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Target Categorization with Primes that Vary in both Congruency and Modality

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Abstract: In previous research (Kim, Porter, & Goolkasian, 2014), we examined conceptual priming within and across modalities and found that target categorization was facilitated by the advanced presentation of conceptually related exemplars, but there were differences in effectiveness when pictures and environmental sounds appeared as primes. The present study follows up this research by manipulating the prime/target pairs in one of four ways to explore the priming effect in a comprehensive manner. Results showed a strong effect of target modality and two distinct patterns of conceptual priming effects with picture and environmental sound targets. When picture targets are preceded by same item, but not same category primes, target categorization is facilitated. For sound targets, the priming effect was restricted to comparisons between the same item and neutral primes. The findings suggest that auditory and visual features about a single item in a conceptual category may be more tightly connected than two different items from the same category.