

Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis of Experimental Research Project into Out-of-Body Experience

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ABSTRACT: This work reports some of the significant results obtained from two OBE research experiments using opportunity sampling to generate data. These experiments took place during two workshops conducted in Évora – Alentejo, Portugal, and in Segovia, Spain, respectively. The core focus of this research project is to establish more consistent and systematic information related to the way in which the consciousness perceives, interprets and recalls the information learned through out-of-body experiences, including processes such as extraphysical perception, cognition, and memory; transference of information to the physical brain; and the interference or influence of individual cultural and personal background in the interpretation of perceptions. Suggestive findings and conclusions are discussed.

SUMARIO: Este trabajo presenta algunos de los resultados significativos obtenidos durante 2 experimentos que utilizaron un muestreo de oportunidad para generar los datos. Estos experimentos acontecieron en 2 talleres realizados en Évora – Alentejo, Portugal y en Segovia, España, respectivamente. El foco central de este proyecto de investigación experimental es identificar, de un modo más sistemático y consistente, los aspectos relativos al mecanismo a través del cual la conciencia percibe, interpreta y recuerda las informaciones captadas durante las experiencias fuera del cuerpo, incluyendo procesos como la percepción, cognición y memoria extrafísicas; la transferencia de información al cerebro físico; y la interferencia o influencia que la formación cultural y personal del proyector pueda ejercer en la interpretación de las percepciones. Las conclusiones y hallazgos inferidos a partir de este trabajo son discutidos.

RESUMO: Este trabalho apresenta alguns dos resultados significativos obtidos durante 2 experimentos que utilizaram como amostragem casos observados na oportunidade de 2 *workshops* realizados em Évora – Alentejo, em Portugal e em

Segovia, na Espanha, respectivamente. O foco central deste projeto de pesquisa experimental visa a identificação, de modo mais sistemático e consistente, de aspectos relativos ao mecanismo através do qual a consciencia percebe, interpreta e recorda as informações captadas durante as experiências fora do corpo, incluindo os processos relativos à percepção, cognição e memória extrafísicas; à transferência de dados para o cérebro físico; e à interferência que o *background* cultural e pessoal do projetor possam exercer na interpretação das percepções. Conclusões e descobertas sugestivas são discutidas neste trabalho.

INTRODUCTION

The Out-of-Body Experience (herein referred to as ‘*OBE*’ or by the technical term ‘*conscious projection*’) has historically attracted the attention of researchers seeking to prove its existence by empirical means – a number of experiments employing a variety of empirical techniques have been conducted in the past (Vieira, 1999, pp.944-979).

Had this research been related to analysis of a different phenomenon, the results could be said to conclusively corroborate its existence and properties; nonetheless, due to the nature of the OBE, the collection of objective physical evidence is not easily achieved and satisfaction of the demands of positivist, conventional scientific community remains impracticable.

The subjective character of most OBEs makes personal experimentation the method of choice for validation of the phenomenon. A worthy analogy relates to the validity of dream research methodology – dreams are experiences of a variety that are even more subjective than OBEs, lacking any objective elements at all.

The only indications of the existence of dreams are indirect and take the form of the electroencephalogram trace and the observable REM of an individual during sleep – but research on dreams still requires correlation with a report of the dream and no objective verification can be made of the specific content of the dream itself. Proving the existence of dreams to the satisfaction of conventional science would require the existence of a device capable of recording dreams and making their contents available to impartial observers thus allowing verification of the dreamer’s report of their experience.

Yet the fact that all (or most) of us experience and recall dreams allows us to be certain of the existence of dreaming as a phenomenon, and research does not strive to prove the ‘dream’ experience but rather

to amplify understanding of it. Hence, it can be appreciated that in instances of research into subjective phenomenon, personal experience plays a vital role.

Whilst the results of this experiment may contribute to the body of evidence supporting the notion of the OBE as a factual phenomenon, this research project is not primarily concerned with *proving* the existence of such experiences. It moves forward with the investigation of the phenomenon, focusing on the research question of how the 'mind' perceives, interprets and recalls the information learned through OBEs.

The model employed to approach the OBE in this research specifies that the individuality (the consciousness) actually leaves the body and can act in an extraphysical dimension; i.e., it adopts the hypothesis of the OBE as an objective phenomenon. As such, consciousness, is considered to be a synonym of the individuality rather than just an attribute of the physical brain; therefore, surviving bodily death (known in parapsychological studies as the Theta phenomenon).

OBJECTIVES

The relative knowledge we have amassed nowadays about how our five senses perceive, identify and comprehend sensed information can help individuals and scientists alike to better understand the process of information acquisition.

Similarly, conscientiological and scientific research into 'non-physical' phenomena would benefit greatly from a more in-depth understanding of how the para-brain 'senses' extraphysical reality and how this information is translated and incorporated into the physical brain.

Other related questions such as (1) are there any personal characteristics that interfere in this process?; (2) do environmental conditions in some way affect the "transference" of information to the brain?; also come to mind as issues that would be helpful if they were better understood.

The experiment was designed to establish details of how the projector (OBEer) perceives the physical world from a non-physical perspective (seeing a physical image while projected) and how he/she organizes their framework of ideas or beliefs in order to understand and describe the reality perceived.

The main objectives of this research project are:

1. To begin systematic collection of data related to the process of acquiring visual information in the extraphysical dimension;
2. To identify the variety and features of physical images that are most noticeable to the projected consciousness (OBEer);
3. To understand the factors that influence the interpretation of the image perceived;
4. To search for elements that may help to understand the mechanisms that are involved in the 'translation' of the extraphysical perception into intraphysical language and to look for indications of the method of recall used by the physical brain to recover information stored in the para-brain;
5. To collect data related to the way in which individuals construe their experiences and the extent to which their mental and cultural framework interferes with or otherwise influences their interpretation of a perceived image;
6. To verify how and to what extent environmental, cultural, physical, mental and emotional idiosyncrasies interfere with the individual's capacity to carry out and recall the OBE;
7. To establish if particular categories of projective techniques improve extraphysical acuity.
8. To amass further elements to facilitate analysis of extraphysical lucidity and intraphysical recollection.
9. To expand conscientiological knowledge about extraphysical cognition and interpretation in order to identify more effective means to support (1) conscientiological research into para-cognition and (2) the creation of new pedagogic strategies by conscientiology instructors to teach individuals to produce the OBE phenomenon at will.

Completion of the research question and objectives, theoretical evaluation and statistical and qualitative analysis will be facilitated by the gradual, ongoing accumulation of data until achieving a desirable number of experiences to allow conclusive results.

The information and conclusions presented here are based on the results of analysis of data derived from the two experiments conducted to date: in the first instance on the 3rd to the 5th of August 2001 in Évora, Portugal, at the Évora Hotel and later from 14 to 16 of December 2001 in Segovia, Spain, at the Puerta de Segovia Hotel.

THE EXPERIMENT

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The experiments took place during two weekend workshops in which ‘students’ endeavored to accomplish lucid, willed out-of-body experiences. Several countries (Portugal, Spain, Holland, England, Brazil, Scotland, New Zealand, and Switzerland) were represented at those events. The first experiment, realized in Portugal, had 84 participants whilst the second, in Spain, had 21.

Both workshops and the experiment as a whole were sponsored by the International Academy of Conscientiology (IAC), a European conscientiological research center established in Portugal.

The experiments were conducted during practical courses (workshops) open to the public, adding to the extent of the inherent complexity of such a task. Firstly, the experiments did not revolve around the experiences of a single subject capable of producing OBEs at will (i.e., unlike other historical experiments conducted with Alexander Tanous, Keith Harary and Robert Monroe) – in this instance several persons with neither experience of a conscious projection nor any real information related to the subject took part in the research. Most of the participants were simply individuals with an interest in the phenomenon and a desire to learn techniques that might enable them to produce an OBE. Secondly, because the experiment was not conducted in a laboratory, less control over the physical environment was available and as a result, some conditions were less than ideal and did not allow for the desired level of physical comfort of participants, so helpful in facilitating disconnection from the body – participants used mats placed on the floor, unexpected noises in the surrounding areas of the hotel periodically interrupted proceedings, and some participants were untiring snorers. Thirdly, the main activity facilitating the experiment itself was the execution and management of the workshop and thus much of the attention of key personnel was dedicated to giving instructions to the students and commenting on their experiences.

The bold circumstances under which the experiments were performed ratified that the experience can be learned by individuals with an interest in the subject and that producing a conscious projection involves (plagiarizing Edson) 1% predisposition and 99% determination. A total of 37.5% of those who had never before experienced an OBE claimed to have had an OBE during these workshops. These individuals account for 11.43% of the total number of participants.

At the beginning of the event, instructions regarding techniques to leave the body and the specific conditions of the workshop were given. Participants were provided with a description of the technicalities of the research and were invited to take part – each was free to participate in the experiment or to join only in the ‘training’ part of the event. Each individual’s agreement to participate and permission to use data collected from their experiences were provided in writing to the researchers. Participants were also shown the room in which the target image would be displayed on the screen of a computer.

The experiment was designed in accordance with rigorous scientific principles and conducted under the most controlled conditions possible, given that total closure is never possible when dealing with human subjects and complex phenomena.

To warrant the ‘rigor’ of each step of the experiment and to account for reliability, an external inspector with no association with the IAC, IIPC or any of its affiliated organizations participated in the experiment as an auditor. In both experiments the role of ‘auditor’ was filled by professional journalists each agreeing to follow the research throughout the weekend. Contact was established with the auditors in advance of each experiment, in order to make them aware of previous research on the theme and to prepare them for the practicalities of the experiments in which they would take part. Their understanding of the research design was appreciable and demonstrated by their performance, remaining committed throughout all sessions.

The auditor monitoring the experiment conducted in Portugal was Ms. Carla Pereira, a reporter of EuroNews, a newspaper based in Portugal and distributed in Europe. During the experiment in Spain, the auditor was Mr. Josep Guijarro, a reporter and correspondent of the *Más Allá de la Ciencia* magazine.

As an ethical consideration and to respect participants’ privacy, their names were kept anonymous; however, the original research documents collected from each of them have been retained by the researchers. In addition, as the primary reason for individuals joining the event was their interest in producing conscious projections, the educational aspect of the workshop received the priority requiring considerable attention from the instructors and members of staff. One researcher was charged with responsibility for monitoring the experiment and this did not interfere with the main objective of the workshops: OBE training.

The Workshop

The workshop within which the experiment was conducted, entitled *Projective Field*, was conceived by Wagner Alegretti, aiming at providing participants with optimized conditions to experience conscious OBEs. In order to allow for a broad understanding and replication of the conditions of the experiment, the basic strategies employed to achieve optimization are detailed below:

1. *Extraphysical*: installation of a super-specialized bioenergetic field that acts as a catalyst for non-physical perceptions, and keeps the non-physical environment within a specific energetic pattern that supports the production of OBEs. This energetic field is created and maintained by the energizer-epicenter's bioenergy and holochakra.

2. *Physical environment*: every detail is prepared in such a way as to focus participants' attention on the extraphysical reality and on the out-of-body experience. This includes the use of posters and text phrases placed in prominent positions in the room where the projective exercises took place and in participants' rooms; watching video(s) related to the subject of projectiology; discussion between sessions; etc. This constant exposure to ideas and images associated with the OBE acts as a kind of positive mental saturation, assisting the production of projections – a condition that is difficult to replicate in typical, everyday life.

3. *Physiological*: careful control of factors affecting the individual's physiological state, such as the schedule of times of OBE attempts (sessions), hours of sleep, length of breaks in the workshop, the types of food provided, the temperature of the room, lighting, relative silence, etc.

4. *Techniques*: a number of techniques are taught to the participants. The techniques provide opportunity to provoke the OBE through the application of the participants' will, helping eliminate suggestion and imagination. Participants are free to select and apply the technique(s) of their choice provoking their own experience through the application of their will. Continuous attempts to provoke OBEs, by following a carefully planned schedule provides improved results due to the accumulation of relaxation and awareness of the extraphysical process.

METHODOLOGY

The general research plan consisted of monitoring individuals' accounts of their attempts to reach a pre-established, remote target

during their OBEs and later analysis of the accuracy of their description of that target. The experiment involved teaching various OBE techniques to the participants who were invited to attempt to ‘fly’ to a locked target room where an unknown image was displayed in a computer screen.

The target image was displayed on the 14” TFT (active matrix) screen of an IBM Thinkpad notebook computer model A20m and was selected at random by a computer program written by Rodrigo Medeiros (transcribed below). To avoid any possibility or claims of telepathic influence, this was a ‘triple blind’ experiment – students, researchers and the auditor were unaware of the image being displayed. The script was designed to display a randomly selected image on the screen precisely two minutes after it was initiated.

Projections were attempted simultaneously by all participants in repeated sessions and, following each session, participants were instructed not to converse with one another nor to leave the room prior to completing and signing a questionnaire designed to collect details about their experience.

From Friday evening to Sunday afternoon of each experiment, participants took part in six controlled projective sessions. The room in which the participants physically remained lying and applying techniques to leave their bodies is hereinafter referred to as the *Experiment Room* and the locked room where the computer displaying the randomly selected image was placed is referred to as the *Target Room*. In both experiments discussed here the Target Room and the Experiment Room were located on the same floor of the building, between 40 and 60 meters apart.

Documents used to register and collect data

1. *Authorization from Participants* – a statement signed by the participants acknowledging their consent to their experiences being examined in this research.

2. *Questionnaire: General Information About the Participant* – a self-administered questionnaire to collect personal information about the participants, such as their age, gender, cultural background, health condition, previous OBE experiences, etc.

3. *Questionnaire: Results and Evaluation of the Experiment* – a self-administered questionnaire designed to be completed at the conclusion of each projective session, detailing personal descriptions of the occurrences, perceptions and sensations experienced by the participants during that session.

4. *Record of Environmental Conditions* – notes defining the physical conditions of the Experiment Room during each session (temperature, humidity, position of the participants' bodies in relation to the cardinal points, the lunar calendar, meteorological conditions, and any special occurrences).

5. *Certificate of Authenticity of the Computer Program Script* – a document declaring the authenticity of the computer program script employed (to ensure that the program - transcribed below - was the software run during each session of projective attempts), signed by the auditor and one of the researchers each session.

6. *Declaration of Reliability and Neutrality* – a document, signed by the auditor and one of the researchers at the conclusion of each projective session, describing in sufficient detail the image displayed on the computer screen during the preceding session and confirming that (1) the Target Room remained locked closed at all times during the experiment, (2) that no individual was able to physically view the image, (3) that the auditor remained sitting outside the locked door of the Target Room for the duration of the experiment and (4) that the image had not been displayed on the screen of the computer until after the researcher and the auditor had left the room and locked the door.

7. *Declaration of No Suggestion Received* – a document signed by participants at the conclusion of each workshop, formally declaring that they were not informed by any means of the nature, type, or description of the images in the image bank stored on the computer and used during the experiment.

Note: Every document listed above was dated and identified with the experiment (workshop) and the session to which it referred.

Description of the Target Room

- The room was largely empty, containing only a small table covered with a white tablecloth upon which was placed the notebook computer.
- The windows were completely sealed with two sets of thick curtains. To ensure that the windows were completely obscured, all curtains were secured to the adjacent wall at their edges using adhesive tape. The auditor checked that the room was locked and that it was impossible to see into the room from the outside.
- The door was kept locked at all times and the only key to the door remained in the possession of one of the researchers throughout

each event. During each experimental session, the auditor remained seated directly outside the Target Room's only entrance, ensuring that no physical ingress was made. The retention of the only key to the Target Room by the researchers also assured the auditor's inability to enter the room or interfere with the random selection of the target image.

- A software program was installed and run on the notebook computer to randomly select and display a single image from an image bank. In the first experiment, in Portugal, the image bank of 200 figures was comprised entirely of colored geometric shapes. The second experiment, in Spain, utilized 199 figures selected from commercial clip-art.



Auditor examining the notebook computer after one of the sessions

Description of the Experiment Room

- Mattresses and chairs were provided for all participants. During the practical sessions participants remained relaxed and lying on their mattresses, each concentrating on their projective techniques.
 - Indirect dim light was used in the Experiment room during the practical sessions.
 - The researchers and staff members remained inside the Experiment Room observing participants and assisting them where required.
 - During the experiment conducted in Portugal, one staff member remained outside guarding the door of the Experiment room to avoid any entry. In Spain, the room's door remained locked from the inside.

- Thermometer, hygrometer, barometer, compass and clock were placed inside the room.



Participants during a practical, projective session



Participants reporting their sensations, after a projective session

Procedures and Steps followed for each Experiment Session

1. Lights of the Experiment Room were reduced and participants were instructed to lie down, relax, and prepare for the projective exercise.
2. Simultaneously, researcher Nanci Trivellato accompanied the auditor to the Target Room whilst researcher Wagner Alegretti remained

with participants in the Experiment Room. In the Target Room, the notebook was turned on and booted (i.e., started from an inactive condition, not restarting from suspended/stand-by or hibernation state).

3. The auditor was requested to compare the script being used on the computer during that projective session to randomly generate the image with the script appearing on the '*Certificate of Authenticity of the Computer Program Script*'. Once the auditor confirmed each was identical with the other, the certificate was signed by both the researcher and the auditor.

4. Following authentication, the script was run. The program was set to select and display an image precisely two minutes after it was initiated, allowing sufficient time for the researcher and the auditor to leave the room and lock the door before the image appeared on the computer's screen.

5. The auditor remained outside the door of the Target Room uninterrupted and for the duration of that session.

6. Upon locking the door to the Target Room, in each instance Trivellato returned to the Experiment Room and remained there for the duration of the session, keeping the key of the Target Room in her possession. She would leave the Experiment Room only after the session had ended and all the participants had completed and provided her with a completed '*Results and Experiments Evaluation*' questionnaire.

7. Subsequent to the collection of completed questionnaires, Trivellato proceeded directly to the entrance of the Target Room, where the auditor remained positioned outside its only entrance. Auditor and researcher entered the Target Room at the same time, verifying the image that had been selected. The auditor examined the questionnaires completed by the participants, noting how many had been collected in respect of each specific session and applying their own initials to them.

8. The researcher and the auditor then described the displayed image in the document '*Declaration of Reliability and Neutrality*' subsequently signing it. In the experiment conducted in Portugal, a Polaroid picture of the notebook screen was taken, identified and signed by the auditor and researcher. In the Spanish experiment, the image was printed from the computer using a color printer and then identified and signed by both the auditor and the researcher.

9. The computer was, then, turned off and the Target Room door locked. The auditor was invited to the Experiment Room in order to hear the participant's comments on their experiences. Trivellato secured the questionnaires and other documents corresponding to each specific session by locking them in a case located in her room.

Note: The images selected by the computer program during the course of the weekend were revealed to the participants only at the conclusion of the workshop, after all sessions had been completed in accordance with the specified procedures.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Some of the results obtained are, at the very least, intriguing and will certainly motivate the replication of the experiment. These researchers have scheduled additional experiments for 2002 and 2003, with the purpose of accumulating more data on the core focus of this research. This initiative will allow comparative studies, expansion of the case history available and further analysis and conclusions.

Analysis of the questionnaires completed by participants during both workshops reveals that 93 instances of an OBE were reported by 52 individuals out of a total of 105 participants.

The documents completed by participants included certain questions designed to allow comparison of the initial results (Alegretti & Trivellato, 1999) of these experiments with data produced by an extensive, ongoing global OBE survey research work established by these researchers in 1998 [with over 6,000 participants at the time of writing]. These special inclusions were made to allow further investigation into possible links between the OBE experience and certain specific conditions. Amongst items in this category were, for example, the cataloging of each participant's sensations during the practical sessions and a question asking participants if they had hyperthyroidism, hypertension, or respiratory problems.

For the time being, the relatively small quantity of data collected through the structured questionnaire applied in the two experiments conducted to date makes it imprudent to try to draw reliable conclusions based on statistical analysis.

Measurements of the consistency with which individuals perceived the displayed figure indicated that the shape of the figure was the element that was most easily perceived, with 22 instances of significantly correct perception, followed by color, with 15 occasions. Only two accounts provided satisfactorily accurate descriptions of the size of the figure and only one instance accurately reflected the nature of the displayed image.

The difficulty associated with analyzing an individual's description of events that occurred outside his/her physical body or through other parapsychic phenomena (e.g., extrasensory perception - ESP) is

considerable. Since clear-cut measurable variables do not seem to exist in this case, a well-conceived operationalization is required to allow for reliable results in order to yield a theory.

Thus measure of the level of accuracy of the participant's perception was based on objective examination of the descriptions provided using the researchers' extensive personal experience of extraphysical phenomena and on innumerable analyses of students' accounts over the course of 17 years of OBE teaching.

Some of the participants' perceptions represented significant results and encourage further experimentation using the methodology adopted. Certain of the results that indicated some level of perception of the remote target are illustrated below.

The first experiment (Portugal) used abstract, geometric shapes that have subsequently been shown to be less than ideal as participants attempted to contextualize the perceptions instead of simply drawing them. In the second experiment, it was decided that images of objects representing everyday items should be used in order to facilitate recollection and incorporation of the image into the memory of the physical brain.

Session 3, Saturday, in Portugal:

Selected image:



Image description: This image is composed of a large black square surrounded by a yellow band.

Significant perceptions: Two participants reported that they had seen a sunflower, which conforms in terms of the color, proportion, and relative positions (dark core surrounded by a yellow contour) of

the disparate elements of the figure, but instead of squared, rounded. We can speculate that the reporting individuals appear to have in some fashion, inadvertently ‘smoothed’ the shape of the figure and attempted to link their perception of it with a ‘real’, known object.

Researchers’ comment: To provide a comparison with the image, below is a photo of a species of sunflower that possesses a dark core.



Session 4, Saturday, in Portugal:

Selected image:

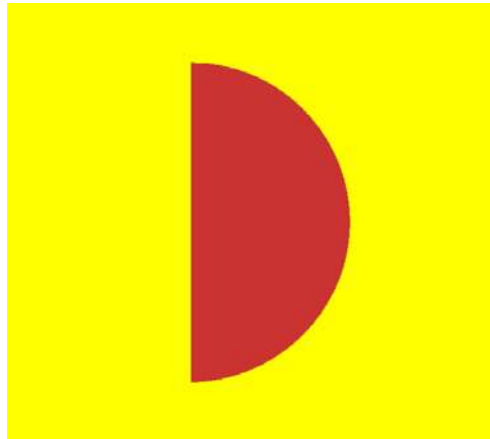
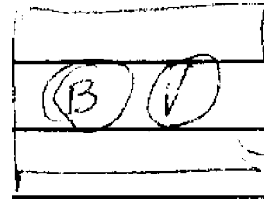


Image description: This image is composed of red semicircle over a yellow background.

Significant perception (1): A participant reported seeing “A big cherry?” (Una cereza muy grande?). The interrogation mark at the

end of the statement suggests that the individual was not sure that that was what the figure actually represented.

Significant perception (2): Another participant stated that the image was “A white and a red ball, in this order” (Uma bola branca e vermelha nesta ordem), and drew this image to accompany the text:



Notes: 1. ‘B’ stands for branco (white in Portuguese) and ‘V’ for vermelho (red); 2. The drawing was made on paper with pre-printed lines, resulting in the horizontal marks seen above.

Session 1, Friday, in Spain:

Selected image:



Image description: This figure represents a thermometer, with a red liquid inside the clear glass.

Significant perception (1): A participant reported seeing “a type of jar”, (una especie de jarra) which is similar in shape to the picture above. Note: In an informal, exploratory survey with a few individuals, some said they would have perceived the image as a test tube with a liquid inside, what could resemble to certain extent the utility of a jar.

Significant perception (2): Another individual wrote “I think I saw a screw with a bent end” (creí ver una alcayata) and drew the following basic illustration:



Note: The line appearing at the bottom of the illustration was created by a section of one of the pre-printed lines appearing on the questionnaire and is not an element of the drawing itself.

Researchers' comment: the image perceived by this participant is similar to the target image when turned through 90 degrees clockwise.



Session 4, Saturday, in Spain:

Selected image:



Image description: The image is of a roll of toilet paper, drawn with an element of perspective, suggesting a wall to which the support is attached. The background is white with a circular blue gradient emanating from the middle of the picture. The holder is colored blue.

Significant perception (1): One participant entered the following description: "the screen was blue at first, then I saw a type of spiral

(?) or squares” (La pantalla estaba azul, y despues vi como una especie de espiral (?) o de cuadrados).

Researchers’ comment: it is possible that the person saw each element of the image separately, without being able to combine them into a cohesive whole. First, she perceived the blue color (the real color in the background of the paper roll and of the supporter), and then focused on the spiral (which is a perception of the nature of the figure, but not its utility). Her interrogation mark, placed after the word spiral, suggests that she was conscious that she was unable to interpret the image clearly. Later still, she perceives the holder.

Significant perception (2): A second individual reported “I think I saw a type of amphora or a not very big jar. The opening [of the amphora] finished in a triangular form” (Creo que era una especie de ánfora o un jarrón no muy grande, por la boca terminaba en forma de triangulo).

Researchers’ comment: in this case, the image appears to have been perceived upside down, as shown below, resembling the shape of an amphora:



Note: a brief, informal survey in which the image was rotated to all possible orientations and people were asked what they saw produced a variety of answers such as: toilet paper, steam roller, cylinder, and whistle.

Session 5, Saturday, in Spain:

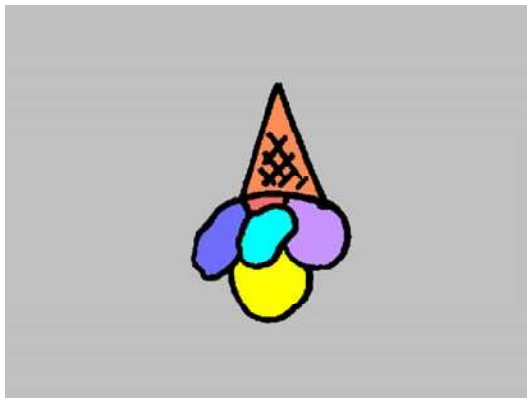
Selected image:



Image description: A stylized ice-cream. The background is entirely gray. The cone is orange. The largest ice-cream scoop at the top of the image is a vivid yellow whilst the other ice-cream scoops (from left to right) are strong purple, a bright sky blue, and a vibrant navy blue.

Significant perception (1): A participant described the image in his questionnaire by stating “I think I saw small squares of distinct colors, but all were vivid colors, like in a mosaic” (me pareció ver cuadritos pequeños de distintos colores, mas bien colores vivos parecido a un mosaico).

Researchers’ comment: this is an image typically very much orientation-dependent, especially given the unnatural colors for ice-cream. Observation of the image after 180° inversion reveals that it takes on the appearance of something entirely different, such as the head of a clown perhaps, with prominence on the clown’s hat.



Significant perceptions (2): Other participants [who perceived it upside down?] placed more emphasis on the conical element of it. Descriptions included:

1. “The image of an abeto¹ came to me and later I saw the leaf of an acebo²” (Me apareció la imagen de un abeto luego vi la hoja de un acebo), twice mentioning the conical shape;

2. “I am not very sure, but it seemed to me that there were two triangles pointing out from each side and [which were] concentrated at the center” (No estoy segura, [pero] me pareció dos triangulos que salían de cada lado y se concentraban en el centro).

Session 8, Sunday, in Spain:9

Selected image:



Image description: A glass filled with a red liquid (probably illustrating red wine) in which there are different tones of red, as if reflecting light and shadows.

Significant perception (1): A participant perceived the details of the color, including details of the different tones. She described having perceived a “geometric figure in strong red shades” (Figura geométrica en tonos rojos fuertes).

Significant perception (2): Another participant perceived the shape and some aspects of the color. He described having seen an

¹ Coniferous tree with a conical crown and horizontal branches.

² Shrub with lustrous and spiky leaves.

“image of something very tall in a very vivid color, although I could not distinguish what it was (imagen de algo muy alto de color muy vivo aunque no distinguí lo que era).

Significant perception (3): A third description related to the shape of the figure, but suggests that the participant perceived the image upside down (below). She reported: “I saw the image of a monument with the shape of a Roman triumphal arch, but with only one arch” (Vi la imagen de un monumento con la forma de un arco de triunfo romano, con un solo arco).



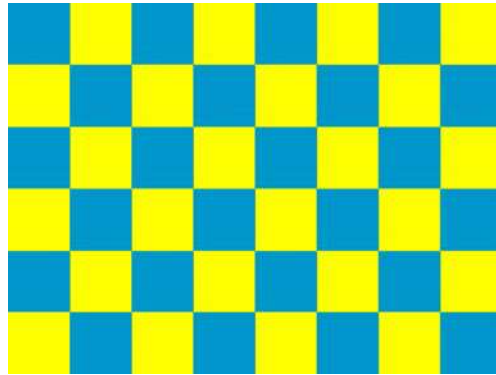
UNEXPECTED RESULTS

In both experiments unambiguous cases of precognition occurred. Two of these cases were registered by the research documentation, as they are related to precognitions of the target image of a future session. Other two cases occurred, in these instances related with future events that were subsequently confirmed during the workshop. These last two cases took place during the workshop in Portugal and were witnessed by all participants and by the auditor as well.

The two cases related to the experiment were:

1. During the third session in Portugal (Saturday) a participant described the image that was going to be selected [by the computer program] during the eighth session, more than 24 hours later. The description was: “It seems to me that I saw the computer screen with a grid of light blue squares” (Pareceu-me ter visualizado a tela do computador com uma grade com pontos azuis claros).

The image displayed during Session 8 of the experiment appears below:



This pattern on this board alternates blue and yellow squares.

2. In the first session in Spain (Friday) a participant described the image that would be selected and displayed during the third session, next morning. The description was: “It came to me the face of a dog in which we could see the red tongue and wavy, dark hair. It was small and very nice. It looked like a good and friendly dog” (me salió la cara de un perro que se le veía la lengua roja y melenas rizadas y completamente negro. Era pequeño, muy majo... Hasta el aspecto de un perro bueno y apacible).

Note: this person reported having seen, prior to the appearance of the image of the ‘dog’, an image that matched the shape of the image selected by the computer in that session (first session).

The image displayed during Session 3 of the experiment was:



The two cases related to future events were:

1. On the Saturday of the experiment in Portugal, a participant 'saw' an image of woods on fire, the woods appearing in a locale featuring large rocks on the ground and in proximity to a wall. The next day, in the vicinity of the hotel where the workshop and experiments were conducted, a fire began and burned for some hours in nearby woods. The fire brigade arrived to extinguish the fire, blocking the road to the hotel. The landscape and conditions of the fire matched her description very closely.

2. On Sunday afternoon, during the last session in the Portugal experiment, an individual had an experience in which she noticed someone locked inside one of the rooms close to the Experiment Room, shouting in an attempt to attract attention of passers-by and secure their release.

After collection of all questionnaires and without any examination of them, Trivellato proceeded to the Target Room (located almost directly in front of the Experiment Room) to perform the same routine as the previous sessions. Trivellato and the auditor entered the room and shut the door, without locking it. Mysteriously, they discovered that they were unable to open the door and the two of them were locked inside, shouting in vain to be heard having with them the only key of the room which was useless from the inside. Fortunately, a file containing the telephone number of the hotel was stored on the same computer used to select and display the target image allowing them to telephone the reception of the hotel and have the door opened using a master key.

It was only later during lunch, when Trivellato and the auditor were commenting on these events, that the individual who had the pre-cognitive episode in which she had perceived someone being locked in a room, told us of her experience. Her report of this experience is registered in her completed questionnaire of the last session, in the space reserved for participants to record events unrelated to attempts to view the remote target.

DISCUSSION

OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCE OR REMOTE VIEWING?

Some historical experiments did not make a clear distinction between Remote Viewing and the Out-of-Body Experience – the framework of these experiments' methodology involved a person 'seeing' a remote target and drawing or describing the target **while** 'seeing' it. Because both phenomena involve accessing remote information through non-physical means, some researchers categorize this type of ESP as belonging to a family of psychic phenomenon that includes the OBE. In fact, though, these phenomena are very different in their nature.

In instances of Remote Viewing (RV) the consciousness does not 'detach' from the physical body, as the information is accessed through the projection or expansion of one's visual perception. This phenomenon could be compared to an exteriorization of sensibility through the energetic body or through the expansion of the frontalchakra of the remote viewer.

In the Out-of-body Experience, however, the consciousness actually departs from the physical body, travels to the place or environment where the remote target object is located, and "looks" at it. This is followed by the process of perceiving the object/image through extraphysical senses, interpreting the perception, memorizing it in the para-brain, and later, transferring the information from the para-brain to the physical brain.

In this research it is difficult, in most cases, to classify from an external perspective (researchers' viewpoint) whether the image was captured via an Out-of-body Experience or through the process of Remote Viewing. However, the sensations and occurrences reported by the participants after each session [via the questionnaire] provide some means by which to assess the variety of the phenomenon experienced – OBE or RV.

Moreover, given the fact all the participants were provided with techniques designed to produce OBEs and, that they remained lying in a totally relaxed condition, willing to actually leave the body and travel to the Target Room, it is reasonable to speculate that many of the cases in which the target image was described with some degree of accuracy, the phenomenon experienced was an OBE.

PERCEPTION, COGNITION AND MEMORY

Intraphysical Approach

The many complexities involved in the intraphysical processes of cognition and memory have long been acknowledged by neuroscientists and psychologists. It is pertinent to remember that our ‘supposedly’ objective five senses seem to be not so clear-cut. For instance, below is a representation of the ways in which bands of color are understood in three different cultures (Smith, 1998).

English

red	orange	yellow	green	blue	purple
-----	--------	--------	-------	------	--------

Shona

cipsuka	cicena	citema	cipsuka
---------	--------	--------	---------

Bassa

ziza	hui
------	-----

It is not our intention to conduct a review of the subject, but rather to stimulate consideration of certain of the complexities associated with it and to that end cite some studies that have been conducted in this area.

Hanson (1969, pp.61-97) states that the interpretation of the ‘objective’ visual sense is a complicated issue – a visual sensation of a brilliant yellow-white disc is not itself a seeing of the sun, though any case of seeing the sun entails having had at least one visual sensation of a brilliant yellow-white disc. In the strictest sense of ‘see’, what one sees are two dimensional color patches; not the sun itself, but only the visual appearance of the sun.

Most of us are familiar with the well-known figures utilized in experimental psychology, containing within them two separate but inter-mingled images; individuals viewing those figures generally perceive one or the other image but seldom both, providing us with insight into the fact that people try to apply *meaning* to their *interpretation* of their perceptions and that their mental constructs to some extent interfere with the *identification* of the sensed ‘object’.

The ‘constructivist theory’ proposed by cognitive psychologist Gregory in 1966 considers that perception is not determined simply by stimulus patterns; it is rather a dynamic searching for the best interpretation of the available data, which involves going beyond the immediately given evidence of the senses (Gross et. al, 2000). It is

widely accepted that learning and remembering are active processes that involve ‘effort after meaning’, that is, interpretation plays a major role in the process of remembering, as we try to make sense of our perception (reconstruct it or put into context).

Eysenck’s theory of ‘pattern recognition’ (1993) says that we assign meaning to visual input by identifying the objects in the visual field – our ability to recognize, identify and categorize objects seems effortless; nonetheless, it actually comprises several remarkably complex achievements. According to Roth’s theory (1995), our visual systems have to “decide” which edges, surfaces, corners and so on go together to form units or wholes.

Studies performed by the Institute of Psychiatry in London suggest that various functions of the brain, senses included, are handled in specialized neural modules, wired together by neural pathways. Sometimes the senses are not so precisely defined, such as in cases of synaesthesia – a disorder in which senses mingle, i.e., someone can hear words as taste (Motluk, 1994). In addition, today, more light has been shed on the mechanism of transference of visual information captured by our retina to the brain, as processes such as [physical] color blindness and negative after-images are explained.

An experiment performed at the University of Magdeburg in Germany revealed that when asked to memorize words, people tend to remember a different word which has an association of meaning or context with the original word – for instance, a word such as ‘sleep’ was recalled as ‘drowsy’ (Motluk, 1997).

Knowledge of the ‘idiosyncrasies’ of cognition, interpretation and memory – an area still requiring improvement in understanding – have affected even the legal system of western society, as in the instance of eyewitness testimony which is no longer accepted as objective truth.

Extraphysical Approach

Knowledge and awareness walk hand in hand and positively shape our existence. Nevertheless, the study of and search for knowledge regarding multidimensional life is an area largely neglected by the current mechanistic scientific establishment, dogmatic and afraid of looking for evidences and information regarding the non-physical aspects of our world. So, this research’s rationale is directed at exploring this overlooked area of knowledge.

Despite drawing on insights provided by semiotics and psycholinguistics, the analyses of descriptions provided by participants in this

experiment are primarily based on the knowledge and experience of extraphysical reality per se.

Part of this knowledge derives, in this case, from the substantial accumulation of personal experience of the researchers with both OBEs and RVs, their vast experience in conducting classes and lectures on the subject for many years, and on the considerable collection of anecdotal accounts (case history) available.

The results of the two experiments discussed here demonstrate that images that were orientation-dependent or perspective-dependent were in some cases misapprehended by the projector due to the angle at which they were observed extraphysically. This fact evidences that the process of 'seeing' while projected is more 'flexible' and complex than the purely physical vision.

Observations made by other researchers ratify the importance of further study on the extraphysical mechanism of cognition and memory. Karlis Osis in his experiment called Fly-in that took place in 1973 came to the conclusion that the process of cognition or information acquisition during a conscious projection is different from the common extra-sensorial state (Vieira, 1999 p.953), but specifics are yet to be established.

Janet L. Mitchell (1981) and many projectors have acknowledged or mentioned the fact that it is difficult to see certain details of the physical world while projected, as is, for instance, the case of reading numbers or words. Considering that the images used as targets in this research project were displayed on a computer screen, it is possible that this contributes to the degree of difficulty associated with accurate extraphysical perception of the target image and retrieval of that information by the physical brain. This encourages a variation on the methodology in some of the future experiments by using real objects as targets.

USING A COMPUTER IMAGE AS A TARGET

Disadvantages

The use of an image displayed in a computer screen is not an ideal target for an experiment investigating extraphysical perceptions. This can be attributed to the following factors:

- Depending on the level of lucidity of the projected individual and the energetic 'density' experienced during the projection, it is possible to see a book sitting on a table whilst finding it difficult to

focus on or to read the title of the book; likewise, seeing a picture of an object is harder than seeing the object itself. Thus, the fact that image displayed on a computer screen is bi-dimensional (no depth perception) can add to the difficulty of the perception. Moreover, if Mitchell (1981, p. 6) is correct in her observation that glass or shiny surfaces are less easily perceived by the projector, the computer screen itself may add complexity to the process of the perception. In this instance, the computer screen was not as reflective as glass (having a type of matte finish) but can still be considered to have added some degree of difficulty as the screen emits light rather than reflecting it.

- The image is a representation of a real object and not the real item itself. It is, therefore, already an interpretation, showing the artist's impression of that object combined with a reproductive style or technique.

- The image displayed on the computer's screen has no energy. The computer, as a 'real' object, has energy that attracts the attention of the projector to a greater extent than the image. We can speculate that this fact may contribute to perceptions of the image in altered positions (e.g., sideways or upside-down). Would using a real three-dimensional object be likely to provide an easier target, firstly due to the object's inherent energy, and secondly by alleviation of the problem of distorted perception (although this could never be totally excluded, due to the characteristics of extraphysical vision)?

- The image can only be seen from one specific direction and, depending on the angle of approach, the colors could undergo distortion as a result of the characteristics of the computer screen.

Advantages

- The system utilizing the computer allows for completely random selection of the target image. The computer screen can display as an image: a cell, a letter, a car, a building or a cluster of galaxies. Given the infinite variety of images that could have been randomly selected as the target image by the computer, and the fact that participants had no information regarding the nature of the images before the experiment was conducted, it is clear that an advantage exists in terms of radically minimizing the likelihood of a 'lucky guess'. Calculating the significance margin of the results represents an unworkable task, as there is no way to determine how many different images it is possible for an individual to conceive.

- Excludes the possibility of telepathic transmission, as it was impossible for anyone to know which image had been selected and

displayed. If a 'real object' were used, it is unavoidable that at least one individual would have knowledge of the target object prior to the conclusion of the experiment as someone would be required to place it in the target room.

- Facilitates easy changing of image banks from one experiment to another.

POSSIBLE REDESIGN OF THE METHODOLOGY

The following points outline current proposals for the development of the existing methodology that would be interesting to incorporate in future experiments.

- Some revisions that can and will eventually be completed in this area of research include the insertion of a means of objective detection of the presence of projected consciousnesses in the Target Room. The best method of detection is through the use of living beings, preferably persons, as they would be able to communicate and describe their perception. Clearly, it would be pre-requisite that any human detector had developed parapsychic capabilities, with those perceptual capacities well tuned to the task at hand, thus introducing a new variable that might prove difficult to control. The use of some sort of sensitive electronic device to detect the presence of the projector is not ideal, as there is no known technology readily available at the present time with the capability to guarantee detection of a non-physical presence (Alegretti, 1990); however, it is the 'least bad' option and attempts to include technology such as an infra-red camera will be included in future experiments.

- Use of a bank of images composed of real photographs of simple things, aiming at facilitating recollection.

- Regarding the use of real three-dimensional objects, one method to allow this approach in place of computer images whilst still avoiding telepathic interference, would be the construction of a robot capable of randomly selecting a target object from a box or shelf with a number of pre-selected objects and placing it in a pre-determined location. However, such a method would impose a reduction of the number and nature of possible targets.

- After the full battery of experiments are conducted and before the final conclusions, the researchers intend to invite independent judges to examine the descriptions of the images provided by the participants in order to have their opinion and analysis about the participant's perceptions.

- Instead of the six controlled sessions currently conducted over the period of a weekend, more ideal conditions would entail 21 controlled sessions over a period of seven days. We can conjecture that this would yield better results as it would allow a deeper training and immersion in the exercises.

FINDINGS

To date, the results derived from analysis of data collected during these two experiments suggest that:

1. Participants were more prone to precognition than to simulcognition (i.e., OBEs or RVs). These findings illustrate how little is understood about the process of information apprehension by the mentalsoma [exactly what mechanism is employed by the mentalsoma to foresee the image that will be randomly selected by a computer program in the future when that information exists only as patterns of ones and zeros on the computer's hard disk at the time of the precognition?].
2. Shapes and colors were more easily perceived and individuals reported having difficulty in specifying exactly what the 'thing' depicted in the image was (i.e. its name). Nonetheless, participants had a tendency to interpret perceived data or to put their perception into some personal context, for instance by translating geometrical shapes into objects we encounter in everyday life. Possible explanations for this are:
 - a. Reported experiences occurring during the hypnagogic phase, resulting in a less analytical state of mind.
 - b. Physical perception uses specific neural circuits, which makes storage and recollection an easier and more familiar process. In the case of extraphysical perceptions, though, the specific memories are brought to the brain without using those specialized neural pathways, making the process less accurate.
3. In some sessions, more than one participant perceived the same image as one another, despite the fact that the shared image was not the image selected by the computer. This suggests either a telepathic/mental link between them or a link with one or more extraphysical consciousness who in turn expressed that idea. As illustrations of this, two of these instances are:
 - a. In the first session of the first experiment (Portugal), three persons saw a sea seal (the animal).
 - b. In the fourth session of the same experiment, three persons saw a water-going craft or ship (two saw a sail boat and one saw a canoe).

4. The images used in the image bank during the experiments were not based on previous historical studies conducted by other researchers or aimed at verifying their results. The researchers' initial scheme involved the use of a different image bank for each experiment, in an effort to determine which, if any, type of 'image' is more easily captured or transferred to the brain by a projected consciousness. Nevertheless, the results of these experiments tend to support J. L. Mitchell's (1981) assertion that, during OBEs and RVs, primary colors are more easily perceived.

5. For more conclusive results and to address the points 5, 6, and 7 referred to in the section Objectives, further experiments will be completed in order to generate additional raw data.

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ANNEX

SCRIPT USED IN THE RANDOM IMAGE SELECTION

(script written by Rodrigo Medeiros – IIPC Florida)

```
<html>
<head>
<title>Image Target Project</title>
</head>

<body>
<SCRIPT LANGUAGE="VBSCRIPT">
<!--
' Copyright (c) 2001 International Institute of Projectiology and Conscientiology

Dim iMaxImgNum, iMinDelay, iMaxLoops
```

```

Dim sImgExtension
Dim sSelectedImg

'The number of the last image. The first image has to be numbered "0"
iMaxImgNum = 199

' Set the file extension that corresponds to the file format
sImgExtension = ".gif"
' Set the delay in minutes here
iDelayMin = 2

' Safenet, even if the timer is wrong there's a max delay of
' approx. 20 min.
iMaxLoops = 1E15

' Convert the delay to seconds
iDelaySec = Int(iDelayMin * 60)

document.Write "<h2>Image Target Project</h2>"
document.write "Please click the button below to activate the timer and then leave
the room. <BR>"
document.write "The image will be displayed after " & iDelayMin & " minutes<BR>."
document.write "If after about 15 seconds you get a message ""...Do you want to
abort the script?"" , click ""No"" and the timer will keep counting.<BR>"
document.write "Remember select ""View/Full Screen"" and to adjust your monitor
position to eliminate the title bar before you click ""Start Timer"".<BR>"
document.write "Set the Monitor to 1024X768 for images and 800X600 for
Geometric Forms. 16 bit color minimum (High Color)."
```

```

Sub Start_OnClick
    ' This code will execute after you click the button to start the Timer

    Dim StartTime, EndTime
    StartTime = Timer

    ' Max Loop is to guarantee that it will not loop for ever
    For I = 1 To iMaxLoops
        ' Checks the Elapsed time in seconds and break the loop when the number
of seconds has elapsed
        CurrentTime = Timer
        If Int(CurrentTime - StartTime) = iDelaySec Then Exit For
    Next

    ' This command will initialize the pseudo-random function Rnd
    randomize

```


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