

## Abstract

Two questions about the nature of subliminal perception were addressed: 1) What is the basis of subliminal perception? 2) What is the difference between subliminal and supraliminal perception? Two experiments with printed Chinese characters as stimuli were conducted. Sixteen participants performed a primed category-naming task in Experiment 1. The incongruent trials (with the prime and target of different categories) were presented more three times more frequently than congruent trials. Both subliminally and supraliminally presented primes led to longer reaction times in congruent than incongruent trials. In Experiment 2 a primed naming task was given with different prime-target relationships. With a short prime-target SOA of 100 ms, graphic and phonological priming was observed for subliminal primes, whereas graphic and semantic priming was shown for supraliminal primes. Results from the two experiments supported a model of subliminal perception based on feature detection. Difference between subliminal and supraliminal perception in the sequence of access to various word properties was also discussed.