

# Discrimination strategies for braille

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## Summary

The figure identity strategy recognises each braille character, and performs preliminary analyses of dots; it ranks a feature conjunction (of dot location and dot quantity) as the most important target-discriminating feature. Then, it performs a specific analysis of dots, e.g. 'R's dot 5 equals V's dot 6' (Graven, 2015, p. 85). The global characteristics strategy notices global braille letter shapes, e.g. 'An N and some L's, or something like that' (*ibid.*, p. 87); it ranks one separate feature (either dot location or shape property) as the most important target-discriminating feature. If found necessary, it then performs a specific analysis of shape features, e.g. (N amid Ls) 'One is a curve, while the other ones are a straight line' (*ibid.*, p. 87). The touch vision strategy notices braille characters or shapes of dots, and performs preliminary analyses of dots/gaps or shape features. Next, it recognises the braille characters by associating them with visual experiences, e.g. braille 'V equals regular print, capital, L.' (*ibid.*, p. 88). The figure identity strategy and the global characteristics strategy are equally fast, accurate, and used with equal amounts of after-decision certainty; for the touch vision strategy this varies according to visual experience. When the discrimination strategy fails, either because of attentional load or because of not focussing attention sufficiently, braille readers lack a repertoire of alternative discrimination strategies, and/or the experience of using this repertoire (Graven, 2016).

## Keywords

Attention - Braille - Discrimination strategy - Haptic touch - Recognition proficiency.

## Bibliographic references

Graven, T. (2016). When the discrimination strategy fails: Revisiting the figure identity strategy, the global characteristics strategy, and the touch vision strategy. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 34(2), 121-129.

Graven, T. (2015). How blind individuals discriminate braille characters: An identification and comparison of three discrimination strategies. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 33(2), 80-95.

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