



Optimal Perception and Eye-movement Response Assessment

Tech ID: 34798 / UC Case 2026-821-0

BACKGROUND

Humans make approximately three eye movements per second to direct central vision (the fovea) to regions of interest in scenes. Eye movements are used in diagnostic medicine to assess conditions including concussions, dyslexia, fatigue, and many more. However, most approaches focus on the dynamics of eye movements (e.g., fixation stability, peak velocity, anti-saccades) without analyzing in detail the relationship between the fixations and the semantic content of the fixated visual information. Though where humans direct their gaze is a window into the mind, there is no benchmark theoretical framework that predicts how a human with normal vision and cognition should fixate a real-world scene to accurately comprehend it or answer a particular question as fast as possible. This lack of data limits the capabilities of eye movements as a diagnostic tool.

DESCRIPTION

Researchers at the University of California, Santa Barbara have developed an innovative AI-powered method that models and evaluates optimal human eye movement patterns for scene comprehension to assess visual and cognitive health. This process utilizes a foveated visual-language model combined with reinforcement learning to simulate and predict optimal eye movements when viewing complex scenes and answering related questions. By comparing optimal fixation sequences to an individual's actual eye-tracking data, the method provides a quantitative score reflecting the efficiency and accuracy of an individual's visual exploration.

Additionally, the approach measures scene-comprehension accuracy after N eye movements for two cases: the optimal foveated model and the same model driven by measured human fixations (a proxy for human comprehension). A generated score reflects the optimal human gap and measures the comprehension cost of any inefficiency in human eye-movement sampling. This method supports advanced diagnostics for visual and cognitive deficits by analyzing how closely human eye movements align with theoretically optimized patterns that maximize scene understanding and, critically, the cost in scene comprehension or accuracy in Q&A. The process also extends eye-tracking assessments beyond simple tasks to ecologically valid, real-world scenarios, leveraging large multimodal language models and novel AI-trained fixation-selection models to improve clinical and research applications in vision science.

ADVANTAGES

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OTHER INFORMATION

KEYWORDS

eyes, eye movement,
diagnostics, diagnostic
medicine, vision, AI, cognitive
health, eye tracking,
concussion

CATEGORIZED AS

- ▶ **Medical**
- ▶ **Diagnostics**

RELATED CASES

2026-821-0

- ▶ Models eye movements optimized for complex scene comprehension rather than simple stimuli
- ▶ Integrates state-of-the-art vision-language AI and reinforcement learning for precise fixation prediction
- ▶ Provides quantitative metrics to assess visual and cognitive deficits based on human-to-optimal eye movement comparisons for any visual content and Q&A.
- ▶ Enables evaluation in realistic, ecologically valid contexts with natural images and tasks
- ▶ Supports a wide range of clinical applications, including concussion, ADHD, autism, pediatric vision and other neurological deficits
- ▶ Supports education applications, including reading assessment, learning in science, technology, and mathematics

APPLICATIONS

- ▶ Reading Comprehension Centered Eye Movement Assessment
- ▶ Healthcare diagnostics for concussion, fatigue, ADHD, dyslexia, autism, and pediatric vision disorders
- ▶ Neurocognitive assessment tools employing advanced eye-tracking analytics
- ▶ Vision research and cognitive neuroscience studying human perception and attention strategies
- ▶ Augmented reality and human-computer interaction systems optimizing visual information presentation
- ▶ Development of personalized therapies and rehabilitation based on eye movement behavior
- ▶ Commercial eye-tracking platforms seeking competitive advantage through advanced AI-driven metrics
- ▶ Cognitive-aware robot head movements

ADDITIONAL TECHNOLOGIES BY THESE INVENTORS

- ▶ [Intent Resolution via Inference-time Saccades](#)

