

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

As a human, we can never stop learning. Every day we learn something new no matter how minuscule it is. In the beginning, we can only learn by imitating people near us, as we grow up our sources of learning are also begin to expand, no longer limited to merely imitating people. One example of those sources is a film. In the general-purpose, film is used as entertainment, but if we as the audiences try to look deeper, a film (fiction or not) is capable to give lessons to them. Other than the plot, audiences can learn something by analyzing the character. This statement is supported by Madden (2001) as he believed that character's action and belief in a story can involve the audience's emotions and a good story is capable to provide lessons and self-understanding to them. From this reason, the writer is interested in learning about characters in a film and the writer decided to use a film titled *The Ron Clark Story* as the basis of the research.

The writer chooses *The Ron Clark Story* as a research material because this film has many educational values that inspire the viewers, especially teachers and students. First, this film shows real problems encountered in a teacher's daily life: noisy students, lack of concentration among students, disrespectful students, and undisciplined students. In this film, Ron shows some innovative ways to make the class lively and fun which help the students to pay attention, learn, and respect the teacher. Second, the story's plot is not focused on how students get good grades but

more into his relationship with his students. Other than teaching with creative ways, Ron Clark also teaches attitude, gratitude, punishment, and respect among others his students and motivates them. This shows that Ron teaches his students to get a high score and to have good attitudes. The third and last interesting things about this film lies on the student. The students in *The Ron Clark Story* are described by Headmaster Turner as uncontrollable and bad at both social life and grades, to the point that previous teachers were given up to teach them. At first, the students, to summarize were bad, selfish, and arrogant, but as the story progress it turns out that the students were not bad but they just had a rough background which hardens their personalities.

*The Ron Clark Story* is a biographical film about a teacher named Ron Clark. Ron started his teaching career in 1994 at an elementary school in North Carolina. Four years later, he decided to leave North Carolina to become a teacher in New York. Ron did this to liven up to his words: “go for what they want in life, dream big, take risks”. Arrived in New York, Ron started to look for a job vacancy for a teacher but did not bear a good result. When he was walking near Inner Harlem Elementary School, Ron saw a teacher fighting with his student. Ron started to break them up with the help of the school's headmaster and left with the resignation of the teacher. Ron saw that opportunity and he was accepted as the new teacher. After his little tour on his new workplace, Ron chose the class which considered the worst despite the headmaster's warning. This film tells about Clark's first-year experience teaching in the class, the conflicts that arise, how Ron Clark give motivations, and how he bond with his students by out of the box methods. This film only has one protagonist which is Ron Clark, but this film has several antagonists. The antagonists for this story are

the students (in the beginning) and Shameika and Tashawn's parent (later in the story).

After choosing a suitable film, the writer started brainstorming the focus of his research. By deciding what the writer focused on, the research was more detail and prevent the researcher to be derailed from their initial plan and objective. In this research, the writer is focused on studying the characterization of the main character in the film which is Ron Clark.

The reasons why The writer choose Ron Clark as the subject of this research are: as a protagonist, most conflicts or events in this film are revolved around Ron and his choices and actions affect many people and the story's progression, therefore Ron as the main character holds a firm grasp of the plot and character development. Another reason is found in the title of this film. The title of this film, *The Ron Clark Story*, is taken from the main character's name Ron Clark. When the character's name is used for a title, the reader's first understanding is that this story is about the mentioned person. This first impression is intended to give a figure to the reader about the focus of the story. Other than the first impression, the word choice can also be included. In grammar, "The" is used to identify something or someone which is special or unique. For this film, the usage of "the" is to emphasize Ron Clark as a unique person.

A study using the film itself had been done by several researchers. In Yunita's (2016) research "*Karakter Tokoh Utama dalam Film "The Ron Clark Story" Karya Randa Haines*" she used sociological approach in analyzing the main character in the film, Irvani (2015) chose this film as a research material and he analyzed its education values, Zulkarnain (2017) used Ron Clark's classroom management as the focus of

his research, and Suherman (2010) who analyzed the main character to define a good teacher according to the film. This research has similarities with the mentioned researches especially Yunita's and Suherman's research. What makes this research different from prior researches is the focus and the purpose. Yunita's research focused more on the sociological approach in analyzing the main character while this research focused more on the characterization. In Suherman's case, although his research also mentioned about characterization, he used it to know the quality of a good teacher while this research used characterization to explore the characters which the writer chose. From this background, the writer decided to start this research titled "Characterization of Ron Clark in *The Ron Clark Story*".

## **1.2 FIELD OF THE STUDY**

The field of this study is literature.

## **1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The scope of this study is an in-depth characterization analysis in *The Ron Clark Story*.

## **1.4 PROBLEM FORMULATION**

Based on the background of the study, the question which the researcher needs to address in this study is:

- What are the characterizations of Ron Clark?

## **1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

To answer the research question above, this study has an objective to discuss the characterizations of the main character (Ron Clark).

## 1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

By doing this research, hopefully, the readers will have a better understanding of the character in *The Ron Clark Story*. The writer also hopes that after the readers read and understand this research, they will learn something new as the writer believes that a story (fiction or not) and its characters are capable to give lessons for its reader.

## 1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

In order not to create confusion for the readers, the writer will briefly explain the terms used in this paper.

### 1. Characterization

According to Madden (2001), characterization is the creation and the development of characters.

### 2. Character

According to Harpham & Abram (2012), characters are persons who lived in narrative works which possess morals, intellect, and feeling like a human. Those qualities can be inferred from their dialogues and actions.