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Tense and aspect in word problems about motion: diagram, gesture, and the felt experience of time.

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Summary: Word problems about motion contain various conjugated verb forms. As students and teachers grapple with such word problems, they jointly operationalize diagrams, gestures, and language. Drawing on findings from a 3-year research project examining the social semiotics of classroom interaction, we show how teachers and students use gesture and diagram to make sense of complex verb forms in such word problems. We focus on the grammatical category of “aspect” for how it broadens the concept of verb tense. Aspect conveys duration and completion or frequency of an event. The aspect of a verb defines its temporal flow (or lack thereof) and the location of a vantage point for making sense of this durational process.

Classification: F90 M50 C50

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