Assessing Influences of Prime's and Target's Interpretation Ranges on Contextual Priming Effects: Prime's Product Category and Target's Ambiguity

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ABSTRACT

Priming effect illustrates that "latter" judgments are sensitive to context in which they are made (Herr, 1989; Meyers-Levy, 1989). What's more, due to the priming effect, primed stimuli often bring up other two related effects subsequently to influence people's judgment of a target object. When there comes the assimilation effect, judgments of the target will move "toward" the prime. On the other hand, judgments of the target will move "away from" the prime when "contrast effects" happen.

Such effects have been studied for a period of long Dimensional Range Overlap Model proposed by Chien (2002) has comprehensive and broader perspective to explain the underlying process of context effects of assimilation and contrast. The model suggests that when there is an overlap (no-overlap) between the target's range and the prime's range on the relevant judgment dimension, assimilation (contrast) effects are supposed to occur.

In addition, among previous literatures, there lies apparent discrepancy of the effect of the category of prime (belonging to target category or not) on the occurrence assimilation and contrast effect. Thus, due to its greater generalizability proven in Chien's study (2002), it may be a useful model to test the practical role of the category of playing in assimilation and contrast.

Not only the influences of the category of prime but also the ambiguity of (familiar or new brand) on priming effects will be studied through the Range Overlap Model in this current research. Therefore, a 2 (***the category of prime***: target category/ non-target category) *2 (***the ambiguity of target***: familiar/ new) * 2 (***dimensional range***: overlap/ non-overlap) between-participants factorial involved.

Finally, it demonstrated that it is indeed the **overlap/ non-overlap** between the

target's range and the prime's one on the relevant judgment dimension predominate the occurrence of assimilation and contrast effects, neither the category of prime nor ambiguity of

With this conclusion, the contradiction resulting from previous studied is explained through the Dimensional Range Overlap Model; also, several management and marketing implication can be provided to enhance brand image, appreciation, and finally maximize the profit.

Key words: Priming effects, Assimilation effects, Contrast effects, the Dimensional Range Overlap Model

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Chapter 1 · STUDY

In a broad view, “Contextual priming effects” are defined as “the facilitative effects of performing one task on the subsequent performance of the same or similar (Tulving, 1983). To go into details, “Priming effects” demonstrate that “latter” judgments are sensitive to the “former” context in which they are made (Herr, 1989; Meyers-Levy, 1989). It means that there are several different interpretations object“ resulting from the previously given information which is so-called “the primed category”. Due to the priming effect, the primed category often brings up other two related effects subsequently to influence people’s judgment of a target object. First, “**assimilation effects**” are more likely to occur such that judgments of the target will move “toward” the prime (Herr et al., 1983; Schwarz & Bless, 1992a; Sherif & 1961; Stapel, Koomen, Velthuijsen, 1998). Second, judgments of the target will “away from” the prime when “**contrast effects**” happen.

Up to the present day, there have already been several different established models explaining the cause of assimilation and contrast research have found that various factors will affect the occurrence of assimilation or contrast effects, like the ambiguity of the judged target, the extremity and distinctness of the activated information and the primed category (Herr et al., 1983), priming attributes versus target category exemplar (Stapel, 1998), and the (Schwarz & Bless, 1992b),etc.

Furthermore, the “**Dimensional Range Overlap Model**” suggested by Chien, Y. (2002) has demonstrated a more extensive perspective and greater compared to previous theories. It is because that most of the elements regarding the occurrence of assimilation and contrast effects mentioned above theoretically can be

explained just through the Dimensional Range Overlap Model. newly-established model, instead of any type of the prime and target, the occurrence assimilation and contrast effects are determined by whether there is an overlap between the target's possible interpretation range and the prime's possible interpretation range on the relevant judgment dimension (Chien, 2002).

However, under the process of literature review, there is one assimilation and contrast effects still remaining disputes. When it comes to the "exemplar priming", the effects of target category or non-target exemplars seem discrepancy in different research, such as Meyers et al. (1993), and Stapel (1998).

Hence, the purpose of this thesis lies in the attempt to ascertain whether the category (non-target or target) of the prime will play an effective role to influence the direction of people's evaluation on the latter target object by applying the Dimensional Range Overlap Model. Once the thesis is conducted successfully, we will gain a more clear idea about what the real effectiveness of the target and non-exemplar affecting the emergence of assimilation and contrast effects is. In addition, generalizability of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model will be strengthened. What's more, some managerial implication such as the position of one particular brand in a huge assorted shopping center (e.g., Taipei Breeze Center, and newly-opened Miramar Entertainment Park) will be attained and discussed.

Chapter 2 · LITERATURE

2.1 Priming Effects

Cramer (1968) defines “priming” as “a change in antecedent conditions which is specifically designed to increase the probability of a particular response being given to particular stimulus”. Higgins (1996) suggests that the term procedures that stimulate or activate some stored knowledge. Therefore, preceding definitions, it would be proper to refer to the influence of priming on evaluative impression as a “priming effect”. Priming effects have demonstrated even when people are unaware of the activated concept (Yi, 1990). Also, the priming effect on the subsequent evaluative impression identification-based inference effect (Higgins, 1996). In a words, because the priming effect strongly emphasize on the influence of the activated concept on the evaluative impression, it is kind of a facilitative effect (Tulving, 1983) that performing one particular task in order to make people more easily and simply subsequent performance of the same or similar task even unconsciously.

2.2 Assimilation versus Contrast Effects

Priming increases the accessibility of available knowledge such that knowledge is more likely to be activated and used in subsequent processing of stimulus information (Higgins, 1996). What proceeds from the priming effects on the subsequent judgment can be divided into two parts, which are assimilation effects and contrast effects.

Assimilation effects occur when a target object receives more positive evaluation after a positive primed stimulus. That is, the final judgment of the target will tend

move “toward” the prime. On the other hand, if people rate the target object more on the positive end of the scales in the negative priming condition than in the positive condition, it can infer to contrast effects (Martin, 1986). From the perspective regarding distance, contrast effects result in the farther distance between the target and the prime.

2.3 A Well-known Empirical Study of Assimilation and Contrast Effects

There have been many studies discussing various causes related to the occurrence of assimilation or contrast effects. These factors may affect the direction of ultimate judgment on the scale even beyond their perception. One of several research outcomes with respect to factors initiating assimilation and contrast effects had been conducted by Herr, Sherman, and Fazio (1983). Herr et al. (1983) proposed that there were two imperative factors predicting the effects of priming on judgment— 1) ambiguity of the judged stimuli and 2) the extremity of the primed

In their studies, the above two determinants would interact in However, only when “moderately” small (large) animals were primed and “ambiguous” target (fictitious animals) were judged, the fictitious animals would be judged in the same direction of the primes and were perceived equally relatively small by representing the assimilation effect. The other three combinations would all result in contrast effects.

Such results had been concluded by a “feature-matching model” developed by Herr et al. (1983). This model proposes that assimilation effects should be obtained merely when moderate categories are primed and hypothetical (ambiguous) targets are evaluated. In all other three conditions; which the combinations are extreme primes and ambiguous targets, extreme primes and unambiguous targets, and moderate unambiguous targets, contrast effects should be obtained.

2.4 Studies Regarding "the Category of the Prime"

"The category of the prime" in this present thesis refers to "whether the prime belong to the same category as the target or not." The main concern here is that "if the category of the prime really plays an imperative role to affect the assimilation and contrast effects." Therefore, here are some literature reviews especially with respect to the influence of the category of the prime. Unfortunately, these seemed to provide different outcomes and even result in discrepancy.

2.4.1 Stapel and Koomen, 1998

-- Priming Target Category Exemplars and Non-target Category Exemplars

2.4.1.1 Main Propositions and the Underlying Process

In addition to the extremity of the primed category, Stapel and Koomen (1998) also demonstrated that the direction of priming effects on consumer judgments depended on the "comparison relevance". That is, based on their experiments, accessible information yielded contrastive judgment effects occurring in both "new" and "familiar" target when primed information was distinct enough and "comparison relevant" to be used as anchor; whereas it produced assimilative effects occurring in judgments of "new" and "ambiguous" target when the activated stimulus was "relatively "comparison irrelevant".

The anchor, to be effective, must be perceived as a member of the "same" class as the target (Brown, 1953). This is an application of "**comparison-relevance** ". Following this previous saying, Stapel and Koomen (1998) continuously stated:" The importance of comparison relevance for primed information to be used as comparison standard implies that when evaluating a particular product category, exemplars that belong to a different category from the target are "unlikely" to be used as a comparison standard because a

non-target category exemplar lacks so-called “comparison relevance”. Besides, Stapel and Koomen (1998) even more argued that such non-target category exemplars were likely to prime the “attributes” they exemplified (e.g., The Gap primed “casual” and Gucci primed “elegance”; see Meyers-Levy & Sternthal, 1993). They might still activate information that could be used to form a representation of the target. Hence, from Stapel and Koomen’s perspective, while non-target exemplars were accessible, the associated with the primed exemplars were likely to steer the interpretation process. To sum up, Stapel and Koomen (1998) suggested that target category exemplar priming would like to lead to contrast, whereas non-target category exemplar priming is likely to result in assimilation.

2.4.1.2 Brief Review of

In Stapel and Koomen’s studies (1998), participants were told questionnaire seeking opinions about new venture that would be described in an ad. One hundred and twenty Dutch undergraduate students were randomly conditions of a 2*2 (Exemplar Valence: Elegant/ Casual * Comparison well-known Restaurant/ well-known Clothing Store) between-subject priming stimuli were designed to be included in the introductory text to the target advertising one. The priming stimuli were presented printed in bold letter type, involving subtle introduction just before participants started reading the target advertising text. Continuously, participants were asked to evaluate both new restaurant presented in the advertising message (the new target) and AC restaurant, a well-average-rated restaurants (the familiar target).

2.4.1.3 Results and Discussion

As the results showed, ratings of the new target restaurant were less positive when

elegant restaurants were primed, and more positive when casual restaurants were primed. However, ratings of the new target restaurant were more positive when elegant clothing stores were primed, and less positive when casual clothing stores were primed. On the other hand, ratings of AC restaurant (the familiar target) were more negative elegant restaurants were primed and less negative when casual restaurants were primed. Conversely, these ratings of the exiting AC restaurant were more or less the same when clothing stores were primed.

In sum, from Stapel and Koomen's (1998) postulation, the above indicated that the exposure to exemplar primes resulted in assimilation or in contrast, dependent on their "**comparison relevance**". When evaluating new or familiar targets (e.g., restaurants), people tend to use target category primes (e.g., restaurants) as a comparison standard which results in contrast effects. While primed non-target category exemplars viewed as so-called relatively irrelevant comparison, they strongly imply attributes that can be used to form a representation of a new target product and end in assimilation effects; yet reveal no effect on a familiar target object.

2.4.2 Meyers-Levy and Sternthal (1993)

-- Priming target category exemplars and non-target category ones

2.4.2.1 Main Propositions and the Underlying Process

With the mention of contextual cues, Meyers-Levy and Sternthal (1993) had come up with a two-factor explanation of assimilation and contrast effects. They proposed that contrast would occur when two conditions are met: (1) the cognitive resources available at judgment are substantial and (2) there was little overlap between contextual cues and target objects. In the absence of either of these conditions, assimilation was Meyers-Levy and Sternthal (1993) investigated this possible explanation by conducting

the following experiments.

2.4.2.2 Brief Review of

A booklet containing an ad for the target restaurant was randomly distributed to the research participants. Subjects read the ad, which included a phrase containing a primed cue. The previous occupant of establishment's location served as the contextual cue. Thus, participants would read the designed sentence like "New to the city, Eveylon's restaurant (Target) is in a building formerly occupied by McDonald's/ (Prime)" for a condition primed with target category exemplars; or "New to the city, Eveylon's restaurant (Target) is in a building formerly occupied by The Gap/ The Gucci (Prime) for a condition primed with non-target category exemplars. Afterwards, several questions were asked to obtain subjects' overall evaluations of the ambiguous target restaurant. Also a recall task was administrated in which subjects were asked to write down everything they remembered from the ad. This measurement participants' cognitive style that clarifiers' recall was significantly higher than that of simplifiers because clarifiers tended to expend more cognitive resources discrepancies, but simplifiers appeared to spend little cognitive effort in such situations.

2.4.2.3 Results and Discussion

Consistent with their two-factor explanation, the experiment revealed that people likely to engage in the elaboration of differences and enact processes only when there was both low contextual cue-target object overlap (the primed cue and target belonged to different product categories which were the clothing store and the restaurant, respectively in this experiment) and when people devoted substantial resources to the task. On the other hand, while people's resources applied to the task were limited, and/or when overlap was high (the primed cue and target belonged to the

same product category which was restaurants), people were more likely to elaborate on similarities and engaged in the less effortful judgment process of assimilation.

In a word, based on Meyers-Levy and Sternthal's two-factor explanation(1993), once people devote enough elaboration in the judgment process, the target object and primed cue which belong to different basic level categories may bring up contrast effects because this low contextual cue-target overlap may be seized by these clarifiers. On the contrast, when priming target category exemplars, this condition will violate part of the two-factor explanation for primed cues and evaluated target share lots of overlap, and then it would end in assimilation. Again, there are some discrepancies comparing this study with former ones while the category of the prime is mentioned.

2.4.2.4 Stapel and Koomen's argument of Meyers-Levy & study

The above research outcome is totally opposite to Stapel and Koomen's one in 1998. Stapel and Koomen (1998) refuted this conclusion regarding the difference between the type of priming method used in their own studies and the type of contextual Meyers-Levy and Sternthal (1993) employed.

In Stapel and Koomen's studies (1998), the primes were participants were exposed to the actual target advertising and were unrelated to the target. This priming method spoke to a large tradition of non-diagnostic priming events which respondents did not establish a meaningful relation between the prime and the (see notes on the "unrelated task paradigm" by Higgins, 1996; Schmitt, 1994; Wyer & Srull, 1989; Yi, 1993). However, in contrast to these traditional priming studies, Stapel and Koomen (1998) criticized that Meyers-Levy and Sternthal respondents with the target advertisement within the primed information mentioned simultaneously. Besides, Stapel and Koomen (1998) argued that the prime Meyers-Levy

and Sternthal (1993) used was related to the target because the target advertising message specified the previous occupant of the building housed the restaurant currently. In and Koomen's view (1998), this information might easily become comparison-relevant and meaningful when forming an impression of the target and bring underlying processes compared to their own studies.

What's more, based on some findings by Wegener and Petty participants attended to the relation between primes and targets, the contrastive effects of target category exemplar priming and the assimilative effects of attribute were likely to reverse. Hence, following these former findings, Stapel and Koomen (1998) claimed that placing primes with targets at the same time in the same message might make respondents to attend to their relation and then initiated the concern similar to Wegener and Petty's findings (1995).

2.5 The Dimensional Range Overlap Model

-- Overlap or Non-Overlap between Prime's and Target's Range

2.5.1 Main Propositions and Underlying Process

The Dimensional Range Overlap Model (Chien, 2002) is developed to offer a more comprehensive perspective to explain the underlying process of especially the occurrence of assimilation and contrast effects. Its main suggests that the presence of assimilation and contrast effects are determined by whether there is an overlap between "**the targets' possible interpretation range**" and "**the prime's possible interpretation range**" on the "**relevant judgment dimension**". If an overlap indeed exists between both extents, assimilation effects are more likely to occur for the target will be judged toward the prime (as more similar to the prime). Nevertheless, if there lies no overlap between both scopes, contrast effects are

likely to turn out to make the target judged farther away from the prime (as less similar to the prime).

Moreover, there lie three important factors together affecting the inexistence of an overlap between the target's range and the prime's one, which are (1) target range width, (2) prime range width, and (3) relative distance. "Range" mentioned here reflects not only the interpretation "width" on the relevant judgment dimension, but also the "position" on the relevant assessment dimension. Thus, target range width refers to how diversely a target can be interpreted on the relevant judgment dimension. Given the other two factors, if the target's range is wide enough to cause an overlap with the prime's range, assimilation is likely to happen; nevertheless, if the target's range is too narrow to induce an overlap with the prime's range, contrast is apt to emerge.

Similarly, given the other two factors, when the prime's range is wide enough to cause an overlap with the target's one, assimilation occurs, and vice versa. Here are two examples (Figure 2-1 & 2-2 in the following page) illustrating these above three factors together influence whether there is an overlap between the target's scope and the prime's one on the relevant judgment dimension, so as to affect the appearance of assimilation and contrast effects.

NOTE: Assimilation effects — (1)Target's range is wide, (2)prime's range is narrow, and (3)the relative distance is small

Figure 2-1. Example of Assimilation Effect Predicted by the Dimensional Range Overlap Model

NOTE: Contrast effects — (1)Target's range is narrow, (2)prime's range is narrow, and (3)the relative distance is large

Figure 2-2. Example of Contrast Effect Predicted by the Dimensional Range Overlap Model

Chien (2002) stated that the key postulate of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model focuses on whether there is an overlap between the target's and the prime's range on the relevant judged dimension. Thus, as long as targets and primes are associated with ranges on the relevant assessed dimension, the model can be contextual priming effects, regardless of different types of primes and/or targets. instance, either the types of the primes are attributes or exemplars, or whether the types of targets are fictitious or familiar should not be constrained in priming effects at all.

2.5.2 Brief Review of

In one of Chien's experiments which the primes were attributes and the target was an existing brand, firstly, participants were asked to write down three adjectives that they thought these three adjectives could best describe a product associated with a specific prestige range, which range was either 5-7 or 3-5 on a scale ranging from 0 (low prestige) to 10 (high prestige) for a small relative distance condition, and which range was either 8-10 or 0-2 for a large relative distance condition. This was the priming task.

In the second survey, participants were asked to evaluate some products. The first to-be-evaluated one was the target brand, "Honda Civic", which had been regarded as a moderately prestigious brand in the pretest. Participants were asked to indicate how prestigious they thought "Honda Civic" would be on a scale ranging from 0 (low prestige)

to 10 (high prestige). Other products to be evaluated included a car Taurus") and a clothing brand ("Old Navy") with a view to speculations about the relation between the previous priming task and the subsequent target evaluation.

The result revealed that a significant two-way interaction between "relative distance" and "prime valence" illustrated to support the hypothesis of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model. As shown in Figure 2-3 below, in the small relative distance condition, the target's prestige rating became higher when the target was accompanied by the positive prime (6.70) than when the target was accompanied by the negative prime (4.90) through assimilation effects.

However, in the large relative distance condition, the target's prestige rating became higher when the target was accompanied by the negative prime (7.10) than when the target was accompanied by the positive prime (5.53) through contrast effects.

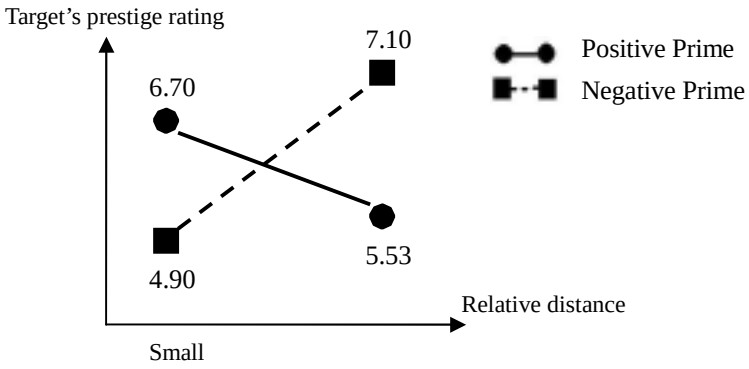


Figure 2-3. Two-way Interaction between "Relative Distance" and Prime Valence" to Support the Dimensional Range Overlap Model

Similarly, under another experiment that the target was used as the same existing brand as the above experiment and the primes were target participants were requested to list three cars that they thought were associated with a

specific prestige range, such as a range of 5-10 (positive prime) or 0-5 (negative for a wide prime range condition, and a range of 7-8 (positive prime) or 2-3 prime) for a narrow prime range condition. Continuously, the target evaluation procedure was the same as the former experiment.

Again, the outcome revealed that a significant two-way interaction between "prime range width" and "prime valence" demonstrated to support the Dimensional Range Overlap Model. As shown in Figure 2-4, in the wide prime width condition, the target's prestige rating became higher when the target was accompanied by the positive prime (6.50) than when the target was accompanied by the negative prime (4.30) through assimilation effects. However, in the narrow prime width condition, the target's prestige rating became higher when the target was accompanied by the negative prime (6.67) than when the target was accompanied by the positive prime (3.73) through contrast effects.

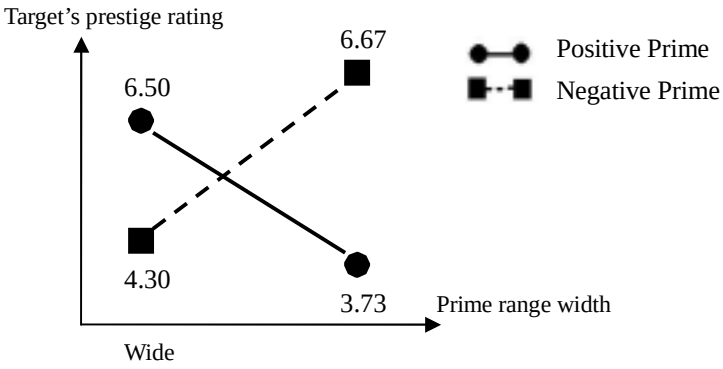


Figure 2-4. Two-way Interaction between "Prime Range Width" and Prime Valence" to Support the Dimensional Range Overlap Model

2.5.3 Results and Discussion

Based on the above two of Chien's experiments in 2002, through applying concept of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model, the type of the prime will

necessarily influence the occurrence of assimilation and contrast effects. For the two former experimental results, priming both attributes and target category exemplars can produce assimilation and contrast effects under each of the two condition. Actually, it is the overlap (non-overlap) between the prime's range and the target's one to end in assimilation (contrast) effects.

Thus, this postulate demonstrates the new model with greater compared to previous theories because they have typically examined context under a certain type of prime such as traits (Higgins et al., 1985) or target category exemplars (Herr et al., 1983; Schwarz & Bless, 1992a, 1992b), or have suggested different processes for different types of primes or targets (Herr et al., 1983; Stapel & Koomen, 1998; et al., 1998). For example, Stapel and Koomen (1998) suggested that when the target category exemplar is primed, it would be perceived as distinct to be used as a comparison standard and contrast might occur. Nevertheless, when attributes are primed, they are easily viewed as lack of context-target similarity, distinctness, or comparison relevance; and then primes might merely serve as an interpretation frame and result in assimilation. Different from these previous studies, the Dimensional Range Overlap Model suggests that priming attributes can also produce contrast effects as long as there is an overlap between Prime and Target on the relevant dimension. Priming exemplars can initiate assimilation merely by an overlap.

It seems that the Dimensional Range Overlap Model has comprehensive view regarding the occurrence of assimilation and because this model explains the emergence of assimilation and contrast effects in terms of the overlap or non-overlap between the target's range and the prime's one on relevant dimension, instead of being constrained by the type of target and

Chapter 3‧ THEORY FOUNDATION and HYPOTHESES

3.1 Theory Foundation

According to the proposition of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model presented above, the model can be applied, no matter which type of primes and targets are used as long as both primes and targets are associated with ranges on the same relevant judgment dimension (e.g., the prestige dimension). Reviewing the experiments done by Chien in 2002, the effectiveness of the model already has been confirmed under the use of attributes and the target category exemplars. However, "the category concerning target or non-target category exemplars which had brought up discrepant outcomes of assimilation and contrast effects in several previous literatures seemed not to be mentioned in Chien's original study in 2002.

Thus, owing to the confidence of expansive generalizability of the Range Overlap Model discussed above, the main theory foundation of this current thesis will continuously follow the proposition of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model:

> "Regardless of the "target or non-target category exemplars", it is the existence or non-existence of the overlap between interpretation range and the target's one on the relevant dimension to influence the occurrence of assimilation and contrast effects."

If this theory foundation is supported again in this current thesis, literature review suggesting that the category of primes belonging to the target category or non-target one acts a practical role influencing the emersion of assimilation and contrast effects will be refuted and considered as a partial and incomplete point of view. On the contrary, the postulation of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model can be enriched and extended.

In addition, based on the proposition of Stapel and Koomen in 1998, they that when priming "non-target" category exemplar, there would only "assimilation effect" on a "new" target object, but no effect on a familiar target object.

Therefore, with a view to challenge Stapel and Koonmen's studies more thoroughly, the final proposed theory of this present thesis is going to be elaboration:

> **"Regardless of 1) the target or non-target category exemplars and 2) the familiar or new targets, it is still non-existence of the overlap between the prime's interpretation range and the target's one on the relevant dimension to influence the occurrence of assimilation and contrast effects."**

3.2 Hypotheses

Succeeding the presented theory foundation, the hypotheses of the current thesis are developed as follows:

While primes and the evaluated target are in the "identical" product category:

Hypothesis 1: When the interpretation range of the target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) **overlap** with the interpretation range of a familiar (existing) target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **assimilated** toward the prime assimilation effects).

Hypothesis 2: When the interpretation range of the target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) does **not overlap** with the interpretation

range of a familiar (existing) target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **contrasted** away the prime (i.e. contrast effects).

Hypothesis 3: When the interpretation range of the target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) **overlap** with the interpretation range of a new (fictitious) target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **assimilated** toward the prime assimilation effects).

Hypothesis 4: When the interpretation range of the target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) does **not overlap** with the interpretation range of a new (fictitious) target object on the relevant dimension, judgments of the target will be **contrasted** away the prime (i.e. contrast effects).

While primes and the evaluated target are in "different" product categories:

Hypothesis 5: When the interpretation range of the non-target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) **overlap** with the interpretation range of a familiar (existing) target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **assimilated** toward prime (i.e. assimilation effects).

Hypothesis 6: When the interpretation range of the non-target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) does **not** interpretation range of a familiar (existing) target relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target **contrasted** away from the prime (i.e. contrast effects).

Hypothesis 7: When the interpretation range of the non-target category exemplars

(i.e. primes in the current study) **overlap** with the interpretation range of a new (fictitious) target object on the relevant dimension, judgments of the target will be **assimilated** toward prime (i.e. assimilation effects).

Hypothesis 8: When the interpretation range of the non-target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) does **not** interpretation range of a new (fictitious) target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be away from the prime (i.e. contrast effects).

The following table illustrates a much brief and clear summary of those above hypotheses:

Table 3-1. Brief Summary of Eight Research

While primes and the evaluated target are in the identical product category:	
Key Points in Hypotheses	Predicted Outcome
H1: 1) Overlap 2) Target Category Primes 3) Existing Target	**<<Assimilation Effect>>** Target evaluation shift obviously towards Primes.
H2: 1) Non-overlap 2) Target Category Prime 3) Existing Target	**<<Contrast Effect>>** Target evaluation shift obviously from Primes.
H3: 1) Overlap 2) Target Category Prime 3) Fictitious Target	**<<Assimilation Effect>>** Target evaluation shift obviously towards Primes.

Key Points in Hypotheses	Predicted Outcome
H4: 1) Non-overlap 2) Target Category Prime 3) Fictitious Target	**<<Contrast Effect>>** Target evaluation shift obviously from Primes.
While primes and the evaluated target are in the identical product category:	
H5: 1) Overlap 2) Non-Target Category Primes 3) Existing Target	**<<Assimilation Effect>>** Target evaluation shift obviously towards Primes.
H6: 1) Non-overlap 2) Non-Target Category Prime 3) Existing Target	**<<Contrast Effect>>** Target evaluation shift obviously from Primes.
H7: 1) Overlap 2) Non-Target Category Prime 3) Fictitious Target	**<<Assimilation Effect>>** Target evaluation shift obviously towards Primes.
H8: 1) Non-overlap 2) Non-Target Category Prime 3) Fictitious Target	**<<Contrast Effect>>** Target evaluation shift obviously from Primes.

The whole manipulation procedures of the eight hypotheses is also illustrated Figures3-1 and Figure 3-2 in the next page:

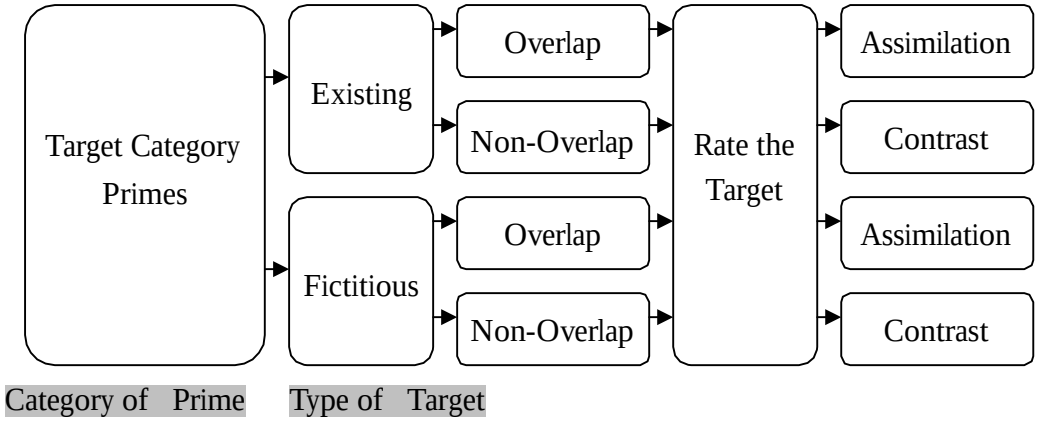


Figure 3-1. The Manipulation Procedure with Hypotheses 1~4 Combined

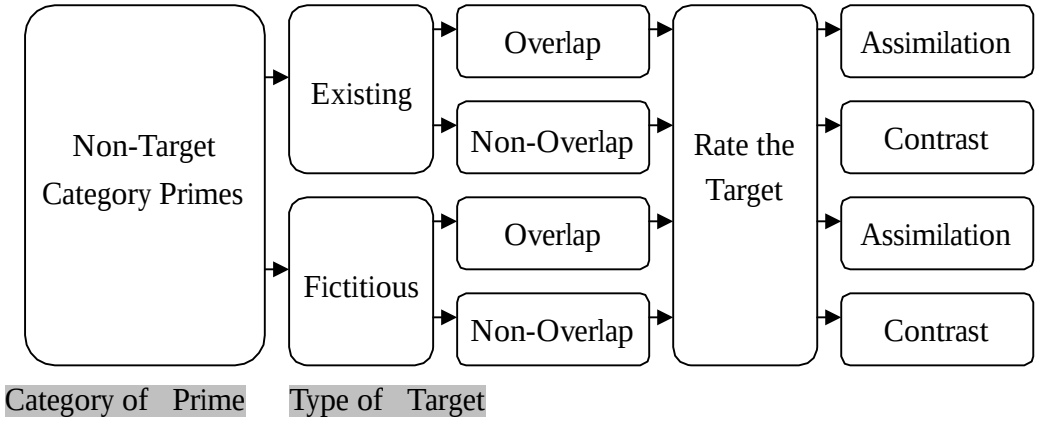


Figure 3-2. The Manipulation Procedure with Hypotheses 5~8 Combined

3.3 Uniqueness of the Current

From the above structures of hypotheses, the most obvious differences between this current thesis and previous related studies are as follow:

Most important of all, the current study postulate that both contrast effects are likely to emerge no matter which category of primes and how ambiguous the targets to be judged are. It is "overlap or non-overlap" of dimensional range that plays the practical role in the emergence of contrast effects.

Since the concept of "overlap/ non-overlap" has been the main point, this study also focuses on **the interpretation ranges** instead of the single point estimate on the judgment dimensions. Single point estimate may be too partial when examining the emergence of assimilation and contrast effects based on Chien's study in 2002. example, a prime's point measurement on the judged dimension may not definitely be the central tendency of its interpretation range on the judgment dimension. Hence, though the prime's point ratings are the same in two cases, either assimilation or contrast will probably occurs because the prime's point estimate violate the central tendency and then end in different interpretation range. Besides, even if a stimulus's (e.g. a prime) point scoring is on the central tendency of its interpretation range, the width of its (narrow or wide) can still affect whether there is an overlap (non-overlap) to result in assimilation (contrast) effects.

Reviewing Chapter 2 of previous literature, there seems to be some discrepant outcomes (see Table 3-2) needed to be further clarified.

Table 3-2. Summary Regarding the Category of Prime from Previous Literature

Priming Condition	Research Outcome
Non-target category exemplars	**Stapel and Koomen (1998) :** End in *Assimilation* of a *new* target, but no effect for a familiar target. **Meyers-Levy and Sternthal (1993) :** Bring up *contrast* because 1) little overlap between the contextual cue and the target, and 2) people's resources applied to judgment are substantial
Target category exemplars	**Stapel and Koomen (1998) :** *Contrast* evaluation of *new or familiar* targets. **Meyers-Levy and Sternthal (1993) :** Result in *assimilation* due to the absence of either of two above conditions.

After reading the former table, it may easily result in discrepancies and confusion that what the practical role of the category of prime affect on the occurrence assimilation and contrast effects. Hence, one of the uniqueness of this study is attempt to settle down this lasting dispute concerning the category of prime (belonging to target category or not) by applying the newly-established Dimensional Range Overlap Model with its grater generalizability. In addition, Stapel and Koomen(1998) stated that priming non-target category exemplars would only end in assimilation of a new target, but no effect for a familiar target. Thus, the effect of the ambiguity of target (existing new brands) on the emergence of assimilation and contrast will be examined together in this study.

Third, although Chien (2002) suggests that the Dimensional Range Overlap Model can be employed to explain the underlying process of contextual effects without being constrained by the type of prime and the target. Nevertheless, the category of belonging to target category or not is still not analyzed in Chien's study. Therefore, examining the category of primes by applying the Dimensional Range Overlap Model is the uniqueness of the current study as well.

Fourth, the priming method used in Chien's study (2002) so as to set up the Dimensional Range Overlap Model is so-called a "self-generation" priming procedure. For instance, participants were asked to self-generate the primes that fit the specific criteria (i.e. the specific prestige range "5-8") before they were requested to evaluate the target. On the other hand, a different priming method will be used in this research. Participants would be asked to read advertisements together with the pre-selected stimuli (primes) embedded before target judgment. Once the current study successfully, the Dimensional Range Overlap Model will definitely be because it is still workable under diverse priming method compared to Chien's study in 2002.

Chapter 4 · PRETEST

4.1 Purpose of

According to those eight hypotheses above, some pretests should advance to prepare for the upcoming main experiment.

First, the suitable dimensional range of many brands in different categories should be evaluated. Therefore, given the evaluated dimensional range, the most optimal brand combination for each of eight conditions (hypotheses) in the experiment can be settled down.

Secondly, the average point of every brand in one particular dimension which is the same as the assessed range width mentioned above should also be evaluative point of these brands on the same dimension will serve comparing indicator while examining the final result of assimilation and contrast which this thesis attempts to figure out in the main experiment.

Third, due to the manipulation of the ambiguity of the target object in the experiment; in addition to the existing familiar brand names, fictitious brands of product categories should also be created and judged in pretests. Therefore, pretests will be divided into two stages for existing and fictitious brands individually.

4.2 Pretest 1 for Existing Brands

4.2.1 Pretest Design

At the beginning, four different product categories are selected in the pretest, which are 1) casual clothes, 2) restaurants, 3) automobiles, and 4) personal computers. Each of the four product categories contains twelve or thirteen existing brands. In the following, the "**prestige**" dimension is chosen when these various brands are evaluated. "Prestige"

is determined to act as the relevant dimension based on three reasons below. Firstly, this attribute is similar to the dependent variable used in several previous studies. For instance, based on literature review, prestige is just the manipulated dimension in Chien's study (2002) discussing the Dimensional Range Overlap Model; product "elegance" and "casualness" which relate to prestige also serve as dependent variables in both experiments of Stapel/ Koomen (1998) and Meyer/ Sternthal prestige can be proved to be the suitable dimension in the current study because it has been manipulated successfully in so many previous experiments. relates to personal perception, and it dose not like other attribute such as price which is too objective and pragmatic to shift on a dimensional scale when being primed. People's perception of prestige may easily change when potentially being contextual effect. Thirdly, prestige is also the appropriate attribute which can easily be measured across various product categories. For no matter what people consumes, they may often ask themselves that whether the merchandise would make me more dignified or not. On account of these reasons mentioned above, manipulated relevant dimension in this present study.

To sum up, four different kinds of pretest questionnaires are developed to survey the interpretation range width and the average point of each brand on the dimension in four different product categories; based on a 2 (range/ point)*2 (Clothes & Restaurants/ Car & PC) rule:

- Pretest Questionnaire A: the prestige dimensional range width of every brand of casual clothes and restaurant are evaluated at the same time.
- Pretest Questionnaire B: the prestige dimensional range width of every brand of automobiles and personal computers are evaluated at the same time.
- Pretest Questionnaire C: the average point on the prestige dimension of every brand of casual clothes and restaurant are evaluated at the same time.

- Pretest Questionnaire D: the average point on the prestige dimension of every brand of automobiles and personal computers are evaluated at the same time.

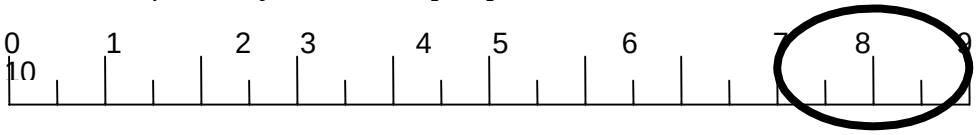
As long as this pretest is separated into four different questionnaires, it can release burden of subjects who take part in the pretest because they only have to evaluate nearly twenty-five brands (twelve brands at least per category multiple two product categories in a questionnaire) at one time. If subjects are requested to rate simultaneously, they will easily become impatient and result in biased evaluation.

- **Anchoring Manipulation**

What' more, there is sort of manipulation in the pretest design. predicted to receive the highest and the lowest evaluation of the ranges and the points on the prestige dimension are put as the "first" and the "second" items of each product category. Hence, once subjects rate the highest assessment in the first question and the lowest one in the second, judgments of other remaining brands in the same category are supposed to fall on the interval between the lowest and the highest. This control is considered as the "**anchoring effec**t" with a view to increase the effectiveness of the

In the following are the examples measuring 1) the range width and the 2) point on the prestige dimension of one brand. In both instances, a 10-point scale is developed to examine the prestigious degree of each brand. "0" represents the evaluation, and "10" represents the most prestigious one:

– *Please circle the prestige range of Burberry from your own perspective.*



– *Please point out the position of Burberry on the prestige dimension from your own perspective.*

The complete pretest questionnaires are also demonstrated in Appendix (Ⅰ, Ⅱ).

4.2.2 Outcome of Pretest

4.2.2.1 Sample Size

Subjects are mainly composed by undergraduates and graduates of the college of Management in National Taiwan University. They are requested to answer questions similar to the above intuitionally. As a result, the valid cell questionnaires is nineteen to twenty-one.

4.2.2.2 Result of Anchoring

The expected anchoring effect can be proved if brands predicted to be the most elegant are successfully ranked in the highest or the second highest position within the 10-point scale. In addition, brands predicted to be the least prestige must result in the similar situation, too. Hence, the rest brands can indeed fall on the interval between the lowest and the highest. The following Table 4-1 shows the prestigious-ranking in each product category.

Table 4-1. **Expected** Ranking in the Prestige Dimension of Each Brand

Ranking	**Casual Clothes**	**Restaurants**	**Automobiles**	**PCs**
Lowest	Twinhead	Hang Ten	我家牛排	Daihatsu

To inspect the intentioned anchoring manipulation, first compute

prestige range and point of each brand in four categories. All brands in every category are ranked according to their own average evaluated prestige range with a gradually increasing trend first. (see Table 4-2. below)

Table 4-2. **Actual Ranking** of Each Category Based on Measurement of the Prestige Range

Casual Clothes		Restaurants		Automobiles		PCs	
Brand	Range	Brand	Range	Brand	Range	Brand	Range
Hang Ten	1.24-3.02	我家牛排	1.41-2.91	Daihatsu	2.70-4.23	LEO	2.32-3.92
Baleno	2.14-3.71	貴族世家	1.77-3.43	台塑汽車	2.93-4.93	Twinhead	1.95-4.13
A&D	2.05-3.88	Sizzler	2.80-3.80		Hyundai		3.10-5.10
Genuine	2.55-4.18						
Giordano	2.24-4.08	Sunday's	3.25-4.80	Honda	3.78-5.90	Lemel	3.08-5.03
Esprit	4.38-6.19	Ponderosa	3.20-4.84	Ford	3.65-6.03	Acer	4.50-6.55
Benetton	4.62-6.50	鬥牛士	4.32-6.09		Mitsubishi	4.35-	6.48
BenQ	4.68-6.68						
Elle	5.02-6.71	T.G.I Friday	4.55-6.40	Nissan	4.58-6.70	Asus	4.82-7.03
Guess	5.38-7.21	Swensen's	4.82-6.71	Toyota	4.85-7.05	HP	Compaq 5.18-7.29

Based on the above table, "Hang Ten", "我家牛排", "Daihatsu", and "Twinhead" successfully rank the last among their own categories as predicted. Similarly, "Burberry" and "Ruthchris", "Porsche", and "Apple" rank at the top among their own categories as expected, too.

Besides, those brands ranking top in the prestige dimension but not the originally predicted ones are still perceived as the high-class product (i.e. Sony and Ferrari) in their own category in general, so is the brands ranking last in the prestige dimension but not the originally predicted one (i.e. LEO). Furthermore, when it comes to the examination of the expected anchoring effect with respect to the measurement of the average

for each brand, similar outcomes have revealed, too. The anchoring effect is successfully manipulated to increase the pretest's effectiveness.

4.2.3 Selecting Suitable Primes for the Main Experiments

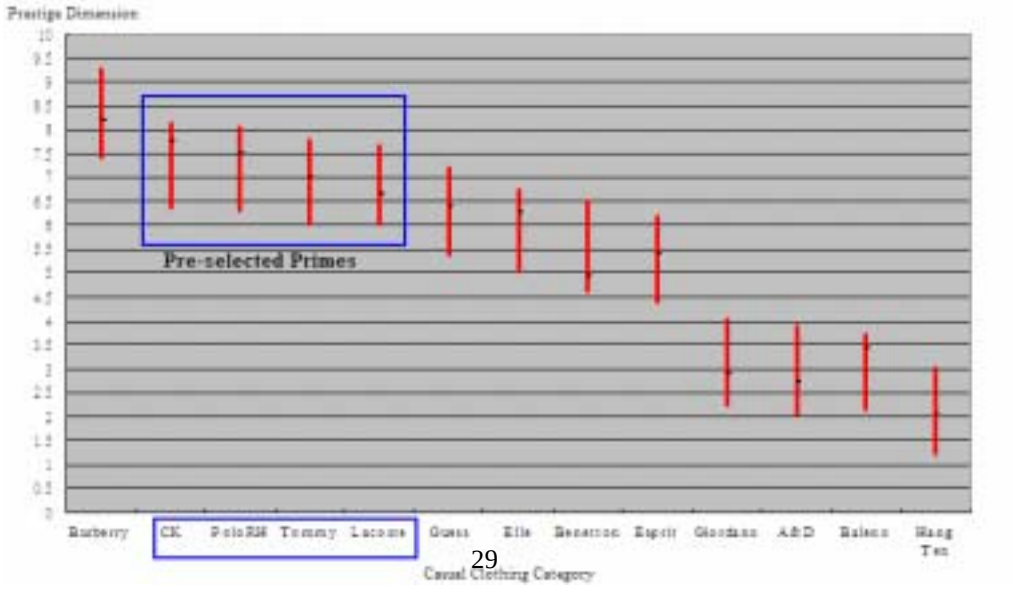
Similar to the previous experiments in literature review, there should also be several primes existing for one judged target. Thus, based on this principle, four appropriate primes are chosen in the clothing category. They are **"Calvin Klein", "Polo Ralph Lauren". "Tommy Hilfiger", and "Lacoste"**. Their prestige ranges 6.00~8.14. Table 4-3 shows the range width and average point on the prestige dimension of these four clothing brands. Figure 4-1 demonstrates the range patterns of these brands on the prestige dimension among the casual clothing category.

Table 4-3. Range Width and Average Point on the Prestige Dimension of Pre-determined Primes

Brand Name	Range Width	Average Point
Calvin Klein	6.36~8.14	7.75 (0.86)
Polo Ralph Lauren	6.31~8.07	7.50 (1.11)
Tommy Hilfiger	6.00~7.81	7.00 (0.76)
Lacoste		6.00~7.67

NOTE: In the parentheses shows the standard variation of each brand's average point.

Figure 4-1. Patterns of Pre-determined Primes on the Prestige Dimension



Purpose of Selecting Theses Four Brands as

Picking up several primes instead of only one not only are referred to the methods, but also may enhance the intensity of priming effects. Thus, it is necessary to ascertain that selected brands as primes share similar prestige pretest with a view to maintain the priming integrity. Reviewing the categories above, only the casual clothing category includes four existing brands sharing exactly resembling prestige range one another. They are "Calvin Klein", "Polo Ralph Lauren". "Tommy Hilfiger", and "Lacoste". According to Table 4-3, their prestige ranges lie in the "**moderately high**" degree which ranges from 6.00~8.14 on a 10-point scale. Brands in the casual clothing category are easily more acquainted by college students, too. Therefore, "Calvin Klein", "Polo Ralph Lauren". "Tommy Hilfiger", and "Lacoste", four casual brands are chosen to form a set of primes in the incoming main experiment.

4.2.4 Selecting Suitable Familiar Targets for the Main Experiments

The methodology intended to use in the subsequent main experiment is to "fix" the set of previous primes (i.e. Calvin Klein, Polo Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger, "Lacoste) in all eight manipulated conditions based on research hypotheses. With the four "**fixed**" priming existing brands, targets in eight manipulated conditions have to "**vary**" so as to make the intended overlap or non-overlap conditions with the same four primes.

Hence, according to the hypotheses and the above principle (i.e. fixed primes with various targets in different conditions), some appropriate familiar brands should also be chosen as the targets to be evaluated in the following main test. Therefore, with the **2 (overlap/ not overlap with primes) * 2 (belong/ not belong to the same category as primes') rule**, four brands are decided as targets for different conditions (hypotheses) in future main experiments. They are ***"Benetton" and "Baleno"*** of the casual clothing

category; **“陶板屋” *and “Sunday’s”*** of the restaurant category. Table 4-4 demonstrates their prestige dimensional range and average point compared to the four pre-determined primes mentioned above.

Table 4-4. Combinations of Fixed Primes and Familiar Targets

“**Clothing**” Priming Brands	Primes’ Range	Target Category	Target Brand	Manipulated Condition	Target’s Range
Calvin Klein Polo RL Tommy Hilfiger Lacoste	6.00~8.14	Clothing	Benetton	Overlap	4.62-6.50
			Baleno	Non-overlap	2.14-3.17
		Restaurant	Sunday’s	Non-overlap	3.25-4.80

NOTE: Primes’ and Targets’ range here are all recognized as “prestige”

4.3 Pretest 2 for Fictitious Brands

Due to the manipulation of the ambiguity of the target object experiment, besides the existing brand names, suitable dimensional range and averaged point of some fictitious brands in different categories should also be evaluated in advance.

4.3.1 Pretest Design

First, **“TAINA” and “月廬”** are two fictitious brand names invented separately in casual clothing and restaurant categories. Secondly, for it is somewhat difficult subjects to rate the prestigious range and average point of “fictitious” brands, “make-up” advertisements would be attached in the pretest 2 questionnaire as participants.

Third, in terms of the above hypotheses, it is necessary to make up two different advertisements for one identical fictitious brand. That is, one advertisement designed to

be looked more elegant with a view to make the fictitious brand to overlap with primes mentioned above. The other advertisement designed to be looked less elegant with a view to make the fictitious brand not to overlap with primes. (see Appendix (III))

Based on this 2 (casual clothes/ restaurant) * 2 (overlap/ non-overlap with primes) rule, four different questionnaires are developed. Fourth, except the fabricated advertisements, other questions in the questionnaires for fictitious brands are similar to those for existing ones with slight adjustment. In the stage 1 pretest, subjects are asked to "circle" every brand's prestige range; nevertheless, this method leads to some blurs because at times it may hard to tell what on earth the prestige range is circled. For example, one upper rim of the prestige range possibly falls between 7 and 7.5; hence, it necessary to ask the subject in person whether he implies 7 or 7.5. Due to this kind of confusion and inconvenience, the way used to measure the elegance range of each brand is modified in this stage. Participants are requested to clearly "write down" both upper and lower boundaries in terms of the prestige range, instead of circling. Such instance demonstrated as follows:

– *After referring the above scale, from your own perspective with regard to Burberry, the* ***"upper"*** *limit of its prestige range is _____; the* ***"lowest"*** *limit of its prestige range is _____.*

(Figures should be filled in those two blanks.)

This newly measurement helps solve the confusion suffered in the stage 1 pretest, and will also be used in the upcoming main experiment.

4.3.2 Pretest Outcome

4.3.2.1 Sample size

Similar to the pretest 1 for familiar brands, the valid cell range of conditions is from twenty to twenty-three. These samples are also undergraduates and graduates of the college of Management in University.

4.3.2.2 Concluding Suitable New Targets for the Main Experiments

Manipulation in the made-up advertisements seems quite effective in this pretest. Advertisements expected to be more prestigious really acquire higher assessment in range and average point, and vice versa. Table 4.6 in the below will give a clearer illustration.

Table 4-5. Combinations of Fixed Primes and Fictitious (New) Targets

"**Clothing**" Priming Brands	Primes' Range	Target Category	Target Brand	Ad Style	Manipulated Condition	Target's Range
Calvin Klein Polo RL Tommy Hilfiger Lacoste	6.00~8.14	Clothing		More elegant	Overlap	4.62-6.50
				Less elegant	Non-overlap	2.14-3.17
		Restaurant	月廬	More elegant	Overlap	4.89-6.77
				Less elegant	Non-overlap	3.25-4.80

4.4 Predetermined Combinations of Primes and Targets

Consequently, after these two-stage pretests, it comes to the most imperative step to determine the optimal combinations of primes and assessed target following eight conditions based on the proposed theory. The combinations of exemplars and the target object for eight hypotheses are developed and illustrated in the following Table 4-6:

Table 4-6. Predetermined Combinations of Primes and Targets

	Condition	Primes*4 (6.00~8.14)	Target (Prestige Range)	Expected Result
While primes and the evaluated target are in the identical clothing category:				
1	Overlap Target Category Primes Existing Target	CK (6.36-8.14) Polo RL (6.31-8.07) Tommy (6.00-7.81) Lacoste (6.00-7.67)	Benetton (4.62-6.5)	Assimilation
2	Non-Overlap Target Category Primes Existing Target		Baleno (2.14-3.71)	Contrast
3	Overlap Target Category Primes New Target		TAINA (3.97-6.30)	Assimilation
4	Non-Overlap Target Category Primes New Target		TAINA (2.91-5.04)	Contrast
While primes and the evaluated target are in diverse categories:				
5	Overlap Non-Target Category Primes Existing Target	CK (6.36-8.14) Polo RL (6.31-8.07) Tommy (6.00-7.81) Lacoste (6.00-7.67)	陶板屋 (4.88-6.77)	Assimilation
6	Non-Overlap Non-Target Category Primes Existing Target		Sunday's (3.25-4.8)	Contrast
7	Overlap Non-Target Category Primes New Target		月廬 (4.54-6.9)	Assimilation
8	Non-Overlap Non-Target Category Primes New Target		月廬 (2.86-5.00)	Contrast

Chapter 5 • MAIN

In this thesis, eight contextual priming conditions will be examined to test if Dimensional Range Overlap Model still works well no matter primes and the target belong to the same product category or not. In addition, the influence of the type on the Dimensional Range Overlap Model will also be examined in this study.

Hence, to sum up, the assimilation condition predicted by the Dimensional Range Overlap Model is going to emerge when the target's and primes' range in prestige dimension overlap one another; no matter 1) primes are members of target's category or not, and 2) target is familiar or new to subjects. (see Figure 5-1 below)

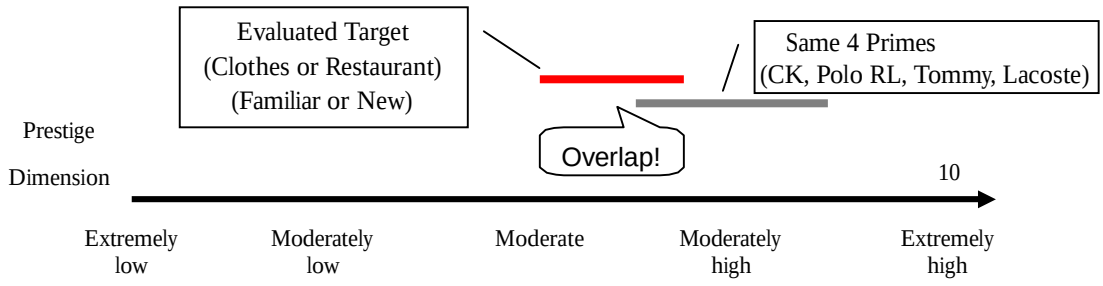


Figure 5-1. Expected Assimilation Effects in Manipulated Overlap Condition

On the other hand, contrast condition predicted by the Dimensional Range Overlap Model is going to appear when the target's and primes' range in prestige status do not overlap one another, no matter 1) primes are members of target's product category not, and 2) target is familiar or new to subjects. (see Figure 5-2 below)

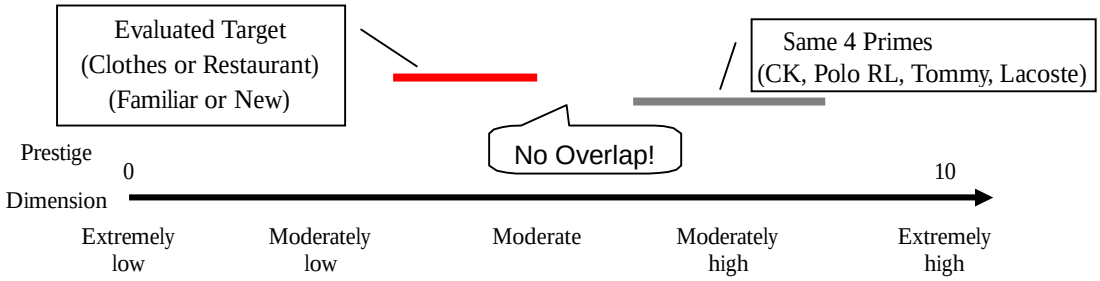


Figure 5-2. Expected Contrast Effects in Manipulated Non-overlap Condition

5.1 Design and Participants

This study involves a 2 (***the category of primes***: target category) *2 (***the ambiguity of target***: familiar/ new) * 2 (***dimensional range***: overlap/ non-overlap) between-participants factorial design. Originally, one hundred and ninety-three graduates and undergraduates participate in this experiment. randomly assigned into the eight experimental conditions.

Product categories of primes and targets used in this study are “casual clothes” and “restaurant” because university students exposed to lots of fashion nowadays should be familiar with these kinds of

With regard to the ambiguity of the target, when it comes to existing (familiar) brands, their advertisements used in the main experiment are practical ones found in magazines or on their official websites. Oppositely, when it comes to fictitious brands which are brand new to participants, their advertisements applied in the following main test are fabricated ones but just the same as those exposed in the former pretests.

5.2 Procedure

In the beginning of the experiment, participants are requested to complete consumer surveys designed to investigate university students’ attitudes products. All participants are given a booklet individually.

In the first part, participants are presented with five different introducing five different brand names (see Appendix (Ⅳ)). They are advertisements in the questionnaire. In this succession of advertisements, first four them are managed to be primes (the detail will be explained in “Prime Manipulation”), and the last one is maneuvered as the important target ready to be evaluated (the detail will be explained in “Target Manipulation”). When participants are reading these five advertisements, they are asked not able to turn back to look at the former advertisement

again as long as they turn to the next page. They must look at these advertisements page by page in the designated order.

In the second part, after finishing reading those five advertisements, participants are asked to answer some questions. All questions are related to various dimensions of the target brand presented in the final advertisement. However, the first to-be-evaluated status is “prestige” (the detail will be illustrated in “Target Evaluation”).

In the third part, participants are asked whether they know the key purpose of this experiment. If they reply “yes”, they have to write down some words to express own opinions about the object of this study. It is to check whether participants are aware of the true underlying experiment purpose.

In the forth part, participants are required to evaluate each of the brands appearing in former advertisements in the first part with regard to its individual prestige range. The fourth part serves to check the prime and target manipulation (the explained in “Manipulation Checks”). Consequently, participants will be giving souvenirs, debriefed, and dismissed.

5.3 Independent Variables

5.3.1 Prime Manipulation

In the beginning, the first four advertisements for subjects to read serve as primes. “Calvin Klein”, “Polo Ralph Lauren”, “Tommy Hilfiger”, and exemplars selected from existing stimuli in previous pretests and are simultaneously used as primes among all eight manipulated conditions. These four brands are all members of “casual clothes”, and share similar prestige range at a moderately high degree.

Participants have to be exposed to these pre-chosen primes before target evaluation. There are also plenty of ways to prime these pre-selected stimuli. However, the method used in this study is to request participants to read advertisements within which

the pre-selected stimuli were embedded just prior to their crucial target assessing task. This priming procedure is referred to previous studies, such as Stapel & Koomen (1998); and Yi (1990, 1993).

There lies an important reason for this research to introduce a similar priming method to Stapel and Koomen's studies. Reviewing the proposed theory mentioned above, this study suggests that it is the overlap or non-overlap between the target's possible interpretation range and the prime's one that actually influences the assimilation or contrast effects, not the category of exemplars (belonging to the categories as target's or not) proposed by Stapel & Koomen in 1998. Thus, if research applies the same priming way as Stapel and Koomen's, and then the theory of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model will be more tenable to retort upon Stapel and Koomen's study in the later discussion chapter.

The purpose of placing "four" brands serving as primes, not only "one" brand is that more exemplars should increase the intensity of priming effects. For more than one exemplar is used in the main experiment, it is necessary to confirm that every different priming brand all refers to the similar priming condition. Hence, "Calvin Klein", "Polo Ralph Lauren", "Tommy Hilfiger", and "Lacoste" are determined to be the four critical exemplars presented in the main test because they share the similar prestige range from 6.00 to 8.14 which is at a moderately high degree on a 10-point-scale.

Finally, for existing brands are chosen to serve as exemplars, their advertisements for participants to read are all real ones once published in magazines or on their own official websites.

5.3.2 Target Manipulation

In the first part of the booklet, the last advertisement subjects read serves as the target brand (see Appendix (Ⅱ)). What is more important, owing to the proposed theory,

there will be eight different target advertisements to form eight dissimilar versions of questionnaires based on a 2 (***the category of primes***: target category) *2 (***the ambiguity of target***: familiar/ new) * 2 (***dimensional range***: overlap/ non-overlap) between-participants factorial design. Thus, here come the eight diverse combinations individually matched for eight hypotheses from the proposed theory:

Given target category exemplars and familiar (existing) target brand names, the advertisement of "***Benetton***" will serve as the target in order to manipulate an overlap with former four primes' prestige range (6.00~8.14) because the prestige extent of Benetton is 4.62 to 6.50 in the pretest. On the other hand, the advertisement of "***Baleno***" is used as the target with a view to avoid an overlap with four primes' elegance range because the prestige extent of Baleno is merely 2.14 to 3.17 in the pretest.

Given target category primes and new (fictitious) target, the "***TAINA***" is arbitrarily created to serve as the evaluated target. However, there are two quite distinct advertisements of TAINA to satisfy two different conditions. One more elegant version of TAINA's advertisement is used to manipulate an overlap with four primes' prestige range (6.00~8.14) because this TAINA's ad acquires its prestige range from 3.97 to 6.30 in pretests. The other less elegant version advertisement is used to avert an overlap with primes' prestige range because this TAINA's ad only acquires its prestigious range from 2.91~5.04 in pretests.

Given non-target category primes and familiar (existing) target brand names, the advertisement of "陶板屋", a restaurant name, will serve as the target in order to

manipulate an overlap with former four primes' prestige range (6.00~8.14) because the prestige extent of 陶板屋 is 4.88 to 6.77 in the pretest. On the advertisement of "***Sunday's***", another restaurant name, is used as the target with a to avoid an overlap with four primes' elegant range because the prestige extent of Sunday's is merely 3.25 to 4.80 in the pretest.

Given non-target category primes and new (fictitious) target, the brand name "月廬" is created to serve as the evaluated target. However, there are two quite distinct advertisements of 月廬 to satisfy two different conditions. One more elegant of advertisement is used to manipulate an overlap between 月廬 and those four prestige range (6.00~8.14) because this ad of 月廬 acquires its prestige range from to 6.90 in pretests. The other less elegant version advertisement is used to avert an overlap between 月廬 and those primes' prestige range because this ad of 月廬 acquires its prestige range from 2.86~5.00 in pretests.

5.4 Dependent Variables

This part will be described according to the sequence of questions in the main experimental questionnaire (see Appendix (Ⅱ)).

5.4.1 Dependent Measures（Target Judgment）

After the priming task by requesting participants to read those advertisements, participants are asked to evaluate several dimensions about the brand presented in the final advertisement. All dimensions ready to be judged here will follow the rule of estimate". That is, on a scale ranging from 0 to 10, participants merely have to circle "one" score to express their evaluation toward one product dimension.

The first to-be-evaluated status is "**prestige**". Subjects are requested to indicate how elegant and prestigious they think "the target" (the brand name changes depending on which condition mentioned above that subjects are randomly assigned into) will be on a scale ranging from 0 (low prestige) to 10 (high prestige).

"Prestigious dimension" is placed to be the first one because it is the main concern of this research. Besides, the question and the scale measuring the target's prestigious

dimension is the same as the one in former pretests. This consistence indeed facilitates the follow-up result analyses, and makes the comparison between the experimental group in the main test and the controlling group in the pretests more plausible.

The second and the third dimensions to be evaluated are "**price**" and "**quality**". Subjects are asked to indicate how expensive and how quality they think about the target brand will be on a scale ranging from 0 (cheapest/ low quality) to 10 (most costly/ high quality). Price and quality dimensions are evaluated because they are supposed to relate with prestige status. Thus, it can also examine if there is positive correlation among prestige, price, and quality dimensions. That is, once participants think one target is more elegant, they will also indicate that the same target is more expensive and quality due to the positive relationship among these three dimensions.

The fourth and the fifth dimensions to be evaluated are those predicted being irrelevant to prestige. For example, when the target is casual clothes belonging to the same product category as primes, and then "**design variety**" and "**size variety**" are just the "irrelevant" dimensions ready to be measured. Participants are asked to indicate how various they think the design and size of the target brand will be both on a scale ranging from 0 (quite monotonous) to 10 (very diverse).

On the other side, when the target is the restaurant not belonging to the same product category as primes, "**menu variety**" and "**service** "unrelated" dimensions to be measured. Participants are asked to indicate how various of the menu and how fast of the service they think the target restaurant will offer on a ranging from 0 (very monotonous/ very slow) to 10 (very diverse/ very fast).

Finally, the sixth and the seventh dimensions to be rated are those regarding to the overall appreciation of the designated target, such as "**preference** "**attitude**". Subjects are requested to indicate how much preference they show for the target brand on a scale ranging from 0 (dislikeful) to 10 (very fond). Similarly, they are

also required to indicate how positive their attitudes are towards the target brand on a scale ranging from 0 (very negative) to 10 (very positive). Preference and integral attitude are rated because it can also analyze if there is positive correlation between prestige and the overall evaluation of one product. That is to say, once participants think one target is more elegant, they will also express much preference and more positive attitude towards the same target owing to the positive relationship between prestige dimension and the whole appreciation of the target, and vice versa.

The subsequent Table 5-1 helps make whole dependant measures judgment) clearer:

Table 5-1. Summary of Seven Product Dimensions Ready to be Rated

Casual Clothing	Explanation	Restaurant
1. Prestige	**Main Concern**	
2. Price	Related dimensions with prestige, and expected positive correlation	2. Price
3. Quality		3. Quality
4. Design Variety	Unrelated dimensions with prestige	4. Menu Variety
5. Size Variety		5. Service Efficiency
6. Preference Degree	Integrative appreciation and expected positive correlation with prestige	6. Preference Degree
7. Overall Attitude		7. Overall Attitude

Purpose to Place Other Measured Dimensions besides Prestige Status

Besides the judgment of prestige status, there are two reasons of inserting measured dimensions together with prestige. First, asking participants to measure diverse aspects and the overall appreciation about a target brand makes the survey look more like a normal product survey. Participants may think that it is only one product consuming survey among those advertisements they have just read. It helps

speculations about the relation between the priming task and the subsequent evaluation. Secondly, by requiring other aspects in addition to elegance, examine their relationship with prestige; for instance, if higher rating of prestige actually lead to higher scoring of price, quality, preference, or integral attitude.

5.4.2 Manipulation Checks

After the target judgment come manipulation checks, foremost, subjects are asked if they know the main purpose of the test. They also have to write down their about this experiment's object if they circle "yes".

Continuously, on the next page comes the judgment of every brand ever presented in previous advertisements in terms of their own prestige range on a scale ranging from 0 (low prestige) to 10 (high prestige), including four primes and the target. This is the most important manipulation check in this research. Based on the result of these ratings, whether there is an overlap between primes and the target or not examined. It helps check if overlap or non-overlap conditions actually occur as predicted. Also, whether the prestige ranges of the brands resemble those in pretests can be known. The reason to separate the point estimates of target judgment and prestige range checks is to decrease the possibility that participants may get confused with these two segments. For ways and styles to measure the two portions are somewhat resembling, if subjects read these two parts continuously, they may easily be bewildered by seemingly repeated questions. As a result, one page of asking the purpose of this test will inserted to separate target judgment and prestige range checks apart.

In the end, subjects would be asked if they have ever heard those brands presented in former advertisements before. It helps investigate the influence that whether people have heard those brand names or not on contextual priming effects.

Chapter 6 • RESULT

6.1 Criteria of Selecting Valid

6.1.1 Adopting the Overlap/ Non-overlap Criteria

In order to better control the manipulation for each participant, every participant's data is going to be checked on the following overlap/ non-overlap criteria:

In the manipulated overlap condition, if at least three (out of four) primes' ranges overlap with the target's range, the data will be analyzed in the subsequent data analyses.

In the manipulated non-overlap condition, if at least three (out of four) prestige ranges do not overlap with the target's range, the data will be analyzed in the subsequent data analyses.

Primes' prestigious ranges and the target one mentioned here are what participants directly indicate in the main experiment, not according to those acquired in pretests.

6.1.2 Reasons for Adopting the Above Criteria

Those eight hypotheses proposed in Chapter 3 are based on the Dimensional Range Overlap Model suggested by Chien (2002). The model predicts assimilation effects occur once an overlap between primes' possible interpretation range and the target's possible interpretation range on the relevant judgment dimension; while contrast effects occur once there is no overlap between both ranges. Therefore, with a view to examine those hypotheses following the Dimensional Range Overlap Model, the over/ non-overlap between primes' and the target's prestige range must be manipulated. Continuously, the dependant variable (the target's prestige rating) can further be analyzed to check whether

assimilation effects appear because of the overlap; and vice versa, contrast occurs owing to the lack of

What's more, there is inevitably some degree of range variations across participants. That is, for some participants, the primes' prestige range does not overlap (or overlaps) with the target's range in the conditions where both ranges were managed to overlap (or not to overlap) with each other. However, by using the above criteria on an individual basis, samples that manipulations fail to be controlled are all removed, and then degree of variations across subjects can decrease a lot.

6.2 Demographic Description

Originally, one hundred and ninety- three graduates and undergraduates participate in this experiment. Participates are randomly assigned into the eight conditions. However, after adopting the overlap/ non-overlap criteria, one hundred and twenty-four samples are reserved to be further analyzed, including forty-eight males and Seventy-six females. In addition, there are at least fifteen samples in each experimental condition. The detail numbers of every condition are shown below:

Table 6-1. Valid Samples in Each Condition

Condition (recognized by Target)	Numbers (N)
Primes and target are in the Same Category	
1. Benetton	15
2. Baleno	15
3. TAINA (manipulated overlap)	16
4. TAINA (manipulated non-overlap)	15
Primes and target are in Different Categories	
5. Sunday's	16
6.陶板屋	17
7.月廬 (manipulated overlap)	15
8.月廬 (manipulated non-overlap)	15
Total	

6.3 Manipulation Checks

6.3.1 Prime Manipulation Check

In the final page of the questionnaire, participants are asked to circle prestige ranges of the brands; Calvin Klein, Polo Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger, Lacoste, serving exemplars. After using the above overlap/non-overlap criteria, reserved samples are all that the primes' ranges overlap with the target's range in the condition, while they do not overlap with the target's range in non-overlap condition. Once again, prestigious ranges of primes and targets here are based on the answers directly in the main experiment questionnaires.

Continuously, average prestige ranges of each exemplar are calculated, and then will be compared with those in previous pretests in the following table. Also each standard variation is demonstrated below.

Table 6-2. Primes' Prestige Ranges in Main Experiment and Pretest

	Calvin Klein		Polo Ralph Lauren		Tommy Hilfiger		Lacoste	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Main	**5.5645**	**7.9758**	**5.2742**		**7.6815**	**5.2621**	**7.6371**	
	5.0605	**7.3048**						
STD	1.4719		1.2670	1.3974		1.1232	1.3592	1.2994
1.5310	1.3307							

Note: "Main" means "Main experiment"; "STD" means "Standard Variation"; "Low" means "the Lowest bound of the prestige dimension"; "High" means "the Highest bound of the prestige

From the table, the overall four primes' prestige range in the main experiment is "**5.0605~7.9758**"; and those in pretests is "6.00~8.14". Although primes' elegant scale totally moves downwards a little, especially the lowest bound, primes' prestige range stands still on the "moderately high" degree. Each standard variation of low and bounds is no more than 1.6 which is viewed within the accepted level.

There may be three main reasons why the whole four primes' prestige scale moves downwards and is expanded compared to that in pretests. First, participants join in the main experiment are not actually the same as those in pretests. Thus, it is quite possible to result in some degree of range variations across different subjects and groups in the main test and pretest. Second, there are advertisements attached with priming brands in the main test; however, in pretests, there are merely brand names listed for participants to evaluate their prestige range. Therefore, with additional visual advertisements in the main test, it may influence potentially when participants are asked to rate those brands' elegant scale. Participants' scoring may involve not only the brands themselves but also the impressions of those brands' advertisements. Nevertheless, these range variations do lead in any significant divergence. Third, from Table 6-2, with larger standard variations in the main test, the prestige range of those four primes is much expanded and scale's low bond moves downwards compared to the outcome in pretests. This difference may result from anchoring manipulation in pretests. By placing the brands predicted to be the most and the least prestigious as the first two questions in pretest, prestige ranges of other brands among the same category would likely fall within that interval.
there is no need to manipulate such anchoring in main tests; and that is why standard variation of each brand's prestige range is higher than that in pretests as a result to make the scale wider. Although there exists such difference in primes' prestige range between the main test and pretests, these two scales are still close within the accepted level (5.0605~7.9758 in the main experiment; "6.00~8.14" in pretests).

6.3.2 Other Possible Influences on Priming Tasks

6.3.2.1 Knowing the Purpose of This Main Experiment or

After target judgment in the questionnaire, subjects are requested whether they figure out the key purpose of this research. Once they say "yes", they still have to write

down their own ideas about the purpose. Among all 124 valid samples, only eight persons' answers are closed to the true goal of this study. Participants possibly spend a little more efforts and time so as to figure out and elaborate the answer after the target judgment task. Hence, it is hardly able to affect apparently their previous evaluating process.

Participants are asked such question because this study concerns whether subjects guess right on the real research objective will affect the average points of each brand and finally bias the dependent measures regarding the emergence of assimilation and contrast effects. This would be a kind of "demand artifact". "Demand artifacts" refer to the bias itself, the "error of inference regarding the cause of an observed effect" 1975, P. 103). However, according to Shimp, Hyatt, and Snyder's study about demand artifacts in consumer research in 1991, they propose that three conditions must exist for a subject to be demand biased. Firstly, the subject must "encode" a demand cue that would alert him or her to the research hypothesis. Secondly, s/he must "discern" the correct research hypothesis or guess another hypothesis that is incidentally correlated with the true research hypothesis. Thirdly, s/he must "act" on the conforming to a certain role that leads to biased responses on measures. In equation form (Shimp, et al., 1991),

$$Pr(Bi) = Pr(Ei) \times Pr(D_1 \mid Ei) \times Pr(Ai \mid Di),$$

where Pr(Bi) = probability that the i^{th} subject will be demand biased; Pr(Ei) = probability of encoding a demand cue; $Pr(D_1 \mid Ei)$ = conditional probability of discerning the true experimental hypothesis or a correlated hypothesis; and Pr(Ai | Di) probability of acting on the

This multiplicative junction stresses that all three conditions (i.e, encoding a demand cue, discerning the hypothesis, and acting on the hypothesis) must apply for a subject to be demand biased.

However, among the eight persons whose answers are closed to the true goal of this study, they merely encode a demand cue that previous advertisements read might affect their following target judgment, but they all fail in discerning the hypothesis. That is, they can not tell which direction the evaluated target would shift after being primed. Hereafter, the probability that these eight subjects would be demand biased (i.e., Pr(Bi)) indeed decreases a lot due to the least $Pr(D_1 \mid Ei)$. The consequence of subjects guessing right on the experimental purpose is not as serious as originally expected.

What's more, removing hypothesis guessers may lead to systematic between comparison groups along the lines of the selection-bias threat validity noted by Cook and Campbell (1979, p.53). In addition to threatening internal validity, removing hypothesis guessers may also adversely affect an experiment's external validity and in turn compromise its construct validity (cf. Lynch, 1982). As a result, since those eight purpose guessers do not successfully discern the correct research hypotheses (i.e., they do not indicate the accurate direction the average prestige point of targets would shift when being primed), they shall not lead to any remarkable demand bias. Thus, the eight samples are still kept in further analyses for dependent measures.

6.3.2.2 Have Ever Heard those Existing Brand Names or not

At the last of the questionnaire, participants are asked whether they have ever heard those presented brand names before. Based on the question, among those analyzed samples, there are some of them who have not heard at least one brand name. Brand names especially concerned here are those priming exemplars and familiar targets, such as Calvin Klein, Polo Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger, Lacoste, Sunday's, and 陶板屋. Fictitious brand names are all excluded because they are new to participants.

It is essential to examine whether participants have ever heard those brands or not

will influence their rating of 1) average points in terms of target judgment and 2) prestige ranges; which may finally affect dependent measures, the assimilation and contrast effects.

First, as for point estimates for seven product dimensions of target judgment, participants assigned in the four manipulated conditions which the targets are existing brands all have ever heard of targets' brand names. Thus, such doubts will not happen to affect those target point ratings.

As for the exemplars' prestige ranges, there are six, twenty-three, ten, samples respectively that have "not" heard of Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger, Polo Ralph Lauren, and Lacoste. In order to examine whether their prestige ranges are different from participants having heard of these brands and those having not heard of, one-ANOVA is used for proceeding checks.

Firstly, among the samples that have ever heard of those exemplars' names, the same numbers as those having never heard of are randomly chosen. Thus, respectively, six, twenty-three, ten, and six random samples that have ever heard of Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger, Polo Ralph Lauren, and Lacoste. Continuously, four individual one-way ANOVA analyses would be applied to test if there exists obvious diversity between these two kinds of groups. Through one-way ANOVA, no significant variations between the two groups (i.e., samples having and having not heard of four individual prime) in exemplar's prestige range are shown (see Table 6-3~ 6-6). Thus, evaluations of four primes' prestige ranges do not diverse apparently no matter participants have heard those brands or not. (see Table 6-7)

For this reason, here comes the conclusion that even samples have not hear at least one exemplar brands within the main test; they are still covered in further analyses for dependent measures. These samples will not lead to any critical effect and bias.

Table 6-3. One-Way (Samples Having Not Heard of v.s. Samples Having Heard of) ANOVA Result of Calvin

			Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
CK	Low bound	Between	1	1.021	.385	.843
		Within	10	2.654		
		Total	11			
	High bound	Between	1	6.021	3.081	.739
		Within	10	1.954		
		Total	11			

Table 6-4. One-Way (Samples Having Not Heard of v.s. Samples Having Heard of) ANOVA Result of Tommy Hilfiger

			Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tommy Hilfiger	Low bound	Between	1	1.761	1.179	.283
		Within	44	1.494		
		Total	45			
	High bound	Between	1	2.174	1.823	.184
		Within	44	1.193		
		Total	45			

Table 6-5. One-Way (Samples Having Not Heard of v.s. Samples Having Heard of) ANOVA Result of Polo Ralph

			Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
POLO RL	Low bound	Between	1	2.813	1.669	.213
		Within	18	1.685		
		Total	19			
	High bound	Between	1	.112	.098	.758
		Within	18	1.146		
		Total	19			

Table 6-6. One-Way (Samples Having Not Heard of v.s. Samples Having Heard of) ANOVA Result of

			Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
LACOSTE	Low bound	Between	1	1.333	.672	.431
		Within	10	1.983		
		Total	11			
	High bound	Between	1	.333	.519	.488
		Within	10	.642		
		Total	11			

Table 6-7. Treatment Means in Low and High Limit of Prestige Range

Dimensional Bound		Samples "Not" Knowing Exemplars	"Random" Samples Knowing Exemplars
CK	Low	4.833 (1.861)	5.4167 (1.357)
	High	6.917 (1.463)	8.333 (1.329)
POLO	Low	4.783 (1.420)	5.174 (0.984)
	High	7.196 (1.240)	7.630 (0.919)
TOMMY	Low	4.300 (1.206)	5.050 (1.383)
	High	6.900 (0.809)	7.050 (1.279)
LACOSTE	Low	6.000 (1.760)	5.333 (0.931)
	High	8.417 (1.020)	8.083 (0.491)

NOTE: In the parentheses shows the standard variation of each brand's lowest and highest bond on the prestige dimension.

6.4 Dependent Measurement

6.4.1 Target Evaluation

The Occurrence of Assimilation and Contrast Effect

All the eight hypotheses in this research suggested that it is non-overlap between primes' prestige range and the target's one that actually affect the appearance of assimilation or contrast effects. That is, it is the Dimensional Range Overlap Model that can explain assimilation and contrast effects more

neither the category of primes (belonging to target category or non-target category), nor the ambiguity of targets (being familiar to subjects or brand new to subjects).

In order to test these hypotheses, the average prestige points of eight target brands in the main test are viewed as the "**experimental group**"; while the average prestige points of eight target brands in pretests are regarded as the "**controlling group**". The controlling groups in pretests are not influenced by any other priming advertisements; while the experimental groups in the main test are. Hence, one-way ANOVA is used here to examine whether there are significant diverse judgment between these two groups. See details in Table 6-8 and 6-9.

Table 6-8. One-Way (Experimental v.s. Controlling Group) ANOVA Result of Eight Different Target Brands

Evaluated Target	Source	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
While primes and the evaluated target are in the identical clothing category:					
Benetton	Between Groups	1	9.301	4.300	0.046**
	Within Groups	33	2.163		
	Total	34			
Baleno	Between Groups	1	11.501	4.624	0.039**
	Within Groups	33	2.487		
	Total	34			
TAINA (manipulated overlap)	Between Groups	1	5.699	2.870	0.099*
	Within Groups	37	1.986		
	Total	38			
TAINA (manipulated non-overlap)	Between Groups	1	6.193	6.091	.019**
	Within Groups	33	1.017		
	Total	34			

Evaluated Target	Source	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
While primes and the evaluated target are in diverse categories:					
陶板屋	Between Groups	1	1.553	0.906	0.347
	Within Groups	37	1.713		
	Total	38			
Sunday's	Between Groups	1	21.356	10.540	0.003**
	Within Groups	34	2.026		
	Total	35			
月廬 (manipulated overlap)	Between Groups	1	6.943	3.487	0.071*
	Within Groups	33	1.991		
	Total	34			
月廬 (manipulated non-overlap)	Between Groups	1	19.717	14.827	.001**
	Within Groups	33	1.330		
	Total	34			

Note: *p<0.01; **p<0.05

Table 6-9. Summary of Cell Mean Comparisons of Eight Manipulated Conditions

Target Brand	Condition	Hypotheses	**E** Group		**C** Group (mean)	Sig.
Benetton	1.Overlap 2.Same category 3.Familiar target	Assimilation	**5.9667** (1.23)	**>**	**4.9250** (1.62)	0.046** Confirmed
Baleno Overlap	1.Non-Overlap 2.Same category	Contrast	**2.2667** (1.39)	**<**	**3.4250** (1.69)	
TAINA (overlap)	1.Overlap 2.Same category 3.New target	Assimilation	**6.1250** (1.53)	**>**	**5.3478** (1.31)	0.099* Confirmed
TAINA (no overlap)	1.Non-Overlap 2.Same category 3.New target	Contrast	**3.1000** (1.16)	**<**	**3.9500** (0.87)	

Target Brand	Condition	Hypotheses	**E** Group		**C** Group (mean)	Sig.	
陶板屋	1.Overlap 2.Diverse category 3.Familiar target	Assimilation	**5.5294** (1.57)	<	**5.9318** (1.06)	0.347	Not Confirmed
Sunday's Overlap	1.Non- 2.Diverse category	Contrast	**2.3750** (1.24)	<	**3.9250** (1.54)	0.003**	
月廬 (overlap)	1.Overlap 2.Diverse category 3.New target	Assimilation	**6.3000** (1.65)	>	**5.4000** (1.19)	0.071* Confirmed	
月廬 (no overlap)	1.Non-Overlap 2.Diverse category 3.New target	Contrast	**2.4333** (1.19)	<	**3.9500** (1.12)		

Note: *p<0.01; **p<0.05; E group: Experimental Group; C group: Controlling Group
Also, in the parentheses shows the standard variation of each brand's mean point on the prestige dimension.

The above table provides a very clear summary of each target's outcome. Seven the eight hypotheses are confirmed, excluding the target "陶板屋". That is to say, the Dimensional Range Overlap Model successfully explains most of the emergence of assimilation and contrast effects; neither the category of primes (belonging to target category or non-target category), nor the ambiguity of targets (existing or fictitiously new brand).

Once given the **manipulated overlap premise**, the average prestige points of "Benetton", "TAINA (overlap), "月廬 (overlap)" in the main significantly higher than those in pretests serving as the controlling group. Assimilation is predicted to occur in these manipulated overlap conditions such that average elegance scoring are all shifted toward the four primes which are at a moderately high prestige degree. When there is an overlap between primes' prestige range and

targets' ones, targets' prestige points become much higher when they are accompanied by these positive primes. Whether primes belong to the target category or not is proven not an essential role in affecting the emergence of assimilation effects; neither the ambiguity of targets (being familiar or new to subjects).

On the contrary, once given **the manipulated non-overlap premise**, the average prestige points of "Baleno", "TAINA (non-overlap)"; "Sunday's"; "月廬 (non- in the main experiment are all significantly lower than those in pretests serving as the controlling group. Contrast is predicted to occur in these manipulated conditions such that these targets' average elegance scoring are all shifted away from the four primes which are at a moderately high prestige degree. When there is no overlap between primes' prestige range and targets' ones, targets' prestige points become much lower when they are accompanied by these positive primes. Whether primes belong to the target category or not is proven not an essential role in affecting the occurrence of contrast effects; either the ambiguity of targets (being familiar or new to subjects).

Explanation of the Unconfirmed Hypothesis

However, when it comes the target restaurant "陶板屋", which is an existing brand but belongs to the diverse category from primes, the predicted assimilation seems not to occur in the manipulated overlap condition. Its average prestige point experiment is contrarily lower than that in the pretest; the controlling group.

Still, it is too premature to say that the contrast effect emerges in this condition just because the rating in the experimental group is lower than that in the controlling group. For the p-value in this condition is 0.347 (see Table 6-9) which is much higher than the significant level 0.1; so it only concludes that there is no discrepancy between the average elegance rating of 陶板屋 in the experimental group and that in the controlling These two points are actually similar with each other. Priming effects do not appear in

this condition; neither assimilation, nor contrast.

There are three reasons explaining why the predicted assimilation effect do not occur to affect the prestige point of 陶板屋 in the manipulated

First, when in pretests, the average prestige rating of 陶板屋 is already the (5.9318; see Table 6-9) among four evaluated targets in the condition. This point (5.9318) is even quite closed to the low bond (6.000) of the primes in pretests. As a result, with this originally higher appreciation, prestige rating of 陶板屋 apparently higher to shift toward those moderately primes more closely is indeed harder. Space for 陶板屋 to move prestigious primes is much smaller than other three targets. That is what so-called the "**ceiling effect**". It is the main reason why assimilation does not occur as predicted. Without assimilation, the prestige point of 陶板屋 in the main similar to that in the previous pretest. Contrast effects do not emerge, either.

Second, materials used in pretests and the main experiment are not controlled being identical. To go in details, in the main experiment, the brand name would appear within its own advertisement; but in pretests, the brand name is listed alone. Due to the diversity, prestige rating from pretests might not serve as the totally objective comparison bases for prestige scoring in the main experiment. Thus, comparison between the experimental and controlling (referred as compared standard) group might probably be affected, and then it fails to confirm the former hypothesis. More details about this deficiency of experimental design will be discussed further in later Chapter 7.

Third, when participants are asked to rate several dimensions of 陶板屋, prestige; they have already read its advertisement previously. As a result, the picture of 陶板屋 possibly has an influence on subjects' judgment upon 陶板屋. illustration is a little unattractive to some of participants, so its average prestige scoring is decreased latently by the effect of its own advertisement. Stuff related to the sense

sight may usually influence subjects' judgment in a peripheral way potentially. However, though the prestige point of 陶板屋 falls a little comparing to that in pretests, it fails to bring up contrast effects because of failing to attain the significant p-value level.

6.4.2 Extra Finding

Relationship between Prestige and Other Dimensions

Previously, to get rid of participants' doubt about the real experiment, in addition to prestige dimension, many other dimensions towards the target are also placed together to be evaluated. This way can make the test more like a normal product survey. Since these product dimensions are also evaluated by participants, it is interesting to further investigate the correlation between prestige and other dimensions.

Through the correlation analyses, results are demonstrated below (see Table 6-10) and the next page (see Table 6-11):

Table 6-10. Correlations between Prestige and Other Six Dimensions in Casual Clothing Category

		Prestige	Price	Quality	Design Variety	Size Variety	Preference	Integral Attitude
Prestige	Pearson Correlation	1	.808**	.785**	.488**	.362**	.685**	.602**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.004	.000	.000
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61	61

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6-11. Correlations between Prestige and Other Six Dimensions in Restaurant Category

		Prestige	Price	Quality	Menu Variety	Service Efficiency	Preference	Integral Attitude
Prestige	Pearson Correlation	1	.681**	.749**	.138	.022	.512**	.520**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.279	.864	.000	.000
	N	63	63	63	63	63	63	63

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Complying with above Pearson Correlations, all as predicted, “price” and “quality” are most positively correlated with “prestige”. In addition, the overall appreciation of one product; including “preference” and “integral attitude” always can apparently positive link with prestige. Once a product is regarded elegant, it is more possible to be preferred by consumers. However, as referring clothing and restaurant, prestige dimension is not necessarily associated with design variety, size diversity, menu multiplicity, and service efficiency. They are quite irrelevant dimensions prestige

Chapter 7 • GENERAL

7.1 Conclusion Review

7.1.1 Experimental Outcomes

The critical issue of this research is to settle down the discrepancy among several previous studies regarding to the practical role of the category of primes (belonging the target category or not) in the emergence of assimilation and contrast effects. The factor of the ambiguity of the evaluated target (being familiar or new to participants) also tested.

Based on the purpose, the Dimensional Range Overlap Model proposed by Chien (2002) is applied owing to its proven greater genealizability in terms of contextual effects. In addition; following the principle of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model, eight different targets are used to develop eight manipulated conditions experiment. All results analyzed in Chapter 6 are summarized below Although those eight conditions are diverse, their primes are still all the same, which are four moderately positively elegant clothing brands. Hence, the prestige scoring of the target brands would be apparently higher comparing to their original ones in former pretests when it comes to assimilation effects. On the contrary, the prestige rating of the target brands would be apparently lower comparing to their original ones in former pretests when it comes to contrast effects.

Based on the above principle, the outcomes in the current study generally support the Dimensional Range Overlap Model, and even strengthen the model more tenable and extensive. Disputes about the actual effect of the category of ambiguity of targets on the emergence of assimilation and contrast successfully, too.

Table 7-1. Summary of Results for the Eight Manipulated Conditions Based on Hypotheses

Predictions and Manipulated Conditions	What as found
While primes and the evaluated target are in the identical product category:	
H1: When the interpretation range of target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) **overlap** with the interpretation range of a familiar target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **assimilated** toward the prime (i.e. assimilation effects).	**<<Supported>>** Benetton; the existing target clothes brand in this condition, **shows significant higher prestige rating** (5.9667) in the experimental group than
H2: When the interpretation range of the target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) does **not overlap** with the interpretation range of a familiar target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **contrasted** away from the prime (i.e. contrast effects).	. **<<Supported>>**. Baleno; the existing target clothes brand in this condition, **shows significant lower prestige rating**
H3: When the interpretation range of the target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) **overlap** with the interpretation range of a new target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **assimilated** toward the prime (i.e. assimilation effects).	**<<Supported>>** TAINA; the fictitious target clothes brand in this condition, shows **significant higher prestige rating** (6.1250) in the experimental group than

Predictions and Manipulated Conditions	What as found
H4: When the interpretation range of the target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) does **not overlap** with the interpretation range of a new target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **contrasted** away from the prime (i.e. contrast effects)	**<<Supported>>** TAINA; the fictitious target clothes brand in this condition, **shows significant lower prestige rating**
While primes and the evaluated target are in the identical product category:	
H5: When the interpretation range of non-target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) **overlap** with the interpretation range of a familiar target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **assimilated** toward the prime (i.e. assimilation effects). H6: When the interpretation range of the non-target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) does **not overlap** with the interpretation range of a familiar target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **contrasted** away from the prime (i.e. contrast effects).	**<<Not exactly supported>>** 陶板屋; the existing target restaurant in this condition, though shows lower prestige rating (5.5294) in the experimental group than that (5.9318) in the controlling group, the two ratings are not significantly diverse to cause contrast **<<Supported>>** Sunday's; the existing target restaurant in this condition, **shows significant lower prestige rating**

Predictions and Manipulated Conditions	What as found
H7: When the interpretation range of the non-target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) **overlap** with the interpretation range of a new target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **assimilated** toward the prime (i.e. assimilation effects).	**<<Supported>>** 月廬; the fictitious target restaurant in this condition, **shows significant higher prestige rating** (6.3000) in the experimental group than that (5.4000) in the controlling
H8: When the interpretation range of the non-target category exemplars (i.e. primes in the current study) does **not overlap** with the interpretation range of a new target object on the relevant judgment dimension, judgments of the target will be **contrasted** away from the prime (i.e. contrast effects).	**<<Supported>>** 月廬; the fictitious target restaurant in this condition, **shows significant lower prestige rating** (2.4333) in the experimental group than that (3.9500) in the controlling

According to most of the confirmed hypotheses above, the essential argument the Dimensional Range Overlap Model is indeed strengthened and extended again. To reaffirm this model, assimilation and contrast effects are actually determined by whether there is an overlap or not between the prime's range and the target's one on the relevant dimension (Chien, 2002).That is, with an overlap, assimilation effects are more likely to emerge; while without an overlap, contrast effects are more likely to occur.

Derived from this fundamental postulate and those confirmed discrepancies in literature review noted before are also solved. Target or non-target category primes, and familiar or new target do not necessarily emergence of assimilation and contrast effects. That is, regardless of the non-target category exemplars and the familiar or uncommon targets, it

overlap or non-overlap between the prime's interpretation range and the target's one on the relevant dimension to decide the occurrence of assimilation and contrast effects. Up to the present day, only the Dimensional Range Overlap Model proposed by Chien in 2002 offers a more complete theory to explain the underlying process of context effects of assimilation and

Additionally, the relevant assessed dimension used in this study is prestige. Through the correlation analyses, there lies significantly positive relationship between prestige and other relevant aspects, such as price, quality, overall preference and attitude. Therefore, the prestige rating of one brand may serve as a useful cue to obtain approximate evaluations of other elegance-related dimensions together so as to understand about people's perception toward the target object.

As for the unconfirmed hypothesis, the set of non-target category exemplar and the familiar target (i.e. the restaurant named 陶板屋) in the manipulated condition does bring forth the expected assimilation. Thus, its limitation and future related suggestion will be discussed in the next part.

7.1.2 Explaining the Discrepancy of Previous Related Studies

In Chapter 2 of literature review, discrepant research results are found when category of primes is concerned to be a factor affecting the emersion of assimilation contrast effects. Hence, it results in the essential research motivation of this study. Though the conflict among former studies indeed exists, it does not mean that they conducted their experiments incorrectly and lead to wrong conclusion. Through applying the perspective of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model, both research of Koomen (1998) and Meyers/ Sternthal (1993) actually make sense but are incomplete when describing the category of primes as an element influencing the contextual priming effect. From the experimental outcomes in this current study, the

assimilation and contrast effects should not be constrained by the category of primes, and the ambiguity of judged targets, either. In fact, it is the overlap or non-overlap that predominates the assimilation or contrast effects. Priming target category exemplars or non-target category exemplars, both assimilation and contrast effects would probably happen under each condition. Hereafter, no matter the study of Stapel and Koomen (1998) or the other one of Meyers and Sternthal (1993), they only apply their theory foundation and empirical results to explain part of the contextual priming consequences resulted from the category of primes and the ambiguity of the newly-built Dimensional Range Overlap Model is able to offer a broader and complete perspective in terms of the assimilation and contrast effects.

In Stapel and Koomen's study in 1998, they had proposed "comparison relevance" to illustrate the contextual priming information yielded contrastive judgment effects occurring in both new and target when primed information was distinct enough and "comparison relevant" to be used as an anchor; whereas it produced assimilative effects occurring in judgments of new and ambiguous target when the activated stimulus was relatively indistinct and "comparison irrelevant". From the proposition of the Dimensional Model, when the primed stimuli are quite distinct and comparison relevant, it possibly refers to that the positioning of these primes is so clear as to have much narrower interpretational range on one relevant dimension. With narrower dimensional ranges of primes, the possibility for them to overlap with the evaluated target's dimensional range decreases a lot. Thus, this kind of primes may serve as comparison standards and end in contrast effects without the overlap between the prime's and the target's ranges, and it is probably so-called that "comparison relevance" will bring in contrast effects suggested by Stapel and Koomen (1998). On the contrary, they had also claimed that when the activated stimuli are relatively indistinct and comparison irrelevant, assimilation effects

would happen on the new target. According to Stapel and Koomen's argument (1998), such non-target category exemplars are likely to prime the "attributes" they exemplify and then activate information that could be used to form a representation of the target. From the viewpoint of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model, attributes activated from indistinct primes may refer to a wider interpretational range. Also, the new target which is more ambiguous to people probably indicate a wider interpretational range. Hence, these two extensive dimensional ranges may overlap with each other easily, and then end in assimilation effects.

In sum, using comparison relevance as the theory foundation to contextual priming effects can make sense and also shares some similarity with the postulates of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model. However, it is quite partial premature to identify comparison relevance or irrelevance by classifying whether primes belong to the same product category as the target or not. Even though Stapel and Koomen's experiments demonstrated that contrast effects would emerge when new or familiar target was primed by target category exemplars, whereas assimilation would occur only when the new target was primed by non-target exemplars; they were still part of the whole conditions. Using the same target category primes actually can produce either contrast or assimilation depending on whether there is an assimilation can be seen in the study of Meyers and Sternthal (1993), also in this current study. Similarly, in addition to the assimilation in Stapel and Koomen's study (1998), using the non-target category primes can produce contrast as well through this present study and Meyers and Sternthal's (1993).

As for Meyers and Sternthal's research in 1993, similarly, their theory foundation and experimental outcomes seem to make sense but are not thorough enough. They had come up a two-factor explanation of assimilation and contrast effects. Based on their illustration, contrast would occur when two conditions are met: (1)

resources available at judgment are substantial and (2) there was little overlap between contextual cues and target objects. In the absence of either of assimilation was expected. This two-factor explanation can be discussed further through the Dimensional Range Overlap Model. First, because of the low contextual cue-target object overlap, people likely to engage in the elaboration of differences; continuously, they probably judge the prime's and the target's range with larger and farther relative distance. Besides, the low contextual cue-target object overlap is just like the lack of overlap between the prime's and the target's dimensional range. conditions are likely to lead to contrastive judgment process.

On the other hand, while people's resources applied to the task were limited, the relative distance between the prime's and the target's ranges may be perceived much smaller. If the distance is smaller enough to cause an overlap, assimilation effects would easily occur. Furthermore, much more overlap between contextual cues objects means similarly that there exists an overlap between the prime's and the target' dimensional range; again, assimilation effects are likely to emerge owing to such overlap. It is just what Meyers and Sternthal suggested that in the absence of either of conditions, assimilation would be expected. To sum up, the two-factor explanation seems to share some similarity to the Dimensional Range Overlap Model. However, whether the contextual cue-target object overlap is low or high is merely determined by the category of primes in Meyers and Sternthal's research. The primed cue and target which belong to different product categories would be perceived as low contextual cue-target object overlap; whereas the primed cue and target which belong to the same product category would be viewed as high contextual cue-target object overlap. This point of view is too limited because the prime and the target in diverse product categories can also cause higher overlap to result in assimilation effects. For instance, once either the prime's dimensional range or the target's one is wider, or even their relative distance is

smaller; these two ranges may overlap with each other though they refer to different product categories; and vise versa. Such experiment outcomes different from the study of Meyers and Sternthal (1993) can be acquired in Stapel and Koomen's study (1993), and in the current research as well.

Undoubtedly, "Comparison relevance" and the "two-factor assimilation and contrast effects", the two kinds of theory foundation suggested by Stapel/ Koomen (1998) and Meyers/ Sternthal (1993) have had contextual priming effects. They also share common place with the newly Dimensional Range Overlap Model. For example, all of them propose that between the prime and the target determines whether the prime is used to interpret the target (assimilation) or used as a comparison standard (contrast) (Chien, 2002). However, in Stapel and Koomen's research (1998), two elements, the category of prime and the ambiguity of target, are too insufficient to be used to identify comparison relevance or irrelevance. In Meyers and Sternthal's study (1993), the element regarding the category of prime is still too inadequate to tell if the so-called two-factor explanation is fulfilled not. Only through the Dimensional Range Overlap Model, up to three elements (i.e., the prime's range width, the target's range width, and the relative distance) are concerned simultaneously to influence where there is an overlap between the prime's and the target's range, and thus the occurrence of assimilation and contrast. consideration at one time can the Dimensional Range Overlap Model provide a broader and extensive perspective of the contextual priming effects. Under the theory of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model, assimilation and contrast should not constrained by any type of prime and target. Hence, no matter the prime refers to the same category as the target or not, either assimilation or contrast may occur depending on whether there is an overlap. Also, regardless of the ambiguous unambiguous one, either assimilation or contrast may occur depending on whether there

is an overlap. Both Stapel/ Koomen's research (1998) and Meyer/ Sternthal's one (1993) had just demonstrated partial experimental outcomes regarding the category of and the ambiguity of target. Moreover, due to their own half and diverse there seems to contradict with each other. Only the Dimensional Range Overlap Model can offer all complete results and further proves that neither the category of prime nor the ambiguity of target play an critical factor influencing assimilation or

Finally, there still lies one key difference between two previous studies and the current one. Only in Chien's (2002) and this present research, the concept of "range" the relevant dimension is discussed. Range, reflects not only the interpretation width on the relevant judgment, dimension, but also the position on the dimension. It helps make the research more detailed and advanced. Nevertheless, in previous studies, merely the single point estimate on the judged dimension is concerned. As mentioned above in Chapter 3.3, Single point estimate may be too partial when examining the emergence of assimilation and contrast effects. For example, a point measurement on the judged dimension may not definitely be the central tendency of its interpretation range on the judgment dimension. Hence, though the prime's point ratings are the same in two cases, either assimilation or contrast will probably occur because the prime's point estimate violate the central tendency and then end in different interpretation range. Besides, even if a stimulus's (e.g. a prime) point scoring is on the central tendency of its interpretation range, the width of its range (narrow or wide) still affect whether there is an overlap (non-overlap) to result in assimilation (contrast) effects. The above are potential reasons why Stapel/ Koomen's study (1998) and Meyer/ Sternthal's one (1993) got their own half and discrepant outcomes examining the influence of the category of prime on the occurrence of assimilation contrast effects.

To sum up, the contribution of those two previous research to the contextual

priming effects can not be totally denied. Their proposed theory and experiments are just not sufficient enough. Their different outcomes seem in disputes merely owing to their individual incompleteness. However, the Dimensional Range Overlap Model serving as the theory foundation in this current study can provide an extensive view and greater generalizability in terms of the emergence of assimilation and contrast effects. That is say, the overlap/ non-overlap between the prime's and the target's regarded as the most important element affecting assimilation and determined by concerning three factors (target range width, prime range width, and relative distance) at the same time. This is the most unique place different from other related studies.

7.2 Limitation and Suggestions

Constraint of the Overlap/ Non-overlap Criteria Adopted

All the analyzed data is further checked on the individual basis aforementioned overlap/ non-overlap criteria. However, it is only a measure with a view to solve some degree of range variations in exemplars across participants. Besides, for some subjects, maybe only three (out of four) primes meet the overlap/ non-overlap criteria because the "at least four" rule was applied. Actually, these are not the best ways at all to manage the overlap/ non-overlap manipulation for each participant because the criteria here are not purely on the individual basis.

In order to entirely and successfully control the overlap manipulation for every participant, future experiments should be conducted on a real individual basis proposed by Chien (2002) as long as time and efforts are abundant. This advanced experiment involves three important stages:

First, participants will be given a list of several kinds of products, and then they be requested to indicate the prestige range of these diverse products Continuously, all data are going to be analyzed on a totally individual basis. To go into details, for each subject, among those diverse products they judged previously, a set of the target and primes will be determined such that their prestige ranges will overlap with one another. Also another set of the target and primes will be selected so that their prestige ranges will not overlap with one another. Those mentioned above are only pretests prepared for the future main test.

On the second stage, "same" participants will be recalled to take part in the main experiment. Every participant will be presented with a set of exemplars and target, which has been sieved in the first step with an overlap between two prestige ranges according to each subject's data. Thus, for a specific participant, the target's prestige rating acquired in this second step will be compared to that in the first step to investigate if there are significant variations to result in assimilation effects.

Similarly, on the third stage, still the "same" participants are going to be recalled again to take part in the main experiment. Every participant will be exposed to another set of exemplars and target, which has been selected in the first step without an overlap between two prestige ranges based on each participant's condition. Thus, for a specific participant, the target's prestige assessment obtained in this second step will be compared to that in the first step to check if there are contrast effects. Nevertheless, except for enough time and efforts, this advanced experiment relies heavily on the cooperation of all participants.

Sample Size

In the main experiment, for some degree of range variations in exemplars and targets across participants are not successfully controlled, the overlap/

criterion is adopted further. This method apparently decreases the especially in those manipulated non-overlap conditions. The reason is prestige ranges move a little downwards in the main test due to the potential influence of visual advertisements, so it becomes more difficult for primes' prestige range and the target one not to overlap. Further, this defect leads to fewer valid samples in manipulated non-overlap conditions; hence, there are only fifteen valid samples in conditions. If there is more ample time and efforts in future related studies, effective samples should be collected as many as possible to make analyses more tenable and plausible.

Divergent Materials Used between the Pretests and Main Experiment

In this current study, pretests outcomes serve as the important controlling group to compare with those prestige evaluations in the main experiment. Nevertheless, there lies kind of divergence between the pretest content and the main experiment one, and it might lead to analyzing bias.

In pretest questionnaires, only brand names are listed; on the other hand, brand names are combined with their own advertisements in the main tests. This inconsistency possibly bias following analyses regarding the emergence of assimilation or effects. It is critical to maintain the uniform materials used in pretests and main tests with a view to make their comparison more reasonable.

For future similar studies, more detailed pretests for existing brands should be conducted. That is, the prestige attribute of each existing brands is judged from those casual clothing, restaurant, automobile, and personal computer category lists at the very beginning, and then it comes to determine which existing brands would serve as primes and targets in the main experiment. However, for each pre-selected additional questionnaire including merely one familiar brand name advertisement should be designed continuously. With the added advertisement, seven

product attributes conforming to those in the next main experiment would be rated again. It helps ascertain participants' real and pure evaluations towards different brands, and make the control group more quality. For this kind of measurement using only brand integrating with its ad is not going to be affected by interference like other existing brands. What's more, one individual subject is requested to judge only one brand at one time. Thus, the result is actually what so-called "context-free". The context-free group would not only make its comparison with the further experimental one more reasonable, but also get rid of potential order effect bias that can not be totally controlled by anchoring manipulation mentioned in page 26.

To sum up, in addition to keep the materials used in pretests and main tests totally uniform, methods applied for the similar measurement should be identical as well. For instance, when it comes to the dimensional range judgment, regardless of pretests main experiments, all participants ought to be asked to write down the upper and lower prestigious boundaries of every brand.

Questionnaire Design of Stage 1 Pretest

In stage 1 pretest designed for existing brands, participants are asked to judge two kinds of product categories composed of twelve or third-teen brand names in each one time. Nevertheless, the sequence of twelve or third-teen items individual category is all the same among different subjects. "Counter balance" is not considered, and it probably leads to the order effect to influence participants' judgment. For future related studies, to avoid the possibility of such order effect, there should a between-subject design to randomly rotate brand items among one product category. However, first two brands to be evaluated will always stay the same for anchoring manipulation, and then are excluded from rotation.

Questionnaire Design of the Main Experiment

In the main experiment, participants are given an advertisement booklet, first four of them serve as primes, and the last one is the judged target. When exemplars and the target belong to the same category of casual clothes, the subsequent target evaluation task is much ordinary. Participants may easily think the evaluation task of the target is just from a random one clothing brand among the five advertisements they have read previously.

Nevertheless, while exemplars and the target are in diverse categories, and then the subsequent target evaluation task may easily become a little strange. Participants probably suspect that why only the last restaurant brand is selected to be judged, not any other clothing brands. Thus, if exemplars are non-target category, maybe it is better to place one more advertisement not belonging to primes' category nor the target's one after the target advertisement. This manipulation may reduce participants' doubt that why only the most different and the last brand whose category diverges from the other four is chosen to be rated. Once the experiment is designed to be more ordinary just like a normal product survey, the judgment of dependant variables will not be biased

Demonstration Presented Ahead of Prestige Range Measurement

In both pretests and main tests, subjects are all required to indicate every brand's prestige range. After all, this kind of judgment is still brand new and strange for most participants. Hence, for future related research, in addition to detailed description at the beginning of questionnaires and oral explanation, some examples and exercises ought to be supplemented before formal measurements start. In this way, participants can practice to get used to the newly dimensional range measurement gradually through a few former exercising questions. With such learning effect, validity and effectiveness of the following essential dimensional range judgment will definitely be improved.

Limited Analyses of the Relationship between Prestige and Other Dimensions

According to the extra finding appearing in 6.4.2 (P.58), prestige dimension is not necessarily associated with clothing design variety, size diversity, multiplicity, and service efficiency. On the other hand, dimensions such "quality", "preference", and "integral attitude" are all obviously and positively correlated with "prestige". However, earlier published findings implicated "attribute's specificity" on priming effect (Herr, 1986), the results of the present study Unfortunately, due to imperfection of pretest design, advanced analyses could not conducted further to clarify this contradiction.

In pretests, only prestige dimension were measured for each individual brand, other product attributes like price, quality, and etc were all excluded. Without these evaluations in pretests to serve as the controlling group, separate analyses of variance can not be implemented on these other supplementary ratings. Because supplementary attributes' difference between pretests and the main experiment were not known, it loses the chance to check whether or not the direction of ratings on these other variables would consistent with what predicted when prestige attribute was primed. In other words, it fails in examining if this research also conforms to Herr's finding (1986), that is, effect has highly specificity, and the cognitive dimensions supplementary ratings may be independent of or unrelated to the prestige dimension; thus, priming prestige was insufficient to activate other relevant or irrelevant variable. For future resembling studies, product attributes to be judged should all be identical in the pretest and main experiment. It will be more convenient for further examination and comparison.

Constricted Measurement of the Assimilation and Contrast Effect

In this study, following the Dimensional Range Overlap Model, it ascertained how prime's and target's interpretation range on the relevant dimension would affect the emergence of assimilation and contrast effects. In terms of the element influencing the priming effect, the concept of the "scale" is more emphasized here that is quite different from previous related studies. newly-proposed perspective, not only the average prestige point of the evaluated target but also its prestige range should shift as well after being primed. However, in the main experiment, merely changes of judged targets' prestige point are checked to assimilation or contrast, instead of the shift of targets' prestige range. Point estimate used here because of its simplicity; also it is widely adopted in former research. What more, the most optimal method to examine how targets' dimensional ranges shift after being primed is so perplex and has not been thought up. advanced research, the dependent measurement regarding assimilation and effects should consider both changes in the target's dimensional point dimensional range. That is, it is also critical to check how the dimensional range would change after being primed with a view to recognize assimilation or contrast effects. Therefore, the main perspective of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model can firmly be further highlighted.

7.3 Research Contribution and Management Implication

As for research contribution, this thesis again makes the Dimensional Range Overlap Model more strengthened and extended. conflicts existing in previous studies, such as Herr's (1989), Meyers-Levy and Sternthal's (1993), Stapel and Koomen's (1998), are clarified clearly by applying the basic postulate of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model. All related details are already revealed in the

former conclusion part.

This research not only helps the Dimensional Range Overlap Model provide a more intact perspective to illustrate the underlying procedure for priming effects, it also offers some management and marketing implication in the real business world.

By viewing the significantly diverse prestige rating between the experimental and controlling groups, it is quite obvious that people are not always sensible creatures when making decisions. Consumers tend to look for any related clues potentially in order to support their own determination, especially while encountering something unacquainted with. Therefore, when consumers lose their confidence in making decisions, they also unconsciously neglect the ability to think rationally and logically. This is indeed a very valuable opportunity for marketing managers to make good use of.

To go into details, contextual priming effects become imperative marketing manager are deciding where to locate the store in an assorted shopping center or which section to set in a comprehensive exhibition. The store may get a chance to increase its elegance appreciation as long as its prestige range overlaps positively graceful stores nearby owing to the assimilation effect; no matter what kinds of neighboring stores are. Besides, the store possible obtain a chance to raise its evaluation to be more refined as well as long as its prestige range does not overlap with other less graceful stores nearby due to the contrast effect; no matter what kinds of neighboring stores are.

To sum up, neighbors beside one store really provide useful cues to promote the store's own image and appreciation. It is even more critical when one new brand is ready to enter the market. New merchandise and shops usually lack enough resources and budget to promote and establish their own images. Their awareness is low as well at the beginning. At this time, marketing managers have to skillfully search external supports and materials and make better use of them.

essential dimension ready to be earnestly emphasized of one brand must be decided first, and then the marketing manager can continuously determine which other brands are able to serve as suitable exemplars (primes) to bring up expected priming effects.

The basic concept of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model can actually apply to several situations particularly when marketing managers encounter various competitive brands simultaneously, including the decision of the most optimal store location in a comprehensive shopping mall; the most optimal advertisement space within a magazine; and the most optimal shelf place in a supermarket or a grocery store.

By applying the Dimensional Range Overlap Model well, marketing managers will definitely find that other brands and categories are not detestable opponent anymore. From another point of view, they may all become marketing managers' useful tools to promote and improve products' image and judgment a lot. In addition, **the cooperation with companies in alien industries** can also be viewed as an Dimensional Range Overlap Mode. Nevertheless, there lies a premise that marketing managers must look for other companies whose positioning or styles match their own merchandise at first. The principle just expresses the similar idea to the imperative element in terms of "the relevant judged dimension" in the Dimensional Range Overlap Model.

Besides the newly-built brands, the key concept of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model is predicted helpful when an existing brand needs to be re-employing suitable target or non-target category exemplars to manipulate the overlap or non-overlap condition, an old and deteriorating brand can renew its totally different image so as to set up and increase its evaluation again.

At last, although the Dimensional Range Overlap Model focus on the emergence of assimilation and contrast effects by the external priming force, it is still important for marketing managers not to ignore their own brands. That is, they should figure out and

clarify what the real potential and positioning of their own brands combining the “internal force” which refers to their ability and strategic position, and the “external priming force” can finally bring out and maximize the expected assimilation or contrast effects. After all, it is not an enduring and effective policy to always rely on other outside resources.

7.4 Future Research Direction

As mentioned previously, the overlap/ non-overlap manipulation completely under control across each participant in advance in the current thesis. Thus, the overlap/ non-overlap criteria are adopted to supplement this defect. The better method involving three essential steps to comprehensively manage non-overlap condition on an actually individual basis ahead is also illustrated in the paragraph of limitation. Therefore, it can be one constructive suggestion for research. However the successful implementation requires corporation of participants very much because same subjects are going to be recalled back for experiments several times. Detailed planning and sincere communication to participants are integral in order to totally conduct the test on an individual basis.

The second recommendation is about the category of primes. In the current thesis, although primes and the target belong to diverse categories in some condition, primes themselves are still under the identical sort. Hence, another direction to further certify the reasonableness of the Overlap Model originated from Chien (2002) and the influence of types of Future studies can focus on what on earth will happen if primes themselves also differ in product categories. For instance, there may be similarly four primes placed ahead of the judged target. On the premise that four of them all fall on the identical degree of

prestige dimension, the first prime is a clothing brand, the second is a brand within personal computers, the third is a restaurant, and the forth is an automobile brand.

Future studies can investigate whether the assimilation (contrast) effect still occurs when there is an overlap (no overlap) on prestige dimension among four different kinds of primes and a watch brand serving as the evaluated target. If the above hypotheses be proven true in the future, the proposed theory to explain the underlying process of context effects of the Dimensional Range Overlap Model can also be strengthened a lot. In addition, Stapal and Koomen's argument of the influence of the category of (belonging to target category or non-target category) on priming effects will totally be demolished.

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Appendix (Ⅰ) Pretest 1 for Existing Brands

Measurement of Prestige Dimensional Range of Brands in Casual Clothing Category

填卷說明

在這份問卷中, 我們希望了解您對以下各品牌的看法, 根據您認為該品牌形象是

「高尚尊貴」的程度, 在下列 0~10 尺度中, 圈選出您認為最合適的「範圍」:

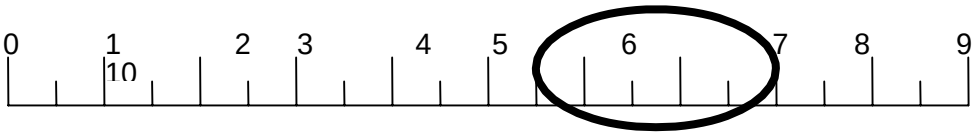
請注意！！

1.「**0**」表示「最不能」彰顯高尚尊貴,「**10**」代表「最能夠」彰顯高尚尊貴。

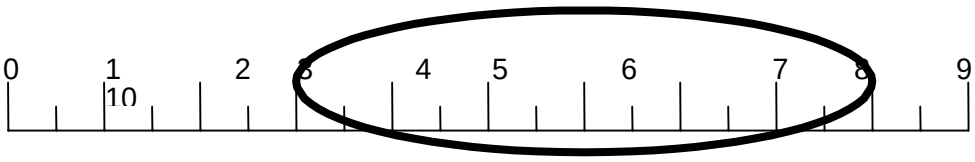
2.圈選的「範圍」並無任何限制,「可寬可窄」完全視您對於該品牌的直覺與印象而定。

☆「範圍寬」的定義在於：例如您可能認為 **NOKIA** 的產品可能同時有「高階到低階」的商品，因此所涵蓋的範圍較寬☆

例如, 如果您認為「NOKIA」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度, 介於「***5.5 8***」之間，請做出以下圈選動作：



或者，如果您認為「NOKIA」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度，介於「3 9」之間，請做出以下圈選動作：

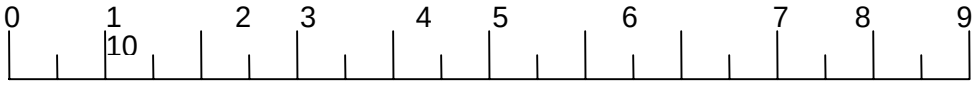


在明白上述作答說明後，請翻至下一頁開始作答，謝謝！

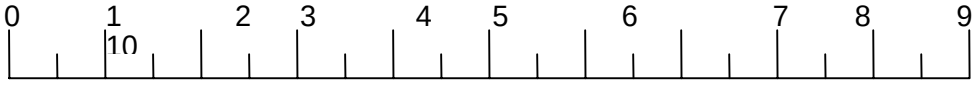
說明：請您分別針對下列各項休閒服飾品牌，根據您對於該品牌的直覺與印象，圈選出您所認為該品牌所能夠彰顯出「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」分別為何。

注意：「***0***」表示「最不能」彰顯高尚尊貴，「***10***」代表「最能夠」彰顯高尚尊貴

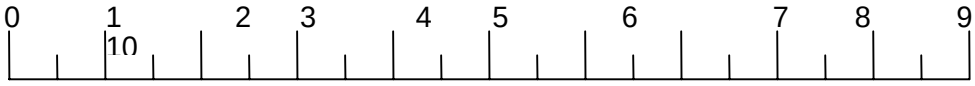
請圈選出您認為「***Burberry***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



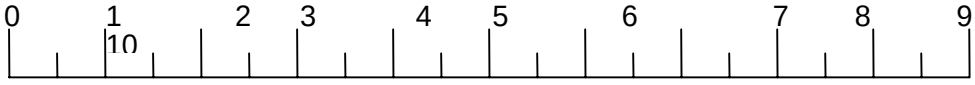
請圈選出您認為「***Hang Ten***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



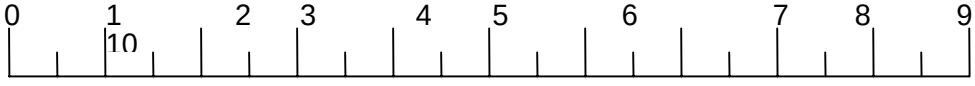
請圈選出您認為「***Espirit***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



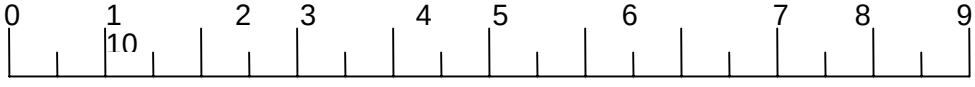
請圈選出您認為「***Lacoste***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



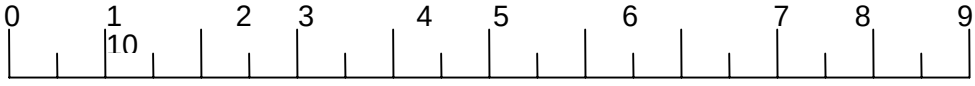
請圈選出您認為「***Baleno***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



請圈選出您認為「***ELLE***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」

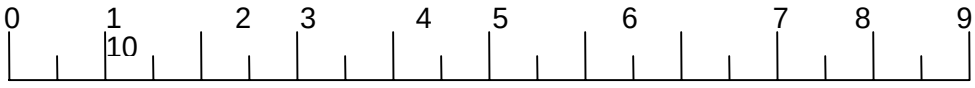


請圈選出您認為「***Polo Ralph Lauren***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」

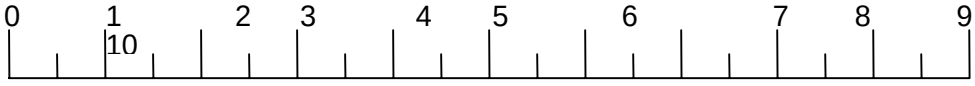


請您翻至下頁繼續作答，謝謝！

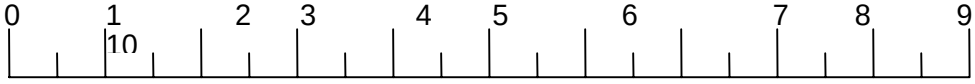
請圈選出您認為「***Calvin Klein***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



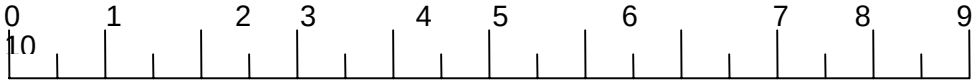
請圈選出您認為「***A&D***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



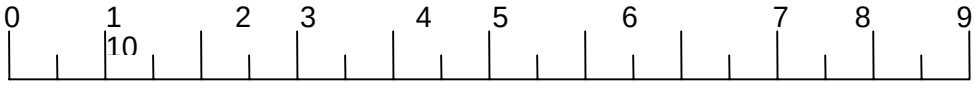
請圈選出您認為「***Guess***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



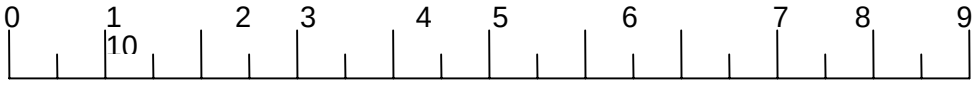
請圈選出您認為「***Tommy Hilfiger***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



請圈選出您認為「***Giordano***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



請圈選出您認為「***Benetton***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的「程度範圍」



基本資料調查：

1.請問您的性別：‰男　‰女

2.請問您的年齡為：_____歲

問卷到此結束，非常感謝您的配合與協助！

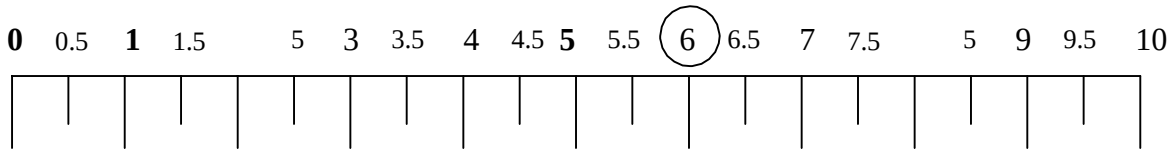
Appendix (II) Pretest 1 for Existing Brands

Measurement of Point Estimate on the Prestige Dimension of Brands in Casual Clothing Category

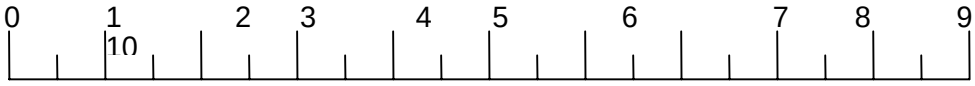
在這份問卷中，我們希望了解您對以下各品牌的看法，請您針對以下各品牌，根據您認為該品牌可以彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度，在下列 0~10 的尺度中， 圈選出您認為

最合適的點：(10 表示非常能夠表彰身分地位，0 表示無法表彰身分地位)

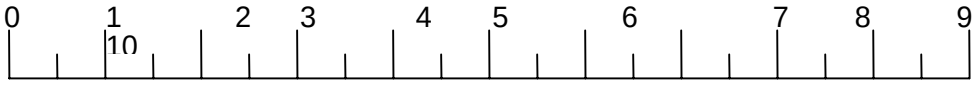
例如：當您認為某品牌可以彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度的程度為 "6"，則圈選如下：



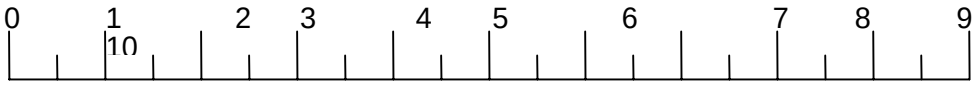
請圈選出您認為「***Burberry***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



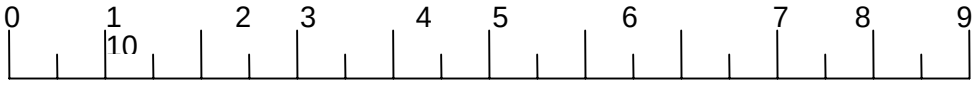
請圈選出您認為「***Hang Ten***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



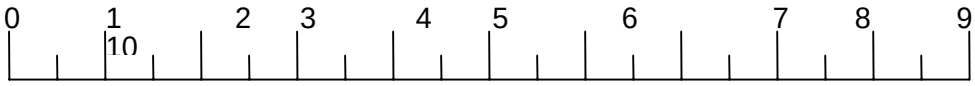
請圈選出您認為「***Espirit***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



請圈選出您認為「***Lacoste***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度

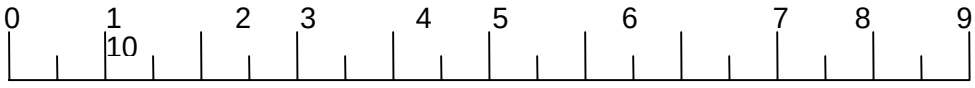


請圈選出您認為「***Baleno***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度

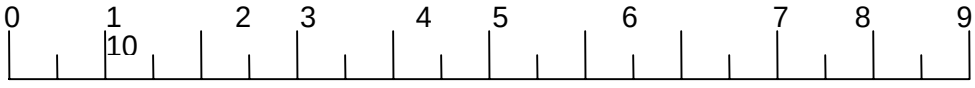


請您翻至下頁繼續作答，謝謝！

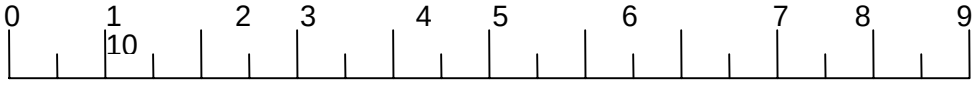
請圈選出您認為「***ELLE***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



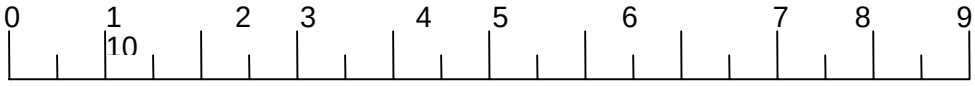
請圈選出您認為「***Polo Ralph Lauren***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



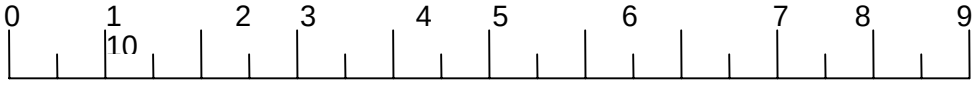
請圈選出您認為「***Calvin Klein***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



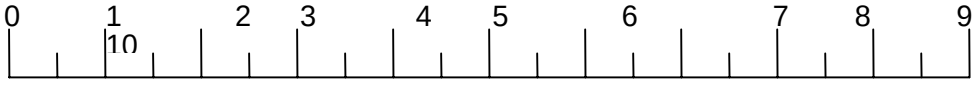
請圈選出您認為「***A&D***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



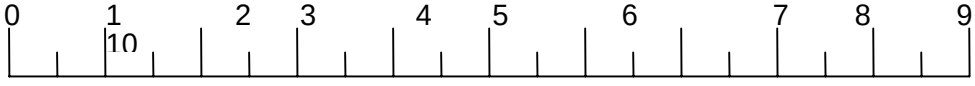
請圈選出您認為「***Guess***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



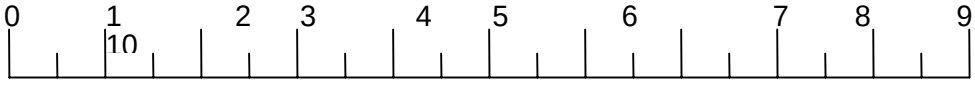
請圈選出您認為「***Tommy Hilfiger***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



請圈選出您認為「***Giordano***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



請圈選出您認為「***Benetton***」所能彰顯「高尚尊貴」的程度



基本資料調查：

1.請問您的性別：‰男　‰女　　2.請問您的年齡為：

問卷到此結束，非常感謝您的配合與協助！

Note:

Take the casual clothing category for instance; the previous two questionnaires are examples of measurement of prestige dimensional range and the average point on prestige dimension. Measurements of brands in other three product acquired in resembling method.

The following are the designated order of brands listed in the pretests:

Product Category			
Restaurant	Automobiles	Personal Computers	
Ruthchris	Porsche	Apple	
我家牛排	Daihatsu		
Twinhead			
雙聖	Toyota		
ASUS			
Sizzler	Honda	Acer	
陶板屋	Ford		
LEO			
王品台塑	台朔汽車		
Toshiba			
Tasty	Benz	IBM	
Sunday's	Hyundai	Genuine	
貴族世家	Ferrari	Sony	
Les Sens	Mitsubishi	BenQ	

Appendix (Ⅲ) Pretest 2 for Fictitious Brands

Note:

As for fictitious brands, the method to measure the prestige dimensional range and the average point on the prestige dimension are similar to those in Pretest 1 for existing brands. The advertisements below are designed for fictitious brands. Each brand contains two different ads to express diverse feeling of elegance.

More elegant ad of restaurant 月

Less elegant ad restaurant of 月

More elegant ad of casual clothing

Less elegant ad of casual clothing “TAINA”

Appendix (Ⅳ) Main Experiment

親愛的朋友，您好！ 我們正在進行有關消費者行為的研究, 希望藉此 問卷得知大專院校的學生對於目前市面上各種 不同的品牌與商品的看法和意見。

您所填寫的資料純粹只提供本研究之用，敬請安心作答，請依個人感受、想法填寫答案，您的熱心參與將有助於本研究的順利完成，在此先向您致上衷心的感謝！

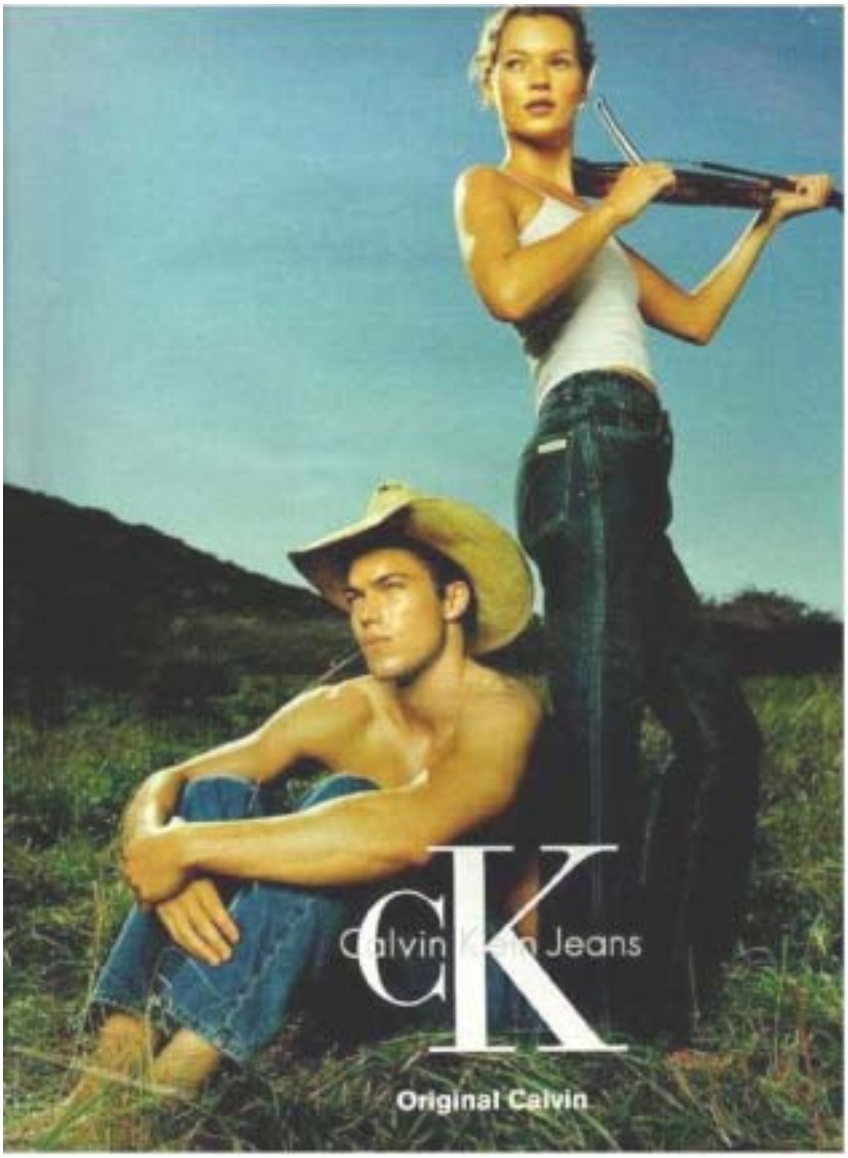
如有任何問題，歡迎您隨時聯絡：
台大商學研究所

研究生　　吳岱芸　email:

由下一頁開始，將會出現幾則平面廣告。 請您仔細觀賞每一個廣告，請您依照順序觀賞； 我們將在最後請您回答幾個有關這些廣告的簡 單問題。

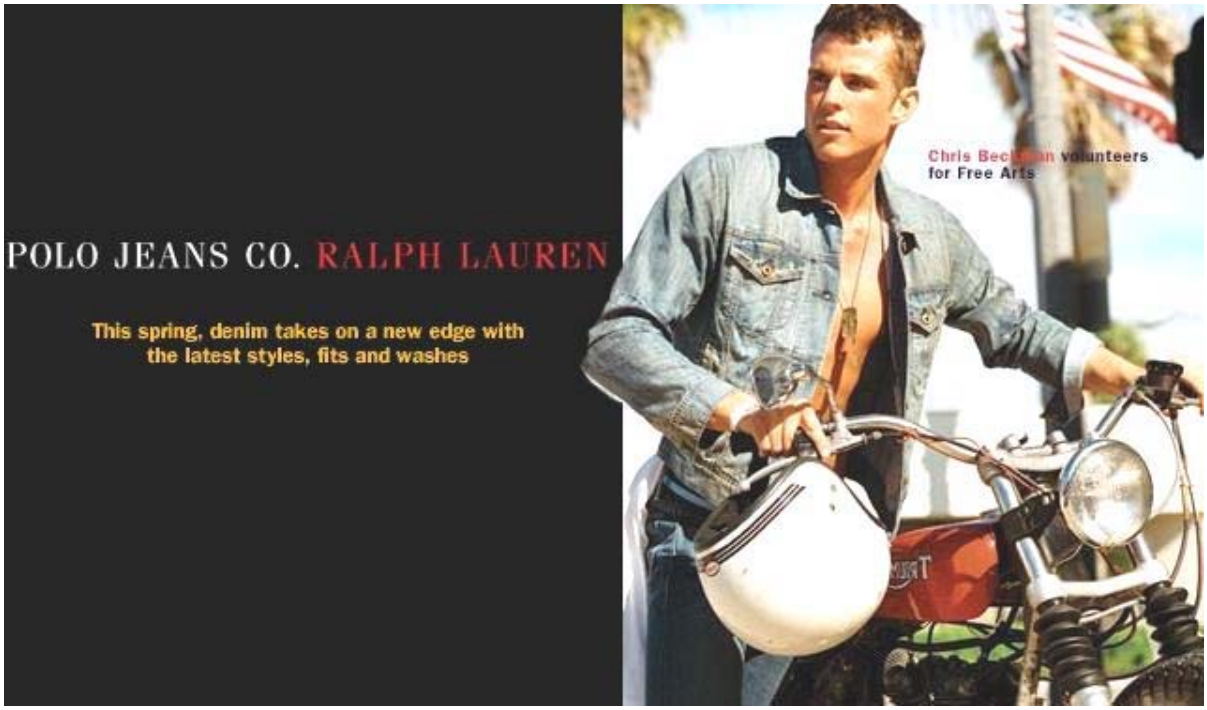
請注意不要往前翻閱，謝謝！

請翻往下一頁



若您已觀賞完此一平面廣告，請繼續翻往下一頁，謝謝!

若您已觀賞完此一平面廣告，請繼續翻往下一頁，謝謝!



若您已觀賞完此一平面廣告，請繼續翻往下一頁，謝謝!

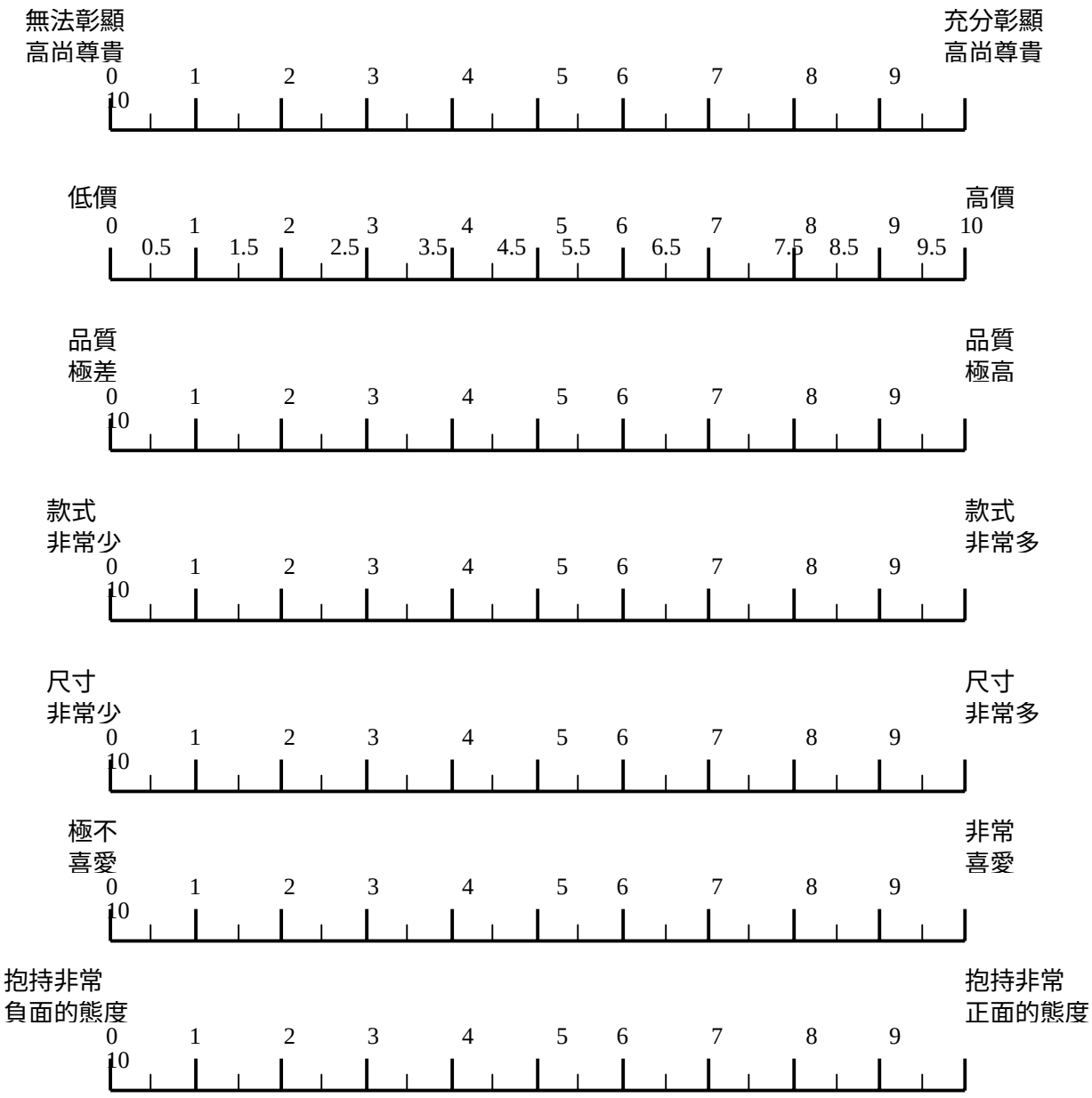
若您已觀賞完此一平面廣告，請繼續翻往下一頁，謝謝!

若您已觀賞完此一平面廣告，請繼續翻往下一頁，謝謝!

在看完以上的廣告後，我們有一些簡單的問題想請教您。

請詳細閱讀後，依照題目順序填答。答案並無絕對的對或錯，請您依照直覺填答即可，但是請注意<u>不要再往前翻閱</u>，謝謝！

1. 請您針對「<u>United Colors of Benetton 班尼頓</u>」此休閒服飾 品牌，回答下列問題：(請於下列尺度中，圈選出「一個」適當的數字)



作答完，請您繼續翻往下一頁，謝謝！

2. 請問您認為自己知道本實驗的目的嗎？

□ 不知道

□ 知道，我認為本實驗的目的為：

_____

問卷還沒有結束，請繼續翻往下一頁，謝謝！

3. 請根據您對於該品牌的直覺與印象，認為該品牌在彰顯「高尚尊貴」的方面，所「可能涵蓋的全部範圍」參考下列 0~10 的尺度，分別寫出您認為最合適「範圍」的「下限」與「上限」:

請注意！！

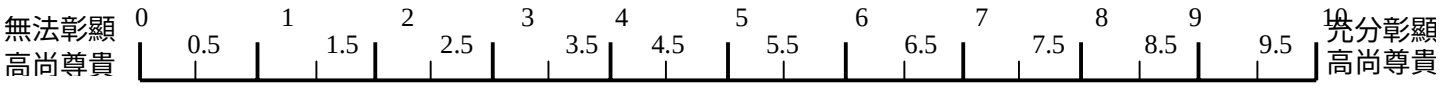
1. 「**0**」表示「最不能」彰顯高尚尊貴,「**10**」代表「最能夠」彰顯高尚尊貴。
2. 圈選的「範圍」並無任何限制,「可寬可窄」完全視您對於該品牌的直覺與印象而定。

舉例說明

如果我覺得 NOKIA 品牌在手機市場中，所能「彰顯高尚尊貴」的程度，可能會因為此品牌中的不同系列或產品，而有高有低，但大約是在 **4.5—7** 之間。則 請填答：

「NOKIA」在彰顯「高尚尊貴」的方面，所「可能涵蓋的全部範圍」的下限是___4.5___；上限是___7___

接下來，就請您根據下面的尺度，寫下您所認為，各個品牌在彰顯「高尚尊貴」的方面，所「可能涵蓋的全部範圍」之「下限」與「上限」:



(1) 在休閒服飾中，我覺得「Calvin Klein」在彰顯「高尚尊貴」的方面，所「可能涵蓋的全部範圍」的下限是_____；上限是_____

(2) 在休閒服飾中，我覺得「Tommy Hilfiger」在彰顯「高尚尊貴」的方面，所「可能涵蓋的全部範圍」的下限是_____；上限是_____

(3) 在休閒服飾中，我覺得「POLO Ralph Lauren」在彰顯「高尚尊貴」的方面，所「可能涵蓋的全部範圍」的下限是_____；上限是_____

(4) 在休閒服飾中，我覺得「Locaste」在彰顯「高尚尊貴」的方面，所「可 能涵蓋的全部範圍」的下限是_____；上限是_____

(5) 在休閒服飾中，我覺得「Benetton 班尼頓」在彰顯「高尚尊貴」的方面，所「可能涵蓋的全部範圍」的下限是_____；上限是_____

6. 請您就前述所看過的廣告，勾選出您「從來沒有聽過」的品牌：

‰ Calvin Klein ‰ Tommy Hilfiger ‰ POLO Ralph Lauren ‰ Locaste ‰ Benetton 班尼

7. 請問您的性別：_____，年齡

問卷到此全部結束，非常感謝您的幫忙！

Note:

The previous questionnaire is the example that: **given target category exemplars (**Calvin Klein", "Polo Ralph Lauren", "Tommy Hilfiger", and "Lacoste **)and familiar (existing) target brand names**, the advertisement of "***Benetton***" serves as the target in order to manipulate an overlap with former four primes' prestige range.

There are total eight versions of questionnaire in the main experiment, but there are several slight differences among them:

1. The Target Advertisement (The 5th Ads)

Given target category exemplars and familiar (existing) target brand names, the advertisement of "***Baleno***" is used as the target with a view to avoid an overlap with four primes' elegance range.

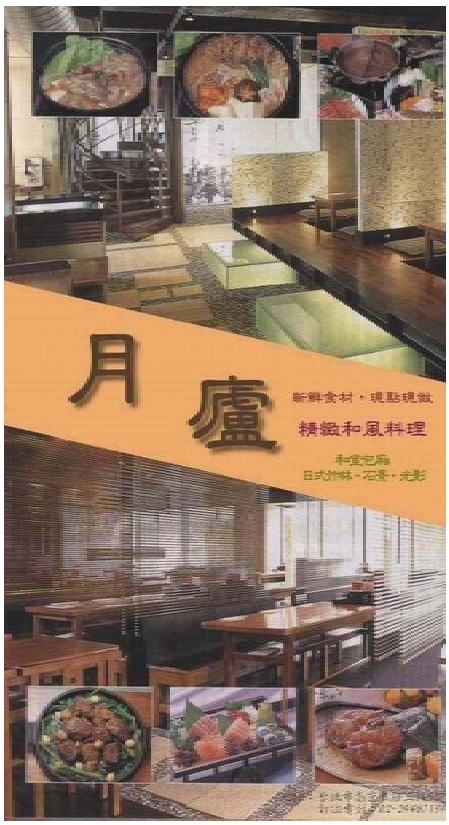
Given target category primes and new (fictitious) target, the more elegant version of TAINA's advertisement is used to manipulate an overlap with four primes' prestige range.

Given target category primes and new (fictitious) target, the version of TAINA's advertisement is used to avert an overlap with primes' prestige range.

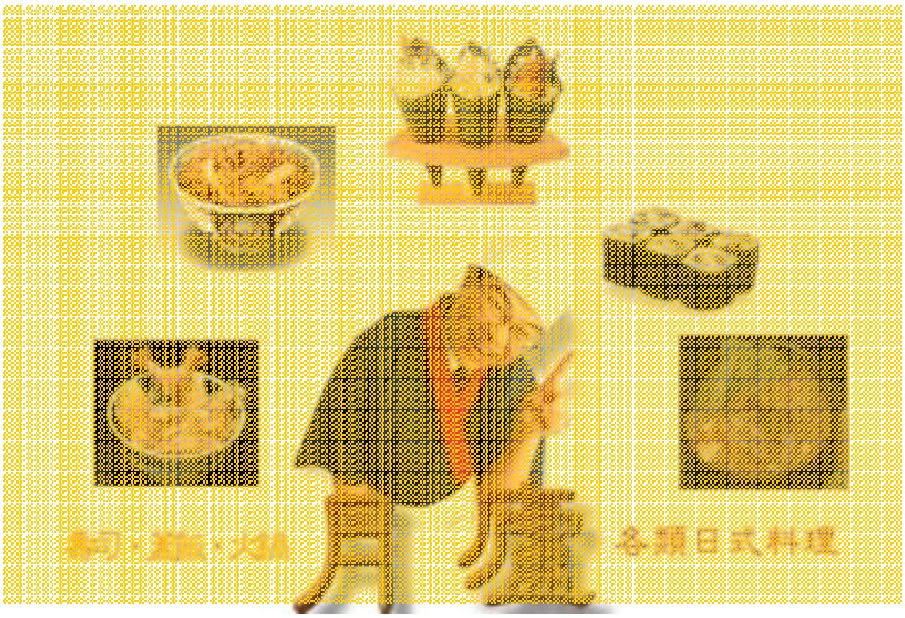
Given non-target category primes and familiar (existing) target brand names, the advertisement of restauran "陶板屋" will serve as the target in order to manipulate an overlap with former four primes' prestige range

Given non-target category primes and familiar (existing) target brand names, the advertisement of restaurant "***Sunday's***" is used as the target with a view to avoid an overlap with four primes' elegant range.

Given non-target category primes and new (fictitious) target, the more elegant advertisement of 月廬 is used to overlap with and those four primes' prestige range.



Given non-target category primes and new (fictitious) target, the less elegant version advertisement of 月廬 is used to avert an overlap with those primes' range.



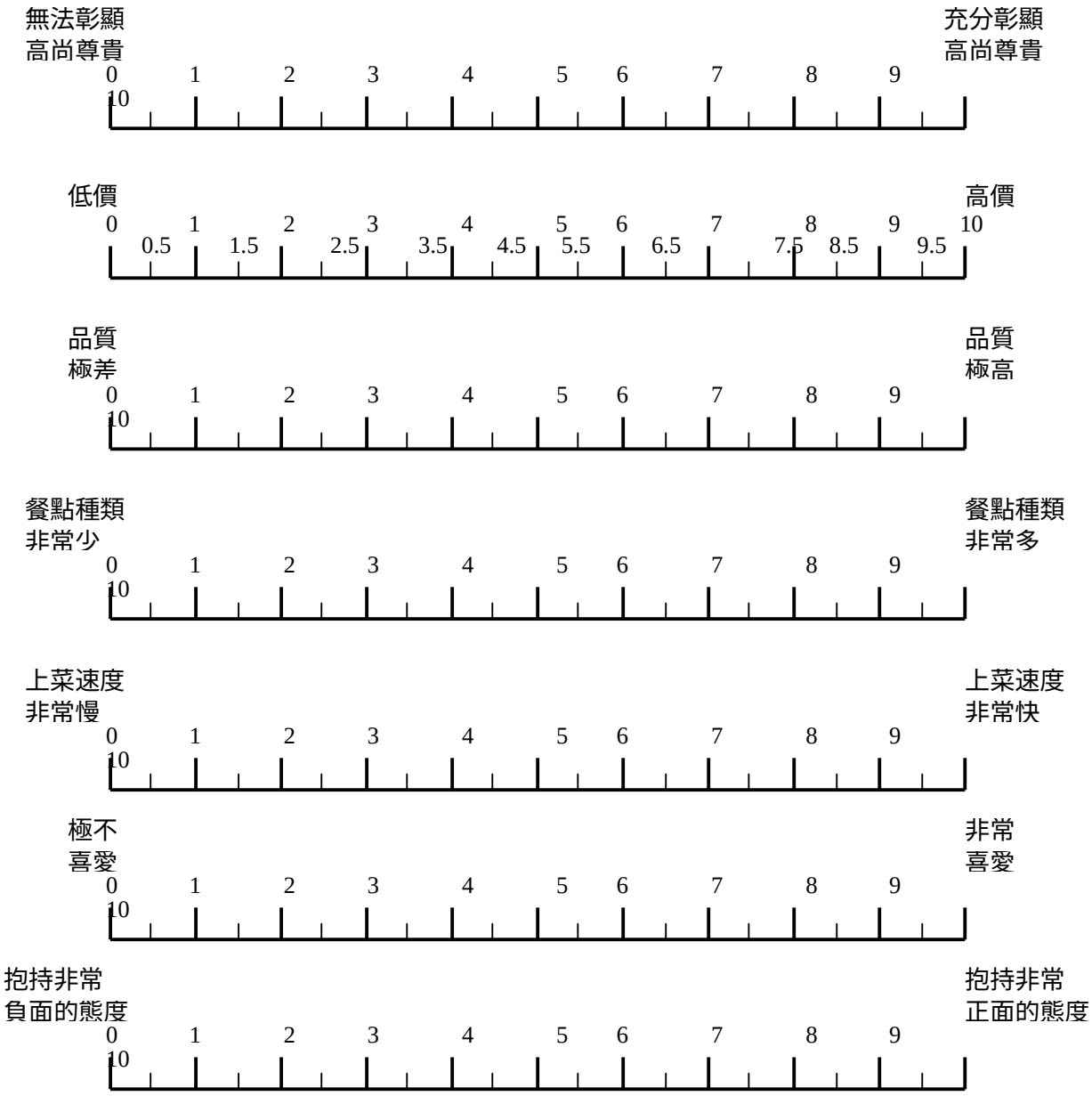
2. Questions for Target Judgment

If the target belongs to the casual clothing category, the target judgment questions regarding seven product dimensions are those showed in the previous questionnaire.

If the target belongs to the restaurant category, the target judgment questions regarding seven product dimensions are demonstrated as follows:

請您針對「陶板屋」此餐廳品牌，回答下列問題：

（請於下列尺度中，圈選出「一個」適當的數字）



3. Questions for Manipulation Check

At the final part of the questionnaire, it is necessary for participants to answer the prestige range of each brand they have just read. The first four brands serving as primes are always invariable. However, the brand name of the last (the 5th) question must be changed according to what the 5th ad is placed previously because the target brand names are variable in different versions of questionnaires.