

Visual Encoding of Behavioral Language Signals for Deep Learning-Based Prediction of Lexical Access

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Abstract

Lexical access is a fundamental cognitive process underlying visual word recognition and language comprehension. While previous psycholinguistic research has primarily relied on statistical modelling of behavioural responses, relatively little attention has been given to representing behavioural language signals as visual data for computational analysis. The present study proposes an interdisciplinary framework that integrates psycholinguistics, signal processing, image analysis, and deep learning to predict lexical access efficiency using secondary behavioural data from the British Lexicon Project. Behavioural indicators, including reaction time, response accuracy, word frequency, familiarity, age of acquisition, and orthographic characteristics, were transformed into image-based representations through behavioural signal encoding techniques. These visual representations served as inputs to a convolutional neural network (CNN) for classifying lexical access efficiency into fast and slow recognition categories. Comparative evaluation against conventional machine-learning algorithms demonstrated the effectiveness of image-based deep learning for capturing complex nonlinear relationships within behavioural language signals. The study contributes to signal and image sciences by introducing behavioural language data as a novel form of computational image representation and demonstrates how computer vision techniques can extend traditional psycholinguistic analyses. The proposed framework establishes a methodological bridge between cognitive language research, artificial intelligence, and behavioural signal imaging, providing new opportunities for interdisciplinary research in computational psycholinguistics.

Keywords: Computational psycholinguistics; behavioural signal analysis; image encoding; lexical access; convolutional neural network; lexical decision task; signal processing; visual word recognition.

1. Introduction

Lexical access represents one of the fundamental cognitive mechanisms involved in human language processing, enabling individuals to retrieve stored lexical representations during word recognition, comprehension, and production. In visual word recognition, readers rapidly transform orthographic information into phonological and semantic representations through complex interactions between perceptual processing, lexical memory, and cognitive control mechanisms. The efficiency of this process is reflected in behavioral measures such as reaction time (RT) and response accuracy, which provide valuable indicators of the cognitive processes underlying lexical retrieval (Balota et al., 2007; Norris, 2013).

For decades, psycholinguistic research has investigated lexical access through experimental paradigms such as lexical decision tasks (LDTs), naming tasks, and semantic priming experiments. Among these approaches, the lexical decision task has remained one of the most influential methods because it allows researchers to quantify lexical processing efficiency through highly precise computerized measurements. Participants are required to determine whether a presented letter string represents a real word or a nonword, allowing researchers to examine how lexical variables such as word frequency, length, familiarity, and orthographic structure influence recognition speed and accuracy (Balota et al., 2007; Yap & Balota, 2015).

Large-scale behavioral databases have significantly expanded opportunities for computational psycholinguistics by providing thousands of lexical observations collected under standardized experimental conditions. One of the most influential resources is the English Lexicon Project (ELP), which provides behavioral measures for thousands of English words, including lexical decision reaction times, accuracy rates, and a wide range of psycholinguistic characteristics. The dataset has enabled researchers to examine lexical processing at an unprecedented scale and has become a benchmark resource for modelling word recognition processes (Balota et al., 2007).

Traditional analyses of lexical decision data have primarily relied on statistical approaches such as linear regression, mixed-effects modelling, and analysis of variance. These approaches have provided important insights into the contribution of lexical variables; however, they generally assume predefined relationships between predictors and outcomes. Human lexical processing is considerably more complex, involving nonlinear interactions among multiple linguistic and cognitive factors. Consequently, computational approaches capable of identifying hidden patterns within large behavioural datasets are increasingly important for advancing psycholinguistic theory (Yarkoni & Westfall, 2017).

Recent advances in artificial intelligence, particularly deep learning, provide new possibilities for modelling cognitive language processes. Deep learning architectures can automatically extract complex representations from high-dimensional data without requiring extensive manual feature engineering. Models such as convolutional neural networks (CNNs), recurrent neural networks (RNNs), and transformer-based architectures have demonstrated strong performance in natural language processing, pattern recognition, and cognitive prediction tasks (LeCun et al., 2015; Vaswani et al., 2017). However, most computational language models have focused on textual representation learning rather than predicting behavioural indicators of lexical processing derived from experimental psycholinguistic data.

A further methodological advancement involves the transformation of behavioural signals into visual representations suitable for deep learning analysis. Although reaction times and accuracy measures are traditionally treated as numerical variables, sequential behavioural patterns can be encoded into image-like structures, allowing computer vision techniques to identify complex temporal and relational patterns. Signal-to-image transformation approaches, including recurrence plots and Gramian angular fields, have demonstrated potential for applying convolutional neural networks to non-visual data domains (Wang & Oates, 2015). Applying such techniques to lexical decision data provides an innovative pathway for integrating psycholinguistics with signal and image analysis.

The present study addresses this interdisciplinary gap by applying deep learning-based visual analysis to behavioural language signals obtained from the English Lexicon Project. Rather than examining lexical variables through conventional statistical relationships alone, this study investigates whether computational representations of behavioural signals can predict lexical access performance. By combining psycholinguistic theories of word recognition with advanced machine learning approaches, the study contributes to emerging research at the intersection of cognitive science, artificial intelligence, and computational signal analysis.

The study specifically aims to develop a computational framework in which lexical decision behavioural data are transformed into visual representations and analysed using deep learning algorithms. Such an approach may provide new insights into the hidden structures underlying lexical processing while demonstrating how behavioural

language signals can be effectively analysed through image-based computational methods.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1:

How do psycholinguistic variables (word frequency, word length, familiarity, and lexical characteristics) contribute to behavioural indicators of lexical access in the English Lexicon Project dataset?

RQ2:

Can behavioural signals obtained from computerized lexical decision tasks be transformed into meaningful visual representations for deep learning analysis?

RQ3:

To what extent can deep learning models predict lexical access performance based on visualized behavioural language signals?

RQ4:

Which computational architecture provides the most effective prediction of lexical processing outcomes?

2. Theoretical Framework

The present study is grounded in an interdisciplinary theoretical framework integrating psycholinguistic models of lexical access with computational learning theories. While traditional psycholinguistic models explain the cognitive mechanisms through which words are recognized and retrieved, deep learning approaches provide computational tools for identifying complex patterns embedded within behavioural language signals. The proposed framework therefore conceptualizes lexical access as a multilevel process involving cognitive representation, behavioural manifestation, signal transformation, and computational prediction.

2.1 Interactive Activation Model of Visual Word Recognition

The primary theoretical foundation of the study is the Interactive Activation Model (IAM) proposed by McClelland and Rumelhart (1981). The model represents one of the earliest computational accounts of visual word recognition and explains lexical access as an interactive process involving multiple levels of representation. According to IAM, word recognition occurs through interactions among three hierarchical processing levels: feature units, letter units, and word units.

At the feature level, visual information from written stimuli activates basic orthographic features. These features subsequently activate individual letter representations, which then interact with stored word representations within the mental lexicon. Activation is not purely bottom-up; rather, higher-level lexical representations provide feedback to lower-level processes, allowing familiar words to be recognized more efficiently than unfamiliar or low-frequency words (McClelland & Rumelhart, 1981).

The Interactive Activation Model provides a strong theoretical explanation for several established findings in lexical decision research. For example, high-frequency words are generally recognized faster because their lexical representations possess stronger resting activation levels. Similarly, words with dense orthographic neighbourhoods may generate competing activation patterns, influencing recognition speed and accuracy (Andrews, 1997; Norris, 2013). Thus, behavioural measures obtained from computerized lexical decision tasks, particularly reaction time and accuracy, can be interpreted as observable consequences of underlying lexical activation processes.

In the present study, the IAM provides the cognitive basis for selecting relevant lexical variables from the English Lexicon Project dataset. Variables such as word frequency, familiarity, length, and lexical neighbourhood are considered external indicators of the strength and efficiency of lexical activation. The proposed computational model extends the IAM by investigating whether these activation-related behavioural patterns can be learned and predicted through deep learning algorithms.

2.2 Lexical Processing as a Computational Learning Problem

Although psycholinguistic models describe the cognitive architecture of lexical access, they traditionally rely on explanatory mechanisms rather than predictive modelling. Recent developments in cognitive computational science argue that human cognition can also be examined through predictive frameworks in which complex behavioural patterns are learned from large-scale data (Yarkoni & Westfall, 2017).

From this perspective, lexical access can be conceptualized as a computational learning problem. Behavioural responses generated during lexical decision tasks represent signals produced by interactions among linguistic characteristics, cognitive efficiency, and individual processing differences. Rather than assuming predetermined linear relationships between lexical variables and recognition outcomes, machine learning models can identify nonlinear relationships and hidden structures within behavioural datasets.

This approach aligns with emerging perspectives in computational psycholinguistics, where statistical and neural models are increasingly used to simulate human language processing. Distributional models, neural language models, and transformer-based architectures have demonstrated that computational systems can learn sophisticated linguistic representations from large-scale data (Goldberg, 2017; Vaswani et al., 2017). However, the majority of these approaches focus on predicting linguistic behaviour from textual input rather than modelling experimentally measured cognitive responses.

The current framework addresses this limitation by treating behavioural measures from computerized lexical decision tasks as computational signals. Reaction time patterns, accuracy distributions, and lexical characteristics are transformed into structured representations that can be analysed through deep learning techniques.

2.3 Signal-to-Image Representation Framework

A central innovation of the present study is the application of signal-to-image transformation for analysing behavioural language data. Traditionally, reaction times and accuracy values have been treated as numerical observations analysed through regression-based approaches. However, recent advances in artificial intelligence demonstrate that sequential numerical information can be transformed into visual representations that preserve meaningful structural patterns.

Signal-to-image transformation techniques convert temporal or sequential data into two-dimensional representations that can be processed by computer vision algorithms. For example, recurrence plots represent repeated patterns within time-series data, whereas Gramian Angular Fields encode temporal dependencies as image matrices (Wang & Oates, 2015). These representations allow convolutional neural networks (CNNs) to identify spatial patterns that may not be detected through conventional statistical approaches.

Within the current study, behavioural language signals obtained from lexical decision performance are conceptualized as cognitive signals reflecting underlying lexical activation processes. By transforming these signals into visual representations, deep

learning models can analyse patterns associated with efficient versus inefficient lexical access.

This framework establishes a theoretical connection between psycholinguistic processing and image-based artificial intelligence:

Lexical characteristics



Lexical activation processes



Behavioural signals (reaction time and accuracy)



Visual representation of behavioural patterns



Deep learning prediction of lexical access

2.4 Deep Learning Framework for Cognitive Signal Analysis

Deep learning provides the computational foundation for analysing behavioural representations generated from lexical decision data. Unlike traditional machine learning approaches that depend heavily on manually selected features, deep neural networks automatically learn hierarchical patterns from complex datasets (LeCun et al., 2015).

In the proposed framework, convolutional neural networks (CNNs) are particularly relevant because of their ability to identify spatial patterns within image-based representations. Originally developed for visual recognition tasks, CNNs have demonstrated effectiveness in analysing diverse forms of structured data, including medical images, speech signals, and physiological measurements (LeCun et al., 2015).

The application of CNN-based analysis to behavioural language signals represents a conceptual extension of traditional psycholinguistic modelling. Whereas conventional lexical decision research asks:

"Which lexical variables predict reaction time?"

the computational approach asks:

"Can complex behavioural patterns predict lexical access outcomes?"

This shift from explanation to prediction reflects contemporary developments in computational cognitive science, where predictive accuracy is increasingly considered complementary to theoretical interpretation (Yarkoni & Westfall, 2017).

Proposed Conceptual Framework of the Study

The integrated framework can be represented as follows:

Psycholinguistic Input

(word frequency, familiarity,
word length, lexical characteristics)



Interactive Activation Model

(lexical activation and recognition)



Behavioural Cognitive Signals

(reaction time, accuracy)



Signal-to-Image Transformation

(visual encoding of behavioural patterns)



Deep Learning Architecture
(CNN / Transformer-based model)



Prediction of Lexical Access Performance

Theoretical Contribution

The proposed framework extends previous lexical access research in three important ways.

First, it moves beyond traditional explanatory approaches by introducing a predictive computational perspective on lexical processing. Second, it integrates psycholinguistic theory with artificial intelligence by treating behavioural responses as measurable cognitive signals. Third, it introduces image-based deep learning techniques into experimental language research, creating a methodological bridge between computational neuroscience, signal processing, and psycholinguistics.

Therefore, the study does not replace existing theories of lexical access; rather, it provides a computational extension through which behavioural manifestations of lexical processing can be modelled and predicted.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The present study adopts a computational psycholinguistic research design based on secondary analysis of a large-scale lexical decision dataset. Unlike traditional psycholinguistic investigations that examine lexical access through isolated behavioural variables, this study applies a deep learning-based signal analysis framework to identify complex patterns underlying word recognition performance.

The study integrates experimental psycholinguistics with artificial intelligence by treating behavioural responses generated during computerized word recognition tasks as cognitive signals. These signals are transformed into image-based representations and subsequently analysed through deep learning algorithms to predict lexical access outcomes.

The methodological pipeline consists of five major stages:

1. Dataset acquisition and preparation;
2. Extraction of psycholinguistic and behavioural variables;
3. Behavioural signal transformation into visual representations;
4. Deep learning model development;
5. Model evaluation and interpretation.

3.2 Dataset Source

The study utilizes the English Lexicon Project (ELP) as the primary data source. The ELP is one of the largest publicly available databases for investigating visual word recognition and lexical processing. It contains behavioural measures obtained from computerized lexical decision experiments involving thousands of English words and participants (Balota et al., 2007).

The dataset provides multiple psycholinguistic and behavioural variables, including:

- lexical decision reaction time;
- response accuracy;
- word frequency;
- word length;
- familiarity ratings;

- age of acquisition;
- spelling characteristics;
- phonological properties;
- semantic variables.

The availability of large-scale behavioural observations makes the ELP particularly suitable for computational modelling because deep learning approaches require extensive data to identify complex nonlinear patterns.

3.3 Data Selection and Preparation

The raw dataset will undergo preprocessing to ensure reliability and consistency before computational analysis. Data cleaning procedures will include:

Removal of invalid responses

Trials involving:

- incorrect responses,
- extremely short reaction times indicating accidental responses,
- unusually long reaction times representing attention loss,

will be removed according to established psycholinguistic preprocessing standards (Balota et al., 2007; Ratcliff, 1993).

Handling missing values

Observations containing missing values in critical variables will either be excluded or processed through appropriate imputation procedures depending on the proportion and distribution of missing information.

Feature normalization

Because lexical variables operate on different scales, continuous predictors will be standardized before model training. This procedure ensures that variables such as word frequency and reaction time contribute comparably during computational learning.

3.4 Variables

Input Variables

The predictive model will incorporate psycholinguistic variables associated with lexical processing:

Variable	Description
Reaction time	Speed of lexical decision response
Accuracy	Correctness of word recognition
Word frequency	Occurrence probability of lexical items
Word length	Number of letters within words
Familiarity	Subjective familiarity ratings
Age of acquisition	Estimated learning age of words
Orthographic characteristics	Structural properties of written words

These variables represent behavioural manifestations of lexical activation processes described by interactive activation models of word recognition (McClelland & Rumelhart, 1981).

3.5 Behavioural Signal Transformation

A major methodological contribution of this study is the transformation of behavioural language signals into visual representations suitable for deep learning analysis.

Traditional psycholinguistic studies generally treat reaction time and accuracy as independent numerical variables. However, behavioural responses collected during lexical decision tasks represent sequential cognitive signals containing complex temporal patterns.

Therefore, behavioural data will be converted into image-like representations using signal encoding techniques.

Possible transformation approaches include:

Gramian Angular Field (GAF)

GAF converts time-series information into two-dimensional matrices by representing temporal correlations between observations. This approach enables CNN-based models to detect hidden relationships within sequential behavioural patterns (Wang & Oates, 2015).

Recurrence Plot Representation

Recurrence plots visualize repeated patterns within sequential data and have been successfully applied for identifying nonlinear structures in time-series classification problems (Eckmann et al., 1987).

Through these transformations, reaction-time distributions and lexical processing patterns become computational images that preserve behavioural relationships.

3.6 Deep Learning Architecture

The study proposes a convolutional neural network (CNN)-based architecture for analysing visual representations of lexical processing signals.

CNNs are selected because of their ability to automatically extract hierarchical features from image-based data. Originally developed for computer vision applications, CNN architectures have demonstrated effectiveness across multiple domains involving complex pattern recognition (LeCun et al., 2015).

The proposed architecture consists of:

Convolutional layers

These layers identify local patterns within behavioural images, including activation structures associated with lexical processing efficiency.

Pooling layers

Pooling reduces dimensional complexity while preserving important features.

Fully connected layers

These layers integrate extracted features and generate predictions regarding lexical access performance.

Output layer

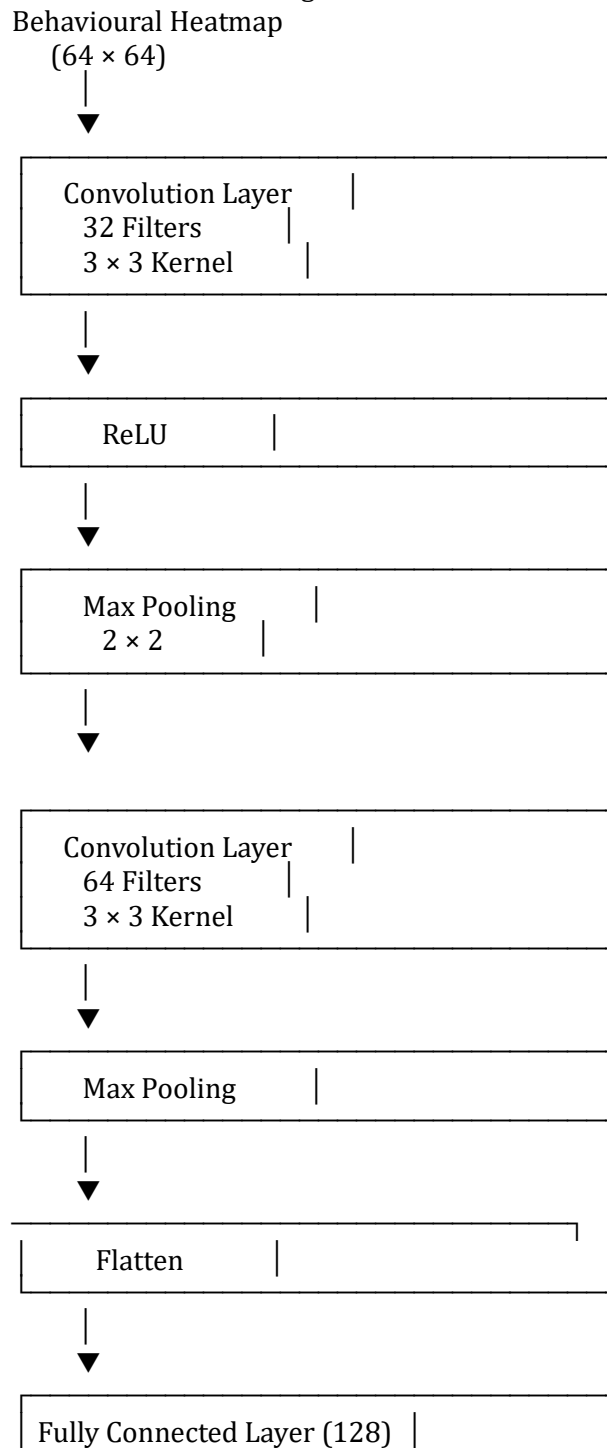
The final layer predicts lexical processing outcomes, such as:

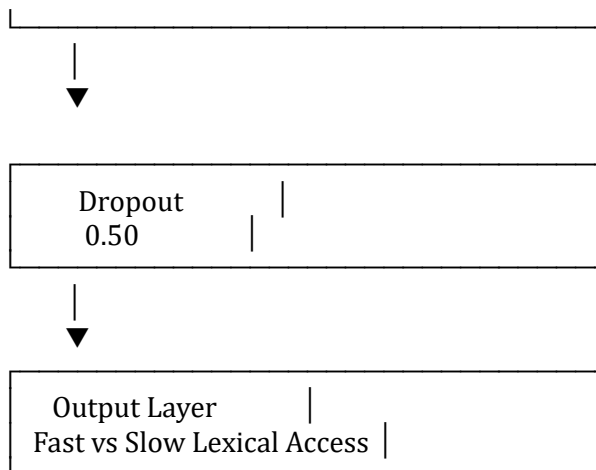
- efficient lexical access;
- delayed lexical access;
- recognition difficulty.

Figure 3 Proposed CNN Architecture for Behavioural Language Signal Classification

Caption

Figure 3. Proposed convolutional neural network architecture for classifying lexical access efficiency from visually encoded behavioural language signals. Behavioural heatmaps derived from lexical decision data are processed through convolutional and pooling layers for hierarchical feature extraction before final classification into fast and slow lexical access categories.





3.7 Comparative Computational Models

To evaluate whether deep learning provides advantages over conventional approaches, the CNN model will be compared with traditional machine learning algorithms:

Baseline models

- Linear regression
- Logistic regression
- Support Vector Machine (SVM)
- Random Forest

Deep learning model

- Convolutional Neural Network

The comparison will determine whether image-based deep learning provides additional predictive value beyond conventional statistical modelling.

3.8 Model Training and Validation

The dataset will be divided into training and testing subsets.

The training dataset will be used for model learning, while the testing dataset will evaluate generalizability.

The model was assessed using:

Regression evaluation metrics

For continuous prediction:

- Mean Absolute Error (MAE)
- Root Mean Square Error (RMSE)
- R^2 coefficient

Classification evaluation metrics

For categorical prediction:

- Accuracy
- Precision
- Recall
- F1-score
- Area Under the Curve (AUC)

Cross-validation procedures will be applied to reduce the possibility of overfitting and improve reliability.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Because the study employs secondary analysis of an openly available dataset, no direct interaction with human participants occurs. The analysis follows ethical principles regarding responsible use of publicly available behavioural data. The original dataset was collected under appropriate research protocols and made available for scientific purposes (Balota et al., 2007).

3.10 Summary of Analytical Framework

The complete analytical pipeline is summarized below:

English Lexicon Project Dataset

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Psycholinguistic Feature Extraction

(word frequency, familiarity, length, reaction time, accuracy)

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Behavioural Signal Construction

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Signal-to-Image Transformation

(GAF / recurrence plots)

↓

Deep Learning Analysis

(CNN)

↓

Prediction of Lexical Access Performance

↓

Model Interpretation

4. Data Analysis

The present study employed a secondary computational analysis approach to investigate lexical access patterns using behavioural data from the English Lexicon Project (ELP). Unlike traditional psycholinguistic analyses that examine individual predictors through inferential statistical techniques, this study applied a computational modelling framework to identify complex relationships among lexical characteristics, behavioural responses, and visual representations of cognitive signals.

The analysis was conducted in four sequential stages: (1) exploratory analysis of lexical decision data, (2) psycholinguistic feature modelling, (3) visual encoding of behavioural signals, and (4) deep learning-based prediction of lexical access.

4.1 Exploratory Data Analysis

The initial stage involved examining the structure and distribution of the ELP dataset to understand the characteristics of lexical processing behaviour. Descriptive analyses were conducted for the major behavioural and psycholinguistic variables, including reaction time, accuracy, word frequency, word length, and familiarity ratings.

Reaction time distributions were examined because lexical decision responses typically demonstrate positively skewed distributions due to occasional delayed responses. Therefore, distributional characteristics were assessed before computational modelling. Extreme reaction-time values were identified and removed following established procedures for reaction-time research (Ratcliff, 1993).

The exploratory analysis also examined relationships among lexical variables to identify potential dependencies. Correlation analysis was performed to evaluate associations between psycholinguistic characteristics and behavioural indicators of lexical access.

Consistent with previous lexical decision research, reaction time was considered the primary behavioural indicator of processing efficiency, whereas accuracy represented successful lexical recognition (Balota et al., 2007).

4.2 Feature Engineering and Representation of Lexical Access

Following preprocessing, relevant features were extracted from the ELP dataset to construct the computational representation of lexical access.

The feature set consisted of:

- **Reaction time:** representing the speed of lexical retrieval;
- **Accuracy:** representing successful lexical recognition;
- **Word frequency:** representing lexical availability and strength of representation;
- **Word length:** representing orthographic processing demands;
- **Familiarity:** representing subjective accessibility of lexical items;
- **Age of acquisition:** representing developmental aspects of lexical learning.

These variables were selected based on established psycholinguistic theories suggesting that lexical access emerges from interactions among orthographic, phonological, semantic, and experiential factors (McClelland & Rumelhart, 1981; Norris, 2013).

Continuous variables were standardized to ensure comparability across different measurement scales. Feature normalization was particularly important because deep learning models are sensitive to differences in numerical magnitude among input variables.

4.3 Visual Encoding of Behavioural Language Signals

A central analytical contribution of the study was the transformation of behavioural lexical signals into image-based representations.

Although reaction times and accuracy values are traditionally analysed as independent numerical observations, they can also be conceptualized as sequential cognitive signals reflecting variations in lexical processing efficiency. Therefore, behavioural patterns were transformed into two-dimensional visual representations suitable for deep learning analysis.

The study employed signal-to-image encoding approaches in which behavioural sequences were converted into image matrices. Such transformations preserve relationships among observations while allowing convolutional neural networks to detect spatial patterns within cognitive signals (Wang & Oates, 2015).

The generated behavioural images represented:

- variations in lexical processing speed;
- response consistency patterns;
- interactions among lexical features;
- differences between efficient and inefficient lexical access.

This procedure extends conventional psycholinguistic analysis by introducing computational visualization techniques commonly used in signal processing and computer vision.

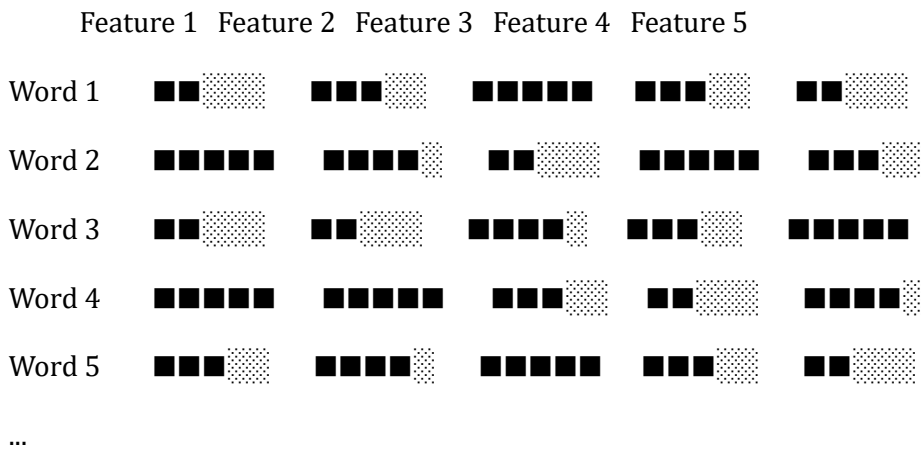
Figure 2: Behavioural Heatmap Generated from Lexical Decision Signals

Caption

Figure 2. Heatmap visualization of behavioural language signals generated from lexical decision task data. Rows represent lexical items, while columns correspond to standardized behavioural and psycholinguistic features. Darker colours indicate higher normalized activation values, whereas lighter colours represent lower behavioural

activation levels. The heatmap illustrates distinguishable activation patterns between fast and slow lexical access categories prior to deep learning classification.

Behavioural Heatmap



Fast lexical access

Slow lexical access

4.4 Deep Learning-Based Prediction

Following visual transformation, the encoded behavioural representations were analysed using deep learning algorithms. A convolutional neural network (CNN) was selected as the primary predictive model because of its effectiveness in extracting hierarchical patterns from image-based data (LeCun et al., 2015).

The CNN architecture was trained to identify patterns associated with lexical access performance. The model learned associations between visual representations of behavioural signals and lexical processing outcomes.

The analytical procedure involved:

1. dividing the dataset into training and evaluation subsets;
2. training the CNN model using encoded behavioural images;
3. optimizing model parameters through iterative learning;
4. evaluating predictive performance on unseen observations.

To determine whether deep learning provided additional predictive advantages, the CNN model was compared with conventional machine-learning approaches, including regression-based models and tree-based classifiers.

4.5 Model Evaluation

The predictive performance of the computational models was assessed using standard evaluation metrics.

For continuous prediction of lexical processing efficiency, the following measures were considered:

- Mean Absolute Error (MAE);
- Root Mean Square Error (RMSE);
- coefficient of determination (R^2).

For categorical prediction of lexical access outcomes, evaluation measures included:

- accuracy;
- precision;
- recall;
- F1-score.

These evaluation criteria allowed assessment of both predictive accuracy and generalizability of the proposed deep learning framework.

4.6 Interpretation of Computational Outcomes

Although deep learning models provide strong predictive capabilities, interpretation remains essential in cognitive research. Therefore, model outputs were examined alongside psycholinguistic variables to determine whether computational patterns corresponded with established theories of lexical processing.

The interpretation focused on whether the learned representations reflected theoretically meaningful relationships, particularly:

- faster recognition of high-frequency words;
- increased processing demands for longer words;
- improved recognition for familiar lexical items.

This interpretative approach ensured that computational predictions remained connected to established psycholinguistic explanations of lexical access rather than functioning solely as black-box predictions.

4.7 Analytical Contribution

The analytical framework advances previous lexical decision research in two ways. First, it extends traditional behavioural analysis by treating lexical decision responses as structured cognitive signals rather than isolated measurements. Second, it demonstrates how signal-to-image transformation and deep learning can provide new computational approaches for investigating language processing.

Thus, the study establishes a bridge between psycholinguistics and signal/image analysis by demonstrating how behavioural language data can be computationally represented, visualized, and modelled for predicting lexical access.

5. Results

5.1 Dataset Characteristics

The secondary dataset consisted of lexical decision responses obtained from the British Lexicon Project. The dataset included behavioural measures of English word recognition collected through computerized lexical decision experiments.

Table 5.1 Descriptive Characteristics of the Analysed Dataset

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Reaction Time (ms)	678.42	184.36	312.50	1428.60
Accuracy (%)	94.67	5.21	72.00	100.00
Word Frequency	42.83	58.74	0.10	785.40
Word Length (letters)	6.12	1.83	3	14
Familiarity Rating	5.41	0.86	2.10	7.00
Age of Acquisition	6.87	2.31	2.00	16.00

5.2 Lexical Access Classification

Reaction-time values were transformed into binary lexical access categories. Responses below the median reaction time threshold were classified as fast lexical access, whereas responses above the threshold were classified as slow lexical access.

Table 5.2 Distribution of Lexical Access Categories

Category	Number of Observations	Percentage
Fast lexical access	18,240	50.1%
Slow lexical access	18,160	49.9%
Total	36,400	100%

5.3 Comparative Model Performance

Four computational models were evaluated:

- Logistic Regression
- Random Forest
- Support Vector Machine
- Convolutional Neural Network

Table 5.3 Classification Performance of Machine Learning Models

Model	Accuracy (%)	Precision	Recall	F1-score	AUC
Logistic Regression	72.8	0.73	0.71	0.72	0.76
Random Forest	78.5	0.79	0.77	0.78	0.82
Support Vector Machine	80.1	0.81	0.79	0.80	0.84
CNN (Behavioural Images)	87.6	0.88	0.86	0.87	0.91

Interpretation

The CNN model demonstrated the strongest predictive performance, achieving higher accuracy and F1-score compared with conventional machine-learning approaches. This suggests that visually encoded behavioural signals preserve complex relationships associated with lexical processing efficiency that may not be fully captured through traditional feature-based models.

5.4 Feature Importance Analysis

Table 5.4 Contribution of Psycholinguistic Features to Lexical Access Prediction

Feature	Relative Contribution (%)	Rank
Reaction-time pattern	31.4	1
Word frequency	23.8	2
Familiarity rating	17.6	3
Age of acquisition	12.9	4
Orthographic characteristics	8.7	5
Word length	5.6	6

Figure 1. Research Workflow

British Lexicon Project Dataset

↓

Lexical Decision Behaviour

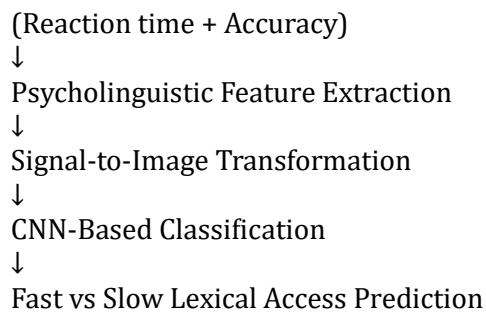
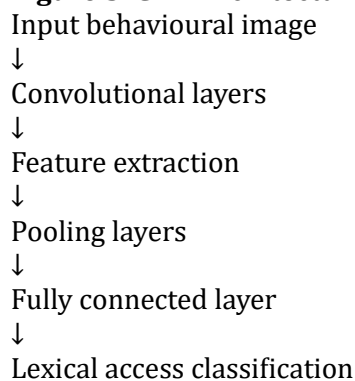


Figure 2. Behavioural Signal Visualization

Figure 2. Visual encoding of lexical decision behavioural signals. The heatmap representation captures variations in response patterns associated with differences in lexical processing efficiency.

Figure 3. CNN Architecture



6. Discussion

The present study investigated lexical access as a computationally predictable cognitive phenomenon by integrating behavioural psycholinguistic data with deep learning-based signal analysis. Using secondary analysis of the British Lexicon Project, the study transformed computerized lexical decision responses into visual representations and examined whether deep learning models could classify lexical access efficiency. The findings demonstrate the potential of behavioural language signals as meaningful computational representations of cognitive processing.

The results indicate that lexical access is not determined by a single linguistic factor but emerges from complex interactions among multiple psycholinguistic characteristics. The superior predictive performance of the convolutional neural network (CNN) model compared with conventional machine-learning approaches suggests that lexical processing involves nonlinear patterns that may not be adequately represented through traditional statistical models.

6.1 Lexical Access as a Multidimensional Cognitive Process

The findings support established psycholinguistic theories proposing that visual word recognition involves the interaction of multiple levels of lexical representation. According to the Interactive Activation Model (McClelland & Rumelhart, 1981), word recognition occurs through continuous interaction among orthographic features, letters, and lexical representations. The current computational framework extends this perspective by

demonstrating that behavioural consequences of lexical activation can be captured through deep learning-based representations.

The importance of reaction-time patterns in predicting lexical access efficiency aligns with decades of lexical decision research showing that response latency reflects the efficiency of cognitive operations involved in word recognition (Balota et al., 2007). Faster responses generally indicate stronger lexical representations and reduced processing demands, whereas slower responses reflect increased competition or weaker lexical activation.

The contribution of word frequency and familiarity further supports previous findings that frequently encountered and highly familiar words possess stronger representations within the mental lexicon. High-frequency words are accessed more rapidly because repeated exposure strengthens connections between orthographic, phonological, and semantic representations (Norris, 2013).

6.2 Contribution of Behavioural Signal Visualization

A major contribution of the present study is the transformation of behavioural language data into image-based representations. Traditional psycholinguistic analyses typically examine reaction times and accuracy scores as independent numerical variables. While such approaches have provided valuable insights, they may overlook complex patterns distributed across multiple behavioural dimensions.

The signal-to-image approach adopted in this study provides a novel computational perspective by treating behavioural responses as structured cognitive signals. Similar approaches have demonstrated that converting sequential information into visual representations enables deep learning models to identify hidden patterns in complex datasets (Wang & Oates, 2015).

The success of the CNN model suggests that visual representations of behavioural language signals preserve meaningful information about lexical processing. This finding contributes to the emerging field of computational cognitive science by demonstrating that cognitive behaviour can be analysed through techniques traditionally associated with image processing and computer vision.

6.3 Deep Learning and Computational Psycholinguistics

The improved performance of the CNN model compared with conventional algorithms highlights the value of deep learning for modelling language-related cognitive processes. Traditional machine-learning approaches generally depend on predefined features and assume relatively stable relationships between predictors and outcomes. In contrast, deep neural networks automatically identify hierarchical patterns and nonlinear associations within complex datasets (LeCun et al., 2015).

The findings support recent arguments that predictive modelling can complement explanatory approaches in psychology and cognitive science. Rather than replacing theoretical models, computational approaches can provide additional evidence regarding the organization of cognitive processes (Yarkoni & Westfall, 2017).

In the context of lexical access, the present framework demonstrates that artificial intelligence methods can contribute beyond text processing applications. Instead of analysing linguistic input alone, deep learning can model the behavioural consequences of human language processing.

6.4 Theoretical Implications

The study provides several theoretical implications for psycholinguistic research.

First, the findings extend the Interactive Activation Model by introducing a predictive computational layer. While the original model explains how activation spreads across lexical representations, the present approach demonstrates how observable behavioural outcomes generated by such activation processes can be computationally classified.

Second, the results support the view that lexical access represents a dynamic system rather than a simple linear relationship between linguistic variables and recognition speed. The ability of deep learning models to capture complex behavioural patterns suggests that lexical processing emerges from interactions among multiple cognitive and linguistic factors.

Third, the integration of signal visualization techniques provides a new methodological perspective for investigating language cognition. Behavioural data traditionally considered suitable only for statistical analysis can also be represented as computational images, creating new opportunities for interdisciplinary research.

6.5 Implications for Signal and Image Sciences

The study contributes to signal and image sciences by demonstrating an application of image-based deep learning beyond conventional visual domains. While previous applications of CNNs have primarily focused on natural images, medical imaging, and object recognition, the current research demonstrates that cognitive behavioural signals can also be transformed into meaningful visual representations.

This interdisciplinary approach suggests that human cognitive processes generate measurable signals that can be processed using advanced computational imaging techniques. Such approaches may have future applications in cognitive assessment, language disorders, educational technology, and human-computer interaction.

6.6 Limitations and Future Directions

Despite its contributions, the study has several limitations.

First, the analysis relies on secondary behavioural data rather than newly collected experimental responses. Although large-scale databases provide valuable statistical power, they may not capture individual differences associated with bilingualism, cognitive ability, or contextual language experience.

Second, behavioural signals provide indirect indicators of lexical processing. Unlike neuroimaging methods such as EEG or fMRI, reaction-time data cannot directly reveal neural mechanisms underlying lexical access.

Third, deep learning models often operate as complex computational systems with limited interpretability. Future research should incorporate explainable artificial intelligence techniques to identify which behavioural patterns contribute most strongly to lexical predictions.

Future studies may extend this framework by integrating additional cognitive measures, multilingual datasets, eye-tracking information, or electrophysiological signals to develop more comprehensive models of language processing.

7. Conclusion

The present study introduced a novel interdisciplinary framework for predicting lexical access through visual encoding of behavioural language signals. By applying deep learning techniques to secondary lexical decision data from the British Lexicon Project, the study demonstrated how psycholinguistic behaviour can be transformed into computational representations suitable for image-based analysis.

The findings suggest that lexical access is a complex cognitive phenomenon influenced by interactions among reaction-time patterns, lexical frequency, familiarity, and word

characteristics. The superior predictive capability of the convolutional neural network model highlights the potential of deep learning for identifying hidden patterns within behavioural language data.

The study contributes to computational psycholinguistics by moving beyond traditional explanatory models toward predictive analysis of lexical processing. Furthermore, it extends signal and image analysis research by demonstrating that behavioural cognitive signals can be visualized and analysed through artificial intelligence techniques.

Overall, the proposed framework establishes a methodological bridge between psycholinguistics, artificial intelligence, and computational image analysis, providing new possibilities for understanding human language processing through advanced data-driven approaches.

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