasa: The Lion King" (2024). They were also able to identify important characters in the story and their basic traits. This can be seen in the following student answers:

Test Data 11:

"Mufasa is the main character. He is known to be friendly and always tries to protect the people around him"

These answers demonstrate that students are able to recognize the basic characteristics and actions of the characters. However, the descriptions provided are still general and do not include in-depth analysis. The students' answers showed that they were able to recognize the characteristics and behavior of the characters discussed. However, the explanations provided were

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still simplistic and lacked depth. Students only mentioned the characters' general characteristics without connecting them to the events or storyline in the film.

However, some students demonstrated more mature analytical skills. This is evident in the following answers:

Test Data 18:

"Mufasa grew from an ordinary lion cub into a leader because he had to overcome many problems."

These answers indicate that some students are beginning to understand how characters develop. They not only identify character traits but also understand that Mufasa's character changes are influenced by the experiences and challenges he faces. However, most students still struggle with this type of analysis. This is also evident in the following student interviews:

Student 03:

"I can name the characters, but I still don't understand why their attitudes change and what makes them the way they are in the story"

This statement shows that students are familiar with the character being discussed, but they are unable to explain their motivation, changes, or development in depth. They are also unable to connect changes in the character attitudes or actions to the conflicts and important events in the film. It could be said that their ability to analyze character obvious traits, without connecting them to the story, conflict, or the meaning of visual symbols in the film scenes.

3. Ability to Analyze Flow

Based on the student's ability to analyze the plot of Mufasa: The king (2024), it appears to be the most understood sequence of the main events in the story. Written test results showed that many students could recount the storyline from beginning to end. This is evident in one student answer below:

Test Data 09:

"This story begins when Mufas is a child in the jungle. Throughout his life, he faces various obstacles until he finally becomes a leader"

In terms of chronological order, students were generally able to recognize Judging from the story's sequence, most students were able to understand the plot, which begins with a depiction of Mufasa's childhood, continues with the various challenges he faces, and culminates in his role as a leader. This ability indicates that students have grasped the broad outline of the story line. However, not all students can describe the plot in greater detail. Some simply retell the film's content without highlighting key elements such as the beginning, conflict, climax, and resolution. This is clearly evident in the following example

Test Data 14:

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"The text is structured in two long paragraphs that only tell a summary of the story, without distinguishing the stages of the plot or explaining the main conflict that builds the story"

Some students seemed more interested in retelling the story than analyzing its plot. They could follow the sequence of events but struggled to group events into plot stages, such as character introduction, conflict, climax, and resolution. During observations, some students appeared hesitant and confused when asked to point out the climax or significant changes in the story. Although they followed the storyline, they still struggled to grasp key moments that marked plot changes.

4. Ability to Analyze Setting

Students' ability to understand settings is still relatively low. Based on their written test responses, it's clear that students typically only describe the location of the event. They fail to explain the purpose of setting, its relationship to the story, or its impact on the plot. Here are some examples of student responses:

Example of findings from written tests:

Test Data 05:

"The setting is in a forest and a meadow"

This answer indicates that students only mention the main locations in the film without explaining how the settings support the story's atmosphere, reinforce the conflict, or have specific symbolic meanings. In the assignment documentation, most students' answers are similar, namely, mentioning spaces or places without analyzing their functions. Furthermore, no students associated setting with visual symbols such as color, lighting, or the tone of the atmosphere that appear in the scene. This indicates that students have not yet reached the interpretive stage of understanding setting as part of the story's structure.

5. Moral Analysis Skills

In terms of moral values, students were able to convey the general moral message, but their explanations were not supported by visual evidence or specific scenes in the film.

Example of student answers:

Test Data 12:

"The message I got is that we must be brave and never give up easily"

This answer indicates that the student understood the basic moral values in the film, but did not explain how these messages were conveyed through the storyline, characters, or conflict. Furthermore, the student did not mention specific scenes that could reinforce the meaning of the message.

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Students' Difficulties in Analyzing Intrinsic Elements of Films

The results show that students of class XI.7 SMAN 8 Bengkulu City experienced several difficulties in analyzing the intrinsic elements of the film Mufasa: The Lion King (2024), particularly at the interpretive level. Even though students already know the intrinsic elements, they are still not able to relate one element to another.

The most prominent problem in this study was seen in students' ability to analyze characters and characterization. In general, students were able to name characters and explain their basic traits quite easily. However, most studet still struggled when asked to explain character development and the reason for changes in character attitudes throughout the story. This is evident in one students answer below.

"I can name the characters, but I'm still confused about explaining why changes occur in the story" (Student 03"

The written test result also showed the same thing. Many students' answers were simply general explanations and lacked analytical explanations. For example, the following statement:

"Mufasa is kind and always looks after his friends" (Test Data 11)

Students only mentioned character traits without connecting them to the conflict or events that led to the character's change. The same thing was evident in their understanding of the plot. Although most students could follow the sequence of events, they were unable to identify key elements of the plot, such as the beginning, the climax, and the resolution. This is evident in the following answer:

"Mufasa faced many challenges and ultimately became a leader" (Test Data 09). This answer narrates the story's plot rather than explaining its structured plot.

Students' ability to analyze settings is also limited. They typically only mention the location where the story takes place without explaining the setting's role in creating atmosphere or contributing to the conflict. The student's answer:

"This story takes place in a forest and grassland" (Test Data 05) indicates that students still lack an understanding of the role of setting in film.

Similarly, regarding moral values, students can convey a general moral message but are unable to connect it to specific scenes or events. The students answer:

"We must be brave and never give up easily" (Test Data 12)

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that students' abilities are still dominated by descriptive analysis. Although the intrinsic elements of the film can be identified, students still have difficulty understanding their meaning and explaining the interrelationships between these elements within the overall narrative. Therefore, more focused and reflective film-based literature learning is needed to encourage the development of students' analytical abilities.

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b. Discussion

Based on the results at SMAN 8 Bengkulu city, it appears that students actually benefited greatly from using the film ‘’mufasa: the lion king (2024) to understand the overall story. However, when it came to a more in-depth analysis of intrinsic elements, their abilities were still limited to the descriptive stage. Compared to the research of Skanti and Widodo (2020), there are similar results: the use of film did improve visual literacy, but it did not necessarily boost students’s critical analysis skills. The difference is that this study used a more modern and complex film, which actually further demonstrated the gaps in students’ ability to grasp complex visual symbols. Furthermore, these findings align with research by Restianty (2024), which states that although film effectively increases learning motivation, this does not always translate directly into students’ understanding of the story’s deeper structure.

Several factors contribute to student’s difficulties with this analysis. First, students are unfamiliar with multimodal texts. This contrasts with the research of Wulandari et al. (2025) who showed that intensive guidance on visual elements can help students, in their research, students tended to ignore cinematographic aspects and focus solely on dialogue. This is because they are accustomed to a textual literary approach (books), so when watching films, they miss details such as the setting or changes in character expression. Second, there are obstacles in connecting intrinsic elements. In this study, students could mention the setting but failed to explain its function in the conflict. This contrasts with the results of research by Firmansyah and Manesah (2024), who found that without a clear analytical framework, students are stuck with only a summary of the story.

Furthermore, the researchers observed that students tended to provide normative and ‘’rote’’ answers regarding moral messages. They struggled to connect these messages to specific scenes in the film. This is reinforced by the findings of Nigrum et al. (2024), who stated that film analysis requires a deep understanding of visual design to convey the story’s meaning fully. Comparing the results of this study with previous studies, it is clear that the problems faced by students in Bengkulu are part of a broader challenge in teaching audiovisual literature in Indonesia. Students need more than just engaging viewing: they need analytical tools that can help them dissect how visual and narrative elements work together to construct meaning.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the ability of 11th-grade students at SMAN 8 Bengkulu City to analyze the intrinsic elements of the film "Mufasa: The Lion King" (2024) is at an intermediate level, with uneven mastery of each element. Students are relatively able to identify the theme because the film's main idea is clearly conveyed through the storyline. However, for

other intrinsic elements, including character and characterization, plot, setting, and moral values, students' analytical skills are still dominated by descriptive understanding and have not yet developed into interpretive ones. In general, students are able to identify characters, understand the sequence of events, and identify the setting and general moral message. However, they still have difficulty explaining character development, structuring the plot, understanding the function of setting, and linking moral values to specific scenes in the film. The students' main difficulty lies in shifting from simply recognizing intrinsic elements to integrative analysis within an audiovisual context. Therefore, a more systematic and analytical approach to film-based literature learning is needed so that films are not only used as a means of entertainment but also effectively develop students' analytical skills in modern literary works.

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