

ABSTRACT

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This study examines how Roland Barthes' concept of the Death of the Author is enacted within the interactive narrative of *Undertale* (2015), a role-playing video game whose story is shaped by player choice rather than fixed authorial intention. Employing a qualitative textual and narrative analysis grounded in Barthes' post-structuralist theory and Espen Aarseth's theory of ergodic literature and the cybertext, this study treats the game itself, its dialogue, mechanics, and system memory, as the primary object of literary close reading, focusing on the True Pacifist and Genocide ending sequences. The findings show, first, that Barthes' concept is manifested in *Undertale*'s narrative structure through its three distinct endings, Neutral, True Pacifist, and Genocide, none of which is privileged as a single authorially intended conclusion; each instead emerges from the player's cumulative choices. Second, the study finds that permanent narrative consequences, encoded through mechanical systems such as EXP and LV, the SAVE system framed fictionally as Determination, and the cross-run memory of the Genocide route's taint, construct narrative meaning through player action rather than authorial exposition. Analysis of characters such as Sans, Flowey, and Chara further reveals that characterization itself becomes route-dependent, allowing a single authored character to carry different meanings depending on the path a player constructs.

Keywords: *Death of the Author, Roland Barthes, interactive narrative, ergodic literature, cybertext, Undertale, player agency*

ABSTRAK

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Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana konsep Kematian Pengarang (*Death of the Author*) yang dikemukakan oleh Roland Barthes terwujud dalam narasi interaktif *Undertale* (2015), sebuah video game bergenre role-playing yang alur ceritanya dibentuk oleh pilihan pemain, bukan oleh intensi pengarang yang tetap. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan analisis tekstual dan naratif kualitatif yang berlandaskan teori post-strukturalis Barthes serta teori sastra ergodik dan cybertext dari Espen Aarseth, penelitian ini memperlakukan game itu sendiri, mencakup dialog, mekanisme permainan, dan memori sistem, sebagai objek utama pembacaan close reading sastra, dengan fokus pada rangkaian akhir cerita True Pacifist dan Genocide. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan, pertama, bahwa konsep Barthes termanifestasi dalam struktur naratif *Undertale* melalui tiga jenis akhir cerita yang berbeda, yaitu Neutral, True Pacifist, dan Genocide, yang tidak satu pun diistimewakan sebagai kesimpulan tunggal yang dimaksudkan oleh pengarang; setiap akhir cerita justru muncul dari akumulasi pilihan pemain. Kedua, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa konsekuensi naratif yang bersifat permanen, yang terkodekan melalui sistem mekanis seperti EXP dan LV, sistem SAVE yang dibingkai secara fiktional sebagai Determination, serta memori lintas permainan dari noda rute Genocide, membangun makna naratif melalui tindakan pemain, bukan melalui eksposisi pengarang.

Kata Kunci: Kematian Pengarang, Roland Barthes, narasi interaktif, sastra ergodik, cybertext, *Undertale*, agensi pemain