

## Analysis of Suspense Types in Narrative Texts by Third-Semester Students at HKBP Nommensen University

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### ABSTRACT

*This research examines third semester students' narrative writing with tension in the English Language Education Program at HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar University. This research sought students' perspectives on how they integrate tension in narratives – especially situational, psychological, and anticipatory elements. This research uses a qualitative strategy that examines 40 narrative texts to determine the type of tension and its occurrence as well as its level of significance. The results showed that anticipatory tension was the most common type, followed by situational, conflict-based, and psychological tension. This research also expands the scope of the discipline of narrative writing, especially creative story pieces to be included in curriculum activities for students.*

### A. Introduction

Narrative conveys fiction or factual stories filled with conflict, tension, and suspense. It also serves purposes in science, reporting, and business. In the school curriculum, the aim of teaching narrative writing is to help students create engaging fictional or factual stories. The structure of narratives can vary across cultures in the sequence of actions. Regardless of this variation, the core of any narrative is the consistent delivery of a moral message through captivating entertainment. Narrative suspense is a fundamental feature of the literary reception that encompasses a range of emotional and cognitive responses to a written text (taken here as a metaphor for any sort of medial presentation of a narrative plot). In general, suspense plays a key role in maintaining readers' engagement with the text and is closely linked to various emotional and cognitive reactions, including immersion in the story, transportation, reading enjoyment, emotional connection, and more. (Bálint et al., 2017; Kuijpers et al., 2021).

The concept of suspense in narrative texts often refers to the tension or uncertainty readers experience when they don't know how events will unfold but hold a strong hope for a specific outcome. Brewer and Lichtenstein (1982) explain that suspense frequently arises from narrative structures involving uncertainty, surprise, or conflict, especially when readers are engaged in "narrative transportation," where they feel deeply immersed in the story. They also note that suspense can remain powerful even when readers know the story's outcome, as emotional tension comes from how the story unfolds, not solely its ending. Research by Hoeken and Van Vliet (2000) supports this view, showing that suspense is sustained by storytelling techniques that maintain tension right until the conclusion. This approach is also related to the "narrative transportation" theory, which suggests that suspenseful experiences can heighten readers' emotional engagement in a story, as explained by Green and Brock (2000). Furthermore, a story structure incorporating uncertainty and conflict enhances the suspense effect by making readers feel intrigued or unsettled by potential unfavorable outcomes. Consequently, suspense plays a crucial role in creating a captivating and emotional experience for readers, driving them to keep reading until the story's end.

This research explores how a group of third-semester students, in a country where English is not the official language, write a series of events in their stories, whether fictional or factual. The study assumes that their narratives follow a general structure consisting of a beginning, middle, and end, commonly used to convey a moral message through entertaining content. Theoretically, their stories begin with an exposition, followed by a progression of dramatic events leading to a climax, and finally descending to a resolution and reorientation. Based on these assumptions, the central question of this research is: "What aspects of suspense do third-semester students utilize in writing narratives to tell their stories?" According to Edgar Allan Poe (1846) in his essay entitled

"The Philosophy of Composition," Poe explains that suspense is a key element in a story that can influence the reader's emotions. He believes that suspense creates tension that captures readers' attention, allowing them to remain engaged in the storyline. Tzvetan Todorov (1969) discusses how suspense arises from uncertainty in the narrative in his book "Theories of the Novel." He states that suspense emerges when readers encounter unexpected situations, which creates tension and anticipation. Additionally, Robert McKee (1997), in his book "Story," emphasizes the importance of narrative structure in creating suspense. He asserts that suspense is built through a series of tensions generated by conflict and complex character development. The purpose of this research is to reveal the elements of tension which include 8 types, namely (Situational, Psychological, Dramatic, Anticipatory, Conflict-based, Emotional, Moral, Mystery) that students include, how they utilize these elements, and why they selecting these elements for their narrative. Theoretically, these findings can contribute to the development of a conceptual framework for understanding narrative structures used by third semester students. Practically, these findings could be significant for curriculum design, especially in revitalizing English curriculum content in English-speaking countries.

## **B. Content of Literature Review**

This research is based on narrative theory. Structurally, narrative has two elements, i.e., story as content and plot to unfold sequence of causal-effect events occurring in a time and place or from a time and place to another time and place that drive the story forward from beginning to end. Plot commonly includes exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax, falling action, denouement, and resolution which can be classified into dramatic. Progressive plot, episodic plot, parallel plot, flash back plot that moves a story from its beginning to its end. Conflict is an intense physical or verbal fight of a character vs. self, character vs. character, character vs. nature, and character vs. society. Tension is an ominous experience which originates from the state of conflict or instability or dissonance or uncertainty which can be classified into foreshadowing to build dramatic tension, inner conflict to build levels of tension, time limit to place a time limit to a character on an action to undertake a problem that trigger predictive processes directed at future events of emotional significance.

Suspense is wonder or uncertainty or emotion of mental and bodily event to anticipate what might happen next like danger, horror, anxieties, and outcome dealing with the character as the degree of probability with which the story can develop in one or another direction which can be calculated. John McKee (1997) - In his book "Story: Style, Structure, Substance, and the Principles of Screenwriting," McKee states that suspense is closely related to conflict and character decisions. He argues that the suspense that arises from the difficult choices that characters face is the key to creating effective suspense in a story. Tzvetan Todorov (1977) - In other works, Todorov also states that suspense does not only arise from conflict, but also from the way information is presented to the reader or audience. Suspense can be created by providing conflicting clues or withholding relevant information. Action is a pair of a mental event of intention and a bodily event (or set of events subject to further ordering constraints) predicated of a given person [or character] and action sentence is a sentence with at least one action predicate and at least one name (term for an agent) as an argument. Narrative transitions are words and phrases, like at first, afterward, an hour later, in the meantime, etc. to connect the events in the narratives, explain how the sequence of events unfolds, signal a change in the action, show the order of events, and indicate when the story moves from one time or place to another.

## **C. Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This research employs a qualitative design to analyze the behavior of a group of students and the reasons behind it, specifically examining how and why these students use suspense elements in their narratives to convey stories or experiences. The researchers focus on aspects of the research problem by collecting and analyzing data from documents in an inductive manner.

### **Research Subject**

This research is based on documents and actual works, specifically 40 narrative texts written during lectures by 40 third-semester students of the English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, HKBP Nommensen University, Pematangsiantar, in the 2023/2024 academic year.

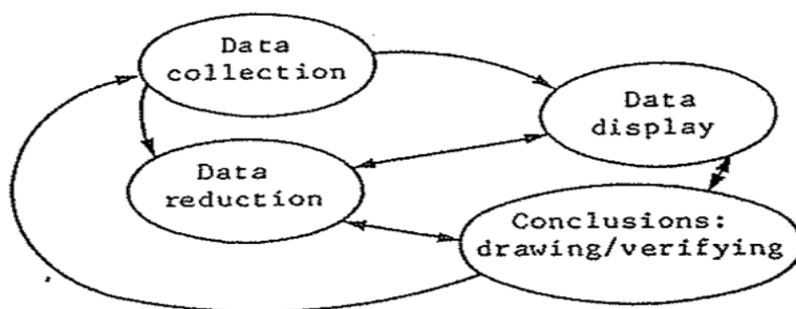
### **Research Object**

The object of this research includes aspects of suspense in 40 narratives written by a group of 40 students. This object refers to various factors that serve as subjects of analysis, motivating individuals to behave in certain ways or influencing their preferences. This research focuses on the suspense elements that the students incorporate as a key reason for their narrative writing during the data collection process.

### **Technique of Data Collection and Analysis**

Inductive methods are used to describe general principles based on documents as research data. Therefore, this data requires processing and analysis, based on observations in the form of words and text. The data collection and analysis procedures in this research follow the flow of the interactive model of data component analysis, as illustrated in the figure

#### Components of Data Analysis: Interactive Model



Data Collection, Reduction, Displaying, and Drawing conclusion/Verifying:

Observing the sequence of suspenses based on the cause-and-effect relationship between events in each of 40 narratives data in this research.

- Suspension data collection for suspense is based on cause-and-effect relationships between events in each of the 40 narrative data.
- Suspension data classification for suspense is based on cause-and-effect relationships between events in each of the 40 narrative data.
- The description and explanation of suspension data for tension is based on the cause-and-effect relationship between events in each of the 40 narrative data.
- Make conclusions based on the classification, description, and explanation of suspense by analyzing the tension derived from cause-and-effect relationships between events in each of the 40 narratives.

#### D. Result and Discussion

The research results show that tension is present in all stories. The types of suspense contained in 40 narrative texts include; *Situational Suspense*, Creates tension as characters face dangerous or conflict-ridden situations, making readers eager to see how they respond. *Psychological Suspense*, Engages readers in the characters' inner conflicts and fears, highlighting emotional or psychological strains. *Dramatic Suspense*, Occurs when the audience knows something that the characters do not, building anticipation for characters' responses to unseen dangers. *Anticipatory Suspense*, Builds tension with hints or clues about an upcoming twist, sparking curiosity in readers. *Conflict-Based Suspense*, Arises from direct conflicts involving characters, whether interpersonal or internal, creating high-stakes situations. *Emotional Suspense*, Connects readers emotionally to characters, creating tension through sympathy and empathy. *Moral Suspense*, Develops as characters face moral dilemmas, prompting readers to ponder the choices characters will make. *Mystery Suspense*, Engages readers through unresolved mysteries, keeping them invested in uncovering the answers.

Situational Tension was 13 cases, Psychological Tension was 11 cases, Dramatic Tension was 0 cases, Anticipatory Tension was 16 cases, Conflict Based Tension was 10 cases, Emotional Tension was 0 cases, Moral Tension was 1 case, and Moral Tension was 0 cases. Mystery Suspense. The results of the study show that suspense is present in all the stories. There are 13 instances of Situational Suspense, 11 instances of Psychological Suspense, 0 instances of Dramatic Suspense, 16 instances of Anticipatory Suspense, 10 instances of Conflict-based Suspense, 0 instances of Emotional Suspense, 1 instance of Moral Suspense, and 0 instances of Mystery Suspense.

NO	NAME	Title	SUSPENSES							
			Situational	Psychological	Dramatic	Anticipatory	Conflict-based	Emotional	Moral	Mystery
1.	Yena Jorena Sembiring	Emily and Her Journey				X				
2.	Devi Triana	Boring Weekend		X						
3.	Jonathan Purba	The Clever Fox and Cunning Cat					X			
4.	Monika Natalina Silaban	Road Trip	X							
5.	Tessaria Simorangkir	Unforgettable Road Trip to the Grand Canyon				X				
6.	Angel Lamtama Sihalohe	A Road Trip Unveiling Unforgettable Adventures	X			X				
7.	Kevin Alfredo Pakpahan	An Unforgettable Adventure					X			
8.	Sintya Margaretta Sinaga	A Day at the Beach				X				
9.	Dennis Manurung	First Day of College	X	X						
10.	Rentina F. I. Ompusunggu	Morning with Uncle and Aunt	X							

NO	NAME	Title	SUSPENSES							
			Situational	Psychological	Dramatic	Anticipatory	Conflict-based	Emotional	Moral	Mystery
11.	Casandra Dealova Sitopu	A Memorable Camping Trip					X			
12.	Theresia Sitinjak	Camping with Family				X				
13.	Sonya Lauri Situmeang	Surprising Discovery in the Park		X						
14.	Josayna Virgines Trilaksino	David's Family Holiday at the Beach Villa	X							
15.	Santa R Sihombing	Memorable Camping Trip					X			
16.	Rotua Sinta Marito Pakpahan	Volunteering at an Animal Shelter		X						
17.	Mutiara Angelica Sinaga	A Culinary and Artisanal Adventure				X				
18.	Joi Ravidio Manurung	An Unexpected Discovery in an Abandoned Mansion	X				X			
19.	Rachel Silalahi	Embarking on a Thrilling Adventure in a New Novel		X		X				
20.	Marino Sihombing	Memorable Camping Trip					X			

NO	NAME	Title	SUSPENSES							
			Situational	Psychological	Dramatic	Anticipatory	Conflict-based	Emotional	Moral	Mystery
21.	Noventy Tampubolon	A Memorable Adventure in the Enchanted Forest				X				
22.	Netania Saragih	The Ant and the Dove	X				X			
23.	Leony Elisabeth S	Farmers' Market Adventure				X				
24.	Venya Sinaga	Busy Saturday	X							
25.	Cindy Debora Manurung	An Unforgettable Mountain Climbing Adventure					X			
26.	Rani Puspa Sari	. My First Day at a New School	X	X						
27.	Yolanda Jesica Sitanggang	My First Time Traveling Alone	X	X						
28.	Viola Sasti Bizora L. Tobing	Road Trip to the Pacific Northwest				X				
29.	Junita Siska Nauli Saragih	Bawang Merah and Bawang Putih					X		X	
30.	Palti Hansd Togi Maruhum Simanjuntak	Vacation to Various Destinations				X				

NO	NAME	Title	SUSPENSES							
			Situational	Psychological	Dramatic	Anticipatory	Conflict-based	Emotional	Moral	Mystery
31.	Syalaisha Syafira Irwansyah	Shopping at the Traditional Market	X							
32.	Riyanti Anjelina Sinaga	Mountain Adventure		X			X			
33.	Kristin Permata Sari Manalu	A memorable Journey to the Beach				X				
34.	Naomi Arta Tambunan	Summer Vacation				X				
35.	Nadya Y. P. Parhusip	Village Tales	X	X						
36.	Lasmaria Novita Purba	Culinary Adventure in Rome				X				
37.	Arta Jesika Rajagukguk	My First Trip to the Beach				X				
38.	Bhets Dewani Sipayung	Trip to Bali				X				
39.	Inggrid Yossi Anna Sianipar	Returning to My Hometown		X						
40.	Yenni Adelina Sinaga	Discovering Family Secrets	X	X						
JUMLAH			13	11	0	16	10	0	1	0

Story 1 reveals 1 anticipatory suspense. In sentence 9 “...Within its walls, she would lose herself in the pages of countless books, traveling through time and space...” it states that, The suspense in this story is light and anticipatory. The reader is curious about what Emily will discover next in her adventures through the forest and



village. However, there are no significant stakes or conflicts, which limits the tension. The peaceful nature of the story keeps the suspense soft.

Story 2 reveals 1 psychological suspense. In sentence 11 "...Initially, I chose to read a novel, but the storyline of the novel was not interesting. Therefore, I went back to reading online comics for an hour and then watched dramas until late at night. This weekend was the most boring weekend for me, I think..." it states that, This narrative creates psychological suspense from the protagonist's internal boredom. The reader anticipates whether anything will break her monotonous weekend. The mild suspense comes from her indecisiveness and attempts to engage herself, though it ultimately results in a continuation of her dull day.

Story 3 reveals 1 Conflict-based suspense. In sentence 5 "...The incident strengthened their bond, prompting them to collaborate more frequently in their quest for survival. Together, they faced various challenges, from cunning hunters to treacherous terrain, always relying on each other's strengths..." it states that, Conflict-driven suspense dominates this story. The fox and cat face immediate danger from a pack of wolves, creating tension as readers wonder how the two will escape. The stakes are high since the protagonists' lives are at risk, which adds a layer of urgency and intrigue to the narrative.

Story 4 reveals 1 situational suspense. In sentence 11 "...We spent the afternoon hiking through lush forests, admiring cascading waterfalls, and spotting wildlife. It was a true nature lover's paradise..." it states that, In this narrative, situational suspense is created by the unpredictable journey. The unexpected detours and scenic views add light suspense as readers wonder what the travelers will experience next. However, there is no danger or high stakes, making the suspense more about the unfolding of events rather than conflict.

Story 5 reveals 1 Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 11 "...After that, we reached the Grand Canyon, and the sheer magnitude of its beauty left us in awe, marveling at nature's grandeur. The breathtaking views unfolded before us, making the long drive worthwhile..." it states that, This story contains anticipatory suspense centered on the excitement of the road trip and the scenic beauty of the Grand Canyon. While readers are curious about the group's journey, the lack of conflict or danger keeps the suspense mild. The story focuses on enjoyment rather than tension.

Story 6 reveals 2 suspense, namely Situational & Anticipatory. In sentence 7 "...Deciding to explore a nearby nature reserve became the next chapter, allowing me to immerse myself in the beauty of untouched landscapes..." it states that, This narrative blends anticipatory and situational suspense. The suspense comes from the unpredictability of a spontaneous road trip. Readers are curious about the places the protagonist will encounter, such as a nature reserve and a café, but the stakes are low. The lack of conflict or danger keeps the suspense mild.

Story 7 reveals 1 suspense, namely Conflict based. In sentence 9 "...Further into the cave, we encountered a labyrinth of tunnels, each twist and turn revealing new wonders that heightened our sense of adventure..." it states that, This narrative includes conflict-driven suspense through the exploration of mysterious caves. The group faces challenges like navigating dark tunnels and discovering hidden chambers, which creates tension. The unknown dangers of the cave and the high stakes of exploring an unfamiliar environment contribute to the suspense.

Story 8 reveals 1 suspense, namely Anticipatory. In sentence 13 "...Sarah's mom took a leisurely walk along the shoreline, collecting seashells as souvenirs..." it states that, This story contains anticipatory suspense centered around a family's day at the beach. The suspense is mild, coming from the anticipation of different activities like swimming, building sandcastles, and playing volleyball. There are no significant stakes, making the story more leisurely.

Story 9 reveals 2 suspenses, namely Psychological & situational. In sentence 11 "...I realized that college was not as scary as I thought it would be, and that I was capable of achieving great things, my first day of college was a mix of nervousness and excitement, but it taught me valuable lessons and gave me unforgettable memories..." it states that, Psychological suspense is present as the protagonist navigates their nervousness on the first day of college. Readers experience situational suspense as the protagonist meets new classmates and professors, wondering how the day will unfold. The stakes are personal, focused on the protagonist's anxiety and adaptation to college life.

Story 10 reveals 1 suspense, namely situational. In sentence 5 "...Unlike in urban areas, we villagers throw rubbish in the yard, by making a hole to burn it there every day. This method is more effective in dealing with the waste problem..." it states that, This narrative has mild situational suspense as the protagonist helps clean the yard with their uncle and aunt. The suspense is minimal, focused on the daily activities of cleaning and preparing for a family event. The story doesn't contain any significant tension or conflict.

Story 11 reveals 1 suspense, Conflict-driven suspense. In sentence 11 "...Gathering around a crackling campfire, we shared stories, roasted marshmallows, and forged memories that would last a lifetime..." it states that, Conflict-driven suspense appears in this camping trip narrative, especially when the group faces unexpected rain that threatens their plans. Readers wonder if they will be able to salvage the trip, and the tension builds as they try to overcome the challenges of the weather and continue enjoying their experience.

Story 12 reveals 1 suspense, Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 9 "...Finally, we gathered around the campfire, roasting marshmallows and sharing stories, creating lasting memories..." it states that, Anticipatory suspense



is present in this family camping trip. The reader is curious about what the family will experience during their time in nature, from hiking to enjoying campfire activities. However, the lack of significant conflict or danger keeps the suspense light and focused on enjoyment.

Story 13 reveals 1 suspense, Psychological suspense. In sentence 11 “...I shared snippets of my own life, finding common ground in our experiences. Time seemed to stand still as we connected over shared values and perspectives...” it states that, Psychological suspense comes into play as the protagonist meets an elderly man in the park and learns about his life after the loss of his wife. The suspense comes from the emotional weight of their conversation and the connection they form. The story focuses on the unexpected emotional bond rather than physical conflict.

Story 14 reveals 1 suspense, Situational suspense. In sentence 13 “...they decided to explore the wild nature. When evening came, the Davis family went to visit a local farm. That evening, they all gathered on the terrace of the villa, enjoying dinner together while enjoying the gentle breeze and the sound of the waves...” it states that, Situational suspense is present as the family embarks on various activities during their beach holiday. There's mild tension as they explore the wilderness and visit a local farm, but there are no high stakes or significant danger. The suspense comes from the new experiences and what they might encounter next.

Story 15 reveals 1 suspense, Conflict-driven suspense. In sentence 9 “...We researched the area and found a secluded spot near a crystal-clear lake. We encountered a variety of wildlife. Along the way, we captured countless photographs, preserving the memories of our journey and the beauty of the natural world...” it states that, Conflict-driven suspense appears when the group faces challenges during their camping trip, such as navigating through the wilderness and dealing with wildlife. The suspense builds as they overcome obstacles and experience moments of uncertainty, but the story concludes on a positive note.

Story 16 reveals 1 suspense, psychological suspense. In sentence 13 “...Finally, as my time volunteering at the animal shelter came to an end, I felt a deep sense of fulfillment and gratitude...” it states that, This narrative contains psychological suspense, as the protagonist navigates their emotions while volunteering at the animal shelter. The suspense is mild and personal, revolving around the protagonist's internal growth and their interactions with the animals and potential adopters.

Story 17 reveals 1 suspense, Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 9 “...Finally, with a filled basket and a heart brimming with culinary inspiration, I strolled through the artisanal crafts section...” it states that, Anticipatory suspense is present as the protagonist navigates a vibrant farmer's market and culinary experiences. The suspense is driven by curiosity about the food, crafts, and cultural interactions, but there are no significant stakes or conflicts, making it a light and enjoyable read.

Story 18 reveals 2 suspenses, conflict-driven and situational suspenses. In sentence 9 “...Following the narrative's twists and turns, I unearthed clues leading to a concealed chamber rumored to hold a forgotten treasure—a fabled relic whispered to possess mystical powers...” it states that, This story contains both conflict-driven and situational suspense. The protagonist's exploration of an abandoned mansion during a storm creates an eerie atmosphere. The discovery of a hidden compartment and a centuries-old diary adds layers of tension as the reader anticipates what secrets the mansion holds.

Story 19 reveals 2 suspenses, Anticipatory and Psychological suspenses. In sentence 11 “...The author's vivid descriptions allowed me to visualize each perilous obstacle and feel the rush of adrenaline as the hero conquered them...” it states that Anticipatory suspense comes from the protagonist's immersion in a new novel. The reader is pulled into the protagonist's experience of the book's plot, with Psychological suspense added as the story inside the novel builds toward its climax. The suspense is reflective of the book's tension, experienced second-hand by the protagonist.

Story 20 reveals 1 suspense, Conflict-driven suspense. In sentence 9 “...The following day, we embarked on a challenging hike through the surrounding mountains. The trail was steep and rocky, but the breathtaking views at the summit made it all worthwhile...” it states that, Conflict-driven suspense arises when the group embarks on a challenging hike during their camping trip. The suspense is heightened as they face physical challenges and unpredictable weather, creating tension about whether they will successfully complete their journey.

Story 21 reveals 1 suspense, anticipatory suspense. In sentence 9 “...Then, I stumbled upon an ancient tree with a hidden door, unlocking a world of magical creatures, as the first light of dawn painted the sky, I emerged from the forest, carrying cherished memories of an otherworldly journey...” it states that, This narrative features anticipatory suspense as the protagonist embarks on an adventure in a mystical forest. The suspense builds as they encounter magical creatures and hidden doors. The reader is curious about the enchanted world and what the protagonist will discover next. The stakes are more imaginative than dangerous, creating a mild but consistent sense of wonder.

Story 22 reveals 2 suspenses, situational & conflict-driven suspenses. In sentence 11 “...Guessing what he should do, the ant quickly bit him on the heel. Feeling the pain, the hunter dropped his net and the dove flew away quickly from this net...” it states that, This fable incorporates situational suspense when the ant falls into the water and is rescued by a dove. The suspense shifts to conflict-driven when the ant later saves the dove from a hunter. The stakes are clear, but since this is a fable, the resolution is somewhat expected, making the suspense less intense but still effective within the moral framework of the story.

Story 23 reveals 1 suspense, Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 9 “...Next, Among the produce, ripe strawberries gleamed like jewels, tempting me to indulge in their sweetness...” it states that, Anticipatory suspense is present as the protagonist explores a local farmer’s market. The suspense is mild, driven by curiosity about what the market has to offer. There are no significant stakes or conflicts, but the vibrant descriptions of different foods and stalls create an engaging experience.

Story 24 reveals 1 suspense, Situational suspense. In sentence 11 “...While waiting for the nail polish to dry, I took a short break for about 30 minutes...” it states that, Situational suspense emerges as the protagonist navigates a busy Saturday filled with different tasks, such as decorating the church and preparing for Christmas evening. There is mild tension as readers follow her efforts to complete everything in time, but the stakes are low and the suspense remains light.

Story 25 reveals 1 suspense, conflict-driven suspense. In sentence 13 “...We celebrated our achievement, capturing the moment with photographs and reflecting on the lessons we had learned throughout the climb...” it states that, This story is rich with conflict-driven suspense, as the group faces physical and mental challenges while climbing a mountain. The unpredictable weather and difficult terrain raise the stakes, creating tension as readers wonder whether they will reach the summit. The suspense is heightened by the danger inherent in the climb, making it one of the more intense narratives.

Story 26 reveals 2 suspenses, Psychological & Situational suspense. In sentence 13 “...Finally, as the school day came to an end, I reflected on the positive experiences I had on my first day at the new school...” it states that, Psychological suspense is prevalent as the protagonist navigates her nerves and excitement on her first day at a new school. Readers experience her anxiety about making friends and adjusting to the new environment. Situational suspense also plays a role as she meets new classmates and engages in her first lessons.

Story 27 reveals 2 suspenses, Psychological & Situational suspense. In sentence 9 “...I had some language barriers, but I learned some basic phrases and communicated through gestures and expressions...” it states that, This narrative combines psychological suspense with situational suspense, as the protagonist experiences the challenges and rewards of traveling alone for the first time. The tension comes from her uncertainty about navigating a new place by herself and the potential for getting lost or facing language barriers, which creates a mild but consistent sense of suspense.

Story 28 reveals 1 suspense, Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 11 “...After days of exploration, we found ourselves standing at the edge of Crater Lake, its sapphire waters reflecting the surrounding majesty of nature...” it states that, Anticipatory suspense drives this story, as the protagonist’s family embarks on a scenic road trip. The suspense comes from their excitement and anticipation of the beautiful landscapes they will encounter, such as Crater Lake and Olympic National Park. There are no conflicts or high stakes, so the suspense is light and focused on the unfolding journey.

Story 29 reveals 2 suspenses, conflict-driven & moral suspenses. In sentence 13 “...Then, the magic flower that bawang merah had stolen from her sister turned into a stone, and she was unable to remove it from her hand...” it states that, This traditional story contains conflict-driven suspense, primarily between Bawang Merah and Bawang Putih. The conflict intensifies when Bawang Merah steals the magic flower, and readers anticipate the punishment she will face. The stakes are moral, with suspense built around the themes of jealousy and kindness and Suspense is created by the moral tension between the wicked actions of Bawang Merah and the virtuous Bawang Putih, with readers anticipating the results of Bawang Merah’s behavior.

Story 30 reveals 1 suspense, Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 11 “...Here, we know how ancestral weapons used to fight the invaders. Many weapons also vary from the times and various countries...” it states that, Anticipatory suspense is present as the protagonist’s group embarks on a well-planned vacation to multiple destinations, including Lake Toba and a war museum. The suspense is light, focusing on the group’s excitement for each new experience. The stakes are low, and the narrative is more about the joy of exploration than about tension or danger.

Story 31 reveals 1 suspense, Situational suspense. In sentence 9 “...After that, syalaisha bought some of the cakes, because she rarely found them sold elsewhere. The atmosphere in the traditional market was very crowded...” it states that, Situational suspense arises as Syalaisha and her mother navigate a busy traditional market. The reader anticipates what they will purchase next and how they will interact with local vendors. The tension is light, focused on the flow of the day’s activities and the experience of shopping in a bustling market environment.

Story 32 reveals 2 suspenses, psychological & conflict-driven suspense. In sentence 11 it states that, This story combines conflict-driven suspense with psychological suspense, as the group faces harsh weather conditions and an injury while hiking. The external conflict with nature creates physical tension, while the group’s internal emotions—such as worry about their injured friend—add psychological depth to the suspense. The stakes are high, making the reader wonder if they will make it to the summit.

Story 33 reveals 1 suspense, Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 11 “...Panic flickered across our faces, but we swiftly rallied to aid our injured companion. We fashioned a makeshift splint and supported them as we continued our ascent. After that, a sudden downpour caught us off guard, drenching us to the bone...” it states that, Anticipatory suspense drives this narrative, as the protagonist’s excitement builds toward a day at the beach. The

suspense is light, centered around the anticipation of swimming, playing games, and enjoying time with loved ones. There is no conflict or high stakes, but the curiosity about how the day will unfold creates mild tension.

Story 34 reveals 1 suspense, Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 9 *“...As I sipped my favorite mug of hot chocolate, my mind raced with all the adventures that awaited me. The beach, hiking trails, and lazy afternoons spent reading under the shade of a tree were all on my summer bucket list....”* it states that, This story uses anticipatory suspense as the protagonist eagerly awaits the start of summer vacation. The suspense builds as she imagines all the adventures she could have, from going to the beach to hiking. The tension is mild, as the stakes are low and the focus is on the joy of having free time.

Story 35 reveals 2 suspenses, psychological & Situational suspenses. In sentence 11 *“...With a wistful smile, the man closed the book and looked out at the bustling village with a renewed sense of appreciation...”* it states that, Psychological suspense emerges as an elderly man reflects on his village’s past while reading a treasured book. The suspense builds as readers anticipate what memories the book will evoke. The connection between past and present, along with the man’s nostalgia, creates a contemplative, emotional tension. Situational suspense is also present as he revisits his memories and considers the future of his village’s stories.

Story 36 reveals 1 suspense, Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 9 *“...my culinary adventure in Rome not only satisfied my taste buds but also provided a sensory journey through the vibrant tapestry of Italian flavors, leaving me with memories to savor for years to come...”* it states that, Anticipatory suspense is the key to this narrative, as the protagonist embarks on a culinary journey through Rome. The suspense is light, focused on the anticipation of discovering new flavors and foods at different restaurants and markets. There is no conflict, but the curiosity about what culinary delights will come next creates mild tension.

Story 37 reveals 1 suspense, Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 9 *“...We ventured into the crystal-clear water, feeling the gentle tug of the current against our bodies...”* it states that, This story contains anticipatory suspense as the protagonist eagerly anticipates their first trip to the beach. The suspense comes from the excitement of new experiences, such as snorkeling and observing marine life. The stakes are low, and the tension is mild, driven by the joy of discovery rather than danger or conflict.

Story 38 reveals 1 suspense, Anticipatory suspense. In sentence 11 *“...I went to the Ubud market and found some beautiful handmade crafts, like batik fabrics and wooden carvings...”* it states that, Anticipatory suspense arises as the protagonist explores Bali’s famous landmarks, including Tanah Lot and the rice terraces of Ubud. The suspense is light, focused on the excitement of discovering new places and tasting local cuisine. There are no significant stakes or conflicts, but the anticipation of each new experience keeps the reader engaged.

Story 39 reveals 1 suspense, psychological suspense. In sentence 11 *“...After that, I ventured to the local park, where I used to spend countless hours playing and dreaming...”* it states that, This narrative features psychological suspense, driven by the protagonist’s emotions upon returning to their hometown. The suspense builds as they revisit familiar places and reconnect with memories of the past. The tension is emotional, focused on the nostalgia and the changes they observe. The stakes are personal, making this a reflective type of suspense.

Story 40 reveals 2 suspenses, Situational & psychological suspense. In sentence 9 *“...Their tireless dedication to education transformed the village, empowering generations with knowledge and opportunities previously thought unattainable...”* it states that, The psychological suspense lies in Lily’s emotional and mental journey of self-discovery, influenced by the revelations from the book. The situational suspense is rooted in the unfolding of each historical story and the specific circumstances her ancestors faced, which create tension about how these past events will impact Lily’s present life.

## E. Conclusion

This study shows that suspense is present in all stories written by 40 third-semester students from the English Language Education Study Program at HKBP Nommensen University. The types of suspense identified include Situational Suspense, Psychological Suspense, Anticipatory Suspense, Conflict-based Suspense, and Moral Suspense, while Dramatic Suspense, Emotional Suspense, and Mystery Suspense were not found. Specifically, there are 13 instances of Situational Suspense, 11 of Psychological Suspense, 16 of Anticipatory Suspense, 10 of Conflict-based Suspense, and 1 of Moral Suspense. Each story employs different suspense elements, such as conflict-based suspense in stories involving physical or mental challenges, and anticipatory suspense that builds the reader’s curiosity without introducing significant danger. These findings provide insights into how students use suspense in their narratives, which can be valuable for developing more engaging and interactive English curriculum content.

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