

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves as an introduction to the research, providing essential information that lays the foundation for understanding the research. It covers key elements such as the research background, the research problem, and other important information. These information's are crucial for grasping the context and purpose of the research

1.1 Research Background

Since the dawn of human communication, narrative has been central to storytelling, a concept that has been systematically examined since Aristotle's *Poetics*. Aristotle established the fundamental principles of narrative structure in Western culture, outlining that a coherent story must encompass a beginning where a problem is introduced, a middle where the characters struggle to resolve this issue, and an end where the problem is ultimately resolved.

The twentieth century marked the onset of the digital age, characterized by the rise of computers, television, film, and video. Prior to this era, storytelling was primarily confined to conversation, books, and plays. The advent of film and cinema, which Marie-Laure Ryan refers to as the "art of the twentieth century," revolutionized narrative techniques. Ryan argues that cinema introduced new dimensions to storytelling by depicting events in real time, akin to written narratives, but with enhanced visual representation. This medium allowed for a deeper immersion of the audience through cinematography and music, transforming the way stories are experienced.

Tavinor (2009) illustrates how traditional art theories can be extended to the emerging medium of video games, offering a philosophical perspective on their artistic value. He applies frameworks from analytic philosophy of the arts to video games, examining their place within the broader context of art and entertainment. Tavinor explores the connections between video games and established media such as film and literature, highlighting how video games integrate and build upon the narrative and aesthetic techniques of these earlier forms.

In today's world, narrative has become integral to how we understand and engage with events, permeating various media from musicals and poems to television and books. Video games have evolved significantly in recent decades, emerging as both a prominent industry and cultural phenomenon. According to Murray (2017) and Muriel & Crawford (2018), video games now frequently present complex, multifaceted stories that highlight player choice and freedom, reflecting advancements in digital storytelling and offering immersive, interactive experiences.

In many video games, the central focus lies in the narrative progression, particularly concerning the progression of characters, and the unfolding of the story.

Narrative progression entails the depiction of events in the sequential order they occur within the storyline. Narrative progression is the synthesis of what Phelan and Rabinowitz refer to as textual dynamics: “the logic of the movement from beginning to middle through ending,” and for audience dynamics: the audience’s “evolving (or shifting) understandings, judgments, emotions (including desires), and expectations as it follows the textual dynamics,” (2012b, p. 58). This storytelling approach is prominently featured in *Red Dead Redemption 2*, a narrative-focused video game created and published by Rockstar, which debuted in 2018. The game immerses players in a compelling tale revolving around the Van der Linde gang, a group of outlaws grappling with the demise of the Wild West era in America during the year 1899. Through its narrative focus, *Red Dead Redemption 2* captivates players with its rich storytelling and immersive gameplay experience, inviting them to embark on an unforgettable journey through the rugged landscapes of the American frontier.

The transition marking the end of the Wild West era profoundly influences both the storyline and character progression within *Red Dead Redemption 2*. This period of historical change serves as a catalyst for the narrative arcs and moral dilemmas faced by the game's protagonists. For instance, the protagonist Arthur Morgan grapples with the quest for redemption amidst the harsh realities of his outlaw lifestyle. Similarly, the once-charismatic leader Dutch Van Der Linde

undergoes a transformation, evolving into a ruthless figure whose actions lead to the downfall of his gang by the conclusion of Chapter 6. Additionally, the epilogue offers insight into the adaptation of characters like John Marston to the shifting landscape of the new era

Throughout the main storyline, numerous events unfold, each presenting players with moral values to contemplate. These events contribute to the overarching themes of morality and redemption that permeate the narrative landscape of the game. Through the experiences of its characters and the challenges they face, *Red Dead Redemption 2* offers players a thought-provoking exploration of ethical complexities within a historical context. As players navigate through the game's immersive world, they are invited to reflect on the moral implications of their actions and decisions, adding depth and resonance to their gaming experience.

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the explanation above, the research highlights the research question which is elaborated on below

1. How are the narrative progression in *The Red Dead Redemption 2*

This research explores how the events and conflicts in *Red Dead Redemption 2* shape the characters and storyline throughout the game. Each chapter presents new challenges that the Van der Linde gang must face, which drive both character development and narrative progression. By closely examining these thematic elements, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how the game's storytelling techniques enhance player engagement and appreciation for its immersive narrative.

2. What are moral values behind narrative progression of character and story in *The Red Dead Redemption 2*?

This research examines the moral values and ethical challenges embedded in *Red Dead Redemption 2*'s 50-hour narrative, which spans six chapters and two epilogues. As players follow the gradual development of the characters and story, they encounter numerous moral dilemmas that shape the characters' actions and

choices. The study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of these moral complexities and their progression throughout the game, offering insights into the broader moral framework that influences both the narrative and player engagement, as well as its cultural significance.

1.3 Research Purpose

Based on the research problem the purpose of the research is:

1.To describe character and story progression of Red Dead Redemption 2 narrative story

This research explores the complex relationship between character development and story progression in *Red Dead Redemption 2*, where events ranging from minor shifts to significant occurrences shape both the characters and the narrative. By analyzing the intricate storytelling, character evolution, and world-building, the study aims to uncover the mechanisms driving these progressions. This deeper understanding enhances appreciation for the game's narrative depth and provides insights into the broader realm of narrative-driven games, illustrating how storytelling influences virtual worlds and player immersion.

2.To describe how to find moral values in the narrative progression of character and story in the Red Dead Redemption 2

This research focuses on uncovering the moral principles embedded within the character and narrative progression in *Red Dead Redemption 2*. By analyzing the ethical dilemmas and themes presented throughout the game's storyline, the study seeks to reveal the moral values intertwined with the evolving characters and plot. Through careful interpretation, the research aims to provide insights into the game's moral dimensions, highlighting its influence on players and its significance within the broader gaming community, fostering a deeper appreciation for the narrative's ethical complexities.

1.4 Research Significance

This research endeavors to elucidate the moral values embedded within the narrative progression of characters and stories in the acclaimed video game Red

Dead Redemption 2, developed by Rockstar Games. By examining the character and story progression inherent in the game's narrative, this study aims to shed light on the ethical dilemmas and moral themes interwoven throughout the gaming experience. Through this exploration, readers and video game enthusiasts alike can gain a deeper understanding of how video games, like other forms of storytelling media, convey moral values within their narratives.

Furthermore, the researcher aspires that this study will not only provide valuable insights into the moral dimensions of Red Dead Redemption 2 but also serve as a resource for future researchers interested in utilizing video games as subjects of inquiry. By demonstrating the potential for video games to offer rich moral narratives worthy of scholarly exploration, this research aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding the intersection of gaming and ethics. Ultimately, the goal is to foster a greater appreciation for the moral complexities inherent in video game narratives and encourage further research in this burgeoning field.

1.5 Research Scope and Limitation

The objective and scope of this study is to explore the moral values embedded within the narrative elements of both characters and stories in Red Dead Redemption 2. However, it is important to note that this research is delimited to analyzing solely the narrative aspects of the game's story mode, excluding examination of the narrative content found within the online mode section. By focusing on the moral dimensions of the game's storytelling, this research aims to provide insight into the ethical themes and dilemmas present in the game's narrative landscape. Through this focused analysis, the researcher hope to contribute to a deeper understanding of how video games, as storytelling mediums, can convey moral messages and provoke ethical reflection among players and audiences.

Red Dead Redemption 2 offers players a plethora of options to engage with the game, ranging from the immersive single-player experience of its main story campaign, which delves deeply into the narrative and character development, to the online mode designed for more interactive and social gameplay. In this study, the

focus will be on the main story campaign, where the narrative and characters play a pivotal role in shaping the overall experience.

Although Red Dead Redemption 2 has garnered widespread acclaim for its narrative prowess, it is important to acknowledge that it may not represent a flawless narrative depiction. Certain aspects of society may have been overlooked or not thoroughly explored within the game. Despite these limitations, the research will endeavor to highlight the key story points in each chapter, providing insight into the game's narrative strengths.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In the realm of academic research, the concept of "key terms" plays a vital role in shaping the discourse and understanding within a specific field of study. These terms are not merely words or phrases; they represent the cornerstone concepts that define the framework of a research endeavor.

By identifying and defining key terms, researchers establish a common language and understanding, fostering clarity and coherence in scholarly discourse. Key terms serve as foundational elements that guide the formulation of research. They are essential tools that enable researchers to navigate through the complexities of their field and communicate their insights effectively. In essence, the identification and elucidation of key terms are fundamental practices that uphold the integrity and rigor of academic research, ensuring that knowledge is constructed and shared in a meaningful and coherent manner. Below are the key terms crucial for this study. Detailed elucidation of some term will be provided in subsequent chapters.

1) Gaming

According to Roger Caillois, a French sociologist, gaming encompasses several distinct characteristics, as outlined in his book **Les jeux et les hommes**. Caillois describes gaming as an activity that is fundamentally playful and enjoyable, offering free play as an option rather than an obligation. It is marked by its separateness from everyday life, existing in a distinct space and time. Additionally,

gaming is characterized by uncertainty and unpredictability, is non-productive in nature, and is governed by its own set of rules. Finally, it is inherently fictitious, involving elements of pretense and imagination.

2) Moral Values

According to Baguswaluyo (2007: 28), moral values are standards or principles in judging conducts or behavior.

According to Ponio (2022) in his article she say to define moral values, we first need to clarify the two components: values and morals. In a philosophical context, values refer to traits or qualities that are considered desirable, such as honesty, respect, and courage. While values are often viewed as inherently positive, they are not universally good; they are relative and can vary depending on the situation and individual perspective. This relativity makes values deeply personal, as they represent the traits each of us finds important. These personal values drive our actions and reactions to people and circumstances.

3) Video Game

According to Granic (2014) what she mean by the term video games and how they differ from other media (e.g., books, television, movies). The most essential distinguishing feature of video games is that they are interactive; players cannot passively surrender to a game's storyline.

According to Collins (2024) video game is a computer game that you play by using controls or buttons to move images on a screen. Video games are electronic games played on various devices, such as computers, consoles, or mobile devices, typically involving interaction with a user interface to generate visual feedback on a screen

4) Narrative Progression

Narrative progression encompasses both textual and audience dynamics. According to Phelan and Rabinowitz, textual dynamics involve the logical progression from the beginning, through the middle, to the end of a story. Audience

dynamics, on the other hand, refer to how the audience's understanding, judgments, emotions, and expectations evolve as they engage with the narrative. As Phelan and Rabinowitz explain, these shifting elements reflect the audience's response to the unfolding text, shaping their experience and interpretation of the story (2012b, p. 58).

