

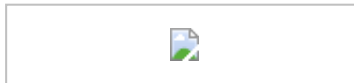
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THERE IS MORE TO READING THAN MEETS THE EYE

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As people read, in addition to fixating on words, they also process parafoveal information. The nature of this processing and how it interacts with the processing of fixated words are still under investigation. Researchers whose work has been published in *JEP:HPP* and *JEP:LMC* used the boundary technique to investigate parafoveal processing. In this procedure, a gaze-contingent display shows a preview letter string until the eyes pass an invisible boundary, at which point the preview is replaced by the next word in the sentence. [Gordon et al. \(2013, JEP:LMC\)](#) showed that when a preview letter string is a word that was recently read, participants are more likely to skip the next word in the sentence, speeding up reading. However, this is not the case when the preview word is an orthographically similar nonword. These results suggest that parafoveal words are recognized in full and parafoveal processing is not simply based on coarse visual properties but rather engages full lexical processing.

It is interesting that although parafoveal processing does not seem to be fooled by visually similar nonwords, orthographic similarity of the preview word still facilitates processing of the word being fixated. [Angele et al. \(2013, JEP:HPP\)](#) showed that participants read the word *news* faster if the preview word is an orthographically related pseudoword (e.g., *nīws*) but not a semantically related word (*tale*), suggesting a benefit from visual but not semantic relatedness. In contrast, according to [Jones et al. \(2013, JEP:HPP\)](#), orthographically similar preview items lead to interference in dyslexia. This suggests that reading impairments in dyslexia are at least partially due to difficulty in distinguishing between multiple activated orthographic codes.

Together, these articles provide an interesting window into how the orthographic similarity of parafoveal words influences normal and impaired readers.

Other related reading:

“Reading Impairments in Schizophrenia Relate to Individual Differences in Phonological Processing and Oculomotor Control: Evidence From a Gaze-Contingent Moving Window Paradigm” ([Whitford et al., 2013, JEP:General](#))

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