

# The Subjectivity Lab

## Perceptual Awareness and Decision-Making Study

Thank you for your help today! Very broadly, the purpose of this research is to investigate how what people see, hear, or imagine (e.g., color, shape, duration, motion, sounds, etc.) and what people experience and think (e.g., appearances, conscious awareness, judgment, confidence, decision-making, planning etc.) interact. Our experiences have both objective and subjective aspects, and we are trying to understand how they relate to each other. When looking at or imagining different objects, our minds interpret both its objective properties (e.g., color, shape, motion, etc.) and its subjective properties (e.g., how it looks to you from here at this particular moment, etc.).

Importantly, our minds often perform cognitive operations on these perceptual experiences when we evaluate them: Was I aware of the stimulus? How well am I remembering what I saw? How confident am I that I judged its perceptual properties correctly? What strategies could I use for more accurately classifying these stimuli? Are my general strategies in engaging with this stimulus effective or novel enough? By relating these subjective and objective properties of our experiences, we are trying to understand better how our minds make sense of the environment, and how our experiences relate to some of mental capacities such as reasoning, deciding, imagining, remembering, and so on.

Sometimes we use eye-tracking technology to make sure that we know what part of the screen participants are looking at as different aspects of what was seen may have attracted a participants' gaze in different manner at different times of the study. Moreover, when we use eye-tracking we also look at the size of participants' pupils since, sometimes, the size of the pupil is an indirect measure of how participants experienced our task (for example, when noticing something on the screen, the pupil may grow a little bit in size).

If you have more questions about this study, please feel free to write Dr. Jorge Morales ([j.morales@northeastern.edu](mailto:j.morales@northeastern.edu)) (Principal Investigator at the Subjectivity Lab ([www.subjectivitylab.org](http://www.subjectivitylab.org)) at Northeastern University).

**APPROVED**  
By NU IRB at 3:32 pm, Jul 26, 2022