

Gualtiero 1.
Gualtiero Sampling Interview 1

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the May 13 sampling interview 1 with Gualtiero that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/wzVoO20sDUw>. In green are Russ's comments, and in blue are Gualtiero's comments about and explanations of the Descriptive Experience Sampling process inserted after the interview. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt
GP = Gualtiero Piccinini
LG= Lauren Graf

THEY DISCUSS SOME GROUNDRULES

- 0:02 RTH: So the recording, the recording is going and, uh, let's see. Where, where are we here? This is gonna be Gualtiero's first track at this. And Gualtiero, do you go by Gualtiero? Is that what I should call you? Or, uh-
- 0:16 GP: Or G some people call me G. Just my initial. That's the only nickname that's worked in the U.S.
- 0:24 RTH: And, and do you, I- it's up to you. I'll call you whatever you want me to call you.
- 0:29 GP: Yeah, either one is fine, is good.
- 0:31 RTH: Okay.
- 0:33 RTH: And, and I have sent you all, I guess I sent Gualtiero, and he might've forwarded to Lauren, the transcript from the initial interview. And, uh, and the rules, the rules of that are basically the, I think the, the sort of the rules of the whole game here is that we should consider this as a private conversation between the three of us. And, uh, and at some point down the line, we may say it's okay for us to show this to somebody else, but in the meantime, this is Gualtiero's private material, and he ought to have control over that. And, uh, and this is a video, so we shouldn't put the video out into the world until somebody says we should put the video out into the world. And, and by somebody, I mean, all of us say that. So anything we, el, el, that's what I know that we should be talking about before we look at Gualtiero's beeps. Anything else that we should talk about?
- 1:34 LG: [shakes head no]
- 1:39 GP: All right. That's, this is a fascinating experience already.

- 1:42 RTH: All right, well then I would say, let's, let's go for- or, or I guess I would do, I do wanna say one more thing, and that is: *Lauren*, you should consider yourself a, a full-fledged participant to the extent that you would like to be a full-fledged participant, which means you should ask whatever questions that you would like to ask whenever you would like to ask those questions, or not. So you can, you can take the position of, *well, y'know, I don't know what I'm doing here and I'm gonna watch here*. That would be fine with me. Or you can say, *Gualtiero said something that interested me, and I would like to ask, ask a question about that*.
- 2:15 And if you *do* ask a question, then I have the right to say or not to say something about your question. I could say, y'know, I'd prefer that you not ask that question. That was a terrible question. Or that was a good question. Or whatever. And, and, and, and you should take that, if I, if I were to say something like that, you should take that as being what I *think*, not necessarily the Truth with the capital T. And, uh, and, and so I think it's quite possible that you would ask a question that I would think was a *better* question than I've asked, I've asked, and you might ask a question that I think is misleading, and we should have the right to have a conversation about that either way.
- 2:55 And, *and* I would also say that we should have the right, or I guess we could, so maybe we should negotiate this. So let's negotiate what I'm about to say here. So we could have sort of, we could model this as sort of straightforward DES interviews about Gualtiero's experience, which is to say we're gonna ask about Gualtiero's experience and that, and that would be it. But we, so that would, that would be like topic A.
- 3:23 But topic B could be about the *process*. Like, why did we ask this question? What does this, what does this say about Gualtiero's experience? Or our apprehending about this would be sort of like a meta conversation about the conversation. And we could discern, we could decide, no, we shouldn't have those conversations, we should just stick with Gualtiero's experience and we can come back and have meta conversations as we go, or, or at some later time, I mean; or we can have those conversations as we go. And I don't have a particular preference about that. Might be sort of primarily up to Gualtiero, but-
- 4:01 GP: My preference would be to keep this as open as possible so that any questions that come up are acceptable, including meta questions, questions about the process, questions about the, the nature of experience. Um, but yeah, within limits, cuz we don't wanna stay here all day and, y'know, we're gonna have other meetings and then we can, as you said, we can add comments to the transcripts as well. So there's another venue for possible expansion of the discussion.
- 4:31 RTH: So I'm in agreement with that,
- Russ comments: RTH has audio issues, and conversation about that is grayed out.
- 4:35 RTH: But I'm also having audio issues here. Lemme see whether I can, would you say something one more time and see.
- 4:45 GP: Yes. Um, did you hear what I said before?

- 4:48 RTH: I heard it, but it's coming through my, my computer speakers rather than my earphones. And I'd rather get 'em through my earphones. So say something one more time.
- 4:59 GP: Something one more time.
- 5:14 RTH: Now let's try that. Say one more time.
- 5:17 GP: One more time.
- 5:17 RTH: That's better. I get that. I, I like the sound injected rather than out there in the, in the, in the real world. So can you all hear me? And I can hear you good.
- 5:33 RTH: All right, then I'm ready for sample number 1.

SAMPLE 1.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 5:34 GP: Okay. So I thought I should read my notes and then you can ask me questions. Does that, does that work?
- 5:40 RTH: That's, that's fine with me. I don't, the, what I would say about that is that the notes, as far from my point of view, the notes are between you and you. [GP: Mm-hmm] I don't need to see the notes. I would like to know about your experience. I don't particularly wanna know about what you *said* about your experience or what you *wrote* about your experience. You can tell me about what you wrote about your experience, if that makes life easy for *you*.
- 6:03 GP: Yes. So-
- 6:05 RTH: But I, but I, I like to keep totally clear [GP: Okay] the distinction between what your experience was and what you wrote about it. What I, what I really don't want you to do is to tailor your writing *for me*. [GP: Mm-hmm] I want you to tailor your, tailor your writing for *you* so that you can get back as best you can to your experience. [GP: Yes. Okay.] And if that means keeping the, keeping the writing public and reading it off to me, that's fine. If that means, y'know, keeping it to yourself, that is also fine.
- 6:34 GP: Okay, let's try it this way. I, I was trying to record as best I could for myself. [RTH: Okay.] What I experienced at the moment of the first beep. So here it goes. I was typing, quote unquote, "e.g.," um in the middle of the paragraph, I was adding that to a middle of the paragraph. I had just typed it, and I was shifting attention to the end of the paragraph. When the beep happened. Right before the beep, I was noticing the letters "e.g." with dots. Um, I had just ty-, which I had just typed. Um, as the beeps started, I felt my attention shifting.
- 7:20 So that's, that's what I wrote. And maybe I can just elaborate a little bit. [RTH: Okay.] One thing I noticed, it's very hard to, um, retrospectively select something that was in my experience right before the beep, as opposed to the whole dynamics of what, what, what was happening a little before, during, and after. So I, one thing that this beeping experience, um, that this beeping method made very vivid to me is how

much is happening in my mind at all times. And therefore, yes, I can try to select, y'know, what I was aware of right before the beep, but that's not, that's a bit, there's a, there's an artificial element to that, which is that normally I don't just try to pay attention to what's in my mind. I'm just, y'know, living my life, my mental life, or mental or otherwise. Um, and so there's a lot happening and, um, it's not easy to just say, *okay, yeah, here. That's what I was experiencing most vividly at that moment.* But I, I'm doing my best. And this is probably not news to you, but this is-

8:47 RTH: So what I, what I would say about that is, yes, it's not news to me. (B), (B) it, I would say it might get to be easier for you, or it might get to be more complicated for you. I'm, I'm not taking an opinion about that. I would say most people, it gets easier as you get more practice at it. (C) I would say, I don't think that there's only one thing going on at a, at the moment of a particular beep. Maybe there is, and maybe there's not. (D) There might very well be some *primary* thing that's going on and, and, and we may get more and more skilled, skilled at it. And, and so what I, and, and, and (E) I guess if that's where I was in that list, uh, I would say what I want us to do is to be honest about it. I don't, I don't want us to oversimplify it, anything, I don't want us to over-complicate anything either. What I want us to do is to, is to, is to get as good at it as we can.

9:48 And (F) I guess, I guess we're up to *F*, I would say I, I, I, I think there's, I think there's longer term things and there's shorter term things, and I don't want us to, to prefer one of those over the, over the others. So with all that meta said, this is what I have under- I understood you to say [RTH holds up diagram] this is, this, I think is the drawing that we had left over from last, last time. [GP: Mm-hmm.]. Which was the time is marching like this, the beep happens here, you turn the beep off here, and time continues to, to march on. And this is the moment that we're interested in. And what I'm gathering is that somewhere out here [points to the left side of the figure] you wrote "e.g." And then your eyeballs aim, [points to the leading edge of the beep schematic] started to switch to the end of the paragraph. And yet "e.g." is somehow still present in your experience at the moment, at the moment of this beep. Is that right?

10:49 GP: Yeah, I would say yes, I would say that. So of course there's a, there's a dynamic change at all times. But right before the beep, my eyes were still on the "e.g." And then as the beep started, they were shifting away. Um, because I had typed, y'know, I was adding something to a paragraph that had already existed, I had already typed. And so then I was gonna move back towards the end of the paragraph to continue typing. Um-

11:19 RTH: So what I said then, then I guess is a little bit mistaken. Apparently at this particular moment here, [points to the exact place where the schematic begins to rise] which let's call this moment the, let's call this moment, *the moment of the beep*. And by uh the moment of the beep, I really mean a microsecond just before the beep [GP: Mm-hmm]. Your eyes are still aimed at e.g. [GP: Yeah. Yeah.] And then during the beep, [points to the top portion of the schematic] your eyeballs shift to, to the end of the paragraph.

11:19 Russ comments: We are spending a lot of time and effort aimed at becoming as clear as we can about what is meant by *the moment of the beep*. That clarification is essential to the DES process, which aims to confine itself to (“cleave to”) discussing experience that was occurring at the moment of the beep. First-day interviews always (or perhaps nearly always) focus on such clarification.

11:44 GP: Yes. That’s my best effort at recollecting. What, what’s happen. [RTH: Okay] Yes.

11:48 RTH: And, and I, I’m, I’m accepting best efforts this, we’re, we’re not trying to be perfect here. We’re trying to be as good as we can get, and maybe we’re gonna get better at it, and maybe we’re not. And, and so your eyeball, I’m gathering that your eyeballs *and* your experience at the moment, what we’re calling the moment of the beep, one microsecond before the beep, is aimed at “e.g.” as a *visual* experience. I’m seeing “e.g.”

12:21 GP: [Nods head] Yes.

12:21 RTH: And is this mostly a visual experience, as opposed to a, like is... [GP: Yeah] Is “e.g.” is “e.g.” *for example*? Is that what “e.g.” means?

12:32 GP: Yes. Yes, Yes

12:32 RTH: And, uh,

12:35 GP: *Example given*, yeah.

12:37 RTH: Okay. And, and, and so what’s present to you is the “e.g.,” rather than the *for example*? Is that correct?

12:37 Russ comments: RTH is asking whether Gualtierio’s experience is more of the *letters* or more of the *semantic significance* of those letters. That is, is Gualtierio more experientially aimed at the characters as seen (at the “e.g.”-ness of the letters themselves) or at the meaning of those characters as understood (at the *for-example*-ness of the letters)?

This is the beginning of the second main exploration in DES—clarifying the main aspects of the experience (the first aspect is the temporal clarification—see the comment at 11:19). The first several DES interviews are always (or at least nearly always) aimed at clarifying/practicing those two skills: cleaving to the moment of the beep and cleaving to experience.

Also: RTH apparently didn’t register that Gualtierio’s definition of “e.g.” is *example given* rather than *for example* (see Gualtierio’s 12:35 turn). RTH’s question at 12:37 would have been somewhat better had he used Gualtierio’s lexicon, asking: “So what’s present to you is the ‘e.g.’ rather than the *example given*?” thus keeping the question tied to Gualtierio’s personal lexicon. (That would also be true of the upcoming questions referring to *for example*.)

12:45 GP: Yes. Yes. Yes. The, y’know, I’m, I’m looking at the letters typed on the screen. Yes.

- 12:49 RTH: Okay.
- 12:52 GP: Because that's what I was typing, so I just typed it. So I guess there was a moment where like the, the typing was complete. I was basically experi- y'know, well, here's a thought as you, as you add something like that to a paragraph, you wanna maybe check that you typed correctly or you typed when you wanted to type. So I guess it was part of a, maybe a control check on the success of my action before moving back to the end of the paragraph.
- 12:52 Russ comments: That turn is explanation, which is to say, it is *not* cleaving to directly-apprehended-at-the-moment-of-the-beep experience, so RTH will want to return the focus to the at-the-moment-of-the-beep experience. This is standard first-few-days DES interview fare—no one (or nearly no one), on the first sampling day or several, cleaves to the moment and cleaves to experience.
- 13:23 RTH: Okay. So I'm not...
- 13:24 GP: [they talk over each other] I don't know that I was *experiencing* that. I'm sort of *reconstructing* that now.
- 13:28 RTH: Okay. And, and, and everything that we talk about is a reconstruction—I'm accepting that. I think maybe we can get better at recon- at, at limiting the reconstruction. That's, that's sort of the aim. We're trying to, we're trying to improve that to the extent that we can.
- 13:45 But what I'm, what I'm, what I have so far gleaned is that this is about the letters "e.g." rather than the meaning *for example*.
- 13:45 Russ comments: The conversation in the 12:52—13:28 turns has been about explanation, causation, theory (that is, is *not* cleaving to the moment and cleaving to experience). RTH has acknowledged the importance of explanation, etc., in his 13:28 turn, but at 13:45 he guides the conversation back to what is central to DES (Gualtierio's at-the-moment-of-the-beep experience) by asking for a distinction between potential kinds of experience. (See the comments at 12:37 and 12:52.)
- 13:54 GP: Yes.
- 13:55 RTH: And it is quite possible to be typing "e.g." and, and in my experience is just "for example," and it's "e.g. that comes outta my fingertips and onto the screen. But in my experience is *for example*."
- 13:55 Russ comments: RTH here is undermining the characterization that he himself has just (13:45) stated, and to which Gualtierio has assented. This self-undermining is a central feature of DES (and any good) interviewing—it indicates that RTH would prefer to apprehend Gualtierio's experience with fidelity rather than be thought to be correct in an interpretation. Even if RTH's characterization at 13:45 is correct (or largely correct), he wants to model and practice keeping the options open and on the table.
- The general principle: Try to keep all possibilities alive and active until it has been demonstrated that those aspects are no longer possibilities. After all competing

possibilities have been eliminated, there is warrant to believe that what's left is an apprehension with fidelity.

14:12 (RTH continues) *Or* my experience could be of *saying* to myself, "e.g." But I'm gathering that, no, that those two things are *not* part of my experience. What's part of my experience is the seeing of the *letters* "e.g.", not the semantic [GP: Mm-hmm.] (either spoken or understood or innerly spoken or whatever) nature of it. Is that right?

14:12 Russ comments: The DES art is to balance genuine forthcomingness with keeping alternatives alive. Here, apparently RTH believes that he has been adequately self-undermining, so he can now forthcomingly state what he has heard. But even then, he leavens it with "is that right?"

14:37 GP: Yeah. I would say that, I would say that as, as best I can remember, it was mostly just the letter, the shapes of the letters themselves. I mean, with understanding that they are the letters *e* with a dot and *g* with a dot. And that, that's what I meant to type. And of course, y'know, if you had asked me, I knew why I was typing that cuz I was there to add, I was adding that, that was an example. But I wasn't really experiencing that as far as I can remember. I was just kinda noticing that yes, the, those letters were there now where they should have been.

15:13 RTH: Okay. So that, that kinda a distinction between the letters and the semantic, meaning behind the letters, you're seem pretty clear that it's the one and not the other. [Gualtierio: Yes.] And, and we're not so sure about exactly where the time came. Maybe it's, and we're not so sure about some other kinds of stuff, but, but, but I guess that what, what I guess I'm observing is that it's, it's, it's not like it's a total mess out there, in your experience. Your experience is pretty clearly differentiating between these aspects.

15:13 Russ comments: Note that RTH is *not* saying that Gualtierio is right, or that he is skilled; and he is not saying that Gualtierio is wrong or unskilled. RTH's aim is to acknowledge that we can, at least perhaps, grasp aspects of experience—that the task is not hopeless.

RTH's goal for Gualtierio is the same as for himself: keep honing the skill of cleaving to experience at the moment of the beep without prematurely settling on one explanation or preference (see the comment at 13:55).

15:49 GP: Yes. [RTH: (inaudible)] Yes. Between those aspects? Yes.

15:57 RTH: Okay. [pause] And, uh, I am the shifting, of the shifting of my attention to the end of the paragraph. Are we deciding that, that's coming after the moment of the beep?

16:09 GP: Yes. But so when you say it's differentiating pretty clearly, what, what it's differentiating *not* very clearly is the boundary between the time that those letters come into my focus and the time they got out, they go out of my focus, and also the surrounding text or the, the surrounding of that portion of my visual field, y'know. I say "e.g." where in, maybe in the foveal region, y'know, like the fixation point, at that moment right before the beep, when, y'know, when you point, y'know, you do the

diagram, the point, y'know, that that looks, it's supposed to look maybe like a, like a point on a continuum, but of course, visual experience takes a little bit of time to come online and to be felt. So it's, y'know, it's maybe more accurate to say there was a short interval during which right before the beep, there was a short interval during which those letters were in the, at the center of my visual attention. Um, and there was certainly other things surrounding them that were, at least in the neighborhood of my experience, y'know. I mean, I wasn't focusing on that, but I was at least faintly aware of at least like, the surrounding region of, of, of those letters.

16:09 Russ comments: This is a knowledgeable description of the optics / mechanics / physics / neuropsychology of visual perception. However, DES is *not* concerned with visual perception—DES wishes to cleave to *experience*, not perception. RTH's response will have to be responsive to both Gualtierio's description of visual perception and DES's interest in directly apprehended experience.

17:50 RTH: So I, I, I totally agree with that. And not only are you visually aware of it, but I presume that you're also semantically aware of it (whatever we're gonna call that): you know, what this paragraph is saying and what you're trying to say and what the correction is gonna be. All that stuff is somehow driving your [GP: Yes.] action, even though it might not be explicitly present to me right at this particular moment. [GP: Mm-hmm. Yes.] And is there anything else in your experience at this particular moment?

17:50 Russ comments: RTH states his acceptance of the perceptual view, but he does *not* engage with it. For example, he does *not* open a discussion of whether "there was a short interval during which those letters were in the, at the center of my visual attention"—eye movements are not smooth but jump around 20 or 40 times a second, and what happens during each of those saccadic jumps can be debated. He does *not* engage any such discussion of visual perception. He acknowledges it, but then moves back to directly apprehended experience: "And is there anything else in your experience at this particular moment?"

Gualtierio's directly apprehended experience is doubtless connected to his eye movements, his command of English, his understanding of the subject matter that he is revising, his political views, his level of caffeine or testosterone, and a huge number of other important influences, each of which is worthy of investigation. But those are all behind Gualtierio's directly apprehended experience (if he has any).

18:25 GP: Nothing that I remember, or that I, yeah, I didn't write anything else, and I don't really remember anything else. The, yeah, I think I said everything I, [inaudible].

18:39 RTH: Okay, I'm good. Lauren, you good? [LG nods and gives a thumbs up] Okay. On to beep number 2.

18:47 GP: Um, beep number 2, um, startled me a little bit and after that I, I turned the volume to the minimum volume, which still at that time seemed a little bit too loud. But after that, the subsequent beeps, it didn't startle me and it didn't bother me anymore. So this is just a methodological note. Um, not very important, but maybe, but, um, I, I made a note as the beep was too loud! [laughs] Anyway-

- 19:16 RTH: If I, if I were to build the beepers again, I would make the, the minimum beep a little bit softer
- 19:22 GP: Anyway, the, um-
- 19:24 RTH: But I would also note that most people have the same reaction that you just reaction, which was, it was worse on the second beep and not so bad after that.
- 19:31 GP: Wow. Okay!
- 19:32 RTH: People, people, people adjust, adjust to...
- 19:36 GP: That's right. That's right. I think I adjusted by, by the third beep I adjusted fine.

SAMPLE 1.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

19:41 (Gualtierio continues) Okay. So I was reading an email at the beep. I was looking at dots at the end of the sentence, so there's like a dot, dot, dot at the end of the email. But my attention was shifting rapidly through the text. That's, that's what I wrote.

20:01 RTH: So at, at what we're calling the moment of the beep, your most, your attention is mostly on the ellipses, the dot, dot, dot at the end?

20:01 Russ comments: RTH's referring to "ellipses" is a methodological mistake. Gualtierio had called them "dot, dot, dot," and it would have been better for RTH to have adopted Gualtierio's terminology. Here's why:

To refer to *ellipses* is to consider the dot, dot, dot as a single semantic unit, whereas to refer to *dot, dot, dot* is to consider (or at least to keep alive the possibility) that Gualtierio's interest was in an individual dot or in the three-ness of the dots rather than their semantic significance. We don't know which meaning Gualtierio intended, but by RTH interjecting *ellipses*, he is, as DES would say, *out ahead of* Gualtierio, and perhaps coerces the conversation in the direction of a single unit. He tries to correct himself by saying "the dot, dot, dot at the end," but the damage has been done.

DES is a performance art, and perfection is not achievable.

20:08 GP: Yeah. Yeah. On the ellipses. Yes.

20:09 RTH: And, and there's something about going through the rest of the sentence or the rest of the text or something? Or I didn't quite understand.

20:20 GP: Yeah, cuz I'm, y'know, I'm reading quickly, so I'm moving, y'know, my fixation point, my eyes, y'know, I'm saccading, I don't know, through the text. And so I'm, I guess it's a little bit like the beep before, where even though I am somewhat artificially reconstructing the main focus of my attention at the time, right before the beep as the ellipses, there's also this, this sense that I'm going through this text. So it's not, it's not static, it's not like, I'm not like really fixating on it, on that I, I am remembering being at that point in this sentence right before the beep, but I was also shifting attention all, the whole time.

- 21:18 RTH: So is that to say (going back to my diagram here) [RTH holds up diagram from before] is that to say that I'm reading this sentence and I get to the dot, dot, dot here, and the beep happens? [GP: Yes.]
- 21:32 RTH: And, and does it seem, and this is about your experience, not about a theory, about the way saccades work or whatever, but does it seem like at the moment of this beep, for whatever reason, I'm actually focusing on the dot, dot, dot portion? Or does it seem like, well, my focus was pretty much continuous along here and, and at the moment it happened to be on the dot, dot, dot portion. [GP: Yeah.] So my question is, have you, have you sort of made a little mini figure for yourself of the dot, dot, dot? Or are you gliding along the, the reading experientially and it happens to be at the dot, dot dot?
- 22:16 GP: The second one. Yeah. [RTH: Okay.] That's how I felt like I, yeah, I'm gliding through. And then coincidentally, right before the beep, I was gliding through the dot, dot dot, but I wasn't stopping there.
- 22:29 RTH: So it wasn't like I had made a thing out of the dot, dot dot. It was that I'm going through this sentence, [GP: Yes.] and at the moment it's at the dot, dot, dot? [GP: Right.] And so far about this beep, we haven't said anything at all about the meaning of this sentence. Is the meaning part of your experience?
- 23:02 GP: Not, uh, not at that moment, no. [RTH: Okay.] I don't think so.
- 23:08 RTH: So at the moment of this beep, it's a visual...
- 23:12 GP: Yes.
- 23:14 RTH: ...a visual stream of letters going by, I guess something like that, which happens at the moment of the be- beep to be the dot, dot, dot, *rather than* I am reading the, the, the sentence, "I'll see you tomorrow at lunch..." whatever that sentence said.
- 23:35 GP: Well, yes, and I don't even remember which email it was or what it said, and I didn't write it down, [RTH: Okay.] which to me suggests that it, that was not really part of my experience at that moment.
- 23:48 RTH: Okay. And, and so what I, I would say about that is this is the first sampling day. And so there's skills to be amassed here. And, and I'm, I, I think it's totally possible for the semantics of a situation to be processed—you're *no doubt* processing what this reading is—but that can be, *that can be* entirely a- as it would, as it might seem from what we've said so far, entirely unconscious or outside of awareness, or not experienced, or whatever, however you wanna call that. It's happening in your bag of neurons, but not necessarily experienced. *Or* it could be that it was experienced and you forgot to tell us about it, forgot to write it down. Either way is fine with me. I, I, what I *don't* want us to do is to say, well, I'm listening to what Russ says here. And he said, well, semantics must be important. Therefore I should be looking for semantic content in all of my experience. That's *not* what I'm saying. What I'm saying is the sort

of the opposite of that. I'm, I'm saying let's, let's *accept* that it is possible at a particular moment to be processing semantic material without it being experienced.

- 23:48 Russ comments: This turn (like many others) is an instance of the iterative process. RTH is *not* trying to figure out what was experienced at the moment of beep 1.2; he is laying out possibilities that he (and hopefully Gualtierio) can take seriously when apprehending and describing *next week's* samples. In that sense, DES is always *forward* looking (and perhaps only to a lesser extent *backward* looking).
- 25:11 GP: Yes. And there's gonna be semantic material in subsequent beeps. So...
- 25:19 RTH: And, and about the visual characteristics, are you noticing any particular visual characteristics? Or is it that your, your eyeballs are tracking along and that's it?
- 25:32 GP: Yeah, I just, I just wrote down, I was focusing on those dots, the, the ellipses, and- or not that I was not focusing in the sense that I was stopping at them, but in the sense that right at the moment where the beep, right before the beep happened, I was passing through the dots and noticing the dots. [RTH: Okay.] That's all. So, yeah, I mean, y'know, just the literal white dots on it, this is white text over a black background, if that matters. Whereas in the previous beep, it was black text over a white background. This is because of my, my word processors set up that way. Whereas my email reader is, uh, Outlook, Microsoft Outlook is set up to show the white text over black, black then black background.
- 25:32 Russ comments: RE "I was focusing on those dots, the, the ellipses"
This is the penalty that is the result of Russ mentioning ellipses (see the comment at 20:01). This turn makes it clear that Gualtierio's experience is of *dots*, not of *ellipses*, but because Russ has mentioned ellipses, Gualtierio has to struggle a bit against the notion that he is seeing an ellipsis.
- 26:32 RTH: Got it. So a lot of what happens on the first day is we have to debate what, what timeframe we're, we're dealing here with. And so I guess I don't want us to come away thinking that Russ wants us only to get a really short experience, and any long experience doesn't count. [GP: Mm-hmm.] That's not true. I'm happy for an experience to be as long as you, as long as you want it to be minutes, it could be, or seconds or whatever long. I'm happy with that as long as it's *present* at the moment of the beep. [GP: Okay.] So there might be some kind of semantic processing, and I'm using that as an example, that might have been five seconds long. I'm thinking about the lunch date that this guy's suggesting or whatever. And if that's an experience for a long period of time and it, and it is punctured by the beep—caught in flight by the beep—then that would count for me, even though it might be fairly long. So I don't want us, I don't want us to eliminate things or exclude things from experience just because they're longer. That's what that lecture is about.
- 26:32 Russ comments: RTH uses "lecture" in an ironic way, because what he is saying is not really a lecture at all. A *lecture* is a speech about abstract concepts, perhaps illustrated with examples drawn from some abstractly nameless pool of examples. What RTH is doing here is *not* a lecture; it is a conversation about Gualtierio's

experiences as they have been discussed so far. Thus this conversation illustrates an important feature of the iterative method. I think it would have been *impossible* to transmit the content of this conversation by giving a lecture prior to Gualtiero's participation—nearly every word in this conversation would have had a different meaning / connotation if it had been a part of an abstract lecture prior to sampling. *Now*, Gualtiero has a concrete sense *for Gualtiero* of what it means to be longer or shorter, or at the moment of the beep or before the beep. RTH's words *now* are transactions between RTH and GP *about Gualtiero's experience as it has concretely been unfolding and discussed*. Prior to sampling, RTH's words of a seemingly-similar-content lecture would have been *about everybody's experience except Gualtiero's*. Those are entirely different worlds.

Almost all DES observers wants me to accelerate the DES process by giving more complete pre-sampling instructions, or video examples, etc. I don't think it is possible, and therefore it is not desirable. For the conversation to advance Gualtiero's skills, the content *must be* based on Gualtiero's own concrete sampling instances, not on abstractions.

- 27:40 GP: Okay. Okay. So yeah, that helps. That clarifies. Yeah. So if I remember things that had been going on for longer, uh, but they were still present in some way, it's definitely fair game to include-
- 27:53 RTH: That, that's fair, that's fair game for, for including it. [GP: Yeah.] But what I *don't* want you to do is to theorize, well, I'm, I'm reading and I'm getting in comprehension, and therefore it must have been in my experience [GP: Sure.] And so I'm gonna tell 'em is what it-
- 28:05 GP: And I also, it sounds like you also don't want me to try to recollect a whole stream of thoughts that happened over a period of time. Is that right?
- 28:14 RTH: That's correct. Un- unless they're still present. [GP: Yeah.] So if, if you had three or four different experiences that were happening simultaneously, and one might have started 30 seconds ago and is still going on, and another one started five seconds ago and is still going on, as long as they're both still going on, [GP: Yeah.] I'm... But I don't want you to try to speculate about this cuz I'm thinking about this because five minutes ago I was thinking about that and five minutes before that I was thinking about that. That's, that's, I don't think that's possible. [GP laughs] Well, I, I think it's possible to speculate that, but I don't think it has anything to do with anything experiential necessarily. [GP: Right, right.] People are not good at knowing the causation of their own experience, I don't think.
- 28:59 GP: Right. Okay.
- 29:02 RTH: So I'm happy with that. Lauren? [LG nods head] Number 3.

SAMPLE 1.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 29:08 GP: Number 3 is I think an interesting case. I was taking a nap and the beep woke me up from the nap. Um, and at the moment right before the beep, I was thinking that

something's impossible. And it was something specific. I just don't remember what it was. I, it was the thought of some, it was a, it was a full propositional thought of something being impossible. I remember the impossible part of the content. I don't remember the rest. Um, and, um, it was part of a train of thought. The train of thought was clearly in my experience, um, not, it wasn't visual. It was like propositional thinking. It wasn't inner speech, it was-

30:01 RTH: It was not, not an inner speech?

30:03 GP: Not inner speech, at least I didn't experience it as inner speech. I, um, y'know, I would dare to call that unsymbolized thought, um, using your, y'know, label. Um, and what I like about this is that it's a very nice, crisp, to me crisp example of how you can have trains of discursive or propositional thought without it necessarily having inner speech *even in your sleep while you're not dreaming*. I wasn't dreaming in the normal sense of having a succession of visual experiences or maybe other sensory experiences. Um, there was any, there was nothing visual about it. No.

31:02 RTH: So would you, would, when you say you were asleep, do you think that you were, you were actually asleep or were you just sort of [GP laughs] dozing, do-doing along? Or can't you tell the difference between that?

31:14 GP: I was asleep. I was asleep. Um, I cannot tell you which phase of sleep, but I was asleep. I was not awake, and the, the, the beep woke me up.

31:24 RTH: Okay.

31:25 GP: And then, so after the beep, I was awake, but before the beep I was sleeping.

31:29 RTH: Okay. And, and as far as your experiences are concerned, does it seem that this thought was ongoing and the beep caught it as already ongoing. As opposed to the beep woke me up and in the act of waking up, I thought about this?

31:46 GP: No, I was, I was thinking about stuff in my sleep and I, and the beep woke me up, and right before the beep, I was thinking about something that I had, I was sort of deducing or, y'know, inferring that that was not possible. And I don't remember what *that* was. I just remember the, the content-- *no, that's impossible*. And then, and then that's what, when the beep happened, and it woke me up.

32:16 RTH: Okay. And, and-

32:18 GP: It interrupted a train of thought. The beep interrupted the train of thought.

32:21 RTH: Okay. So you seem very confident about that. [GP: Yes.] I would, I would, I would say that there are philosophers who argue that, that everything that I do is about this making up stuff that the beep always makes, gets people to make up stuff as it, instead of, instead of catching things that are, that are ongoing. I don't think that's probably true. And I, and, but I, but I can't argue against that. I think that's, that's possible much as it's possible that I'm a brain in a vat.

32:44 GP: [laughs]. No, you're not.

32:49 RTH: I don't think so either, but I think it's, I think it's in the realm of possibility. But at any rate, so, so at about this particular beep, is it this, this unremembered thing is *impossible*? Or is it this unremembered thing is *not possible* and or does it, does that distinction not make sense. *Is impossible* versus *not possible*?

33:15 GP: Well, yeah, I would say that distinction doesn't really make a lot of sense in this case because it wasn't a verbalized thought. It was just the, the semantic content of that. Um, so whatever those two things have as common meaning is what I was thinking. Not so much verbalize one way or verbalize another way.

33:44 RTH: Okay, and that's fine. I'm, I'm not, I'm not trying to suggest that it has, that there has to be a distinction to be made. [GP: Mm-hmm.] What I'm, what I'm doing (to have a meta conversation about it) is at one time you said "it's impossible" or "something is impossible." [He refers to 29:08.] Another time you said "it's not possible." [He refers to 31:46] You said it two different ways. And I heard that, and that's my job to, to pay attention to what people are saying. And so I was, I was asking whether there was one of those seemed like a clarification of the other, which maybe it was and maybe it's not.

33:44 Russ comments: This is a good example of the distinction between semantic meaning and apprehended experience. *It's impossible* and *it's not possible* are semantically synonymous, but they are (or at least may be) experientially distinctly different. In similar situations, many DES participants would say something like: What was present to me was *it's impossible*, and it is *not adequate* to render it as *it's not possible*. For them, we would then want to explore whether words are somehow inchoately present (perhaps not spoken, heard, or seen, but present nonetheless). GP, by contrast, says *it doesn't matter* whether we render it as *it's impossible* or *it's not possible*. GP's experience here is, apparently, less wordy than that of some other participants.

34:20 GP: Well, good catch.

34:23 RTH: And, and I would say that that is, that that is what descriptive experience sampling. That's what makes it interesting from my point of view. My job is to pay attention to the, [GP: Yeah.] to the nuances of what you're saying and, and try to figure out whether it, whether it has any import, without having a theory about whether it should or not. I don't, I noticed two different things and uh, and then I was following up on that, and that's really it. No, no theory behind that other than he, he said it two, he said it two ways. Is that interesting?

34:56 GP: Yeah. Would it, would it help at all to say more about why I'm confident that I was asleep and that I was thinking of my sleep, or that's unnecessary?

35:12 RTH: It wouldn't occur to me to ask that. If, if you think I, I It might be interesting, I'd be happy to hear it. But it wouldn't occur to me to ask, because be-because I don't

wanna try to get into the position of trying to prove that one way or the other. [GP: Yeah.] I, I think it might, y'know, if we ever speed up fMRI by ten or twelve orders of magnitude, then maybe we can, we can solve that problem. But, but short of short of that, I'm, I'm happy to accept that your experience is of being interrupted, of having this thought be interrupted *rather than* of making it up in the act of awakening.

35:51 GP: GP: Yeah.

35:53 RTH: And, and that you're confident about that.

35:56 GP: Yeah.

35:57 RTH: And, and I would agree with Carruthers or whoever and say, well, y'know, he's probably mistaken about that, but, but, or he *might be* mistaken about that. I *think* that's what Carruthers would say. But, but I don't, but, but I don't really care as long as we do the best we can of, of nailing down the experience.

36:16 GP: Well, what I think, what I find interesting about this is that I would not say that I was experiencing myself being asleep. That's not part of the experience. That is knowledge that I reach a different way specifically because I, I do have, I did have an experience of awakening because of the beep. Um, I also have the knowledge that I was awake after the beep. And I can contrast that with how my mental life slash experience was before the beep. And that was the kind of experience that you have when you're asleep and you have thoughts while you're asleep. Not everybody has thoughts when they're asleep that they can report, but, uh, but some people do, and I do. And I have ex-I've had that experience of thinking in my sleep many other times.

37:15 Um, and I also know that I, y'know, I lie down to take a nap. I was aware of that, of feeling sleepy, and I thought, well, let's keep the, um... [RTH: Ear plug.] Ear plug from the beeper in just in case it beeps while I'm asleep so we can see what was happening, if anything was happening in my experience as I was sleeping. So I was, I made a conscious decision to make this part of the process. Y'know, I, so I knew I was going to sleep, um, and I left the thing in my ear, but from the beeper on purpose. Um, and, I, y'know, I didn't know if there was beeping. It was gonna beep while I was asleep, but it did. Um, and I, y'know, I'm, I'm also familiar with myself, my brain, how it feels when I go to sleep, um, how it feels when I'm thinking when I'm sleeping, and how it feels when I'm waking up.

38:14 And on top of that one important difference, there's an important difference in the quality of thought while sleeping versus the quality of thought when I'm awake. Um, and I could say a little bit about that if you want. Um, and that is that [pause] when I'm awake, I can much more, well, I can with relative ease, direct my attention voluntarily to one thing or another and act on my thoughts. For example, I can move my eyes or head or, or hands or speak or not speak, or even as I'm fixating on something, I can decide to shift my attention to the right, to the left or whatever. Um, but in my sleep, I can't do that. So whatever is happening, whether it's a dream or a thought, train of thought, it's much more kinda automated. It just sort of flows on its own and there's virtually no volition or voluntary control over it.

39:20 Um, unless it's a lucid dream. But that's happened to me very, very few times. I've had a few lucid dreams, but other than that, and even then, the control is very

limited. But other than that, y'know, whatever's happening is happening kinda on its own. There's not really the kinda ability to shift attention-- and also memory is much more fleeting. That's why I don't remember what I was thinking. That, y'know, I was thinking it was impossible, but what was it? I don't know. Because by the time I was writing it down, it was gone because it was because I was asleep.

39:57 RTH: So, so let me tell you what my reaction is to that, to that.

40:01 GP: Okay. [laughs].

40:02 RTH: And, and my, so my reaction is: That's an interesting story, and Gualtiero is pretty clearly interested in that story. And the more the, and, and I have a sort of a general rule is that the more interesting a story, the less likely it is to be true [GP: laughs]. And, and, and I don't really know whether that's true or not. I think it's quite possibly true, but it, but, but what it, what it does for me from my experience and, uh, of listening to that, it, it, it, it, uh, it, uh, potential, potentiates, some sleep related skeptical antennae. So I've, I've got a bunch of antennae, I think, as it seems to me, I got a bunch of antennae where I'm listening to people and I'm gonna be listening to Gualtiero about sleep stuff, something related to sleep stuff.

40:50 And I don't, and, and I don't really know whether that's true or not. He's told a story. It was an interesting story. Maybe he just thought that, that would, I would find that as an interesting story. And it's not really, not really a particular interest to him, in which case that antenna of mine will eventually go back to sleep. And, and, uh...

41:09 GP: Yeah.

41:09 RTH: So, so that, y'know, I'm, I'm not saying I'm not believing, I'm believing you. What I'm, what I'm, I guess I'm saying this as a.... What I, what I take to be the first day or two of sampling is trying to be honest with each other about what it is that we're doing here. And, and one of the things that I value is what I would call the bracketing of presuppositions. And the conversation that I'm having right now is a bracketing-of-presuppositions conversation, which is to say, I've heard what Gualtiero has to say about sleep, and I'm gonna bracket that, which doesn't, which *means* I'm not gonna think it's true, and I'm not gonna think it's not true. I'm going to think, well, there's some motivation behind this sleep conversation.

42:00 RTH: I don't know what it is. I'm gonna be interested in it. I'm not gonna just buy into it. This, I'm not gonna say, well, if Gualtiero said it was true, that's gotta be true. I'm not gonna, I'm not, that's not true. But I'm also not gonna say, well, look, Gualtiero says it's gonna be true, that's gotta be false. That's not true either. It's that I'm trying to, I'm trying to get at what Gualtiero's *experience* is, and, and the, and the sleep *may turn out to be* a doorway into that, and it may turn out to be a doorway that *blocks that*. I don't know. I'm pretty sure Gualtiero doesn't know, or maybe he doesn't know, maybe he knows that doesn't know or whatever. Lauren and I don't know. And, and, and, and I would say I'm, I'm being, I'm, I'm presuming that Gualtiero is going to accept the fact that I'm being skeptical about what he's saying, and he's gonna take that with as a, as a sign of *goodwill* rather than, than criticism. Something like that. But, yeah.

- 42:00 Russ comments: DES is very simple: be interested in the experience that was directly apprehended as being ongoing at the moment of the beep. Gualtiero's discussion of sleep states was a longish (5 minutes, from 34:56 to 39:55) excursion *away from* (or tangential to, or alongside, or whatever) directly apprehended experience. The DES art is to help the process cleave to experience. There are many ways to do that, and I do not claim that the way I chose is the best way (or even, necessarily, a good way). I chose to be light-heartedly confrontational ("the more interesting a story, the less likely it is to be true"; 40:02) and the immediate heartiness of Gualtiero's laugh suggested to me that that gesture landed well. Good! The interview is a dance in which Gualtiero and I are learning how to talk with each other, whether to trust each other, whether we can be genuine with each other, and all of that is necessary for Russ to get a faithful glimpse into Gualtiero's at-the-moment-of-the-beep experience.
- 43:12 GP: Yeah. Yeah. Just one minor clarification is, I don't mean to say that I'm always having conscious thought, trains of thought in my sleep. It, it can happen. It has happened before, but it, it's not a normal occurrence.
- 43:28 RTH: And I would say in passing that I very often take a nap when I'm trying to think something, think about something. And when I wake up, sometimes I feel like I've solved that problem. And, and, y'know, getting supine or whatever makes, makes the different perspective on the world. So I'm, I'm not, I'm not disbelieving any of it. I'm just saying there was some energy behind that. I don't know what that energy is. And, uh, and, and I'm, my job is to pay attention to where, where energy takes me when, and whatever I don't have a, that clear definition of energy, but I think somebody watching this video could say, Well, yeah, he had some energy behind what his talking about his sleep experience, I think. [pause]
- 44:18 So: what I've got from this experience is I was asleep and I was having what, what Russ would call an unsymbolized thought sound, pretty much like an unsymbolized thought where I was analyzing something. I was conceptualizing something as being impossible or not possible. [GP: Yes.] And I can't remember what the thing was, but I'm guessing that if the beep had come a little bit before that or whatever, I would've known what I, what, what that was. But it, [GP: yeah.] what I got was just the second half of that experience or whatever.
- 44:56 GP: Yes.
- 44:59 RTH: Lauren, you happy? [LG smiles and nods] Number 4.
- 44:59 Gualtiero comments: The conversation about whether I was asleep points at an interesting difference between how RTH approaches DES and how I do. RTH seems to have refined DES as a method for describing the content of someone's experience at time instants that are as temporally confined as possible (i.e., snapshots), bracketing any assumptions about what is real and not real outside the experience. This bracketing business sounds Husserlian and I would be interested in hearing more about whether RTH got it from Husserl or other followers of Husserl and how that came about. Accordingly, RTH seems to be bracketing my statements that I was asleep. I, however, am interested in theorizing about what is the physical basis of

experience, how it evolves through time, and what explains its functioning. This difference will show up in other areas. With respect to whether I was awake or asleep, I think wakefulness vs sleep is a significant difference for various reasons: for understanding what sorts of experience are possible when people are awake or asleep, for understanding sleep versus wakefulness, for understanding the effect of sleep on memory, and more. Therefore, I don't want to bracket whether I was asleep, and I don't see a reason to. For whether I was asleep is an objective fact that, in principle, could have been established by looking at my EEG patterns or other objective evidence. Luckily, there is no need to do that because at least in that case, I am 100% confident that I was asleep and I have no good reason to doubt it.

Russ comments: RE "at time instants that are as temporally confined as possible (i.e., snapshots)"

To say "confined" and to refer to "snapshots" is to imply that DES is interested only in short experiences. That is not the case (it's my fault, because that was implied in my earlier writing). So I would prefer "temporally constrained" and ("i.e. caught in flight by the moment of the beep onset") so the phrase reads "at time instants that are as temporally constrained as possible (i.e., experiences caught in flight by the moment of the beep onset)." The experiences themselves can be seconds or minutes long.

RE "I would be interested in hearing more about whether RTH got it from Husserl or other followers of Husserl and how that came about it"

I invented the beeper in 1973, and initially used it basically to cue the administration of questionnaires (much like modern ESM). By 1976-ish, I had realized that the beeper was a good idea but the questionnaires were just as problematic when administered at a beep as they were in more typical one-shot administration. What to do?

To try to answer that, I wore the beeper myself nonstop for a year, from when I got up to when I went to sleep. At the same time, I read Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, and Kierkegaard; I read in the Buddhist, Zen, and Jain tradition; I read Skinner and those who would avoid the experiential realm altogether; I read the memory-skeptic and eyewitness-testimony literature. Compost all that together and I got, by 1978-ish, the beginnings of what I would later call DES.

As for the bracketing thread: I admired Husserl's intention to bracket presuppositions, but I could not accept his confidence that that would lead to some kind of eidetic or essential realization. How to apply Husserlian phenomenology without requiring an eidetic interest? I was influenced in this regard by the Duquesne school—added that to the compost heap. Bracketing for me is reducing the influence of presuppositions and theories; I don't expect it to be perfect or that it will reveal an essence.

RE "RTH seems to be bracketing my statements that I was asleep."

Yes I do, in the same sense as I wish to bracket all of our understandings (yours and mine and Lauren's) about everything that we observe, everything that we say or don't say. What it means to bracket will have to evolve for us.

I fully accept the importance of sleep; I, too, would like to understand the physical basis of experience, how it evolves through time, and what explains its

functioning. To “bracket,” as I understand it, is to accept the imperfection of my own views, to recognize that I may have blind spots or hypersensitivities, and to build into DES as many handrails as I can to hold in check my own enthusiasms and energize my own apathies.

To bracket Gualtierio’s statement that he was asleep is *not* to disbelieve him; it is *not* to diminish the importance of sleep. It is to accept the approximations that are inherent in saying “I was asleep”: dozing or fast asleep? REM or some other stage? does Gualtierio have a broader or narrower view of sleep than I do? And so on.

I accept that sleep has an objective science, and that we could measure Gualtierio’s sleep according to that objective science. But we didn’t. Maybe we will, if time and interest permit.

In the meantime, I think it is the highest form of respect to accept that I don’t know exactly what Gualtierio meant by “I was asleep”; that I am willing to work at trying to clarify that; that I don’t think that Gualtierio necessarily knows exactly what he means (because, short of nirvana, people are to some degree mistaken about their own impressions).

SAMPLE 1.4 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 45:06 GP: Number 4. I was typing the word “presence.” Um, I stopped after P-R-E cuz the beep interrupted the typing. While typing, I was aware of a related propositional thought that was emerging in my mind at that moment. I think it had to do with the view that propositional thought has its own phenomenology, and it was unsymbolized. Um, and this is because coincidentally this morning I was reading part of a manuscript by a philosopher on grasping thoughts and, y’know, giving an account of that. So it’s sort of related to experience and the, um, phenomenology of thought and intentionality, like sort of just some of the things that we’re studying here.
- 46:05 RTH: Okay. So I’m typing, and I’m in the middle of the word. Is it “present” or “presence”?
- 46:13 GP: “Presence.”
- 46:14 RTH: C-E “presence”?
- 46:15 GP: Yes.
- 46:16 RTH: Okay. And, and I’m halfway through. [GP: Yeah.] And, and so in the temporal aspect, I’m halfway through typing. And is that typing in my experience, or is that just ongoing in my, my experience directed at this propositional thought, of, of [inaudible]?
- 46:36 GP: Yeah, I would say my experience includes both the, the visual check on what I’m typing. So I see the P-R-E appearing on the, on the screen as I’m typing them. And the, the thought I’m so becoming aware of this thought that I’m having about something having to do with propositional thought, having its own phenomenology. Um, I think, like, if I remember correctly, it was something like this, this guy’s view implies or presupposes that, or seems to presuppose that a propositional thought that has no visual images associated with it, does *not* have its own phenomenology. But that goes kinda against the premise of the descriptive experience sampling method, where you

are being asked to report on the phenomenology of your thoughts, whether visual of a sensory or non-sensory. Um, and at least the way you talk about all of this is, you call it all phenomenology of experience, y'know, and it can be just, it could be unsymbolized thought, so it can just be the content itself, but still you, I think for good reason, call it all phenomenology. Um, and it just seemed to be, y'know, in, intention at the very least with what this guy was saying in his book. Now, y'know, this is a very kinda expansive articulation of some of the things that might have been forming in my mind at that moment. And I'm not saying that it was all like fully there, like I described it now, but I think this is some of what was percolating.

- 48:37 RTH: So what you described as percolating is a pretty expansive, as you pointed out, deal. It's what he said and what I said, and what you think about what I said and all that stuff. All that stuff. And is, is there any, is, is, is there any specificity about what you're, what is happening right at the moment of the beep? Or is it just this whole cloud is somehow present to you?
- 49:00 GP: I can't, I couldn't tell, I couldn't tell. The only thing I could tell, like in a kinda clear and vivid way was the, this seeing the letters P-R-E on the screen at that moment. Um, and that I was aware, that I was aware of, y'know, this thinking going on in the background, if you will. Um, but, but there wasn't anything more specific that I could re, re, recall and write down as that's, that's the bit that was in my experience at the moment of, of the beep.
- 49:41 RTH: Already. So, so the bit that you told, told us about the thought process with something like *propositional thought has its own phenomenology*.
- 49:52 GP: Yeah.
- 49:54 RTH: And what I wanna know is whether that characterization is meant to stand for this whole thing about what he wrote in his book and what I've said, and what you think about that and all, all that other stuff? Or are you narrowing it down to this particular aspect of it? Well, *propositional thought has its own intentionality*, and that part about, well, Hurlburt doesn't think that, or whatever. That's, [GP: No.] that, that's penumbra around the...
- 50:23 GP: Yeah, no, it, it, it was a vague, it was vague, like the, the recollection was just too vague to pin it down into a precise thought content. So yeah, I wrote down "it has something to do with" the, I wrote down, it has "something to do with" the view that phenomenon, the proposition of thought has its own phenomenology. But that's why I wrote something to do with it, because it, there was some vague sense of something in that neighborhood being what I was thinking about, but *not* like, that's *exactly* what I was thinking about.
- 51:02 RTH: And as, and as far as your direct experience at this moment, does it make sense to ask, am I more into seeing the word P-R-E appear on the screen? Or am I more into consideration of the propositionality of...

51:23 GP: Yes, and the answer is, it is more, there's more focus, there's more attention to the letters on the screen, because I was *typing* at the moment. So my main kinda goal was to type that word "presence." Um, the thoughts were kinda running on their own.

51:47 RTH: Okay. And by more do you mean 51/49? Or 90/10? Or 60/40? Or...? [GP: laughs] And I don't really care about the numbers, but I, I would like to know, but what do you?

51:59 GP: Let's say, yeah, something like 60, 60/40 maybe.

52:04 RTH: So pretty much substantially more, but by no means entirely, or something like that.

52:08 GP: Yes, yes.

52:08 RTH: And, and I, I don't, I don't care whether we call it 60/40, 75/25, whatever it is, as long as, as long as we are distinguishing between 51/49 and 99/10, and 99/1 or whatever it's up to.

52:21 GP: Yeah, yeah. Something, yeah. Like 70/30 would be about an equally good measure.

52:27 RTH: Fair enough. And, and, and I will, I'm, I, I would also like to react to the word "because" in what you said, you said, I was, I was seeing those words *because* I was typing. I think it is possible, *every bit* possible, to type without having any experience *at all* that's visual or, or kinesthetic, or tactile, or whatever. [GP: Mm-hmm.] That doesn't mean that *you* do it. [GP: Yeah.] Some people can type and have the words appear on the screen and everything, and, and their eyeballs, no doubt, register it and, and their neurons respond to it and whatever. But there, but there's no experiential trace of that. And other people watch, watch it. And I don't have a preference as to which one I think is better. I have a preference for, let's not presume that *just because I'm typing, I must be seeing* the letters on the screen. The question is whether I have an experience of seeing the letters on the screen independent of any theory that I might have about how typing works, and how thinking works, and whatever.

53:35 GP: Yeah.

53:39 RTH: And I would say the conversation that we're having, most of the conversation we're having here is pretty standard first sampling day conversation, where the goal is to somehow learn to talk to each other about what is the moment of the beep and what's in experience and what's not, and how much, and how much is context and how much is implicitly there or explicitly there.

54:06 So what I've got about *this* beep is that at the moment of the beep, I'm typing, I'm pretty, I am, I'm, I'm predominantly watching what I'm typing. And that is predominantly a visual experience rather than a tactile experience or a kinesthetic experience. I'm seeing the letters appear on the screen. And at the same time, I understand myself to be engaged in some cognitive thought-y consideration—don't have a good word for that—of this general notion of the propositional thought and it's phenomenology. But it's not specific. I'm not saying Hurlburt says this, or I don't

believe that, or whatever. I'm, I'm in that, I'm in that pot, stirring that pot, considering, considering that, whatever. Do I have that right?

55:09 GP: Yes.

55:16 RTH: So we are 56 minutes in here. Do we wanna go on and do number 5?

55:24 GP: It's okay with me.

55:25 RTH: I'm ready.

55:26 GP: Okay.

55:27 RTH: Mindful of everybody's time here.

SAMPLE 1.5 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

55:28 GP: This one's easy because, um, it got interrupted. So I was experiencing the word, the words, "the exper.."-- I was reading. So, and I was reading through the words "the experientialist," um, which is a view that this guy defends in his book. And this was part of prepar-preparing for the meeting. And I wasn't, y'know, there was more to read and I wasn't done, but it was time for the meeting. So, um, so all I wrote down is, "I was experiencing quote, unquote 'the experientialist' on the screen while thinking about something related. But I had to stop," because as soon as the beep as, as soon as the, the, the beeper beeped, I also realized that the meeting had already started, or like, I was already like a couple minutes late, so I just wrote down like on the thing, and I clicked on the Zoom link and I joined the meeting, and that's it.

56:37 RTH: And, and so what I, what I've got so far is that I am mostly seeing, I guess, "the experientialist" on the screen.

56:51 GP: Yeah. [RTH: And-] So, very similar to the previous beat where I was [inaudible] something visual, but then I also was *thinking* something at the same time.

57:02 RTH: But I forget what it was.

57:04 GP: But in this case, I don't, I have no information about what that was.

57:08 RTH: And do you think that's because the, the meeting interrupted me? Or because it was a more inchoate thought to begin with, or?

57:15 GP: No, I think it's because, because, uh, after the beep, after the beep, I also became, I noticed a time, um, maybe the beep felt like a reminder that I was, y'know, I, I had, was already kinda in the back of my mind that I had to check the time because it was almost time for the meeting. And then the beep, I guess, shifted my attention enough that I remembered like I needed to check the time and check the time. It's time for the meeting. I'm already a little late, so I wrote down the thing, but by the time I, I wrote down the notes, I had forgotten what I was thinking about. Cuz there had been

like too many interferences, y'know, like the beep, the, the check of the time, the, the, the realization that the meeting has already started. So it's like too much to then remember what was that, what I was thinking about.

58:05 RTH: And then is it also too much to know? So I'm gonna ask this question, but you might say that I, I can't tell you to answer that. So is, so far we've talked about "the experientialist" as being something that I see and that may or may not have any particular semantic significance to me. Am I, am I thinking about whatever it is that this, "the experientialist" is a token for? Or am I, am I seeing the word, "the experientialist" sort of as a word?

58:35 GP: No, I would say I, yeah, I'm reading, so I'm, I partially guess, but, um, the best, the best I could say is I was, I was reading with understanding, y'know, I was, I knew what I, what it meant. [RTH: Okay.] Yeah. It wasn't just the visual form of the, of the letters in a sequence.

59:06 RTH: Then I think, I think we're now at an hour, and I think that's probably a good place that we should probably, we should probably stop here. Any questions or comments either from Gualtiero or Lauren? And shall we do this again?

59:25 GP: Yeah, sure.

59:28 RTH: ...My calendar and see whether we can figure out when to do it.

59:31 GP: You said, you said, yeah, it helps to have multiple sessions like this.

59:36 RTH: It has, it *has to be*. From my, from my point of view, [pause] from my point of view, what we've talked about today raises more questions than it answers. And, and that's not a criticism of Gualtiero or of Russ. That's, that's, uh, uh, an acceptance of the fact that Gualtiero has his sensitivities and vocabularies, and Russ has his, and we have to figure out how to, how to mate those in order for us to be confident that we know what we're talking about. [GP: Yeah.] So I, I, I think it's, I, I think it's *necessary* to do it more than a few times. [GP: Sure.] So today is Tuesday the 13th. When shall we do this again?

They compare calendars

1:01:50 RTH: Does that work for you, Lauren?

1:01:54 LG: Yes. Yes. Thank you so much for letting me join. I really appreciate it.

1:01:58 RTH: Okay. So, and, and in the meantime, I will start the, the, uh, transcript process for *this* interview. And when I get it done and commented on, which may or may not be much before Monday, I will send it to you and you can either look at it or not, depending on whatever you wanna do about that.

1:02:19 GP: Sounds good.

1:02:20 RTH: And then, and then we will do the same thing next time.

1:02:27 GP: Thank you.

1:02:28 RTH: Any other comments, questions?

1:02:32 GP: No.

1:02:34 RTH: All right. Thank you all very much. [GP: Okay.] I'll see you on, and, and let's use the same Zoom link as, as we did this time. I'll try to remember to put that in the, in the calendar invite, but same, same time, same station.

1:02:47 GP: Great.

1:02:47 LG: Thank you.

1:02:49 RTH: Thank you.

1:02:49 GP: Bye.