

TRANSCRIPT WITH COMMENTARY

Olivia: A Podcast Journalist

Olivia Interview 1

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the February 11 interview with Olivia that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/WkjUw3t-q7o>. In green are comments about and explanations of the Descriptive Experience Sampling process. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt

AK = Alek Krumm

Olivia = Olivia R., a podcast journalist

0:00 RTH: So, this is gonna be your first day at sampling. And you said it was difficult. You want to expand on that? Or shall we just go and look at, look at the beeps here?

0:13 Olivia: Um, well let me expand on it, um, and sort of explain what I was ... referred to before about this time not perhaps being the best time. So on Fridays, I take care of my two-year-old. That's my day that I have with her. Um, and, and then, and Saturday mornings I think are just, I mean, once again, she's around, we're sort of at home, my partners are out. So on Fridays, I'm, I'm sort of alone with her at home and, um, but in sort of sole, y'know, I'm the person caring for her on Saturday morning. My partner's around, but, y'know, we're both kind of, um, futzing about the house. The device is very interesting to her. Um, and y'know, she kind of wants to pull the thing coming out of my ear and it's, um, y'know, she just can't quite seem to get past it in the way that a two year old, uh, seems to know.

1:06 RTH: Good for her!

1:07 Olivia: Yeah. Yeah. Um, so there's that, y'know, that's kind of a potentially, y'know, she's kind, I'm trying to stop her from pulling it out and pulling the thing out of the, the headphone jack, uh, the, the headphone out of the jack. Um, but then there's also, I think that's, she's also just really increasing my awareness of it. So I'm not really ever able to kind of forget it. Um, and also I'm just often doing very like physical things with her, like sort of rolling around on the floor or, um, yeah, not really kind of... I think that this thing is best if you're kind of sitting still, or, y'know, just walking around maybe, but not kind of running in the park and pushing a kid on the swings and rolling around on the floor. So, um, I thought I was gonna do it on Friday and I was just, y'know, trying to find a time I thought, oh, maybe I'll pop it in when she has a nap, but that's only ever really an hour and then I've gotta pick her up, y'know, so I couldn't find a time on Friday.

1:07 Russ comments: Olivia is reluctant to sample when she is taking care of her daughter. DES would be fine with such sampling, except for the logistical difficulties Olivia describes.

2:01 Olivia: Um, and so this morning, y'know, she was interrupting it. My partner gave me a bit of respite from her, but, um, yeah, definitely that was an, uh, an obstacle. As well as the fact that when I'm with her, I'm kind of constantly, um, interacting with her in a way that, I mean, I'm, I'm interested to ask you the question about, and, and some of my beeps will, will, beeps will kind of cover that. But like, when you're in the midst of a conversation or an engagement with someone it's very, y'know, the beep will go off and I'd be like, oh, I was in the middle of a sentence. Um, so one of my beeps, I was in the middle of a sentence and I was, and I knew exactly where I was in the sentence was I was trying to find a word.

2:50 Olivia: So I was repeating the three words that I was saying. Um, so I was saying in, in my mind, I was saying "in the, in the," cuz I was trying to say "in the groceries." I was telling my partner that there was something in the groceries that had just arrived, but I was stumbling. I couldn't find the word "groceries" in my head. But almost all of in fact, every single one of my four beeps were mid-conversation. Um, and basically I think, I mean, I, I, I, I do, yeah, I, I couldn't quite... I've written them all down as being what I just said or kind of what was in my mind of what I was saying. And I can't be entirely sure of just before the beep, that was it. or actually it was what I was hearing with the person I was speaking to, um,

3:42 RTH: Well, rather than trying to answer this question as a general question, why don't we look at a few beeps and maybe we should start with the beep that we're already talking about, even if that wasn't the first beep. But that's, we, we're starting to talk about the, in-the-grocery beep. Why don't we, why don't we deal with that? [Olivia: Um hm.] And, and, and then deal with another couple beeps and then come back and talk about the general principles that might be involved. And, and when we should do this again, if we should do this again or whatever. [Olivia: Um hm. Um hm.] Everybody agree that that's a good idea?

4:14 Olivia: Yep.

4:14 AK: Yes.

4:15 RTH: All right. So let's, what, what was this of your first beep or your second or third?

4:19 Olivia: It was second beep.

4:21 RTH: So we'll call this beep 1.2, but we'll talk about it first. [Olivia: Um hm.] And, uh, and it had... So why don't you tell us what was in your experience at this particular beep. Tell us again.

SAMPLE 1.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE (2nd sample, 1st discussion)

4:34 Olivia: Okay. So I was, so it would've been about 6:30, still quite early. I'd just got, gotten out of bed, um, and was down in the kitchen. So we had a grocery delivery that came shortly after six. Um, and my partner had carried them all into the kitchen from the front door. And so my partner was there, y'know, the, my daughter was buzzing around. And I was

standing, uh, at the bench and, and the full sentence was, "Darcy, there were some funny substitutions in the groceries." Because you do these online orders, and if they don't have something that you've ordered, they substitute it with something that they considered to be a fine substitution that sometimes to my mind is not a fine substitution. Um, anyway, so I said, "Darcy, there was funny, yeah, there were some funny substitutions in the, in the, and, and I was, y'know, it was 6:30 in the morning and I couldn't find the word "groceries." So I was sort of right in the middle of trying to conjure the word "grocery" when the beep went off.

- 5:36 RTH: Okay. And, and so when you say here, "I was in the, in the," do you mean that, that you were repeating the words "in the, in the"?
- 5:46 Olivia: Yep. I was saying them out loud.
- 5:49 RTH: And so *saying out* loud "in the, in the." This is not an *inner* experience, this is an out, this is an out-loud thing.
- 5:57 Olivia: Yeah. Yes.
- 6:00 RTH: And the beep happens in the, "in the, in the" ...[laughs at the awkwardness of the expression] I guess in the....
- 6:05 Olivia: In the, in the midst of "in the," in the "in-the"ness.
- 6:07 RTH: In the midst of "in the." [Olivia: Some. Yeah.] Okay. And so, so far what we have described as an external thing, I'm saying aloud "Darcy, there was some funny substitutions in the, in the" <beep>.
- 6:19 Olivia: Mm.
- 6:19 RTH: Is that right?
- 6:21 Olivia: And it may well have even been that I got "gr" "groceries" out before the beep came. [shrugs uncertainly]
- 6:27 RTH: Okay.
- 6:29 Olivia: So maybe it was "in the, in the." Maybe it was "in the, in the groceries," but it was definitely right around the end of that sentence.
- 6:38 RTH: Okay. And, and so we, I guess I have said, this is an external thing--I'm speaking aloud. Is there any inner experience going on? Or is it just, this is, this exhausts my capabilities or my characteristics, my inner characteristics are not present because I'm, I'm involved in this speaking.
- 6:59 Olivia: Yeah. I definitely feel like I don't have an independent line of thought or inner experience that is existing independently from the, um, y'know, conjuring and, and getting out of the words. I mean, I guess the thought was... There was a thought, but

not that, yeah, not one that I feel like I have access to, that was a thought being translated into language. It just felt like all that was going on in my head was putting together that sentence. And it was requiring considerable effort, it being 6:30 in the morning.

- 7:40 RTH: And, and is that effort part of your experience? Or is it just what's in my experience is, I am saying aloud "Darcy, there was some funny substitutions in the, in the groceries" and the beep happens somewhere in there.
- 7:53 Olivia: Yeah. It doesn't feel like there's a, um, concerted, y'know, um, deliberate effort. It's just, that is just what is happening.
- 8:04 RTH: Okay. And the, and, and the substitution, this is, this is about substitutions that they substitute a whipping cream for milk or whatever. [Olivia: Mm.] And is that, is that present to you? Obviously, y'know what you're talking about, but the,
- 8:22 Olivia: Like the particular ones? [TH: Yeah.] Am I thinking in my head of which particular ones?
- 8:26 RTH: And I'm not trying to say that there *should be*, or that there *is*. I'm just asking.... [shrugs]
- 8:31 Olivia: Yeah. I don't think so. No. I think it was all that was in there was the, the words that were coming out.
- 8:38 RTH: Okay. And, and so as best... What, we're, what we have concluded so far (as I've understood it) is (as best I can understand it) is at the moment of the beep I'm speaking aloud and making sense, but I'm stuck on these words. These, these words are those words aren't coming out glibly they're coming out slowly or repeatedly or something. But there's nothing, there's nothing else in my experience. [Olivia: Mmm.] There's, it's not like I've planned this sentence and now I'm waiting to make this sentence match some inner, inner plan. Maybe I have planned this sentence, but that's not in my experience. Is that right?
- 9:16 Olivia: Yeah.
- 9:19 RTH: Okay. Alek, you got [raises eyebrows expectantly]
- 9:23 AK: No, I just wanna clarify about the conjuring the word "groceries." Is, is there anything separate about that? That I haven't understood that, so I'm not trying to suggest it, but is that just part of this speaking aloud process, is I'm currently paused and when "groceries" comes to me, it it's gonna come outta my mouth, but it's not like I experience some mental searching or something for the word?
- 9:50 Olivia: Yeah. That's a good point. I feel like it's more like I'm just waiting for it to arrive, rather than I'm desperately searching for it. Um, and it's probably a symptom of both it being early in the morning, but also, I guess I was standing at the, um, bench, at the kitchen bench, and I'm, I'm sure I was doing something and this,... I haven't noted down what I was doing, um, whether it was getting some yoghurt out for my daughter. Like I was definitely doing something that was distracting. That was the, I mean, y'know, like, I

think there's a lot of reasons that,... Y'know, when you're talking to someone also, and you're like talking to them, but you're writing, trying to write a text message at the same time. And you're doing two things that are competing with the language part of your brain. Also, that's what it feels like most commonly is that if I'm doing something language based and I'm trying to say something mundane to my partner, like, "can you hang out the laundry," but I'm trying to write an email at some time at the same time. Um, y'know, there's that interference in the same way that sometimes if you're talking to someone and you're writing something, you end up writing the word that you're saying, so I'm writing an email and all of a sudden I start writing, "hang out the laundry," or even just "laundry." Um, so it was, it felt like that, but, but it wasn't that I was doing a language thing. I was definitely doing something. So I think the, inability to kinda just land on the word was as a result of doing something. Um, but whether there was a, a kind of discernible search process, no, no. It didn't feel like that. It just felt like, um, yeah, just sort of, yeah, just waiting, waiting for the word to arrive, I think is the best that I can describe it.

11:41 AK: Okay, good. That's what I understood.

11:44 RTH: Okay. So, so the explanation of why this happened--it was early in the morning I was competing or whatever--that goes beyond what our interests are. [Olivia: Mm.] I, I think speculations about causation are very difficult to do, and so we try not to do it.

11:59 Olivia: Okay.

12:00 RTH: And, and I was gonna say something else about that too, but my mind is fried about that. So I can't remember. Maybe I was gonna make some kind of a joke. Like I never talk to my partner and do an email at the same time. I'm always single minded. [they laugh] So let's go on to beep number 3 or 2, or beep 3 or 1, which, and Alek ...

12:29 Olivia: Can we,

12:30 AK: Yeah.

12:32 Olivia: Can we talk about beep number 4? [RTH: Sure.]

12:34 AK: Yeah, let's do it.

SAMPLE 1.4 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

12:35 Olivia: Just because to me, this number 3 was, was quite similar. Um, so, but 4 was quite different and, um, yeah. So, so I think this one is in, is interesting to, to talk about. So I was sitting down with my daughter at a little table drawing with her, with some pencils. And we were drawing little stick figures. Um, I was drawing triangles that I was turning into tents and she was asking me to draw a tent. Anyway, that's too much information. Um, I'd drawn a little stick figure that was her friend she'd asked me to draw her friend, whose name is Xanthe. So I drawn a little stick figure whose friend was Xanthe. And right as the beep went off, I was writing Xanthe's name under the stick figure. Xanthe's name is spelled X A N T H E. But I was, as I noted it down, I, I was, as I was writing it, I

was not thinking “X A N T H E,” I was thinking “Xan... the.” So I was just, I had separated the word into two, two bits that, and I was, so I was writing X A N and then T H E, but really in my mind, I was hearing “Xanthe... Xanthe.” And I think I was, I dunno if I was hearing it in a repeated way, but I was definitely aware of, of, of hearing “Xanthe.”

13:59 AK: Um hmm. And where does the beep come into play here? What, what is it “Xanthe” that’s in my experience at the moment of the beep?

14:06 Olivia: Yeah.

14:06 AK: Okay. And how exactly is that present to you?

14:06 Russ comments: Note that Alek doesn’t immediately ask about Olivia’s “hearing,” instead leaving the word for this experience undefined at this point. DES calls this *dragging your feet*. Olivia is free to return to the word “hearing,” but she will have to slightly *drag* Alek along with her. Alek has not criticized Olivia’s use of the word “hearing.” She has not said or otherwise suggested that “hearing” is the wrong word. But at the same time, Alek has not endorsed the word “hearing,” nor blindly assumed that because Olivia used the word, it must be the right word. Instead, by dragging her feet, Alek has allowed the interview to refine the description without (yet) committing itself to any particular terminology.

14:15 Olivia: I mean, I hear, I hear that, I hear “Xan...the Xan...the” in my head.

14:21 AK: And *hear*. Like, you seem to be clear about this as a hearing type, as opposed to say speaking, or,...

14:28 Olivia: Yeah. Look, I’m using the word *hear*, but I do not,...it’s not hearing in the same way.

14:28 Russ comments: When someone answers *Yes* and follows it with a *No* phrase, as here, DES thinks the *No* is more likely the right answer. From that perspective it is likely that this is not a *hearing* phenomenon. But that likelihood should be bracketed, and the Xanthe experience should be explored equally either as hearing or as some other phenomenon.

14:37 Olivia: [continues] I mean, the radio was on it the time. Um, and I was hearing the radio. I mean, I, I, I used the word *hear* and I’ve sort of, y’know, when I talked to, um, Russell and sort of, y’know, I guess more anecdotally was thinking about and, and have thought about my experience. I definitely think, I mean, to me *perceived* seems to be a better word than *hear* for my inner experience for when I am hearing words or, y’know. Like, I definitely don’t think that even when I’ve have noticed myself, y’know, um, rehearsing or replaying conversations I’ve had with people. Which feels very identifiably inner speech in the way that I understand it. Um, I wouldn’t still use, I mean, to me *hear* does not seem like the right word. *Perceived* or *feel*... Like, I don’t know. I mean *hear* seems right because it’s, it’s there, but it’s not there audibly. Like, I, I don’t think I’m actually, y’know, *hearing* it. [AK: Um hm.] I’m like *hearing* it. It feels like an internal hearing versus an external hearing. Yeah. That,

- 14:37 Russ comments: What makes hearing difficult is that Olivia has to wrestle with the distinction between outer hearing and inner hearing, and the distinction between hearing and speaking, and the distinction between hearing and some other kind of perceiving. This is Olivia's first sampling day, and our object is not to definitively answer which of those distinctions applies, but instead to clarify the distinctions on the possibility that on some future sampling day, it will be of value to have started to work on those distinctions.
- 15:54 AK: Yeah. Okay. So if I'm understanding that it's like, this is different than external hearing. [Olivia: Umm.] But in, but yet something drives me to still call it a *hearing*, like that it's coming to me, maybe, that I'm not producing it? Is that part of it? In the same way the radio is coming to me, I'm not making the sounds on the radio?
- 16:16 Olivia: I guess, but, but I feel, I do feel like I'm producing it. Um, cuz there are definitely times when I feel like I'm not hearing anything in my head at all.
- 16:16 Russ comments: Here is another distinction about hearing: If external hearing does not include the producing of the thing heard, but if inner hearing sometimes occurs but other times doesn't, then I *must be* producing it. Again, we will not answer that, but rather explore it.
- 16:31 Olivia: [continues] Um, because another question I had for you guys, um, I was thinking about it last night, y'know, sitting, um, watching... Oh no! No, it wasn't last night. It was this morning. I was watching a little seven-minute cartoon with my daughter. Um, it's a long time between six in the morning and nine, a lot of activities
- 16:55 AK: A lot can happen. Yes.
- 16:57 Olivia: I'm packing the groceries, doing some drawing. We watch this little cartoon, uh, and it's quite an enjoyable cartoon here on our, um, on the, like the public broadcaster. Um, I was quite enjoying it. And I'm, I'm quite engaged in this, y'know? And, and once again, back to, I think I'm too aware of it. Um, I was thinking What, oh... What will happen if a beep goes up while I'm watching the cartoon? Because while I'm watching the cartoon, I'm not here. Like there's no, like I'm, there's the external experience that's kind of, but it, I don't hear any thoughts in my head. I'm just purely kind of absorbing the external stimuli.
- 17:40 RTH: So can I, can I have a crack at the, at this hearing "Xan the" deal?
- 17:45 AK: Yeah.
- 17:46 RTH: So I, I want to start at the beginning. So, is "Xan the" somehow present to you innerly? Without putting a verb as to how it's present, but is, are you [Olivia: Yes!] somehow articulating "Xan the" at the moment of the beep?
- 17:46 Russ comments: This is an example of the value of using multiple DES interviewers: RTH can clarify *his* (and in turn, everyone's) understanding of the experience, including returning to details that have already been discussed, without offending Olivia (or Alek)

, because all can accept that his perspective will naturally be fresh and therefore likely at least somewhat different from has already been said.

- 18:13 Olivia: Yes. Yes. And I think what I remarked because, interestingly, I'm, I'm perceiving "Xanthe" as I'm writing the letters. And I think that was what was interesting to me to have the beep go off at that time was that I realized that I wasn't thinking X A N. I was thinking "Xan...the," and my hand was just doing. And it was definitely, I think I probably, I mean, in my, I imagine that I probably did a tiny pause between the N and the T so that I really wrote X A N ... T H E. But maybe I'm projecting, that's all speculation. I *feel* like that. But it, it just felt very clear to me that in my mind was two syl... syllables rather than six letters, writing out six letters.
- 19:13 RTH: So in my mind are two syllables separated by a pause, Xan...The. Is that right? [Olivia: Yes.] So this is not "Xanthe." This is "Xan ... the."
- 19:23 Olivia: Yeah.
- 19:23 RTH: And we're confident about that.
- 19:25 Olivia: Yes.
- 19:26 RTH: Okay. And then we had some discussion about whether this should be called hearing or perceiving or whatever. And so I, I, and, and I'm saying let's set those words aside for the moment and, and, and just zoom in on the "Xan ... the" that we're in, we're an agreement was there. And the question is, does that "Xan the" have any characteristics, whether they be auditory characteristics, or motion characteristics, or color characteristics, or...
- 20:09 Olivia: [pauses, sighs] Uh, I mean, I feel like it... (this kind of contradicts what I just said) but it feels like they just have *sound* characteristics. Like it's "Xan ... the." There's no motion. There's no color. There's just, there's sounds. [appears puzzled] I mean, I don't know. Am I seeing, am I seeing the letters as, but so it's all muddled.
- 20:34 RTH: I didn't, I didn't mean to be implying that you should be seeing the letters. [Olivia: Umm.] I, I was just trying to say...
- 20:39 Olivia: No, but I'm trying to think. Are there any other characteristics of that kind of experience of Xan the." And it's funny because, so I kind of wonder, maybe I'm *seeing* the two syllables as separated. Like I'm visualizing the word, but that feels, y'know, interfered with by the fact that I happen to be writing the word. So, but [RTH: Okay. So lets...] I find, I, well, maybe I shouldn't speak generally, but I think I am often breaking up words in my head.
- 21:09 RTH: That may, that may be. And let's, but I would say let's not speculate about that. Either we'll find out that you're breaking up words in your head or, or we won't and... [Olivia: Yeah.] So does, so "Xan .. the" is present to you as two syllables. [Olivia: Um hmm.] Is there a voice involved in this "Xan..."?

- 21:31 Olivia: I think it's *my* voice. I think I am perceiving my voice, but I'm very aware that my, the voice, my voice that I hear, is not the voice at you hear. And I guess that's because I maybe, maybe it's because I work in audio and, and have had the opportunity to hear my recorded voice played back to me quite a lot. And I know [RTH: So...] that that is not the voice that I hear in my head, but it is...
- 22:02 RTH: So at the moment of the beep, are you in some way recognizing, well, this isn't the same kind of voice that you guys would hear? Or is that a retrospection?
- 22:14 Olivia: I'm hearing it as my voice that I know as my, but I know that voice to be my internal voice. [RTH: Okay.] That is the voice that I hear when I hear my voice, but I know it to not be the voice that you hear. [RTH: Okay.] It's my internal voice, which sounds different, even though it doesn't sound at all, it's it sounds different.
- 22:33 RTH: So, so things can sound, we can hear things, even though there's no physical vibration out there in the real world. So I'm, I'm not trying to argue us out of the phenomenon of hearing at all. I, I think people can hear things in their imagination. But what I do want us to not fall into the trap is of, of saying "hearing" when it's really more like "speaking." So the, the next line of questioning that I've got is something like, is this more an auditory? I *hear* my voice. Or is this more a speaking I'm *speaking* "Xan ... the"?
- 23:10 Olivia: Well, and I think I, I was speaking it, probably, cuz I'm writing out the letters sort of showing my daughter. So I think I was saying it audibly. But I do think I was hearing it, perceiving it internally as well as in a way that is different to what I just kind of recalled with the, in the groceries. Like that felt very much like a, um, like it wasn't going on [points to head] in here and out there. It was just, it was just like going, it was just going outwards. It wasn't existing in inside and going out. Whereas "Xanthe" felt like it was existing inside [points at her head] as I was writing it.
- 23:55 RTH: Okay. And, and so did I understand you to be saying, maybe I was indeed saying *aloud* "Xanthe"?
- 24:04 Olivia: I think, think I very possibly was. Yeah.
- 24:07 RTH: So, so that's sounds quite highly speculative. [Olivia: Umm.] And our task is never to speculate. I would, we would much rather have you say "I don't, I don't know about that. Maybe I was maybe, y'know, it seems logical that I was" or whatever. But, but let's not go there. [Olivia: Mmm.] The question is, as best you can (and this is the first sampling day, so as we told you, we, we are not expecting you to be any good at this) but the... So as best you can directly recall, is there an external speaking involved? And the next [Olivia: Yes!] question is, So you think I am, you are speaking "Xan the." "Xan..." [Olivia: Yes. Yeah.] Okay. And, and now, then I understand that, that your experience is more about what you're calling the inner portion than the outer portion of "Xan the.? Is that right?
- 25:02 Olivia: Yes. And because once again, I mean, I know you, you're only interested in the moment of the beep, but my feeling is that "Xan ... the" continued in my inner experience beyond the writing it down. But then of course I started writing it, um, in the notebook

as well. Um, but I, yeah, like what I've written in the notebook is "Xan dash the" and I've sort of written it out phonetically and then "not X A N T." Yeah. So it felt like it kind of went on a loop.

25:44 RTH: So as if in my imagination it's "Xan ... the ... Xan ... the ... Xan ... the." Is that [Olivia: Yeah.]" Is that what you mean?

25:55 Olivia: Yeah.

25:57 RTH: And, And that would take longer than it would take to write out "Xanthe," it would seem.

26:07 Olivia: What do you mean it would take longer than it would take to write out like. I mean the, yeah, it's, it's repeating it's. I mean,

26:14 RTH: So my question is, does the, does it seem like the, in the inner "Xan .. the" precedes, the writing and also extends past the writing? Or does it seem like it's all in sync, even though physically it couldn't possibly be in sync? So, so what I'm trying to get at here is the, I, I want us to separate the physics of the, of the experience, what we take to be the physics of the experience, from the experience of the experience. And so it's possible to, to be experiencing saying "Xan .. the," as if that were in sync with the writing, even though physically that's not possible, Or it could be that I experienced myself as saying "Xan .. the, Xan .. the," Xan .. the," and that would take me 10 seconds, even though it would only take me 2 seconds to write it.

27:06 Olivia: Mm. So it feels like it, it happens in the first instance as I'm writing. Like I'm sort of, as I said, I felt like I probably read it as it wrote it as X A N, pause, T H E. So I feel like I'm, but then it, but then it continues as a loop after I've written it.

27:33 RTH: Okay. Okay. I think I understand that. And, and, but then I still, I wanna make sure that I have, but that we have gotten as good as resolution as we can about the..., So does this seem like... So, so this is an *inner* phenomenon; we're in agreement about that? [Olivia nods affirmatively] No, no question about that. The question I still have is whether this is a *hearing* phenomenon or a *speaking* phenomenon, that this is more like what I would generally do with my external ears, even though it's, my external ears aren't involved here. But, but it's, so I could, I would talk about pitch and, and the sound quality and, and whatever. Or is it more a *speaking*, in which case it feels like what I would do with my throat or mouth or something, even though that's, they're not, that's not involved either. But it seems like a producing, coming out *here* [gestures out his mouth] as opposed coming in *here* [gestures into his ears]. And "I don't know" is a perfectly good answer to that question.

28:39 Olivia: [laughs] Yeah, my answer is, I don't know, I think.

28:41 AK: Good. Good.

28:41 Russ comments: We have spent the last 15 minutes raising questions about the phenomenon that Olivia originally called (at 13:48) "hearing," and our final conclusion is

"I don't know." Perhaps this seems like too long to spend on one detail, but this is *not* a waste of time! On the contrary, we have been raising our awareness that details are important, cultivating our sensitivity (and patience!), and developing our skills at apprehending and discussing phenomena. There is no shortcut. If one wants to get phenomena in anything approaching high fidelity, one has to go through this kind of preparation. Then maybe *next time* we will be better able to apprehend and describe Olivia's experience somewhat more efficiently.

28:44 RTH: So the, the first sampling day, what we're talking--this interview right now--is we don't generally think that we can get good an... good answers on the first day. We, we throw the first data, first day's data out routinely (all the time, actually). [Olivia: Good!] And so the, the object is for us to raise que... raise questions for you. Like, what the hell are these guys talking about? [Olivia laughs] The difference with, between speaking and hearing and whatever is that a, is that really a deal? And maybe it is for you and maybe it's not. And our, our task is, is for us to sort of practice, uh, separating out what's in experience from what's in reality, [Olivia: Mmm.] so that we can focus in on, on, on experience and really sort of not worry about whether this makes sense in the physical world or not.

29:44 Olivia: Okay. So that's a that's so, so, Hmm... Because I think what I was finding was that my inner experience was completely dominated by my reality this morning, be it because I'm watching something on TV, or because I'm having a conversation with my partner, or because I'm engaging with a two year old, which is quite, um, y'know, like it's, it's quite, um, I mean, I've used the words engaging, but like, like it's not like I, I'm not having a separate line of thought when I'm having a conversation. Sometimes if I'm having a boring con, like I'm bored with, um, a conversation that, y'know, someone's talking to and it's boring or something I might, my mind might wander. Um,

30:36 RTH: So, so I'm gonna push back just a little bit about this, and that is so, so your, your inner experience here at this beep about Xanthe is clearly driven by the fact that you're writing "Xanthe" for your daughter. I've got no, no problems with that. But, on the other hand, you are saying "Xanthe, Xanthe, Xanthe," and that has gone on apparently after the writing is done. [Olivia: Umm.] And so that portion of it is divorced from, or separate from her, whatever, from the external task. So even on those times when you are (and, and, and I would say, well, we wanna look at two beeps. So, so it's hard to generalize from two, from two samples). But even, even in that, even in this situation where you're quite tightly tied to reality, you're not perfectly tied to reality your, your inner experiences is creating its...

30:36 Russ comments: An important aspect of DES is to be confrontational against premature self-theories of any kind and yet simultaneously supportive. The object is to help Olivia attain a stance toward her own experience where she would prefer a high-fidelity apprehension of experience to the confirmation of her own self-theory.

31:28 AK: Yep.

31:29 Olivia: That's true. Yeah.

31:32 AK: Well, and in both of, again, just two beeps, but in both of these, y'know, the actual *activity* you're engaged with, doesn't seem to be a part of the experience. You're doing those things, skillfully writing the letters, getting the yogurt, but that's not the center of the experience at the moment.

31:32 Russ comments: Alek continues the confrontation/supportive intention.

31:50 Olivia: Yeah, you you're right. The, the, yeah, I mean in the first, the groceries beep, as a yeah. You're, you're right. I can't even really remember what I was doing in the reality beyond where I was standing. And I'm sure I was engaged in an activity. Um, but yeah, the language, the speaking language experience was the dominant, was what I was, um, I guess where my mind, so, so I was whatever I was doing, I guess it feels like I was, I was not thinking about what I was doing.

32:30 RTH: Well, I think it, it sounded to me like it was more than that. It was like you had, you were not experiencing what you were doing in your direct experience. It was happening. You were skillfully doing it, as Alek said. [Olivia: Yeah.] But, but you weren't attending to it in your direct experience, whatever it was--getting the yogurt, dishing up the yogurt.

32:50 Olivia: Yeah. But can you do something like that without thinking about it at all? I mean, I guess,...

32:50 Russ comments: This is an instance of Olivia's expressing a theory / generalization about inner experience. Olivia, like most people, has many such theories. Already she has mentioned: 2:30 "But like, when you're in the midst of a conversation or an engagement with someone it's very, y'know, the beep will go off and I'd be like, oh, I was in the middle of a sentence"; 21:05: "I think I am often breaking up words in my head"; 29:47 "my inner experience was completely dominated by my reality." Part of the DES effort is to help people (Olivia in this case) bracket their self-theories, where to bracket is to take a dispassionate stance. So RTH will say next, "we're gonna find out." The aim of that is to encourage Olivia to be more interested in her genuine experience than in her self-theories. Maybe any particular self-theory is 100% correct; maybe it is 100% baloney; maybe it is partially true and partially misguided. After we have examined some randomly selected experiences in high fidelity (which means to bracket all those possibilities), then perhaps we will be in a position to say something trustworthy about these self-theories.

32:56 RTH: Well, we're, we're gonna find out that's the that's, that's what we're here for. But the, in general, the answer to that is yes. I think, I think experience is as much destructive as it is constructive. And so your, your bag of bones, which is trying to, which is determining what it is that you're going to experience at any particular moment is going to zero in on one thing and not in another. And in that, on that first beep you were zeroed in on what you were saying to your partner, and you were destroying the visual stuff that came in about the yogurt or whatever.

32:56 Russ comments: This is more of the confrontational / supportive effort.

33:29 Olivia: Mm.

33:31 RTH: Which isn't to say that you were not intending to it. You weren't throwing the yogurt on the floor by mistake.

33:36 Olivia: I would've remembered that! [they laugh]

33:40 RTH: But, but it, but it, as far as being before the footlights of your consci consciousness, it sounds like probably not.

33:49 Olivia: Mm.

33:51 RTH: But, but on the first day we don't want to... This is an aside conversation that then we should bracket away, y'know, cuz maybe we will determine in the future sampling that you *are always* paying attention to the visual aspect of your environment. And that would be fine, too. Right now what we want to do is to not *assume* that just because your eyes are open and you're engaged in something that, that you *must be* thinking about that. Maybe you are, maybe you're not. So shall we do one, one more? I know Alek has a deadline coming up.

33:51 Russ comments: RTH has given a genuine answer to Olivia's question about people in general, but now he undermines that generalization: maybe the general rule does not apply to Olivia. That's part of the bracketing skill.

34:27 AK: Yeah. Let's do one more

34:27 RTH: There's a deadline coming up.

34:33 Olivia: So the other two are, are very similar and feel, um, uh, at both times the beep went off and I went, oh, what was I thinking? Um, y'know, I kind of panicked, oh, what was I thinking? And it, at both times I, it was mid conversation. Um, once again involving my two year old. So,

35:00 RTH: So let's pick one, let's pick one of these. Let's not do two.

35:00 Russ comments: We have noted above (at 32:50) Olivia's urge to generalize. This is that urge at its most basic--*let's talk about two samples at a time*. RTH nips that tendency; DES always focuses on a (meaning one) specific instance. (We note again that nearly everyone shares in Olivia's tendency toward generalizing.)

35:03 Olivia: Alright. Let's pick one.

35:03 RTH: Alek, you wanna, you wanna do this one?

35:04 AK: Sure. Yep.

SAMPLE 1.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

35:07 Olivia: Okay. So, let's do the first one. Um, it was not long after I'd, so I basically woke up and plugged the thing in. Um, and so it would've been, y'know, 10 or 15 minutes after I'd woken up. I'm sitting on the bed, drinking a cup of coffee. (Um, my partner and I will always have a cup of coffee in bed before we get up. And the two year old is in the bed having a little cup of warm milk with us.) So we're kind of sitting there having a chat, y'know, she's kind of nonsense. Um, and so right as the beep happened, she had just drunk her little, um, warm milk, which she calls her "coffee" and she said, "I drink my coffee." And the beep went off just after she had said that. So that's all I kind of know to write down because as far as I am aware, I'm just listening to her saying that, um, and not... there's nothing else going on, except from the fact that I experienced in reality, her saying that. And I, I don't know. I mean, I guess I'm, I'm listening and hearing that and processing that internally, but it doesn't feel like there's anything else happening.

36:23 AK: And so in reality she is saying, "I dr... I drink my coffee."

36:27 Olivia: Yeah.

36:29 AK: And is it accurate to say, I ex, I experience that? I hear it? I'm...

36:34 Olivia: Yeah. I mean, I hear it. I hear it. And um, yeah, I mean, I definitely, I hear it and I don't think, y'know, it doesn't spark deep thoughts or questioning in my mind. I'm kind of, y'know, I'm always interested in hearing, y'know. She's funny and very cute and I'm kind of, it's just kind of enjoyable to listen to her, even though she's not saying anything particularly interesting or asking me a question or... y'know, she's just kind of stream of consciousness, blah blah. Um, so yeah, but I, I hear it. I, I, I heard it, I heard it in, in reality. And so to separate, I don't know how to... Like it. Yeah. It doesn't... As I, as I kind of said before, in that instance, it doesn't feel like I'm hearing anything internally.

37:30 AK: Sure. So if I could compare this one to the first one we talked about, which was actually beep 2, I think. So in that be viewer speaking aloud, you were talking about the grocery substitution, and I think we kind of agreed my experiences. I'm, I'm speaking aloud and I'm engaged in that I I'm experiencing the speaking of that. Is the same kind of true here, except in this case I'm hearing, I'm, I'm taking something in, I'm just engaged in that there's no separate visualization or thought or whatever. I'm just...

38:04 Olivia: Yep.

38:05 AK: ...receiving. Okay. And the she's cute / this is funny / stream of consciousness. Is that present to you at all? Or is that sort of an after the fact, y'know, this is why this is cute.

38:17 Olivia: Yeah. I think, y'know, I think that's an after the fact. It's not, um, ...Yeah. I'm not thinking I'm not hearing like this kind of, yeah. That's not going on. I feel like that's after-the-fact kind of justification of why I can be engaged in, in listening to something that's quite sort of one sided and, and mundane.

38:43 AK: Sure. So we're all sitting on the bed, we're all having our coffee or her milk-coffee or whatever. And she says, "I drink my coffee," and I'm, I'm hearing her say that.

- 38:53 Olivia: Yeah. And then the beep goes off and I go, "Oh! What was I thinking?" And then I go, I, I think I was just thinking what I just heard. I mean, I wasn't, I just, I just heard that. It was all, I mean,...
- 39:07 RTH: So... Is it, would it be fair to say, I, I heard my daughter speak those things that, and that was *all* that was in my experience. Or would it be fair to say I heard my daughter to speak those things, *and* I was also recognizing that I was on the bed with my partner, and... Or was the partner, was the partner gone at that moment experientially?
- 39:37 Olivia: No, he was, he was, I mean, he was there physically sitting there. Um, I mean, I'm definitely aware of the setting.
- 39:50 RTH: Are you aware of the setting in the same way that you're aware of your daughter speaking?
- 39:56 Olivia: No. No, no. The setting, it seems very much just in the background. Um, y'know, in the same way that I think at a certain point, everyone just kind of gets up or she gets up and says, I want breakfast and we, and I don't think, I even think I'm getting up now. I just get up now. Right. Like I, so, so the setting's there, but it's not, there's no, Um, obvious processing or registering it.
- 40:28 RTH: So, uh, there's a centrality of experience that has to do with my daughter's speaking. And there's not a centrality of experience that has to do with the setting. Is that right?
- 40:41 Olivia: Yeah.
- 40:45 RTH: And so does this, is that to say that the setting is just really not part of my experience *at all*? Or is that to say (and, and here, I don't want a speculation. I want...) So about your daughter's voice, about your daughter speaking, it seems like we're saying I'm directly apprehending that. That's, she's speaking and I'm hearing it, and there's no question about that. [Olivia: Um hm.] But it also seems like about the *setting*, my husband's drinking coffee, but I'm not attending to the *coffee-ness* of my husband. It's there. I'm not, I, I recognize it's out there, so I'm not spilling his coffee or, or whatever, but I'm not, it's not directly present to me in the same, in any of the same way as my daughter speaking. And I'm not trying to talk you into that. I just want to,
- 41:38 Olivia: Yeah, no, it doesn't. I mean, cuz I'm just sort of even thinking now to what, to what extent is my setting right now present. And I mean, it, it does. I mean, it's definitely there and I'm seeing it and I know exactly where I am and, but I'm not, um, there's no deliberate or, um, deliberate's not the right word. I mean I'm, I'm per... I'm.... Yeah. I guess it doesn't feel right to say that it's part of my experience. It, even though it obviously is part of my experience because I'm there physically, but it doesn't feel like part of my internal experience feels like.
- 41:38 Russ comments: First, it is impossible to accomplish the task that Olivia sets for herself here (*I'm just sort of even thinking now to what, to what extent is my setting right now present*). When she asks herself to what extent the setting is present, then she has foregrounded the setting, and therefore the setting is present in a way that is very

different from its everydayness. Olivia's attempt at armchair-introspection is very typical of DES participants on their first day, and RTH will discourage it (by calling it a "hard thing" when he speaks next.

Second, Olivia goes on to do an excellent job of distinguishing between two very different meanings of the word "experience": directly apprehended (before the footlights of consciousness) experience vs. unattended experience.

42:14 RTH: So the hard thing, the hard thing about these things is, is, is that they're speaking about it in generality. So I I'm, I could call your attention to the pressure on your backside. And when I do that, you can probably feel that chair on your backside.

42:30 Olivia: Yeah.

42:31 RTH: And my guess is that you haven't been attending to that for the last half an hour. [Olivia: Yeah.] It's been there the whole time. You've been sitting skillfully on your chair and not falling off it and probably adjusting your posture when, when some pressure got whatever. But, but that happens outside of your directly apprehended experience, it seems to me.

42:52 Olivia: Yes.

42:54 RTH: And so now the question is whether that's the, whether your partner was like *that* at the moment of this particular beep, there, there was pressure on my backside, but I wasn't paying attention to it. There was, there was my partner with a cup of coffee next to me, but I wasn't attending to that. And, and I'm not asking you to answer that question. What I'm trying to do is to *raise* the question so that then on subsequent days we can.

43:18 Olivia: Yeah. And it's a good point because I mean, I know that I was paying direct attention to my daughter because she was speaking, she had just said those words. Um, but y'know, so she's here, he's there.

43:34 RTH: Your bottom is doing whatever it's doing.

43:36 Olivia: My bottom's on the bed. y'know, I'm definitely like I'm leaning. I mean, I'd say he would be more of my experience than the feeling of my body. God, I don't know! [laughs with frustration]

43:52 RTH: We we're now we're moving into the range of speculation, which I don't want us to do. [Olivia: Alright. Alright.] So this is, this is about, this is about sensitizing us to the possibility that maybe those things are there and maybe they're, they're not. And if they are, we'd like to talk about 'em and if they're not, then we can, we can talk about just what's there

43:52 Russ comments: We have spent the last 5 minutes focusing on the distinction between directly apprehended experience (the daughter's voice) and contextual experience (partner, coffee, room, etc.). We have not resolved the limits of experience at beep 1.1. In fact, it is impossible to resolve such instances retrospectively. What we have done is

to make it more likely that Olivia will be more sensitive to such distinctions on subsequent sampling days – and hopefully also less influenced by her own ideas about those distinctions (e.g., that if her partner is physically present, he *must* also be somehow experienced). That is the gradual-acquisition-of-skill process that DES calls “iterative,” an essential feature of DES.

44:13 RTH: So I’m guessing that we have accomplished what we need to accomplish today. And Alek has an appointment coming up here of some sort that she needs to get to. And, uh, and so what we need to do is to figure out when we’re gonna do this again, or if I suppose first, and then when we’re gonna do it, it again. And, and so I, I I’m, I’m an agreement that Russ, that your daughter wrestling with the earphone is probably problematic. It’s not terribly problematic, I would say, but it’s problematic. It’s not fatally problematic, but if we wanna do it at a different time, that might be a scheduling issue. If we can, it’s gonna be harder for Alek, I think. But So do you wanna suggest, and, and we could do the suggestion by email or by a, when to meet poll or something like that.

44:13 Russ comments: We fast forward while they compare calendars.

47:59 RTH: So that means that you will wear the beeper on your Tuesday or Wednesday early morning.

48:07 Olivia: Yeah. I’d say Tuesday, the mornings are. Yeah. I mean, how do you just like, what is the ([laughs] I wanna say “what’s the right answer”!), but when you, when are talking to someone, I mean, do you find people have a whole other different line of thinking when they’re in like engaged in a conversation with someone?

48:30 RTH: Sometimes.

48:31 AK: Yeah. Sometimes.

48:33 RTH: I, I would say the most, the most common response when people are talking is that they’re talking and that’s it. There’s nothing else going on. [Olivia: Yeah.] But, but there’s big individual differences about that.

48:44 Olivia: Yeah. Right. All right. Well, I’m interested to see, cause I think I will do it, um, the day before and I will do it, y’know, I’ve got a work day, I’ve got meetings in the morning. I might throw it in the afternoon when I don’t have heaps of meetings and we’ll, but y’know, I won’t have my daughter constantly, y’know, demanding my attention.

49:06 RTH: And, and what I, what I’m about to say is, is generally true. And that is, so we talked about whatever it is that we talked about today. Some listening to stuff, let’s set, all that stuff aside as if the next time is, uh, starting fresh. And what, so maybe what we talked about today would be typical of what we would find next time around, or maybe it would be atypical. Either one of those things is, is fine. What I *don’t* want us to do is to say, *well*, last time I, I had this, I was listening to external speaking. I gotta be listening to external speaking next time *too*. That that’s not true.

49:45 Olivia: Okay.

49:46 RTH: Great. All right. Well...

49:49 Olivia: Great. And I'll send you through this audio. Um, you

49:53 RTH: If y'all send me the idio, [laughs] the audio and I will see whether I can get it together.

49:59 Olivia: Great. Thanks guys. All right.

50:01 AK: Yeah! Good meeting you.

50:02 Olivia: You. Yeah. Great to meet you. Have a good evening. Bye bye.

50:05 RTH: Bye.