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# Missed it? - Question based discourse models and narrative suspense

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## Abstract

Question-based theories of discourse structure have proven significant with explaining various linguistic phenomena. Showing that they can predict cognitive and aesthetic macro-phenomena makes them valuable also for interdisciplinary research. In this work, we introduce a new term within theories of discourse, called "Potentially Inquiry Terminating Question". By giving the reader the impression that their goal of getting a desired answer is close, PITQs maximize readers' engagement with a literary text. They are thus substantial for the emergence of suspense. We show how they can predict it to a remarkable degree, bridging the gap between linguistic and literary theory.

**Keywords:** QUD, discourse model, suspense

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