

Agnes Bolinska.
Agnes Interview 9
Green meeting (part 2)

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the June 4 Agnes green meeting (part 2) that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/DHc1ITwCoe4>. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt
Agnes = Agnes Bolinska
MD = Michael Dickson

- 0:00 Russ comments: The comments that I have inserted in the transcript below are intended as commentary about what I think at the time I write the comment, which is generally within a day or so of the interview. They are not to be confused with the Truth with a capital T; there is no guarantee that I will agree with them if I review them at some later time, at which time I might revise or extend them; they are invitations to Michael and/or Agnes to disagree, or to amplify, or to say they don't understand, and so on. If they wish to insert their own comments, they should pick a color other than this green, and then do so. They should also feel free to correct the transcript.
- 0:01 RTH: So, it is recording, and it is recording to the cloud. Hope for the best as far as that's concerned, but it seems like I could do it yesterday. So, where I think we left off, I'm gonna share my screen, unless there's anything that we should be talking about before we resume?
- 0:22 MD: No? I have the document you sent, so I think it was 5.4 where we left off.
- 0:31 RTH: So, let me share my screen. We were halfway through 5.4. I think. Let me do one... let me adjust one thing to the... the video... Let's try that and see what happens. The video only showed the speaker, as opposed to everybody, while my screen was being shared. And I actually prefer to see everybody's face, rather than just the face of the speaker, because sometimes there's something to be, you know, a quizzical look or whatever from somebody else, and... and, yesterday's... yesterday's Zoom, when I went to the cloud, didn't do that. So we will see.
- 1:50 MD: For what it's worth, I can see all your faces right now. I don't know what the cloud can see.
- 1:55 RTH: Right, and I can see all the faces... I can see all the faces now. And I've got a... I have a different format now than I had yesterday, so... We'll try that. So, we're halfway through 5.4, and we haven't yet, as I recall. Talked about this portion of it. Is that where... are we in agreement about that's where we are?

2:21 Agnes: Yeah.

Consideration of sample 5.4 continues here

2:35 RTH: And my guess, judging from what I have written here, is that this was one of those sort of inchoate senses...

2:44 Agnes: Yeah.

2:45 RTH: Anticipatory pauses, or whatever we're calling that, some... maybe slightly greater than an anticipatory pause, but not much. So...

2:52 Agnes: I mean, I wouldn't necessarily... okay, this is... I'm going by memory, and Michael can fact-check me. [laughs] But I... I wouldn't call it anticipatory pause. Because, I mean, I don't think it was any kind of pause.

3:08 RTH: Okay.

3:09 Agnes: Maybe it was anticipatory, but it wasn't a pause. And... I don't know.

3:15 MD: That's consistent. I mean, you said... "part of the experience was this kind of vague sense that I'm about to look at this message." That sounds anticipatory. But there was nothing that I'm seeing that... That indicates pause-like experience.

3:35 RTH: That's... that's fair enough. I think when I said anticipatory pause, I was trying to emphasize the anticipatory portion. So we happy with... the green and 5.4?

3:48 Agnes: I'm happy with it.

Consideration of sample 5.5 starts here

3:52 RTH: On to 5.5.

4:23 Agnes: So maybe sensory... like, the sensory... I can't remember what you called it.

4:28 RTH: I call it sensory awareness.

4:30 Agnes: Yeah, sensory awareness.

4:32 RTH: Which is really multiple. You buying that? [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] The fur and the pressing and whatever. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.]

4:46 MD: Yeah, that discussion started with Agnes saying just, "I could feel her," and then I think the... in the discussion, we sort of brought out the fur and the claws and whatnot.

5:03 RTH: And then, timing... timing issues, I forget what we're calling those. Something about timing, what we put into the...

- 5:18 MD: Yeah, we had a way of saying it. The basic idea was just a lack of certainty about when it... the beep happened.
- 5:25 RTH: Certainty might.
- 5:26 Agnes: There's... there's... there it says, confident about the moment of the beep, so maybe "lack of confidence about moment of the beep"?
- 5:33 MD: Yeah.
- 5:54 RTH: And is that it for that?
- 5:58 Agnes: I think so.
- 6:02 MD: So, I don't know if this makes it into the description or not. But I misspoke a little bit, so I just want to make sure that nothing is happening based on what I said. In the conversation... I didn't get through all the conversation until just now. In the conversation, it started with, "I feel the cat," and then there was an exploration of, was it fur, was it claws, whatever. But then by the end, Agnes was saying, yeah, it could have been any of that, but I'm not really sure, but I felt the cat. So, Agnes wasn't really willing to commit to it was definitely fur, it was definitely claws. I don't know if that changes the... description, I just wanted to correct what I said earlier.
- 6:49 RTH: So I changed the description, because I think you're right about that. The... so it wasn't... we were not confident that there were multiple simultaneous sensory awarenesses. It could have very well have been first the fur, then the claws, then the whatever. But we can't separate those out.
- 7:10 MD: Right.
- 7:15 RTH: So that's... Are we happy with this corrected green?
- 7:21 Agnes: Yeah.

Consideration of sample 5.6 starts here

- 7:24 RTH: On to 5.6? So I'm guessing that we had in mind here that this was more than no figure-ground, but not much more than...
- 8:14 MD: Yeah, I mean, she was saying, you know, she was more emphatic about, I am *seeing* the words.
- 8:20 Agnes: Yeah, I mean, again, going off of my memory of this, not the experience, but also the conversation. I think that the words were more of my focus than in some of the other beeps where I was just kind of staring off into space. And not figure-izing anything at all.

8:50 MD: Right, but you weren't reading them. So what you were saying was that you were seeing them, and you were also aware of the semantic content at the same time, but you weren't reading or sequential-izing the words.

8:50 Russ comments: RE "you were also aware of the semantic content"
RTH will quibble about that at 9:21 below.

9:02 Agnes: But I think that doesn't, preclude the fact that they could have been more figurized.

9:09 MD: O h yeah, I was... I didn't mean to be... I didn't mean to be pushing back against that at all. I think that's right.

9:15 Agnes: Oh. Okay.

9:21 RTH: So I would... I would disagree a little bit with what Michael said about the "semantic content." I don't think she had any semantic content. I think she recognized that these were semantic entities, semantic, tokens. But not necessarily what they said.

9:46 MD: I'm trying to... I'm trying to think where... I'm trying to read more carefully what I was looking at when I said that. I think it's ambiguous. I don't think we ever quite settled that. So I'm agreeing to back off of what I said. There was some... there was some talk about semantic content early, but then it kind of disappeared. Yeah, I agree. I think you should take... I can't really see... I should make my window bigger so I can see, but I agree about removing whatever I said about semantic content.

10:45 RTH: Okay. [alters green] You buy that?

11:06 MD: Yep.

11:13 RTH: Alright, that's the end of day 5.

11:17 Agnes: What about... I mean, do we want to say anything about ... feeling?

11:21 RTH: Oh I see... We do. My... my bad.

11:24 MD: That was pretty prominent, actually, in the discussion.

11:27 Agnes: Yes.

11:27 MD: The feeling of blah.

11:36 RTH: And was that mental, as opposed to bodily?

11:46 Agnes: I think so(?)

11:51 MD: It was kind of a... It was a post... it was a post-Zoom... mind... not focused very much, kind of a thing.

12:12 Agnes: And I'm not sure whether we made the, like, mental versus bodily distinction in that conversation.

12:19 MD: Yeah, I'm looking to see, but I... it was almost more like a volitional thing, I don't... I mean...

12:29 Agnes: I just noticed a typo in the transcript at 59.15. I could have this kind of *blood* in other contexts.

12:40 MD: Oh, yeah! I've seen a lot of those little typos, but it doesn't seem worth fixing every single one.

12:53 Agnes: Yeah.

12:53 RTH: And when I see them, I do fix them.

12:55 MD: Well, that makes sense if you actually have them in an editable mode.

12:59 RTH: Right.

12:59 MD: I'm just looking at a PDF.

13:01 RTH: Right. So I will, I will fix these.

13:09 MD: I mean, it's not... it's not... it's certainly not super mentalized, and it's definitely not *meta*. If you look at Agnes' next statement, "I wasn't thinking about the feeling at all, it was just this feeling, this kind of low feeling." And earlier, you had connected to the idea of, like, not really being ready or willing to go on to the next thing. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] That's why I... that's what I meant by calling it volitional earlier.

13:38 Agnes: Hmm.

13:39 MD: Kind of... kind of a lapse in... in... Lapse in directed volition. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] But nothing... I mean, everything you're saying about it, though, except for that. Doesn't seem to be mental at all. You said, I'm *feeling* it, I'm *feeling blah*, I'm *feeling tired*... those were the words you were using.

14:08 Agnes: Yeah, so, I mean, I guess when sometimes... when I think about the distinction between what we've been calling mental and bodily, this kind of thing... doesn't seem to fit neatly in either category, because...

14:25 MD: I agree.

14:26 Agnes: it's bodily in... bodily in some sense that I'm tired, like, physically tired, but not... as in, oh, I feel it in some precise location in my body, but it's physical, but it's also mental in the sense that, like, this volitional thing that you're talking about, Michael, that I'm just not very motivated, and...

14:49 MD: Right.

14:50 Agnes: Not wanting to move to the next thing.

14:53 MD: Maybe... maybe lack of motivation is better than... I use the word *volitional*, but maybe lack of *motivation* is slightly better.

14:59 Agnes: Yeah.

15:00 MD: play better.

15:02 RTH: I agree with that. And I think this discussion emphasizes or highlights or whatever the clumsiness of my using of the word *mental* when I'm referring to feelings. And I don't like the word *mental*, but I don't have a better one yet, so somebody can come up with a better word. But what I mean by *mental* when applied to feelings is, *I don't feel it in my body*. I don't mean it as *cognitive*. And, but... But I don't have a better word for it either. *Non-bodily* seems... seems to have the focus wrong, because some people can have *very clear* feelings, of anger, or sadness, or whatever. And those feelings can be not in the body.

15:52 MD: Right.

15:53 RTH: What to call those feelings. I don't know... I don't have a better word than *mental*. But it runs the risk of making it seem like they're cognitive when they're not.

16:02 MD: Right. I mean, this does seem to have some... bodily component to it as well, at least the words that Agnes is using feel like they could be... physical to me. Bodily may not be the right word, since it's not, like, a specific bodily feeling, but lack of energy, I'm tired... those feel... those words, maybe wrongly to me, connote something about one's overall physical being... not... I mean, maybe not bodily specifically, it's not like, Agnes, my *body* was tired, it was more like *I* was tired.

16:02 Russ comments: MD's talk here (particularly at the beginning), and perhaps moreso at 13:09, suggests to me that Michael presumes that the mention of "feeling" implies a bodily aspect. That is, in my DES experience, not true (which RTH tried to say at 15:02). The good news is that MD in the second half of 16:02 seems to recognize that.
Here, it does seem that what we are calling "physicality" might be something like an undifferentiated, un-figure-ized bodily aspect, so blah might be a very inchoate physical/motivational undifferentiatedness.

16:37 Agnes: Yeah, yeah, that's what I was trying to say before. Like, physical, but maybe not bodily, and I think... I don't know, I mean, it...

16:54 MD: Maybe we're... maybe we're kind of deep in the weeds now.

16:56 Agnes: Yeah, maybe.

16:57 RTH: I think we are. And it's an important set of weeds, but I haven't been able to get any better than this. 50 years of trying, actually...

17:08 MD: I guess... I guess this idea, which we're not gonna... we're not gonna clarify fully right now, but this idea that there can be physical, but not bodily feelings. That strikes me as something worth thinking about.

17:08 Russ comments: I agree; see the last paragraph of my comment at 16:02.

17:23 Agnes: Well, and also...

17:24 RTH: But if you're going to think about that, I would say that everything that you all have been talking about, physical, like, so *I was tired*, I think when you examine that, you'll find that to call that physical in any sense is going to be misleading to you, because it's just as much I was volitionally tired [inaudible]

17:44 MD: Oh, I agree with that. I think that's what Agnes was also trying to say earlier, that the physical, non-physical, bodily, mental, whatever, all these distinctions may just not be quite the right distinctions to make in this case.

17:57 RTH: Right, I think that's right.

18:00 MD: But maybe all we can do is notice that fact. [laughs]

17:08 Russ comments: I think MD is right: We should notice that it seems that what we are saying here is that that Agnes's lack of figure-ization goes all the way down—it's not merely a lack of figure-ization within a mode (such as the mode of seeing), but also the lack of figure-ization *pre-modal*—an undifferentiatedness *about which mode* (bodily, visual, whatever) to instantiate.
See the discussion of sample 4.6.

18:03 RTH: Right. The risk is to... it's *easy* to single out the word physical in that. Well, it seems sort of *physical*. And I'm... and I would resist that.

18:13 MD: I... yeah, I think that would be... given what Agnes said, I think that's correct. I guess I was just trying to say it doesn't seem like it was completely mental, like, there's some... there's something... there's some in-the-worldness about this feeling. But I don't know that we can say much more about that than that.

18:30 RTH: I agree with that. All of that. On to day 4? [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] What'd I do with that transcript. Alright, day 4. So we're gonna do day sample 4.3 first, Michael.

19:02 MD: Yes.

Asides about AI and cheating

19:08 RTH: Oh, this was the AI day!

19:12 Agnes: She did use AI, by the way.

19:15 RTH: He admitted it?

19:15 Agnes: Guilty.

19:16 RTH: Did he admit it?

19:18 Agnes: Yeah, she did. I mean, the way that it works is the Office of Academic Integrity has a meeting with her, and yes, she did not admit it to me, but she admitted it to them in that meeting.

19:29 MD: Interesting.

19:31 RTH: I give a final exam in my statistics class that's a take-home exam, and I have them write out a statement that says, "during this exam, I have neither given nor received assistance, including consulting AI." And they all wrote that out, and I'm pretty sure that half the class used AI. But I don't have enough information to...

19:49 MD: Maybe some of them used AI to write that out. [they laugh]

19:52 RTH: Could be. What I think we're actually doing is we're teaching our students how to lie about these things.

20:00 Agnes: Ummm.

20:01 MD: I agree with that, actually. We don't need to get distracted, but I do agree that we are making them better liars, which is not a good thing.

20:08 Agnes: No... Uuhhh!

20:12 RTH: But that isn't... That is a distraction, but this whole day is about that! [they laugh]

20:19 MD: That's a fair statement.

20:23 Agnes: You know what, let's just get AI to do this green meeting! [they laugh]

20:29 RTH: Well, I have been using AI to summarize the comments that... I think I've confessed about that to y'all. When, in the, in the, website, when I have the list of comments? I've been using ChatGPT to make that list.

20:46 MD: Hmm.

20:49 RTH: For better or for worse.

20:51 MD: Oh, yeah, I see what you mean. Well... I mean... hopefully you read them afterwards, too, and look... [laughs]

21:00 RTH: I have skimmed them afterwards, but I haven't been as careful as I should have.

21:05 MD: I mean, that's one of the things it's good at, is ingesting large amounts of text. [RTH: Right.]

Consideration of sample 4.3 starts here

21:13 RTH: Alright, it's 4.3. So, this is, directly apprehended but inchoate mulling. [types]

21:41 Agnes: I like that.

21:48 MD: I mean, what... the thing that's striking to me about this one, and maybe just because I've been thinking about this a lot lately.... In the summary there, and also in the... in the actual transcripts, insofar as I've been able to skim it. there's... there's this... well, the statement there towards the end, I'm somehow contemplating how this will affect blah blah blah blah, all those things, but none of them specifically. Now, this is a... this is a *thinking*, not a *seeing*, that we're talking about here. I mean, there's... there's... there's also some seeing involved, but I'm not talking about that right now. I'm talking about the, I'm thinking about this, and this, and this, and this, but not all of them... but none of them specifically. And that strikes me, and again, maybe it's just my over tendency to see patterns, but... that strikes me as a kind of cognitive version of a lack of figure-ground. Like, all these things are there, but I'm not really focused on any one specifically, but they're still all there. All there in thought this time, not in... not in... in vision. I don't know what to make of that, but I just noticed there's a kind of structural similarity.

21:48 Russ comments: I agree. MD articulates the important observation that the lack of figure-izing applies to realms other than the visual or other sensations.

23:13 RTH: So, I agree with that, and I've thought... I've thought about the same thing. I think Agnes's... Agnes' experiences in general... are... not crisply figure-ized, with a few exceptions. There are some exceptions where I think there are... things... things become clear. But many of her experiences are... and *well, there's a lot of stuff going on, I can't really say what it is, can't really say when it is. It's in there somewhere, it's not nothing.* And... and... and I want to say for the fifth time, probably, there's no criticism implied in that. That's... that's... and so, what if...

23:59 MD: Whatever the nature of Agnes' experience is, she seems to get on fine in the world, so there's no reason to criticize. [laughs] [RTH: Right.] Sounds like she's debilitated by this or something.

24:11 RTH: Well, I think... and I agree with that. But sometimes, particularly early on, I think Agnes felt like she was... or talked as if she was worried about it.

24:19 MD: I see.

24:20 RTH: Like, we were criticizing her. Or that she was self-criticizing herself, or something like that. And... and I might... I might be misremembering that or whatever, but the...

24:30 Agnes: I think you're remembering my experience as a *questioner*. I didn't feel criticized as... about my experience. [RTH: Aha!] I felt like I was getting all the questions for Michael, I felt like I was getting them wrong.

24:44 RTH: Could be.

24:47 MD: Anyway, I just... I was just noticing that there's this... non-visual thing that's also a kind of... lots of stuff was there, but nothing specifically was standing out to me in the moment.

25:07 RTH: So I do think that's worthy of comment when we write up about what Agnes' experience is like. And so I've put this, sort of a separate from the usual green meeting, but I've put it in brackets here, when we think of the green things as being reminders of what we might...

25:26 MD: Right.

25:27 RTH: I'm gonna be writing about. Not necessarily attached to this particular description.

25:35 MD: Right. And I guess, yeah, I mean, the word, which is... I didn't see this word in the transcript, but I only skimmed it, but usually, Russ, when you write these things, you're using the same words that the person used. I'm somehow *contemplating* this, so this is a... a lack of figure-ground in contemplation, so to say. Rather than in vision. I guess the reason that's striking is that Agnes was very confident that all these things were present. She was all... she was just also confident in saying I wasn't focused on any one of them.

26:15 Agnes: So, can I ask a question about this kind of analogy. In the visual sense, like, it's like, there's all this stuff in my visual field, it seems that often there *is no* figure-ground phenomenon. I'm wondering whether... That analogy makes sense entirely, because... like... if there were a figure-ground phenomenon, in this case, the way of drawing that analogy out would be that... I'm... all these things are there in my mind, and I'm focusing on *this* one, but the rest of them are simultaneously there, right? So... whereas in this case, they're all there, but I'm not focusing on any one in particular.

27:14 And I'm wondering whether... That kind of thing, the first thing that... the figure-ground phenomenon in this cognitive sense, is a thing. Like... maybe either for me or for other people to contrast this lack of figure-ground, too, because it seems like I don't know, my first thought is, well. what would it mean to... well, no, sorry, I don't know where I'm going with that. I'm just... I'm looking... I'm wondering whether the analogy makes sense. I think in order for it to make sense, the figure-ground, the possibility of having a bunch of thoughts and some of them are figure-ized, and others aren't, should be a possibility.

28:06 MD: I think that is a possibility.

- 28:07 Agnes: And I think you're... I think maybe you're right. Yeah, I'm just kind of thinking out loud.
- 28:11 RTH: So, let me... let me think out loud alongside your thinking out loud. So, I think you're right that...well so,... So let me start that over again. I think to say *figure-ground* implies that there are things in the ground that you're sort of semi-aware of, or partially aware of, and I think that is sometimes true. But I think the more important deal is just the *figure* side of it. It's the *figure*-izing, not necessarily the *figure*-izing and the *ground*-izing. But it's the figure-izing that is important. And I think that in much of perception. There is figure-izing with no *ground*-izing. We talked about that with Michael. But... So I think there's some kind of a continuum there, too, so... I think in everyday... an everyday perception, and everyday experience, and all kinds of stuff, there's a... there's a gradation in how much the ground is present. And in what way the ground is present. So in the *cognitive* way, the ground might be present in the particular way that you would think about how to turn in the grades. Well, I'm turning in the grades because I semi-feel some cognitive pressure to support this student, or whatever, that shapes...
- 29:45 MD: Yeah, I agree with that. I mean, you could... you could... you could have been thinking about turning in the grades, and the other stuff was in the background as, like, [Agnes: Right.] relevant considerations, but you're focused on this question, but you're saying, I'm not focused on any of these, they're just kind of all there.
- 29:59 Agnes: Yeah, yeah, no, I agree with that. Yeah, I could see how that would be.
- 30:03 MD: There is a typo, Russ, it's a minor one. This is more than *as* unconscious process. The last sentence of the black part. [Russ fixes that]
- 30:49 RTH: [Russ writes new green reminder] Is that gonna reawaken this conversation? Yes. What we're talking about.
- 30:58 Agnes: R in the ground-izing is missing. [RTH fixes that]
- 31:05 RTH: [Writes a new green] Will this... will this... jangle your recollections of...disconceration, Agnes?
- 31:10 Agnes: Yeah...
- 31:12 MD: Yeah. I've made that prediction before and been wrong, but it seems like it would.
- 31:19 RTH: We're not... we're not shooting for perfection here.
- 31:24 RTH: On to number 4?

Sample 4.4 consideration starts here

31:38 MD: But this one stands out a little bit in as much as maybe it's one of the only other ones where Agnes was pretty precise about where the beep happens.

32:00 RTH: So she is seeing... with figure-izing, I think. [types] And innerly saying? Is it inner saying? Yeah.

32:21 MD: Well, by the end, we... I think you or she... we were saying we weren't sure whether it was saying or reading. Or both, I guess.

33:02 RTH: [types] We good about that? Does the green seem right?

33:07 Agnes: Do you want to add "moment of the beep," or just... [Russ adds it]

33:25 RTH: Onward?

Consideration of sample 4.5 starts here

33:27 Agnes: Yep.

34:51 RTH: [types] So, I left some space here, because I was trying to... we've been thinking about seeing whether it has figure-ground phenomenon. But whether that's relevant in this discussion, I don't really know. [launches the sample 4.5 transcript]

35:05 MD: Yeah, I'm looking. [long pause while they read]

36:03 MD: Yeah, I don't see anything that would lead in that direction.

36:08 RTH: In which direction?

36:09 MD: Talking about figure-ground.

36:25 RTH: It seems to me like it's not really a separate seeing. It's... seeing and reading as one thing. We're in agreement about that?

36:43 MD: I think so.

37:07 RTH: We good about that?

37:10 MD: Yep. [Agnes: Yep.]

Consideration of sample 4.6 starts here

37:10 RTH: Number 6. [long pause to read] So this reminds me of the conversation we had 10 minutes ago. Where I... I can't distinguish between bodily and physical and... mental, and volitional, and...

38:06 MD: Hmm.

38:15 RTH: So what was that previously? Well... must have been in 5-something. [searches the green document]

38:38 MD: I mean, I think it's... there's... it's slightly different, because in that case, what Agnes wanted to say was, like, I had this feeling... do we call this bodily, do we call it... mental, or what. In this case, there's... there's a... there's a clear bodily awareness or experience. And I guess the question is just, how's that... how is that connected to the affective experience... at the same time, Because she talk... because there seems to be some affect here, right? Because she's talking about finishing this report, her heart is racing. Maybe the bodily movement is a movement away from the AI report. Which would connect it to the affect of... unpleasantness of the report. I don't know.

39:36 RTH: So I'm not... I'm not sure I'm buying the original premise of your statement, where you said there was sort of a clear bodily movement. She starts out, or I start out, writing this description as, I feel a bodily movement. But then most of this is a detraction, a retraction from that. Maybe it's not really bodily, maybe it's just intentional.

40:03 MD: Yeah, you might be right. No, you're right, you're right. It's at 48:12, it's... it's... that's the right place to look, I think. Or *a*, maybe not the, *a* right place to look. That's where it becomes ambiguous whether there was bodily movement or not.

40:40 RTH: [scrolls through transcript] Yeah, this is... So there's some... and so it seems like we've got a... a theme of something that we've got to write about. That's something like the indeterminacy between subtle bodily movement and...intention.

41:18 MD: Yeah, so at 4... and then after that, the next turn, 48:53 and Agnes' response, we are trying to get at this issue a little bit. And it becomes more muddy rather than clearer.

41:34 RTH: So let's give ourselves a green note in here. Are we... Are we talking about 4.6?

41:45 Agnes: Yes.

41:47 RTH: So one of our notes is... [types] So, this is a shifting of attention, or... movement. We're buying that? [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] So you know where you're going, you're going towards the reMarkable. And is reMarkable a lowercase r and an uppercase M?

43:27 Agnes: It's an uppercase R. Actually, you're right, it is. [holds up the tablet] That is stylized.

43:37 RTH: Okay. I think... I think I looked that up somewhere along the line. [pause while reading] But this is the directionality... even the directionality is not crystal clear. The experienced directionality. Am I moving away from this task or towards the tablet? I can't tell the difference. That's [Agnes: Um-hmm.] what I think I understood about this task. [types] Then, there is some... bodily, physical activation. Which I guess is sensory. [types] I'm putting the question mark in *sensory awareness*? because I

must have thought... this sentence is not how I would write about sensory awareness. If... if I understood... Agnes' experience as being, I felt my heart racing. I would have written this "I feel my heart racing."

- 45:51 MD: Well, there was some discussion of that point, so you... so... I... I was the... first questioner here, and I was asking her so I was asked... so I'll... if you look at 55:01, you can see your reservations about my focusing on the heart racing.
- 46:19 RTH: 55:01? [scrolls there in transcript]
- 46:20 MD: 55:01. I think there's... I think you're still... I think you're... it sounds like you're still convinced there that there's bodily sensation of some kind. You're worried that I was focused too much on the heart. Although, in 55:13, Agnes feels... I think she does kind of say, yeah, it was my heart, but... you, at 56, say, I'm not sure about that.
- 47:04 Agnes: Michael, you led me on to believe [inaudible]
- 47:07 MD: I led you astray, I'm so... I do that so often, I'm sorry.
- 47:10 Agnes: But I took the bait. Should have known better.
- 47:15 RTH: Well, I think Michael is on the side of the natural attitude in that regard, and the natural attitude is a strong....
- 47:24 MD: Well, she did say "heart."
- 47:26 RTH: Yeah. I agree. And so what I... my impression is that this is part of the... the ambiguity that I was referring to in here somewhere, honoring the ambiguity. [highlights part of the comment in the transcript at 55:01] That... so I think Agnes... I think Agnes... says things that are ambiguous. But I think she says things that are ambiguous *because* the experience is ambiguous.
- 47:51 MD: Yeah, no, so in fairness to you, Russ, I mean, she said "heart," but she said the other things also, and I did kind of home in on the heart thing. And so, I agree, I didn't disagree with your comment there. But I... I do think it's... it does seem pretty clear that it's *something* bodily. But maybe it's not clear whether to identify that feeling with the heart, or some general... I don't know, adrenaline-rush kind of feeling, or exactly what? But it... but it... but it... but in all the... all the sort of ambiguous overlapping options that were discussed--energy in my body, heart pounding, rush of adrenaline—all those... still sound like bodily experiences to me, of some sort. They could be laced with affect also, of course. And I don't think you were denying that, you were just... as I recall, you were just worried that I had focused on one of those things, the.
- 48:52 RTH: Right, I think that's right. So I think I understood there was some physicality of, some experienced physicality. But whether it was specifically aimed at the heart or whatever.

- 49:09 MD: Right. That's how I understood it. And I don't disagree with that.
- 49:43 RTH: [types] Does that green do it for us? [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] And it is... this... it is related to... the figure-grounding, figure-izing... Agnes doesn't make one clear figure in any modality most of the time, or much of the time. Maybe most of the time. Onward? [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] 4.1...

Consideration of sample 4.1 starts [here](#)

- 50:59 MD: This time, the AI translated it as bluh, B-L-U-H. We've had bleh, blah, blood, and bluh.
- 51:13 Agnes: I like the blood in the mix of the...
- 51:28 RTH: I'm guessing there's not much more to be said about this. I think scrolling...
- 51:37 Agnes: I agree.
- 51:42 RTH: So we're good about Day 4?
- 51:45 MD: I, as... Yeah, I mean, maybe it's interesting to notice that there was... I mean, I don't disagree with what's in the green. She did say, or I think this is *you*, actually, Russ, but then she responds "exactly," so... at the moment of the beep, I'm seeing this photo, But then... so, so it's... it's not like there's some blur of experience in front of her, like, there's a... there's one photo in front of her, but still, that thing hasn't really been figure-ized.
- 52:22 RTH: Right.
- 52:25 MD: But she's able to say, *yes*, it wasn't... it wasn't like they were flying past me so fast that I, you know, it would be impossible to focus on one, or something like that. There was a specific one that was in front of her, but it still hadn't really made itself the... clear object of attention, or something like that.
- 53:10 RTH: [types] You buying that? If I turn it green?
- 53:12 MD: Yeah.
- 53:17 Agnes: I'm, so I'm going off my memory here and relying on Michael to be the transcript moderator, but I'm wondering whether... I'm wondering whether it's too strong to say that it's not the figure? I'm kind of remembering that, that it *would have been* the figure. Like, I was looking at the screen. And there was the other stuff in the background, and the photo was the figure, *but* what I wasn't figure-izing was some particular aspect of the photo, right? So it was, like, there were photos of bike parts, and I wasn't figure-izing the bike part, but I was figure-izing—and this is the part I don't remember well—but, like, either the photo or the screen... I believe.

54:32 MD: I think it's unclear, because you also are saying things like. "I'm just seeing the scrolling." So at one point, you're like, the figure... like, at one point, you're like, the photo... I'm seeing this photo. But then a lot of it, you're just wanting to say. Well, no, that's Russ. Wait, did you agree with that? Yeah, you did agree with that. But it's...

54:56 RTH: Well, I would say, I would say, just as an aside, I would say about that: Agnes agreeing with what Russ or with what Michael says is a much weaker form of evidence than Agnes saying it on her own.

55:08 MD: That's fair.

55:16 Agnes: Like, at 59:17, like, at...

55:23 RTH: So I haven't gotten to 59:17 yet, but this...

55:26 Agnes: Okay, yeah, yeah.

55:26 RTH: Yeah, let's have highlights.

55:27 Agnes: You're highlighting for sure.

55:28 RTH: I've highlighted here is... corresponds with what *you* just said, it seems.

55:32 Agnes: Right, right.

55:34 MD: Yeah, I think it is true, so... I didn't mean to be disagreeing with you, Agnes. I was just trying to, I don't know, relate it back to the text, which is what we do. But the... so, it does seem like the... the... the photo itself, even though you weren't really paying much attention to what the photo actually was a *photo of*, but it does seem like that was the object of attention.

56:00 Agnes: Yeah.

56:01 MD: And you didn't even mention, I don't think, anything else around it.

56:04 Agnes: Exactly.

56:05 MD: So clearly that had been your... some... in some sense, you were focused on that, but you weren't focused in a way that brought the content of the photo to mind.

56:14 Agnes: Exactly, exactly, exactly. But I think that's different from the case of, like, the cat and the pavement and the house, say, where it was, like, an... there was no figure-ground.

56:25 MD: Yes, that's... that's good, that's... yeah, I agree with that. So it wasn't like there were multiple things, and they were all just kind of bluh there. It was *one* thing that was just kind of bluh there.

56:35 Agnes: Exactly, yeah.

56:46 MD: And I... And actually, I think Russ's summary at 1:01:50 kind of... kind of says what I just said.

57:11 RTH: So, my green... shouldn't say this. [corrects the green]

57:30 Agnes: Exactly, yeah. I mean, I would... I would say that the photos are figure-ized.

57:40 MD: Well, I would say that maybe the figure-ground thing is just not a thing in this case, because it's not like you were saying. Well, there was the photo, and then there was this other stuff that was the ground against which the photo was a figure.

57:53 Agnes: But I think I wouldn't have said that, right? Like, and I think this is something that Russ pointed out when we were discussing the cat example. Like, one of the things Russ said last time is "most people would just say, 'I'm seeing the cat'."

58:07 MD: Right.

58:07 Agnes: I'm seeing the cat doesn't imply, and there's no ground, it just implies that the cat is figure-ized, and similarly, I believe, in this case, my saying I'm seeing these images implies that they're figure-ized, not that there's no figure-ground phenomenon.

58:28 MD: Are you saying... Okay. I mean, it doesn't have that... I don't think... I don't think it implies that, for *me*, most of the time.

58:36 Agnes: I mean, it implies that for *me*.

58:37 MD: Because...

58:38 Agnes: because one of the things we discussed with your experience, Michael, was that you sometimes have figure *without* ground. And I never have that. So if I'm saying I'm seeing the images, my default is there's also other stuff that I'm seeing, but the images are figure-ized.

59:07 RTH: But you don't do that very often. [Agnes: I guess not.]

59:12 MD: I just have to trust you on that stuff, because I don't understand it.

59:12 Russ comments: It is interesting that, by happenstance, we have three people with very different figure-ground experience engaged in this exploration of figure-ground experience.

59:18 RTH: So, are we happy with the... this green?

59:23 MD: Yep.

59:26 RTH: And on to Day 3...

59:28 Agnes: Well, so hold on, but... so do you guys disagree with me that the photo is the figure? Like, I want to say that the photo is...

59:34 MD: No, I'm not... no, I just said I don't understand this at all. I'm not disagreeing with you. I'm not disagreeing with you, no.

59:42 Agnes: The caption says, but "it does not become the figure," and I want to say it is the.

59:46 MD: Oh, where... I missed that.

59:48 RTH: The second row of the campaign.

59:49 Agnes: Like, I want to say, "the photo is the figure." Like, the photo, qua, photo of bike part. Not some specific bike part.

1:00:01 MD: Sorry, I was only looking at the first sentence of the green, which I... Was agreeing with. Maybe the way to say the thing in a second without bringing... without... without... bringing that in would just be to say something like. Without interest, or attention, or discerning the specific content, or something like that? Specific... yeah, there we go. Or specificity, maybe even, I don't know.

1:00:58 RTH: I think we're in the ballpark of what we can say about it.

1:01:00 Agnes: So we don't want to say that there's... that there's a figure-ground phenomenon here? Like, we don't want to note that?

1:01:58 Russ comments: I'm not sure that RTH fully understood this discussion as it was happening. As I understand it now, Agnes is saying: The picture qua picture is figure-ized; but the *content* of the picture (whether it is of a sprocket or a derailleur) is not figure-ized. That is, Agnes sees *picture, picture, picture* as she scrolls, but she does *not* see *sprocket, fork, derailleur*, as she scrolls.
Assuming that is true, it is remarkable figure-izing in its own right. I think most people, when scrolling, either make nothing the figure—they are just glazed over or inattentive—or they see the series of contents (they would see sprocket, fork, derailleur). I think most people when looking at photos do not see the *photos*, they see the *content* of the photos.

1:01:09 MD: But it sounds to me like you... I mean, you didn't rep... so I'm not denying that there was, okay? Because you're saying when you see something in general, that's how you see it. But that sounds like a general theory that you're applying to this case. Like, there wasn't... you didn't say anything in the nature of the experience, like, oh, and I was seeing the table behind the computer, or whatever you were scrolling on.

1:01:33 Agnes: So here's, I mean, this is a general kind of methodological question for Russ: In this case, like... if we didn't discuss something at the time of the beep. And, I mean,

Michael is right that I didn't say anything about the background. Do we just assume that there is no background to speak of because we didn't discuss it then?

1:02:03 MD: That's not what I was suggesting.

1:02:05 Agnes: I know that's not what you were... This is a genuine question, Michael, that I'm raising. I know that's not what you're suggesting, but I think one thing that you're... implying, perhaps, is whether, like, my... theory about, in general, my perception in general, does that qualify as some kind of evidence for what was going on in this particular sample? So I'm raising this genuinely as an open question about whether what I'm saying now... gets to have any weight for this caption, or should it not, because we didn't talk about it?

1:02:47 RTH: So I think that's a hard question. It is certainly not the case that just because we didn't talk about it means it doesn't exist. Certainly, I don't agree with that. But I also think that if we didn't talk about it, *and* we... and we understand each other as being, well, we're trying to be pretty complete here. That there's something about that that probably isn't all that important, or might not be that important. There's a *shred* of evidence that it's not important, let's put it that way. Not total evidence, but *a bit* of evidence.

1:02:47 Russ comments: I think a better answer than the one RTH gave here would be: If (a) the issue being discussed (here, figure-ground perception) is important, and (b) we are debating the quality of the evidence we have (here, whether omission is to be credited), then *rather than trying to answer that question here*, we should argue for the iterative method.

That is, we should here accept that we don't know this important detail about Agnes's figure-ground perception and either leave it at that (confessing ignorance) or (if we deem it important enough) then return to sampling and collect additional samples, now armed with some seemingly important, tentatively possible distinctions. RTH does say as much later, in his turn at 1:11:05.

That is a general principle of DES: we should not be in the *figuring out* mode; we should be in the *if I'm not sure we should get more data* mode.

1:03:19 Agnes: I... I guess one of the reasons I'm... raising the figure-ground thing as something we may or may not want to include here, or we *may* want to include, is... if one of the things we want to say at some point is something about Agnes' experience, or lack thereof, of figure-ground, I think this would be a relevant sample.

1:03:45 MD: So maybe...

1:03:46 Agnes: Like, I don't... what I don't think we should say, and I think maybe what Russ just said is aligned with this, is, well, we didn't talk about this, therefore *there must not* have been any kind of figure-ground going on. There *may* not have been, but I think it's plausible that there may have been, even though we didn't talk about it, and if we're gonna say something later about Agnes's experience with respect to figure-ground, I think this would be a sample that we would want to consider, at least.

- 1:03:46 Russ comments: I entirely agree with this. The discussion that we eventually write about Agnes's figure-ground experience will have to have some caveats/limitations about the extent to which we know what we are talking about. And if those caveats/limitations seem too heavy or limiting, then we have to be honest and confess that that's the best we can do. And if that is not satisfactory, then we would have to agree to sample more with Agnes and see if we can sort some of these things out.
- 1:04:21 MD: So, I... I... I didn't mean to be... suggesting anything different from what you just said, but it seems to me that the careful thing to say about this is... and maybe *this* is worth saying, so that the sample doesn't get *misused*, but it seems like the careful thing to say might be something like. There... there's not... "there's nothing specifically in this sample about the absence or presence of figure-ground phenomenon." Apart from what could be inferred from Agnes's general experience. [RTH writes that in green]
- 1:04:54 Agnes: Sure.
- 1:05:03 MD: So, yeah, I see what you're saying, Agnes, that you... we... it could go, especially since we're, like. You know, distilling and then distilling the distillation. that you could end up thinking, oh, there's no figure-ground here, because we didn't say anything about that, or something like that. So it may be worth just warning ourselves, this is *not* one of those cases.
- 1:05:25 RTH: So my... if I had to guess, which it... which, I think it's more in the weeds, but if I had to guess, I would say... that when... when we generally think of figure-ground phenomenon we think of something that is... at least temporarily *static*. So when we're... when, for example, we think about the alternating figures... figure... alternating vase and... vase and figures. what we're saying is, I see the vase, and for the... for the time of the seeing the vase, that's a static thing. *I see the vase*. And then at some later time, *I see the profiles*. And at that time, that is a static thing. And so I go from one static thing to another static thing, and these things happen temporally quickly, maybe. But it's from a static to a static...
- 1:06:22 MD: So I don't know if this is not relevant, I guess, maybe, or maybe it is. I wrote something recently in which I used that image. (I actually found the original image and used it.) And I looked at that image, A lot. Too much, probably. And... I... I... I had a very hard time like, either I was seeing both of them at the same time, and I couldn't decide... I couldn't say which one was more prominent, or I saw was seeing neither of them. I couldn't... it was very hard for me to see one and not the other.
- 1:06:55 Agnes: That sounds like the story of Fran.
- 1:06:56 RTH: It does sound like the story of Fran. And... and I think... and I think when I have been saying I've been saying that we ought to write about Michael's experience, that's a big part of it.

1:07:09 MD: Anyway, sorry, I was just... you said... you mentioned that picture, and... I went through this whole experience of finding the guy's dissertation and getting the picture out of it.

1:07:09 Russ comments: Michael, if you mean Rubin's 1915 dissertation, I'd like to see what you found.

1:07:19 RTH: And so, Agnes, what's your experience of faces and vase when...?

1:07:25 Agnes: Yeah, I see one at a time.

1:07:28 RTH: Okay.

1:07:29 Agnes: I *don't* see them both at once.

1:07:32 MD: I was able to see one at a time, but I had to take my fingers and kind of put them in exactly the right place to focus my attention on just one thing.

1:07:40 RTH: Yeah, that's pretty unusual. But not... but not non-existent. As in...

1:07:46 MD: I hope it's not non-existent! [laughs]

1:07:48 RTH: Yeah. I mean, as far as my research is concerned. I have... I have seen that, at least with Fran and maybe another couple of people. And I think there's not enough consideration of that in the literature.

1:08:05 MD: Anyway, I didn't, sorry, I didn't mean to sidetrack us.

1:08:08 RTH: But I haven't... I haven't yet finished the [MD: Yeah, sorry.] story that I was trying to tell. So... in... in both of those cases... so... so back to the looking at the... at the vases, and the figure of vases, and the figure, and the faces, and the figure. In all of that. That is... that presumes that there is a *stable frame* that is figure-ized. So, I'm gonna look at this picture, and I'm going to see either a vase, and then I'm going to look *at this same* picture, and I'm going to see it profiles. There is some figural process that envelopes, or circumscribes, or something, the figure-ground phenomenon that we're interested in. And so... so it's like... it's like a figure-ground-squared kind of a deal. There's figure-ground... there's a figure... I make... I make as a figure that I'm gonna do this alternation stuff, and then *within that* I do the alternation stuff.

1:09:02 MD: Hmm.

1:09:03 RTH: And this one does... this sample, the scrolling sample. Seems like one of those samples, one of those things is missing. I don't really give a shit about this, and I'm gonna look at this one, and maybe it's gonna have a... it's gonna... it's... it's gonna have the faces. But I don't really care. I'm gonna see the faces, but it's not like I've... and then the next one, well, might be the vase or whatever, but... I'm gonna see this bike part, I'm gonna see that bike part.

- 1:09:03 Russ comments: Looks like RTH is making a similar observation to Russ's comment at 1:01:58.
- 1:09:34 Agnes: But it's like a...
- 1:09:35 RTH: It's like a *disinterest in making* a figure. I'm making it. I'm making it, but it's... but it's not clear, it's not...
- 1:09:49 Agnes: I mean, I think the question that is left unanswered in this in the interview in which I have a theory about, but obviously I could be wrong, is whether, in my experience, there was... I mean, I'm kind of assuming... my theory is that I wasn't just seeing the pictures, that also, in the background, I was seeing, and this is a very natural attitude thing, like, I was seeing the background of the direction that I was looking, and that, if prompted, I could have... done that kind of switching. Like, I could have paid attention to some aspect of the background and not the pictures. But the more we talk about this, the more I'm leaning towards not talking about the figure-ground thing, because I didn't talk about it. And... it may well be the case that my theory... is false in this case, like, that I was just seeing the pictures, and I was completely absorbed in them, and I did... part of my experience was not the background. I think that's actually more plausible than what I said before, actually.
- 1:09:49 Russ comments: What we have been saying along in her, including right here, is that it is possible to figure-ize, or not, without have to ground-ize, or not. See RTH's turn at 1:13:36.
- 1:11:05 RTH: So the... what Agnes just said for my... is an endorsement of why we need to do the iterative procedure. We're gonna... we're gonna... we're gonna get to the end of this sample, and we're gonna say, I don't know what happened here. And then, if we were... if we were really interested in that, what we would do is we would sample with Agnes *some more*. And now that we've raised these issues, then we would... We would... we would try to figure it out.
- 1:11:36 And it's... maybe I forget what I wrote in the comments, but did I say something about swimming upstream? It's going upstream? It's, it's *back towards the source*. Where the conversation that we're tempted to have, the natural attitude conversation is to try *to figure out what happened*. But that's, like, floating downstream among the... the pieces of the conversations that we've already had. And I think that that... I think we can't do that, if we're careful. And what we need to do is to go back to this... wellspring of Agnes' experience, and... get another one, and then another one, and then another one, and eventually, maybe we'll figure this out, and if we... can fine, and if we can't, well, it's... bu about this one? We're just not sure. On to day 3?
- 1:11:36 Russ comments: RE "did I say something about swimming upstream?"
RTH is referring to Russ's comment in the Green part 1 transcript at 1:32:57.
- 1:12:36 Agnes: Yes.

Consideration of sample 3.5 starts here

- 1:12:36 Russ comments: Reminder: The expositional interview for Agnes's sampling day 3 was held in a workshop setting, where a dozen workshop participants could ask Agnes or Russ questions about the process.
- 1:12:43 RTH: And we're starting with number 5, Michael.
- 1:12:46 MD: Yeah.
- 1:13:11 RTH: [pause to read] So this was day 3, and I think we don't... we didn't know what we were facing here with Agnes' figure-ground stuff. But I'm guessing this was a lack of figure-ground. She's seeing something without making the...
- 1:13:25 Agnes: I agree.
- 1:13:36 RTH: *And* it is... it seems to me that this is... it's becoming more evident that rather than saying "no *figure-ground*," it would be better to say "no *figure*."
- 1:13:48 Agnes: Yeah.
- 1:14:38 RTH: [pause to read and write] And there again, in line with what Michael had said earlier today, there's... this is us, Agnes, and the rest of us, trying to figure out how to deal with, lack of figure in the cognitive... cognitive realm as well. On to number 6?

Consideration of sample 3.6 starts here

- 1:15:05 MD: I think so, yeah. There's a lot of scrolling in this one because of so much talk.
- 1:15:40 RTH: So what are we calling this anticipation stuff?
- 1:15:43 MD: "Anticipatory pause," or something like that. [Agnes: Yeah.] So I think... One of the things... it might be a little bit more difficult to go through the transcript. I'm a pretty fast reader, but there's a *lot* of text in these transcripts because of the... all the interruptions. I'm... interruptions isn't the right word, but you know what I mean. Lots of people [workshop participants] talking.
- 1:16:25 RTH: Excursion.
- 1:16:29 MD: So, I'm... I'm not inclined to try to find this in the transcript right now, because the transcript is 40 pages long, and we had 2 beeps. But there's... so I'm saying this on pure speculation, and I'm also not suggesting we go back to the earlier beeps, but maybe we could flag it here, and then... if there's some occasion to go back and look and see.
- 1:16:50 What I'm getting at is... this idea, which is in parentheses in your description, Russ, "seeing it as a meaningful string of words, but not reading them." I have this vague idea that maybe that's happened more than once. And there's a similar thing with the photographs that we just got done talking about, right? So you're seeing

the photographs, you sort of know that they're photographs of bike parts, but you're not really... processing exactly what the bike part is. And this seems similar to that. I'm seeing these words, I know that they're meaningful, but I'm not really *processing* exactly, you know, I'm not *reading* them. And so I'm not processing them in a reading kind of a way. or I'm not processing the photo in a kind of parsing into bike... specific bike part kind of a way. And maybe I'm just making something up here, but it feels to me like that kind of thing, especially with words, may have happened other times as well, where Agnes would say, I'm seeing these words, but I'm not reading them.

- 1:16:50 Russ comments: The object is not to count occurrence frequency but to describe characteristics of Agnes's experience. MD is entirely correct to remind us of the importance of this sort of partial figure-ization, in multiple modalities, where Agnes in a way makes what would commonly be perceived as the *vehicle* of the perception (the word [on the way to meaning]; the photo [on the way to bike parts]) something of a figure (albeit not too clearly) without making the usual content (the word's meaning, the photo's) the figure.
- 1:17:56 RTH: I think it happened at least once today, because I remember writing something about Words as tokens or something.
- 1:18:02 MD: Right.
- 1:18:03 Agnes: Yeah.
- 1:18:03 MD: So that might be worth flagging here, just if we decide that it's something that happens other times also.
- 1:18:11 RTH: And is that different from...
- 1:18:17 MD: [reads] "Seeing words, not reading." No, I guess not really. Oh, I was... maybe I was just elaborating on that. Sorry, I have that window kind of small because I got the other ones big so I can read them.
- 1:19:06 RTH: So I have written something which... I take it as a shorthand for what you were just saying, and we can remember it later on.
- 1:19:06 Russ comments: The green for 3.6 says in part "I see photos, I recognize them as bike parts, but I don't focus on them]" I think that is somewhat misleading, and would better be "I see photos, I recognize them as photos of bike parts, but I don't focus on the bike-part content of the photos." That is, I make the photo-ness a figure, but I don't make the bike-part-ness the figure."
- 1:19:14 MD: Yeah,
- 1:19:20 RTH: On to Day 2, which is the last one we're gonna do. Because we don't generally do day 1.

1:19:27 MD: Got it.

Consideration of sample 2.1 starts [here](#)

1:19:29 RTH: And we're gonna start with beep 1.

1:19:37 Agnes: Just a typo that I'm noticing, it's "Yun Ying Kuo." Instead of Yoon Kim, Kim should be replaced with Y-I-N-G. That's fine. It's the "Kim" part. The Kim should be Y-I-N-G.

1:19:55 MD: It's Y-U-N hyphen Yi N. Does she have a G in her name? I thought it was... I thought it was just Yun Ying. Yun...

1:20:04 Agnes: Yun Ying, yeah.

1:20:05 MD: No, you're right. No, as soon as I said it, I realized I was right.

1:20:10 RTH: [corrects] So is that what we're saying?

1:20:11 Agnes: Yes.

1:20:14 RTH: And is that in the transcript? Is that wrong in the transcript as well?

1:20:17 MD: I was just getting... no, it's correct in the transcript. [pause to read] So *here*, it seems like we *do* want to say this *was* a case of pretty clear, kind of, figure-ground kind of seeing. [Agnes: Yeah.] Like, that's... that seems like a reasonable interpretation of what of those words.

1:21:03 Agnes: Yeah.

1:21:05 RTH: So I agree that that's a reasonable interpretation. I would also say this is Agnes's second sampling day, and if she had the same experience later on, she might have been...

1:21:14 MD: Oh, I totally agree with that. I mean, I've been looking back at some of mine, realizing that I was unfortunately, like, overly influenced by theory, especially early on.

1:21:27 RTH: Yep. That's the way it... that's the way it always is. And that's...

1:21:32 MD: I'm not saying that's true in this case, I'm just saying that that was true of me.

1:21:36 RTH: Well, I think it's *likely* true for Agnes as well, that not that she was influenced by theory, but that she was influenced by the natural attitude. If I'm speaking something, I must be seeing it, and I must be saying it.

1:21:48 MD: I guess I wasn't making any strong distinction between theory and natural attitude. [RTH: Right.]

- 1:21:55 Agnes: I mean, for whatever it's worth, and I don't know what it's worth, from what I recall about this sample, this was one sample where I had a more distinct experience that I felt more confident about, as opposed to some of the others.
- 1:22:16 MD: You definitely, in your opening salvo... In many of your opening salvos, they started with things like, I don't really know what was going on, the beep freaked me out, blah blah blah. And... and actually, there's none of that in this one.
- 1:22:35 RTH: So I don't... I don't doubt that at all. *And* I don't doubt that it's possibly a natural attitude. What I... what I do say is... this is why we gotta do the iterative training. We're gonna throw out *completely* the *first* day, *maybe* we're gonna throw out the *second* day, maybe we're gonna throw out the third day, we're gonna get better at it as we go. That's just... that's the... that is the procedure. And it's not a criticism of Agnes, and it's not a criticism of Russ, or anybody else. It's... this is just the way the process has to go while we learn what it takes to focus on experience.
- 1:23:14 Agnes: I guess I'm...
- 1:23:16 MD: Go ahead, Agnes.
- 1:23:17 Agnes: Well, I was just gonna say, For this sample, I feel pretty confident that I *was* focused on my experience, and part of how... and, like, Russell, you may be right, but also, the other thing I wanted to point out is that, yes, this was my second sampling day, but we also had, like, 10 sampling days with Michael, so... it's not like I... like, I... I think I was familiar enough with the distinction between experience and... natural attitude. But anyway, maybe we don't need to belabor this point, because we can't answer this question.
- 1:23:58 MD: Well, I don't know that there's anything specific. I was looking through the transcript now to see, like, well, is there something where we might, you know, say, hey, maybe Agnes was overconfident or something, but actually... Like, so your... so your initial description... it's pretty straightforward, and I don't think it's, like, wildly inconsistent with stuff that you were saying later on. What did... one interesting thing that *did* happen, and it's relevant to something we were just saying about seeing words and not reading them, is there was a question... in fact, Russ asks exactly this question: "Is it the case that I'm reading what I'm seeing?" And *that*... that question prompted a lot—in fact, Russ even commented on this—prompted a lot of, *well, I don't really know* was in the end the answer, but it was, like, there was, I don't know, Russ highlighted, like, 15 different hedge... hedge words at that point. You know, hmm, I think that's a good question. Hmm, I wouldn't say, hmm, that I, you know, et cetera, et cetera. But that's not... that's not a comment about the opening salvo. That was... that's just a comment about what happened subsequently. I don't think it casts and I don't think Russ's question was... Russ's was... Russ's comment was... intended to... question the opening salvo, was questioning this further point about, are you... do you know whether you were reading them or not?

1:25:46 RTH: [types] So, I guess I do want to say this: So, I'm *not* going to try to talk you out of... being confident about this. But at the same time, I think there's no way that you can talk *me into* being confident about it. [Agnes: Yeah, fair. I agree.] And that's...And that is not a criticism of either one of us. That is a limitation of the method.

1:26:14 Agnes: Yeah, and I'm... I'm happy with that. I think what I said was stronger than... than... what I intended.

1:26:22 RTH: It wouldn't have mattered, wouldn't have mattered, because... because it's the kind of thing, second day, y'know....

1:26:22 Russ comments: These last several interchanges illustrate the iterative method: presuppositions (according to Russ) are delusions, and are therefore believed by the bearer. Russ is accepting that Agnes is, or at least might be, delusional, and he will do his best to help Agnes bracket those delusions away. But in the meantime, he is not going to believe what might be delusional, and he is not going to try to figure out whether it is delusional or not. He is going to try to help Agnes and Russ get into a position where on subsequent sampling days, there may not be as much risk of delusion.

1:26:27 MD: I'd be more worried about... I mean, I guess I would be more invested in who to believe, whom to believe if I... if this opening salvo was somehow weirdly different from things that Agnes said you know, 5 sampling days later, or whatever. But I don't... I don't actually detect anything in here that makes me think that this is unusual. I mean, it does seem to me likely, given that we went through mine for 2 months prior, that Agnes may have been motivated to say, something like "I was seeing the less rest of the screen with less interest, but not blurry," or something like that, because we had been talking about exactly this kind of question. So maybe I just felt motivated to, like, differentiate her experience... from mine, but that's fine. I don't... that doesn't... there may have been a particular focus, is what I'm saying. But I... I don't know, I... if there was something really strange being said here, then I might have thought, hmm, maybe... maybe we haven't... maybe... maybe we haven't yet figured it out, or whatever. But... am I seeing this wrong? Is this striking you, Russ, as, like, something unusual is happening here that we didn't see later?

1:26:27 Russ comments: RE "given that we went through mine for 2 months prior"
MD refers to his sampling in IEO part XV, where Agnes was co-interviewer. A characteristic of Michael's experience was that he often (or usually) has a figure experience with no ground whatsoever. MD is suggesting the possibility that Agnes is differentiating herself from that.

RE "Is this striking you, Russ, as, like, something unusual is happening here"

There is nothing unusual, but there *is* something important, and that is the level of what I call subjunctification (what Michael called "hedge words" in his turn at 1:23:58). Those are indicators (not proofs, by any stretch) that Agnes's grammar producer doesn't fully believe what she is saying. When my antennae detect such hedges, I take that seriously, and therefore I also don't fully believe what Agnes is

saying. That is *not* a disrespect to Agnes; on the contrary, that is a full respect to all of what Agnes's body and language are trying to tell me.

- 1:27:51 RTH: No, I... so... so I agree with everything that you said, and in the sense of it... seems reasonable to interpret this as being that way. But my philosophy, I guess you would say, is... I am, and I've said this pretty frequently, I'm *not* in the business of trying to interpret what Agnes said. I am trying... I'm in the business of trying to get Agnes in the position where she can say things that I don't have to worry about what it is that she said. And on the second day, I don't think we're there yet.
- 1:28:28 MD: That's fair.
- 1:28:31 RTH: And that doesn't mean that what she said isn't *right*. It means I have a legitimate reason for being concerned, whether that comes from Agnes or comes from 500 people that I've sampled with before Agnes.
- 1:28:44 MD: Right, and I...
- 1:28:45 RTH: And...
- 1:28:46 MD: I don't disagree with any of that. That all makes perfect sense to me. I guess my concern... I guess I would be more... concerned if this sample looked unusual relative to ones where we had gotten better. But it doesn't look that way to me. Doesn't mean it's right, it just means that one particular way of being wrong is ruled out. In fact, a thought that just occurred to me—which is just pure theory, so who knows?—but... but I said earlier that maybe Agnes was kind of sensitized to this whole question about *do you see stuff around the thing that you're looking at?* and so explicitly says it here, and maybe she relaxed about that a little, and that's what Agnes was saying earlier, that, well, I wouldn't have necessarily said that I was seeing other stuff. Around it, you know, as ground. We are not using the term... those terms at this point, but... or maybe we were, I don't know. Maybe she relaxed about that a little bit, and felt more pressure to say it here, explicitly.
- 1:30:28 RTH: So when we rewind and try to think about the context of what the Sampling day 2 was, this would have been in preparation for sampling day 3, [MD: Right.] so the whole workshop deal is important...
- 1:30:43 MD: Correct. It's looming, yes.
- 1:30:45 RTH: And, *and* it is sampling day 14, or whatever, counting Michael's as... 1 through 12, or whatever, and so... all, all of that stuff. is in the grinder that makes Agnes say what it is that she says.
- 1:31:03 MD: Right.
- 1:31:04 RTH: And Russ... say whatever it is that he says, and etc. So, she is... coming back to the concreteness of this.

1:31:04 Russ comments: This is more in the Russ-is-not-going-to-try-to-interpret mode.

1:31:16 RTH: (continues) She is seeing these words, and she is saying these words, but Russ does not write here that she is reading those words.

1:31:32 MD: And also, in the transcript, when that issue came up, you seemed to like the level of confidence that Agnes had.

1:31:43 RTH: Where's that?

1:31:44 MD: 3:35, you're... you say at the end. That you're not reading... you say you're not reading from the screen. And Agnes says, yeah, and you say, that seems like a... More confident statement, essentially.

1:31:44 Russ comments: RE (1:31:32) "you seemed to like the level of confidence that Agnes had"

That's not quite right. In my comment at 4:01 in the sampling-day-2 interview, I said that I liked that fact that Agnes's grammar producer seemed to recognize and convey that Agnes can differentiate confidence. That's good in the long run, but not necessarily at any particular time, particularly in the early going.

1:32:22 RTH: [writes green] Like that?

1:32:25 MD: Yeah. I think... I think the point is that she was... she was seeing the words, and she was saying it, but the *saying* was not a *reading*.

1:32:42 RTH: Right. You happy with that, Agnes?

1:32:46 Agnes: Yep.

Consideration of sample 2.2 starts here

1:32:48 RTH: On to number 2? The barn is in sight! So this should be in quotes. [writes] So I take this as our way of saying, we're not sure about this figure-ground stuff.

1:34:01 MD: Yeah.

1:34:02 Agnes: Yeah.

1:34:04 MD: That seems right.

1:34:25 RTH: [writes] You good about that?

Consideration of sample 2.3 starts here

1:34:27 Agnes: Yeah.

1:34:48 RTH: So this is the *anticipatory pause*.

1:34:58 MD: It does feel like that, doesn't it?

1:35:08 RTH: Pretty close to what we've been talking about. [Agnes: Yeah.]

1:35:19 MD: I mean, it's interesting that... I would have to go back and look, and we don't have time to do that right now, but... there's this... So, in this one, there's, like, you know, these 3 different options offered. And Agnes is saying... I'm not looking at the transcript now, I don't know... I'm not sure I know exactly where to look. So I'm just relying on... on Russ's summary here. Basically, I'm unsure... and maybe, I don't know, maybe the answer is that these anticipatory pauses are kind of all of those things at once, or something? I mean, so you offered a few options. I'm in a state of nothingness, I'm in mild confusion, I'm in what to do next. That probably doesn't translate into anything to write in green, I was just making an observation. [pause] Oh, I just found it.

1:36:39 RTH: Does this do it for us? [Agnes: Yeah.]

Consideration of sample 2.4 starts here

1:36:43 Agnes: So is this one where we should say that there's, like, uncertainty about the experience?

1:37:14 MD: Yes, it does seem pretty clear.

Conversation after the green meeting

1:37:33 RTH: So... We are finished with the green meeting. And the next... the next task is to write what we call the independent... what... what I call the *independent informal characterization*. And the object is for each of us to do that before we sleep. That sometimes means before we sleep *twice*, but... but soon, at any rate.

1:38:01 What we're supposed to do is to write something that conveys to you and to the rest of us, what you think we should write about in the document. So we're gonna, we're gonna write a description of Agnes' samples. And that document ought to say A, B, and C, or whatever. And the task is for each of us independently to say... to *commit ourselves in writing*, or in electrons. to what... that document should say. And I don't really care about the format, sometimes it seems, like, reasonable to... to have that be an outline, and sometimes it seems like a bulleted list is fine, and sometimes it seems like there's excursion... discursive... discursive text. But the object is to commit yourself, for each of us to commit ourselves to, this is what I got out of the green meeting. And I'm going to send you the green meeting document, so it's not like you have to do this for memory. You can go back through the green meeting document. [MD: That's good.] And but... but it's... this is... it's what I glean from the green meeting and everything that I've got so far, summarized in the green meeting, summarized in the green meeting document, and going back to the transcripts if I need to, whatever. This is the kind of stuff that I Agnes, or I Michael, or I Russ think ought to be in the... in the document.

1:39:32 And then we're going to send those to each other, and the rules of that game is you can't look at the other people's until you've submitted your own. So that's the *independent* of this stuff. [MD: Yep.]

1:39:45 And then we'll compare those things, and if it seems like we are all on the same track, then we'll actually write a paper, I will actually write a description, and then we'll pass that back and forth. But the object... the object is... this... the object is to be objectively... honest with each other about what it is that we saw, so that it's not... we can't... we can't later on say, well, I didn't see that, or I did see that, or whatever.

1:39:45 Russ comments: RTH leaves out the important step of the rectification, which occurs between the independent informal characterization and the writing.

1:40:14 MD: Right.

1:40:14 RTH: Gonna pin our... pin ourselves down.

1:40:17 MD: Right, so I'm happy to be pinned down. I, I have to be honest, I cannot do this tonight. [RTH: Okay.]

1:40:26 Agnes: I can't either.

1:40:27 MD: I mean, I have... my next couple hours are spoken for, and if I try to do it after that. I'll do worse if I do try to do it after that.

1:40:34 RTH: Right.

1:40:34 MD: As opposed to if I sleep.

1:40:36 RTH: Fair, fair, fair enough. What it has to be is *soon*.

1:40:40 MD: Yeah, I can do it tomorrow.

1:40:41 RTH: Okay.

1:40:42 MD: I just can't do it tonight.

1:40:43 Agnes: I'll do it tomorrow as well.

1:40:44 RTH: Fair enough.

1:40:46 Agnes: So it's, it's like a general description, correct? Like, Agnes exp... I mean... what we're *not* doing is re-describing each of the samples. What we're doing is we're trying to say something like, *Agnes seems to have these kinds of experiences*.

1:40:46 Russ comments: In editing the transcript, I think Agnes's description is absolutely correct.

- 1:41:10 RTH: I think that's true, and it's also... and it's also... *and* I would like to see the description of Agnes so we're gonna say something about, well, Agnes had some sort of strange figure-ground stuff. And what I would like to see in that discussion of figure-ground phenomenon would be: whatever, however you would conceptualize that. And it can be more or less cryptic. I mean, this is not the final document. But it has to be, it ought to be understandable, it ought to be understandable. But it... but it... it... it serves several functions. It's... it is possible that we will have... that we will note discrepancies. And if that's the case, then we can hash those out sooner rather than later. But it also serves as sort of a checklist, where... so when we get to the final document, you don't get... you don't get wrapped up in the final document and forget, well, this is what I really thought. It's... I've got it... I have it memorialized here. It's sort of like in the legal system. A contemporary description of the events has more weight than a... retrospective. account.
- 1:42:34 MD: So, when this gets to court, we'll all have our contemporary descriptions! [they laugh]
- 1:42:37 RTH: That's exactly right. And the court in this situation is the written... the written description. So when... and the point... the written description is going to be something where... Agnes has to sign off and say, *this is exactly what I... this is a... this is a faithful characteristic, a faithful characterization of my experience*. And Michael has to say, *this is a faithful characteristic of Agnes' experience*, and Russ has to do the same thing. And that does not mean we have to *agree* about things, but if we disagree, those have to be explicitly in there. So, we... the final document might say, well, Agnes saw it this way, and Russ saw it that way, and they never could agree about that. But this is Agnes' version, and this is Russ's version. And then Agnes can agree to that, and she can say, well, this is what I saw, and Russ never got there, or whatever.
- 1:43:31 MD: I, I understand. I could, I can do it, I can do it tomorrow.
- 1:43:35 Agnes: I can do that tomorrow as well.
- 1:43:37 RTH: Cool. All right, then we will not have to schedule any more meetings unless something occurs. In the process of... writing, or... whatever. But the process of when we're gonna do this, we're gonna do this, these informal characteristics, if we're... then I'll probably set up a table where I'll compare the two, er, the three, and... and, and if everything seems to line up, then I will write the description and pass it back and forth.
- 1:43:37 Russ comments: RTH again overlooks the rectification process, which occurs before the writing.
- 1:44:11 MD: Okay. Sounds good.
- 1:44:16 RTH: Thank you very much. And I will also do the transcript, assuming that Zoom did its thing.

1:44:23 MD: Right, okay. Alright, bye!