

Peter Hoskin Formal Description

We collected 35 samples from Pete over seven sampling days. As is usual in DES, we discarded the first day's samples ($N = 3$) as training; this description is therefore based on 32 samples collected over six days. The samples were random within periods selected by Pete; the interviews were conducted by Russ Hurlburt via Zoom.

Multiple strands of experience

Many (58%) of Pete's samples contained two or more separate strands of experience. Most frequently, the number of strands was two, but there could be as many as perhaps 20. A typical two-strand experience was sample 7.6, where Pete was innerly saying (see below) "Right!" which he both innerly speaks and hears and understands as an instruction to himself, shorthand for "Right, I've got to do <this thing>." The *thing* in this case is to arrange the books that are disorderly stacked on his bed. Simultaneously, Pete experiences a "trapezoid of attention," a meta-experience (see below) of his attention shifting from one stack to the next—that is, he is attending to his attention (that's the meta part) as it focuses on one stack and then on another stack, shifting around a trapezoid-shaped region.

At the complex end of this multiplicity was sample 7.4, where Pete simultaneously innerly saw (see below) a bunch (5? 20?) of old technology items: he innerly saw an iPod lying on his desk; simultaneously he innerly saw a small soldering iron with sparks coming out of it (which in reality is more like a welder than a soldering iron); simultaneously he innerly saw a green circuit board; simultaneously he saw several or many other items, but he could not grasp them because their simultaneity was disrupted by the beep. These items move as Pete sees them, floating in front of him in a sort of moving collage. His understanding was that all the items were of old-time (pre-digital-interaction) technology.

Pete's distinguished between two kinds of simultaneity, synchronous and overlappy. Experiences that seemed simultaneous were apprehended as being in parallel, starting together and seeming to exist in synchronous trajectories. At other times, experiences seemed asynchronous in that one experience would start and then begin to wane, when a second experience would begin and wax; the simultaneity existed because these trajectories overlapped. See the figure, which is Pete's attempt at schematizing overlapping waning and waxing experiences.



Prior to sampling, Pete had no inkling that his experiences were multiple-stranded.

Meta experience

Pete's experience was often (52%) aimed at some aspect of his own experience itself, a phenomenon we call *meta-experience*. For example, at sample 5.5, Pete is reading about Thomas Paine and his book *Rights of Man*.] At the moment of the beep he sees the words "*Rights of Man*" on the computer screen and simultaneously innerly sees the same words inside his forehead. This is two separate, simultaneous seeings of the same words—the inner words are bigger but otherwise in the same font, etc. So far, that is not meta; here's the meta part: As he sees these words, he also is somehow aware of a cone-like region between the words on the screen and the words in his head, as if he is somehow focused on the manner in which the words are projected from the page to the head. He doesn't see this cone; he doesn't *feel* it as a physical object; but it *is* experientially present as the path or projected region. We call this aspect of Pete's experience *meta* because its object is an aspect of Pete's

experience itself—it apprehends an aspect of Pete’s own experience. Three samples involved similar meta-experience of a cone-shaped region.

(Simultaneously at sample 5.5, Pete innerly sees a car park in Lewes where he had once parked (Lewes is an important town in Paine’s history). Pete sees the car park clearly and in color, as from an elevated position above the corner of the car park. This is thus an example of Pete’s multiple-stranded experience: three seeings (words externally seen on the screen, words innerly seen in his head, and innerly seeing the car park) and the meta-experience of the cone region).

Pete’s meta-experience of experiential regions had shapes other than cones. For example, sample 7.6 (discussed in the Multiple Strands of Experience section) involved a trapezoid of attention: Pete experienced a trapezoid-shaped region in which his experience darted around. In sample 7.3, the region was circular. Pete is watching a movie in which there was a group of perhaps 15 dancers moving in a circle. Pete somehow superimposes that circling movement somehow in his head—he feels movement in a circle inside his head in a way that matches the movement he sees on the screen. This was not merely an attending to the movement on the screen; he feels his inner experiential movement.

Sometimes Pete had a meta-experience of his own perceptions. For example, at sample 5.2, Pete was at his computer, teaching/parenting his son Elliot some basics about computers—that the computer could, for example, show his name (and he typed “Elliot” on the screen). Pete feels a physical shifting towards his right ear, where he is beginning to hear Elliot say “Can it say..., can it say...”. This is primarily a meta-experience of Pete’s physical focus swooping down toward his physical ear. That is, this is *not* merely a shift of attention, which would be felt *out there* as his focus shifted from the screen to his son. Instead, this is an *in here*, an in-my-head moving of physically present attention as it swoops toward his ear. (There are four other experiential strands in this sample. Counting the meta-awareness of the swoop toward the ear as strand (1), there are: (2) A rising anticipation or awaiting how Elliot is going to complete that sentence (it turns out to be “Pokemon” as in “Can it say Pokemon?”); (3) He sees “Elliot” displayed on the screen; (4) He innerly sees “Elliot” inside his forehead; and (5) He is meta-aware of the cone region through which the on-screen “Elliot” projects itself into the in-forehead “Elliot.” Strands (3), (4), and (5) are very similar (except for content) to the “Rights of Man” experience of sample 5.5 described above; these aspects are waning.

This meta-experience of perception occurred not only with hearing but also with seeing: In sample 6.1, Pete was beginning to look at an email and experienced his attention as moving down to his eyes—this was a swooping physical motion very similar to the toward-the-ear swoop of sample 5.2. In sample 6.1, Pete saw the words his eyes were aimed at as being semantically meaningful text, but he was not reading them at the moment of the beep. (Simultaneously, Pete innerly saw, with clarity and detail, the face of the sender of the email.)

Sometimes Pete had a meta-experience of his own actions. For example, at sample 4.1, Pete was walking, navigating a path across a cluttered room, and he swung his leg out and around a bench. As he did so, he innerly spoke something like “Whoop!” reflecting the motion of his leg. We see that “Whoop!” as expressing a meta-experience of his action: he is not merely swinging his leg as he walked, he is *noticing*—is *meta-experientializing*—his leg swinging. (Sample 4.1 simultaneously involved an imageless seeing as described below.)

Meta-experience of his motion could occur with or without an articulated “Whoop” kind of commentary. For example, at sample 5.1 Pete was erasing a line in his notebook, and his experience is mostly focused on the downward movement of the pencil eraser. This is a feeling of the movement, not a seeing of it, not an attention to the erasing, as if Pete was somehow present in the movement of the end of the pencil. (Simultaneously Pete felt a very gentle, diffuse bodily emotion of *was that a bad thing to have done?*)

Sometimes Pete had a meta-experience of the inadequacy of his own imaginations. Two examples occurred while Pete was reading an Artificial Intelligence book. In sample 3.5, as he reads,

Pete is innerly seeing a flowchart (displayed as if in a textbook), and at the same time, Pete realizes that the seen flowchart does not actually represent what he is reading about. Sample 7.6 is similar: as he is reading the portion of the book that described the work of Ray Kurzweil, Pete innerly sees a photo of Kurzweil as if from a 1970s academic prospectus. The seeing is clear and detailed, but the photo seen is a bit dated and faded. In both the 3.5 and 7.6 sample, Pete is self-illustrating the passage he is reading, a phenomenon that is very common in DES. However, also at the same time, Pete somehow understands that his imagination has served up an illustration that is not correct. That is a meta-experience—an experience of his own experience and its suitability.

Meta-experience in all its aspects was thus a major feature of Pete's experience. It was differentiated in its aspects (of attention, perception, action, adequacy) and its content (of static experience, of something in motion like a swoop; and with or without an inner or outer articulation like a "Whoop!") Despite such frequent and skillful deployment, Pete had, prior to sampling, no notion of his meta-experiences.

Inner seeing

Many (66%) of Pete's experiences included inner seeing. Half of those were clear and detailed, colorful, and sometimes of motion. We have seen several instances: the flowchart of sample 3.5, the photo of Kurzweil in 3.6, the car park in 5.5, and so on.

A third of Pete's inner seeings were imageless: Pete experienced himself as seeing some specific thing, but that something was not actually seen. For example, in sample 4.1, Pete was innerly seeing a self-portrait of the cartoonist David Squires drawn in Squires's own distinctive style. However, whereas Pete experiences himself as *seeing* Squires, there was no *seen* Squires. That is, Pete's experience was of *seeing*—this is *not* merely a *knowing about* Squires, or a *recalling facts about* Squires's style visual appearance. The experience is *if seeing* even though there is no fulfillment or accomplishment of the seeing experience.

Imageless seeing could be complex: at sample 3.2, Pete was imagelessly innerly seeing a shop simultaneously both from the inside and the outside.

A quarter of Pete's inner seeings were multiple—two or more simultaneous seeings. We have seen a complex instance of this phenomenon in sample 7.4, where Pete simultaneously innerly saw a bunch (5? 20?) of old technology items. A simpler instance was sample 5.4, where Pete and his wife are talking about her father (Steve) who had visited and left a box on their microwave. Pete had two simultaneous seeings, one imageless and the other clear and in motion. The imageless seeing was a standard portrait view of Steve, basically a head shot, but whereas Pete experienced himself as seeing Steve in this way, there was no experience of the seen Steve. Simultaneously, Pete innerly saw Steve moving through the kitchen towards the microwave. This is a clear seeing where Pete and the elements of the kitchen are seen, and Steve is seen more clearly or distinctly than the rest of the items.

A quarter of Pete's inner seeings were what DES calls skillful, where some aspects of a seeing are seen clearly, but other aspects are not visually articulated for motivated reasons. (The textbook example of skillful inner seeing came from a student who clearly innerly saw her roommate, wearing only bra and panties, sitting on a couch; next to her was a boy who was indistinctly seen, as if the identifying details were not included. The skillfulness of this seeing was the contrast between the clear seeing of the roommate's seductiveness, but the nonspecific generic boy. That is, the different levels of clarity portrayed the roommate's promiscuity.) For example, at sample 6.2, Pete is seeing the cover of the latest book by Lucy Hughes-Hallett. This book is about the Duke of Buckingham, and Pete sees the cover clearly—its yellow letters including the word "Buckingham" and an old-timey image of the Duke. However, the remaining words of the title are not articulated, skillfully reflecting that Pete does not

remember the actual title of the book. (Actually, the title is *The Scapegoat*, so “Buckingham” is incorrect, even though it is clear.)

There was one instance where Pete innerly saw the same scene that his real eyeballs were actually aimed at, but did *not* experience himself as actually seeing that scene. In sample 2.5, Pete is sitting at his desk, deciding whether to pick up his phone (again) to check the football score. He experiences himself as *innerly seeing* his phone and the desk clutter around it; this is the same scene that his real eyeballs were aimed at, but he did *not* experience himself as seeing the real phone or clutter. We have discussed instances of innerly seeing the same words as are externally seen: in sample 5.5, Pete actually saw the words “*Rights of Man*” on the computer screen and simultaneously innerly saw the words inside his forehead.

Pete’s inner seeings were sometimes experienced as being located in some specific region inside his head (e.g., inside his forehead in sample 5.5). Furthermore, the inner seeings were sometimes located in some portion of his inner visual field—off to the right, or to the upper left, for example.

Several of his inner seeings were from perspectives that Pete would not himself naturally (or ever) take. For example, in sample 7.1, Pete was listening to a podcast that was making a pun about the twists in Stephen King’s mysteries—likening a “King’s twist” to a cocktail name. Pete innerly sees a King’s twist cocktail, appearing to be perhaps a gin and tonic with a twist of lime. He saw this glass from a point of view close to the bar looking up and over at the glass, a perspective he himself had never taken.

Before Pete embarked on DES, he assumed that most of his experiences were of “talking” to himself. In actuality, Pete’s inner seeings were frequent (66%) and his inner speakings were rare.

Inner speaking

Prior to sampling, Pete understood his experience to be primarily inner speaking, and inner speaking did appear in his sampling, somewhere between once and nine times, depending on how you define inner speaking.

Pete had one instance (out of 32 samples) involving an innerly spoken complete sentence: In sample 3.3, Pete is walking toward his office where he will write a review of a book on Artificial Intelligence—he is impressed by the author’s skill. Pete innerly speaks “He does in paragraphs what others have struggled to do in books.” This inner speaking is in Pete’s naturally inflected inner voice, and is a comment understood in a straightforwardly semantically meaningful way.

Pete had three instances where he innerly spoke one or two words that commented on or instructed himself. In sample 3.1, he was at his computer scrolling in a rush through work; in sync with his fingertip on the mouse roller, he innerly said “scroll, scroll,” a commentary or caption about his action (not a self-instruction). In sample 5.3, Pete was planning to write an article about horrible extremists and was trying to find the manifesto of a horrible killer. As he searched, Pete innerly said “Anders Breivik, Anders Breivik” as the name of the manifesto’s writer. However, at the same time, he had a meta-understanding that Anders Breivik was *not* actually the manifesto’s writer—that is, he understood that his inner speaking apparatus was producing the wrong name. The third example is sample 7.6 (discussed in the Multiple Strands of Experience and Meta-Experience sections), where Pete innerly spoke “Right!” which for Pete is a spoken shorthand expression for *Do this!*

Pete had two samples where he innerly spoke words for their acoustic phenomenology rather than their semantic understanding. At sample 6.2, Pete was seeing the cover of a book which said “Introduction by Lucy Hughes-Hallett.” Pete innerly said “Luch Hughes-Hallett” in a sing-songy expression, saying it for the pleasure of the sound rather than any semantic significance. At sample 3.4, Pete was in the kitchen and caught sight of their cat, Nicole. Pete innerly said “Cat!” in his 2-year-old son’s voice. This was an expression of endearment—Pete is fond of the way his son names the cat. In neither of those instances was the inner speaking a semantic utterance.

On one sample (2.6), Pete was editing an article which he found disappointing. He innerly uttered “Hmm!” which expressed a cynicism/skepticism/disappointment (that if put into words would be something like *is that right?!? Is it really?!?*). Whether this should be considered an inner speaking or a bodily expression is hard to say.

Pete had one sample where he experienced himself as innerly speaking but where there were no words present. At sample 3.2 he experiences himself as innerly speaking something to the effect that he needs to pick up a parcel at the corner shop, but there are no words involved. This experience, which DES calls *wordless speaking*, seems parallel to the *imageless seeing* described above in the Inner Seeing section.

Pete had one sample (7.2) where he was replaying (an inner seeing with audio) an interview he had conducted a few nights ago. He understands himself to be naturally speaking the entire interview question, but in reality it seems to happen too quickly for that to be possible. However, he also does not experience himself as asking a compressed, condensed or accelerated question. Simultaneously (although it seems to be in response) Pete sees/hears the interviewee’s answer, which in reality is probably not actually the entire answer, but it *does not* seem like a *condensed* or accelerated version of it. (The whole experience seems to exist in the back right of his head and to be fading.) DES (perhaps arbitrarily) does not consider speaking that is part of an inner seeing to be inner speaking.

Feelings

Pete experienced feelings (emotion experience) in 5 of the 32 samples (16%). Four of those feelings were diffuse bodily experiences. However, in sample 6.4, Pete felt a warm satisfaction mostly in the back of his head, possibly rising upwards there.