

Chapter III

Research Method

In this chapter, the research methodology employed to explore the narrative structure of the webtoon "Solo Leveling" is described. The goal of this chapter is to provide a detailed account of the research design and methods used to conduct the analysis of the webtoon. This study used a qualitative research method that was based on theories and ideas from cognitive narratology and structuralism. This chapter begins with an overview a description of the research design, data collection and analysis procedures. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

3.1 Research Design

Research design is a crucial component of any research study. It involves planning and organizing the entire research process in a systematic and logical manner. According to Babbie (1979), research design is a strategy for finding out something. For the present study, the following stages have been carried out:

- a. Identify the research topic and its significance. The present study aims to explore the plot structure in the Solo Leveling webtoon through the lens of cognitive narratology. The choice of this topic is based on its relevance to the field of narratology and the growing popularity of the Solo Leveling webtoon.
- b. Formulate a research question that will guide the study. In this study, the research question is: "How does the plot structure of "Solo Leveling" webtoon by Redice Studio contribute to its popularity "

- c. Determine the research method and data collection techniques. The present study uses a qualitative research method, with data collection techniques including close reading of the Solo Leveling webtoon episodes, and analysis of the text using cognitive narratology theory.
- d. Select the appropriate data sources. The primary data sources for this study are the chapters of the Solo Leveling webtoon, while secondary data sources include relevant literature on cognitive narratology and narratology theory.
- e. Collect and analyze the data. The data collected through close reading and analysis of the Solo Leveling webtoon chapters will be analyzed using cognitive narratology theory to identify patterns and themes related to plot structure.
- f. Draw conclusions and report the findings. Based on the analysis of the data, the study will draw conclusions about the contribution of cognitive narratology to an understanding of the plot structure in the Solo Leveling webtoon. The findings will be reported in a systematic and logical manner in the final research report.

3.2 Research Method

For this study, the researcher will use a qualitative research methodology. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research focuses on exploring and understanding complex phenomena through the collection of non-numerical data. The aim of this approach is to capture the richness and depth of the data, emphasizing the subjective experiences and interpretations of research participants.

Qualitative research is well-suited for the study of narrative texts, such as webtoons, which often involve complex themes and character development. This research approach emphasizes understanding the subjective experience of individuals and the interpretation of the text. It involves a systematic and reflective approach to data collection and analysis. In the context of this study, the researcher will employ a qualitative research design that focuses on a close reading and analysis of the webtoon "Solo Leveling" by Redice Studio. The data will be collected through a systematic analysis of the webtoon itself, including the identification of plot elements, themes, and character development. The researcher will utilize existing theories and frameworks in cognitive narratology to interpret and analyze the narrative structure. The analysis will be based on a detailed examination of the text and its inherent features, without relying on techniques such as interviews or surveys.

In this study, the researcher will use a systematic analysis of the webtoon "Solo Leveling" by Redice Studio as the primary method of data collection. The analysis will involve examining and documenting plot elements, themes, and character development within the webtoon. By closely analyzing the webtoon

itself, the researcher aims to gain insights into the plot structure and understand how it contributes to the story's popularity.

The qualitative data collected in this study will be analyzed using thematic analysis, as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis involves identifying recurring patterns and themes in the data. By employing this method, the researcher aims to uncover key plot elements and their contribution to the story's popularity in "Solo Leveling." This analysis will provide insights into how fans interpret and engage with the plot structure. By utilizing thematic analysis, the study seeks to deepen our understanding of the narrative elements and their significance within the webtoon.

The use of a qualitative research methodology will enable a comprehensive exploration of the plot structure in "Solo Leveling" and its contribution to the story's popularity. The researcher will conduct a systematic analysis of the webtoon, focusing on identifying key plot elements and their impact on the narrative. Through thematic analysis, the researcher will examine patterns and themes within the data to gain a deeper understanding of the plot structure. This approach will provide valuable insights into the narrative techniques employed in "Solo Leveling" and their relationship to the story's popularity.

3.3 Source of Data

The research object of this study is the webtoon "Solo Leveling" by Redice Studio. The webtoon is available on various digital platforms, including the official webtoon website and mobile applications. The webtoon is categorized under the action, fantasy, and adventure genres and has gained popularity among readers due to its engaging plot and unique storytelling style.

The research will focus on analyzing the plot structure of "Solo Leveling" using the cognitive narratology approach. The plot structure will be examined by identifying the story's events, the order in which they are presented, and how they are interconnected. The study will also investigate how the plot structure contributes to the webtoon's popularity among readers.

3.4 Procedure of Collecting Data

This research study will use a self-report method of data collection, where the researcher will collect data on their own. Self-report methods involve collecting data through personal observation, interviews, surveys, or other means where the researcher is both the collector and the subject of the data (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006).

To gather the data for this study, the researcher will read and analyze the webtoon "Solo Leveling" by Redice Studio to identify the plot structure and its contribution to the story's popularity. The researcher will use a cognitive narratology approach to analyze the plot structure of the webtoon, focusing on the use of plot events, characters, and narration to create meaning (Herman, 2002).

The researcher will take detailed notes while reading the webtoon to capture their observations and insights. The notes will include descriptions of the plot events, character interactions, and narration techniques used in the webtoon. The researcher will also use screenshots and quotes from the webtoon to support their analysis.

After analyzing the webtoon, the researcher will organize their notes and findings into themes or categories based on the cognitive narratology framework. The researcher will then use these themes or categories to answer the research questions.

Overall, the self-report method of data collection used in this study provides the researcher with an opportunity to intimately engage with the data and gain a deeper understanding of the plot structure of the webtoon "Solo Leveling." This method allows the researcher to capture their personal insights and observations while maintaining a rigorous and systematic approach to data analysis.

3.5 Techniques of Data Analysis

The data collected from the self-interview, observation, will be analyzed using content analysis based on the cognitive narratology approach. Content analysis is a systematic and objective technique for analyzing the content of written, verbal, or visual communication. According to Krippendorff (2013), content analysis consists of identifying, coding, and categorizing patterns within the data. In this study, the data will be analyzed by identifying the plot structure, language style, and themes used in the webtoon "Solo Leveling" by Redice Studio.

The cognitive narratology approach will be applied in analyzing the data. This approach focuses on understanding how the narrative structures and literary techniques affect readers' cognitive processes and emotions. The analysis will involve identifying the narrative patterns, analyzing the plot structure, and identifying the themes used in the webtoon. The analysis will be conducted by reviewing the data collected from the self-interview, observation, and identifying patterns and themes that emerge from the data.

The data collected from the self-interview, observation will be analyzed qualitatively. This involves a thorough examination of the data to identify patterns, themes, and connections. The analysis process will begin with organizing the data, followed by categorization and coding. The identified codes will then be reviewed and sorted into themes and sub-themes. The themes will be analyzed to draw conclusions about the plot structure of the webtoon "Solo Leveling" and how it contributes to its popularity.

The process of data analysis will be an iterative one, with constant review and refinement of the themes and sub-themes until a comprehensive understanding of the data has been achieved. Ultimately, the findings will be presented in a narrative form, with supporting evidence from the data, to provide an in-depth analysis of the plot structure of "Solo Leveling" from a cognitive narratology perspective.