

# Kinesis in Literature and the Cognitive Dynamic of Gestures in Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Cervantes

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## *Abstract*

*Literature activates and often challenges our cognitive faculties. A desire to better understand its impact goes with an enhanced attention to the potentials of our embodied minds, and the ways in which literature is a manifestation of both situated cognition and imaginary experiences. A reflective focus on the cognitive acts of perceptual simulations, in association with the historical background of a text, can produce a type of analysis that bridges the gap between literary studies and cognitive science via the study of narrated gestures, sensorimotor events, and their dynamic cognitive force in the act of reading. Kinesic passages in Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Cervantes are discussed in this essay to demonstrate the value of this approach.*

**Keywords:** cognition; perceptual simulation; sensorimotricity; reading; horseback-riding.