

TRANSCRIPT WITH COMMENTARY
Do I Really Have Internal Monologue?
Ryan Langdon Interview 1:
DES Sampling Day 1

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the May 19 interview with Ryan Langdon that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/ULxDyTP6R4M>. 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

Ryan = Ryan Langdon

0:00 Ryan: I'm ready whenever you are.

0:02 RTH: I am ready.

0:04 Ryan: Okay.

0:05 RTH: So, you have questions about the procedure or whatever?

0:09 Ryan: Uh, no, but I will warn you that I did it like earlier in the day yesterday, so it's been like a long time and I also have been studying all day, so my brain is just full. I can't imagine that I'm going to remember everything to the best of my ability [RTH: Okay.] But next time I do it. I'm going to do the beeper closer to the interview.

0:29 RTH: I think as a general rule, the closer to the interview the better. But I also think that it will be fine. What we have... Everything is an approximation, and we're going to learn some stuff and then as long as you have enough brain cells leftover to learn some stuff, then we're going to be in, it's going to be in good shape.

0:47 Ryan: Okay. Sounds good.

SAMPLE 1.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

0:49 RTH: Alright, then I think number one.

0:53 Ryan: Alright? Number one. Uh, so it was my first one, so I didn't really know what to expect. Uh, the beep kind of like caught me off guard. But just to set the scene a little bit, I was watching, um, a TV show. I was watching "Survivor," um, and someone was talking when it was beeping. And I wasn't really thinking, I was kind of like an emotional scene a little bit. So I was more intently focusing on what the person was saying rather than actually like having, forming my own thought, if that makes sense.

- 1:27 RTH: Okay. So does that mean that you are watching TV and carried along by the show? Watching what's, watching what's happening on that show?
- 1:35 Ryan: Yeah. So I don't know if it was like more of a physical thing that I was feeling, but I was definitely like more focused on the show at that point than I was at any other point.
- 1:45 RTH: Okay. And if it's a physical thing... I'd be fine with me if it's a physical thing--I don't want to prejudice one way or the other, whether it's a physical thing. But if it's a physical thing, I would like to know what the characteristics of that are to the extent that you can recall. And if you can't remember that, that's fine.
- 2:03 Ryan: To be honest. Like when the beeper went off, it like snapped me out of whatever was happening. So like I was like, Oh I gotta turn it off. I wasn't like in the moment immediately after it kind of like pulled me away. So like beep is kind of wasn't that good of an experience for me.
- 2:22 RTH: And that's, that's very common on the first sampling day that, so it takes a while to get, it's a skill.
- 2:31 Ryan: Yeah, I got better as it went on.
- 2:31 RTH: Right. So maybe we should leave this beep. We should say what, what I would say is it sounds like you're watching TV. You're somehow into the TV. Not exactly sure how--the beep disturbs you. And ...
- 2:44 AK: Can I ask one more thing about this one? [Ryan: Absolutely.] So you at some point you used the word "emotional," and I didn't know if you meant that was a characteristic of you, Ryan, your experience, or like the scene, the storyline at that moment is emotional.
- 2:58 Ryan: It was an emotional storyline. So like I was more like in tune with what was... Like I was, I was watching it more intently 'cause I didn't know what was going to happen. Something like that. Because leading up to that I was like, it was new to me. I was very aware that the beeper was in my ear. So I was like focusing on that for the entirety of watching the show. Like I was having to like force myself to like watch the show and I kept trying to like every time I had an organic thought I would think about how I would explain that verbally. So like it was just a constant cycle of like having a good thought and then me trying to like think about how I would verbalize that.
- 3:44 AK: I think that, I, I think that's pretty common. I certainly have, I can relate to you on that. And so am I understanding right though that the beeper had been very present to you? It's like I got this thing in my ear. What if it beeps? what if it beeps? whatever. [Ryan: Yeah.] But at this moment that has apparently disappeared. Like, I'm really into...
- 4:01 Ryan: That's why I was surprised, because the show was, it was, it was captivating at that point. [Alek: Okay. Got it.] Yeah. I didn't have like any like noticeable thoughts going

on. Like I wasn't like observing, observing like of clothing or what, how they were saying things. I was just listening and absorbing. [Alek: Okay. Awesome.]

4:24 RTH: So I don't know that I ever told you, Ryan, but we're going to alternate back and forth. So I did the first beep, Alek will do beep number two, and obviously she'll jump in when she wants to ask something, and I will, too.

4:37 Ryan: That's totally fine. Whatever works for you guys.

SAMPLE 1.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

4:41 RTH: Number two.

4:43 AK: Okay, beep number two.

4:44 Ryan: So beep number two. I, um... So between the beeps I would like do a little video recording and I would put it onto my computer. So I was doing like a little bit of editing, editing at that time. And I was listening to what I was saying and I said something along the lines of, um, "if I had juicer thoughts, the video would be better" or something like that, or "I wish this was a juicy thought." Um, but it wasn't, it was, it was that first one where it was like kind of boring. Um, so I, what did I write down? [Looks at notes.] I said, um, it wasn't like a verbal thought, but I just knew at that moment, like when I was listening to what I was saying, that if I had like a dark thought or something that was like crazy, the video would be more entertaining to people. Like it wasn't like verbal or anything. It was just like I knew that I felt that, I guess, like I didn't have to like verbalize it with internal monologue at all. I just knew it.

5:45 AK: Okay. Let me see if I get the, uh, the like setting here. Yeah. So you have been beeped for beep number one and then you made like a recording of yourself about beep number one.

5:57 Ryan: Yeah. So I, I wrote down my thoughts on it, like when it, when it beeped and then I did a recording of what happened and what I was thinking to make the video. And then.

6:09 AK: And you are [inaudible] playing that back.

6:10 Ryan: Yeah. I was sitting at my computer and I, I put it like into the editing program and it was playing along in that it beeped when I said like the line, um, "I wish this thought was, was juicy or something," some horrible adjective.

6:27 AK: Yeah. I kind of like this juicy adjective. So [Ryan laughs] is that something--this is where I'm unclear--is the, is the juicy thing, is that something you said in the video you made?

6:36 Ryan: I said it in the video. So I was listening to, to that being said when it beeped. But I was also feeling like I would, I knew that if like I was thinking that if I had like a crazy thought, the video would be better. But I didn't like verbalize it in my brain.

- 6:57 AK: Okay. So (I'm sorry for the abundant clarification). So I'm listening to myself say something about what I wish I'd had a juicy thought. And at the same time I'm, I have some idea or sense or feeling that if I'd had a juicy thought or crazy thought or a dark thought that would have been cooler.
- 7:12 Ryan: Yeah, it would like, it would more people would, would enjoy the video. But like it wasn't verbal. I just, yeah, I don't know how to explain it. It just like popped up.
- 7:22 AK: And by not verbal, am I understanding right, you mean there are not explicit words?
- 7:27 Ryan: I, no, no words to it. Like they're in a beep in the future. There is words to, to one of my thoughts. But not here. It just, just, I was listening and I just felt like the video would be better. Okay. Yeah.
- 7:44 AK: And so there's no explicit words, but it sounds like the, the notion is quite clear. Like if I had had a juicer thought this would be a cooler video.
- 7:53 Ryan: Very clear without, without an internal monologue.
- 7:57 AK: Okay. And we've called, you've called it a like a "feeling" or a "idea" or something. Is this in the like cognitive realm?
- 8:10 Ryan: It's difficult to explain a thought for me personally, if it's not visual or verbal. So like, I don't know how like what language to use to explain this. It just popped up and like I just, I didn't have to say it, I just knew it.
- 8:10 Russ comments: In the viral blog that was the impetus for these studies, Ryan asked, perplexed, how people can think if they don't use words? Here Ryan gives a glimpse of an answer to his own question: thoughts sometimes pop up, very clear, without being visual or verbal, in a way that is difficult to explain. That's a good description of the "unsymbolized thinking" described by Hurlburt and Akhter (2008).
This is only Ryan's second sample, so we have quite a way to go before we can be confident about the details of Ryan's experience. Perhaps the kind of thinking he describes here will turn out to be frequent for him, but perhaps it will turn out to be red herring. That is a source of the genuine excitement that this process provides.
- 8:25 AK: Yeah? But it feels right to call it a thought?
- 8:29 Ryan: I would call it a thought because I, it's something that I, it was an opinion that I had, but it wasn't verbalized.
- 8:37 AK: There's no picture. There are no words, but I know, I'm thinking *if I had to juice your thought this would be a cooler video*.
- 8:43 Ryan: Yeah. Like it was just like a snap second that I, I could translate that into words if I had to, but it's one of those thoughts where like if you look at a water bottle you don't like say in your head water bottle, you just, it's just there, you just know it's a bottle.

8:57 AK: Okay.

8:58 Ryan: This one is probably the hardest one to explain.

9:02 AK: Okay. Well I think you're doing a fantastic job explaining it, so that's good. I think I've got it. Well, I guess I should ask about the video. So you're also in parallel watching the video. [Ryan: Um hm.] Is that registering? Like are you paying attention to that? Or have you sort of forgotten that and you're into your own thoughts?

9:20 Ryan: Yeah, I'm not like zoning out. I was paying attention and like listening to what I was saying where I was going to cut the video and stuff like that. So like I was paying attention to what I was saying, but I was also like, the way that I said something I knew they like triggered the fact that it would, it would have been better if it was a different thought. [Alek: Okay.]

9:45 RTH: And as far as your experience is concerned, would you say you're more into this thinking that it would have been better? It would have been more interesting? Or more into the, the cutting / editing task.

9:58 Ryan: I was more into the cut it, the editing part of it. But that kind of like goes hand in hand with the editing. 'Cause like when you're making something creative or artistically, like inspiration just like pops up like that. It's not like, I don't know. I don't know how to explain that.

10:17 RTH: So what I'm agreeing with that with all that, but what I'm trying to do is to figure out what, when you... Sorry... Is your attention (whatever you want to call that, your mental powers, whatever), are they as far as you and as far as your *experience* is concerned, are you more into the editing task or more into the thinking *about* the editing desk, which is a bit more juicy, or I thought it'd be more interesting or whatever? Or maybe that question doesn't make sense, and then ...

10:51 Ryan: I think maybe I could answer this question. I think I was into the editing part focusing just on that. Just like when I was watching the TV show, I was just listening to what the person was saying, nothing else was going on. But then when I said that one phrase, then it like took me out of it and I thought of the fact that it would be better without words.

11:13 RTH: And so at that moment have you left the editing task behind? And so at that particular moment, for whatever reason, I'm into this thought process?

11:21 Ryan: I could have just kept editing and kept moving on. It wasn't like it was a distraction to what I was doing.

11:28 RTH: Right. So, so skilled tasks, like your editing task, like driving a car or something like that, you can, you can do that with either paying attention or not paying attention. Obviously you're paying, when you're driving, for example, you're paying attention, you're not hitting other cars or whatever and you're navigating in and out. But you

could be in a conversation with your friend and at the moment totally absorbed in the conversation and the driving is happening.

11:52 Ryan: I've driven home without even like remembering that I was driving just because I was deep in thought. [inaudible]

11:58 RTH: So the question. So the question is about the editing task. Is the editing task mostly like that? At this [snaps fingers] particular moment I'm totally into this *I could have had a better thought?*

12:09 Ryan: I was fixed. I was fixed on the editing. Like I was focused specifically on the editing. I wasn't really thinking about anything else until I said that one thing. And then I had that feeling that I wish this was a better thought and then it beeped.

12:09 Russ comments: For more than 2½ minutes (which is a long time in an interview), RTH has been aimed at the understanding of what "also" meant when Ryan said [at 9:30] he was editing the video "but I was also" thinking the *it would have been better* thought. We do not arrive at an unambiguous understanding of what "also" meant, so it might appear that this section of the interview was time wasted.

That is far from the truth. These 2½ minutes have been spent trying to clarify two important aspects that underly any investigation of inner experience: Which moment are we considering? and What is experience? Ryan (like nearly all DES participants on their first sampling day) does not yet have a differentiated understanding of either aspect. (And that's not a criticism of Ryan or RTH or Alek—It's how the DES process unfolds.)

First, this line of questioning is difficult for Ryan at least in part (we think) because he does not yet have an adequate grasp of the moment: certainly sometime *before* the beeped moment he was focused on the editing task, and sometime *in the vicinity of* the beeped moment he was focused on the *it would have been better* thought. Were those simultaneous or one after the other? The ability to answer that question depends on the ability to process quickly the occurrence of the beep, and Ryan (like almost all participants) still has to engage in the is-that-the-beep? processing, which experientially smears the beep onset across time. Most participants' skill improves in this regard—we shall see across sampling days if Ryan's does.

Second, we have to clarify with Ryan what counts as directly-before-the-footlights-of-consciousness experience. Certainly Ryan is skillfully engaging in his video-editing task, but that skillful editing may or may not require directly-before-the-footlights-of-consciousness apprehension at some particular moment.

DES questioning is always a combination of backward-looking and forward-looking intentions: it is backward looking in the sense that it tries to ascertain what happened at *yesterday's* beep; and it is forward looking in trying to build skills so that *tomorrow's* apprehension of experience is more skillful. The DES questions all appear to be backward looking, but on the first sampling day, the forward-looking intention is the more important. [In fact, we traditionally discard all day 1 samples as training.]

The bottom line: we have spent the last 2½ minutes in an exploration that demonstrates, on Ryan's own turf, why it is important to be clear about the moment under consideration and what exactly counts as experience. That is time well spent,

even though we didn't (actually, we couldn't) clarify important aspects of what was experienced at the moment of beep 1.2.

SAMPLE 1.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 12:27 RTH: Okay. then I'm good. [Alek: Yes. Me too.] Number three.
- 12:31 Ryan: Number three. Uh, so I was done with the editing part. So I went back to watch "Survivor," and the characters had to use flint to make a fire and like you chop it with an ax and it makes sparks and stuff. So I was watching them do that. And I was watching it with my friend. And I was in the middle of talking when the beep went off. And I was saying, um, yeah, I wrote down the exact quote. Um, I was explaining to my friend that if you scrape off too much magnesium from the flint, it doesn't work. So I was in the middle of saying that. And the thought that led to that was just like the same exact thing when I was editing. It wasn't verbal. It was like, just like my, my body knew that I should say this out loud and I just said it to him. I didn't even think about what I was going to say. I just, I just knew that I was just gonna say it. So like, you know how like you could, people say, "think before you speak," where you like you use internal monologue so that, um, maybe like put the words in order of what you're going to say. I didn't do that. It just popped in my head and then I said it.
- 13:49 RTH: So I'm not sure I'm following this. So, let me, so at the, so sometimes we use a timeline sort of like we use our paper as a timeline. But this is time, this is time marching on and the beep hits right here, and the beep occurs and it's beeping, it's beeping, and then you push the button and you stop the beep. And that time keeps on marching along like that. [Ryan: Um hm.] So the, the moment that we're interested in is this moment here, one millisecond just before the beginning of the beep. And the, and is it the case at that particular moment that you are saying something aloud to your friend?
- 14:24 Ryan: I was in the middle of like, I was started talking and then in the middle of my sentence it beeped.
- 14:29 RTH: Okay. And the sentence is, "If you scrape off too much magnesium, it doesn't work."
- 14:34 Ryan: Yeah. The flint, the flint won't work anymore.
- 14:42 RTH: And, and sometimes when people are saying something out loud, those words are just rolling out of their mouth and they're not paying any attention to them. And they seem like they're sort of engaged in the speaking. Are you engaged in the speaking this time?
- 14:57 Ryan: Absolutely not. I just, it was verbal diarrhea, just spewed out as I was watching what was happening on the TV.
- 15:04 RTH: And so does that mean that as far as your experience is concerned, it's you're sort of like encountering these words in the same way as your friend is encountering those words there? Obviously...

- 15:14 Ryan: Exactly. Same as I'm saying it. Um, whatever I'm saying, um, my friend is hearing it for the first time and I'm hearing it for the first time too. Like I didn't plan out what I was gonna say.
- 15:26 RTH: Okay. So these words are just sort of coming out without any direction of yours, experienced direction. [Ryan: Yeah.] And, and do you, is your experience of *speaking* these words or *hearing* these words? And the, and the way, what we sometimes differentiate that is, is imagine yourself talking into a tape recorder. I could say these things into the tape recorder and then I could play it back, in hear it coming out of the tape recorder. Same words, same voice, same inflection saying whatever, except that one experience is of speaking and the other is of hearing.
- 15:56 Ryan: So what do you mean? Like when, when in my experience as I'm talking or before I'm talking?
- 16:01 RTH: At this moment, at this moment that we're interested in [holds up the timeline and point to the millisecond before the beep], which is we've decided, as you're talking, do you experience yourself as *talking*? Or do you experience yourself as *hearing yourself talk*? Or maybe that question doesn't make sense for you.
- 16:16 Ryan: Yeah, I, I can't like, um, wrap my head around that. I, I was just talking and I was hearing my voice come out of my mouth. If that answers your question. Can I have an example of someone else answering this question? So like, I
- 16:34 RTH: Sure. So, so, so some people would say, "I that when I speak, I feel like I'm the creator of these words and I'm the driver of the experience. And that's what I mean when I say I'm talking." And other people would say, "I don't actually experience myself as talking. I, I just, I just hear myself. I, I, the experience is, the experience of my talking is *exactly* the same as my experience of *Ryan* talking. I'm hearing words coming *at* me, I'm creating them in this situation, but the, what the word seemed like more of an *auditory* phenomenon than a *speaking* phenomenon." And I don't have any, I'm not a fan of either one of those. I don't, I don't really care. I'm just asking whether you have that experience. But other people would say, "I don't know what you're talking about. I can't make a distinction."
- 17:22 Ryan: I think I know what you're saying. I just have never thought about it that way before. Okay. I guess it's more of me hearing my voice.
- 17:33 RTH: Well, what I would say is let's, let's leave that question aside and not try to answer it, and use this as a, well, what we've done here is we've raised the possibility that we hadn't thought about before. [Ryan: High fidelity.] Fidelity. That's right. And somewhere down the road, maybe this conversation will help, help us out. And you'll have another experience, and you say, "Oh! I can now, now I know what he was talking about!"
- 17:58 Ryan: Yeah. Okay.

17:58 Russ comments: In our 12:09 comment, we said that DES is always both backward-looking and forward-looking, and our discussion of the speaking vs. hearing distinction capped by RTH's comment at 17:33 is a prime example of that feature. DES questions always sound backward-looking ("What happened at the moment of the beep?"), but on the first sampling day, those questions are mostly (as here) forward looking. DES calls this process "iterative": we are asking about the speaking / hearing distinction at least in part as a way of gaining practice in apprehending experience so that *tomorrow's* sampling can be of higher fidelity than today's.

I re-emphasize that these comments are in no way a criticism of Ryan: essentially no-one is skilled at experience sampling on their first sampling day. For most people (probably including Ryan), DES is the first time they've been asked to describe their experience with such precision.

18:02 RTH: And, and so we've established that you're talking. Are you still paying attention to the show? Or at this particular moment, have you left the show in favor of saying this to your friend?

18:15 Ryan: I'm still watching a show. It's kind of like brushing your teeth while like looking in the mirror and looking at yourself. Like you still see yourself, but like you're not really thinking about brushing your teeth. You just, you're just doing it. It's like muscle memory kind of. So like talking is muscle memory. Like I don't need to like plan out what I'm going to say to talk. I could do it on the fly. Um,

18:38 RTH: So as far as, as far as your *experience* is concerned, what's before the Footlights of your consciousness? Is your experience entirely of watching the show? And as a fact of the universe, I'm speaking, I'm saying "if you scrape off too much magnesium, then the flint won't work." That's a fact. I'm saying that. But I don't even, even experience that at all. I'm just watching the show.

19:01 Ryan: Oh no, I said it. I knew, I knew I was talking and I knew I wanted to say it to my friend to tell him. I wanted to teach him about what was going on on the TV. So I guess the motive behind me talking.

19:16 RTH: So it is not the case that the words are totally automatic, and it's also not the case that I have left the show in favor of the words. But at this particular moment, my experience is both of telling my friend about flint and watching the show.

19:33 Ryan: Yeah. So like if, if my friend wasn't there, I would have had the same thought about scraping too much magnesium off. I would have like not verbally. I would have, once again it would have just like popped up like a feeling, and then I would have just kept going on it and watching it. But since he was there I'm like, Oh this, (I hate explaining things with words 'cause it's not what's happening in my head.) But I knew that I wanted to teach him this. It wasn't a thought where I was just like, Hmm, maybe he would like this. And then I said it. I just, I was like, I felt,

20:08 RTH: In a teaching, in a teaching mode, I said this.

20:11 Ryan: yes.

- 20:13 AK: And is so I want to be really careful to not assume that the motive or the intention always has to be present. Right. Like we could say there's *always* some intention or whatever, but it's not always present in our direct experience. Right. [Ryan: Um hm.] And so in this moment, is the teaching-ness of it part of your direct experience? Or is that just sort of the context? Like I guess I want to say this 'cause I want to teach him, but it's not like I feel an urge to teach him or...
- 20:47 Ryan: I have saved my breath. Or not. I just, I felt the need to engage with my friend that was sitting next to me. I don't know. [Alek: Um hm.] I wasn't thinking about having to engage with him. I just, that's what humans do. They engage with each other.
- 21:00 AK: It just came out.
- 21:01 Ryan: It just came out.
- 21:02 AK: Okay. Okay. I think I'm good.
- 21:03 Ryan: Have you ever, like, stubbed your toe and like swore and it just like the words just came out? Like you didn't like *think about* swearing but it just like popped out. Yeah. Similar to that.
- 21:15 AK: Probably today I have. [Ryan laughs] Well then, I'm good for that one.
- 21:23 Ryan: How am I doing so far?
- 21:25 RTH: Good. You're doing great. This is, this is exactly the kind of conversations that we typically do on the first day where we're trying to, we're trying to raise some issues that you probably haven't thought about, people, people haven't thought about before. And uh, and we don't really know what's important to be asking about., We're... When you say something that triggers, *well maybe you meant this or maybe you meant that*, then we're going to ask about it. And uh, and some of those things will turn out to be useful on the next day or the next day, and some of them will turn out to have been a waste of time. And uh, there's no way of knowing. So we're just muddling along, I guess. But that's the way, that's the way this process has to be, I think, if we're, if we're really aiming at fidelity. So, I think you're doing great. I think Alek's doing great. And I'm doing okay, too.
- 21:25 Russ comments: If it isn't clear by RTH's comment here, this truly is a very typical day 1 DES sampling, and Ryan is doing exactly what we've asked of him: he's trying hard to describe experience, is willing to say "I don't know" and ask for clarification, and has clearly demonstrated his commitment to being a co-investigator in the process.

SAMPLE 1.4 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 22:16 AK: [laughs] You're doing okay! Number four.

- 22:21 Ryan: Yes. Alright. Uh, still watching the show. Um, it, this beep like came almost like 10 minutes like right after. Um, and a woman (I had to like look up her ethnicity so I didn't like sound ignorant. She's from Sri Lanka, yes Sri Lanka). And um, she has an accent and I was focusing on her accent, not in like a negative or positive way, just like how she was saying specific words. And I wasn't thinking to myself in like an analyzing way. I was just noting every time she said something I would like, they would like, I would note it. Um, but I was also listening to the context of the word she was saying, not just like the inflection on the words to the point where like when she was done talking, I said "That was a good answer" out loud to my friend again. And then it beeped.
- 23:15 AK: Okay. So I want to nail down where exactly the beep happens. Like, um, 'cause that sounded like maybe if some digressions of like, here's what I've been doing, the rest of the show. So what, what exactly is all present at the moment of the beep? I understand there's like a focus on the accent.
- 23:32 Ryan: Yeah. Um, there's focus on the accent and um, she was explaining her case why she should win the show. And I was listening to what she was saying. Um, but also focusing on the accent just because it was unique to me. I was trying to like figure out where she was from maybe. Um, but I wasn't like verbalizing these thoughts.
- 23:55 AK: Um, so she is speaking at the moment of the beep.
- 23:59 Ryan: She's speaking. Um, she just finished speaking, and I, I just say "That was a good answer." I said it out loud and then it beeps like a half a second after I said that.
- 24:11 AK: Okay. So she has just finished speaking, [Ryan: Just finished speaking.] and I have commented "That is a good answer." [Ryan: Um hm.] And that's where the beep interrupts? [Ryan: Yeah.] Okay. And so is there still, is her accent still present to you? Or was it like I was focused on the accent *before* and now I've moved on to saying "That's, that was a good answer," and then beep? Or is the accent still somehow there?
- 24:41 Ryan: I was still like sensing the accent the whole time. Like, you know, how have you ever talked to someone for a while if they have an accent and then eventually it's just like it becomes second nature. You don't even think about it anymore. It was kind of new to me. So I was, I was like noting. I was, I was aware.
- 24:56 AK: Um hm. And even though technically her voice has, is no longer, I'm still somehow aware of or sensing or something her accent.
- 25:06 Ryan: Um, no, not at that point. It was only when she was speaking that, that I was thinking about the accent and by thinking, I mean, noting that like, just noticing it.
- 25:16 RTH: So let me, let me see whether I've got this in our timeline deal. So I'm watching the show, she's talking [gestures six or so inches before the beep on the timeline], I'm listening to her accent. I'm also tracking what she's saying and I'm interested in her accent. [he advances on the timeline toward the beep] I'm tracking what she's saying, I'm interested in her accent, I'm tracking what she's saying. [he has gotten to a half

inch before the beep] And then I say to my friend, "That was a good answer." And beep happens in the [inaudible]. So our interest is what's happening right here [points to a millimeter just before the beep]. Not so much what's out here. [points to the region a few inches before the beep] So it sounds in *this* rendition that the accent portion of it is here and gone and not present here. [points to the onset of the beep]

25:50 Ryan: I don't think I could give you, um, any like information that I remember from between the time I said the words and stop speaking till it beeps. I don't, I don't know anything that happened at that point. Like it was, it was such a small little point in time that I didn't even, I wasn't even focusing on anything. I, I don't even remember what was happening at that point.

26:18 RTH: So the point that Alek was trying to drive to raise was that in the physical world, her speaking and her and her accent have come and gone, apparently. But in the experiential world, that doesn't, the experiential world doesn't necessarily track the physical world. So her accent could have come and gone in the *physical* world, but for *some* reason you're, you are still interested in accent.

26:44 Ryan: I was not still interested in the accent.

26:46 RTH: Okay. Then, *then* the accent is a done deal. And what's happening is, I'm saying to my friend "That was a good answer."

26:46 Russ comments: In typical day 1 sampling fashion, we've spent the last 3 or so minutes trying to pinpoint the moment of the beep. Doing so clarified that the woman's accent was *not* in Ryan's experience at the moment of the beep. That is in direct contrast to Ryan's initial description of this experience (Ryan at 22:41: "...she has an accent and I was focusing on her accent.") The interview allows Ryan himself to notice, on his own terms, whether that experience was really captured by the beep. We have no interest in 'scaring away' experiences; we are, however, interested in being clear about which moment of experience we're describing.

26:52 Ryan: That was a good answer. And then I was, I was feeling that she, that she was doing a good job of explaining herself. That's, in that moment, that's what I was feeling. [RTH: Okay.] And when I say... "physical"'s a weird word because it's not like physical sensation that I'm feeling. I don't want, like you were explaining about how some people feel heat or something. It wasn't like that at all. It was just like a more like a gut feeling. That's still sounds physical but

27:24 AK: mm. But there is something coming to me present to me about like my evaluation of her.

27:33 Ryan: Yeah. I'm, I'm probably thinking about a whole bunch of different things at once. Like how the game works, what you have to say to the people that they're talking to, um, who's listening. It's just like a whole combination of things that are happening. Um, like I'm not just like brain dead focusing on one thing at once. It's just like a whole encapsulation of the entire show where everything just adds up. And I'm like, that was a good answer just based on how everything works in the show.

28:05 AK: Yeah. But I'm gathering, it's not like I have any direct thought about, well here are the rules of the game and then here's what the other guy said. But it's sort of like I am skillfully grokking all of it. And then when she's done speaking I realize, Oh, that was a good answer.

28:22 Ryan: Yes. [Alek: Okay.] So it's not like I was like mentally adding up all the criteria you need to hit to have a good answer. I just knew it was a good answer based on my experience of watching the show and how it works.

28:40 AK: And so then my question is sort of, well does he just somehow in some, you know, background, unconscious, whatever way, does he take all that in and what comes out is "that was a good answer"? Or is there some directly-present-to-me thought or feeling or knowing that, that it was a good answer. And then also I say that.

29:09 Ryan: Probably the first one.

29:11 AK: Okay. So like behind the scenes I'm taking it all in and I say it.

29:16 Ryan: Yeah. So it's, it's moreso me explaining to my friend that it was a good answer without actually having to like put all the pieces together. [Alek: Um hm.] And the words that came out, once again, I didn't think about speaking. It just, just popped out. I guess that answers your question about like a tape recorder, if I just hit play and it came out.

29:16 Russ comments: We have not yet conveyed adequately to Ryan the tape-recorder metaphor, that the difference between speaking and hearing is that the experience of speaking is of production whereas the experience of hearing is reception. Like all things DES, this is just one attempt, and we will (perhaps) be able to refine it when other occasions arise in the future.

29:43 AK: Uh huh. Right. You don't experience yourself as driving the words. They're coming out.

29:47 Ryan: They just flow out.

29:49 AK: And so in that sense, is this be really quite similar to the one before? Where there's, you know, there's obviously some understanding like you said, I'm not brain dead, I'm taking in the show, but then I just kind of words just sort of come out. They make sense, whatever. But my experience is just words coming out of me.

30:07 Ryan: Yeah, it was same, same exact, um, I guess method of, of my thought.

30:17 AK: Okay. And the show, is that still getting in? Or have you sort of left that?

30:25 Ryan: No, I could, I could, I was able to like focus on the show still at the same time.

30:30 AK: Okay. So I'm still paying attention to the show and I say to my friend... (you go ahead).

- 30:35 Ryan: She, she's done talking. So I probably am pulled away from the show a little bit. Because it's like when they're talking I'm more engaged. But then like they stopped talking and then I say "that was a good answer." So I guess I, I am pulled away from, from the show at that point when I say it.
- 30:53 AK: Okay. And I have understood that this is kind of like the happening of speaking, like words are coming out, but I don't experience myself producing them. I don't have some pre-sentiment or thought of what they are. I just say what I know.
- 31:07 Ryan: I, it's kind of like reaching into a bag and pulling out a sentence. Like it pops up and then I just know how words go together and they came out as a group of words that mean something. [Alek: Okay.]
- 31:24 RTH: Excuse me. So I want to make one more distinction about this beep before we move on. And that is that a minute ago [00:30:41] you said, "well she was done speaking and so I probably have withdrawn from the show a little bit." What I, what I want us to, to be *really clear* about, which is a skill and it's going to take some practice, is that distinction between *inferring* something (well, she's done talking, and *therefore* I must have been doing this--that's an *inference*) and a direct apprehension of experience, which would have been something like, well, I feel myself, I *felt* myself at the moment pulled away from the a show. [Ryan: Um hm.] And so you asked yesterday I think (or whenever the last time we talked about [interview 0, 00:19:10]), well, don't, sometimes people fill in the details? Well, this *might be*... When people say something like, well, "probably it was this," that that *might be* the filling in of the details. And I want us to be sensitive to try not to do that.
- 32:19 Ryan: And that I'm aware of that. I'm aware that, that that's a strong possibility that is happening right now. Just because it was so long ago. I prefaced it in the, in the beginning.
- 32:28 RTH: Yep. And, and, and that's fine. I'm not, I'm not being the slightest bit critical. I'm, I'm happy that we're having the conversation. I'm aware that you are understanding what the, what the deal is here, which is what the first day is about. So I just want to be explicit that we *don't* want to do that. And, and that we're, that I'm, I'm a careful listener. We're careful listeners here, and we're gonna, we're gonna try to help us *not* fall into that theoretical explanatory mode.
- 32:58 Ryan: Do you guys have certain um, like terms for the different methods of like the questions that you're asking like that you're trying to like find out. So like the way you're phrasing questions, are you trying to look for certain types of things? Like for example, like if in the medical world, if I go to ask someone a question, it's like directed down a path to lead me to an answer that I ended up I'm looking for. Is that what you're doing? Do you have terms for like speaking without thinking?
- 33:32 RTH: Yes, we do.
- 33:34 Ryan: And what's that called?

33:35 RTH: Speaking without thinking I might, I, maybe we, “words rolling out” I guess is our technical term. But uh, but we’re, we’re actually, I think we *don’t do* what you just described. We have terms that we use, but we recognize that people are maybe very different from each other. And so we, we explicitly do *not* want to teach you to use the terms that we are interested in. [Ryan: Okay.] We, we want to enter into *your* experience, which means probably we have to translate, we have to understand what *you* are saying on *your* terms. And then when we’re *done*, probably everybody will agree as to what it was they were saying. And then we can say, well this was an example of that or, or it wasn’t. But, but it’s, it’s not... For us, it’s *not* a matter of trying to fit Ryan into predefined categories.

34:27 Ryan: I was just trying to see if it would be easier to just have like a definition of some of the things that I’m saying. Just so like when we do this again I can say I was, it was, it was *this*, so I don’t have to like verbally try to look like an idiot trying to figure out how my brain works.

34:45 RTH: Yeah. We want you to look like an idiot! That’s our, that’s our goal! [all laugh].

34:49 Ryan: That’s your goal! [inaudible]

34:49 RTH: And, and we also, we also want *ourselves* to look like idiots, because that’s the only way that you can get to fidelity. So, so I think what we’ll end up doing is we’ll end up saying something like, well this is sort of like back in sample number 2.1 I... (You remember that?) And then we’ll... And after we’ve said that two or three times, *then* we’ll say, “Well, we probably ought to have a name for that. If we’re going to re refer it back to the same thing. Let’s give that a name.” And it might be a name that’s, that you use and it might be a name that we use. By that time we will have, we’ll be able to negotiate that without worrying about whether we have screwed you up too badly by, by imposing our vocabulary on you.

34:49 Russ comments: This light-hearted conversation about the desirability of looking like an idiot is actually a serious consideration of a fundamentally important aspect of DES (and of probably of any method that aspires to fidelity). To get to a high-fidelity apprehension of Ryan’s experience *requires* starting out with no presuppositions about what that experience might be like—that is, *requires* starting out “like an idiot.” Then, if all goes well, we can gradually encounter a bit of high-fidelity apprehension (through the eyes of an idiot), and another bit of high-fidelity apprehension (still pretty much like an idiot), and then another bit, and so on, until eventually some regularity reveals itself. This is the heart of what DES calls the “iterative” method.

(As an aside, one might wonder why there are not more investigators trying to get high-fidelity apprehensions of inner experience. Part of the answer likely is that most people avoid looking like an idiot.)

35:28 Ryan: Alright. Okay. So it’s more like labeling. You’re, you’re defining my how I’m explaining things, moreso.

35:34 RTH: But eventually we will try to describe what you have described. And when we do that we *think* that you will say “that’s exactly what I had in mind.” And, and it *won’t* be that

we have divided the world up into 5 or 8 or 29 or whatever different things, and Ryan fits a 3 and a 7 and a 21, or whatever. It's going to be that we will have described the essential features of what samples we have seen. And you will agree that "Yep, that's what I said!" And or, or *not*--maybe we won't be able to do it. But chances are good that you will agree. And *then* we can say, "Well, y'know, that is the kind of thing that we call (uh, with other participants) X. Or not, you know, we'll have to wait and see.

36:27 Ryan: Right. Sounds good.

36:28 RTH: And even if it is, even if we do say it's X, it might very well be that we will say, "Well, this is sort of like what we would call called X with other people, but Ryan has his own particular flavor about this. And instead of being a [inaudible] right down the middle of an X, it's a X with a little bit of something else in it."

36:44 Ryan: I do have a feeling my brain is going to be a little bit more unique than other people you talk to.

36:50 RTH: Well that's, that's what were, that's what makes life interesting.

36:53 AK: We shall see! [Ryan: Right.]

SAMPLE 1.5 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 36:55 RTH: Number five.
- 36:57 Ryan: Number five. I think this one is a fun one. Uh, yeah. Uh, I was watching a Domino's commercial and it was like a bunch of boxes, like a Zoom call, just like a bunch of people on like a, whatever it is, FaceTiming, whatever. And um, there's like this overweight kid, um, and he was eating pizza and he said something about how much he loves pizza. And I said in internal monologue in my head, um, "his parents should probably stop buying him pizza." Um. It's not something I would say out loud, but it is something that that popped into my head.
- 37:42 RTH: And, and this is caught in flight by the moment of the beep? Is that right? [Ryan: Yeah.] And, and those words were, "his parents should probably stop buying him pizza"? [Ryan: Yep.] And this I understand is spoken in your voice. [Ryan: My voice. Yep.] And with any particular inflection?
- 38:03 Ryan: However I just said it out loud. I said it the same exact way inside of my head.
- 38:09 RTH: So that's sort of, to my ear, that sounded like sort of a matter of fact, straight, straight-ahead, declarative sentence: "his parents should probably stop buying him pizza" without any particular inflection. Like his parents should *stop* [said with exaggerated emphasis] buying him pizza.
- 38:22 Ryan: It was more like, "his parents should probably stop buying him pizza" [said flatly and somewhat softly] just like....
- 38:28 RTH: Okay. And, and it does. And that is, so we talked a little bit ago [see 15:43 and 00:29:38] about the distinction between speaking and hearing. Does it seem like you're speaking those words? Or do you...
- 38:39 Ryan: I'm, I'm driving that for sure.
- 38:42 RTH: Okay. So this is a, this is the experience of *speaking* those words, *not* of hearing those words played back to me.
- 38:47 Ryan: It's something I would have said out loud to my friends if they were there, but no one was there so I just said it in my head to myself.
- 38:47 Russ comments: An essential feature of the DES iterative procedure is that the iteration is refreshed by ever new experiences. Here we have had the opportunity to return to the distinction between speaking and hearing, this time from a new perspective, which allows us to refine that distinction.
- 39:00 RTH: Okay. And, and my eyes are still aimed at the TV. [Ryan: Um hm.] And am I, am I seeing that? Or, or have I withdrawn from that in favor of saying this?
- 39:10 Ryan: I'm doing both at the same time.

- 39:13 RTH: Okay. And both, and both in your experience at the same time? So I continue to experience the TV commercial while I say this to myself?
- 39:22 Ryan: Yeah. I'm going to try to explain something just like for the future, 'cause it might happen again. [RTH: Okay.] The way I said that like I can initiate self-speech, um, like internal monologue as what I wrote about. Um, but sometimes it's like louder and more prominent. Like I'm forcing myself to do it. And then other times it's like, I don't want to say quieter but a little less, it doesn't pull me out of certain situations. It's just kind of like going on underneath the scene. This was like very prominent, where like I *wanted* to say it like I was gonna say it out loud but no one was there, so I just said it to myself.
- 40:04 RTH: So regardless of whether this was similar to or different from other ones, you would say (this is a question) the, I was speaking in a prominent way? So, so was prominence, is the prominence a characteristic of this speaking? Or is that just there's going to be some other ones where it's less prominent?
- 40:26 Ryan: There, this is like, I guess, um, not like the norm, but if I wanted to initiate self, talk to myself, like, like the example of me looking in the mirror and saying a sentence. If I wanted to do that, it would be at this intensity or like volume. It's so hard to explain this. Um, I could be in class paying attention and I'll kind of daydream, and then the things that I say are a little less of me driving and more of it, um, coming out organically without me doing it. This is, I knew I wanted to say this. I and I initiated it myself, whereas sometimes I don't initiate it, but it's still my voice that I hear just a little bit less, um, I guess, forced.
- 41:15 RTH: Right. So, so you say it's difficult for you to describe, and I would say it's difficult for me to understand. And the good news of that, of this is that we, neither of us have to do it well on the first sampling day. Because if this is really a characteristic, as you say it is, we're going to get more examples of that on the day 2 or day 3 or whatever, and it, and at those times you're going to be able to say, well, this one is *not* like that other one because that *other* one was prominent or whatever, and we're going to be able to figure, figure this out. [Ryan: Right.] And that's a, an essential feature of the method. We don't have to work too hard on, on any particular day. And in a fundamentally important way, no sample is really all that important. But we're gonna, we're gonna, we have, I've, so what you have done is you've awakened in me, *well, I'm going to be interested in what he's talking about*: sometimes things are prominent and sometimes not. I don't know what the hell he's talking about *now*, but I've, but I've got the idea that maybe that's going to be an interesting thing. I've filed that way somehow in my bones, my neurons, and I'm going to be sensitive to that down the road, and we're, and we're, and we're going to figure it out. *Or* we're going to forget that we ever had this conversation, because it hasn't really happened.
- 42:36 Ryan: Alright. Let me just like for future reference that experience right there where I initiated a self-speak and, as I said, it was prominent, going, it's just a weird word. Um, that is the exact experience that I was fascinated with. That's what initiated me writing everything and making the videos was *that* experience. And the flip side of that,

people saying that they can't do that. That's the whole thing that I'm interested in and what, what I wrote about.

43:11 RTH: Okay, well good. So we're gonna, we're, I think we're gonna find out some interesting things about that. And it's not, we're gonna find out things that I already know and I'm gonna tell you about. And it's probably also not things that you already know and you're gonna tell us about. It's going to be, we're gonna be able to figure this out because we're gonna get some examples and it's gonna clarify for *you* what you *meant*. And, and when you, when you clarify that for yourself, you're gonna be able to clarify that for us. And so, the method really is, I think, it's an emergent thing that that requires all of us working, working together. [Alek: Cool.].

43:53 Ryan: Any other questions about that one, or...?

43:55 RTH: I'd say we oughta go on to beep number six. [Alek: Same.]

SAMPLE 1.6 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

44:01 Ryan: Um, okay. This one was also a more interesting one to me. Um, so I was in the middle of playing a video game, so I was, I was focusing on that, but it was almost like autopilot when the beep went off. So like I was still able to play the game, but I wasn't exactly as focused on it as I could be. Just like drive, like when you drive home and it's just like, you know, you're driving but you're thinking about other things. Just like that. [RTH: Okay.] And what I was thinking about was I just sent a text message maybe like 30 seconds to a minute prior to the beep. And I visually saw one of the words that I said. So I said, um, "I was, I was gonna text ya" instead of saying "you," I typed out "ya." Like Y-A. And like I was visually seeing the Y-A, but I was also *saying* the sentence, um, it like out loud in, well not loud, in my head.

45:07 AK: Mm hm. Okay. So does it seem like there are sort of three things going on here? The game, saying "I'm going to text ya," and seeing the ya.

45:18 Ryan: Yeah. [Alek: Okay.] So kind of like, uh, I just see the word "ya." Um, and all the other words are just kind of like blurry out of picture. So it's just the ya, for some reason that word stood out to me. And I think I was *saying* it almost like trying to figure out how the person that I sent it to would interpret it. [Alek: Okay.] So I think I was just saying it like how would they read it? Maybe. That's, that's how I analyzed that. 'Cause it just, it was one of those daydreams where it just kind of popped in and I wasn't controlling, I didn't initiate that speech.

45:56 AK: Okay. And of the game, the speaking, and the image, is one of those more prominent than the others?

46:04 Ryan: Uh, all in their own way. So like the game was external. So like I, my body, I mean that's what I was *doing*. So like that's what it was just there I was, I was still like, I could see what I was doing, I knew what I was doing. [Alek: Yeah.] And then the visual and the words were happening at the same time. They were connected, they were together but different.

- 46:31 AK: Okay. Well, and sometimes people can say like in terms of like your mental energy, kind of your mental powers, like we said before, some people will say, "well yes, those things are all going on simultaneously. But it's the *image* that kind of dominates, it's like 70% of that experience at the moment." Or sometimes people will say, "Oh, they're all kind of equally present. They're all there."
- 46:52 Ryan: I think it was equally present. I could see how something could be more dominant, just based on my own personal experience. Um, but at that time they all seem to just like have their own place, um, in my head.
- 47:06 AK: Okay. So about the, um, the words. So I understand that I'm speaking this in my head? [Ryan: Um...] The, "I'm going to text ya" or whatever.
- 47:20 Ryan: Yeah. Can you repeat that question?
- 47:23 AK: Are, are these words "I'm, I'm gonna..." Are the words "I'm gonna text ya."
- 47:28 Ryan: Yeah. I was saying it. Like it was, it was, it was inner speech.
- 47:32 AK: Okay. And in the same way as in the previous beep? your voice...?
- 47:39 Ryan: No. Um, it's the same voice, [Alek: Um hm.] but it's a little bit less of the main... It's like you said, like the 70-30%. This was 33%, when the last one was 80%. [Alek: Okay.] So it's like, that's why I say like *quiet*, quieter. It's just, it's hard using audio because it's not actually present. Like it's not actual sound. But like it's, it's quieter. I wasn't controlling it, where the other one, I initiated that speech.
- 48:16 AK: Okay. So in this, in this beep number six, I don't, I am not the initiator of the speech. For whatever reason I'm saying to myself, "I'm going to text you."
- 48:27 Ryan: Yeah. I think maybe the, the Y-A, the visual pops into my head. And then I said it from seeing that.
- 48:38 AK: Okay, so even so I'm not really the initiator. I don't have this sense or whatever of myself initiating the words. Does it, can you make the distinction between, well I'm *speaking* them (innerly), I'm, I'm innerly speaking them, or I am innerly *hearing* them. Does that distinction make sense?
- 48:57 Ryan: I think I was innerly hearing it, [Alek: Um hm.] Yes.
- 49:02 AK: Okay. So in that way, that would make this experience kind of fundamentally different than beep five. There I was the speaker, the driver. I initiated it. Same voice and everything, but here I'm, I'm *hearing* it like I'm the recipient.
- 49:18 Ryan: Yeah. It's... The distinction is weird because it's, it's like a similar thing that's happening. So like the ex the *experience* is similar, but like what *initiated* it is different. So I, the beep five, I just like when I said things out loud, it popped in. I felt the need to

say it. So I initiated it. This one, it just kind of like crept in and I heard it. [Alek: Okay.] Yeah. I, this one I was not in control of. It just came in.

49:53 RTH: And how does that compare to the, I guess the fourth beep, “that was a good answer”?

49:58 Ryan: Uh, the Ff... “That was a good answer.” And then the, um, initiated, um, internal monologue for beep five were similar--just one I said in my head and the other one I said out loud. *This* one was more of an organic thought where I didn’t put any brainpower towards it. I didn’t *try* to do this. It just, it just popped up and I heard it. That’s gonna make me sound like I have schizophrenia.

50:27 AK: [laughs] Oh, you’re in a very common company. There are lots of people out that experience that. [Ryan: Jeez.]

50:35 RTH: So, so one, one thing that I would say about, about all this is, is I want us not to take, uh, the answers that were given to these questions too seriously. We’re trying to do the best we can to answer these questions, but we weren’t really ready to hear those questions. We weren’t ready to ask the questions; you weren’t ready to understand what we were doing about it. So we wanna make sure that we understand that you, that there’s no urge for us to be consistent. So *next time* when we, when we do this, just because you said, well we made, we made a distinction here between prominence and not prominence, or between hearing and speaking, maybe those things... That was, you know, that was because Ryan was tired or Russ was whatever. And, and, and... *Or* maybe those things, will, will be building blocks on, which we can, we can do better.

50:35 Russ comments: RTH is pretty incoherent here. What he’s trying to say is that we should accept what we’ve said today as a first draft of a description of aspects of Ryan’s experience. Next time, when we create a second draft, we may discard entirely our first draft, or we may refine it, or we may accept it as it is. What we *don’t* want to do is to blindly accept our first draft on the belief that because we said it on day 1, we *must be consistent* and say the same things on day 2.

51:23 Ryan: Let me just say quick that those two experiences are very common and happen to me all the time. So whether me initiating the speech or it comes in, it’s still speech that is going on, um, often. Where like the first two beeps, they weren’t speech related. It was just like a, I wasn’t thinking or initiating or anything. It was more of a feeling, where these, like the last three, were more of like language-based thoughts.

51:57 RTH: And, and what uh, what I would say is that I accept that that’s, that’s your characterization and it’s probably true. But *more than that* I want us to what we call *bracket* that. So it might very well be true, but let’s not act as if it were true. And let’s not act as if it were false, either. Let’s just set that aside. If it *is* true, we’re going to see a lot of them and then we’ll get a chance to make the discriminations that are necessary as we go, on the basis of *this* concrete sample and *that* concrete sample and *this other* concrete sample. The alternative is to say, well, I’ve got this theoretical view of myself and I’m going to try to fit all these, all of these samples, all these

experiences, into that theoretical view. *Let's not do that.* Let's, let's set aside any theoretical view that we have. And at the, and the, and the advantage of doing that is that at the end of our time together, you will have a probably a clearer example of what that, or a clear understanding of what that self-theoretical thing is. And, which might range from *well I was entirely wrong* or to or to, *well I was 95% right*. And I learned that last 5%. That's what "bracketing" means. It means we're not not believing you, we're not believing you. We're going to set it aside and we're going to come back to it sometime down the road.

51:57 Russ comments: "Bracketing presuppositions" (setting aside one's taken-for-granted self-theories, generalizations, heuristics, and biases) is a fundamental aspect of DES. It's woven through all aspects of DES; it's at the heart of why we are willing (happy, even) to look like idiots in the spirit of genuinely understanding another's experience.

Here, we're encouraging Ryan to join us in that spirit (and certainly we'll return to this topic again as this process unfolds). Perhaps for Ryan this will be more difficult than for other participants—he has shared his theories about internal monologue with the world, and that might make it difficult to set that theory aside. On the other hand, he was willing to describe an unworded experience at sample 1.2 (a juicy thought would be better). We shall see.

53:16 Ryan: All right. I also think it's important to note, just for like my personal research on this as, as we're doing this, um, that the, just like the setting that I was in while I was doing the experiment. So I was studying for 20 hours straight and then I took a test that morning, and then I was also taking Adderall as well. So, I don't know if that affects everything, but I would be interested in trying to do it in different settings or different times of the day to see how um, what different types of experiences I have.

53:50 RTH: We're all for it.

53:51 AK: Um hmm.

53:52 Ryan: I just, I don't know if you guys put that into your research, um, like medication, or sleep, or I don't know how you account for that.

54:03 RTH: Yeah, that's a really, really good question. And what I w what I would say is we don't spend much time trying to account for it. And our, and, and not because it's not important, but because we see our task as being, we're going to try to describe what phenomenon we encounter. And not, and we're *not* going to try to explain it as to why we encountered that, whether it's Adderall, or whether it's the tired, or the watching TV, or whatever. And the reason for that is that there are, y'know, 999,998 psychologists out there who were trying to explain things. And then there's us who are trying to describe phenomena.

54:47 Ryan: Yes. So some people are trying to explain *why*, and then you're just trying to describe.

54:55 RTH: We're, we're trying to describe things. Other people can come along and descr, and explain, explain what. We're trying to get the phenomenon right, without really regard to whether it's drug related, or TV related, or fatigue related.

- 55:09 AK: We do. I would say though, I mean we do do studies that are more systematic, where it's like, like our lab has done one in the past where we observed inner experience after someone started an antidepressant. [Ryan: Yeah.] So those are really interesting questions. And there, there is certainly reason to suspect that something like medication might fundamentally change your inner experience.
- 55:31 Ryan: I'm really interested in maybe exploring that for my viewers. Eventually once we get the hang of this and um, we both are on the same page of what I'm trying to explain
- 55:44 RTH: And, we'd be, we'd be all over that. We, we would think that that would be a very interesting thing.
- 55:48 Ryan: I think that would be entertaining.
- 55:50 RTH: But, but, but that makes the case that what we *need* to do is we need to get, we need to get the phenomenon *right*. [Ryan: Yeah.] So we've gotta set aside whatever theory you have about what Adderall does or doesn't do. If we're going to learn about what Adderall actually does, we've gotta set that serious side until we get a chance to see the phenomenon. And then we can come back to that theory and say, well what I thought was true all the way along. Or not. Or whatever
- 56:17 Ryan: [inaudible] something that I explained earlier, um, just in reference to the Adderall is that, um, thought five, where like the words initiated themselves, they kind of just crept in. Um, when I take Adderall it's much less of that, and almost like that, that's kind of like daydreamy, where like it pulls me out of the situation where when I initiate self-speech it doesn't pull me out of the external.
- 56:50 RTH: Well, I, I accept that as probably true and I would bracket that aside as well, 'cause that's [inaudible]
- 56:56 Ryan: Just totally [inaudible] I keep talking about it
- 56:58 RTH: And it may, it may very well be an interesting thing for us to do that down the road to manipulate that. Let you take it sometimes and not take it other times and see whether that, whether we can have evidence that shows that as being right or not.
- 57:11 Ryan: Yeah, I would like to do that.
- 57:12 RTH: My clock says that we've been at this for 58 minutes. We probably ought to say this is, this is good for now. Figure out when we're going to, when we're going to do it again. And uh, and, and I would, I would answer your question again. What you've done is great. Perfect. This is exactly what it is that I (or we, probably) had in mind for this, uh, this, this deal. And, uh, and I suspect that you've heard questions that you didn't expect to hear, and comments that you didn't expect to get. And we're trying to, we're, we're trying to figure out how to ask the questions that allow you to describe your experience, and you're trying to figure out how to, how to describe your experience. And maybe, maybe next time we will have learned something from today.

57:54 Ryan: Yeah, I thought it was good. Um, as for when we should do it next, I'm going to have to look at my schedule, so I'll send you an email about that.