

ABSTRACT

NATASIA, VERINA. (2024). **Foreshadowing through Animal Symbolism in *Life is Strange***. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Sanata Dharma.

Life is Strange is a narrative-based video game that uses storytelling techniques like traditional literary works to create a deep and emotional gaming experience for players. This study investigates the use of complex characterization techniques, symbolism in the form of animals representing the characters, and the significance of symbols in the narrative through foreshadowing the fate of the characters represented. These three elements add depth to the narrative and increase player engagement as a result. By exploring these three elements, this research aims to reveal how they contribute to the thematic richness of this game's story.

The main objectives of this research are to: (1) analyze how the main characters in *Life is Strange* are depicted, (2) identify and interpret the symbolism in the form of animals that represent these characters, and (3) examine how the symbols foreshadow the fate of the characters they represent. The main characters include Maxine Caulfield, Chloe Elizabeth Price, Rachel Dawn Amber, Nathan Joshua Prescott, and Mark Jefferson. The five characters are classified as main because of their importance in the narrative.

The research methodology involves qualitative analysis of the three elements studied. This includes an in-depth examination of the description of the main characters based on Characterization theory with its eight methods, recognizing the characters' animal symbols based on Symbolism theory which includes two types of symbols and four methods of charging (giving significance to) an object to be a symbol, as well as understanding and interpreting what is subtly hinted at by these symbols about the fate of the characters based on the Foreshadowing theory which explains how this tool enriches the quality of the narrative. With the three theoretical foundations sourced from Boggs and Petrie as quoted from their book *The Art of Watching Films Ninth Edition*, and using the New Criticism literary approach, this research aims to provide a comprehensive and objective understanding of how *Life is Strange* uses these techniques to develop a charming and captivating story.

The research findings include the characterizations of the main characters, identification of the animal symbolism representing them, and the significance of these symbols. They are not just visual additions, but enhance the narrative's complexity and quality by representing the characters and foreshadowing their futures which adds to player's tension and anticipation. The doe guides Max's journey and shows the place she is looking for, the blue butterfly represents Chloe and signifies the important decisions regarding her death, the blue jay reflects Rachel and hints at her inevitable tragic fate, the giant beached whales represent Nathan and imply his fate, and the owl not only symbolizes Jefferson but also serves as warnings of his crime scenes.

Keywords: *characterization, animal symbolism, foreshadowing, representation, video game narrative*

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Life is Strange adalah *game* berbasis narasi yang menggunakan teknik bercerita seperti karya sastra tradisional untuk menciptakan pengalaman bermain mendalam dan emosional bagi pemainnya. Penelitian ini menyelidiki penggunaan teknik penokohan yang kompleks, simbolisme berupa binatang yang mewakili tokoh, dan makna simbol dalam narasi melalui pembayangan nasib tokoh yang diwakili. Ketiga elemen ini menambah kedalaman narasi dan sebagai hasilnya meningkatkan keterlibatan pemain. Dengan mengeksplorasi ketiga elemen tersebut, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bagaimana kontribusinya terhadap kekayaan tematik cerita *game* ini.

Tujuan utama dari penelitian ini adalah untuk: (1) menganalisis bagaimana karakter-karakter utama dalam *Life is Strange* digambarkan, (2) mengidentifikasi dan menafsirkan simbolisme dalam bentuk hewan yang merepresentasi karakter tersebut, dan (3) mengkaji bagaimana simbol tersebut mengisyaratkan nasib karakter yang mereka wakili. Karakter-karakter utama meliputi Maxine Caulfield, Chloe Elizabeth Price, Rachel Dawn Amber, Nathan Joshua Prescott, dan Mark Jefferson. Kelima karakter digolongkan utama karena pentingnya dalam narasi.

Metodologi penelitian melibatkan analisis kualitatif terhadap ketiga elemen yang ditelaah. Ini mencakup pemeriksaan mendalam terhadap deskripsi karakter-karakter utama berlandaskan teori Karakterisasi dengan kedelapan metodenya, merekognisi hewan-hewan simbol karakter berlandaskan teori Simbolisme yang meliputi dua macam simbol dan empat metode membebaskan suatu objek untuk menjadi simbol, serta memahami dan menginterpretasikan apa yang secara halus diisyaratkan simbol-simbol tersebut tentang takdir karakternya dengan teori Foreshadowing yang menjelaskan bagaimana alat ini menambah kualitas narasi. Dengan ketiga landasan teori bersumber dari Boggs dan Petrie yang dilansir dari buku mereka *The Art of Watching Films Ninth Edition*, dan menggunakan pendekatan sastra New Criticism, penelitian ini bertujuan memberikan pemahaman komprehensif dan objektif tentang bagaimana *Life is Strange* menggunakan teknik-teknik tersebut untuk menyusun cerita yang memesona dan memikat.

Penemuan penelitian ini meliputi penokohan tokoh-tokoh utama, identifikasi simbolisme hewan yang mewakilinya, dan signifikansinya. Mereka bukan sekadar tambahan visual, namun meningkatkan kompleksitas dan kualitas narasi dengan mewakili karakter dan mengisyaratkan masa depan mereka sehingga menambah ketegangan danantisipasi pemain. Rusa betina menuntun perjalanan Max dan menunjukkan tempat yang ia cari, kupu-kupu biru mewakili Chloe dan menandakan keputusan penting terkait kematiannya, burung jay biru mencerminkan Rachel dan mengisyaratkan nasib tragis takerelakkannya, paus-paus raksasa yang mati terdampar menggambarkan Nathan dan menyiratkan takdirnya, dan burung hantu tidak hanya melambangkan Jefferson namun juga menjadi peringatan tempat-tempat kriminalnya.

Kata kunci: *characterization, animal symbolism, foreshadowing, representation, video game narrative*