Symbolic Studies, Day 1

A broadcast by Surfatial, the collective of Satya Gummuluri, Malavika Rajnarayan and me, 22 January 2016. Watch on YouTube

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I made this transcript by machine from the recording and corrected it against the recording's description and my own records. I have not checked the words by ear. I checked a sample of the speaker names by ear, and corrected those I heard differently. [?] marks a word still in doubt and [unclear] a passage that could not be made out. A speaker is named only where the broadcast's screen or the recording's own words say who is speaking. Fillers such as "uh" and "um" are left out. Times are from the start of the recording.

A name followed by (?) was read from the screen at a moment when it changed from one speaker to the next, so the turn may belong partly or wholly to the speaker before or after.

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00:02 PRAYAS Started day one of Symbolic Studies.

00:06 PRAYAS (?) We have in the room

00:11 Three of us who are going to play different roles at Surfatial, then we have numerous guests.

00:19 Okay.

00:21 So Sumir and Jiten from T. Right. Okay. So and between three of us, just to introduce, between Malavika, Satya and me, we'll be playing different roles.

00:33 Mm.

00:34 PRAYAS (?) In the discussion and so I'll be zooming in, I'll be examining the details of this of threads that we discussed. Satya will be zooming out and Malavika will be connecting different things that we're talking about so that it continues to make sense to us.

00:57 THUKRAL It sounds good.

01:01 PRAYAS So

01:04 So s Satya, I'll I'd like to invite you to start zooming out so that we can begin.

01:12 SATYA From a very high level perspective, from a bird's eye view the question that we are trying to look at is how can we have a conversation between those who speak very different symbolic languages and also how who perceive the world or objects in sort of different ways. I think our conjecture is that everybody is making sense. Everybody's trying to make sense at a fundamental level, everybody's trying to make sense and the way we approach different things when we are trying to make sense, what is the processing that we use to make sense of those? And we are trying to examine it specifically from an artist's perspective and somebody who's like a on the scientific side, if you like mathematicians you know, physicists, they have a very different language to different symbols that they use. So that's what we will try to examine today. And they're gonna do that using thought experiments which

02:19 SATYA (?) So are we all familiar with what thought experiments are?

02:24 No.

02:25 PRAYAS So thought experiments are let's say scenarios that we set up in which the scenario represents the entire philosophical problem, right? So it so if it if the if it works true for the scenario it works true for the whole problem. So that's the assumption.

02:49 Okay.

02:50 PRAYAS (?) Right. So we will demonstrate as we go along today.

02:57 JINAL (?) So the Yeah.

03:00 SATYA The first thought experiment we had should we just jump in?

03:05 PRAYAS Yes.

03:06 SATYA Okay. So we had the example of Murugan who is looking at a movie poster and on the poster he sees a yellow field of flowers with Simran, the heroine, running towards Raj, who is the hero in the frame. The question is how long does it take for Murugan, the viewer, to know what the movie poster is communicating?

03:31 SATYA (?) I'm gonna go back to the

03:32 MALAVIKA That question and I'm just looking at it again and I'm wondering if the question has to be reframed because if we are looking at the question of modeling at how do we model a question to examine attention?

03:51 Can we look at I mean, shouldn't the question be how long does it take for Murugan to know or to realize that it's a movie poster or to understand that it is a movie poster?

04:06 PRAYAS But as Satya pointed out, what we are trying to do is make sense, right? So the our objective is to make sense. So if we know that it is a movie poster, it doesn't help us know of what the movie poster is saying.

04:25 MALAVIKA (?) Okay, so we are going into the detail of what it is communicating.

04:30 PRAYAS Yeah.

04:31 SATYA Actually.

04:31 Okay, yeah, it's like the first thing that happens when you see a movie poster or i if you see an object, what happens? In this case Murugan is seeing a poster. What's the first thing that happens, right?

04:44 PRAYAS Yeah, what is the first thing that happens?

04:50 MALAVIKA (?) So if we examine

04:52 The first thing that happens is recognition that it is a poster for a movie.

04:57 Right.

04:58 PRAYAS (?) Right. So after recognition does sense making begin immediately? Do we do we after recognizing or is there intermediary phase when we figure out if we are interested in the first place?

05:16 SATYA But isn't there something even before that? Before that I'm seeing some blob in front of me, right? I guess shouldn't we start there?

05:25 PRAYAS So we recognize the blob and we f do we and then before we try to be interested, you are saying there's something else.

05:35 SATYA Yes, what I'm saying is if I just see something in front of me, I'm just a person walking and I see a square. f even before knowing that it's a movie poster, there are steps, are there not? And would I see those steps differently if I'm an artist versus if I'm an observer? Would I see the steps differently?

05:56 PRAYAS So would you like to spell out the steps? Because I'm slightly lost in terms of the steps you're referring to.

06:05 SATYA (?) Okay, for example, the first thing is I am walking and I see a blob in front of me. Something caught my attention.

06:13 Yeah.

06:13 Something caught me and I turn, I'm looking at something. The first thing I see maybe in my opinion for it's a very subjective thing. Each person may see different things. but I guess what we need to be trying to do is to have a generalized idea of what happens when someone sees something, even before recognizing what it is.

06:41 W DON I think part of that process is distinguishing something that's kind of a figure from some other field that's a background. Right? so we think of the blob, and then the blob is defined against this space, around it or behind it, or enveloping it from which it emer emerges. That's how I imagine the process to be.

07:28 W DON (?) Right.

07:29 PRAYAS So don't these things happen very fast for humans? because I can imagine Don the way you are spelling out the steps maybe for a machine it would be for a machine trying to see, it would happen in a series of sequentially logical steps like that. But for humans don't we doesn't it happen very fast and don't we already know things before having to process it logically?

08:10 JINAL (?) I agree.

08:12 PRAYAS Yes, so Jinal, what would you say what would you say what happens after we see the blob, let's say the poster, we see that there is some kind of a something. We haven't really recognised yet that it is a poster.

08:29 JINAL The I think the I don't the Indian name for this but it's in Indian like in Hindi it we will call it Bhava. Bhava produces, you know the stimulation to even perceive it after. Like it's just that I have I have seen some visual and then s something happens inside and which makes me even think about it. So logic comes after. That's what I think.

08:56 JINAL (?) Right. So the same [?] comes first.

08:59 SATYA So you're saying we don't even make sense intellectually what we saw, but even before that the bhava comes. Something communicates to us which is not even yet in words. Is that what you mean?

09:10 JINAL Yeah, and it depends. Like sometimes only logic of course. But I think also behind that there is some bhava. you know?

09:21 SATYA (?) Yeah.

09:23 So even though we didn't realise ki there is a yellow field of flowers, we see something yellow, we see some figures. We haven't figured out yet ki what are these figures. S still something got communicated to us before even figuring out exactly the detail.

09:39 PRAYAS So the feeling the we feel the we feel things before we know what they are.

09:46 Yes.

09:48 Sumir, would you like to add something to this? I will actually

09:52 THUKRAL You know what, when you when you said that thing I kept thinking that what poster would it be? Because all I see is okay, so I've actually pulled out a couple of posters just to refresh my memories.

10:07 THUKRAL (?) Right.

10:08 I think to me it is a lot to do with it also depends on to me it is a lot to do with the composition part of it. The moment I get into it looks to me like a it can be an abstract if it is, but here we're talking about a very particular figure and a very striking colour. You know? It may be different in all other posters, but what you're referring to is two figures in a yellow field and some typography written up there.

10:42 THUKRAL (?) No.

10:43 THUKRAL (?) With my memories and experience I know that this is two film actors. there can be a cheating in the text, which I will actually perceive once I go closer.

10:55 Right.

10:56 But I exactly know that there is no cheat

11:02 Memories are serving well and all I see is that there is something. I mean I it could have been something else or any other language. but I think typography comes later in this particular case.

11:18 PRAYAS So you are saying that the precision of the of the designer is the first thing that will make an impression on so the way the designer specifies the in you know what is in the what is the most important sentiment, let's say in the in the poster. So it's a design that you notice.

11:47 THUKRAL (?) Well I come from a visual background so that's the first thing'll happen to me. Right. but I completely understand about the expression and when she said bhav I think I kinda completely agree with what she's trying to say.

12:01 SATYA (?) There is an overall mood that comes through.

12:03 Yeah.

12:04 PRAYAS So but do you think the mood comes through before or after observing the technicalities of the presentation?

12:13 THUKRAL (?) No, before the before that mood comes in.

12:17 PRAYAS (?) Right. Okay.

12:19 THUKRAL And then you will actually start kind of pinpointing certain things which may irritate you, could have been better. But you kind of like you kind of like analyse it from a from a larger perspective, but also looking at minute details which you're not happy with, probably. I don't know.

12:39 Yeah.

12:40 MALAVIKA So if one wants to examine attention we are looking more at this initial response whether it's a visual or whatever medium it is, if you have if I mean a poster is after all a visual medium, so that's the first thing we're gonna see, the way it is composed and the visual elements will be crucial in tr measuring or defining the kind of attention it grabs from the viewer.

13:09 Yeah.

13:09 And the eventually the very fact that it is a poster or whatever it may be d determining what it is or what it's trying to communicate will rely on comprehension and not so much attention.

13:26 SATYA But if you don't pay attention that there is a blob, you don't even go there. Now and the second thing I wanna say is if you don't pay attention to the details, y it you lose the communication, right? Because it might communicate the wrong thing. Like someone just said that the visual is there but if some typography is wrong, you could be cheated into thinking that it's something else. So if you didn't pay attention, you could get the wrong message.

13:58 PRAYAS But what Jinal was saying, the about the bhav the bhav needs a listener also, right? So the mood also needs a listener. So shouldn't we be zooming in into at which point does the mood become clearly apparent? So that is the first instance of communication. That is even before let's say knowing what the movie poster is communicating, before that it is the question of what is a movie poster feeling like.

14:31 Yeah.

14:32 PRAYAS (?) Mm-

14:33 JINAL And also it needs you know, my memory connected with that particular because it's I think he was right when he was saying that if it's a very, you know, recognized memory, then I would have something very common to perceive. you know, I will be sharing the same memory with somebody else also seeing that particular poster.

14:58 JINAL (?) Correct.

14:59 So I think if you zoom in into that particular question which is, you know, how and how long it does take for Murugan to know what the movie poster is communicating. So it also ha Mal it depends on what all things that also we can m keep in focus.

15:23 MALAVIKA Yeah, that's pr precisely the thing. Now the question that we are trying to frame is actually addressing an aspect of comprehension. So because we're looking at what the movie posters communicating and for that we need to get into that second level of beyond attention, what is it doing and like someone was mentioning the typography, whether you can be cheated into reading something else when it's actually supposed to mean something different. so if you're trying to frame a question, then are we going to consider these two layers of arriving at it? One where you are looking at it more in terms of the first level of attention and then when you then once you are attentive to it, you are responding to the visual elements and then do you get into the comprehension of what it's trying to say.

16:24 PRAYAS But I still I still feel that I still feel that the mood is becoming apparent to us even before we are being attentive to it.

16:36 SATYA (?) No, I would say the opposite two things. First thing is it catches your eye. Second thing is you feel the mood. Third thing is you start trying to comprehend exactly the details. Would any would all would anyone disagree with that?

16:50 PRAYAS No yeah, so for example if you look at architecture, if for example if you go from a poster to an architecture, don't you think the moment I step into a space, whether or not I am attentive to it

17:09 The space will make it will be clear to me what the space feels like.

17:18 SATYA But isn't there a distinction between architecture and a visual in front of you?

17:26 PRAYAS So that dis that distinction is not very clear to me because basically we are looking at experience.

17:36 SATYA Right. When you experience a space, it is it's of course defined by the visuals around that space, but yet the mood, the feeling is a little more apparent, I feel, in a in a space.

17:49 THUKRAL I don't know.

17:52 KRITTIKA (?) I think the space could play a role even when we are

17:56 Poster, like depending on whether I'm seeing it at a bus stop, whether I'm seeing it at an Indian store. So already like my mind has started connecting location with experience with the mood I'm in to visualize or even take note of this blob.

18:12 THUKRAL (?) Right.

18:14 PRAYAS So where so this introduces a new parameter into our question. where we're looking at the poster. Where is the poster? Yeah. So it's not just about the poster, it's also about where we're looking at the poster.

18:29 MALAVIKA (?) That's true.

18:33 Space.

18:36 Much to do with the

18:37 MALAVIKA (?) The location because i sometimes you can be completely oblivious of where you are if you're very preoccupied with something else.

18:49 So, I mean, if you just take the world we live in and there may be a day when we are l looking or observing some detail of a tree that is you know, in our house and we don't see it on other days. So it's not that was different. So in term so attention is I think completely dependent on the mind.

19:15 PRAYAS So we are talking about two things here. attention and an impression, I think. So the space makes an impression and attention is something we apply to understand let's say the some detail. let's say the poster. But the im impression is happening irrespective of your attention.

19:41 PRAYAS (?) So there's two things.

19:43 SATYA Yeah.

19:44 Sorry, it's just two levels. So one is fr from the external and one is from the internal. So space is from the impression is external and attention is internal.

19:55 MALAVIKA Internal. That's true. and also th then we will have to find the criteria for that impression to take place.

20:04 PRAYAS Yeah, so what would that be? So how would we rephrase the question now? How long did it take for Murugan to know what the movie post is communicating? How would we rephrase it?

20:17 MALAVIKA We need a couple of one okay, we spoke of attention. I'm just typing in the

20:26 SATYA (?) We had five things. First was space, second was attention, third was mood, four fourth was comprehension, and fifth was memory or socialization.

20:38 PRAYAS (?) So you already spoke of impression, okay.

20:46 MALAVIKA (?) Okay, so the things we need criteria for are definitely impression we will need s we will have to define criteria for that to even grab attention.

20:56 SATYA (?) Right. And then

21:02 MALAVIKA What else would need criteria?

21:05 SATYA (?) So I think we also had space like Krittika was mentioning just now. Where are we located? And

21:13 MALAVIKA (?) Yeah, that it doesn't come with an impression. The location is what will impress.

21:18 SATYA Ah yeah, you're right. Yeah. Impression in space would be the same thing. Yeah, that's right. And then we talk of bhava, the mood.

21:27 SATYA (?) But that's

21:28 PRAYAS So the mood is also included so the impression, the Jinal would you agree that the mood is the impression?

21:39 Well

21:40 The mood the mood is the is the impression. It's that's the

21:48 So can we combine it with impression, the mood and the impression that the space makes upon us?

21:55 W DON Yeah, from what I understand so far mood and impression seem to be the same thing.

22:01 PRAYAS Yeah. So then we need criteria for d examining impression. How do we go deeper into understanding impression? so what is involved in this b in this you know context of impression? So how do we talk about it?

22:25 SATYA (?) And the criteria is continuous.

22:29 JINAL So I think the criteria is actually quite wide for this. As I experien like if I examine my own experience with the mood perceiving thing, then I will have, you know, a lot of bac backups like my cultural backup, then my m personal memory, then my you know, a lot of things are there and how do I see or my choices are. I mean all these things actually make a mood.

22:58 W DON (?) So it's not it's not external.

23:02 JINAL (?) It's not at all.

23:04 Okay.

23:05 SATYA But then don't the doesn't the weather make a difference? For example, right now I'm in a very grey place and it makes a difference on how I perceive things rather than if I'm in India where it's very sunny, right?

23:18 SATYA (?) Yeah, that's just

23:21 JINAL See if i the criteria is already there like that, but also the same thing for a different person in a grey mood and a monsoon you know, if it's thing, they will they will perceive it differently. The mood can be different, you know? With the s with see seeing the same thing. Exactly.

23:41 JINAL (?) Exactly.

23:43 MALAVIKA To consider both. So one is internal criteria and the other is external crit criteria because what you come with in terms of experience has to be taken into account plus where you are located and what that is creating for you to respond.

24:04 KRITTIKA (?) Call it like long-term criteria and short-term criteria, as in like the moment I sat with somebody two minutes before I'm having this conversation, I'll be in a different mood. that would be like I would say a short term criteria. The long term will be my perception from a longer time, like whatever I associate to moral standing, ethical standing and awareness, etc.

24:30 W DON (?) So you are saying that internal criteria is short term?

24:35 W DON (?) No. I think these are two separate things.

24:37 SATYA I think.

24:38 MALAVIKA I'm wondering if you should just add time as an added criteria, independent of internal or external. Because won't the time be constant for that moment of attention? Because at

that point what you are internally is going to match the same time of you know, the time frame of your experiencing an external criteria.

25:07 W DON (?) Although it's like you know, w people say they get lost in something, in looking at something or experiencing something. then wouldn't the time be f a f flexible thing?

25:24 Yeah.

25:24 Kind of a function more of the mood rather than something that imposes a structure on the mood.

25:35 W DON (?) Yeah.

25:36 W DON (?) Not yeah, I'm not sure how to

25:40 PRAYAS (?) Like we were like Sumir we were discussing, once you are immersed in something, you can lose sense of time, right? I think we're you're referring to that, Don, yeah.

25:57 THUKRAL (?) Oh.

25:58 MALAVIKA (?) But this sense of time, isn't it a constant or is it variable?

26:08 W DON I think the sense

26:11 PRAYAS Of time the measure of time might be constant. But the experience of time actually yeah, it might be variable. So

26:25 It's yeah. I don't know, because Sumir you're trying to say something, you got cut off.

26:32 THUKRAL No I was actually I just went back to two illustrations where I'm trying to change the context completely here.

26:43 Yeah.

26:43 Like imagine we are in Russia and the typography is saying something completely different. and you are in a group of all Russians and you're you are coming from a very different perspective and they are coming from a very dispens different perspective. And so and you're you just walk you just you're walking through the streets and suddenly you found this poster of course translated in Russia. So how will that be? Like how all those things will matter there because the context is completely different, but you have you have your own old memories which will keep it protected in a very strange way that nobody else really knows what you are looking at it and Maybe they are looking at it from a very d different perspective and you are seeing it from a very you know experience or I don't know how I'm just trying to create that you're saying

27:50 PRAYAS (?) You are talking about an experience that goes before literacy.

27:56 PRAYAS (?) Yes.

27:57 So for example, so you're saying that typography, if it's if it's of a foreign language, then how is it that it would be experienced?

28:11 THUKRAL Yeah, even I mean imagine everything is grey around when you started talking about the colour the sun and the and the and the cloudy day. I'm imagining not that sunny in Russia in that sense. And so how does that sort of change the way you approach to the same subject you are familiar with? Number one. number two and you also realize that you're the only one who's realizing this and nobody else really knows what it is?

28:39 SATYA You're coming with your memories and your nostalgic baggage.

28:43 THUKRAL It's a very straight line. It has not been it is pretty pure at that moment where all around you is an a neutral world around there, right? So it is it is it's a it's and I'm keeping the image I mean as we know the image is extremely warm. The two people hugging each other and it's all like it's very Indian in that sense, like you know how it has been classified or whatever. Sunny and warm and purple at the same time. So I mean these are these are just little things like how would I would my perception change and this kind of narrative what we are trying to kind of work out with, like comprehend, like first come this and then and then and then a chain reaction. Would that chain react applied there as well?

29:40 PRAYAS So I'll just try to break down your input or what you what you just contributed into what we already had on a plate. So it's a foreign landscape. It's a foreign landscape, it's a for-

eign landscape and the and the material is the same, which we are trying to look at here. Right. But how does the landscape and it's for being foreign in nature, how does that affect the per the impression? Like how does it affect the capacity of the space, the capacity of the architecture to make an impression?

30:24 KRITTIKA So here I would think maybe the internal criteria that we have, they are a bit stronger. and you know they will take over first and then probably whether we perceive the poster as happy, sad or whatever, that would be dependent on whether I'm seeing it in Russia and it's grey or it's raining there. and the other factors probably.

30:49 SATYA So you're saying actually that the internal and external have different weights depending on the situation. So suppose I'm in India seeing this poster. The seeing the poster will be different obviously than seeing it in Russia, but in Russia probably I see the poster it draws me more quickly because there's something familiar and nostalgic about it. Whereas in India I'm bombarded by the similar kind of images. So it doesn't necessarily attract my attention that much as it might have in Russia. And I can vouch for that because when I'm abroad and suddenly I see something that's it just catches my eye if it's something related to, you know, my past or something in India, right? Yeah, also

31:32 KRITTIKA Language that we can understand maybe.

31:35 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, are we saying that when something becomes foreign, its capacity to make an impression on us changes?

31:45 MALAVIKA How does it change? Because it can work the other way also, because something and here I can't help but get into design aspects. If something is designed very differently from what we are familiar with. taking any kind of minimal design, for example and we're not supposing we are not used to a very minimalist language and we suddenly come across something that's so sparse we still have a response to it. It hits us. We still look at it because it's so different.

32:26 PRAYAS Right.

32:28 W DON Yeah, I c I think also sometimes when we're looking at something very familiar in you know, when it's an a mass of other familiar things in a context that's very well known to us, there's also a kind of decision, I think, to isolate things. Right? Where when we see something that we're attracted to, I think we make the decision to ignore the other things. So there's a kind of in the same way that I think that maybe in the same way that time is malleable while as we're experiencing things, the space around us also becomes malleable in the sense that we decide to ignore certain aspects of the space. But I d I don't know if that is something that we break down into language or it's intuition or it's a pre language thing? I'm not quite sure how to phrase it.

33:34 PRAYAS Yeah, so the way we experience space, it does that and the way we experience let's say a specific the way we notice a specific item, let's say a poster, does it does it involve two different kinds of vision and attention? So the does the space and the environment involve a meandering kind of attention. So we know we know immediately if we are in the forest or if we are in a on a street. And we know that before we know it. Like we just know it instantly. Exactly. And so is that different from the specific attention we offer to an item, to an object?

34:22 SATYA I think it's you know, if you're in a forest there is always the visual element, so there is that attention you are paying to that. But if you remove the visual element, there is something even before the visual element where there are the other senses which are also giving you input into where you are in the space and defining the mood in a way.

34:44 PRAYAS Yeah, and I'm referring to that other those other ways of sensing what the situation is, right? And I'm asking or s you know, i if that if those other ways work much faster, much faster than our visual way of processing information like you know where we are and what we are doing.

35:16 So do we know if you are blindfolded in a and in a forest do we know it's a forest even before we need to hear the sounds of animals and trees and

35:28 SATYA (?) Right, before the senses.

35:30 Yeah.

35:31 MALAVIKA It depends on what senses are open.

35:34 SATYA (?) Yeah.

35:36 But Prayas, are you saying even before the senses?

35:41 Is there anything before?

35:42 The senses?

35:43 PRAYAS Yeah, so because the way a space makes an impression on us is by shaping or molding our world actually, right? So if we are looking around us in a building, then

35:58 Yes.

35:59 For all we know, if we forget everything else, for all we know, this is a world.

36:06 Right.

36:07 If n and for a moment we can imagine that nothing else exists. This is it, this is where we are. And that feels something very specific. So where we are right now. So in that sense I'm talking about the that immediacy of how a space makes us feel how a space makes an impression on us. And

36:32 MALAVIKA Gracias. [?]

36:36 SATYA No, I'm unable to see how I can have see the sense is what makes the sense organs are what give me the inputs as to my brain. If I don't have any input coming to my brain, how do I perceive space or what is the meaning of where I am if I don't have sensory inputs?

36:55 PRAYAS So the that's the way we look at our world, right? For example, the way we understand what our world is.

37:04 Is beyond sensory information. So

37:08 MALAVIKA Prayas, this is actually what I feel is this is if you start including more senses, it's complicating the question. Now I'm trying to pull it back to the question we're trying to frame here. And the one thing we do know about it is that if you're looking at a poster, just l let's look at a poster, it's visual. And so if s we still have to get back to how that poster is

37:34 MALAVIKA (?) Mm.

37:36 I don't know if we need to rephrase the question, but how are we actually formulating the question? because i there are so many variables. I think we need to f see how many variables e I mean everything the context is variable, the time is variable, our experience is variable. the but Andy [?] is also

37:58 SATYA The variables that go into answering this question of how long because if we talk about something even before sensory, if we start there, we say that consciousness, then there is some sensory input, there is some blob perception, there is some tip typography perception. So if we if we take each one of those as and I'm trying to zoom out in the sense individual experience is different obviously. So the exact amount of length of time might be different for each person. We have to accept that. But the criteria that go into determining how long it is, those criteria will be similar for everybody is what I'm trying to think because you know if you're a human

38:41 SATYA (?) Yes, so yeah.

38:43 KRITTIKA You're exposed to this media play a role, like say, you know, I'm in a moving object say in a car or something, like it. I this Dilwale poster with the field has caught my eye. Would that play a role? I'm wondering whether I would be like, Oh, if I see it on a street, I would think, Oh, maybe they're showing this movie somewhere, I want to know where and when. So I would try to search for that information. And if I was looking at it in a gallery space, then look at the design and artistic perspective of the composition or something else. So I'm wondering whether exposure to media would play a criteria in this.

39:21 SATYA Yeah. Yeah. If it's just a flash from a car versus walking and you're seeing it versus you're actually going to a gallery to see it. So the intent almost.

39:32 KRITTIKA True, yeah. I think the intent or what my brain associates with it and wants to get out of it.

39:38 PRAYAS But the intent looks at the subject that it looks at you. But if I don't look at you, if I think about the poster, and the poster is somehow strategizing or scheming or you know, making a conspiracy to somehow be seen by you. So if you look at it from the poster's perspective and not from your perspective, then if then if you don't look at intent, right and if you look at the pretext, if you look at the pretext of how the poster how the poster's designer and maybe the publicist decides to place the poster where the publicist decides to place the poster, that your noticing it will make the maximum impression.

40:34 MALAVIKA (?) Right.

40:35 But does it

40:37 W DON (?) Do you think that's the first one?

40:38 MALAVIKA Frame the question limit the question to either the viewer or the poster.

40:47 SATYA I agree. I think we should go to one or the other and I think we sort of started off from the viewer's perspective.

40:55 PRAYAS Right. No but I think with yeah.

41:00 W DON Yeah. Yeah. I think there's also you know the last few minutes of discussion we are talking about the poster as if it had some sort of like it could fool you or lead you astray. I think that only happens it's as if we have seen the poster already. So we always come to experience with a memory of that experience in a way, right?

41:32 So that we have certain expectations when we see something. And as a viewer like you know, the presence of those expectations also allows for the possibility of a different message coming through.

41:53 I don't know if that makes any sense but I guess it's related to the idea of memory and a kind of where that memory leads to certain expectations about certain objects or certain experiences. so there's a kind of there's a there's the possibility of the subverting of that experience in a way.

42:20 JINAL I think like looking at the whole conversation I would also rephrase my own you know stating that the mood comes first because I think it makes me think all these conversations that it doesn't come first actually. But everything is simultaneous. You know, like it even if I am there in Russia looking at the poster, I think that will be more, you know, forcing me to look at the poster and if I am here then it will be like so all the mood happening, I mean the perceiving of the mood or with that particular memory which I have to click or if I don't have memory still you know the environment makes me think about that poster or look at it. So everything happens very simultaneously. It happens at the same time. And that happens also very quickly.

43:19 PRAYAS (?) What you're saying is when we ask a question how long

43:21 SATYA Long does it

43:22 Yeah.

43:23 It's

43:23 Happening.

43:24 Very quickly.

43:24 All almost all are simultaneous and very fast.

43:28 JINAL (?) No, it's not like that, but just to get an attention for that particular video [?] happens, you know, like a very fast thing because we all work in the same manner. We all have one kind of brain and whatever. But then to perceive it and look at critically and then making of looking at that poster an experience, it will have variations of, you know, time for each person.

43:57 JINAL (?) Correct.

43:59 JINAL (?) That's how I'm like now getting it.

44:03 W DON So what you're kind of saying is that so many things are happening in that short span of time very quickly. But that's only the initial recognition of the blob, right?

44:26 SATYA Simples. [?]

44:30 Initial recognition of the blob.

44:33 PRAYAS But so if we are th still stick talking about the two words, we're talking about attention and we're talking about impression. that it is all happening very fast is true, but do we need to then

44:56 Not make a question about how long, but then make it about how well I mean we make it about the quality of the communication. How well do I understand what a poster is about, right?

45:14 And I guess.

45:15 SATYA Yes that's

45:15 That's the question we had in our original thought ex experiment, that is to know what the movie poster is communicating. How long does it take for the comprehension, right? Is that what you're saying, Prayas?

45:27 PRAYAS Yeah, so let's say the poster has been designed for I mean not for purpose. I'm saying the poster has been designed with certain elements, right? With certain content. And what we talk about then is the quality of how well is that content perceived. So or do we perceive something else altogether and if that is fine as well. but should we change our question? I mean, because if it's all happening very fast, if it's if it's not about the perception of perception happening in a limited span of time, it's not about quantifying that. If it's not about quantifying that, then is it about qualifying it?

46:18 SATYA Actually quantifying is going to be difficult because from our perspective in this group, I don't know everyone but I feel like from my perspective I don't know how to measure you know, from a biological perspective, you know. I don't know how that is done so

46:33 PRAYAS I mean that's the reas that's the reason I'm saying that if it's happening so fast, if we are not going to be able to quantify it how if we're not going to be able to answer the question how long?

46:44 Right.

46:44 Does it take?

46:45 I don't think we'll get that.

46:48 MALAVIKA Answer the question. I don't think that is our target. I our target is to just be able to frame the question. So in other words I think what we need to look at is what are the conditions for this experience to occur. If the qu question can successfully frame the conditions I think that itself is an exercise because

47:16 MALAVIKA (?) The conditions for what?

47:20 W DON (?) For the experience. Yeah.

47:22 W DON (?) Okay.

47:23 SATYA I see it slightly differently. I feel like what are the criteria that ha are take what are the criteria that go into perception and comprehension? That's how I'm seeing this. So we listed a whole bunch of criteria here in time, space, right? So we these are all the criteria we are we are actually we've been coming up with quite a few that go into the process of comp of perception and then comprehension, right?

47:51 MALAVIKA (?) That's true. And we arrived at Yeah, and but we also arrived at the fact that all the criteria are c are continuously they're just happening simultaneously. So everything is moving. You don't have anything that's static except for the poster.

48:07 SATYA (?) Correct. So how long may not be the right question, but we can say what all goes into this comprehension, this process.

48:15 W DON So I d I don't know if this would make sense to the group, but perhaps it's a matter of moving from impression to attention to comprehension. And then so the question would be how well

48:35 W DON (?) Well.

48:37 The poster allow a transition from recognition to attention and then to comprehension.

48:47 SATYA That's one question, but I see that as the question from the side of the perspective of the poster creator.

48:55 SATYA (?) Mm-

48:56 PRAYAS So would you Sumir would you then think about this as the designer's perspective that the designer is actually concerned about this, the comprehension happening in because you mentioned design, so I'm just trying to pull you back into the conversation in the perspective of design.

49:21 THUKRAL Prayas there is a specification when you do a poster. It's a it's a very disciplined parameter sort of thing. It has a task to accomplish. You know, it's like it's like you are targeting something. It's like it's not it just I was also wondering that when if what if we take away the information part of it and we just have a very popular imagery like this without saying anything, just imagine two people running in the yellow mustard fields and those two people are not those people which we actually believe they are.

50:04 So creating something which but it is exactly in shot and aesthetics is almost matching. Does it also then trigger to the same memory of the old version like ten years back? like you know that folder comes op opens up or not. Number one. I forgot number two, actually. Anyways, yeah.

50:27 THUKRAL (?) So

50:28 JINAL To eat [?]

50:29 THUKRAL You know yeah, sorry, I forgot again, sorry.

50:36 PRAYAS But y but essentially you are saying that if we zoom out from the information and we look at just the capacity of the poster to trigger the I'm breaking the poster. [?]

50:50 THUKRAL And moving back to the imagery, like to the to the emotional part of it, or and purely see it from a photographic point of view, like you know, and then will that affect the same attention and recognition and then dipping into your memory?

51:11 JINAL I think this poses the question of aesthetics also, like

51:14 Exactly.

51:16 JINAL (?) You know. so how if this particular image because we are not even going into the needles [?] of if it's Shah Rukh Khan or somebody else and yellow the same kind of film scene and if the faces are replaced with somebody else, still before that from the zooming out place, I mean we are just seeing the similar kind of aesthetic which is yeah, to the film poster.

51:47 SATYA (?) So but there's two aesthetics, right? Like there's the aesthetics from the

51:51 SATYA (?) Of the

51:51 SATYA (?) Designer and there's the aesthetics from the perspective of the viewer.

51:55 SATYA (?) Yeah.

51:59 So I think we have we've shifted now to the designer's perspective. Is it better to examine this question from the

52:07 SATYA (?) I guess we have

52:08 MALAVIKA To d decide which side we want to frame the question from.

52:13 PRAYAS No, so I think the designer's perspective is see the designer is always going to be interested in let's say making the best of the attention pie that he or she has, right? So if the if the viewer is sitting in a car, if the viewer is talking on a phone, if the viewer is on the street, no matter where the viewer is can the if is it in if the attention pie is quite big or if it's actually quite a narrow slice. The designer is going to work with all these scenarios. But I think but we are c talking about the post we're talking about when we're talking about the poster, I think we are talking about the poster.

53:06 Already having gone past the designer and come into the world

53:11 SATYA And I feel like even that, even when the designer in i if I think about it, the designer's trying to go into the viewer's perspective to design something. I mean, there is the designer's personality, but if the designer's trying to target a specific type of viewer, then they have to think from the perspective of the viewer. So it is valuable to think of this question from the viewer's perspective. That's what I think.

53:34 THUKRAL I think.

53:35 KRITTIKA (?) Like pre coded into your poster that we as designers already know that if I design this poster in a certain way then I will attract a certain category of people.

53:47 THUKRAL (?) Right.

53:48 KRITTIKA (?) Like the whole marketing.

53:52 So

53:53 KRITTIKA (?) So the

53:54 KRITTIKA (?) Targeted it so I've kind of pre conditioned the person to come and get attracted to it.

54:00 KRITTIKA (?) Exactly.

54:01 SATYA (?) Made out [?] the bait, you know? Yeah.

54:03 KRITTIKA Exactly.

54:04 PRAYAS So we actually have to work in the situations where the designer fails.

54:13 THUKRAL (?) Okay.

54:14 KRITTIKA (?) Which people

54:15 MALAVIKA Why don't you work in between?

54:19 MALAVIKA (?) What if you work in between? In between

54:22 Yeah. In between because

54:28 Where you don't situate it either from the designer's perspective or from compl entirely from the viewer's perspective. If you can take an average between the two.

54:39 MALAVIKA (?) So let's say you are saying that

54:41 SATYA (?) What's the goal? Is the goal to get attention?

54:45 MALAVIKA No, I'm the goal is to find a universal no question.

54:51 SATYA No, my question is not about that. My question is why what are we trying to formulate? The question is what are we trying to model here?

55:01 JINAL I think the question itself is quite interesting in a way that we are not looking at from the viewers' perspective neither from the you know designer's perspective, but we are looking at the question and how to formulate it. And that's what is more interesting to me in a way that i it has been already stated that it's a D L J poster and then yellow field of flowers and Simran, which are, you know, codes, you know, in the particular question, you know perceive a lot of other things. It's just a visual we are actually visualizing, not even there, you know.

55:41 So for me the question itself and how to formulate it is more interesting than anything else than we are looking at which perspective?

55:51 KRITTIKA What caught my attention yesterday when I read the question was this name Murugan.

55:56 Exactly.

55:57 KRITTIKA (?) What's your job? [?]

55:58 KRITTIKA (?) It's like okay, if it's a Murugan maybe he's a good thing. [?]

56:03 KRITTIKA (?) Oh yeah.

56:04 MALAVIKA (?) Hasn't seen any movies and he doesn't know a Kajol or a Shah Rukh Khan. And he's trying to relate somewhere with whatever he's seen, maybe a Rajinikanth or I don't know who. Exactly. And I was stuck with Murugan for a very long time before I could proceed in to thinking about what he would do.

56:25 PRAYAS No, so we are looking at the Murugan, right?

56:31 SATYA (?) So we had we had imagined a viewer named Murugan who's oh yeah

56:35 SATYA (?) A South Indian

56:36 Person who's coming to some other place where when we were discussing the question earlier, we had the name is has a reason to be there.

56:45 SATYA (?) Yeah, so

56:46 MALAVIKA I don't think it makes too much of a difference there because you have the two main characters like you have the Nayaka Nayika, a hero and a heroine, which is kind of a universal idea.

56:59 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, but we are placing the viewer as a foreigner. we are make we are making the poster into a foreign object.

57:08 PRAYAS (?) Yeah.

57:09 So what is doing? [?] No Don, we're trying to say something. Yeah.

57:15 W DON Because my experience of it after go reading through the text and the thought experiment example none of these things were recognizable to me. None of the names were recognizable to me.

57:25 SATYA (?) Day.

57:26 W DON It was just a matter of the field of flowers and these two figures moving toward each other. the names were to me placeholders for codes which I did not know.

57:45 So I knew that I did not know.

57:50 So that was very interesting. And I think, you know, it wa i it was a question of for me I interpreted the whole thing as w when and how does communication happen. And I think and I think when we kind of frame it that way, then we don't see it from the designer's point of view or the viewer's point of view. We're looking at this other thing that happens between them.

58:23 PRAYAS Right. So as Malavika was saying, the communication. So but just to just to pause for a moment in this in this time because it's a few minutes left for our day to conclude. do you think we can all take a call on whether we can reconvene tomorrow at a at a time when we can also include some people who are interested to join in from the from the US which have which who have a diff very different time zone. So is twelve thirty good for

59:08 Every is g is it good for everyone?

59:12 PRAYAS (?) Twelve.

59:14 PRAYAS (?) Yes, but yeah, it's a good thing.

59:16 W DON (?) Twelve thirty P M I S T.

59:19 Mm.

59:20 THUKRAL Good.

59:20 MALAVIKA Past noon.

59:22 SATYA That won't work in the US.

59:24 Oh yeah.

59:25 PRAYAS (?) Oh that will not work?

59:27 SATYA (?) Thanks so. [?]

59:29 That's late night.

59:30 SATYA (?) Wait for them. [?]

59:31 MALAVIKA Yeah.

59:32 PRAYAS Okay.

59:32 Right. Okay. So then if we work in the morning, like if is nine thirty possible?

59:39 W DON Nine thirty

59:43 Nity [?] morning, right?

59:44 PRAYAS Yeah, morning. Nine thirty morning, is it possible?

59:47 MALAVIKA Yeah.

59:48 W DON (?) Thirty AM IST.
59:51 Yeah.

59:52 MALAVIKA Yes.

59:52 SATYA What's that for you, Don?

59:54 W DON That is noon for me, which would oh I wouldn't be able to make it.
01:00:00 W DON (?) Okay.

01:00:01 PRAYAS Noon time. Yeah.

01:00:03 SATYA Wait, no, i is it no?

01:00:07 W DON (?) If it's morning for you guys. Yeah, I'm ahead two thirty.

01:00:13 MALAVIKA Okay.

01:00:13 SATYA Sorry, I thought you were in the US.

01:00:17 W DON Philippines.

01:00:18 SATYA Oh, sorry, my mistake. No problem.

01:00:20 W DON (?) Yet and you can add okay [?]

01:00:23 PRAYAS No, so yeah can you quickly take a call we can try to take a call. so Don, which is the earlier what is the earliest possible for you then? Is it eight a m

01:00:38 W DON P PM would be better for me.
01:00:40 W DON (?) Oh PM would be better.
01:00:42 Yeah. which I think would match up with you guys well.

01:00:48 PRAYAS (?) Right. but Sumir a l later at night is not possible for you, right? Because you said you were at coach [?]. So you

01:00:55 THUKRAL And yeah. But what time is what are you suggesting now?

01:01:01 PRAYAS So we are considering if nine thirty is in the night, but is that is that workable for you?
01:01:12 PRAYAS (?) That works for me.
01:01:14 PRAYAS (?) That works for you but I think it's a
01:01:16 PRAYAS (?) Everybody will try to work it out.
01:01:18 PRAYAS (?) Okay, so Krittika, does that work for you? Nine thirty PM?

01:01:22 KRITTIKA After twelve noon India time is good because that doesn't mean I have to wake up super early, so

01:01:29 PRAYAS (?) Yeah. So Jinal, does that work for you?

01:01:33 JINAL It's AM or PM?

01:01:35 PRAYAS PM, nine thirty.
01:01:37 PRAYAS (?) Yeah.

01:01:38 JINAL (?) Yeah, it does work for me fine.

01:01:40 PRAYAS (?) Okay. So Sumir, is it going to be possible for you to work it out?

01:01:45 THUKRAL Twelve thirty, twelve thirty is fine.

01:01:48 PRAYAS Yeah, two no, nine thirty PM is what we're talking about right now.
01:01:53 PRAYAS (?) Your day, right?
01:01:55 Nine thirty PM tomorrow. So tomorrow.

01:01:59 MALAVIKA (?) Saturday night IST nine thirty PM

01:02:03 PRAYAS Yeah, Saturday night.

01:02:11 THUKRAL If this is the final thing then we will have to work it out, there is no other way.

01:02:14 PRAYAS (?) Because we're just trying to navigate between all the time zones.

01:02:20 SATYA What about seven?

01:02:20 What about seven?
01:02:21 Thirty.
01:02:22 PRAYAS Is seven thirty is earlier better. Is seven thirty possible? Malavika is Yeah. So Malavika is seven thirty possible for the US time zone?
01:02:32 MALAVIKA (?) It's gonna be a little early, but I can I can ask them to, you know I can ask if they can just manage that.
01:02:40 SATYA I think it'll be eight or seven AM in California.
01:02:43 MALAVIKA Six California will be six. Seven thirty will be six o'clock California time.
01:02:49 PRAYAS (?) Okay, so let's say we work with these
01:02:53 PRAYAS (?) Request that. Yeah.
01:02:54 MALAVIKA (?) Let's try.
01:02:55 PRAYAS (?) To do seven thirty then.
01:02:56 Seven thirty then. Yeah. Okay. So Don that's good for you. Seven that's good for you. Yeah.
01:03:02 W DON (?) Seven thirty IST, right?
01:03:04 W DON (?) Yes.
01:03:05 MALAVIKA (?) [unclear]
01:03:07 W DON PM IST. Yeah, that works for me.
01:03:09 PRAYAS Yeah. So tomorrow the we have a lot of variables today and tomorrow hopefully we should have also a few mathematicians or scientists let's say.
01:03:22 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, she will be joining, yeah. Yeah.
01:03:25 Who will help us maybe model these variables into an actual into an actual co set of correlations that we can call an equation of sorts. So that will be that will be what we are moving towards. Yeah. So thanks everyone for joining today and I hope to see you tomorrow at seven thirty PM.
01:03:49 THUKRAL (?) Yes, seven thirty. Yes, seven thirty.
01:03:51 THUKRAL (?) Yes. Okay. So thanks everyone. All right.
01:03:54 MALAVIKA Yeah.
01:03:55 THUKRAL Thank you, John [?]. Bye.
01:03:57 W DON (?) Thanks so much, guys.
01:03:59 THUKRAL (?) No, thanks.
01:04:00 PRAYAS Bye-bye.
01:04:01 Good night.