Thesis Title: "An institution-based enquiry into concepts of proficiency, automaticity and second-language learning among dyslexic students".

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Statement

This thesis has not been previously submitted to this (Sussex) University, or to any other, for a degree.

Previous work towards the degree has been submitted in the form of a CAS entitled "Proficiency, automaticity and the dyslexic modern languages learner: a critical analytical study ("CAS") in conflicts of knowledge, 12.1.2006", and was awarded a Pass. That original material remains available. A chapter in the present thesis cites and expands that submitted Required Coursework.

In the Preface to this thesis the sources from which the information contained was derived is explained. The thesis contains no joint work with others and is declared to be the author's own, original work except where referenced sources and acknowledged interview data are concerned.

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ABSTRACT

Thesis Title: "An institution-based enquiry into concepts of proficiency, automaticity and second-language learning among dyslexic students".

Yves Le Juen

It is, for some, 'common knowledge' that dyslexic students cannot master a foreign language 'because' they cannot master their own. This study enquires into the assumption, and the 'because', above, and seeks other explanatory routes for dyslexic university students' difficulties with foreign language learning. Building on earlier work concerned with notions of 'automaticity' in relation to concepts of 'proficiency' in proficiency and dyslexia literatures, it relates these directly to second language teaching/learning concepts and discusses this in relation to 'phronetic', 'professional' and 'tacit' views of knowledge.

The empirical part of the study comprises cross-comparison of four narrative sources: the narratives of a dozen dyslexic students engaged in a semi-structured, in-depth interview concerning their language difficulty and how they view it; a second narrative relating the voices of the advisors most directly linked to dyslexic language learners in the institution, also including past and future difficulties of some dyslexic students who may face a study year abroad, e.g. on Erasmus and similar schemes; a third interview with the then current head of the unit dealing with both English as a Foreign Language, and Modern Foreign Languages; and the over-arching narrative of the researcher – his story in conducting this study. Within this framework, the research uncovers how, at a practical level as well as theoretically, phronetic, teaching-learning and exceptional language-acquisition 'knowledge' may be open to subversion from several quarters: the pragmatics and economics of 3rd-level EFL and MFL[1] language teaching; transposing child language acquisition concepts onto adult language learning ones; the cross- and/or mismatching of these with dyslexia ones; and the possible collision between some areas of professional knowledge – tacit or otherwise.

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[1] A list of abbreviations and acronyms is provided below this Abstract, between the Statement and the acknowledgements.

The research shows how for the 'institutional dyslexics' concerned, and sometimes despite their advisors, the unit's academic director and the institution, automaticity is anterior to proficiency and agency is anterior to automaticity. Moreover reversing this, discovering or rediscovering their sense of agency allows certain of the dyslexic participants to attain a qualified measure of automaticity in their language studies and hence, of proficiency. These findings have important implications for those engaged in second language teaching and learning.

The organisation of the thesis is as follows: in a first chapter which the researcher introduces with a short autobiography and an account of how the research came about, a broadly descriptive and factual introduction to the piece then summarises previous work in the doctoral degree particularly the critical analytical study, focusing the research questions, and discussing the relationship between methodology and methods, and begins a consideration of what a 'case' is, and what is the case here. Chapter 2 expands the theoretical focus with a discussion of the notion of coherentism and the notion of 'fit', and introduces issues in narrativity and in phronesis. Chapter 3 addresses understandings and terminologies in 'communicative' language teaching, cross-mapping these to both dyslexia and 'proficiency' issues previously discussed. Chapter 4 explores the data, and begins an assessment of the 'fit' between the respondents. Finally, Chapter 5 summarises and discusses the 'findings' of the research – what emerges from the research questions and what from their interpretation; how theoretical understandings now 'fit', or not; what else emerged during the study; what constitutes a finding; and returning to Chapter 1, asks to what extent the study is a foundationalist 'case' which can or should be 'generalisable'. A short discussion of further research avenues is presented.

A Table of abbreviations and acronyms in use in the Thesis

Items with an asterisk are further referenced in the Bibliography of works and sources cited, pages164-173.

ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
AL2	Adult Second Language Acquisition/Learning
ALTE	Association of Language Testers in Europe, a UN-recognised International Non-Governmental Organisation or INGO
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted/Aided Qualitative Data AnalysiS
CAS	Critical Analytical Study (an earlier component of the Ed.D doctoral programme)
CC	Conscious Compensation hypothesis (Nicholson and Fawcett (1990)
CL1	Child First Language Acquisition
CLA	Child Language Acquisition
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
DAD	Dyslexic Automatization Deficit Nicholson and Fawcett (1990)
DDA	1995 Disability Discrimination Act*
DTFLA	RSA (Royal Society of Arts) Diploma in Teaching of Foreign Languages to Adults
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
GCSE	The General Certificate of Secondary Education - an academic qualification in a specified subject, one of several taken in the United Kingdom – except Scotland - by school students, typically aged 14–16
GP	General Purpose (teaching)
H.E.	Higher Education
IALS	Institute for Applied Language Studies, Edinburgh University
JTB	Justified True Belief, a foundationalist espistemological avenue
L1	Language 1 or First Language
L2	Language 2 or Second Language
LAD	Language Acquisition Device (Chomsky)
LASS	Language Acquisition Support System (Bruner)
LCDH	Linguistic Coding Differences Hypothesis (Ganschow and Sparks)
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages
MLAP	Modern Languages for Academic Purposes
NVivo 8	A trade name of a CAQDAS (q.v.) package by QSR International Pty Ltd
NV	An abbreviation of NVivo 8, used to indentify quotations in the thesis (e.g. "Carmen, NV21").
PLD	Primary Linguistic Data (Chomsky)
SENDA	2001 Special Educational Needs and Disability Act*
SKILL	1988 (SKILL = non-acronymmic replacement title for the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities)*
UNCRC	1991 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky)

Chapter 1   An introduction, a reprise, and an extension

1.1   Introducing the researcher

Given the methodological and philosophical stance I will go on to outline in this thesis, and its naturalistic ambitions, I offer here a short account of my own background, notably how my research emerged, and how I am engaged in the context – my positionality, my linguistic background, and my own teaching and learning experiences.

I am an accidental teacher, an accidental French-English bilingual, and an accidental linguist. Having studied at school, in France, in my birth language of French, a family posting to the United Kingdom coincided with quite severe chaos in the French university system and in the early 1970s, I became a U.K. undergraduate in Modern Languages. During and immediately after my B.A., I worked as a trainee translator and subsequently qualified as a conference interpreter – having French, English, Russian and Spanish at various levels. French is my birth language, English a family language (making me passively bilingual from birth), Spanish emerged informally, and Russian was a language of formal study at my British University. It was acquired with some pains – and a return to my 'French' way of learning a language: grammar-translation, rather than what was on offer in the British Russian class I attended. I had discovered pro-active, remedial self-tuition, and re-discovered my *agency* – which I will discuss below.

Some time into my Interpreting career a friend asked whether, "being a French native speaker" (a term I discuss below), I would take over her French for Adults evening class, during her pregnancy. These adult students were generally retirees, were something of a club which socialised outside the French courses, and were in some cases owners of property in France. They did not care too much that they did not progress linguistically but were, without exception, Francophiles with extensive literary, cultural, musical and political knowledge of France. And quite prodigious oenophiles. I was hooked.

More teaching followed, as a formal *Lecteur* in a French Department, and I took the RSA DTFLA (or Diploma in teaching foreign languages to adults). Later, I

completed a two-headed MSc in Applied Linguistics and TEFL – with the focus on English, because distance-learning masters' degrees in modern foreign language teaching were then limited in number, and quality. Of relevance here is that I found myself working in an environment where many of my colleagues had originally been teachers of English from (and trained in) France and conversely, many EFL colleagues were modern languages specialists who had changed career paths. My Masters was funded for me, on the then assumption that I could, and would, teach in EFL also, be it only on applied linguistics and psycholinguistics topics, in order to increase the elasticity and 'efficiency' in staffing; 'synergies' were invoked. I taught in Linguistics for some eight years. Later, I would be required to teach French 'content' rather than purely 'language' courses, and generally in lieu of the Linguistics, whose department was 'closing'. I describe this literature and philosophy 'content' offering below: it provides a useful vignette concerning my own language use in this thesis.

1.2   Beginning to think about research: first inklings

Offered a tenured fellowship in my present institution, I began to muse on what would become the general topic of this thesis: that various of my students appeared incapable of learning French.

My older evening-class students progressed little, with exceptions. They were at ease, communicated very adequately, were unashamed of having an English accent, were in love with all things French, and made this generally evident.

Other mainstream undergraduates came into my ambit, who struggled to acquire simple French spelling, could not learn grammar rules or indeed, the principles underlying them, occasionally had handwriting difficulties (illegibility, tiny writing) and very quickly became 'blocked' at a certain level beyond which it felt inhumane to push them.

Another type of student began to appear in classroom registers and in student information files: 'diagnosed' dyslexics, who had first-language difficulties with their English (and therefore, by extension, in the institutional view, might not be

ideal second-language students). Furthermore, they were said to be *disabled* and had certain *remedies* and *entitlements* available to them.

My early question was quite simple: was there any link between my older, 'fossilised' (discussion of this term follows) evening-class students; the younger 'blocked' ones; and the general category of 'dyslexics' beginning to emerge?

This was the point of entry into my formal research in this area, though the focus would in time narrow down to the specific areas of the title – proficiency and automaticity in areas of theory and practice in the fields of teaching, language acquisition, dyslexia, and relating these to notions of professional knowledge.

I have never been tested for dyslexia.

1.3 My language use in the thesis

As I explained earlier, in addition to my career profile and developing research interest which I have discussed, it came about that I was required to teach 'content' as well as 'language'. I found myself in an 'academic' and no longer, 'support' unit, which now taught its own modern languages degrees, and not simply serviced institution-wide language needs.

The appointment of a 'world-class' research specialist on Sartre and twentieth-century existentialist thinking led to my being asked to research, develop and teach a parallel course on Simone de Beauvoir. Beauvoir adds numerous slants and interpretations to Sartre's philosophy – notably, an egalitarian-feminist one. A principal concern in her writing was the relegation of women to the status of 'other', of inessential relatively to the male's essential condition in life. Her anxiety is to make women their own *subject*. Thankfully, one of her under-researched earlier novels (*L'Invitée*, 1947) left me a clear field for original research and teaching.

This is by way of an informing anecdote, for my thesis title originally referred to dyslexic *subjects* rather than dyslexic *students*. Hence, reflexively, I have had to re-label throughout the thesis, or include in single quotation marks, many terms which derive from the literatures I cross-analyse – dyslexia, language teaching,

proficiency and its testing, professional knowledge – but do not necessarily agree with in all instances; or whose local understandings in those disparate subjects do not coincide. In my anecdote, far from being in the existentialist context an individual who is not determined – as in the Beauvoir example - a *subject* is often the very opposite: indeed in laboratory parlance, the passive recipient of the attentions of an empiricist experimenter engaged in positivist knowledge-creation. I go on to argue, later in the thesis, that the students in my study do indeed become 'subjects' *in the existentialist sense*, in that they recover, and explore, their own agency. The ambiguous word 'subject' in my thesis title could easily have estranged half my readership.

In addition to the abstruse language of existential phenomenology, there were other examples of terms which need reflection, and qualified use.

I have already mentioned in my small biography above the 'native speaker' who is, in some accounts, an abstract, idealised, adult, educated user of a particular language, and 'unexceptional' in 'presenting no particular language pathologies', to adopt deliberately psycho-medical terms. This 'native speaker' heuristic is often also a *norm* - or yardstick for the measurement of others, overtly or covertly. In other accounts, however, and notably colonial ones, a 'native speaker' was perhaps something to be improved upon or eradicated so that the 'benefits' of English, Portuguese, French or another language of empire could be more readily imposed on this 'native' – who may well possess highly developed and internalised metalinguistic and metacognitive skills but was still that: a 'native', and somehow less than a (white) man or woman, and probably 'unenlightened'. Unless they were useful in their own rights, as interpreters.

I also wish to problematise the notion of 'modern languages'. Hindi, Punjabi, Bontoc and Vietnamese are all 'modern' languages, in daily use by sizeable numbers of people – both in their places of origin, and in Hackney (London) and La Courneuve (Paris). I develop this theme and that of 'prestige' or 'elite' languages, and the purpose of teaching and indeed, funding them, in the following section, an early look at CLT or Communicative Language Teaching. But the use of this expression 'modern languages' is very often Eurocentric, and capitalistic in

the sense of the 'intellectual capital' which education is supposed by some to enhance in the individual and, by extension, in the national economy.

Finally, I have already discussed the notion of 'dyslexic students' and their profound existential and ontological ambiguity, whereby in mandatory education, they exist as such; but on transferring out of it and into further or higher education, their dyslexia status needs to be circularly induced (with extra-institutional help) by proving that they have certain dyslexia-related needs *so therefore*, must be dyslexic. My references to dyslexic students in the thesis try to remain mindful of this distinction between general, everyday parlance; and *the* dyslexic students who formed my cohorts in the institution under study. I have resisted calling them 'my' dyslexics, on a number of grounds, or simply 'dyslexics' in the dehumanising way of much dyslexia literature.

My use of single quotation marks around certain terms therefore denotes that, for all that they are *current* terms in areas and disciplines I cover in this thesis, these terms may be loaded.

1.4   A preview: a central terminological and theoretical issue

In order to clarify why CLT – communicative language teaching – comes so strongly into my later discussion in Chapter 3, I pause here to address the ways in which CLT appears to be privileged in the institution I go on to present – and its dedicated EFL/MLF language teaching unit.

Some advocates and practitioners of CLT may consider it to be a useful ontological recapitulation of recent and current ideas in second language learning and acquisition. Both psycholinguistically and pedagogically, it is the culmination of structuralist, situational and functional-notional thinking regarding syllabus design and implementation. Many core tenets of CLT became established when the Council of Europe's pedagogical master-plan – *Un niveau seuil,* Coste et al. (1976) for the teaching of English was generalised to other languages. This document offered a painstaking, exhaustive survey of language needs and linguistic tools which could be resolved handily into syllabuses. These, in turn, could find their way into increasingly computerised solutions which lent themselves to language teaching/learning use. Various models were proposed for

operationalising syllabus design according to these 'communicative' precepts, and on the basis of a synthesis of theoretical ideas, notably by Munby (1978). A generation of 'communicative' method and handbooks was born – or more cynically, 'rebadged' as such.

CLT was privileged also in the sense that it proposed avenues not only for 'solo' study, but for progressive learner autonomy and learner success: previous studies of classroom anxiety, motivation and other affective variables had stressed autonomy and success as keys to language learning; Bailey (1983) being a much-cited example of such a study .

A second view also needs to be taken of CLT – the political. As I discussed in interrogating the notion of 'modern languages', foreign language learning has itself long been considered in economic discourses as a key to European integration – and social mobility. Social mobility is, in turn, is considered a key to economic growth.

Herein lay a certain danger, because certain key aspects of CLT – the idea of intercultural competence and communicative success, worthy objects as they were - became confused and conflated. Few people might disagree that there is a *correlation* between second language learning/acquisition and intercultural competence and communicative success. But a dangerous assumption can arise that the link is both causal – and reversible. Reversible in the sense that, in the absence of more solidly theorized accounts in CLT of such learning/acquisition issues, and despite nods to Chomsky whom I discuss later, intercultural and communicative success became understood in some teaching/learning situations and institutions as *causal* generators of language learning, and not the reverse. Hence, 'communication' became, in parallel, reduced to the oral/aural route: no need for 'grammar', any more. Combined with increasing computerisation, though pre-Internet, task-based learning and syllabuses which stepped away from more cognitive or psycholinguistic accounts at the expense of learners' own, idiopathic internal syllabuses came to the fore. Under pressure from other subject areas in the school curriculum, CLT lent itself – on the Modern Foreign Languages side (I discuss this term later) – to a 'bite-sized', rote-learnt language-learning experience. While this version of CLT can appeal to institutional seekers

of 'efficiencies' (in this account, the 'language teacher' can be virtually anyone) and 'synergies', some early syllabuses derived from CLT notions in modern languages did little to generate what I describe in the thesis as *automatic and exponential* acquisition and growth. Notably at GCSE level, a wave of exam 'successes', and grade-inflation, seemed unrelated in reality to the examinees' capacity to study at higher levels.

Expanding on the assumptions of CLT in the Modern Languages field, a further problem was its focus, in the hands of inexperienced or indeed, unqualified teachers, on the *oral* route, as I mentioned in the previous paragraph. Whereas the intention might have been to effect rotations between the 4 'basic' skills (listening and reading as inputs; and speaking, writing as outputs), giving each learner a degree of individuated over-learning and cross-modal reinforcement, the oral route and situational learning (rather false dialogues in the manner of *"Allons au supermarché"*) became prized. In this way, CLT became unbalanced in favour of rote-learnt outputs which were geared less towards acquisition and more towards exam passes. In consequence, CLT methodology in the wrong hands side-stepped many of the discoveries of discourse and conversation analysis which had come to clarify understandings of the communicative act, text construction by the reader/speaker herself, as well as intercultural, gender, power and a myriad other issues. There was little to engage with, or help develop, the learner's metalinguistic awareness, which even the classical, but élite, grammar-translation model had afforded because it was calqued on Latin, Greek or occasionally Hebrew. Instead, this form of teaching found itself back with the worst of audiolingualism of the 'You say it, you learn' variety used to train US operatives during the Korean War.

Leaving aside the question of whether and to what extent teaching leads to learning, two other essential flaws underlay this situation. The first, basic error may have been to assume that input is equal to uptake in language teaching, this is a flawed assumption which 'observationalist' child language acquisition scholars had pointed out decades before, as I will illustrate later in Chapter 3. The second basic flaw was to assume that whilst CLT appears to be tenable for EFL teaching *in the target culture itself* (with students attending courses in English in the U.K.,

for example), the Modern Languages classroom may be a very poor replication of the target culture and in the jargon, 'demotivating' – if motivation ever existed.

This second flaw is, I have come to feel, at the heart of the 'schisms' I describe later in the thesis in discussing a teaching unit delivering versions of CLT in *both* its EFL and MFL expressions, and which emerge clearly in the data.

1.5   A reprise

By way of introduction to the present study, and to introduce the reader to its concepts, this chapter offers a short reprise and expansion of my Critical Analytical Study (Le Juen 2006), in which I considered issues relating to proficiency and automaticity and the dyslexic modern language learner.

I will consider how certain key notions were introduced and problematised in the CAS; but first, I will review the original findings so that in the final chapter here, I will be able to reflect on the evolution of my understandings overall in the thesis.

1.6   What I argued in the CAS Study

The CAS reviewed both the literature on modern language learning in higher education, and documentation produced by one university concerning teaching and learning of languages. Both in the CAS and in this thesis the university concerned is referred to as 'the Institution'.

1.6.1   Chapter 1 of the CAS proposed that dyslexic students studying in the higher education institution are often undifferentiated in terms of the precise nature and source of their difficulty. The delicate ontologies offered by dyslexia authors and dyslexia bodies are, in institutional terms, an irrelevance to the conferral of the status of 'dyslexic' in the first instance, though individual remediations may vary thereafter. Secondly, the institution requires such students to be re-consecrated as 'disabled' - in fairly stark terms, and the starker the better, in terms of obtaining state and university-internal assistances and allowances. There is an implicit choice, thirdly, to be made by such students between

'assistances' and confidentiality – in other words, they cannot refuse to disclose their condition and expect to receive help – though confidentiality from other students is offered. Fourthly, these students are, like others, offered campus-wide modern languages teaching to access Year Abroad courses in which classmates are non-dyslexic (and even some bilingual) modern languages undergraduates. Lastly, the classroom teachers are, on average, less qualified than those in the secondary modern languages sector to deal with exceptional students – being trained overseas, if at all. If untrained, they often adopt what they claim as 'naturalistic' approaches, a subject to which I will return in a later chapter.

I noted, in terms of teaching methodologies espoused, that 'communicative' approaches are appealed to, at least nominally. These are often designed to produce re-engagement of child language acquisition mechanisms through e.g. spontaneity, improvisation and peer-to-peer and group work, supposedly to induce an automaticity which I glossed in the CAS as 'exponential and progressively autonomous learning of materials' (Le Juen 2006, p. 50). I shall return to 'automaticity' in the present chapter, and later in the thesis (Chapter 3, §3.3) to a critical analysis of the origins and claims of such 'communicative' teaching.

In mainstream modern languages teaching, successful students are ultimately declared 'proficient'; the examinations they will sit will be modelled on ones similar to the EFL Certificates of Proficiency approved by the British Council, not least because the British Council audits the institution and accredits it.

1.6.2 In **Chapter 2** of the CAS, I established that proficiency is, however, a problematic concept. Indeed, there is a clear distinction to be found in the literature between views of proficiency which can be 'thresholdist' and those which are 'holistic'. The distinction establishes that in some views, proficiency is a *gradable* concept, i.e. one can become 'more' proficient by crossing various thresholds. Implicit in this concept is the view that progression in the language taught is a) possible, b) linear, c) relatively constant, and d) cumulative.

In contrast, there is a 'holistic' view, implicit in some forms of testing and, *a posteriori*, teaching[2], which presupposes that there can be an agreed end-point, an abstract idealisation of the 'proficient native speaker' and that one therefore is either proficient, or one is not. If one is 'proficient', then a 'proficiency' qualification can be granted. This might render teaching something of a redundant activity. The circularity is compounded by the view – drawn from the language acquisition literatures reviewed here later - that there exist both language acquisition mechanisms which are partly innate and also, an internal and individuated language learning 'syllabus' which can be rekindled and lead the learner to proficiency.

I also noted that such a concept of proficiency developed in the literature is further problematic in that what is being described may be an expectation of child first language acquisition (CL1) - whereas quite often, these views have been taken from experimental neurolinguistics sources such as Lenneberg (1967), and mapped onto CL1. This expectation can then be generalised to L2 – second language acquisition, often without due differentiation between child and adult second language learners (White 1989). Differences between first and second languages in scripts – Roman, Cyrillic, Arabic - or in phonology, for example clicking or tonal languages, can complicate matters further. In such accounts, the 'successful' proficiency 'testee' must, by some means, have extracted and exponentially woven sufficient language through some individual mechanism to cope linguistically with anything or everything. This expectation covers reception and production but somehow, at the same time, prediction. Thus, the entire notion of proficiency is deeply problematic even before taking into account teaching/learning assumptions in the field of unexceptional language learning in general, and dyslexic Modern Languages students in particular.

1.6.3 I considered dyslexia in **Chapter 3** of the CAS. Like proficiency, dyslexia also suffers from dichotomies and circularities. I argued that some of these dichotomies are, in fact, allied to the very notion of proficiency. A major ontological difficulty in dyslexia is that there is a broad and current consensus in

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[2] If we can even assume that teaching leads to learning; I shall consider Krashen's dichotomisation of certain terms here, in Chapter 3, later.

regarding it as 'constellated' or 'symptomological' syndromes. However, owing to the propensity in mainstream social sciences to avoid viewing individuals as aggregates, there are many and various symptoms which can be ascribed to dyslexia. This, together with the infinite number of personal, affective, educational and other factors attributable to dyslexic students themselves, is used in turn to confirm inductively the existence of something describable as dyslexia - and not something else. All of this has proved too much for some authors and critics. Where it has not just been flatly denied, dyslexia as a concept has been sub-defined out of existence, in their view.

Dyslexia as a concept is also subject to some intercultural and some methodological caveats. Even within English-speaking research communities, terminologies which on the surface seem cognate prove, on closer inspection, not to be equivalents. Attempting to translate French, German or Japanese research findings throws open further intercultural chasms, witness the disparity between *illiteracy* and *illettrisme*[3]. Proof-based, hypothesis-testing, opportunist and large-scale studies can be offered equal 'shelf-room' with small-scale, qualitative narratives and these - although they too seek to increase understanding - are sometimes single-case and personal. All can then re-emerge in several printings of popularising books and across several publishing houses - but averaged into non-synthesised macro-studies, with or without any update. Epistemological and ontological difficulties of this nature are hardly restricted to dyslexia, and the phenomenon may be quaintly characteristic of the evolution of human knowledge.

Within this discussion, the concept of *automaticity* has been alluded to. It is invoked directly in some sources, but only implicit in others. Indeed, a number of influential authors including Uta Frith (1985) describe dyslexia in *deficiency* terms: the non-development of *automaticity*. To describe 'automaticity', Nicholson and Fawcett more recently hypothesised a "dyslexic automatization deficit" (or DAD) (Nicholson and Fawcett 1990, p.161) allied to an associated conscious compensation hypothesis (or CC) (ibid, p. 162). They propose that unexceptional learners become progressively more fluent until they no longer

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[3] Where *illettrisme* is a cultural deficit – absence of knowledge of, or engagement with, literature, and *illiteracy = analphabétisme*.

need to process their work consciously. Hence automaticity is characterised by fast speed of learning, and a relative lack of conscious effort. Conversely, in conscious compensation, automaticity is thwarted by demands on conscious attention[4]. My CAS referred further to *exponentiality* (Le Juen 2006, p.10 et seq.) in developing automaticity, i.e. the availability and use of what is earned in order to learn more. This deficit - a *lack* of automaticity - is treated as both an indicator *for* and a marker *of* dyslexia. But to what extent are automaticity and proficiency interchangeable terms, or even associable ones?

Cross-comparing what is said in the two domains of proficiency and of dyslexia and their respective literatures, I felt that the notions of '*holistic proficiency*' and '*automaticity*' are closely interlinked and indeed, this was the major claim of my CAS. In the proficiency field, the 'holistic' view with its testing and syllabus consequences is an on-off, yes-no, proficient/non-proficient binary. Likewise, the requirement for a dyslexic / non-dyslexic binary has as its fulcrum the notion of the *possibility* or *impossibility* of automatic and exponential language development.

I also showed in the CAS how extremely delicate and increasingly sophisticated descriptions of sub-types of dyslexia have been evolved and are used extensively[5]. These descriptions have value in opening access to practical and financial relief from disablement and other social inequities. However, some of the authors considered in my review feel the very *delicacy* of definition in fact describes dyslexia out of existence (Elliott 2005; Mills 2005).

For my CAS, I set up the notion of the 'Institutional Dyslexic', a heuristic stripped of sociological variables and specific diagnoses but interacting with the

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[4] Nicholson, R.I. and Fawcett, A.J. (1990) cite Shiffrin & Schneider (1977, p. 127): "Automatic processing is well learnt in long term memory, is demanding of attention only when a target is presented, is parallel in nature, is difficult to alter, to ignore or to suppress once learned, and is virtually unaffected by load".

[5] Notable inclusions in Le Juen (2006) were Aaron and Phillips (1986); Brittain (1981); Coltheart et al. (1987); Crombie (1997, 2000); Dechant (1981); numerous papers by Ganschow, Sparks and their colleagues [e.g. Sparks, Ganschow, and Patton (1995) and Sparks et al. (1998); Ganschow, Sparks and Javorsky (1998)]; Klasen (1972); Snowling and Stackhouse (1996); Snowling (2000); Sasanuma (1980); Thomson and Watkins (1998); Zangwill (1974). Subsequently, Nijaknowska (2010) addresses dyslexia and foreign language issues but without an overt H.E. focus.

Institution. An obvious problem, for this catch-all category of institutional dyslexic is that automaticity/exponentiality and proficiency come together as one single, menacing concept. The double bind is that with the label 'dyslexic', the Institution presumes, on the student's behalf, that automaticity in language learning is not available to them. But *just in case*, the legislation also allows the students' institution to disregard their dyslexia status, and this point was made clear in Chapter 1 of Le Juen (2006) in references to the SKILL (1988), Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1995) and SENDA (2001) exclusions which protect 'course goals' and 'examination validity'. On the one hand, the dyslexic student has the right to be on a proficiency language course. But on the other, the Institution nurses a legally-watertight expectation of their failure. Yet the same Institution is willing to qualify them, if they should disprove its own confirmatory diagnosis and pass a proficiency examination.

My CAS study also asked what, conversely, it says about dyslexia status, the validity of the proficiency exams or the professional integrity of the teaching faculty if the student 'fails to fail', that is, if she becomes 'proficient' in the foreign language to somewhere near native speaker level. Is this the 'second bite at the apple' effect proposed by Miller-Guron and Lundberg (2000), or are the students and the tutors merely brilliant examples of expertise and assiduity, respectively, in a top-rate language-teaching department?

In previous piloting work I had undertaken in this research field, semi-structured interviews with dyslexic and non-dyslexic (but 'blocked') second language learners in a higher education setting provided, in both categories, rueful but unsolicited and unprompted references to the *lack* of automaticity in their learning. At least subliminally, the concept of automaticity exists in the mind of some learners keen to obtain a proficiency qualification; and it is in this light that I sought to find clarification of the interplay between certain of these concepts in the present thesis.

1.7   Local, 'institutional' issues

My CAS closed with several cautionary remarks.

1.7.1   Firstly, I had noted that issues around *power* and *professionalism* were both implicated, and any extension of the study would need to focus on these. The CAS had been in some part about professional knowledge: at that time, the researcher's, and also how this cohered with his experiential knowledge.   The present thesis will indeed discuss both these forms of knowledge, but as intermediated though *phronesis* and other forms of tacit or implied knowledge.

1.7.2   Secondly, I had become aware that if creativity and action prevailed in a Language Teaching department, then collegiality was the norm, and the informed training of one's successors was an agreeable, non-threatening occupation, and not grave-digging.   In this positive case, a wider and ongoing contribution to knowledge was an expectation, not a chore.   However, both institutional central 'direction' and financial stringency have forced a return to orthodoxies, notably across-the-board compliance with British Council accreditation requirements. Posts in modern languages faculty have been 'saved' – but by incorporating faculty into an income-generating facility with British Council accreditation.   The resulting merged unit is indeed a cash-producer.   However, it but brooks little research activity, let alone differentiation (outside the ELT field) between student cohorts of various types.   British Council accreditation certainly requires language teachers to be holders of British Council accredited language teaching qualifications.   These include Royal Society for Arts and Cambridge EFL qualifications, and insofar as university modern language teachers have *any* direct and recognised modern language teaching qualifications, they tend to be derived from such EFL sources.   The DTFLA or RSA Diploma in Teaching Foreign Languages to Adults, which had the institutional weight of a Graduate Diploma in Education, was long deemed a desirable *minimum*.   It was also a franchised operation, for many years, across a number of higher and further education centres.   One such was the Edinburgh University Institute for Applied Language Studies, IALS, which was also the generator of many of the theoretical (and some classroom-based) units, as well as qualifying generations of future teacher-trainers a Masters level and above. A major influence in IALS was the Alan Davies to whom I referred in connection with proficiency testing (Davies 1968, 1977) in

Chapter 2. His observations, challenges and own assumptions on proficiency will have spread extremely far, in time as well as in place.

1.7.3   My CAS proposed that many EFL practitioners would also agree that the British Council is perhaps one of the last, but strongest, bastions of 'communicative language teaching'.   I stated earlier that, leaving aside the question of whether 'communicative language teaching' is a) theoretically well-founded or b) delivered within its own precepts in the Institution, major aspects of 'communicative' teaching methodologies are both anecdotally and in the literature, repellent to dyslexic modern language students – see for example Ackerman and Dykman (1996) and the selective counter-arguments of Schneider & Crombie (2003, pp. 57-58, 63). It may indeed *compound* some of the other difficulties of the 'institutional dyslexic' considered in heuristic form in Le Juen (2006) and personalised in the present thesis in the narratives of Lin, Freesia, Petey, Pat, Carmen, Aggie, Jake, Jess, Sandy, Sam, Millie, and Chris.

1.8   Bridging from CAS to thesis: what was proposed

The CAS closed by stressing that in any study of professional knowledge, and most notably in a doctoral enquiry, into any attempts at *consequential* validation of how that professional knowledge is used must remain aware of the time-space in which that knowledge originated (Messick   1989;   Shepard 1993). Consequently, it must remain conscious of the 'half-life' of some teaching and learning concepts embodied in certain power-brokers within the academy. Most crucially, I felt, such a study needs to acknowledge the very existence of such power-brokers and power-mechanisms because these may, in more than one sense of the word, petrify dynamic professional knowledge into professional orthodoxy. So among other things, the present thesis considers the fit between various stakeholders' narratives in order to return to, examine and expand this embodiment. In doing so, I will refer to notions derived from more recent writers on narratology and phronetic knowledge in educational and allied fields.

1.9 Approaching the present study

My 'subjects' were opportunistically-gathered students at Wealdston University. The advisors (who would in turn contribute their views here, and be interviewed) were initially approached and sent out an e-mail to a 'reserved' list of dyslexic students. Owing to an incident I describe below, a further call was made by the advisors, again by email. These respondents suggested other names and in due course, 12 students with an institutional dyslexia classification contributed to the research. Further technical remarks concerning their 'selection' are offered in Appendix 1A, § 1.6, of the Ethics Statement; in essence they were rewarded very modestly for participation, but not for recruiting fellow-dyslexics, and are in no sense a 'sample'.

1.9.1 Two informing anecdotes

In the context of this study, and though their implications are wider, I have decided to include two stories of my own before meeting the respondents, as they illustrate both the evolution of this thesis and the larger narrative of its unfolding. The coincidence of two (borrowing computing parlance) 'fatal incidents' served to shift the focus of my study in a way which profoundly affected its methodology and methods.

First, at the end of a recording session with one member of the dyslexic students cohort (whose narrative has not been used here, for reasons which follow), and as soon as the microphone had been switched off, she leaned back in her chair, blew off imaginary steam, grinned, and said: "Well, do I pass, then?" This led me as the interviewer, to reflect on my methodology and on 'other' interview(s) which may have been co-occurring simultaneously with the one I thought I was conducting. Which should I now 'analyse' into 'data'? As I said earlier, and in common practice, a small sum of money had been offered to students participating in the project. Had this student somehow assumed the money was conditional on *passing* the interview? Or was the expression ironic, revealing of affective issues relevant to dyslexics and their coping strategies, for example?

Further, the term 'pass' can have several meanings. For example, you *pass* or *fail* an examination. You can also '*pass as*' a member of a community, or as a transsexual or, institutionally, as someone worthy of a disability grant or other 'assistances'. Was the Interviewer being regarded as an Informant? Were there Foucauldian power issues emerging? Had I, the interviewer, stumbled on a fake dyslexic, a grant-chaser? Would this lead back[6] into ontological directions – who is, and who isn't, 'dyslexic'? What else might the respondent have been trying to convey, with her quip? How would I know, as a researcher, given my interview format? Did this matter? What would be the ethics of leaving the tape running, in future, at the supposed end of interviews, to see what else emerged? The entire interview situation and the various relationships intrinsic to its organisation, unfolding and reporting and analysis were in need of review.

The second coincidence which was a trigger to broadening the theoretical and hence, methodological understandings of the research occurred when the Institution offered another employee a Small Grant[7] to 'buy remission[8]' and look into practice in other universities regarding the marking of dyslexic students' work in modern languages. The grant recipient never previously having conducted research, the work was farmed out to a post-graduate and a computing technician. The first action of the funded 'researcher' was to access a disability listing, through her management role, and summon various students to discuss a 'dyslexia project', indirectly cancelling the promise of confidentiality and anonymity which this researcher had offered to some of the very same students before recording them. Their data were excluded from the study, and another cohort used.

The positive outcomes of these incidents were the present researcher's discovery, though supportive supervision, of phronetic and narrative research literatures, and the salutary revelation that one does not just do research; it can also *do for* its subjects. Or for the researcher.

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[6] Previous research work having intended to compare 'dyslexic' and 'frozen mature' learners; see Le Juen (2006):47 (fn. 34), et seq.

[7] £4000, through an institutionally-funded Teaching and Learning Development Fund

[8] This process usually funds replacement teaching assistants; here, it bought a researcher.

1.10 Refocusing the research questions

The questions originally used in the semi-structured interviews forming the data for the present study have been included here as Appendix 3A.

The research questions forming the basis for the analysis of the data here, and which serve also to frame the concluding discussion in Chapter 5, are as follows:

1. My overall question is to ask: to what extent is studying a foreign language at university to proficiency level incommensurable with being dyslexic?

2. What *theoretical* coherence is there between literatures on second-language proficiency, on dyslexia and on professional knowledge?

3.1 What *empirical* evidence emerges from institutional dyslexic students' narratives on issues related to second-language proficiency such as automaticity?

3.2 What views on these issues are expressed by the advisors assigned to such dyslexic students?

3.3 What views are expressed on these issues by the academic director of the unit charged with delivering this teaching?

3.4 What coherence is there between the views expressed by the dyslexic students, the advisors and the academic director?

3.5 What other information or indications emerged from the data and its analysis and interpretation?

3.6 In sum, what coherence, theoretical or empirical, informs the 'incommensurability' question in the Institution concerned?

4. Finally, what avenues does the research suggest that the actors concerned in the study (including the institution and, by extension, others) might explore to refute the 'incommensurability' notion?

1.11   Methodology and methods: theoretical and operational issues

1.11.1 Theorising the methodology and methods

In broad terms, I have taken the epistemological position in my study that the researcher is not primarily in the business of assembling quantities of facts so that their underlying laws are known. Such a view would presuppose that there *should* be underlying laws, that they *exist,* that they can be "discovered", and that is somehow the business of educational research.

A further argument against my using an approach which relied on hard positivist and reductionist procedures is their deification of means over ends; objectivity, replicability, generalisability and prediction can deflect from the particular and the subjective, which interest me. Methodologically, I felt that ascribing explanatory and predictive powers to a purely inductive procedure - even if this is everyday, commonsensical and pragmaticist 'inference to the best explanation' or 'abduction' (Pierce), would be unhelpful and antihumanistic. In non- or anti-positivist working, each human cannot in any case be at the same time both an aggregatable entity, owing clearly defined dependent and independent variables, and one who can be mechanistically reduced. Inducing central human noumena from a set of human phenomena would, were it even possible, also imply that I could get to understand so complex a system by reducing it to its components. I also aimed in this study to allow not only the complexity of individuals to show through, but the sheer variability between them, to emerge from my later analysis, and sustain it.

This approach presents interpretive opportunities, but constrained how I analysed and reported my findings, though generalisability is not the sole prerogative of positivists (see discussion in Stake 1995 and my own discussion of the ontological status of my findings, in Chapter 2 below). It is for this reason that I first discuss the uses of narratives in Chapter 3, and narratives are then adopted interpretively.

Methodologically, I have used a broadly interpretive or naturalistic set of methods. Powney and Watts (1987) suggest that analysis of data is a limited view, chosen for a purpose: analysis has some ulterior motive which the data doesn't

share, and hence "the very task of the analyst is to work through the data and to re-present it in a form that can be appreciated by the intended audience" (Powney and Watts 1987, p. 161). Even before assessing the overall coherentist alignment of the respondents, there are first and second-order perspectives to my data analysis (Marton 1981), the first factual/contextual and the second, interpretive of the subjective meanings of the informants.

It is for this reason that my methodology allows each interview to be analysed at least twice and more frequently, three times. First reflexively, during recording and transcription, using contemporaneous or near-contemporaneous annotations and memos and researcher queries. Secondly, reducing and condensing the situated and contextualised propositions of the respondents into a 'story told' for each interviewee. Thirdly, the inbuilt recursivity of this method together with a subsequent use of NVivo 8 during data-handling and text-search operations, added a further level of penetration and exploration of the data in a manner not dissimilar to the 'constant comparative' method of Strauss and Corbin (1998), though CAQDAS working is more often serial than parallel.

The working method I adopted was also mindful of caveats expressed by Thomas and James - "signposts to investigatory avenues borrowed from natural scientific endeavour" should not emulate "inductive-predictive theory ... commended by grounded theorists" (Thomas and James, 2006, p.772). Lincoln and Guba also have expressed reservations regarding the "hollowness of the putative ends, namely, prediction and explanation" (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 339) of earlier 'tabula rasa' grounded theory approaches (Glaser and Strauss 1967) on the one hand, and the 'imposed understandings' for which Thomas and James chide Charmaz (2000), and certain other qualitative theorists, in Denzin and Lincoln (2006).

Conversely, the present methodology and methods allowed me some emulation of Geertz' 1973 notion of 'thick description' in moving from a comparison of theoretical issues with a heuristic case (as it did in Le Juen 2006) towards an extension study using situated persons. Whereas more positivist statistical models may pay little attention to outriders and more to trends and centrality, my

methodology and methods here favour the individual and the particular above aggregates and statistical models. Likewise, the reflexivity, recursivity and semi-structured nature of the data-gathering allowed me some degree of comparison and contrast of respondents at a narratological level, and helped identify meta-narratives which may be 'narrating' the respondents. As we shall see, this methodology also enables a measure of cautious comparability at other levels, not least the phronetic. Finally, the methodology has tried to be mindful of the Thomas and James (2006) reworking of Oakeshott (1967): "Interpretations are built [...] on what it is to be human" [Thomas and James 2006, p.779].

1.11.2 Making a case – I: *A* case, *the* case, *my* case: the ontological status of the study

My *case*, briefly stated, is that what is understood to 'be the case' in the institution, literatures and individuals studied as regards automaticity, proficiency, dyslexia and their interrelationships, is neither *coherent*, in the first instance, nor does the Institution studied seem *mindful* of this fact.

So I set myself a task of problematising, for myself and for the reader, certain apparent understandings and specificities which, in the institution, literatures and individuals I am studying, might otherwise be understood a-critically to be 'the case'; whereas coherentist cross-examination suggests that they are not so, outside their own bounds.

My *casing*, also briefly stated, is to use a triple-nested and recursive scheme in which the outer 'case', in the sense of 'valise', is a study of an institution and its practices; within which, there is a cross-comparison of the theoretical and empirical issues at stake; the recursivity comes in cross-application (derived from NVivo 8 labelling and modelling) of the emerging discoveries of the theoretical-empirical comparison to further, individual 'cases': my cohorts of dyslexic students, the dyslexia advisors, and the academic director. The cross-application at this third level allows comparison of *individual* students, each as a case in their own right; of the student *cohort* with the dyslexia advisors, another case; the dyslexia advisors with the academic director, himself a case; and the academic

director with the dyslexic student cohort. This *casing* is represented, in flattened-out form, in my Research Questions.

Why have I done this?

My naturalistic approach requires that my *casing* should exist – in the sense of being a heuristic transparent enough to become an aid to the reader's understanding, though not the ultimate determinant in it, as I discuss in Section 5.4.

Beyond medical and legal usages of the term 'case', Ragin (1989), Ragin and Becker (1992), Hammersley and Atkinson (1993), Miles and Huberman (1994), Stake (1995), Cohen et al. (2000), and George and Bennett (2005) offer overviews from numerous disciplines and sub-disciplines in education and social sciences, and trace the evolution and problematic of the case. Stake (1995) proposed a differentiation between 'intrinsic' case studies of interest for their own sake, and 'instrumental' case studies which attempt to aid understanding of something else. In coherentist working then my study operates at *both* these levels, and makes Stake obvious.

A more recent avenue for interpreting a case, and the one I adopt here, is that a case *reveals* itself to be so at the end of a research process: it is a product embedded in a process, not an *a-priori*. But questions of reality need to be addressed. Is any case I derive in this way empirically discoverable and verifiable; or is it merely an exploratory construct which is not necessarily 'out there' but a useful aid to understanding? I opt for both, though I share the *verifiability* with others.

In addition, Ragin (1992) writes, "Asking "what is a case?" questions many different aspects of empirical social science" (Ragin 1992, p. 3). He appears to stress that it is necessary to distinguish not so much what a case study is, but how it should *not* be understood – in the sense that, to use his words, "virtually every social scientific study is a case study or can be conceived as a case study, often

from a variety of viewpoints [...] every case study is a case study because it is an analysis of social phenomena specific to time and place" (Ragin 1992, p. 2). Conversely, presenting results by 'casing' creates a need for both an empirical and theoretical case to be handled, while at the same time, it allows for the investigatory outcomes to be channelled into constructing many possible different cases *substantively*. In this, there is a further caveat to be expressed. Cohen et al. (2000) propose that 'case studies can establish cause and effect' (p. 181), with the possibility of using case-studies for theory-testing (Yin 1994) which can lead towards more positivistic, inductive-deductive iterations - which I have eschewed.

I found more use in Nisbet and Watt (1984), in Cohen et al. (2000): taking the Wealdston University and its dyslexic language learners as a 'single instance', my study "provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles. Indeed a case study can enable readers to understand how ideas and abstract principles *can fit together*" (Nisbet and Watt 1984, p. 72-73, emphasis added). In this sense then, my study is a case-study.

These factors explain here and in Section 5.4 my construction both of what a 'case' is and of the study *as* such a case. It follows that the case which I have not so much 'found' (Harper 1992, in Ragin and Becker 1992) by winnowing, pruning and abstraction, but 'constructed' (Wieviorka 1992, ibid.), can be appealed to when I discuss what my 'findings' are - in closing the thesis, but also in suggesting avenues for further research, by myself and/or others and on these or other substantive issues. In other words, I use the notion of 'case' methodologically for the reader and for myself as thesis-builder; but in a coherentist deployment also, to provide a locus for discussions of the 'fit' of interrelations between theoretical and empirical evidence, and wherein to discuss notions of generalisability and scope. I discussed both 'fit' and 'coherentism' separately, in section 2.1 above.

 In working through my understandings of 'case' and 'casing' I found that the issue of generalizability needed further analysis. I found early work in this area still to be informative. Robert Donmoyer (1990), whose work was paralleled and

expanded by Schofield (1990), offered me a point of entry into discussions of generalizability and single-case studies. And although formally, I have not offered a bounded and longitudinal single-case study here, I feel their comments are still pertinent.

Donmoyer (1990) eschewed a traditional view of positivist, 'proof-giving' research in which notions of random selection and statistical significance are brought to bear on observed (but thus, *a priori* observable) "lawful regularities" (Donmoyer 1990, p. 177) said to hold between causes and effects in order to "discover and validate generalizations about these effects" (ibid), particularly where the purpose is to derive general statements which can be imposed, template-fashion, onto particular situations and produce a *modus operandi* for the practitioner in a given applied social sciences field. This is not Donmoyer's purpose, nor mine, in my case-making.

It was these considerations, and the naturalistic approach I have espoused throughout the thesis, which suggested that I should follow Ragin (1992) in returning finally (Section 5.4) to the question of whether my overall 'case' is *generalisable*; and by whom.

1.11.3 Reflecting on methodology before operationalisation

In reflecting upon my research methods, I feel it is important to stress that my thesis is supported by both interview data and observation – though not by observational *data* as such, because my observations were very much fact-finding and involved with establishing links, procedures and institutional practices around 'consecrating' students as dyslexic. Illustratively, this institutional observation work allowed me the following discovery in my CAS work, which I reproduce here:

> Though the Educational Psychologists referred to by the University confirm that there is a problem for a given student as a symptomological level, it is the Assistive Technology Unit which, in performing appraisals of needs, in effect reconfirms the diagnosis and by identifying assistances, makes concrete this disability. Thus the student passes from 'having dyslexia' to

> 'being a dyslexic', institutionally, *because* it is recognised they need screen enlargers, coloured overlays, book-readers, and so forth – and not because dyslexia inheres in the student. (Le Juen 2006, p. 7)

Given the focus of my study, I do not present direct observational data on HE/EFL/MFL teaching practices beyond the anecdotal, nor use these to triangulate with respondents' perceptions or my analysis of these. I did, however, explore this area using the (tonally ironic) heuristic of the 'Institutional Dyslexic' in my Critical Analytical Study (Le Juen 2006). An indirect observation (by one early respondent, during piloting work) of HE/MFL teaching practices which can thwart a dyslexic student informed this extract from the CAS. (Pertinently also, for my later discussion of 'schisms' in the institution I was, even then, able to identify a disparity between pedagogic *practice* and professional *dyslexia advice* in the same institution):

> Institutionally, the teaching is EFL-inspired and still "communicative". This can be accompanied by sometimes infantilising assumptions about the possibility of re-triggering child first language acquisition (CLA1) mechanisms in order to deal with adults (ALA2, or Adult Language Two Acquisition). The 'house' version of Communicative Language Teaching relies on freshness, surprise, and 'informed eclecticism of approach'. Anecdotally, this happy-clappy 'spontaneity' is sheer poison to many dyslexic students. It is actively discouraged by the institution's own Dyslexia Advisors. (Le Juen 2006, p. 12)

1.12   Data reduction: methods and issues

I would like to make it clear, firstly, that in the body of the thesis, the quotations used are drawn from transcripts of the interviews, though whole transcripts are not presented in the thesis as such.

The interview transcription process itself was completed by me - and not a transcriber. Though the cost of a transcriber might not even have been an issue, I felt that the penetration, reflexivity and analysis afforded by undertaking this process for myself far outweighed time and money costs.

I have included in quotations, as far as I could hear them and recall them from the tapes and transcripts, the exact words of the respondents. Also included, systematically though far more subjectively, were pauses and hesitations, facial and body movements, laughter, incidents during recording (passing lawn-mowers, forgotten mobile phones) which helped me as touchstones and milestones in recalling the event of the interview, as well as the respondents' actual words.

Also, while transcribing the semi-structured Interviews using the protocol I have included in Appendix 3A, I made electronic marginal notes and aide-memoires, as in the pink-coloured boxes of Figure 1 below (for readers in black and white, these boxes are the ones entitled "The Analyst Comments"):

Figure 1, from Millie's Transcript
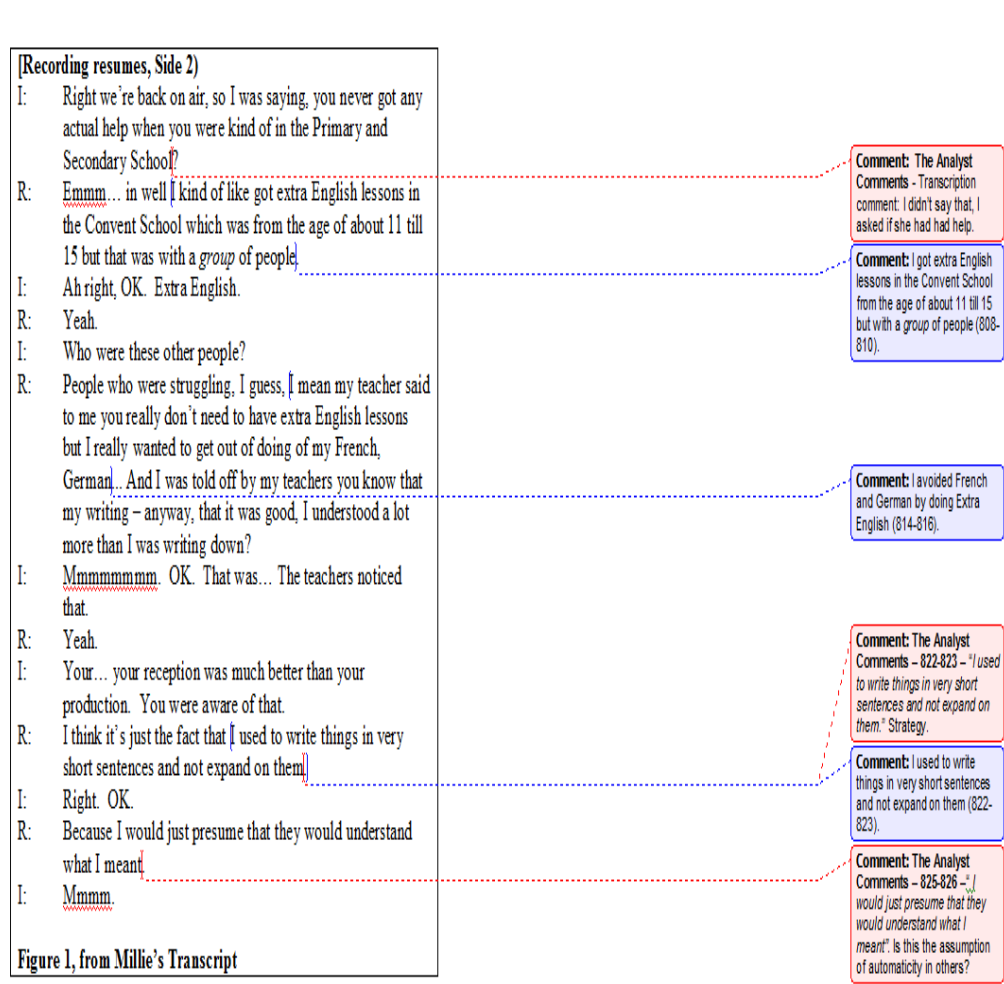
Subsequently, for analytical rather than synthesis purposes, I reconfigured the "Comment" marginalia (blue-coloured entries) as ones in the 1ˢᵗ person voice of

the Respondent ("R" above), assembled into very wide themes (as in Figure 2 below) using verbatim citations or propositions as directly close as possible. I wanted a denser and in its own way, equally 'true' narrative which I could compare with others in a more holistic way, and one with which readers with a preference for continuous prose over dialogue might engage – and generalise from naturalistically - more readily:

So: what's my problem?
I have a 'late' diagnosis of dyslexia. This diagnosis took place at University; the psychologist's diagnosis was of "mild dyslexia" and "fluency problems". Indeed, my dyslexia is a knock-on effect of another cause, the working memory difficulty – this emerged in general diagnostic work. I do not have automaticity and have to learn by rote BUT I can't learn by rote too well, with my Working Memory problem. I have a Working Memory problem with the interrupted numbers test. My numbers problem has never been salient in daily life, unlike my language difficulty. I don't have *acalculia*, just working memory problems.

I have never had a problem with actual reading: I have always been a keen reader. I feel a bit iffy about this, but I come from a family of avid generalist readers. My problem is more productive than receptive. I have problems with fluency in writing: I have difficulty in expressing, in writing, what I'm thinking. I have great difficulty in assembling and structuring for another reader the orderly ideas that are there in my head. Academic text is new to me I need time to read academic text.

Figure 2, from the 'Carmen's Story' compilation

My personal, pink-box researcher's 'marginalia' included items not only from the sound recording but also its context: not only extra long hesitations, rolled eyeballs, gaze-avoidance, blushing and similar features 'invisible' in a recording, but also drawing attention to utterances and idea-associations, misunderstandings and other items which the I felt, subjectively, to be of possible future interest; not least where these opened up paradoxes, dilemmas, or re-assessment of categories and classifications. Iteratively, I added further marginalia but always identified these as those of "The Analyst" in deliberate 'epoché'-type bracketing and neither the direct voice of the respondent nor, totally, of the Interviewer – but the interviewer-as-researcher.

I feel that this phased stratification of immediate/direct, then transcription-excited and finally, reflexivity-induced comments allowed me *not* to disappear disingenuously from the transcription process. It will be seen also that in my dealings with the academic director and with the advisors, I added slash-marks (/) to denote inter-cuttings and over-speaking between myself and the academic

director, on the one hand; and to mark how the (apparently unrelated) advisors seemed to complete each other' sentences.

1.12.1 Propositional ranking, and clarification

The derived **Propositions** were of **first-** and then **second-order**[9]:

First-order, direct, indicative mood declarative statements were used, e.g. "I am the only dyslexic in the family"[10], but

Second-order items included linguistic items such as modals, negatives, contraries, what-ifs, interrogatives, and similar linguistic features in addition to the paralinguistic ones mentioned above.

I effected some minor tidying of first order propositions, to allow for later comparison with other narrators (for example, "I were right brassed" = "I was very angry at this"; though I will discuss the drawbacks of this below in some closing reflective paragraphs). But in second order examples a question about a teacher like "How would she know how I felt?" was rehandled as the proposition "I thought my teacher didn't know how I felt", appealing to (my own) contextualised judgment.

Propositions derived from the Interview were in the first instance simply listed, then linked into prose and united under larger themes. They were further reduced in cases of apparently casual repetitions by the same respondent.

1.12.2   Transfer to NVivo 8

Instead of working pragmatically to an ITBE (Inference to the best explanation) epistemology, a more phronetic, narratological and coherentist procedure was adopted. I describe this briefly in Chapter 4, before presenting the data analysis and linking it back to my research questions.

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[9] This order of interpretation is respected in Chapter 4, the data analysis.
[10] The 3 examples here are all invented.

1.13   The Interviews: some specific closing reflections

1.13.1 Gains, and losses

In conducting interviews, and particularly my semi-structured ones, there were gains and losses and these need to be considered, reflexively. Re-reading the transcripts, there were points where I clearly dominated the conversation, and this has become apparent in my choice of excerpts – which are included in the thesis to illustrate quite different points. But as I show below, this apparent dominance was usually balanced out later, using other techniques. The important lesson for me was one which is not always stressed enough in interviewing literatures, I came to feel, and that is the value of the *probes* used, and indeed, secondary, unplanned probes. While there is a need for structure in the interview, so that the event is generally comparable with other interviews, there also needs to be room for individuality of response and for the unplanned to emerge. Keeping this balance is difficult. Positivistic notions of replicability, in qualitative working, are otiose. But more humanely, respondents who are young university students may not yet be inured to working sessions requiring over 30 minutes' attention span, let alone an hour.

Three methods in particular evolved in my interviewing, notably the 'actor question' (I hold up my Equity card), which was along the lines of "If I had to play a dyslexic, how would I (feel) (think) (act)…"

A second technique which evolved was the appeal to expertise: "You will know more about dyslexia than I do, so tell me…" This proved to be particularly fruitful with social science and natural science respondents, who generally had a 'learned' interest in themselves and had (ironically perhaps) read up extensively on dyslexia.

The final technique, which had evolved through earlier piloting, was to turn the microphone over to the respondent at the end and ask, "What should I have asked – and didn't?" All three provided rich streams of response in which the

respondents were more active and less passive, indeed leading the interview at times.

I refer later, in my Ethics protocol in Appendix 1A, to the problematic of valuable information which emerges *after* the microphone has been switched off, and may not have been intended to be included. There was therefore an *ethical* learning process for me, as the researcher, and reflectively, I note that I have stuck with my decision to keep the interviews as one-offs and not risk over-writing them by follow-up interviews of the same candidate, however tantalising off-microphone comments and post-interview e-mails appeared.

1.13.2   The Interviews: a final limitation – and my solution

Given my aspiration as a researcher for my text to be recognised as a case study, and a case study with a narrative which will support naturalistic generalisation by the reader, it is necessary to acknowledge a limitation, and explain the solution I proposed. The respondents' narratives in themselves do not make a thesis; but to make a thesis, it is incumbent upon me to present things though a particular lens – my own. I have explained earlier that as an analytic strategy I have tried to capture and frame respondents' narratives by transforming these into 'stories', included in Appendix 2, in a format which also brooked electronic handling, and comparing with other similar 'stories'. The danger here is that removing expressions such as 'brassed off' [an invented example] might strip out local colour that could have illuminated the social location of that respondent. Conversely, treating 'brassed off', 'a bit miffed', 'gutted' and 'screamingly infuriated' as separate search entities and research terms might swell a database to pointless effect; judgement and transparency are required. My solution, as a reminder, has been to use verbatim selections of transcript in the body of the thesis (adapted to NVivo 8 presentation, which does not reproduce the original line-numbers), as well as presenting the more holistic 'stories' which are my researcher's assemblage of the original transcripts.

I now turn, in Chapter 2, to the epistemological approach I have adopted, and to the theoretical influences which underscored my research.

Chapter 2 – Theoretical influences in the present study

My ambition, in this study, is coherentist; that is to say, I have espoused a post-foundationalist epistemological model which seeks to contrast certain actors' understandings of terms and practices in the domain of teaching foreign languages to dyslexic university students in the Institution I describe – 'Wealdston University'.

As I will explain below, I have adopted the coherentist model for reason of the inconclusiveness, post-JTB and post-Gettier, of both rationalist and empirical foundationalist models. It is a deliberate distancing from positivist treatment of human affairs where the search for certainty, incorrigibility and indefeasibility of knowledge may receive pre-eminence over *understanding*. Adapting Spender's terms, "*Verstehen* being not to 'explain' the nature of the world but to take part in the more general activity of making sense and searching out the meaning of our experiences" (Spender 1998, p. 34). I therefore had a positive, though not positivist, purpose here, which was to allow stories to be told, and compared, to see how they fit. This I believe will suggest more informed practice by questioning local understandings of apparently 'shared' terms in language acquisition, dyslexia literatures, and areas of professional knowledge.

2.1 Exploring the notion of 'fit'

The attractions and distractions of coherentism are succinctly described in Cardinal et al. (2004), though more usefully (*holistic* versus *linear* coherentism) in Audi (2003, pp. 193 et seq.), and can be briefly summarised as follows. For many theorists, the 'indubitability' of rationalist justifications of knowledge, and the 'incorrigibility' of empirical justifications, have both proved inadequate. Empirically, the incorrigibility of sense-data, for example, can be queried and its justificatory mechanisms, revised. Likewise, rationalism and its rootedness in *a priori* or analytical truths ("all nieces are female") may lack interest or utility. Further, both of these avenues of justification may, if they fail, re-enable radical scepticism and lead to the abandonment of criticality. Hence, my position has

been that *philosophical certainty* for the grounding of knowledge may not exist nor, in any case, be necessary.

In such post-foundationalist views, knowledge, justification and certainty are matters of degree. Thus the coherentist eschews epistemic foundationalism in favour of an epistemological stance which (negatively) seeks non-contradictoriness and (positively) identifies beliefs which support and explain other beliefs without flagrantly denying the world-as-it-is, or relying on coincidences.

The advantage of coherentist positions, particularly holistic ones, is their pragmatism and workability. They don't dogmatically reject the less-than-certain; they are dynamic in accepting best explanations and allowing some predictions; and they tolerate notions of common sense and reality which unalloyed scepticism would put in doubt.

Disadvantages of coherentism may be pointed to, notably by more positivist disciplines in which relativism and revisability are not acceptable because they are not founded on sense data or percepts, for example in mathematics. Indeed, there is a logico-philosophical impasse for certain anti-coherentists. For them, coherentism *must* be false because, if two rival and equally-justified sets of belief exist, and there is no reason for a preference, both cannot be true, therefore neither is true, therefore the whole concept is false.

Reliabilism, a rival non-foundationalist candidate, fails on account of the problems of regression which also beset foundationalism. Reliance on the beliefs of reliable authorities requires authentication and acceptance of the reliability of the reliable authorities themselves, and so on backwards. Justification, in reliabilism, is external to the believer and thus, in some accounts, 'more objective'. However, seekers of such objectivity not unusually espouse positivist, proof-seeking, verifiable *a-posteriori* avenues, and are using probabilism as a springboard.

Conscious of these reservations, my purpose now is to gauge the fit between notions of proficiency and automaticity I discussed in Chapter 1, and will considered further in Chapter 3. I ask how current notions of 'proficiency' in language teaching, learning and testing sit alongside notions of 'automaticity' in the field of language acquisition in general, AL2 acquisition in particular, and within AL2, second language acquisition by dyslexic students.

The present and subsequent chapters also focus on the 'fit' between these notions and their treatment in other types of knowledge. Issues are discussed in narrativity and epistemology, as are issues in practical knowledge, including professional knowledge and practice. Can, for example, an 'intuitive' teacher also hold 'tacit' knowledge as a professional manager and at the same time, be sensitive to 'exceptional' narratives from students with an 'invisible' disability? Or will questions of power and expediency join with terminological confusion and unwarranted conflations from disparate pieces of theory (language acquisition and testing, professional knowledge and practice, dyslexia literatures)?

I will also discuss, in Chapter 4, the *pragmatic* aspects of using narratives as the medium through which to approach a coherentist study.

But first I needed to consider: what is a narrative? And in addition to what it says, what does it do? Narratives being of both substantive and methodological interest, I consider some sources and discussions below.

2.2   Narratives, narratology, and narrativity

Writing[11] on narratives, narratology and narrativity is now extensive and diverse, branching into sub-topics such as the systematic theorisation of narrative time, order, duration, frequency, mood and voice (Genette 1972, trans. 1980); narrator, narratee, metanarrative signs and relative narrativity (Prince 1982); the identity of the narrator (Bal 1997); and narrative articulation and socially-situated narrative (Toolan 2001). In sometimes parallel nomenclatures, Rumelhart (1980) reviews

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[11] And speech; anecdotally, an unidentified football commentator recently alluded to "the narrative behind" Player X's missed goal.

schemata and their earlier versions in cognitive science; and Swales (1990) reviews these schemata and various cultural, cognitive, literary and other labels such as *scripts*, *scenarios*, *frames*, and *routines,* to demonstrate how academic and research genres are themselves narrated. Of particular interest also to my study is Pollak (2005), who uses narratives of dyslexic-identified students in tracing a shift from dyslexia *models* to dyslexia *discourse*s in theoretical, diagnostic and intervention literatures.

Some authors have been critical of the entire narratological project, variously for its fancifulness and its determinism (notably Mink 1978 and White 1984 in Verhesschen 2003). Conversely, a number of researchers have offered particularly delicate and useful insights into how individuals self-narrate. These authors are revisited here - notably Verhesschen, Polkinghorne, Fisher and Battersby. Mindful of my purpose of gauging the 'fit' between accounts of dyslexia, these authors were also selected because their contributions on narrative themes interconnect, in critical terms, with other concepts which emerged in the study - notably *phronesis* and 'tacit, 'implicit' and other forms of professional knowledge.

2.3   Issues in narrativity I: the interest in links between narrative and life

I felt that a necessary prelude to discussing narratives and their role would be to review early interest in this field, notably to inform a later dualism – between the 'episodic' and the 'diachronic' as relating to automaticity.

Paul Ricœur described how we can speak of human life as "a story in the nascent state, and so of life, as an activity and a passion in search of a narrative" (Ricœur 1991, p. 29). Later, an important question in relating the *worth* of narrative in spheres such as education and research was raised by Verhesschen (2003), who suggested that: "The question is whether we live out narratives in our lives or whether we first live our lives and can impose a narrative structure on it afterwards" (Verhesschen, p. 451). Verhesschen's answer is that "narrative structure is immanent in action and experience" (ibid.). Indeed in resolving his own question Verhesschen appeals, within Ricœur's cyclic *triple mimesis*, to the

(again, triple) mediation of Ricœur's Mimesis II: Ricœur's notion of *emplotment* accounts for the sequencing of disparate and separate events into a configuration; the synthesis of heterogeneous elements; and synchronisation of episodic, linear events within a semantic totality.

But importantly for what follows, Ricœur's Mimesis III is also cited: the notion that the process of composition or configuration of a narrative is *not completed in the text but in the reader* (Ricœur 1991, p. 26; emphasis added). This account, and its small rider, also help to resolve into more iterative directions Polkinghorne's 1995 early dualism - based on Bruner's 1985 paradigmatic/narrative distinction - between "studies whose data consists of narratives or stories but whose analysis produced paradigmatic typologies or categories" and "studies whose data consists of actions, events and happenings, but whose analysis produces stories" (Polkinghorne 1995, pp. 5-6). The narrator/narratee (Prince 1982) *invites our help in completing her story*.

2.4   The narrative paradigm and 'narrative rationality': the contribution of Walter Fisher

Alasdair MacIntyre, for whom narratives prefigure but do not determine lived experience, has proposed the notion of the "story-telling animal" (MacIntyre 1981 p.201), and offered a supporting ontological characterisation of human action in which "enacted dramatic narrative is the basic and essential genre for the characterisation of human actions" (MacIntyre 1981, p. 194).

This inspired Fisher (1987) to propose the case for *homo narrans*, who both embodies and enacts a narrative paradigm. This narrative paradigm is itself informed by Fisher's concept of *narrative rationality*. In this ontological but non-dualistic (Descartes) or differentialist (Derrida) rationality, human communication is "rational when stories satisfy the demands of narrative probability and narrative fidelity" (Fisher 1987, p. 58).

Paraphrasing Fisher, his essential postulates for narrative rationality are that while humans are, in their very essence, storytellers, human decision-making and

communication are predicated upon "good reasons". Fisher glosses these good reasons as "values or value-laden warrants for believing or acting in certain ways" (Fisher 1987, p. xi). These change according to situation and the communication medium chosen, as well as according to genre.

However, there's a story within this story: "good reasons" are deemed to be such through historical, biographical, cultural and psychological criteria. Intrinsically, determiners of "good reasons" live in awareness of *narrative probability*: they have knowledge of what is a coherent story. We have referred to coherence above. Determiners of "good reasons" constantly test *narrative fidelity*, to see whether experience chimes with their lived experience. Finally, the knowable world is constituted of stories among which it is necessary to choose in order to constantly re-create that world (Fisher 1987, p.5)

Fisher counterposed his narrative rationality to "classical" or "world rationality", characterised as follows (paraphrasing Fisher 1987, pp. 59-60). First and foremost, humans are essentially 'rational' beings whose paradigm for decision-making and communications is the argument; that is, a discourse with clear-cut inferential or implicative structures. There, situation determines the conduct of argument – be it legal, scientific, legislative or public. "World" rationality calls upon argumentative ability operating upon subject-matter knowledge, and advocacy skills in the given fields; and in its argumentative structure, this 'rationality' serves to solve the set of logical puzzles which is the world. In Fisher's view of "world rationality",

> argument as product and process is *the* means of being human, the agency of all that humans can know and realize in achieving their *telos*... The philosophical ground of the rational-world paradigm is epistemology (Fisher 1987, pp. 59-60).

However Fisher is careful to explain that, whilst world rationality lacks his proposed *homo narrans* dimension, the reverse is not true. Thus, narrative rationality embraces world rationality – and notably, its 'scientific' stories and arguments. This one-directionality is reflected in the way Fisher construes the narrative paradigm in *non*-constructivist terms, rather than *anti*-constructivist ones. The narrative paradigm subsumes all others, notably in its search for the

value of values which are neither 'field invariant' (Fisher 1987, p. 114), as in the analytical sciences, nor the hierarchical values of arguers and measurers, but internalised criteria for humane, meaningful action in the world.

White (1980) is used to further undergird this precedence:

> Narrative is a metacode, a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the shared reality can be transmitted ... the absence of narrative capacity or a refusal of narrative indicates an absence or refusal of meaning itself (White 1980, quoted by Fisher 1987, p. 65).

Fisher expands:

> The narrative paradigm stresses ontology rather than epistemology, which is not to say that knowledge does not exist but that it does not have an absolute foundation in ordinary discourse. The subject of such discourse is symbolic action that creates social reality (Fisher 1987, p. 93).

Fisher asserts that for proponents of narrative rationality, the world is constituted not of *arguers*, as Perelman (1979) and later Habermas (1984) contend, but of *storytellers*:

> [Habermas] conceives rationality as grounded in the presuppositions of speech, specifically argumentative interactions [...] he reserves rationality for argumentation, "that type of speech in which participants thematize contested validity claims and attempt to vindicate or criticize them through argument. An argument contains reasons or grounds that are connected in a systematic way with the *validity claim* of a problematic expression" (Fisher 1987, p. 91, quoting Habermas 1984, p. 18; original emphasis).

Fisher eschews the positivist version of validation in story-telling. Indeed, he has already disparaged the positivism inherent in structuralist 'narratology', which he finds both ontologically and teleologically void:

> Narratology, [...] the "scientific" study of narrative discourse [...] advanced by writers such as Greimas, Todorov, Genette, Barthes... what takes place in the narrative forms is literally *nothing* - what happens is language alone (Fisher 1987, p. 90).

Fisher reinforces his ontological take on narrative by citing Booth (1974) on *interanimacy* questions and social reality: "Not only do human beings successfully infer other beings' states of mind from symbolic clues; we know that they characteristically, in all societies, build each others' minds" (Booth 1974, p. 114). In the present study, these conceptions may have explanatory power when we consider dyslexics in the Institution and indeed, their potential exclusion from it through a failure to have their story heard, and/or to participate in the institutional narrative, or indeed wider ones. This is a narratological axis to which we will return in discussing Battersby's dialectical extension of Strawson, but also in a later discussion of inclusion within and exclusion from group-generated learning.

Returning to Fisher, it is *values*, and the encoding and accessing of these, which explain how the narrative paradigm determines narrative rationality – and praxis itself. "The role of values in constituting truth, knowledge or even reality has been generally denied", he claims, and stresses that "values function in constituting all that we consider knowledge" (Fisher 1987, p. xi). The ontological focus of the paradigm he advocates is once again stressed: "The narrative paradigm advances the idea that good communication is good by virtue of its satisfying the requirements of narrative rationality, namely, that it offers a reliable, trustworthy, and desirable guide to belief and action" (Fisher, p. 95). We may read this 'validation' as non-, rather than anti-, positivist. We also note that Fisher proposes a triangulated and again, coherentist view of the 'validity' of his narrative rationality thesis, explicitly linking narrative rationality, "good reasons", and *phronesis*:

> Aristotle's view of *phronesis* [...] recognised contingency in the social world, the particularities of practical existence, and the possibility of wisdom [...] It is a constituent of the narrative paradigm. Good reasons express practical wisdom [...] making it possible that principles of decision or action can be generalized" (Fisher, p. 94).

I will take forward Fisher's statements on narrative, values and "good reasons" into my analysis of the 'fit' between the stories around dyslexia told in our study by considering phronesis under a separate heading. However, Fisher extends and adapts Aristotle's conception of it:

> The narrative paradigm - with its associated concept of narrative rationality ... seeks to account for how persons come to believe and behave ... a theory of human communication that encompasses ... the practical wisdom of *all* persons. (Fisher, p. 98; original emphasis).

Fisher's "all persons" above squares well with Gadamer, whom he cites:

> The process of communication is not mere action, a purposeful activity, a setting-up of signs, through which I transmit my will to others ... it is a living process in which a community of life is lived out. (Gadamer 1982, cited in Fisher 1987, p. 95).

Later, in further discussion of phronesis, I consider writing from Flyvbjerg on the links between knowledge, professional knowledge, and phronesis. But in describing the ontological nature of narrative rationality, Fisher triangulates phronesis with both *praxis* and *practices*. Fisher's "all persons", above, echoed in Gadamer's "community of life", reappears in Bernstein (1983), whom Fisher cites because he wants "to try again and again to foster and nurture those forms of communal life in which dialogue, conversation, *phronesis,* practical discourse, and judgement are concretely embodied in our everyday practices" (Bernstein 1983, cited in Fisher 1987, p. 94).

2.5   Issues in narrativity II: identity, agency, and the narrator narrated: Battersby's discussion of Strawson

I wish to pursue the concept of 'narrator/narratee' along another axis. Battersby (2006) revisits Strawson (2004), who attacked proponents of the Narrative Identity Thesis, notably Sacks (1985), Taylor (1989), Bruner (1994), Schechtman (1997), and Phelan (2005). Notably, Strawson attacked the "prevailing Diachronic approach to self-experience, in which the self, considered as a self, is understood to persist in time from the past into the future" (Battersby 2006, p. 27). Strawson proposed a return to non-narrative approaches and notably, 'episodic' ones, which I characterise further below. Phelan (2005, in Battersby) had proposed a synthesis and the term 'multiple' rather than 'diachronic' or 'episodic',

however Battersby notes that Strawson had twin targets in the diachronicist camp, to wit:

> those who endorse both the descriptive "psychological narrativity thesis" (each of us "constructs and lives a narrative" that is our identity) and the normative "ethical narrativity thesis" (constructing and living life as a narrative is good, something we ought to do) (Battersby 2006, p. 28).

Battersby is dismissive (on the grounds of 'obviousness', in the technical sense of obviating discussion) of the distinction made by Strawson between 'holistic' self-views and 'inner self' views, thus between:

> oneself when one considers "oneself principally as a human being taken as a whole", and the "experience of oneself when one considers oneself principally as an inner mental activity or 'self' of some sort" (Strawson in Battersby 2006, p. 28).

However, Battersby usefully isolates, refines and extends Strawson's view of the diachronic/episodic polarity thus:

> Implicit in the Diachronic personality's attachment to continuity of self [...] there would seem to be a tendency to adopt a narrative mode of self-representation, just as implicit in the Episodic personality's commitment to a kind of punctuated-equilibrium conception of the self [...] not there yesterday, but here today and gone tomorrow, there would seem to be a tendency to [...] adopt a non-narrative mode of self-representation (if any). (Battersby, p. 29)

He adds:

> It turns out that just a there can be Diachronic and Episodic individuals, so there can be Diachronic and Episodic cultures (ibid.).

Battersby concludes by stating that there are

> many truths we can tell [...] about selves, and many ways of telling them but [...] the whole truth is, unfortunately, a chaotic mess of stuff belonging to a massive number of incompatible categories that simply cannot be brought under the control of a single discursive taskmaster. (Battersby, p. 43).

My purpose here is not to isolate any such 'single discursive taskmaster', or revel in Battersby's gloom; however I will return to the apparent narratological schism between 'diachronic' and 'episodic' self-narrators. A 'diachronic' individual lost in an 'episodic' culture may be an informing metaphor when we assess the 'fit' between the narratives of dyslexic learners and the narratives of various institutional agents in the research presented here. Phelan (2005)'s concept of "narrative imperialism" may also prove to have explanatory power in deciding whether and to what extent the institutional dyslexic students studied are 'narrators' or 'narrated'; and the effects of these positions on their agency and learning. I return to these issues in my closing Chapter 5.

2.6   Aspects of professional knowledge

Here, I continue to assess commonalities and differences in certain concepts which are material to my study, notably *phronesis*, forms of tacit knowledge, and other issues in professional knowledge, and use those raised by Flyvbjerg and by Eraut in different professional contexts as heuristics.

2.6.1   Phronesis and phronetic research

I referred to the Aristotelian notion of *phronesis* in an earlier discussion of Fisher (1987) and Bernstein (1983). Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics describes *phronesis* as an intellectual virtue "that is reasoned, and capable of action with regard to things that are good or bad for man" (NE 1140a24-b12, 1144b33-1145a11). The pre-eminence accorded to phronesis among the virtues ("the possession of the single virtue of [phronesis] will carry with it the possession of them all") long prefigured Fisher's pre-eminence of narrative over world rationality. But here, I first analyse the needs for, and dangers of, *phronesis*, together with some proposals for and examples of a phronetic approach to professional knowledge.

2.6.2   The need for phronetic working

In exploring avenues for assessing the 'fit' between types of knowledge, and notably here forms of professional knowledge, it is not always the case that a

researcher is assembling quantities of facts so that their underlying laws can become known. This would presuppose that there *should* be underlying laws, that they do *exist*, that they are amenable to discovery, and that this is somehow the business of educational research into human subjects. Nor may 'scientistic' approaches which rely on hard positivist and reductionist procedures, always be advisable. Indeed, deification of means over ends, supposed 'objectivity', and requirements for replicability, generalisability and a predictive focus may occlude more than they illuminate, certainly in human affairs.

The 'dichotomy' between quantitative and qualitative working has long been dissolved (Schofield 1990). Even when dealing with the everyday and the commonsensical, ascribing explanatory and predictive powers to purely inductive procedures such as Peirce's 'abduction' (Peirce 1960) and Harman's 'inference to the best explanation' (Harman 1965) may prove antihumanistic, even if they seem intuitive: human beings are not always entities that can be aggregated, nor are they endowed with dependent and independent variables that are so clear-cut that they can be mechanistically reduced. Inducing central human essences from a set of human phenomena would require me to assert that complex systems can be understood by reduction to their components. My data here witness not only to the complexity of individuals, but to the sheer variability between them, notoriously even among the 'institutional dyslexics'[12].

2.6.3   Phronesis in professional contexts: the contributions of Flyvbjerg and Eraut

Having made this case, I now consider authors who have explored means of isolating and describing knowledge in the professional context. I will return, in discussing Eraut and later, in my conclusions, to the appeal Flyvbjerg makes to Dreyfus (1982) and Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) in this area. But writing within the domain of professional planning, Bent Flyvbjerg both elucidates and extends the term 'phronesis' towards a contemporary translation of "practical wisdom,

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[12] Though useful and telling, the term 'students identified as dyslexic' which Pollak (2005) uses in his book title is not adopted here, but only because my own term is imported from the earlier work.

practical judgement, common sense, or prudence" (Flyvbjerg 2004, p. 284). He extends it by removing it from Habermas' 'argumentative' (see earlier) and *post-metaphysical* (Cooke, 1994) contexts of communicative rationality with their implicit, intuitively-mastered rules. Instead, Flyvbjerg focuses on the power sources and power lines involved in deciding what *phronesis* is, aligning this take on phronesis with the writings on power of Machiavelli, Nietzsche and Foucault. In the latter case, Flyvbjerg (2004, p. 296) cites Foucault's axiom that "discourse isn't life; regular daily practice is life" (Foucault 1981 p. 5; 1991 p.72). He does this to justify attention to 'little things' (Flyvbjerg 2004, p. 295), micropractices, in a process akin to Geertz' "thick description" (Geertz 1973, p. 6).

Flyvbjerg (2004) alluded to a basic tenet of phronetic planning research when he stated that "practical examples are typically more effective vehicles of communication than are discussions of theory and methodology" (Flyvbjerg 2004, p. 283). He continued by explaining the apparent paradox whereby a researcher can end up "arguing theoretically for a methodology which emphasises practice" (ibid.). He stated that one of the basic questions of phronetic research must be "to provide concrete examples and detailed narratives of the ways in which power and values work […] and with what consequences to whom, and to suggest how relations of power and values could be changed to work with other consequences" [Flyvbjerg 2004, p.320]. Despite Flyvbjerg's caution that in the Planning context, such research "is also not about, nor does it try to develop, theory or universal method" [ibid], the present study will not eschew theory, nor lose interest in the normative or the utopian, but will entail an analysis of the relative position and power of the diverse players – the teachers, the students, the teacher/managers, the students' helpers – and it will also be necessary to attend to the expressed needs of each of the parties concerned. This analysis, clarification, critiquing and generating new perspectives has an epistemological as well as an ontological outcome: to produce further knowledge, and to suggest action.

2.6.4   The phronetic locus

A phronetic approach regarding the pragmatics of teaching foreign languages to dyslexic students is therefore one which studies how matters are done, practically, on the ground. But in the planning area, Flyvbjerg offers three cautions:

> The result of phronetic planning research is a pragmatically governed interpretation of the studied planning practices. The interpretation does not require the researcher to agree with the actors' everyday understanding; nor does it require the discovery of some deep, inner leaning of the practices. Phronetic planning practice research is in this way interpretive, but it is neither everyday nor deep hermeneutics. Phronetic Planning Research is also not about, nor does it develop, theory or universal method (Flyvbjerg 2004, p. 302).

Thus, phronetic planning research is indeed an analytical project, but not a theoretical or methodological one. We will take this as meaning that in *intent*, phronetic research is indeed interpretive; but not teleological. Secondly, Flyvbjerg stresses that

> "Phronetic planning research may be practiced in ways other than those described here, as long as they effectively deal with deliberation, judgement, and praxis in relation to power and values, and as long as they answer the four value-rational questions at the core of *phronesis*; (1) Where are we going with planning; (2) who gains and who loses, and by which mechanisms of power? (3) Is this development desirable? (4) What, if anything, should we do about it?" (Ibid).

Importantly, Flyvbjerg states in his worked example (Flyvbjerg 2002, p. 353), that the phronetic take is not simply one related to "the inevitable question of power", for it seeks to elucidate the values involved in decision-making. Phronesis, for Flyvbjerg, goes beyond the analytical and scientific knowledge of *episteme* and the know-how knowledge of *techne* to include what Vickers has described as the art of judgement where, signally, "the mental activity and the social process are indissoluble" (Vickers 1995, p. 15). For knowledge to be rational and not simply incidental, the first principles of the conditioned beliefs of *episteme* and *techne* are as known as the conclusions drawn from them. Thus, *phronesis* is all the more important because it is that activity by which instrumental rationality is balanced by value-rationality (Weber 1978; but see also Oakes 2003), a rationality which

sits well alongside the narrative rationality of Fisher (1987) that we commented earlier. Flyvbjerg's injunction then is to "problematise taken-for-granted truths" in developing "the craft of situated, contextualised research about planning practices and the power relations which define such practices" (Flyvbjerg 2004, p. 302).

My interest here is in in Flyvbjerg's 'power relations', and whether and to what extent such power relations may affect the interplaying streams of knowledge to which dyslexic modern language learners are exposed. Of equal interest is Halverson's "phronetic eye" for action (Halverson 2004, p. 92), and like him I wish to steer its focus away from simply "what works" to "how best" to use phronetic knowledge amongst other 'knowledges' to which dyslexic language learners are exposed in the institution. These notions inform many of my concluding suggestions in the final chapter.

2.6.5   Tacit knowledge

I have discussed the notion of *phronesis*; but can this be compared to professional 'tacit' knowledge? And to what extent do the 'automaticities' involved in professional 'tacit' knowledge impinge on expected, or failed, automaticity in language learning?

I will also turn, in a later section, to the allied notion of 'implicit learning'. Implicit learning holds an interest for this study in terms of its effect on future behaviour. Theorists including Reber (1993) propose that such 'future effects' can only be explained as resulting from the *accumulated* experience of several episodes, rather than that of a single event, implying that some selection of lived experience has previously entered long-term memory, albeit not as part of a conscious, deliberate process.

My data here was be screened to find whether, and to what extent, there is evidence that tacit knowledge of practitioners (managers, advisors) conflicts with implicit learning by students, notably dyslexic ones. At narratological level,

students' accounts were examined for commonalities in such implicit learning, and what were the consequences in terms of the agency of the various actors.

Eraut (2000) discusses the idea of 'tacit' knowledge and retraces its roots, realigning possible co-synonyms reviewed in Spender (1998). Eraut's focus is the interplay between public, propositional knowledge, and personal versions of this. The personal, available for use, version of the public/propositional will have been conditioned by this personal use, which may have been across one or several contexts and have necessitated integrating other knowledge which was itself both public and personal. Hence, *tacit* knowledge has been generated, which has been publicly as well as personally sourced. The dialectic of the reciprocal interactions between personal and public or group or collective mind (Durkheim 1964, 1970, Halbwachs 1992, Weick and Roberts 1993) is not discussed here.

The interplay between *implicit learning*, *tacit knowledge* and *reactive learning* was, however, of interest to my study. The concept of 'tacit' knowledge is difficult for researchers because its making explicit is often interpreted as requiring reduction to propositional 'findings'. This may not only constrain the researcher into positivist avenues but once decontextualised, propositional findings can turn into uncritical orthodoxies. Vigilant use of the term 'tacit' is needed, for it presents numerous dichotomies and presuppositions, some of which are discussed below. Finally, over and above mere conflicts in status, role and function between, say, teachers, teacher-managers, work colleagues, and learners, the exporting tacit knowledge or learning across professional contexts and boundaries involving 'tacit' understandings of people and situations and 'tacit' rules underpinning intuitive decision-making may well generate *conflicts in tacit knowledge.* Not all actors in a learning environment may be powerful enough to face such conflicts or their consequences.

So, conversely, the 'tacit' notion is of direct interest to my 'coherentist' narrative analysis. As Eraut - recalling dichotomies explored by Oakeshott (1962) and Argyris and Schön (1974) – reminds us, "The central problem for most managers and professionals is that they are intellectually and emotionally committed to espoused theories which describe the world as they would like it to be, but which

do not accurately describe their own actions" (Eraut 2000, p. 123). Hence, the interplay between such a form of dissonance and questions of automaticity or its non-development or its loss in dyslexic language learners is relevant to my study.

2.6.6   Dichotomies and problems in 'tacit' knowledge

In earlier writing, Eraut (1994, p. 66) cites Buchler (1961) on Bentham's concept of a 'tacit faculty' to draw out a certain dualism.   'Tacit' can mean two things. One is knowing what to do in certain circumstances: it is 'anticipatory' in adapting from as repertoire of possible actions. The other is dealing with the 'unanticipated' or unexpected.

Buchler's dichotomy was followed by Polanyi's 1962 distinction between "objective and tacit knowledge". Polanyi's subsequent and oft-cited reference to "that which we know but cannot tell" (Polanyi 1967, p. 4), explores a distinction not based on activity but on communicability of knowledge. Anderson (1983) and Singley and Anderson (1989), in contrast, would later identify the interplay between 'declarative' and 'procedural' knowledge. Spender (1998) problematises Polanyi's communicability criterion in identifying 'tacit' knowledge in that "we can neither know about nor really be much interested in that which cannot be communicated" (Spender 1998, p.23), though tacit knowledge is referred to in terms of difficulty, not impossibility.

Eraut (2000) explores tacit knowledge further, problematising it both in its detection and its representation. Proposing three types of tacit knowledge (tacit understanding of people and situations; routinised actions; and the tacit rules that underpin intuitive decision-making), he isolates four types of process - reading the situation, making decisions, overt activity and metacognition. In his analysis, three modes of cognition – intuitive, analytic and deliberative – underlie these processes. Tacit knowledge is derived, Eraut proposes, from " non-formal learning […] which incorporates implicit learning that gives rise to tacit knowledge, as well as reactive learning which is near-spontaneous and unplanned, and deliberative learning for which time is set aside" (Eraut 2000, p. 115).

Citing Spender's view that tacit knowledge should be defined as 'that which has not yet been abstracted from practice', Eraut adopts Spender's distinction between tacit *understanding* and tacit *knowledge in action*. (Spender 1996[13], in Eraut 2000, p. 119). I discuss abstraction and Dreyfus (1982) in Chapter 5, but after abstraction and practice, another dichotomy arises between "what one knows consciously and what one might know in some other way that can only demonstrate through practice" (Eraut 2000, p. 23).

Eraut also proposes that the 'unconscious effects of previous experiences' (Eraut 2000, p. 116) may be a bar to implicit learning, and the 'empirical'[14] data here will confirm that to the respondents, previous experience is influent. Conversely, Eraut's notion of 'reactive learning' may be of interest in questions of *automaticity* and, as we shall see later with Spender, *de-automation* of learning. Eraut describes 'reactive learning' thus:

> This *reactive learning* is near-spontaneous and unplanned, the learner is aware of it but the level of intentionality will vary and often be debatable. Its articulation in explicit form could also be difficult without setting aside time for more reflection and thus becoming deliberative (Eraut 2000, p.115; original emphasis).

I will consider later whether successful dyslexics are, strategically, using something akin to Eraut's reactive learning, even where explicit or indeed, implicit learning is unavailable.

2.6.7 Tacitness, implicitness and automaticity

Further, in my discussion of *automaticity*, I would contrast Reber's (1993) expression "the acquisition of knowledge independently of conscious attempts to learn" (Reber 1993 in Eraut 2000, p. 115) with Eraut's 'near-spontaneous and unplanned' description of his 'reactive learning' (Eraut, ibid). Though with Eraut we are with workplace (and therefore situated) learning, and the dialectical

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[13] Eraut gives this as Spender (1995).

[14] In a post-positivist sense of 'empirical', where interview 'data' were used to allow the interplay between narratives to emerge.

relationship which holds between individual and social learning, his subsequent discussion of cognitive matters is informative. He uses the Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) model of skill acquisition and notably, their table of levels. At its peak, "deep tacit understanding" is given as the basis for "intuitive grasp of situations" which in turn marks

> later abandonment of explicit rules and guidelines as behaviour becomes more *automatic* […] Progression beyond competence is then associated with the gradual replacement of deliberation by more intuitive forms of cognition (Eraut 2000, p. 126; emphasis added).

This leads to explicit procedural knowledge becoming

> automised [sic] and increasingly tacit through repetition" (op. cit, p.127), [with] "increasingly *intuitive decision-making* […] based on the tacit application of tacit rules" [where] "their distinctive feature is that of being tacit at the moment of use (ibid; original emphasis).

The situatedness of learning is a very relevant concept because, if any piece of knowledge is situated in a particular context, it is comprised not only of a location but also a set of (social) activities. If it contributes to and/or is embedded in a set of social relations which engender those activities, the cognizing and learning are then a social process which is, in part, outside the head of any particular individual. Such distributive cognition can be witnessed in the language classroom as well as in the workplace. But there is a double marginalisation here. Cognition is depersonalised, but the dyslexic is also marginalised, owing to the language difficulty and further so, when she undertakes to study another language.

2.6.8   Other difficulties with the 'tacit' concept

Thus far, I have identified two reservations with the term 'tacit', one ontological and one methodological; however I can distil several more:

- Epistemologically, 'tacit knowledge' may equally refer to knowledge which is *not* communicated, and knowledge which *cannot be* communicated and further, be variously an attribute of *knower* (and some cannot communicate their knowledge; indeed, Eraut et al. (1998) found

that the capability to tell was linked to people's prior experiences of talking about what they knew) or an attribute of the thing *known*.

- There is a range of partial descriptions available: glimpses, insights, perspectives, and "what many might regard as a reasonable, though not complete, representation of the whole" (Eraut 2000, p. 118).

- The relative agency of researcher and knower: "[making tacit knowledge explicit] can mean either that the knower learns to tell or that the researcher tells and then seeks respondent verification" (ibid.).

- There are discourse-level concerns with *explicit* (that is, 'apparently' non-tacit) forms of discourse which nonetheless tacitly include latent messages of authority, orthodoxy, or competence, or are in defence of practices or of the status quo.

- The owner of tacit knowledge may have no conscious awareness or memories of episodes which may have combined to form the tacit knowledge base; and accessing such memories may trigger the secondary effects already discussed elsewhere.

- Eraut is cautious of invading "the taken-for-granted world of the knower, their social reality" (Eraut 2000, p. 122), warning that knowledge privacy of the implicit theorist provides protection from criticism and escape from the influence of more explicit, public theories. The implicit is, for some, a refuge.

2.6.9 Implicit learning

So much for tacit knowledge. I still needed to distinguish more concisely between tacit knowledge and *implicit learning*. Horvath et al. describe *implicit learning* as "the direct influence of event knowledge in episodic memory on behaviour – influence that is not mediated by the generalised knowledge representations in semantic memory" (Horvath et al. 1996, p. 8). On the other hand, tacit knowledge is inferred from the nature of the observed behaviour. Like tacit knowledge, implicit learning cannot necessarily make itself explicit, except through induction or abstraction by others. It takes time to observe and entails known observational phenomena, not least the observer's paradox. Once again, items of non-explicit

learning are unlikely to be consciously recalled unless there was an unusually dramatic outcome, and returning to it may prove psychologically traumatic.

2.7   Automaticity revisited

To my discussion of 'automaticity' derived from theories of language acquisition and from my discussion of the sense of 'proficiency', I shall now add further views of what 'automaticity' entails, derived from writings on 'professional knowledge'. It could be argued that these views stem from disparate knowledge-areas and that the list is shorter than the review of automaticity and second language acquisition given in Segalowitz (2003). But it is precisely these definitional interstices which are of interest here, rather than Segalowitz' own admission that "research on automaticity in grammar acquisition does not provide a tidy picture" (Segalowitz 2003, p. 400).

In workplace terms, Eraut reminds us that "Routinisation turns explicit *procedural* knowledge into *tacit* knowledge through repetition" (Eraut 2000, p. 123, my emphasis). Here, automation equates to non-deliberation: tacit knowledge is *implicit knowledge embedded in action*. But if the organisation or teaching institution's memory is encoded by routines and learned by doing, some routines may, by their powerfulness, cut across learners' attempts towards their own 'automaticity' *qua* exponential learning.

Eraut adopts Spender's (1998) typology of individual and social modes of cognition and, under 'individual' and 'social' columns, lists learning modes in *explicit* learning and in *implicit* learning. Under *individual* / *implicit* are the entries *automatic* (as opposed to *collective*) and *intuitive* (as opposed to *cultural*). Looking further into Spender, we find that 'automatic' here is in fact glossed as the antonym of 'conscious'. (The term 'unconscious' is properly avoided because of its physiological and psychoanalytical associations).

Automaticity can also be glossed as 'mindlessness'. Reber defines implicit learning as the "acquisition of knowledge that takes place largely independently

of conscious attempts to learn and in the absence of explicit knowledge *about what was learned*" (Reber 1993, p.5; emphasis added) and in doing so, he appeals to Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi's 1988 concept of 'flow'. This proposed that implicit learners make *correct* choices, but using knowledge they weren't aware they possessed – and thus again, 'automatically'. Indeed, Spender cites Reber's recasting of 'judgement', already a synonym for the *phronesis* which I considered earlier:

> "Rather than use the term judgement, which is used in so many other senses, we might employ the term 'automatic' to identify the individual's ability to recognise, to choose, and to perform when 'mindless' or in a state of 'flow'"(Spender 1998, p. 26).

Again, my data will show that dyslexic modern language students may have intrinsic linguistic-cognitive difficulties, for example with rule-formation; or whether entering a state of "flow" is impossible for them, a-priori; or whether entering this state causes their language facility to 'crash', in IT parlance; or combinations of the above.

Automaticity also suffers from the fact that in certain areas of knowledge, learning is a metaphor for *adaptation*. Adaptation is often viewed, particularly in phylogenetic contexts, as "improvement" on a lower or more basic state – where responses are 'automatic' and induced by stimuli outside the organism. Decorticated frogs, indeed, can still 'automatically' perform certain functions. Reber proposes that this automaticity cedes its place to "a self-referencing consciousness which is able to view and model itself and so 'think' in the contemporary sense" (Reber 1993, in Spender 1998, p. 28). The supplanted 'automaticity' was, instead, other-focused and non-thinking.

Lastly, automation and de-automation reside, for Tharp and Gallimore (1988), within recursive cycles between the two last of their 'Four Stages of Learning'. De-automation is a temporary de-skilling of the child between Stage 3 – internalisation and control of Stages 1 and 2 to the point of automaticity, but embedded in a meaningful social activity – and Stage 4. When this activity changes in Stage 4, following crises or the introduction of new contexts, de-

automation back down from self-regulation towards self-control of others' goals may ensue. Though Tharp and Gallimore's work on Vygotsky's dialectical ZPD, or zone of proximal development, is intuitively transferable to adult learning and indeed, language-learning (notably in terms of temporary 'backsliding'), this de-automation may not simply be catastrophic in itself, to a student who has already endured it in L1 acquisition. For a dyslexic second language learner, further de-automation may be cauterising. "Balkanized" (Hargreaves 1994, p. 213) university language teaching situations[15] and discontinuities or slippage between child and adult disability 'statementing' may provide ideal loci for such de-automation. The data will provide cases in point.

In conclusion, this short review of writing on these aspects of professional knowledge has served to highlight assumptions and practices which may intersect negatively with the objectives of some consumers of that knowledge – including dyslexic second language learners. For each emerging 'autonomous but socialized' member of an institution – a teacher, a manager, an advisor – who has a stake in and contributions to make to its discourse fields and community of practice with 'unassisted self-control and regulation', there will be a number of learners for whom assumptions concerning the acquisition of 'automaticity' (and hence proficiency) will be negative.

Conversely, as not all dyslexic language learners are fated to failure, some 'tacit' or 'implicit' concepts such as 'reactive learning' may prove to be both germane and expressed by the respondents.

What evidence to this effect exists in the narratives collected in this study will be returned to in Chapter 4, where I analyse my interview data. But first, I turn from these questions of narration and professional knowledge to further theoretical and contextual issues regarding dyslexia, proficiency, automaticity and second language teaching, as heralded in Chapter 1.

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[15] Hargreaves (1994) refers of course to balkanisation between subject areas; however the posting of foreign-language teaching to language centres with an EFL-dominated and commercial ethos may also justify the epithet.

Chapter 3 – 'Communicative language teaching' (CLT) and its theorisation

I noted in Chapter 1 – the Reprise on the CAS Study – that I would return to concepts of *automaticity* and e*xponentiality* as they relate to dyslexic subjects, specifically regarding the acquisition of modern languages. This chapter therefore concentrates on key issues and dates in a process which brought about the present vogue for 'communicative language teaching' as practised in the institution under consideration.

Central to this discussion must be the underlying assumptions that 'communicative language teaching' exists, and that it leads to learning. Another further relevant issue, and one with which we shall begin, is how and to what extent 'acquiring' a language relates to 'learning' that language. Far from the simplistic but highly pervasive gloss of 'communicate successfully and learn automatically', and to illustrate the conceptual range in the field of 'communicative' language teaching we may compare, here, Munby's highly operationalised 1978 model of Participant, Purposive Domain, Setting, Interaction, Instrumentality, Dialect, Target Level, Communicative Event, Communicative Key and Attitude-Tone Index, from which a 'communicative' syllabus can be derived, with Norman, Levinh and Hendequist (1986) and their concern that their 'communicative' language teaching methodology "stresses, more than other books of a similar kind, student participation, creativity, students producing their own materials, fun and games, and *subconscious language acquisition* (Norman et al. 1986, p. 3; emphasis added). Both poles rest upon the assumption of 'subconscious' acquisition – one synonym for the 'automaticity' I discuss here. But Norman et al. (1986) have clear implications for *agency* in learning, and its relationship with automaticity.

Indeed, I referred in Chapter 1 to some dyslexia-related accounts of *automaticity*, including the Nicholson and Fawcett (1990) hypotheses of DAD and CC – "dyslexia automization deficit" and "conscious compensation". For what is to follow, we can expand general discussion of automaticity with Segalowitz (2003), who cites Newell (1990) in characterising automaticity thus:

it is fast; it is unstoppable (ballistic); it is independent of the amount of information being processed; it involves exhaustive or complete search of all the elements [...]; it involves no awareness of processing [...] In contrast, non-automatic processing, also called controlled processing, is characterised as [...] slow, it is capable of being inhibited; it depends on information load; [...] it involves awareness (Segalowitz 2003, p. 384, citing Newell 1990, p. 236).

To clarify some assumptions and theoretical conflations underlying communicative language teaching, I review some key sources here.

3.1   Learning and acquisition – a brief review

Much of the relevant literature is couched in terms of the relative *precedence* of cognition and language, and their independence or indeed, interdependence. Is cognitive development a precursor for the development of language and if so, a necessary and sufficient one? Or conversely, does possession of an innate capacity for language characterise human development and spur cognition? Garton (1992) proposed a dualism. There is a choice to be made between sources of knowledge in the child: it may be *innate*, including language knowledge; or it may be *social* in origin – acquired from parents, siblings and peers. A third view will be that there is a mixture of influences at work, and I return below to the less nativist, more interactionist ideas proposed for example by Jerome Bruner, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Michael Halliday. Self-evidently, an 'unexceptional' adult is already socialised to some extent, and in at least one language.

3.1.2– Automaticity - an early glimpse: Noam Chomsky

For all that Noam Chomsky has gradually stepped away from it in favour of parameter-setting models (Chomsky 1981), his 1965 notion of a LAD or language acquisition device has become something of a *cause célèbre*, and maintained a half-life beyond its years by becoming transposed into aspects of AL2 or adult second language learning theory. Originally concerned with the development of an innate and universal grammar for language, the innateness question has come

to be stressed at the expense of universality. Whereas universality of the process and the existence of key language-development stages were the features which led Chomsky to conceive of the language acquisition device – a set of rules used by children to process linguistic inputs and hypothesise and trial the rules of their mother tongue - other factors came to predominate, especially in the later mapping of this process onto adult language learning by other theorists and practitioners.

I will consider how Chomsky's own ideas would become more elaborate and delicate in response to the ideas and findings of other researchers, notably in the field of *second* language acquisition. But first, some early terminological discrepancies between Chomsky and other writers need to be noted. It is these discrepancies which account in part for the later corruption of some concepts in the more wild accounts of *adult* second language acquisition, which I discuss below.

Whereas Chomsky (1959) had left B.F. Skinner's 1957 stimulus-response, operant-conditioning, behaviourist accounts of language acquisition (where the child *learns* through imitation and reinforcement) towards a more mentalist direction, Chomsky later made a further distinction between 'competence' and 'performance' in the language being acquired. 'Competence' is here a critical term: for Chomsky (1965), this 'competence' has an idealised and a quantitative (as opposed to qualitative) character. So here, the term 'competence' encodes an *idealisation* of language in the mind: it is abstract knowledge, which accounts for the possibility to create infinite but grammatically-perfect sentences. As I suggested earlier, the counterweight of Chomsky's 1965 notion of 'competence' was that of 'performance'. Chomsky clearly makes the point that actual use of the language in concrete situations may not be an accurate representation of what that language-user really knows. Hence, 'performance'-related grammatical imperfections do not belie the underlying (quantitative, idealised) 'competence' (Chomsky 1965, p. 4). The speaker/writer is not, in that sense, 'incompetent'; but neither does acquiring 'the competence of' Language X predict competence 'at' or 'in' that particular tongue.

This is an important caveat, or get-out, because Chomsky's argument was, initially, deemed circular. Before extending our discussion towards other, more ethnographic and sociological accounts of 'competence' from e.g. Hymes (1967) and Halliday (1973), it is worth recalling the arguments Chomsky offered in support of his theory. These are well summarised in Steinberg (1993).

Crucially for our later discussion of 'automaticity', Chomsky's four arguments invoked the ease and speed of child language acquisition; inadequate language data; poverty of stimulus; and the irrelevance of intelligence.

The first argument was based on comparison with an abstracted, idealised, adult 'native speaker', and noted the speed at which unexceptional children attain 'content' competence. They both learn fast and learn things they haven't explicitly been taught.

Secondly, despite being exposed to 'degenerate' data in the form of pauses, hesitations, errors, grammatical incorrectness or discontinuity and the like, children acquire a complex linguistic *system* which nonetheless fails *systematically* to reproduce those input (PLD, or primary linguistic data) flaws in their output. The child corrects and updates as it learns, even from non-ideal data.

Thirdly, children acquire new structures and can produce and understand novel utterances, i.e. ones which are not in the direct input. Indeed, this 'poverty of stimulus' argument covers well-formedness and hints at metalinguistic sensitivity. Children fail to make certain logical but syntactically inaccurate transformations even in complex and embedded structures. Conversely, they do spontaneously introduce 'adult' deletions (and don't say *Is [the man] [who [here] [is]] tall).

The last of his arguments is bipartite: animals have intelligence but no language (hence, intelligence is not a necessary precursor to language) but in human terms, more importantly, there is no *direct* connection between the degree of intelligence of a subject and the magnitude of the (quantitative, Chomskyan) competence they acquire. As we said earlier 'performance' may well differ between individuals, though for more sociolinguistic reasons. Discussions around intelligence and its measurement are highly problematic, as language content and use are very much implicated societally in determining intelligence levels. This new circularity is

not explored further here, nor are the various, systematic refutations of Chomsky's four arguments. But we can note that Chomsky (1965) held that the co-existence of both a defective 'performance' and a 'perfect' abstract, idealised native speaker was a possibility, and we shall return to this argument in due course because it finds its echo in proficiency discussions I raised in Chapter 1 and indeed, raised in dyslexia literatures themselves.

Despite these reservations, we note that Chomsky (1965) required that his LAD should host a certain number of components. First, the acquiring child must possess one or more techniques with which to represent incoming PLD. Secondly, and separately, means are needed in order to represent the structural links between these incoming data. In addition, there has to exist some early means of organising the categories of possible hypotheses the child may make. This done, there needs to be a back-link (we might today invoke a 'hyperlink') between each hypothesis made and the trigger utterance. In other words, what does each triggered hypothesis imply, relative to all the other hypotheses? Finally, the child needs a mechanism with which to select the hypothesis most adapted to the PLD. Given this interactivity, and the number of variables involved, this process goes far beyond mere 'local' interpretation of single units of PLD – induced generalisations 'learned' about the data. This feature, for Chomsky, explains the systematized acquisition of *knowledge of* language as well as knowing that language itself. In this account, then, automaticity encapsulates both systematicity and metalinguistic knowledge, additionally to the L1 itself. I shall return below to a discussion of the interplay between metacognitive and metalinguistic awareness in reference to dyslexia literatures on second language learning.

3.1.3   Jerome Bruner – automaticity through interactivity

The interchange in roles (or 'handover') between *agent* and *experiencer* exemplifies and underscores much of the work of Jerome Bruner, who qualified Chomsky's second argument in particular by positing a LASS, or language acquisition support system, in response to Chomsky's LAD. Bruner's LASS is

derived from observational work on developing children (Bruner 1983), and notes changes in dyadic activity between language-giver and receiver. Here, the child progressively learns to decode caregiver speech in context through growing knowledge of the social situation. The pertinence of context of learning will be discussed later, in the context of empirical 'dyslexics' data.

In Bruner, the concept of an inner, irresistible compulsion to acquire language, as in Chomsky's LAD, was not ruled out. But in LASS, there is a supporting dynamic, originating from context and furthered by caregiver comment in response to non-adult, early-form expressions. There is an interactive exchange of symbols. For Bruner, writing after the appearance of Vygotsky in accessible translation, the developing child will exchanges roles, going from passive receiver or *experiencer* of situated language, to that of *agent* actively soliciting confirmation and extension of their utterances. Bruner alludes to a 'handover principle', entailing a 'process of setting up the situation to make the child's entry easy and successful, and then gradually pulling back and handing the role to the child as he becomes skilful enough to manage it' (Bruner 1983, p. 60). Later, describing the role of the tutor as 'consciousness for two', he comes to associate scaffolding with Vygotsky's positing of the ZPD or zone of proximal development (Bruner 1986, p. 75)[16]. Here again, situated, contextual understanding is both a prerequisite and a precursor of language development. Cognition takes the lead, in other terms, even if some seed of language is innate. Of course, not all children in all cultures are privileged enough to acquire language in supportive dyads: nonetheless, the progressive development of *agency* is probably more easy to accept, even where peer and/or passive informal learning are the norm, outside supportive dyads or formal teaching. We retain this notion of *agency* for further discussion: its non-development is invoked in certain dyslexia literatures.

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[16] Vygotsky, whom I discuss below, describe this as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem–solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky 1978, p. 86).

3.1.4   Jean Piaget

Jean Piaget's views on child language development are, as in Bruner's case, derived from observational work on children (Piaget's own) but differ from both Bruner and Chomsky. They differ from Bruner's view in that Piaget is not neutral on the existence (or not) of innate language. They differ from Chomsky's view in that Piaget subsumes language into cognition, and gives cognition primacy over it. Through the twin mechanisms of *organisation* and *adaptation* (organisation of sets of behaviour, followed by adaptation through the Piagetian processes of *assimilation* and *accommodation*), the child both creates structures and assimilates incoming, new information into these – a child-led dynamic. Piaget's genetic epistemology (Piaget 1972) seeks to demonstrate that all thinking is supported by a great number of categories of knowledge. But a dialectic is, nonetheless, at work. Though cognition leads, the equilibration process between assimilation and accommodation requires empirical reflection on actions undertaken by the child, rather than on the objects involved. These actions are internalised as *operations* and this process of internalisation – 'learning by doing'; acting upon the world – will be the engine for reflective abstraction. This, in turn, necessitates development of language for efficiency of mental representation, and for further cognitive development. In asserting that the construction of knowledge by the child is an active and not a passive process, Piaget the constructivist shares territory with Piaget the structuralist, who hypothesised various structures which might demonstrate commonalities in the development of these areas of knowledge.

I have stated, however, there are cognitive pre-requisites involved, and a discussion of the innateness of cognitive structures must follow. For Piaget, children may be born with undifferentiated schemata: mind-concepts from which intelligence will develop experientially. Language, being a product of intelligence, will ensue, but only when the child has mastered intellectual skills derived from the *sensory-motor stage* he posits. When the need has arisen for mental representation of more abstract concepts, the child moves from "egocentric" speech, unidirectionally narrating its thoughts and actions, towards communication with others. Thus, if any form of automaticity is involved for the

acquiring child, it resides in the cognitive sphere, which is separate from (but leads to) the linguistic – and the linguistic is not, for Piaget, innate.

3.1.5 Lev Vygotsky

A further ontogenetic account of first language acquisition was evolved by Vygotsky (1965, 1978, 1981, 1986, 1988). Vygotsky (1965) linked language and thought as "a phenomenon of the interpsychic to intrapsychic functioning", (Vygotsky 1965, p. 133). He later restates and explains himself in this way: "First [language] appears between people as an interpsychological category and then within the child as an intrapsychological category" (Vygotsky 1981, p.163). Hence from childhood but then into adulthood also, language develops in order to aid cognitive development. Recalling Malinowski (1935)'s distinction, the representation of the mind's activity through language is *situated*: both in an immediate context, for meaning, but also in a historical, cultural one: there is a social context and thus, a social need for communication. In the child's case, it

> feels the need for words and, though his questions, actively tries to learn the signs attached to objects. He seems to have discovered the symbolic function of words (Vygotsky 1988, p. 82).

Through this mechanism, integration of thought and language is possible: "thought becomes verbal and speech rational" (Vygotsky 1988, p.83).

In this sense, and though his work only emerged in translation well after Piaget's cognitive constructivism, Vygotsky proposed a transactionalist, constructivist and social-constructivist explanation of how language evolves in the individual. It evolves both as a semiotic tool and as a cultural one. It is a tool in the sense that it allows mental activity to be mediated and communicated; ultimately, it allows individuals to transform the relationship between themselves, individually and collectively, and their environment. But here, I noted in particular that it is social-interactive processes which, through ontogenesis, facilitate the emergence of individual cognitive competence. Language follows, but feeds back into this cognitive development (Vygotsky 1978). Internally and externally to the

language user, however, are contextual factors of a cultural and historical as well as a situational and immediate nature, which both require and facilitate dynamic interaction with a particular *discourse community* which itself has an interactive dynamic with its constituents. In 'unexceptional' cases, that is.

I shall return shortly to the concept of 'discourse communities', and Dell Hymes. But there is transcendence – *semiotic mediation*, in Vygotsky's term, in the child's assisted passage from 'social' language to inner thought. Any 'automaticity' involved in the Vygotskyan project will thus intervene in older children and upwards, and reside at the 'exponentiality' level - the level of discovering the symbolic functionality of language though the recursive interplay of ontogenetic language processes and evolving cognitive development – often at the ZPD or zone of proximal development, to which I alluded earlier. As we have read, *intra*psychological processes have their origin in Bruner's 'handover' stage (which implies movement from *inter*psychological to *intra*-), and evolving intrapsychological autonomy is a necessary precursor to any automaticity. On this basis, expectations of automaticity in older second-language learners (who have already completed most cognitive development stages) may seem counter-intuitive. However, the impulse to automaticity in L2 settings remains social and is still based in, or converging towards, the social activity upon which Bruner's and Vygotsky's work is predicated. In addition, subsequent cognitively-based syllabuses may be expected to appeal to unexceptional adult second language learners, whose relatively developed cognition frees them to concentrate on L2 linguistic matters. I sought to discover in the data whether, and to what extent, *cognitive* language learning strategies are deployed by adult dyslexic L2 acquirers; however, Michael Halliday's contribution to acquisition processes is of relevance here also, and I now turn to it.

3.1.6   Michael Halliday

Michael Halliday is included here, not directly for his views on child language acquisition, nor as another counter-case in discussions of 'automaticity' of acquisition, but as a bridge to viewing the linguistic transition from childhood into adulthood. Also, concepts proposed by Halliday have migrated from 'child' to

'adult' language acquisition theory models. Further, they have also been generalised from CL1 (or child first language) to AL2 (or adult second language) literatures, then from learning/acquisition literatures and into syllabus design and testing orthodoxies. Testing and its involuntary effects are well discussed in, for example, in Messick (1989) and Shepard (1993) and their work on consequential validity. I will return to the question of the adsorption of Hallidayan assumptions into 'good practice' for dyslexic AL2 students.

Through the empirical, inductive study of his own child, Halliday delineated purposive, functional labels for the language acquisition mechanisms through which the growing child operates on the world. She does this owing to the semiotic necessity of making meaning along a chain which, according to Halliday, links the *ideational* to the *interpersonal* to the *textual*. Here, over and above linguistic knowledge and categories, language *use* is ontogenetic in nature and reciprocation between the growing language user and society is mediated through the three contextual components of 'field', 'tenor' and 'mode' (Halliday 1978). This represents an extension of Halliday's functional and notional aspects of meaning-exchange towards an attention to context and discourse, and a concern in his work with his wife (Halliday and Hasan 1976) with cohesion and coherence and the dynamic effect of these factors the reader/hearer of the texts conceived, construed, constructed and communicated *competently* within a *discourse community*. I shall return to the notion of 'competence' once again in the following section, but simply note here that Halliday proposes a spontaneous and exponential (or automatic) emergence of language *use*, and I consider later the interplay between metacognitive and metalinguistic ontogeneses in dyslexics as they emerge in the data.

3.1.7   Dell Hymes: 'competence' revisited

Continuing my review of concepts and terms which have 'migrated' into Second Language Teaching and Syllabus Design, and may affect dyslexic second-language learners, I return once again to the concept of *competence* here, because of the influence of Dell Hymes. Hymes firstly proposed the concept of 'communicative competence' (Hymes 1967) but then with John Gumperz,

elaborated this towards the notion of a 'speech community' (Gumperz and Hymes 1986) – one in which the idealised 'native speaker-hearer', to whom I have already alluded, might dwell. Both concepts re-emerged and were expanded in Halliday and to this day, they may populate native language assessments, despite Davies 2003's deconstruction of the 'native speaker' norm.

The 'communicative competence' of Hymes (1967) differs from Chomsky's 'competence' along qualitative rather than quantitative lines. Where Chomsky's 'competence', as I suggested earlier, is an idealised abstraction of all that can be, could be and is Language X (quantitatively), Hymes (1967) stressed that (qualitatively), making *appropriate* choices in Language X is more important than making grammatically *accurate* ones. This ethnographic focus on 'successful' social communication (and the societal language attitudes which Hymes induces therefrom) may be unsurprising, given Hymes' academic background. However, the qualitative concept of 'appropriacy' would in due course become detached from this social/societal explanation. 'Appropriacy' became part of the assessment canon, next to items such as 'accuracy' and 'elaborateness' and 'fluency', as a descriptor of good 'language learning outcomes'. Implicitly, there is something of a notion of *automaticity* here, in that the target norm for a second language learner, in Hymesian accounts, will be an automatic, unreflecting appropriacy and accuracy in the target language.

Later, Hymes would link the notion of 'communicative competence' to the notion of 'speech community'. In discussing it and its trajectory into second language teaching, mention must also be made of conceptual redefinition and expansion of these terms in Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983, 1984), as these lead us back to 'communicative language teaching', a primary focus of this chapter, and whether its pragmatic adoption can thwart dyslexic AL2 students.

3.1.8   Canale and Swain, and 'automatic' mastery of strategic competence

Canale and Swain (1980, p. 28) analysed the 'communicative competence' in Hymes (1967) into three domains which, they proposed, might serve to underpin

second language pedagogy. Again, we note the assumptions about passages between child and adult, first language and second but essentially, *grammatical*, *sociolinguistic* and *strategic competences* were identified, though Canale (1983) would later vary the proposed content of their 'sociolinguistic' sub-domain. In this account, and in order to be deemed to possess adult, appropriate, native-speaker and, all-in-all, 'proficient' levels, the learner needs "knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics and phonology … [together with] … knowledge of how to determine and express accurately the literal meaning of utterances" (Canale and Swain 1980, pp.29-30). Their 'sociolinguistic competence' contains "two sets of rules: sociocultural rules of use and rules of discourse" (ibid). Two things are involved: both knowing how to interpret the social meaning of utterances and also, knowing how to select language which is appropriate to social context. Canale (1983) would later hive off 'discourse competence' as an individual component of 'communicative competence'.

But it is the third, personalised and indeed, most idiosyncratic, of the Canale and Swain (1980) sub-competences, 'strategic', which will take us on furthest in our reflection on 'communicative language teaching'.

'Strategic competence' contains the 'verbal and non-verbal strategies' (Canale and Swain 1980, p. 30) which are adopted by a developing second-language learner in order to compensate for as-yet insufficient levels in the first two sub-competencies – the grammatical, and the sociolinguistic. 'Strategic competence' therefore refers to *behaviour*.

Many observational studies exist of child language development, notably of acquisition order and a separate emergence order of both pre-linguistic and linguistic items[17]. If, however, we leave these broadly descriptive studies aside, we note that 'strategic competence' contains the seeds of two developments in

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[17] See for instance Brown (1973), Snow and Ferguson (1977), Trevarthen (1974, 1979); De Villiers and De Villiers (1978), and Clark (1974), but also covering ages and stages, Foster (1990) for a modular review of child communicative competence, and cross-linguistic and cross-cultural studies often within a universalising framework , for example in Bruner (1981), Bowerman (1985), Slobin (1985).

second language acquisition studies, namely the behaviour (as opposed to behavioural) aspect; and the critical notion of successful communication. According to the precepts of 'strategic competence', then, the unexceptional second language learner is engaged in a process of trial and error and if s/he is rewarded, the result is learning until ultimately, success builds on success and some form of spontaneous mastery – but not 'exponential automaticity' – ensues. I shall add an analysis later of this 'qualified output automaticity' for certain dyslexic students proposed in Schneider and Crombie (2003).

3.1.9   Selinker (1972) and the failure of automaticity in L2 acquisition

Whether what Canale and Swain described under 'strategic competence' was already the case in Vygotsky's ZPD, discussed in 3.1.3 and 3.1.5 above, remains an issue. While noting the 'vicarious' consciousness and scaffolding of the tutor proposed in Bruner (1986), p.77, many have queried the apparent contradiction of *consciou*s mastery being acquired *unconsciously* and others, the non-falsifiability of claims regarding consciousness in second language learning (see e.g. McLaughlin 1990). Notwithstanding such apparent circularities, 'strategic competence' came to the attention of language researchers through its status as *behaviour* and thus, as observable and identifiable mental processes. Selinker (1972) in particular proposed means of observing and identifying such processes when he posited the concept of Interlanguage.

It was precisely the lack of *automaticity* in adult second language acquisition – partly evidenced by error-making - which first motivated Selinker to coin the term 'Interlanguage' in 1969 and then with others, notably Corder's studies in CA – or contrastive analysis (Corder 1973, Corder 1981) to engage in the actual analysis and classification of learners' errors.

A key insight emerging from Selinker and from Corder's work was that there is *preferential attention to meaning at the expense of form* in second language acquisition (see especially Selinker 1972). In certain but not all dyslexic cases, as we shall read in the data, the thwarting of this preferential attention to meaning

may translate into various coping strategies such as problem-avoidance, and unanalysed holophrastic learning. But this is not all. The errors made, according to later Selinker writing, both systematic and positive: hence the errors are conversely not random, and they are positive in the sense that certain errors which one might posit are *not* made (Selinker 1992, p. 151). Corder, and later Selinker, would doubly identify Interlanguage as a system and a process, something they ascribe to neither phylogenetic or ontogenetic origins, but which individuals need to access and 'run' in order to reach what is termed 'transitional competence' (Corder 1981, p. 11).

Thus, in the happiest cases, Interlanguage becomes a channel to automaticity, where this signifies spontaneous adult L2 acquisition: for 'transitional competence' in this account supplants itself, and approaches ever closer to the perfection of an idealised educated native speaker-hearer-writer.

3.1.10 Failed automaticity: Selinker, interlanguage and *fossilisation*

Of particular interest to the present study is Selinker's delineation of the five processes thought to underscore the formation of the posited 'interlanguage':

- Language transfer phenomena – from language 1 to language 2, (though further sub-transfers from child to adult language are not commented);
- Secondly and thirdly, individuals' *learning* strategies and *communication* strategies;
- Fourthly, elements of instability in the form of 'backsliding' (in which at first holistically-acquired units are then analysed and re-learned atomistically, with some regression); and
- Finally, *fossilisation*.

A characteristic of fossilisation is that certain errors become ingrained. Syntactic adaptation and elaboration does not occur; generalisations and exceptions or

reservations around rules are not registered. Phonemically important forms are either not noted for their semantic or discoursal import are not registered. The learner's native accent prevails, pervasively, or a universal 'foreign accent' is applied to all second language learning, irrespective of the TL, or target language. Learning is effortful and conscious rather than unconscious and automatic; in extreme cases there may be effects upon the first language[18].

As Prabhu (1987) and Widdowson (1979) made clear, early 'interlanguage' concepts in Corder and Selinker were subsequently applied to other aspects of learnership over and above simply morphosyntax - in relation, for example to the development of 'discourse competence' and 'cultural negotiation', concepts not discussed here. Despite reservations in Long (2003), p. 521, who proposes a more empirically-testable phenomenon of *stabilization*, we can note that there are strong symptomological ties between aspects of dyslexia and proposed features of fossilisation. Notions of absence, deficit or failure of automaticity are implicit in both. To what extent each is causal or consequential ("explanandum or explanans", Long 2003, p. 486) remains to be discussed in the light of the empirical data.

All the foregoing approaches are marked by differences. They are also marked by similarities. Bliss (1996) compares the ideas of Vygotsky and Piaget in, specifically, theorising the teaching of science; while Wells (1994) demonstrates complementarities between the work of Vygotsky and Halliday.

But how do these approaches translate into adult teaching and learning in the *second* language?

3.2 Acquiring and learning in the second language

A succinct historical account of the evolution of language teaching methodology is given in Adamson (2003), including a review of methods as social artefacts.

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[18] This must, for present purposes, remain an anecdotal comment as it is derived from observation of a small cohort of (self-described) 'fossilised' adult second-language learners who may coincidentally have been dyslexic in their L1.

Given the variability across accounts of first language acquisition, some of which we have discussed above, I now discuss some inclusions in communicative language teaching which appear to be transfers across the fields of child and of adult learning and which, in addition, intersect with concepts in dyslexia.

3.2.1   Incidental and intentional learning

A useful, initial distinction to be made is the one posited between two types of learning: incidental, and intentional. I do this in part to set up a distinction between acquisition and learning per se, when I consider the contributions of Stephen Krashen, below. But at a broader, more anecdotal level, certain learners, including foreign language ones, can fail to acquire certain taught items. At the same time, they can acquire others which seem to feature nowhere on the 'intentional learning' syllabus.   Parallels with the experience of certain aphasics and hyperlexics are not drawn here, but only for reasons of space.

3.2.2   Krashen, learning and acquisition

Krashen (1977, 1981, 1982, 1987) proposed a dilemma not unrelated to the incidental / accidental dichotomy I mentioned above, namely that if a distinction can be made between *learning* and *acquisition*, and if a feature of *acquisition* is that it is naturalistic, i.e. it occurs in natural settings and is informal and untutored, how should this 'naturalism' inform formal, tutored learning contexts? McLaughlin (1987) and Ellis (1995) have already pointed out several important difficulties with Krashen's dualistic hypothesis. These include the vagueness and lack of empirical evidence for Krashen's views; the impossibility of observing or understanding 'implicit' rather than 'explicit' learning which takes place in the developing child; and general lack of concern for what we may characterise as Vygotskyan, or socio-cultural, concerns. Notwithstanding these, Krashen's early proposal gave credence to various (outré, for some, but usefully inexpensive) pedagogic 'methods'[19]. More positively, numerous empirical studies were engendered to refute Krashen.

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[19] Among these Asher (1969) and 'Total Physical Response', Gattegno (1972) and the 'Silent Way'; and Lozanov (1979) and 'Suggestopaedia'.

3.2.3   Terrell: 'less-is-more' teaching

The 'naturalistic approach' which Terrell introduced in 1977 and Krashen and
Terrell elaborated in 1983 took a line of minimalism in the classroom. Here,
teacher control is not altogether replaced by the psycholinguistic interplay
between (conscious) learning and (unconscious) acquisition, but remains limited
to provision of her own and others' 'comprehensible input' at a level slightly
above the learner's current one. This invoked the intuitive but ultimately circular
and inoperable (i+I) formula of Krashen (1982). Why should one input that which
is already comprehensible (circularity); and it is inoperable because of the
disparate 'prior experience' and previous teaching and learning experiences and
world knowledge of any set of learners.   Other implicit but central notions in
Krashen are that acquisition is irresistible, that 'acquisition' precedes 'learning',
and that subconscious (and thus, seemingly 'automatic') acquisition survive from
childhood into adulthood. Implicitly, once again, what is valid for Language 1
will be valid for Language 2, in this account.

Importantly also, Krashen's theories – both explicit and implicit – appear to rely
on a Chomskyan, LAD-type mechanism which feeds a tri-partite process,
internally. First, from Dulay and Burt (1977), an 'affective filter', whose
lowering facilitates learning; then an SLO or second language organiser after
Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982), and finally a 'monitor', surviving from Krashen
(1977), which handles learner- or tutor-generated feedback. A further hypothesis
needs to be mentioned: the 'natural order' hypothesis (which alludes to an
'internal syllabus' in each learner, and therefore may not necessarily be
generalised into a group teaching programme). This L2 'LAD', in combination
with the externally applied 'comprehensible input', ensures that acquisition-like
'automaticity' will ensue, certainly when it is framed in a 'natural communicative
syllabus'.

3.3 From 'natural communicative syllabus' to 'communicative language teaching'

For all that it presents an evolution of Krashen's work, the 'communicative syllabus' remains problematic, not only intrinsically but in my research so far, for dyslexic students exposed to it.

3.3.1 Problematising CLT

I have already mentioned, in my broad preview on CLT in Section 1.4, the apparent operational distance between Munby (1978) and Norman et al. (1986), despite some coherence on the 'automaticity' issue. But this is not all.

Firstly, like any teaching method, communicative language teaching or CLT is prone to being misconstrued, in this case as stating that 'communicating' in the classroom can, by itself, re-trigger acquisition towards automatic, exponential and permanent uptake *sans* grammar teaching.

Secondly, the 'communicative syllabus' can become operationalised merely as algorithmic permutation between the 'four skills: Reading, Listening, as inputs; and Speaking and Writing as outputs. Any 'natural order' internal learner syllabus is left to fend for itself. If this is indeed possible, when one or more domain is impaired, for example in dyslexic students.

Thirdly, reducing the classroom syllabus to mere 'oral communication' work with little overt or systematic structural work (or 'grammar teaching') despite the use of written supports may engender only short-term, atomistic learning of holistic and unanalysed items, or 'chunking'. While there is evidence that this is a dyslexics' coping strategy, it can be onerous upon short-term memory function, which is sometimes depleted in dyslexics.

Fourthly, for dyslexic students in particular, the assumption of 'affect lowering' through 'language fun', 'spontaneous activity', or 'distraction teaching' may not be of help, especially when loss of autonomy and control is involved. In non-

dyslexics, Bailey (1983) warned eloquently of the affective threats to learning. We shall read *later* of the effects of quick-fire 'fun teaching' on particular dyslexic subjects in the data analysis.

Lastly, the 'communicative syllabus' is problematic in that it attempts to generalise across learners. Even if Krashen's (i+I) equation for 'comprehensible input' were workable, circumstances and context need to be available for each participant to consciously engage with their own (i+I). This presupposes an extremely well-furnished syllabus, and well-imagined teaching space. The proposed re-engagement of LAD-type or L2-LAD type mechanisms or modules may in any case be otiose, if these are non-existent or impaired in dyslexic students. Sources such as Aaron and Phillips, (1986) state that, with the exception of a small number of *acquired dyslexia* cases (e.g. brain insult though injury) who have other cognitive and/or motor needs, only a relative minority reaches university-level teaching if they have both receptive *and* productive difficulties in their own L1. An added problem for dyslexic students may intervene at the 'individual differences' and 'institutional dyslexic students' levels. No two unexceptional, or 'normal', students are alike in terms of previous learning, affect, motivation and a myriad other variables (see for example Carroll 1961, 1981, 1985, 1988 on language *aptitude*); nor *a fortiori* are dyslexic ones.

3.4 Bridging between 'communicative' and dyslexia literatures: some further aspects of 'automaticity' in dyslexia literatures

With the notable exception of Margaret Crombie, discussed below, few mainstream 'dyslexia writers' have explicitly addressed foreign language acquisition/learning issues – except fleetingly[20]. Those who have commented often proposed mixed and partial accounts of what 'automaticity' signifies in language acquisition, teaching and learning, either as first or subsequent language.

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[20] Ott (1997), for example, consecrates nearly 4 (of 408) pages to modern languages in a chapter on 'adolescence'; but has nothing directly on this topic in her chapter on further and higher education. She does refer onward to Peer and Reid (2000) on Multilingualism.

3.4.1   Uptake and output automaticity; steady-state versus performance

Most simple is the conflation of 'automatic acquisition', and the 'acquisition of automaticity'. Both forms of 'automaticity' can be either holistic, or partial and attenuated. Both forms can assume the existence of the other, and assume explanatory power for the other. In other words, assumptions about automaticity of uptake can be mapped onto assumptions about automaticity of *output*.

Particularly in Adult L2 acquisition, a further confusion can arise, at output level, between fluency in performance and what we have referred to as 'exponential automaticity', i.e. a spontaneous, dynamic and iterative form of learning.

I will explore these conflations further, below. But they are encased within a larger, qualitative difficulty with foreign-language learning writings related to dyslexic subjects. A short discussion of these qualitative reservations is included here, illustratively.

3.5   Bridging the literatures: ontological and other difficulties

Hill and Roed (2006), writing on dyslexia and modern languages, attempt the following classification of the literature they review:

> The literature on dyslexia is large but falls mostly within three categories. One is attempts to investigate the nature and explain the causes of dyslexia. A second category of studies focuses on the actual manifestations of dyslexia or symptoms, and a third category deals with support issues – how students can help themselves and how teachers or lecturers can help their students (Hill and Roed 2006, p.2).

There are indeed inherent difficulties in categorising dyslexia literature.

3.5.1 Circularity, unanalytical aggregation and folk-validation

The first difficulty is ontological, where a category is proposed but then used circularly to 'prove' its own existence. Hence, I might argue that there are dyslexics because there is dyslexia or, conversely, there is dyslexia because there are dyslexics.

The second difficulty flows from the first, and has two aspects: aggregational (but unanalytical) treatments and reviews can conflate ontological discussions of the topic with symptomological ones. Here, assumptions are justified inductively from symptoms which could easily derive from other sources. A consequential (Messick 1989; Shepard 1993) aspect of such reviews is that categories can be 'pop validated' (Stevenson 1985) by brute force of citation.

As a result of the above, much grey literature can emerge which fails to address any ontological issues, or indeed symptomological ones at all, and instead proposes confused and a-critical 'solutions' to dyslexia, such as merely acting on dyslexics' self-esteem, or cheering them up a bit, or adopting dyslexia-type approaches for *all* students. Despite citable titles and ease of electronic access, 'grey' items can be neither rigorous surveys of institutions nor of the literature, but cherry-picked selections from both. Hill and Roed (2006) and Davis (1997)[21] may be considered samples, for all that the latter is adulated in certain quarters; and Internet hosts a profuse babble.[22]

Lastly, dyslexia literature falls foul of numerous other sources which are directly or indirectly sceptical of its epistemological and ontological underpinnings: Seligman (1992) on 'acquired helplessness', Elliott (2005) with press knocking articles on dyslexia "myths", Eriksson (2005) on the invention of psychiatric

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[21] Davis R.D. (1997) ("The Gift of Dyslexia") is not to be confused with Davies, A. (1977, 1968, 2003) to whom extensive and positive reference is here.

[22] A Boolean internet search on 28.07.2010 of the coordinates "Dyslexia" + "self-help" yielded "about 77,800 results" [sic]. One source - (http://felixdexel.de/English/persoenlich.html) cites S.Paul on the "blessing" of dyslexia: "...all things (even learning disabilities, dyslexia, depression, feeling blocked, etc.) work together for the good of those who love God" (Rom. 8:28)", others propose the "casting out" of dyslexia though faith-healing, along with cancer (www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/news/christchurch/2746441/Faith-healers-attack-cancer-with-prayer).

conditions, and Goldacre (2006) on the critical gullibility of using screening tests for developmental dyslexia tests, then claiming "cures" for dyslexia.

3.5.2 Attempts at clarity: theorising dyslexic students' language difficulty in MFL

Conversely, Schneider and Crombie (2003), publishing with the imprimatur of the British Dyslexia Association, attempt to fill gaps between language acquisition, MFL[23] and dyslexia literatures.

As a point of entry, they stress (with Ganschow et al. 1998) that frustration and low motivation among dyslexic MFL students are not causes, but effects, of linguistic difficulty. Hence, they propose that linguistic difficulty is not reducible to 'mere' deficits in output skills over input ones, but that linguistic difficulty is the product of individual differences, mediated by an array of individuated strategies, and also the sheer variation in comparability between languages.

Ganschow and Sparks (Ganschow et al. 1998; Ganschow, Sparks and Schneider 1995) had earlier summarised these into their LCDH or linguistic coding differences hypothesis. In essence, LCDH proposes that success breeds success both in encoding and decoding, across languages – but the contrary case (failure) is also true. Not only so, but any success or weakness in phonology/orthography, syntax or semantics needs to include cross-linguistic analysis. An L2 may well be easy because it is similar to L1. But conversely, the L2 may be 'harder', because of extra syntactic processing requirements. Across the Ganschow et al. studies, order of difficulty rose from semantic to syntactic to phonological-orthographic. Schneider and Crombie (2003), after Gerber (1993), also factor in the compound effects of poor short-term and working memory stemming from LCDH-type complexity: there is more to remember in *both* languages when you are a dyslexic learner.

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[23] Modern Foreign Languages

Implicitly, therefore, Schneider and Crombie are at first less than sanguine about dyslexic learners reaching (output) automaticity – because it is not a given in the L1:

> These [the Ganschow et al. 1998] findings make it clear that reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in the FL are all significantly affected by weaknesses in linguistic coding skills even when the native language has been well mastered through years of developing strategies and overlearning to the point *where automaticity has been achieved*. (Schneider and Crombie 2003, p.5; emphasis added).

Indeed, they add: "The underlying language processing difficulties and differences are likely to affect the student when exposed to foreign language learning", requiring "[…] *direct and explicit teaching of linguistic encoding and decoding skills in the foreign language*" (ibid.; emphasis added).

Later, they state explicitly: "Lack of automaticity in native language grammar structures […] will exacerbate the problem […]" (Schneider and Crombie 2003, p.6).

3.5.3   Implications for dyslexic MFL learners (Schneider and Crombie)

Two things result from this. Firstly, Schneider and Crombie (2003) admit of a qualified version of (output) 'automaticity', for successful L1 dyslexics, which can be created by intense work and inputs. Nevertheless, *input* automaticity ("lack of automaticity in native language grammar structures", above), however obtained, seems to be a prerequisite for dyslexics' foreign language acquisition success.

Secondly, they stress the role of metacognitive and metalinguistic skills, and remark above that these need *direct and explicit teaching*. Because "without explicit modelling and over-practice of metalinguistic strategies, dyslexic learners will not be successful students" […] "Often", they explain (citing Dreshler et al.

(1984a), (1984b) on learning-disabled adolescents), "dyslexic students are referred to as 'inactive learners'". Even if this 'qualified' form of automaticity can be acquired, it is not 'automatically' acquired in the sense of child language acquisition[24]. With 'qualified' automaticity, we are reminded here of our discussion of the notion of proficiency in its "thresholdist" and "holistic" variants explained in Chapter 1.

These explanations nonetheless remain problematic, because the difference they make between 'student' and 'learner' is unclear, as is the degree to which metacognition and metalinguistic prowess depend on each other, or lead/follow one another. Finally, if metalinguistic *awareness* is lacking, can either metalinguistic or metacognitive *skills* be used to solve 'problems' the learner is not aware of?

The discussion appears circular, and indeed Schneider and Crombie also refer to the "time to explicitly show the student […] what the *logical, metalinguistic* connection is between the new and the previously learned information" (Schneider and Crombie 2003, p. 47; emphasis added). Does this amount to supporting the "highly dynamic nature of the inner self-correction dialogue, more or less spoke out loud at least at the semi-vocal level that the FL learner needs to master" (Schneider and Crombie 2003, p. 26), or can this translate as simple conditioning?

Their discussion can peter out into the use of 'multisensory ways' (p. 26) which allow dyslexics to compensate for auditory and/or visual weaknesses, though it is up to the educator to 'analyse the underlying linguistic thinking steps that lead to a correct response' (ibid.). Hence, they require the dyslexic language learner to be *consciously* able to map fairly advanced metacognitive skills across onto depleted metalinguistic ones in order to develop 'qualified', deliberately-acquired, automaticity. They consciously equate (p.17) productive automaticity with 'overlearning', which is not further defined or referenced, all in the context of producing greater 'learner autonomy' (ibid, viii).

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[24] In the limited, simple sense that universally, unexceptional child language acquisition is irresistible, spontaneous and, initially, child-led.

3.5.4   Schneider and Crombie: a predictive focus

In summary, then, Schneider and Crombie (2003) are neutral on automaticity of input or uptake in unexceptional first-language acquisition. Thus, they do not posit any level of automaticity of output even in unexceptional L1 acquisition. But they do, however, directly relate depleted first-language acquisition to impaired second-language learning in the case of dyslexics, and further anticipate depleted, or at least, non-automatic and very effortful 'overlearning' output in the L2 among dyslexic foreign language learning subjects. I explore the data for confirmatory instances later.

In the next chapter, I consider how these varying approaches to and assumptions about 'automaticity' cohere with the evidence of the students, educators and support workers I interviewed. In due course, I will map these assumptions back to the notion of proficiency, and the specifics of modern foreign language teaching/learning in a particular H.E. institution, Wealdston University, in order to assess the degree of 'fit' between these – as discussed in Chapter 2.

Chapter **4 – Exploring the data**

Firstly, in this Chapter, I offer a reminder of the techniques which I used for data-handling. Then, in narrative form, I recount my exploration, analysis and interpretation of the data. This analysis falls into several sections, which broadly correspond with the revised Research Questions I proposed in Chapter 1, and in which I seek to gauge the coherence between these sets of views themselves.

In the final section I attempt to identify, in particular, what narrated evidence in the dyslexic respondents' reports emerges to support association between exponential automaticity and Proficiency and now, emerging from the data, *agency*. In particular, I was interested in how *anterior* is agency in relation to other factors said to militate against adult second-language acquisition in the dyslexic students studied. My final chapter will then trace the links between these concepts and the earlier parts of the thesis.

4.1   Reduction and analysis of the data

I analysed the data using NVivo 8. The advantages and drawbacks of Grounded Theory were discussed in Chapter 3; however the NVivo 8 package allowed me both bottom-up and top-down analysis, and cross-comparison of concepts through hyper-linkages and some 'quantitative'-style variable ('attribute') analysis of demographic and other data. I have already mentioned the drawbacks of the analysis in terms of propositional reduction, decontextualisation, fragmentation; and loss of discourse features have already been mentioned too. It was these drawbacks which accounted for my creating an (equally searchable) 'researcher's narrative' in which, despite some loss of formatting, further conceptual case notes and methodological 'memos' could be kept. Conversely, I found positive advantages with an analytical tool of this nature in that it relieved some mental and memory overload, provided audit trail possibilities, and therefore encouraged efficient and robust working. I was also able to give conceptual mass to categories emerging in the data by referring to clear examples.

In this way, my qualitative data analysis tool NVivo 8 was used to find primary instances which referred to actual data citations, and secondaries which referred to my transcription notes retold as the "researcher narratives" and formed from instances at one remove from the 'primaries'. My 'tertiaries' are at a double remove from the data, and belong to the narratives which I constructed using propositions derived from the interview transcripts, but informed by contemporary notes. These 'dyslexic students' stories' are included in the Appendices, for the interest of the reader; and on occasions I cite these to foreground and concentrate (from sometimes diffuse responses) what I interpreted the respondent's message to be.

4.2   Issues relating to automaticity, proficiency and dyslexia

4.2.1. **The 'institutional dyslexics'**[25]: the interplay of theory and personal theorising on issues around proficiency and automaticity.

A first NVivo 8 scan of the direct, transcribed data, yielded no instances of the word 'automaticity' originating, in terms, from the mouth of the respondents. This was unsurprising; indeed, the purpose of the research is to uncover *implicit* understandings and versions of this concept.

Using the operators *automatic* OR *automaticit*y immediately yielded 3 'secondary' hits, cued from my analytical notes, as follows:

1.   **Jess** explained that French didn't 'click' for him and hadn't sunk in over time, at school:

> Yeah we did French, and … I think we started speaking … we started learning French, you were given a list of words which of course all looked the same and didn't know the meaning of, and it just ... I didn't click at all, it never sunk [sic] in at all[…] I got a *Certificate*, but that was quite easy to get. […] I'd get the basic and then they'd suddenly jump, and I just can't bridge that gap when it jumps to a … to

---

[25] I have changed the names, sometimes the gender, and other personal details of the respondents - students, advisors, academic director - when this is not material, in accordance with the ethical attitude I have articulated in Appendix 1A.

another level, I can't get the words […] I can do the first stage, I can do a bit of the second stage, and the third stage – well, no chance.

[Jess, NV 245-265]

2. **Jake**, secondly, notes automaticity in others but reveals that automaticity struck him in an unexpectedly negative way:

It just happened to me today and I just get so stressed by it, and I mean it really is a *horrible* thing to have to… I mean it might not even be my dyslexia, but I immediately think, "I'm not good enough to do this", it's stopping me doing it so I'm never going to cope with this, and this is my first assumption, that I can't do it. And it's *horrible*. […] And also people – some people just Really Don't Understand it, one of my family he does the same course as me, he just… he's the most undyslexic person you could ever imagine, you know, completely logical, can write an essay with just once to read it and still get a first …

[Jake, NV331-335; original emphasis]

3. **Freesia** too outlines difficulties at this level. In the first instance,

I *can* read, but it's ... I linger over words a lot and... re-read things a lot because I'll get half-way through a paragraph and *will have sort of forgotten what the point of it was*, even though I've said each word in my head, I don't ... I sometimes don't string them together to make sense. […] With the alphabet, I can't pick... *I can pick it up half way through but only at certain stages*, so if I'm trying to remember if **f** comes before **h,** I have to go you know **d-e-f-g-h**.

[Freesia, NV89, 351; emphasis added]

Freesia explains:

It's not that I'm not concentrating 'cos I have quite a long attention span, but I'm ... the processing ... somewhere between that and the actual taking the words off the page and putting them into the thought, it kind of mismatches and doesn't quite work so I'll be half way through the paragraph and not even ... I'll know the last 5 words I've *read but I don't know what context it's in* so I haven't built up, like, *a sort of internal story going on,* when I'm doing well.

[Freesia, NV111]

So in the initial stage, it seemed to me that the institutional dyslexic students had encountered the concept of automaticity under four different guises:

- An **unrealised expectation** (Jess)
- **negative** automaticity (automatic self-doubt) (Jake)
- **loss** of automaticity (or 'tuning out' out) (Freesia)
- unavailability of **serial-and-parallel** working (Freesia)

I represented these early respondent insights using NVivo 8 models, and evolving them later:

Model 1
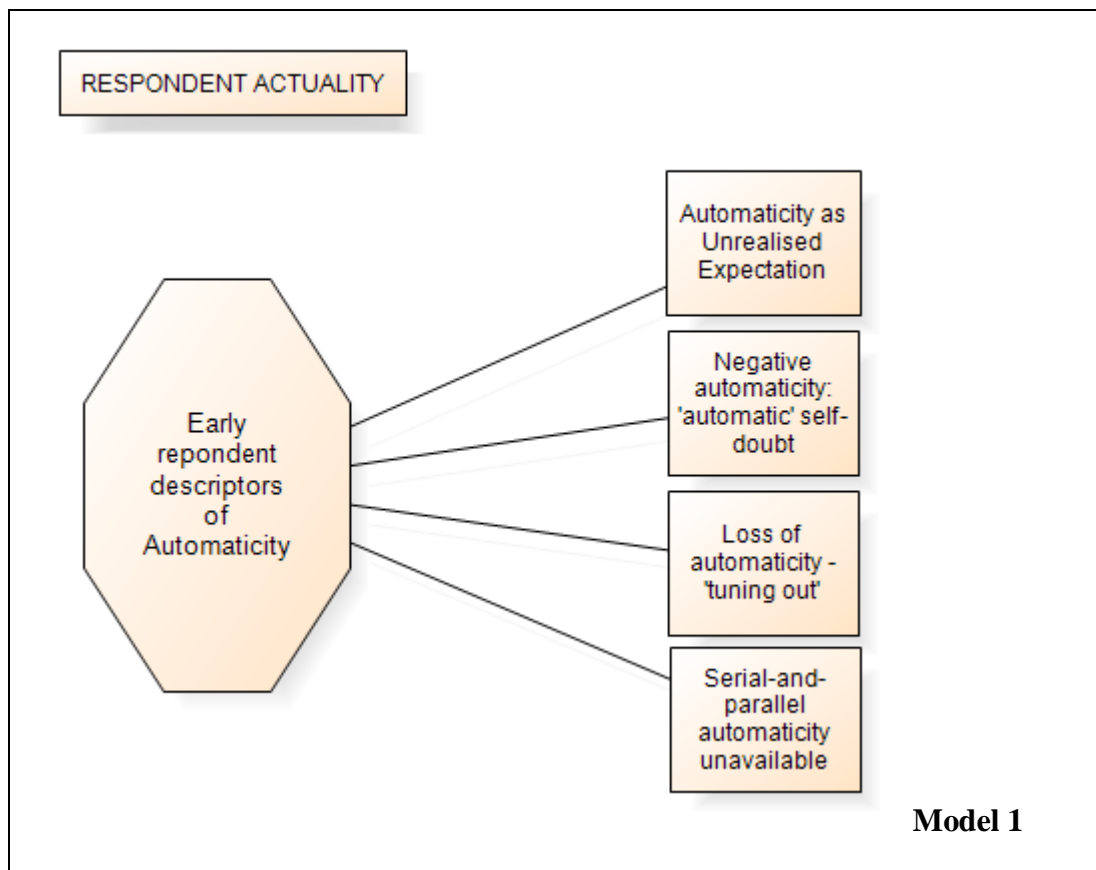
4.2.2.1 Blocked automaticity

Later, in **Aggie**'s Transcription comments, I noted that Aggie (an EFL teacher also trying to learn foreign languages) was seeking automaticity in her own language studies, but could not reach it because something came to block it:

> No the teaching is ... and I do try ... I don't know, because I'm a teacher trainer and I obviously teach in my way but I am quite [...] But basic teaching has to be... there has to be some sort of methodology, some sort of thought into it.
>
> [Aggie, NV71]

> It was just a very poor teacher and ... I don't know whether it was ... you know he was a teacher working in ... a local college so ... and his attitude, he wasn't an unpleasant person, he was actually a very nice person, he just hadn't been properly trained.
>
> [Aggie, NV75]

I realised that here that as a learner, Aggie has intellectual doubts about her teacher. It appeared to me from Aggie's responses that if there is to be any "magic" to adult language acquisition, then a feet-of-clay realisation (T, though "very nice" above, is perceived as incompetent, or otherwise lacking) may douse any spontaneous naturalistic acquisition or, in our terms, re-stimulated automaticity.

Aggie made a second point when she stated that "there has to be some sort of methodology, some sort of thought into it." [Aggie, NV71, above]. She seemed to be distancing herself from some assertions of the 'communicativist', 'exposure and interaction' school of language teaching espoused, for example, by the academic director and discussed in a later section of this Chapter. In terms of automaticity of uptake, I could not extrapolate here what Aggie believes about what happens to 'artificial' constructs and devised, non-naturalistic language (which Krashen, for example, would admit as 'comprehensible input'). But I did note that Aggie reports teacher thought, method and content selection are an expectation and that their absence was a 'negative' for her in terms of acquisition and uptake. Indeed, in our interview, Aggie failed to respond to an invitation to discuss functional-situational syllabuses yet at the same time, is clear that she does not have the automatic uptake of her (non-dyslexic) sister:

> [So they definitely know they're coming onto a functional-situational kind of syllabus course?].

> AGGIE: Yes. Yes. But all of this class, nearly all the people said we go to Italy every year or "We're thinking of buying a holiday house there or a time-share in Italy". [….]
> YVES: Right. So what we're kind of saying is that there is no way that Aggie believes that you can go into a culture, sit there, absorb the language, and it will happen all by itself, in the same way that a child learns a language ?
> AGGIE: No I'm not saying that at all, *it doesn't happen for me*. It happens for my sister.
> [Aggie, NV243-245; emphasis added]

Aggie is therefore aware both of 'automatic' uptake of a foreign language (her sister's capacity), and of her own *in*capacity in this respect.

In these further views of automaticity (schematised into the 'desiderata' and 'reality' in Model 2, below) further delineations seemed to me to be emerging in the data:

- automaticity as spontaneous naturalistic acquisition (from naturalistic sources)
- automaticity of uptake – involuntary and seemingly untutored acquisition; and
- automaticity of output – acquisition towards automatic assemblage and performance.

Further models expand these delineations. But I noted at this stage that a first schism (Schism 1, in Model 2) had arisen: between what the respondents seem to desire, in early parts of their Interviews, and what they go on to report later, and in probes. I will return to this schism, and identify another.

Model 2
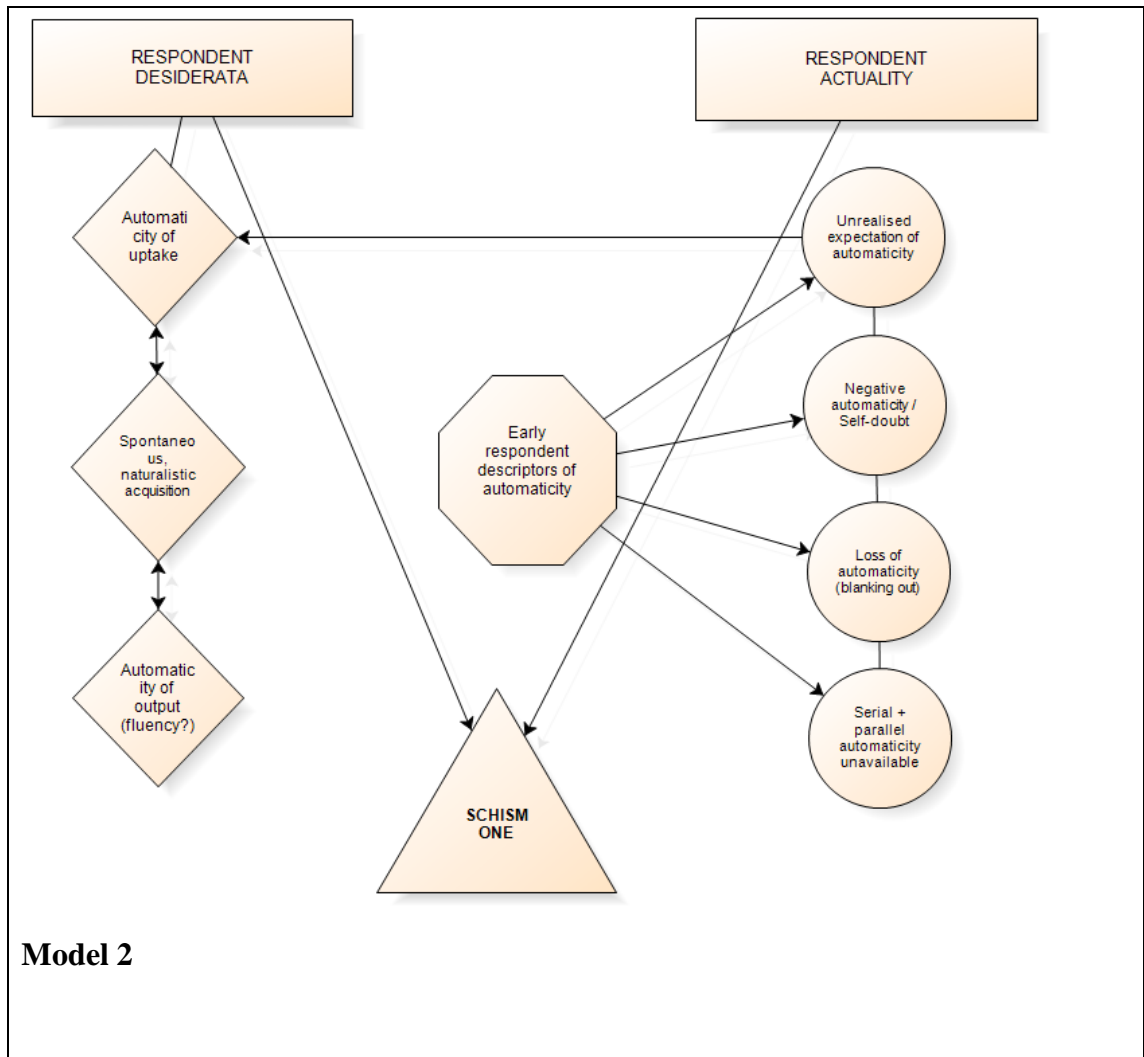
Further informing entries emerged. **Lin** seemed to suggest a "Not-yet automaticity". He appears to call upon an auto-feedback mechanism - a native-speaker self-judgement of grammaticality based on *heard* evidence. So he is using the oral/aural route as a backup to visual analysis. This is, however, not automatic as a volitional, or 'conative', engagement is required. I had already included "Unrealised expectation" in Model 1; the present entry covers some similar ground to the extent that Lin has the *expectation* of automaticity, that is to say, the belief or assumption that it exists, in others. But in his own case, Lin requires an act of will – deliberate checking - in the form of phonological back-up. We can look at the original transcript here:

I have a tendency to write quite long and complex sentences but in general I think ... I mean ... they makes sense, they sound nice, but when you have an essay that's composed of all these quite complex sentences that sort of ... they work, but you have too many of them at once, it's hard to ... sometimes you can muddle what could be much more simply stated. And I don't know if that's dyslexia or just the way that I write sentences but it seems to be quite a trend that I've always had is to overcomplicate my sentences.

Comment [Y1]: The Analyst Comments: 181 – "to write quite long and complex sentences": And speak in them! vide supra l.128. Stream of consciousness?

Comment [YLJ2]: The Analyst Comments: 182 – Lin seems to use an auto-feedback mechanism - a native-speaker self-judgement of grammaticality based on *heard* evidence. So he is using phonology as a backup to visual analysis. Not automatic, though, as volitional engagement is required.

Comment [s3]: I have a tendency to write quite long and complex sentences which muddle what could be more simply stated (181-186)

Comment [s4]: I don't know if that's dyslexia or just the way that I write sentences (186-187)

Comment [s5]: A trend that I've always had is to overcomplicate my sentences. (188-189)

Figure 3 – Lin's transcript

[Lin NV62; here, 181-189 in Original Transcript]

Lin can achieve in language, using written criticality judgements based on many considerations including many phonological, grapheme/phoneme routes ("they sound nice") and non-phonological ones, discoursal felicity conditions, and possible propriocentric feedback if he is subvocalising[26] (see discussion in Bruinsma 1980); but this checking will cost him processing speed and hence, automaticity of output.

4.2.2.2 Automaticity as *exponential*

I discussed this concept previously in chapters 1 and 3. Exponentiality refers to a notion in which both uptake and output of language can be described as spontaneous, irresistible, dynamic, iterative, open-ended and, in unexceptional subjects, permanent: that is, not overwriting itself but conversely, capable of 'exponential' growth, using what it has learnt in order to learn more. When exponential automaticity occurs, the learner can understand and create a nearly

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[26] The literature discussed in Bruinsma (1980) also refers to *covert* speech, *inner* speech and *implicit* speech. Dyslexia literatures, also, refer to absence or depletion of this feature; see e.g. Frith (1985) on *Phonological Deficits* and Wolf (1997) on *Phonological Decoding Deficits*.

endless supply of novel utterances, not all of which have been explicitly taught or modelled.

Issues in *exponentiality* raised by Lin covered several areas. Firstly, Lin himself stated (NV110 et seq., original transcript 320-321), that he couldn't at first transfer his classroom knowledge of French into interactive, exponential and creative longer-term work. Secondly, despite being able to use short term, discrete packages, he did not always attain long-term acquisition or growth in his language from what he had learnt:

> "I could go home and study *one* thing, *one* section of a text book and learn that, but then when you combined with all the other exceptions and all the other things which is hard - after four years of French, to have four years of experience") .
>
> [Lin, NV116; emphasis added]

Nor does Lin feel capable of extrapolation or parallel running. He can only do things in series, whereas the concept of exponential automaticity implies that both should be operative. In Lin's own words,

> "If I'm given one task at a time, one simple task at a time, I can do it very well but this is … as soon as I have too many things at once, that's when I can't choose one of them, I can't decide […] it's almost like an obsessive-compulsive thing, but it's only in relation to doing work. It's not in relation to my life in general".
>
> [Lin, NV136]

Though he has not used the word himself, he cannot achieve *automaticity* and indeed, thirdly, what acquisition of rules and exceptions in e.g. French grammar Lin can manage atomistically and synchronically will not see organic and diachronic growth, or serial-and-parallel working. Lastly, I found a clue (Lin (NV245-251) that mere attempts at exponentiality in fact lead Lin in the opposite direction: towards the exact *reverse* of automaticity, and moving to de-automation and shut-down. I shall refer to this again later when I consider questions relating to agency, as Lin proposes an informative causal explanation relating *secondarily* to his dyslexia.

These further polarities on automaticity, illustrated in Models 3 and 4 below, highlighted the following, for me.

On the positive side, there are the possibilities of:

- Interactive, creative exponentiality
- Transcendence of 'chunking', or holophrastic and piecemeal learning

On the negative side, I noted the inclusion of

- *de-automation*, the converse of, and loss of, automaticity; and
- strategic escape into micro-planning, as modelled below (Model 3).

Aggie had already invoked this when she reported losing what I might call here the 'seduction' into acquiring - because she gets nervous for the teacher. Lin is also informative here on the *interference*, ironically, of his own 'coping' strategies. Once again we can see a trace of *de-automation* in his original transcript entries:

[- Are you holding a lot of information in your head at the same time?]
LIN: I am and I'm not at the same time, I don't really know [...] at the moment I'm just trying to keep to what I have to do each day.

Comment [s14]: I'm holding lots of information but also lack lots of information, propriocentric info on my work in progress (521).

YVES:OK. So one of your coping mechanisms is to do little bits and not try to do big bits.

Comment [s15]: I am micro-planning (523)

LIN: Yeah that's what I'm trying to do because I'll also try to think of everything at once and then not have an entry point into it.

Comment [YLJ16]: The Analyst Comments: 526-527 Another circle? Lin has a vicious circle (see note 9 above)

YVES:And that would be when you'd get a bit panicky, when you're trying to do all four at the same time …

Comment [s17]: I have to sequence (serialise) to avoid "hanging" (526-527)

LIN: Yeah it's not that I panic, it's just that I can't think, I just shut down, … it's just a lot to do at once.

Comment [s18]: It's not that I panic, it's just that I can't think, I just shut down (530)

YVES:When you say you "shut down", what's happening? You give up?
LIN: I don't give up, I just … dunno … just start procrastinating and just start … just not thinking as clearly.

Comment [Y19]: The Analyst Comments: 533-536 Cognitive consequences. And affective, i.e. loss of motivation?

Comment [s20]: With a lot to do at once I lose focus in my thinking (533-536)

Comment [Y21]: The Analyst Comments: 535-536 This seems to be the exact *reverse* of automaticity, i.e. moving to shut-down.

[Lin NV191 et seq.; 520-526, Original Transcript]

Figure 4 – Lin on interference and de-automation

As Lin had said himself, "I just shut down" when attempting holistic working.
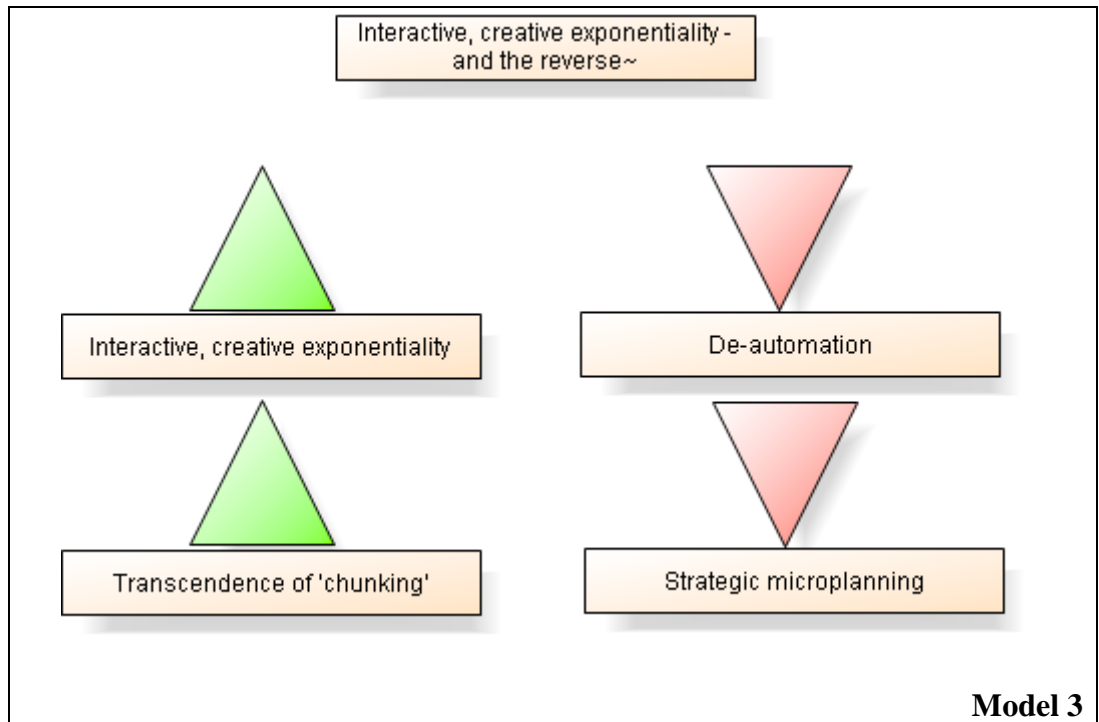
Model 3

In Model 3, above, we can see how Lin is failing to reach his ideal of automatic, effortless and endlessly creative output. This is because, in his view, he becomes de-automated through non-holistic *chunking*, i.e. he only holds and surrenders, (or only takes up and puts out), isolated fragments. These can be slowly gathered, assembled and outputted; but they do not feed back into an expanding reservoir for future use.

AUTOMATICITY

COMMON TO INPUT AND OUTPUT

INPUT/UPTAKE

OUTPUT/FLUENCY

SPONTANEOUS, NATURALISTIC ACQUISITION

INTERACTIVE, CREATIVE AND EXPONENTIAL

"Automatic uptake by self without direct teaching and/or direct teaching context, materials, methods"

"Output automaticity characterised by interactivity, creativity (novel, correct language use) and exponentiality (the possibility of growing what has been acquired)"

Model 4

It seemed to me that **Carmen** had another form of de-automation:

> [Reading] takes a long, long time. I tend to read things out loud to get the gist of them … I tend to sit there and read the same thing over and over on the same page and it won't sink in at all. […] I tend to be OK with presentations, actually, I tend to make sure that I'm prepared enough to write but I will lose … I will lose words but it tends to happen in everyday life as well, I'll know what I'm trying to say and … emmm … I just can't find the right … the way to express it. And it ends up with me skirting round, trying *to find my way round through into what I'm thinking*.
> [Carmen, NV25, 51; emphasis added]

She adds, of the opera singing which will be her career when she completes her Music degree,

> I get a huge well obviously not a panic it's just nerves, it's like "Shit I can't remember the words" and I can't remember the next word so I do a great line in made-up German and made-up French […] I did the Schiller and the

> *Frau Liebe* of Weber last week and I'd been doing the rehearsing for my performance thing since the last term, and we've been practising for *hours* every day and I still … *it just still doesn't click in*, it just doesn't, I don't know why.

> [Carmen, NV516-522; 2nd emphasis added]

I will term this *secondary* de-automation, where Carmen is apparently rendered dyslexic because of what she herself regards as a working memory problem.

Sandy, conversely, uses memory in order to circumvent the automaticity he perceives himself as lacking:

> SANDY: Sometimes it's just a case of bludgeoning the word in there, like "This is how it has to be spelt [sic], there is no other way about it".
> YVES: So you definitely lay down a particular spelling, you remember it, you can see it written down in your mind, or…?
> SANDY: Emm – it's more of the hand-action to write the word.
> [Sandy, NV229-231].

Sandy appears to be using this kinetic or dynamic memory strategically, to emulate automaticity and to over-ride the visual recognition problem he has. He will also rely on cueing by others, as in this example captured "in vivo" during Sandy's interview:

> SANDY: I... I'm not something to be fixed, it's my own little problem and I'll make all the little... what's the word I'm looking for... ummm …?
> YVES: Adjustments, or…?
> SANDY :   **[loudly]** YES!
> [Sandy, NV191]

I wondered at the time whether causally, Sandy's de-automation could be considered clinical and the result of tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon or a mild developmental aphasia, though such causality is beyond the scope of this study.

Millie also presents partial and sometimes implicit accounts of automaticity. Indeed, she herself proposes tip-of-the-tongue as an explanation for her impaired output:

> OK. Well I often can't find the words to say what I want to say. I often find it difficult to structure what I mean – so it tends to be when I write things down, I write down everything and then I can edit it to what I actually mean - eventually. Sometimes I have difficulty in concentrating on what people are saying, and I just have mind blanks or… and in terms of reading? Yeah. I often read the same over and over again but like completely wrong and just not realise it, or yeah I'll read things and put different meanings on them because I've read it wrongly. Emmm – and yeah it's generally just this tip-of-the-tongue thing where I know what I want to say but I can find the words to say it.
>
> [Millie, NV9]

More interesting for me was that Millie may imagine she has a specific deficit with *semantic* automaticity: to recall a word's meaning she can "shout them out in my head" [Millie, NV354], a sort of long-circuiting of her problem. Further, Millie seemed to have something of an expectation of automaticity in that she expected words to 'speak to her', that is, for their sense individually and collectively to become available to her at semantic level, without any long graphological-to-phonological – a 'hearing them in one's head' type access. Millie neither confirms nor denies she has this intervening, phonological stage. But implicitly, if she is not getting the semantics when she looks at certain items, this is her reported approach. Finally, Millie appears to believe in automaticity 'by proxy': whereas she cannot, herself, deal with certain items or gain access, she "would just presume that they would understand what I meant*"* [Millie, NV390].

Jess, conversely, does have *visual* automaticity, of sorts, but a phonological blockage: he has difficulties with making relevant responses. This may signal autistic spectrum disorder difficulties again beyond the scope of this study[27]. However the *de-automation* he experiences also stems from launching into production before he has completed assemblage, thus we should widen our

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[27] Though the advisors will refer to autism too, tangentially; vide infra, section 4.2.2.

discussion of automaticity and indeed, fluency to include *automaticity of pre-output*. Jess, in his professional life, has input automaticity in dealing with circuit diagrams, they speak to him directly, he can "spot quite easily" [Jess, NV280] what they are telling him, as there is no phonological route.

Like Millie, above, Jess can 'borrow' automaticity from an interlocutor:

> You get the feedback from the person, that makes it much easier to produce the next part because it sort of meshes within and you've got that interaction's flowing
>
> [Jess, NV529].

Whereas Millie appeals to 'proxy' automaticity, Jess employs 'discourse-sustained' automaticity. In these cases, however, I noted again two things:

a)   The assumption in the respondent that *there is* automaticity, at least in others, and that they themselves lack it, like Sandy above and Sam, below; and

b)   These further automaticity items (proxy, and discourse-sustained) are untaught *strategies* for dealing with their 'different' language qualities.

As regard what follows, I observed that one or more items of successful non-language automaticity (for example, well-rehearsed 'work-around' strategies) can be used to shore up missing or depleted *language* automaticity. Such 'substitute' automaticity will also find echoes and equivalents in a later discussion of *phronesis* within the general, coherentist framework of the study.

Sam too has a difficulty:

> Errr... **[pause]** not really, I've just always known I've found it a little bit more difficult to read and write and all this ... sort of things, an ... I don't really know exactly why that is, and why I find it more difficult. Emmm... er... as I said maybe it's because I rush things sometimes, but well I often just... stop... the way things come easy to people...
>
> [Sam, NV14].

Sam doesn't have a 'personal' expectation of automaticity – but he too, like Sandy

and others in the cohort, believes in automaticity *in others* ("the way things come easy to others", [Ibid.]; and **"**I didn't want people to know I hadn't read the book, 'cos everyone seemed to be able to read these books so easily and I couldn't, I could just never get into them" [Sam, NV266). Indeed, his effortful attempts can prove counter-productive, and I will now distinguish between *induced* and *elective* de-automation. The former is involuntary but the second, an act of will, or lack of will. Sam distinguishes between his resting 'mind' and 'really thinking about' things:

> The spelling and the grammar behind it, I've never really had the mind for it, it's just never really come easy to me. I've always had to really think about it.

[Sam, NV16].

It appeared to me that one part of Sam's mind is unsuited to language acquisition, whereas another is suited to problem-solving and rule-learning. Further, Sam can work towards recall of lexical items (though probably not full, 'exponential' automaticity). He stated there are two stages in his learning of words: hard graft for recall of spelling but then, frequency of input can step in and give some automaticity of recall. *"It's true, if I learn a word, then I can spell it right, if I see words often enough then I'll remember how to spell them."* [Sam, NV46].

From Sam's discussion [Sam, NV37 et seq.], *de-automation by overwrite* seems to be a factor. In this scenario, respondents may not have a diagnosable, primary linguistic deficit as such - but they may, conversely, rewrite the rule or lexical labels and wipe the previous trace each time – what I shall term (after the film of that name) a 'Groundhog Day' de-automation. Sam can overcome this because he has a phonological escape-route. But any success he obtains is in *suppressing* this trait, and not through an improvement of the basic linguistic functions. However, respondents like Sam are stuck in the present, can't 'get lost' in their reading, or sustain a flight of writing or get into the 'flow' I described earlier.

Pat, a science student, presented me with a double dilemma around automaticity: another version of 'elective' de-automation, which I will compare to the involuntary version which affects others on the cohort. Pat's 'elective' de-

automation is qualitatively different to Sam's. Sam may well give up; however Pat phrases his dilemma thus:

> I tend to read quite a lot... for someone of my age group, let alone a dyslexic! […] If I read a sentence, for instance, and I'm not paying very much attention to it, then I'll read something different.
>
> [Pat, NV31].

Pat is another student who cannot 'get lost' in a text and read on 'autopilot' because if he does, lexical items will trip him up. This is one dilemma: automaticity versus accuracy. Pat needs to read with a certain precision, as a science student. But as a science student, Pat is beset by another dilemma. He will plough through 'difficult' text, but be interrupted by 'easier' texts: he is more likely to worry over not understanding or misunderstanding 'easy' things. This may well be another reason why 'science' dyslexics may fail to be identified as such earlier in their studies: they crash-read adequately for gist, up to a certain level. Pat explains,

> If I'm reading something very technical then I'd probably assume I'm not understanding and just carry on reading, but if I'm reading Harry Potter for example and it's not making sense then I'll think it's my mistake, probably, because it's not desperately tough.
>
> [Pat, NV39].

Petey, finally, presented me with an interesting view on automaticity and de-automation: in his case the de-automation occurred not only at local semantic level – word-meanings, in strings he has read – but also at a higher level: the narratological and discoursal. His problem is best explained in his own words:

> PETEY: […] I mean it's not just a case of my mind wandering, it's more I read all the words and they're just words, rather than coherent sentences.
> YVES: Right.
> PETEY: They just jumble.
> YVES: You're not getting a message.
> PETEY: I don't get a message from... I don't get the narrative, I just get a load of words.
> YVES: You get a load of words. When you're getting this load of words, are you… understanding generally what's

PETEY: happening, or the reasons behind why the author's writing, do you think?

PETEY: You mean like the gist of the story?

YVES: Mmmm-hmmm.

PETEY: Yeah I mean pretty… it depends how complicated the piece of writing is but… I find… yeah I ... I… I'll either completely miss it and have to read it again, or ... there's different levels I suppose, it depends, it really depends on how I read it. I have to read every word.

YVES: Right, OK.

PETEY: And I have to read them as a whole piece rather than as… because I tend to read them as separate words, like if I look at a whole line, of words, I can't necessarily take in the whole line and then in a linear order or see some in the middle and some at the beginning and… Just jumbled, really.

YVES: It's just a jumble for you. OK.

PETEY: Yeah.

[Petey, NV31-43]

As with Pat before him, Petey gets interrupted. However, it is not primarily the accuracy of his intellectual understanding of a science topic, nor the recall of what specific words represent which is at issue, but following a story – critically. As he says above, "... I don't get the narrative, I just get a load of words" [Ibid.]. narratological input automaticity is in play, here: identifying, holding and comprehending a narrative. Jess, earlier, managed this - but only with interlocutor support.

Modelling these further descriptors, the contributions of Carmen, Millie, Jess, Sam and Pat, Petey can be visualised thus, in Model 5:

Model 5
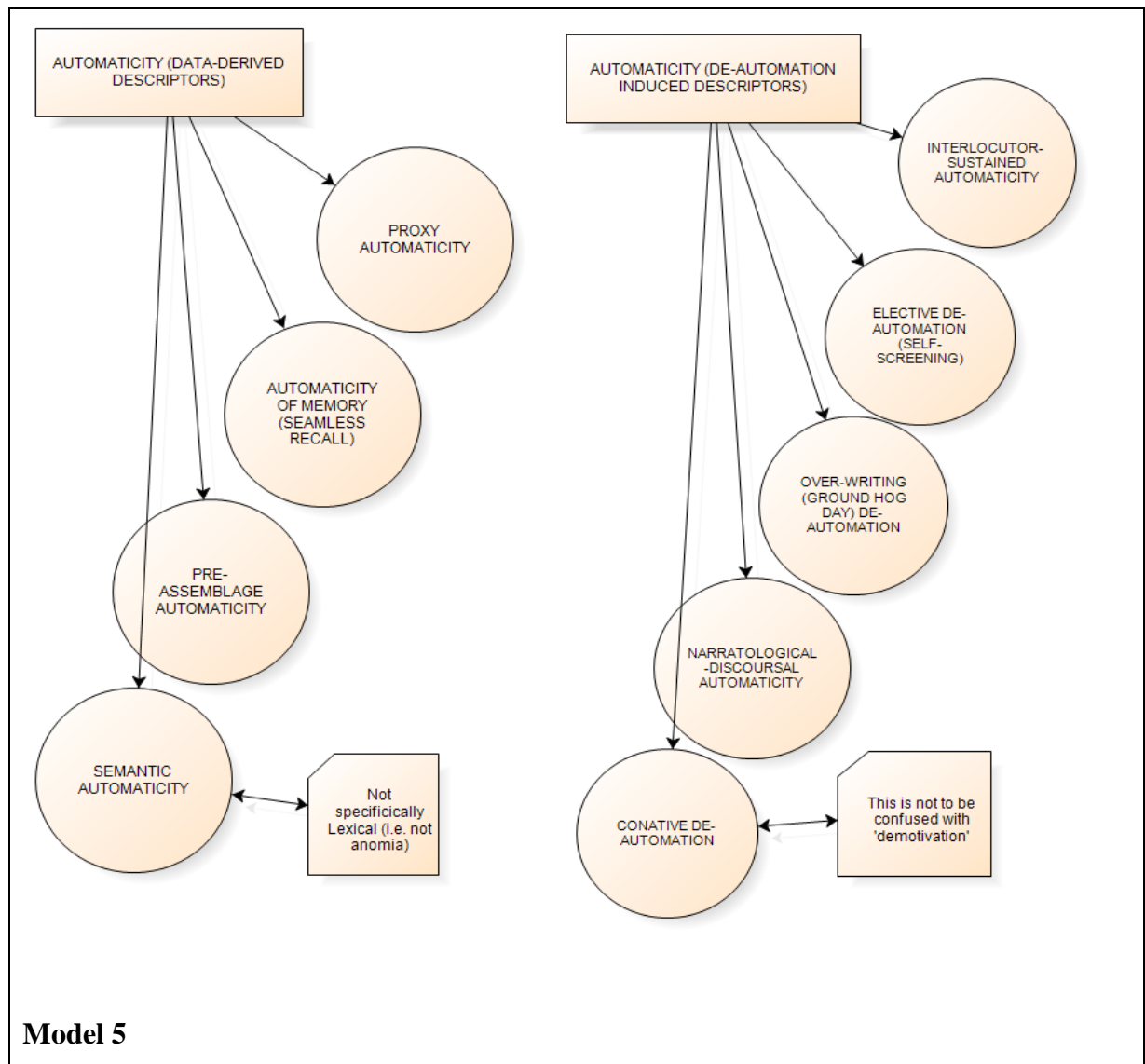
4.2.2   I turn now to the **Advisors** [**Jillie** and **Dave**, below], and the interplay of theory and personal theorising on issues around proficiency and automaticity in their responses. The advisors have a generalist role in offering personal, emotional and academic advice to students in a particular School or unit of the university, and offering informed referrals to other parts of the student support structure. They also possess together with knowledge of the examination and disciplinary structures. They typically have formal qualifications in counselling and/or social work. Jillie is qualified in Modern Languages; Dave has confided that he has a dyslexic son.

Several items make their views on proficiency and automaticity apparent. But I found that these views were, in certain ways, at odds with those stated by the

Dyslexic Students Cohort majority: indeed, the advisors only accept the notion of 'automaticity' implicitly, and with reservations. I will consider the advisors' *phronetic* position in due course – they advance certain a-theoretical, pragmatic arguments for dealing with dyslexic students – but I also noted that theirs were not wholly concordant views, even between two advisors, notwithstanding the narratological interest in their *performed* responses exemplified by the next Footnote.

Jillie in particular seemed to me to hanker after something like the grammar-translation model of second language teaching - or at least, a model in which overt grammar structure teaching is a *necessary* engine for exponential language growth:

> I've always thought that … oh, I don't know, I'm not surp ... I think that the way English is taught in Junior Schools is very bad [Advisors, NV272]

Jillie never states that automaticity is or should be 'untaught' and emerge naturalistically. But she did seem to believe in a worsening of formal grammar teaching in schools. In addition, Jillie makes an explicit link between L1 strength and L2 success, and wants overtly developed metalinguistic awareness as a precondition for L2 leaning/acquisition:

> It's no wonder students find learning foreign languages difficult when … well basically we're not really taught our own grammar very well, and I think that does have an effect on difficulty.
> [Advisors, NV272].

Indeed, Jillie seemed to be proposing a causal chain, linking between overt, descriptive grammar teaching and the evolving of metalinguistic knowledge, then between metalinguistic knowledge and the evolving of exponential automaticity. I was left feeling that for Jillie dyslexia was, by extension, a depleted association between all three: metalinguistic knowledge, overt descriptive grammar knowledge, and exponential automaticity.

Advisor **Dave** drew an interesting parallel between dyslexia and autism, proposing that in some cases the 'dyslexia' is a failure at social language, a failure at 'sub-text' identification, a failure at the 'unsaid', at detecting ironies (which can involve comic negations or opposites). Aspergers' autism may be marked by this, Dave explains below, but so may early stages of both unexceptional L1 and L2 learning/acquisition:

> DAVE: I found when I was teaching some dyslexics that some of them were very good at learning rules and working with rules, and that often when I was working them I would … you know, see a sentence as a sentence like kind of naturally but they'd be applying a rule /
> JILLIE: / yeah /[28]
> DAVE: / and God we're thinking in two different ways, they were very good on rules about all sorts of things, actually, a little bit kind of like Asperger's type of way of looking at things,
> JILLIE: / oh yeah /
> DAVE: / a kind of very formal way, everything is compartmentalised, they have systems for everything, some of them, the colour-coded thing as well, and some of them lived very well because they'd internalised a whole set of rules, and that got them through everything. Yermmm.
>
> > [Advisors, NV281 et seq.].

The advisors here seem to be proposing an example of failed automaticity stemming from the narratological-discoursal underdevelopment which characterised **Petey**'s responses in the preceding section. In this case, we would not be looking at a failure systematically to generalise *individual* rules. The failure is either in obtaining interactivity and pragmatic, native-speaker grammaticality compromises between these rules – or in overgeneralising these rules. But we can at least speak of Dave's proposed sub-automatic 'rule-internalisation'.

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[28] I used conversational analysis conventions in transcribing as I was struck by the amount of overlap and turn-taking and -giving between the two advisors, who have social work backgrounds and seemed to be finishing each others' sentences and thus, sharing a narrative. I continued this practice later, when I noted I was doing the same thing with a respondent.

I address phronetic issues specifically in a later sub-section, but the advisors' evidence struck me at this stage, because it appeared inconsistent. On the one hand, Jillie advises,

> Structure and grammatical structure [sic[29]] aren't the same across the different languages anyway, are they, so? In fact in some ways maybe sometimes it's easier, I was just beginning to think in some languages, other languages.
>
> [Advisors, NV262]

The advisors' answer is to doubt severity, arguing by implication that for someone to have progressed so far, the condition cannot have been too bad and only their academic study skills may be in deficit:

> We do see even at MA level how difficult some students seem to find – and these aren't dyslexic students necessarily, I don't know they are or not, but students who wouldn't consider themselves dyslexic how difficult they find sometimes writing coherent sentences.
>
> [Advisors, NV274]

But automaticity, for advisor Dave, is rooted in successful parsing using the oral/aural route:

> If you just think in terms of a sentence, most of us, we know when something's a sentence (or not) *just naturally*, because it doesn't sound right if not, but other people might analyse it to see whether it's a sentence or not, because they can't hear whether it's a sentence.
>
> [Advisors, NV289; emphasis added]

So for advisor Dave, 'input' automaticity requires *effortless* phonological parsing of *novel* utterances, and an underlying metalinguistic framework upon which to found grammaticality judgements '*just naturally*'. Strictly speaking, Dave's contribution was too slight for me to attribute an 'innateness' argument to what he suggested (where does the underlying metalinguistic framework come from?); but I noted earlier that Lin appeals to such a mechanism too in judging accuracy, well-formedness and felicity.

Model 6 below maps the automaticity 'terrain' of the advisors' responses:

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[29] 'Syntax' may have been intended here.

Model 6
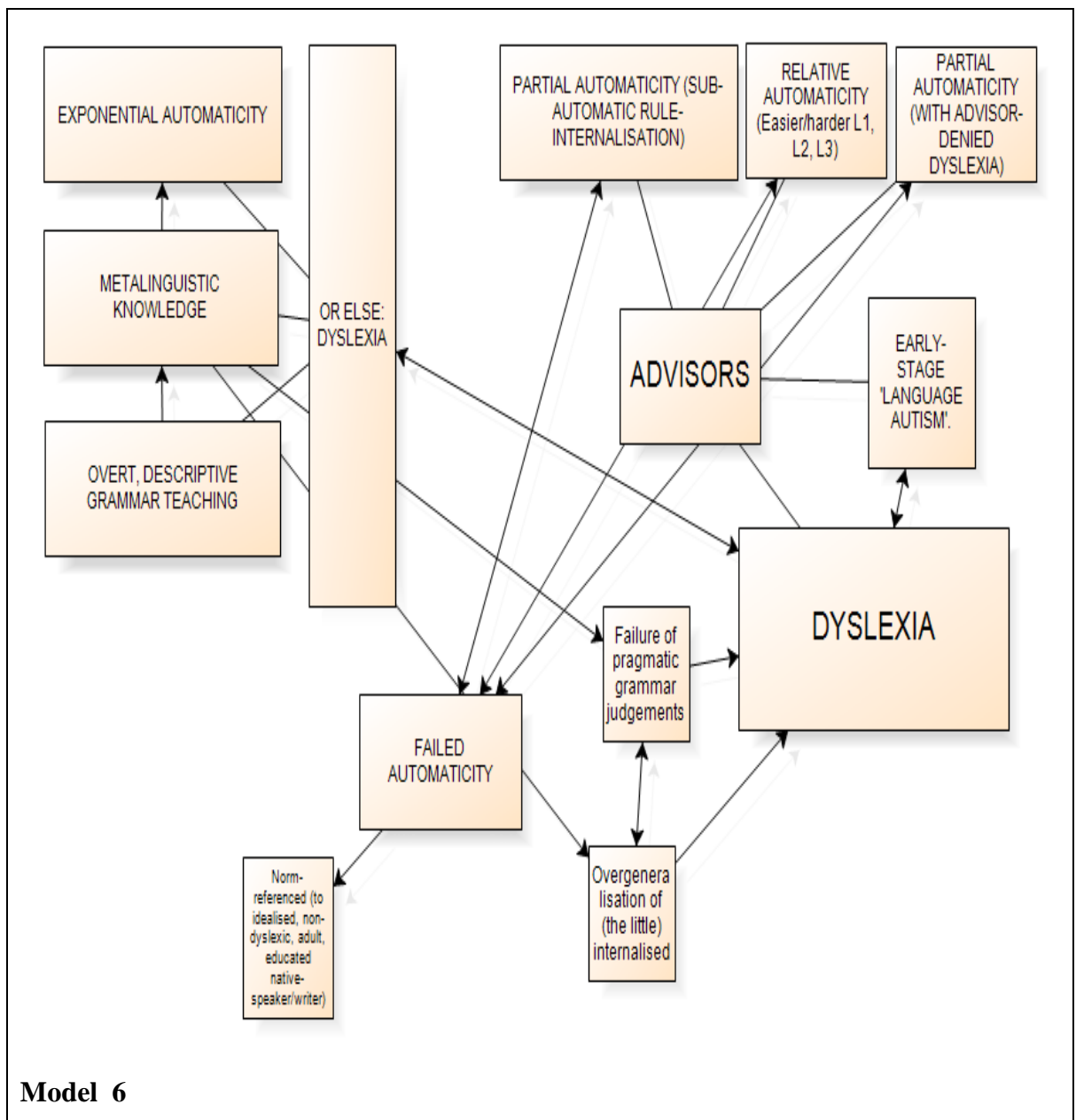
We can note visually that the Advisors connect with 'DYSLEXIA' but do not connect directly with 'EXPONENTIAL AUTOMATICITY', though they have a position both as accepting and being arbiters for 'partial' forms of automaticity. Their interaction with language students up to and into DSS (disabled student status is influenced by their other responsibilities and interests (see for example their useful but idiosyncratic association of autism and dyslexia, discussed above). This being said, Jillie and Dave's criteria are often norm-referenced to idealised descriptors, notably their 'relative' automaticity (where one language can be

deemed intrinsically harder than another, or where they doubt the 'dyslexia' descriptor on the basis of the student's performance up to that point).

I note, however, that *de-automation* has not been a concept in their responses, so it is not included in Model 6.

4.2.3   **The academic director**: the interplay of theory and personal theorising on issues around proficiency and automaticity

The **academic director** (**Derek**) presents a number of stances. The variedness of his responses is consistent with his varied roles: overall director of an non-academic[30] teaching unit; head of section of an English Language Teaching unit; an internally-competing fund-holder and seeker of external funds; co-ordinator and ultimate maker or breaker of British Council and other academic and commercial accreditations; and modern languages and later, ELT graduate in his own right, to mention but a few. So much for variedness; I will return to any internal variability or inconsistency within his positions later in this chapter, but also in the final discussion chapter when I contrast emerging theoretical with narratological and phronetic issues.

4.2.3.1   Automaticity 'versus' exposure and interaction

At first sight, **Derek,** the academic director, appears to hold the simple view that Automaticity is not 'singly' useful as a concept: the keys to acquisition are exposure to, and interaction with, the second language.   We have discussed the origins of this view earlier: it is 'communicativist' and interactionist, and not hard 'nativist' in the sense of irresistible and untaught. We note also that this is a learning theory derived ultimately from L1 acquisition. His comment arises in a short discussion of 'context of learning', and refers to Japanese students learning English at Wealdston:

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[30] A non-academic unit in this usage is one which is not funded through research but through a mixture of central and/or internal 'top-slice' funding and external commercial work.

> YVES: So it's a question of volume, the amount of stuff you get in the foreign language – you can't switch it off because you are in Wealdston rather in Tokyo and it's just there, in massive quantities, exponential quantities of target language.
> DEREK: Yes. It's not ... it's not exposure alone, I mean - it's got ... there's got to be some kind of interaction – I think there was a study[31] done in Holland where they sat children down in front of televisions and played them hours and hours and hours of English television and that didn't do very much for them /
> YVES: Right /
> DEREK: / but it's the combination of the exposure and the interaction.
>
> [The academic director, NV78-81]

However, we need to contrast this apparent view with the response to a question about the value of sending modern languages students abroad for an Erasmus Year, particularly if they are dyslexic. So the following exchange no longer concerns Japanese-to-UK exchanges, but UK-to-EU ones. Derek states:

> We've come to a decision that students need to be of a certain standard in terms of proficiency with the language before they go on the year abroad and we've done that for their good, and I don't think that we should change that.
>
> [The academic director, NV123]

The word 'proficiency' is mentioned here and I needed to analyse what the academic director understood by it.

Year Abroad students are specifically excluded from attending courses in their native language and/or laid on particularly for them. So it might be assumed that one purpose at least of their year abroad is to improve in their target language, over and above any 'content' acquisition which may take place – say, a geographer acquiring deeper subject-knowledge through European research-based teaching in German or French.

Conversely, attaining proficiency entails reaching automaticity in the face of *unpredictability*. And if the assumption is that dyslexics cannot reach such

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[31] Kuppens (2010) reviews such studies, but adds that recent evidence from *subtitled* viewing presents the opposite view, that is, enhanced uptake of English.

automaticity in the face of unpredictability (they have no exponential growth in their language ability), then there are circularities at work. Why?

Firstly, this dents the idea that modern languages degrees with their year abroad offer added value because of the inimitable, unpredictable and not always controlled interactions with native speaker/users. These interactions are not only deemed to give perfecting and uplift of the student's language-skills up towards native-speaker norms. They are also used to legitimate 'proficiency' testing of a nature described here in Chapter 1 as 'holistic': that is, deliberately testing of off-syllabus items not specifically included in direct teaching, but which a 'proficient' learner might be expected to be able to deal with.

Were this to be the case, then the consequence might be that dyslexics should NOT be sent onto a year abroad. When we discussed this, the academic director was insistent: proficiency is *gradable* and not 'yes/no'; and not only this, but gradable *before* exposure on a year abroad. In his words,

> "We've thought about it carefully, and we've come to a decision that students need to be of a certain standard in terms of proficiency with the language before they go on the year abroad and we've done that for their good, and I don't think that we should change that."

> [The academic director, NV123]

Further, in this case, discrimination is required. In terms of modern languages students, currently an Honours degree is not possible without a year abroad – only 'Spanish Studies' or 'French Studies' etc. will be obtained and subsequent avenues, curtailed (teaching, translation studies, competition for higher degree places or funding). It occurred to me that a modern languages dyslexic might now need to persuade the Institution that s/he was never dyslexic at all, or had 'recovered' sufficiently from the condition in order to get onto a year abroad.

4.2.3.2 Re-launching acquisition

In a further exchange, The academic director offers an important, qualifying concession:

> [YVES: So something of an Integrative Motivation but Group Integrative Motivation with their peers is a strong engine, you've said, for that.
>
> DEREK: Mmmm. Mmmmmmmm.
>
> YVES: Good.] And they're going beyond mere learning and going to language classes in Paris, in the French setting, to *acquiring* mechanisms slightly more, you think.
>
> DEREK: Yes. If you want make the distinction – if you want to make Krashen's distinction between learning and acquisition, I would say yes, they have the opportunity to acquire …
>
> YVES: Well I don't want to make Krashen's distinction! But in that direction, so. Absolutely, good. So you – yes, Question 15 "re-engagement of acquisition is expected in the year abroad country for adults"[32], so it's not expected, it is something which possibly *can* be expected, but it's not an *expectation* as such.
>
> DEREK: Yep. I think so.
>
> [The academic director, NV98 et seq.]

There is, in his view, if not a gamble then certainly an open-endedness involved in year abroad arrangements and evolving language skills. This ambivalence may further justify his view of the possible pointlessness of foreign study for dyslexics.

The academic director takes us further still away from models of automatic, exponential or indeed, effortless acquisition in the following discussion:

> YVES: French, German, Spanish, Italian, those sorts of courses would be aiming to get … to measure our students against some sort of idealised Native Speaker of that language, would you say.
>
> DEREK: I …
>
> YVES: Or is it a case of shifting from point A to point B?
>
> DEREK: I wouldn't say that; I don't think so. And I don't think that we really aim for that on our General English courses. […] In terms of Modern Languages, I would think you'd need to go higher than that, but I don't think you're necessarily trying to turn out people who are like Native Speakers, *completely* like Native Speakers.

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[32] Question 15: It will be remembered that the advisors and the academic director were interviewed to a protocol broadly similar to that used with the original dyslexic respondents; these are included in Appendix 3.

> YVES: So we're going more for criteria rather than/
> DEREK: / yes
> YVES: / than absolutes
> DEREK: / yes
> YVES: / and Native Speaker Levels.
> DEREK: Yes.
>
> [The academic director, NV62 et seq.].

Thus, the academic director, Derek, confirms his belief: "- *So we're going more for criteria rather than absolutes and Native Speaker Levels. - Yes*" [ibid.]. In his view, the teaching unit should be sticking to GP (general purpose) and / or forms of MLAP (modern languages for academic purposes, cf. EAP) teaching with no assumptions of exponential growth in the direction of native speaker levels.

Proficiency is therefore, for the academic director, "adequate communication of meaning" according to criteria and not to norms. But importantly for what follows, this definition of proficiency centres upon *agency, performance* and *intercommunicative success*.

A discontinuity, however, arises. To a probe about the levels addressed by the new modern languages syllabus, his response changes:

> DEREK: [We will] use the ALTE[33] levels, and so actually in theory that's what we should be doing, because each of the language courses *should* be pegged, and I think the curriculum documents say that, they *should* be pegged to certain ALTE levels and certainly we use ALTE levels for our English Language courses.
> YVES: What is your understanding of the influence of Native Speaker proficiency - as opposed to being referenced to various criteria of things you can *do* with the language - in the way that we teach certainly Modern Foreign Languages, at The University of Wealdston?
> DEREK: […] Well it's an *educated native speaker,* which I suppose you can understand in a way, for a qualification which is aiming to tell Universities – give Universities information about this person's language

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[33] ALTE Levels refer to, and correspond to, the Council of Europe's Common European Framework such that the Council of Europe's Levels A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2 cross-refer respectively to ALTE Levels 0 to 5. ALTE also produces a series of 'Can Do' Statements – about 400 – for 3 principal subject areas of Social & Tourism, Work, and Study and each of these is subdivided, by Level (0 to 5) into Listening and Speaking, Writing, and Reading statements of what language users at that Level can do in a particular language.

abilities. But certainly, there is an example of a scale, or a reference as it were, which does refer to Native Speakers and … and says that the top level even is beyond some Native Speakers.

[The academic director, NV55 et seq.; emphasis added].

Derek refers above to *pegging*, suggesting that the courses, on paper, should appear to be anchored in acceptable national levels framed as outcomes – and also pegged to a notion of *native speaker proficiency*. There is a risk that this be taken as licence to engage in 'naturalistic acquisition' type teaching, a downgraded version of the 'communicative' teaching I described earlier. This sort of 'naturalistic' teaching assumes that L2 acquisition mimics native speaker L1 acquisition. It seemed to me that the academic director, Derek, had simply contradicted himself. He *does* want to vaunt 'native-speaker-pegged outcomes'– but in this way, these are ultimately norms. To which, according to many definitions of dyslexia, these students cannot aspire. Conversely, Derek identified that the top level is *not* systematically accessible to all native speakers either.

A further issue arose for me in considering the academic director's view of teaching towards 'proficiency'. Derek responds tellingly to a question about the effects of outside bodies - examination authorities, for example – on the taught syllabus and how this interacts with a student's internal language-learning syllabus. Elsewhere in the interview, Derek had espoused 'informed eclecticism' as the house teaching style, and he went on to make this qualification:

YVES:	Can we be "Informed Eclectic" all the way down the line with the Examining Bodies, the Outside Bodies, or do they control us in any way?

DEREK:	Well I think that Informed Eclecticism is … part of it is that it's horses for courses. I means in terms of the Cambridge … let's take the Cambridge Exams since you've raised those, there is, on the one hand there is a ... the examination is made up of several different papers. I mean one of the papers is the Use of English Paper, and so really, in order to prepare students for that examination, you have to look at the kinds of tasks, questions that come up and deal with those, and that would be a fairly kind of … I suppose traditional look at grammar structures, but also … also certain lexical things, not only grammar. But on the

> other hand, the …the Oral for the Cambridge exams - which is worth a fair bit, I think it's worth more than the usual kind of cursory 5 or 10% - is … is in the form of a conversation in pairs, with students given certain communication tasks to do, and so it's very … very definitely targeted at how well students can communicate and interact /
>
> YVES: Right.
>
> DEREK: / thoroughly, so … so it is … it would be more academic, more focused I suppose on grammar, reading and writing than a General English course.

> [The academic director, NV38 et seq.].

Several things emerge from this. His view is in response to a question about the grammar-translation model of language teaching (still well-evidenced in European language-teaching programmes), and justifying its (mainly) non-use in UK modern languages institutions.

But what Derek has stated is that for *English* proficiency exams, such as those set and tested by Cambridge and required for entry to UK universities, then there is indeed a grammar syllabus. However what is unanswered is the place or involvement of the students' own acquisition syllabus or order – and the student's conative 'agency' as discussed below, in addition to her existing psycholinguistic skills. What seems to be really tested in this 'proficiency' model under 'Use of English' – a *holistic* proficiency, as discussed earlier here - is each teacher or syllabus writer's predictive skills in forecasting what to teach, rather than the student's ability to a) react appropriately and in a "high" native speaker way, and b) evolve automaticity and exponentially greater language use from a limited input. Lastly, the academic director's prescriptions for English language proficiency and modern languages proficiency of course differ; though he is the ultimate manager for both programmes.

Before I turn to phronetic and then, narratological issues in the data, I will model the academic director's positions on automaticity and allied issues, and compare these finally with those of the dyslexic students and those of the advisors.

As a reminder, the academic director's data has highlighted the following issues.

Firstly, he offers a *mixed theorisation* of sources for automaticity. On the one hand it offers 'possible' re-launched acquisition. But he also holds that it is pedagogy-dependent ('exposure and interaction' sub-model).

Derek also is working with *mixed descriptors* of proficiency in describing his teaching unit's EFL and MFL issues. In the EFL case, there are native-speaker-pegged norms expressed as industry-known outcomes. However in the MFL case, his aspiration is only towards to 'general purpose' and 'modern languages for academic purposes' types of teaching, with the year abroad doing the rest.

In consequence, Derek gives *mixed weighting* to proficiency issues. It is a precursor **condition** to a year abroad in MFL, but conversely a (highly marketable) **outcome** of a year abroad in the case of EFL taught in England.

As a result, I felt that there were *mixed messages* from the positions Derek expressed. On the one hand, he offered narratives of internal institutional orthodoxy and external recognition and validation as regards the EFL side. But these were counterbalanced by fairly low expectations for modern linguists in general and, by extension, even lower ones for dyslexic MFL students. More on this particular issue emerged in a later discussion.

I also felt that *mixed causality* underlay Derek's espousal of 'informal eclecticism'. It is simply a fact that trained, selected, and periodically-inspected and reaccredited EFL teachers are in over-supply. Conversely, MFL teachers of equal standing are not, and great latitude in what may legitimately comprise 'eclecticism' ensues, probably to the detriment of dyslexic MFL students and notably in relation to cultures where dyslexia is not recognised[34] - and their teachers in the U.K.

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[34] One (non-advisor) staff reaction at Wealdston was "Oh let them [the student concerned] sort it out, we don't want them getting all *clingy*, do we?" [cited in Advisors, NV412]. In another, the International Officer wrote, "Our partner institutions are not always that accommodating - they are usually receptive to our request for extra help, but some do not have quite an understanding of what help the students should expect to get, since nothing precise has been set up for their own students and the help that students need with dyslexia is not yet recognised to the extent it is in the UK" [cited in Advisors, NV413].

Model 7 offers a representation of the above.
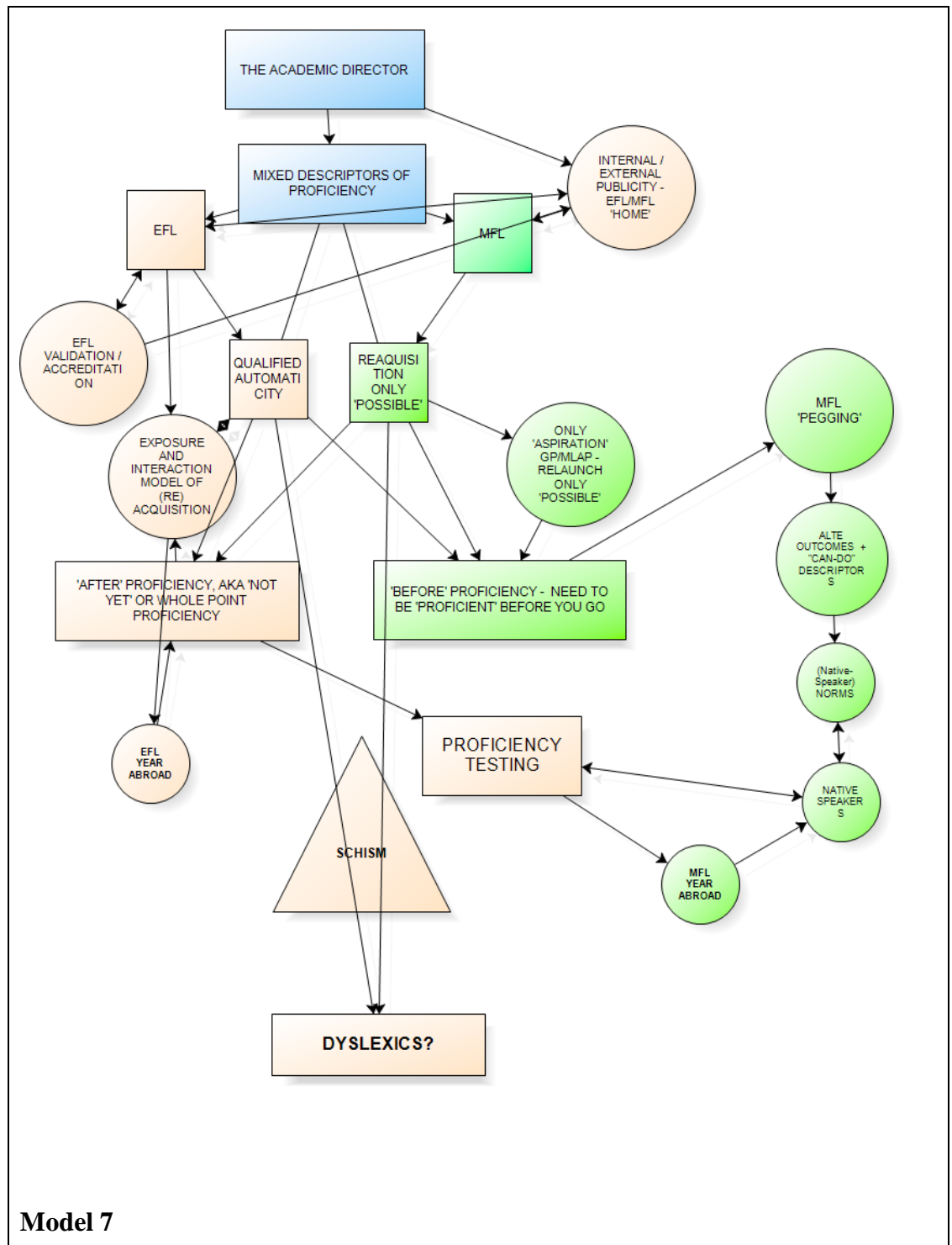
Model 7

Salient in my model is the relative lack of connectedness of the "Dyslexics" label, which I discuss in the next section, and also the question of 'anteriority' in proficiency. In one and the same 'home' for Modern Languages and English as a Foreign Language, proficiency is required to exist *before* the year abroad in the case of modern languages, but the reverse is true for EFL students. In their case, their very presence at Wealdston is based on the assumption that residence among native-speaker language-givers and judge-peers will lead to proficiency. It might be argued that this simply implies different types or levels of proficiency – neither holistic nor threshold as I discuss in Chapter 1 but *gradable*; but this would simply confirm my case regarding dyslexics. A visiting dyslexic EFL student may not appear to be so at all (as these learners all appear 'dyslexic' until they improve). However, 'home' dyslexic MFL students will be far more salient. Thus, not only do dyslexics have little prominence in Model 7 of the academic director's narrative, but the model reveals that a lower degree of importance is attributed to automaticity in acquisition on the MFL side – it's a 'possible' rather than an aim. Hence, one might anticipate that dyslexic MFL students are lower still in the success stakes and therefore, still less worthy of focused effort and resources. I examined the academic director's views further, to confirm his position.

4.3 Exponential automaticity, proficiency and dyslexia: a contrastive model of responses (Model 8)

In my next model, we see few positive connections between the dyslexic students, the advisors and the academic director.

Model 8

There are some close similarities between some student and some advisor items, For example the dyslexic students' **Groundhog Day** label (which I sub-described in NVivo 8 model-generator as "Automaticity does not evolve because linguistic information is over-written by new items effortfully acquired") bears a resemblance to the advisors' **Overgeneralisation** label ("Little has been internalised in the way of metalinguistic knowledge AND it has been overgeneralised"). I think it is readily apparent that students and advisors are

proposing different causal links: overwriting (dyslexic students) and poor original metalinguistic base (advisors).

Likewise, there seemed to me to be a consensus between advisors and academic director regarding testing norms. For the academic director, these are (in the case of MFL) to be 'pegged' to native-speaker derived criteria, as discussed earlier. The intuitive feeling of the advisors is, likewise, that MFL students are not only reaching for this level. However, the advisors express the view that teaching in their own native language has often let the dyslexic students down: they have underdeveloped metalinguistic awareness, stemming from poor school teaching and resulting in what they term an 'autism-like' language condition [Advisors, NV281 et seq.].

A more significant link can be seen between **Advisors** and **Academic Director**. I have referred to the apparent split in the academic director's mind regarding **Before Proficiency** and **After Proficiency**, labelled as such in Model 8. The advisors identify and believe in a case[35] in which, again citing my NVivo 8 sub-descriptor, "Memory and cognition allow quantities of language (including foreign) to be internalised, though probably for monologic outputs in restricted fields and functions". The academic director, in turn, proposes that the MFL case[36], students should in any case only be aiming for GP (general purpose) or MLAP (modern languages for academic purposes) outcomes. This is a lower ambition, perhaps more accessible to dyslexic MFL students; however, this stance is diametrically opposed to the aims of EFL teaching in the same unit, where foreign students are studying in England, and not at home in Japan, for a reason.

4.4 The EFL/MFL schism

Above, I pointed out similitude between some advisor and some academic director positions. However I felt there were few links between items expressed

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[35] labelled "partial automaticity [sub-automatic rule-internalisation]" in Model 8.
[36] labelled in Model 8 as 'Only 'aspirational' of GP/MLAP; relaunch only 'possible'.

by the students and the corresponding stances by the academic director. Not only this, but the academic director gives a bifurcated response, depending on whether EFL or MFL are concerned. Whereas for Derek, the 'Exposure and Interaction' model can lead to acquisition in the EFL case, and the "aspiration and 'possible' re-launch" might be operational for MFL, the students propose two mechanisms which fall below consideration and do not link in Model 8 to either the academic director or the advisors. These were my **Narratological-discoursal automaticity**[37] and **Interlocutor sustained automaticity**[38] labels in Model 8.

I felt that this was important. While the dyslexic students expressed the view that they might derive progressive benefit from support at a narratological and discoursal level, the academic director's view seemed to me to imply that this is perhaps only feasible at EFL level (tutors are more plentiful, as cheaper, and the courses bring in more income). In such a view, MFL aspirations should simply be lower. This would represent a double bind for the MFL dyslexic students.

More than one view can be taken at this stage of the disparities I have highlighted, on the one hand, and the limited similitude between student, advisor and academic director positions. The lack of overlap could be an accident of the data-gathering and analysis. Indeed, the research instruments for the dyslexic students and for the advisors and academic director only cover similar ground, though of course advisor and academic director interview schedules were very closely matched.

However before I consider certain phronetic and later, narratological issues, I can note at this stage that:

- The dyslexic student cohort demonstrates in general a good understanding of dyslexia and each student has an understanding of their particular condition, often informed by family, educational, cognitive and linguistic perspectives.

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[37] Glossed in my NVivo 8 sub-descriptor as "One form of automaticity is that exponentially, the more narrative-types and discourse-types you encounter, the more you know of them and the less these impinge on your uptake or output of language."

[38] Glossed in my NVivo 8 sub-descriptor as "De-automation doesn't kick in so long as automaticity is sustained by an interlocutor (i.e. it might when lecturing, presenting, monologuing unidirectionally)".

- The dyslexic student cohort has in general an attitude towards language acquisition which differs markedly from both the advisors' and the academic director's.

- The academic director's attitude towards acquisition and questions of proficiency varies according to whether EFL or MFL is being discussed.

- The advisors' views on language acquisition are underscored by societal and educational issues around mother-tongue teaching failures, with family experience being cited in this area by one advisor who is also a 'dyslexic parent'.

- The advisors' views tally more closely, institutionally, with those of the academic director than those of the students, though their causal explanations for dyslexia and subjacent theorisation (negative L1 acquisition will negatively affect L2) are at some variance with the academic director's.

4.5   Issues in professional knowledge
Phronetic issues: interplay of forms of professional knowledge

4.5.1   The academic director and the dyslexic students

As I suggested earlier, trying to characterise the academic director's views on dyslexia and issues around automaticity, exponentiality and effortlessness of acquisition towards proficiency was further complicated by *phronetic* and indeed, narratological issues. It could be argued that the academic director's views should not equate with the institution's. Conversely, however, this would have ignored processes, influences and power issues which do in reality affect the Institution.

Firstly, I found that the academic director's response to disability in general, and by extension to dyslexia, was conflicted in its dealing with students, appealing to *equality* between disabled and non-disabled students on the one hand, but also requiring *fairness* among students on the other. As we shall see below, fairness here can be glossed rather crudely as 'not getting saddled with a disabled student'.

But there is a further conflict. An institution will encourage recourse to professional knowledge, and will encourage initiative and pragmatism in dealing with issues such as staff recruitment, retention and promotion, teaching styles, teaching assumptions, course contents and outcomes. It will honour forms of professional knowledge in its managerial staff which may, however, be intrinsically conflicted. These conflicting forms can include subject knowledge, financial accounting knowledge, managerial knowledge, and institutional knowledge, to mention but a few.

A vignette from the data illustrates what I shall term here the 'phronetic density' of the academic director's position. Abstracted from the original transcript, this short section of his 'Story' illustrates this clash of interests well:

> We had an application from a student who wanted to come on one of our Summer Courses, not only was he wheelchair-bound, which wouldn't have been a problem, but he was blind. And that created a problem because the Student Support Unit wanted us to provide the sort of support which might have been sufficient if that student had been attending lectures – and seminars – so just you know, blow up the lecture notes and photocopy these. But of course that wasn't the case, he was going to be in a class, *with other paying students*, *with teachers who were teaching full-time as you know – the 21 hours a week* – and using a course book for 21 hours a week, and so we tried to explain that really the only way that we could cope with such student [sic] was if he had a companion there, in the class, who could actually read out what was there. It was clear to us that that was the only way that we could *cope in order to be fair to the student, to be fair to the other students in the class, and not to overburden the teachers*. And there was this great thing going round the houses as to whom [sic] should pay for this, he wanted to be on a Pre-Sessional course, that's right, so the question was should the Unilang Centre pay for it, should the receiving Department pay for it, should Student Support pay for it, they said "No, you know, we only get money for British students", and so in the end he actually didn't come.

> [The Academic Director's Story, NV 51 et seq.; emphases added].

Tacit professional knowledge, as I have already stated in my discussion of Eraut (2000) and Spender (1996) in Chapter 2, is possessed of its own automatisms. Tacit professional knowledge in skirting difficult issues, particularly those with attached funding implications, may well be prized at Senior Management level in

many teaching institutions, not least in periods of acute financial austerity. But adducing a discourse of equity and preservation of academic standards makes this palatable and acceptable at higher education level, in some views.

Dyslexic students, however, may think that this in fact tarnishes the institution. If there is already an intrinsic bias towards EFL assumptions regarding proficiency teaching and against the validity and viability of MFL, knowledge of the parallel financial and other Institutional rationales attaching to their disability may place them in a double bind. We have seen, notably, that certain received ideas about dyslexics in the advisors' and academic director's accounts of themselves may not be reflected in the dyslexics' own views. I return to the narratives offered in order to isolate instances of this divergence, or non-coherence.

4.6   Narratological issues (narrating and narrated subjects)

4.6.1   Of will and agency

The notion of agency has arisen earlier in this study, in varied contexts including my Chapter 2 discussions of Fisher (1985), Eraut (2000), Bruner (1986) and Phelan (2005), notably around questions of 'narrator versus narrated'. Analysing the dyslexic students' responses also revealed much of explanatory interest which mainstream discussions of dyslexia have perhaps only touched on slightly – and in one case, disparagingly.

An emergent issue – represented in **Model 8** – is that of what I have termed 'conative de-automation'. A note on the diagram alerts against conflating this notion with *de-motivation* – a topic in language acquisition literatures (both child L1 and adult L2) which needs little introduction, indeed my Chapter 3 here cross-referred to discussions of backwash effects on motivation (Crombie 2000, p. 114). However, whilst motivation and other psychological traits allied to affect are well discussed, the interplay between affective and agentive aspects of the dyslexic respondents' evidence was, for me, an unexpected feature. It became apparent to me that there were items in the students' reports in which they themselves seem to

suggest that agency intervenes causally and at an earlier stage than de-motivation. All the dyslexic respondents, in various ways, intimated that in some anterior stage, their agency has been compromised. Affective issues might well ensue - but as consequences, and not as causes, hence my terming these as 'prior'.

I also flagged this notion in the present chapter when discussing the academic director's view of proficiency as centring on agency, performance and intercommunicative success, then in an associated discussion of the students' agency in contributions they may need to make over and above the items formally included in a teaching programme, notably if that programme is to be tested against proficiency norms involving the unpredictable and the untaught (Allen and Davies 1977; Davies 1968).

As a researcher, I needed to be logically wary of asserting that past issues – positive or negative – necessarily influence future behaviours. However, a further search of the dyslexic respondents' data showed that, on a variety of counts, each had suffered from knocks, discontinuities and other phenomena which had, in their own view, affected their evolution as students in general and language students in particular. But here, we shall focus on their preservation (in almost all cases) of their personal sense of *agency*.

4.6.2   Agency versus helplessness

In some recent writing on dyslexia, it has become fashionable to associate dyslexia with conditions referred to as 'acquired' or 'learned' helplessness. Attribution Theory is espoused by Seligman (1975) and theories of self-perception, intelligence, success and failure are proposed by Licht and Dweck (1984) and reviewed by Eppler and Harju (1997) in higher education contexts; but the term has also become a catch-all pejorative in some 'dyslexia-negationist' circles[39]. Here, however, the dyslexic respondents narratives were searched,

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[39] We may contrast for example the usage by Elliott (2005) with Kerr (2001). In Elliott's case the tone of his title says much ('Dyslexia *myths* and the feelbad factor'; emphasis added), whereas Kerr goes full circle and attributes 'learned helplessness' to dyslexia *practitioners* too fazed by the possibility of making a 'maladaptive diagnosis' to be of use (Kerr 2001, p. 82).

notably their 'good' and 'bad' stories, for accounts not of depleted motivation or helplessness but compromised agency prior to either of the foregoing.

4.6.3 'Compromised' agency: its expressions, loci and resolution

Searching the sub-topics of 'help' and 'self-help' offered me major entries into questions of agency. Indeed, all of the dyslexic respondents offered avenues for exploration of this concept.

As potential dangers to his own agency, **Sandy** proposes direct parental help (substitution), indirect parental help (feedback), and 'interference/intervention' help — but conversely, he values *shared agency* with fellow-dyslexics.

> Before I had been diagnosed my parents were actually a great help, they'd sort of like proof-read documents for me quite a lot and just kind of go "This isn't right" so they got me through my GCSEs quite happily, and... but they were less able to help me with A Levels because it's more exam-based than GCSEs were.
>
> [Sandy, NV131]

In addition to this direct help, Sandy receives corrective feedback – but he has evolved a causal explanation for his reading trouble – then and now:

> YVES: And you said you were always an avid reader, as a child. Did you get read to, when you were smaller, can you remember?
> SANDY: Yes, I got read to quite a lot when I was younger.
> YVES: Did you get help reading as well?
> SANDY: Whenever … whenever I was reading from the page occasionally they'd pick up on little mistakes that I'd said, *because it would go in slightly jumbled and then come out slightly wrong. I still do that from time to time now.*
> [Sandy, NV132-135; emphasis added]

I recalled Sandy's words from discussing his use of kinetic memory to bolster automaticity:

> SANDY: The only assistance I managed to get out of it was some handwriting lessons because no-one else at the time thought it was anything more than me having bad handwriting, which didn't really help that much because I thought, there's something more to it, than just me not being able to write clearly. […] I... I'm not something to be fixed, it's my own little problem and I'll make all the little... what's the word I'm looking for... ummm …?
>
> YVES: Adjustments, or…?
>
> SANDY: **[loudly]** YES!
>
> [Sandy, NV189-193]

Ironically, Sandy does want, and accepts, help – but this is in a context of careful preservation of his own agency. This may explain how he has learnt to find help from an unexpected source:

> SANDY: It's … well, with my friends it's more of a comparison of what we do wrong and we just check up - we hope that our different dyslexias cover each other, that one of us will notice someone else's mistake.
>
> YVES: O.K. So… right. So it's a kind of a self-help thing, and it's alerting you to the fact that a) this person is also dyslexic therefore there might be something that you can find in their work and vice-versa and they might find something in yours. Good.
>
> SANDY: Although there are some quite funny moments where it's just all of us and one of us turns round and says "How do you spell this?" and the other two turn round and go "You're asking a pair of dyslexics how to spell!" **[laughs]**
>
> [Sandy, NV256-258]

Jess too sheds light on agency – through its loss. He is doubly-punished at school for his handicap:

> I think it really became a problem in Junior School when they gave writing lines as a punishment. […] And they gave writing lines because I didn't produce enough written work, which didn't help.
>
> [Jess, NV85-87]

But then at university, Jess's agency is compromised through the kindness of others – and their 'mixed messages':

> In terms of the essay it's … I'm great at summarising and getting short sentences and summaries, but it's the expanding bit ... well, I thought it was the expanding bit, I thought that's what essays were, people have been… *have now been saying different things*, saying it's like a story, and that seems to be helping, maybe a way round it.
>
> [Jess, NV93; emphasis added]

Also, he also points out that the 'assistive' technology on offer is of little help, "Probably because the touch-typing is as slow as is my writing". [Jess, NV103]

Jess however becomes aware of his own lack of agency and is stung into reclaiming it. Receiving negative feedback "wasn't that devastating, it was more unhelpful than devastating, for example the Open University tutor who just said well this is not accep... this wouldn't get you a… anywhere at University" [Jess, NV343 et seq]. He continues, "It gives you determination, I'll show you, you know, it's there inside, it's just not coming out right" [Jess, NV351].

Jake, initially, cares little *and* cares too much for his agency, as a schoolboy:

> "My Mum paid for me just a local French lady that helped me, I got B in the end and that but again I was pretty naughty in my French class"
>
> [Jake, NV167]

However for his English exams, and in a subject for which he cares,

> About 6 weeks before my exams I didn't actually do much before that, I worked hard on all my coursework, I sat down and my Mum, bless her, sat down *every day and night* with me and I didn't go to school, she just went through it all with me, and I learned it all. [Jake, NV177]

Jake takes himself in hand. However, Jake receives a direct blow to his agency at school, which still rankles at university and is reproduced here because of its typicality. Similar stories abound in the data.[40]

> Once, in my A Levels, my tutor – the guy – he was like a student teacher I think at the time and he was teaching us and he said something - I can't even remember what it was but he said a comment about dyslexia and then said something about me, and in fact I… it was the most unprofessional thing anybody could have done and I just left the class, and he really did upset me actually, and this lay man - this shows how bad my memory is, that I can't ever remember what it was but he did – he said something like "Oh it's probably because you're dyslexic" or something because I'd made a comment and umm he obviously – and I was really – and I was really upset actually and it did upset me but then he – it was quite – he sent me a letter in the post which was extremely odd I thought, saying "Jake I just wanted to tell you I'm really sorry if I upset you and trying to say it was completely inappropriate for me to say that to you", and you know I just want to reassure you that you are one of the brightest students you know in the class that I teach and like I hope that you're not angry". *But I was angry.*
>
> [Jake, NV 339; emphasis added]

It would be tempting to interpret that anger positively, as the spur to becoming his own agent once again in his studies. But upon arrival at university,

> I came here and we got this pack through the post saying "You are dyslexic, we've got a whole student support unit that's funded… blah blah blah blah blah"… and then I got here and it never really came to anything, I got my computer and a scanner which like… I could have… it didn't really… I have tuition once a week but last year the guy I had was useless, he was subcontracted in from outside and so he was… I dunno, he wasn't… I didn't find it very helpful the support last year, until this year. I felt like… I nearly left at the end of last year because I just thought… I can't do this, I have no… I didn't feel like… that *is* how I felt.
>
> [Jake, NV195 et seq.]

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[40] Illustratively, from the Stories in Appendix 2: Pat's Mrs Spriggs [Pat, NV372], Freesia's 'ousted' teacher [Freesia, NV395], Sam's Geography Teacher [NV320], Chris's English Teacher [Chris, NV99], Carmen's Music Tutor [Carmen, NV394], Aggie's Russian Teacher [Aggie, NV17 et seq.]).

Jake's transitional difficulties from home, his early passivity in his studies and knocks from what he perceives as teacher stupidity are not helped by the 'help' on offer at University. But like Jess, Jake recovers his agency through a *second* transition:

> A lady […] told me of the options that were available to me, and said "You have to be proactive in using these to help you" […] And I thought, "All right then I will", and I did, and it has worked really well and it is actually a lot of the support system and I got a new tutor who's *brilliant* and I feel a million times more happy this year.
>
> [Jake, NV195; original emphasis]

Jake will indeed become 'proactive' and recoup his agency, to the tune of a top 2:1 degree.

Pat is another student who is dyslexic, transits with difficulty from primary to secondary to university, and wants help - but it is help to restore his own agency.

> [At primary school, I had] two years of these individual lessons once a week and then when we got into secondary school, they stopped everything. There was no additional help. […] I had to leave because I was just falling behind quite drastically. […] The college I went to specialised in small classes and it was just a tutorial college, and they because of the small classes and they were all ... every teacher had a training in dyslexic students so they knew how to go about teaching if they felt that I was slipping behind. And that worked a lot better, one-to-one tuition and things like that. And just ... I think maybe just psychologically it works a bit better as well, because they ... er ... seem to be caring a bit more than the Lycée International, *which just left me to get on with it, whatever*.
> [Pat, NV95; emphasis added]

It seemed to me that Pat was caught in a bind: he wants to be his own agent, but is abandoned to his own devices in an International School where 'dyslexia' does not exist – seemingly, because if it did, it would foul up success rates. His education has been totally outsourced in that neither parent wishes to help, nor

male siblings or friends. Alone of the respondents, Pat claims he is 'upper' middle-class.

Freesia has *shared* agency, rather than help.

> One thing which has really helped me is I've got a computer programme now that will sort of read along with me, sounds a bit sad but... I do use that, I use that a lot.
>
> [Freesia, NV83]

Whereas she may feel she is being helped, passively, she has perhaps qualified agency and mechanical support none too different to a dictionary in the case of non-dyslexics [Freesia, NV228].

Freesia recoups agency after an incident when she realises that her *English* is the problem with her Spanish. In her anecdote, she has mis-read 'orchid' for 'orchard'.

> I kind of felt like I needed help, and it wasn't there for me. […]... I didn't say anything at the time but it's something I highlighted with [my teacher] and various other people at a later point, it wasn't that I'd done it wrong it was just the fact that my English was... I mean I can read the word **orchard** but I didn't, I don't know why. *My English failed me*.
>
> [Freesia, NV458; emphasis added.]

Freesia didn't fail Spanish; her English did. Not a huge epiphany, but Freesia now *acts*.

> The only thing which I did which no-one else in the Spanish group did was I went to the Library and I got myself a Teach Yourself Spanish tape to listen to while driving in the car, thinking a couple of hours a day will... was going to help me […]
>
> [Freesia, NV474]

In point of fact, Freesia does retrieve her agency, but to drop Spanish ("I kind of felt like I needed help, and it wasn't there for me") [Freesia, NV 468]. But I felt that she had had a realisation: she doesn't have a *language* problem; she has a *learning* one. Re-establishing agency was, ironically, to lead to her quitting her language studies.

With **Millie,** likewise, I was tempted to view her testimony as indicating purely motivational and/or self-esteem issues. However, she writes of a physics teacher:

> […] in part of my education I had a really good physics teacher – I was quite bad at it **[laughs]** but he was always so encouraging, you know saying "You can do this" constantly, I think it's just having an encouraging teacher who kind of believes in you. I don't think I got that because whenever I got a test back that I'd failed *it was always presumed that that was all I could do, because I didn't think I was trying my best because I didn't believe I could do any better.* So yeah, having that encouragement would have helped.

> [Millie, NV498; emphasis added.]

Millie had suffered previous curtailments of agency. These included, in her narrative, a lack of funding for both diagnosis of, and assistance with, her dyslexia; a fractured transition into secondary education, and a further fractured progression into higher education - including a stay in a teaching establishment with low academic expectations. All of these were both prior, and contributory, to her loss of agency – until a good teacher challenged her.

Sam too is illuminating. He did not receive 'help' in the sense of others doing things for him, but he received help in reasserting his agency and re-establishing mastery of his situation. Sam suffered a loss of agency, and associated deskilling, in a familiar transitional situation, and needs inputs rather than 'support' help:

> I got an extra tutor before I left primary school to get into... to try and get into secondary school, she was just there to help me out on these things that, you know, *some prim...*

> *state primary schools don't teach you what you need to know for public school...*[41]
>
> [Sam, NV154; emphasis added]

Later 'support' help makes things head towards greater automaticity as well as agency:

> I was tested at Sixth Form just to get extra time because I knew I needed extra time, which I really did, it was such a help. Just to get a little more time to sort out the ideas in your head, you feel less pressure then *everything comes out clearer.*
>
> [Sam, NV136; emphasis added]

Lin has early agency and transitional difficulties ("I was actually being home-schooled because I was living in the suburbs outside New York and the schools were really going quite badly, they were very dangerous at that time") [Lin, NV38], but he offers the very exemplar of agentive contribution to his own learning[42]:

> I got quite high grades, but I think I probably had to work harder than … than a lot of the people that were in that same category as me. […] it cost me in terms of stress as well, just having to work until …. I went to ... At high school I went for a little while to like a private school in the states where I went to school seven … six days a week and had four hours of required sports every day, so it was almost like a military kind of school, so *I was ... I didn't have a day of the week that I wasn't working, that was a holiday.*
>
> [Lin, NV102-104; emphasis added]

Lin has suffered from *restricted* agency, in the sense that he wants to and can successfully study many things – but in serial and not parallel or serial-parallel mode. This is general in his studies, and strikes at his language work also:

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[41] In fact Sam names a very prestigious and highly competitive [at entry] private school, or 'Public School' in UK terms.

[42] Lin NV 301 also explains that he was dosed with Ritalin, in the U.S.

> if I'm given one task at a time, one simple task at a time, I can do it very well but this is … as soon as I have too many things at once, that's when I can't choose one of them, I can't decide whereas all my other peers are like "oh just do one, this one's the one to do first, just concentrate on that" - *I can't do that, it's almost like an obsessive-compulsive thing, but it's only in relation to doing work.* It's not in relation to my life in general. […]

> [Lin, NV136 et seq.; emphasis added]

Interestingly, Lin introduces a diachronic aspect to his language condition:

> I don't think that that's dyslexia, I think that's just a … effect of me having dyslexia when I was younger, that's from right going to a school that was quite strict and having to deal with these deadlines when I was quite young. And because I was dyslexic and because I needed more time for all of them, it meant that I have … I just feel more intimidated by having a lot of things at once, because I need so much more time.
>
> [Lin, NV138]

Lin relies on brute efforts of will: the agentive here is the conative. On language specifically, he has already stated that

> I did 4 years of French but it was ... it was definitely very hard and I can't remember it […] if I study something over and over and took a test then I could do it, but I couldn't just keep it, remember all of the rules, all the different ah …. conjugations of every verb at once in order to just at the end of the knowledge I had in discrete little bits but I couldn't do it all at once.
>
> [Lin, NV108-110]

My probe at this stage of the interview established that his agency does indeed exist and that despite his institutional 'dyslexic' label, his 'Languages' problem is secondary to his cognitive difficulty.

Chris offered two insights into the question of agency; the first is more political:

> Well that's something we didn't talk about actually was just feminism, the idea of like the *écriture* of a woman which is like all into her being the madwoman in the attic and… like you could say that's like, maybe like the way I write,

> refusing to, you know, to conform to phallocentric ideas of
> how things should be spelled!
>
> [Chris, NV377]

The second is the challenge to agency provided by her school and, once again, it is *anterior* to her attempts at languages at University:

> [I went to] a very traditional private you know girls' school
> and just my English teacher was very kind of Old School,
> very kind of Oxbridge and like she certainly didn't think
> that spelling wasn't important and she didn't think that
> linking together random ideas was very interesting so that I
> used to drop a lot of marks for my spelling and stuff.
>
> [Chris, NV99]

It occurred to me here, re-reading Chris' narrative, that once again, as with earlier accounts, a challenge to agency neither entails nor predicts its loss. Conversely, though on occasions it means a spur to its retention, this outcome is not generalisable either. I have simply noted that in the cohort studied, agency is anterior to factors such as loss of motivation, and that there was evidence of an association between agency and automaticity and thereby, 'exponential' proficiency. In this way, Chris's agency is curtailed by her circumstances – but this falls outside her conative disposition, or will, which remains unaffected[43]. It is unclear whether Chris just has a sunny disposition or has deliberately adopted a positive approach to conserve her agency, but she states:

> Obviously there's an approach to it, if they're saying... you
> know, taking on board the fact it's spelled wrong and being
> happy to go and correct your mistakes and stuff, as opposed
> to being like… but like *I'm just waiting for someone to find
> the spelling mistakes in my work*, so I don't feel bad about
> it when they do.
>
> [Chris, NV295-299; emphasis added.]

Carmen too helped with this notion, as she depicts what she considers to be an excellent 'dyslexia teacher' (in her words: "the best and the most important to me

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[43] As the transcript noted, Chris in fact took a 1st in her degree, four months following this interview.

is Moira, my dyslexia helper that I have here" [Carmen, NV299]. A late-diagnosis student (not diagnosed dyslexic until university), she obviously does not lack agency, having 'survived' an aborted first year but progressed into a third academic year (her second at Wealdston University) – though growing complexity and technicality of academic texts is a threat. Carmen is being helped to preserve her agency – through strategies. She is in this sense a 'recovering dyslexic', but her agency has always remained quite intact. Indeed, the following information from her enforced 'gap-year' is telling:

> I was learning German in Germany, as I was living with a German family in Germany, and I was always talking in German so I had to, *if you have to do it then you will do it*. So. […]It's ... I really do think it's the only way to learn foreign languages is *just to do it*, you know?
>
> [Carmen, NV470-474; emphasis added.]

Carmen is another dyslexic student whose worst experience is not with a foreign language per se – but with her English, as the scarifying comments on her Music essay reveal. To quote her 'bad story' narrative, "it just came back as totally slated […] …it must have looked like I'd just whipped it off in 10 minutes like about an hour before you had to hand it in". [Carmen, NV394].

Aggie's narrative casts another light on agency: she suffers from what we might term loss of agency by proxy: a trained teacher and teacher-trainer in her own right, it seemed to me that she had felt disempowered in turn by an (unnamed) Italian evening-school teacher and then by Mashinka, a 'Suggestopedia[44]' Russian Teacher to whom she was exposed on an enforced Russian course during her M.A. studies. What seemed to me to have thrown Aggie was her tutor's own lack of agency, in both cases. With the Italian tutor,

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[44] Suggestopaedia is a teaching technique propounded by the Institute of Suggestology Sofia, Bulgaria; as it name denotes, the founder Dr Lozanov's methods include yoga-like relaxation techniques, and 'accelerated learning' without recourse to overt grammatical teaching but, conversely, the need to 'become' someone else during one's tuition. The Institute's materials refer to enhanced memorisation as 'hypermnesia' and, perhaps tellingly, to its teaching sessions as 'séances'.

> I knew the game and I knew what he was doing and so…
> Because I'm insider, it is true […] He certainly wasn't a
> qualified, you know PGCE-style teacher, I don't think he
> could have worked in a secondary school […] maybe he
> was trained but just... hadn't picked up on what the aims
> were […] He was... he was a very nice person, he was a
> nice man. Well-meaning.
>
> <div align="right">[Aggie, NV103 et seq.]</div>

Even at the price of automaticity in her acquisition, Aggie cannot meld her
teaching-learning experience with an Italian tutor who is following a method
which, in her view, he does not understand. Likewise with the Russian Tutor
Mashinka, who both professionally and interpersonally repels Aggie.

> It's a big institute, and it's very famous and it's all very...
> supposedly prestigious and they had this emmm... woman
> called Mashinka […] who came across to teach us. And
> nobody… everybody hated it, it was quite peculiar and I
> found it very stressful but it was based on very strict
> Suggestopedia classes. […] I can't remember all the details
> now but there were meant to be twelve students per class,
> you're meant to have 3-hour classes every morning, etc.
> etc. etc., and as is normal in the – *in Suggestopedia classes
> you're given a personality, you're given a persona that
> isn't developed by yourself it's developed by the Tutor.*
> And I was ... I still can't remember ... I was a Russian
> woman who worked as a computer programmer. And
> that's what I learned to say in the first lesson. And I still
> can't remember it to this day.
>
> <div align="right">[Aggie, NV25 et seq.; emphasis added]</div>

It was immediately apparent to me from Aggie's interview that loss of agency is
not something she will allow to happen to her. Interestingly, in a
contemporaneous note to the Interview, conserved at the end of her transcript, I
suggested:

> Aggie posits a sort of *nous* which a teacher needs to have –
> in practical terms (carrying the bottles[45]) but also, a type of
> knowledge which is that of knowledge being formed, i.e.
> empathetic bonding with the learner (or whole class!)

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[45] Aggie had referred in her narrative to a rather gormless tutor who was ill-prepared for class –
ferrying bottles to and fro when he could have used a tray.

which monitors and is "in there" with the learner. Krashen mentions a Monitor Theory, about the learner him/herself; this is an extension or parallel of this, to monitor uptake as one is giving input. The reason for mentioning it at all here is that it's so obvious that when it's absent, it has an effect on the student (and teacher) Aggie herself.

[Researcher, at Aggie, NV488]

I expressed reservations about Krashen's views earlier, in Chapter 3. However, Aggie clearly associates (re)acquisition with automaticity and with the need for non-compromised agency – both for herself and, equally, for her own students.

Before ending this review of the dyslexic respondents' contributions, it is worth mentioning another student, Petey, a mature student, who offered me another pertinent institutional reminder.

In **Petey**'s words,

I feel like I know the subject but I don't feel like I'm really engaged in a conversation, because I'm not actually articulating in that subject. It seems to come out – it's either I can't recall what I want to say or... or it comes out quite jumbled.

[Petey, NV59]

He continues,

It's only when I sit down and try and... I think that's why… I think essay-writing has sort of helped me to really express my ideas, yeah. Yeah.[…] Because you can really sit and think about it in your own time, and… **[dries]**

[Petey, NV63]

The irony here is that Petey is an institutional dyslexic who, to recoup and preserve agency, *likes writing essays*. That Petey is an 'institutional dyslexic' cannot be challenged, seemingly, within ght institution - though careful analysis of his responses, and my witnessing their occurrence (e.g. in my transcript, Petey "**dries**", above) led me to suspect a mild form of developmental aphasia. This left me with a slight ontological reservation – not regarding 'dyslexic students' but regarding 'institutional dyslexics' who occupy this category by default of another, and might resent inclusion in more cognitive and certainly, medical categories.

In the final section of the thesis, Chapter 5, I offer a summary and discussion of the findings of the research in the light of the Research Questions, and discuss issues around the ontological status of the study and to what extent it is a generalisable case.

Chapter 5 - Final discussion, reservations and qualification

5.1   Preamble

In this closing Chapter, I review and re-address the Research Questions. I then discuss some possible reservations. Finally, I ask whether, and in what sense, this study is a 'case' and whether, in consequence, it is generalisable beyond the precincts of the institution studied, Wealdston University.

My opening Preface proposed that 'automaticity is anterior to proficiency'; but that 'agency is anterior to automaticity' among the institutional dyslexics studied. Reorienting this statement, my finding is that discovering or rediscovering their sense of agency has allowed almost all of the dyslexic participants to attain a qualified measure of automaticity in their language studies and hence, of proficiency. This Chapter describes how and why I came to this conclusion.

5.2   The research questions, reviewed and answered

I address my overarching **Question 1** under **Question 3.6**, which is informed by the answers which precede it.

Question 2 asked, "What *theoretical* coherence is there between literatures on second-language proficiency, on dyslexia and on professional knowledge?"

I found that several areas of theory share *terms*, but that many underlying *concepts* were divergent. As regards 'proficiency'*,* I drew attention in Chapter 1 to the distinction between 'gradable' or 'thresholdist' proficiency, and 'holistic' proficiency. The first two terms admit of partial proficiency – you can be 45% proficient (gradable) or proficient over such-and-such a pass-mark or set of criteria (thresholdist), whereas the 'holistic' proficiency term signals that automaticity has been reached in the sense of exponential growth towards native speaker levels without much further intervention by others, such as through formal teaching. The question of automaticity arises in particular when learners are asked to demonstrate it, and be tested and qualified as 'proficient'. Work by

Davies (1968, 1977, 2003) discusses the notion of including *unpredictable* and *untaught* items in Proficiency testing which is, by implication, geared to native-speaker norms, automatic uptake through a personalised language learning syllabus, and by extension, non-dyslexia.

In **language acquisition literatures**, automaticity underscores arguments for irresistible, untaught and imperfectly modelled understandings of acquisition. These are heavily contested in L1 acquisition literatures by sociolinguistic, constructivist, symbolic-interactionist and many other schools of acquisition research, some of which I reviewed. Nevertheless, such views may still permeate thinking on second language acquisition and so, the teaching of foreign languages. In many cases, the notion of 're-engagement of child language acquisition' still prevails and remains an educational 'magic bullet' for some – a case in point was Aggie's encounter with Lozanov's 'Suggestopedia' in Chapter 4; and "listen-and-repeat" audiolingual learning packages, apparently predicated upon nativist acquisition assumptions, still abound[46].

I also encountered automaticity in the sphere of **professional knowledge**. Reber and Eraut invoke a form of automaticity when they refer to "the acquisition of knowledge independently of conscious attempts to learn" (Reber 1993 in Eraut 2000, p. 115) and a "near-spontaneous and unplanned" type of "reactive learning" (ibid). Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi's (1988) concept of 'flow' speaks to a form of automaticity, and it is echoed by Spender's allusion to "the individual's ability to recognise, to choose, and to perform when 'mindless' or in a state of 'flow'" (Spender 1998, p. 26).

In the **narratological** field, which I explored for its useful metaphors of the 'narrated' and 'narrating' subjects, I found that using Strawson (2004) and Battersby (2006)'s descriptions of 'diachronic' and 'episodic' individuals and cultures was informative. I suggested earlier in Chapter 2, that a 'diachronic' individual lost in an 'episodic' culture was an informing metaphor when we assess the 'fit' between the narratives of dyslexic learners and the narratives of various

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[46] "Unbelievable?" asks Lingualearn's advertising for its new EarWorms[TM], http://www.earwormslearning.com/lingualearn/index.php, last accessed 27.3.2011.

institutional agents in the research presented here. Phelan (2005)'s concept of "narrative imperialism" may also prove to have explanatory power in deciding whether and to what extent the Institutional Dyslexics studied are 'narrators' or 'narrated'; and the effects of these positions on their agency and learning.

In the **dyslexia literature** specifically, several notable sources allude to the notion of automaticity. Frith (1985), extending work by Marsh et al. (1977, 1980, 1981, 1983), described dyslexia in *deficiency* terms, i.e. the non-development of *automaticity*. Nicholson and Fawcett (1990) hypothesised, in terms, a DAD (or "dyslexic automatization deficit") and an associated CC (or "conscious compensation") hypothesis.

Question 3.1 asked what *empirical* evidence emerged from institutional dyslexic students' narratives on issues related to second-language proficiency such as automaticity. Models created from the responses suggested that students were aware of and indeed, preoccupied with automaticity-related questions. There was also a clear schism, depicted in Model 2, between how they felt this should be, and how they felt things actually were, in relation to proficiency and automaticity for dyslexic students of a foreign language. Students showed unrealised expectations of automaticity, automatic self-doubt about their capacities, talked of loss of automaticity through 'blanking out' or 'tuning out', and losing serial-and-parallel 'automatic' working.

Further modelling revealed that below the surface, the students compared themselves not only with friends and family but with non-dyslexic fellow-students. They appeared to infer that these other, non-dyslexic students possessed spontaneous, naturalistic acquisition, and automaticity of both uptake and output - being, in the latter case, more 'fluent' than themselves in speaking and in writing. They expressed a wish to overcome 'chunking' behaviours - piecemeal learning - towards interactive and creative language work. Instead, their reality was often a descent into qualified automaticity – strategic micro-planning when (or in case) automation is interrupted.

Finally, the dyslexic students proposed areas of automaticity and de-automation which I found compelling, and explained in Chapter 4[47]. In *proxy automaticity* the dyslexic subject assumed others will understand; *seamless automaticity of memory* equates to effortless recall; *pre-assemblage automaticity* refers to automatic (and therefore, not effortful) assemblage of items before their output; *semantic automaticity* corresponded with unprompted access to the meaning of intrasentential elements, but was also described as a non-antonym of *anomia;* in *interlocutor-sustained automaticity*, de-automation is not triggered so long as automaticity is sustained by an interlocutor (though it might when lecturing, presenting, or monologuing unidirectionally); *elective de-automation* ensues from self-screening for accuracy in favour of automaticity; *over-writing* describes where automaticity does not evolve because linguistic information is over-written by new items effortfully acquired; *narratological-discoursal automaticity* requires interactivity and pragmatic, native-speaker grammaticality compromises between these rules, and not over-generalising them; and *conative de-automation* invoked loss of will through compromised agency and as opposed to motivation.

These items suggest further avenues both for research into the teaching of modern foreign languages to dyslexics, and into their own learning and coping strategies.

Question 3.2 asked what views on these issues were expressed by the **advisors** Jillie and Dave assigned to such dyslexic students. They did indeed have positions. Though they are not specialists in Modern Languages, and though they admit of 'partial' automaticity, it appeared that they attributed lack of automaticity to *failure*, and to *overgeneralization*. They proposed that *failure* is in pragmatic grammatically judgements; and the *overgeneralization* is of the limited metalinguistic resources available to any dyslexic student. This L1 dyslexia failure, in their view, maps across to failure in L2 acquisition. I noted also that 'bad school teaching' - an absence of overt grammar awareness in their native language - seemed to underpin some of the advisors' account; and that the advisors norm-referenced dyslexics to native speakers in respect of both the dyslexic students' English and their foreign language. I found it interesting that

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[47] These terms are glossed in Appendix 4, using the sub-descriptors derived from the NVivo 8 modelling package.

they melded dyslexia and autism in proposing L1 'language autism' as a causal agent for dyslexia carry-through into the L2. This is reminiscent of Hinshelwood (1900) and his notion of 'mind blindness'.

Question 3.3 concerned the views expressed on these issues by the **academic director**, Derek, who revealed both pragmatic and theoretical stances. Derek does not believe in an 'absolute' form of automaticity per se, but believes that 'exposure and interaction' are the keys to its evolving. This is an orthodox 'communicativist' stance. However Derek's response, as academic director, was two-headed, highlighting a schism between EFL and MFL students as regards the utility of a study year abroad. The difference is in the place and status of proficiency. Derek justified foreign students coming to Wealdston on the grounds of the uplift this would offer to their proficiency. But he has lower expectations for MFL students. It may follow that these expectations will be lower still for dyslexic students. Not only so, but MFL students in particular need to display a measure of proficiency (thus, gradable/thresholdist) *before* they complete a study year abroad, in order to access it.

Question 3.4 concerned the *coherence* between the views expressed by the **dyslexic students,** the **advisors** and the **academic director**. As Model 8 shows, a greater convergence exists between the advisors and the academic director, with a limited convergence between students and advisors, and virtually none between students and academic director. The coherence between advisors and academic director relates to the norm-referencing of descriptions of proficiency, which ultimately centres on an idealised, native speaker/writer (although in intermediate stages, the gradations can be couched in terms of 'can do' statements, 'criteria', and the like). Some linkage can be seen between the advisors and the students. However, it only tangentially links to the academic director, and relates to the question of 'partial' automaticity. This is described as 'qualified' automaticity by the academic director in the EFL case but much less, a mere 'possibility', for MFL. Conversely, the items 'partial automaticity by sub-automatic rule internalisation' (advisors) and 'de-automation by overwriting' (students) tally more closely, though dialectically. There is some consensus between academic

director and advisors on the substantive issues of dyslexia and by extension, disability, to which I shall return below.

Question 3.5 extended the focus to ask what other information or indications emerged from the data and its analysis and interpretation. Earlier, during the process of analysis, I had noted the emergence of the notion of *agency*. I suggested that this is an overlooked factor, though common to most of the dyslexic respondents and 'prior' to other factors such as motivation, aptitude and other well-commented variables. I shall return to agency below. But regarding disability, I noted a shared diffidence at institutional level regarding engagement with disability in general, and dyslexics in particular. The advisors cohere, in this sense, with the academic director. The latter wishes away such an impost on his cost centre. The advisors, on the other hand, query the ontological status of the students they advise, implying that they cannot be all *that* dyslexic if they have made it here to Wealdston.

It also emerged, at this general level, that there is conflict. At institutional level, Wealdston University vaunts a meta-narrative couched in the rhetoric of widening participation, inclusion, diversity, languages-for-all, internationalism. At more local levels, the levers and tools for dealing with 'exceptional' students tend to be 'internally outsourced'. Monies are cascaded down to deal with advisors and their charges, but not from central teaching and research funds. This meta-narrative can also be subverted by a hands-off approach to disability which is not proactive but instead, demand-led and legalistic. This legalism is underscored and justified by reference to the transition of dyslexics from a mandatory educational context to a more 'elective' and 'aspirational' one – but in fact, to a different funding environment.

Other issues came into focus for me throughout the analysis. I found Salomon's (1993) concept of 'distributed cognition' both informative and pertinent. The academic director and the advisors are not 'in the same loop', institutionally. Conversely, the dyslexic students lack any loops - beyond the local (department- or faculty-level) advisors - unless they join a process of formally 'becoming an institutional dyslexic', which I outlined in Chapter 1. In that sense, the institution

is not *mindful* of its dyslexic students; it seems, in this sense, mindless, though in a sense very different to the earlier discussion of what Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1988) or Reber (1993) understood – automatic, and 'in the flow'.

Likewise, institutional 'knowledge' in the field of dyslexia, modern languages and issues such as automaticity and proficiency can become conflated with 'professional knowledge'- most directly, the academic director's - which is in turn conflated with 'best practice'. 'Best practice' can often be reduced to tutors' personal 'intuitive knowledge' or 'tacit knowledge', but be subverted when these tutors are part-timers working door-to-door between institutions, or treated as 'non-academic' staff or, anecdotally, labelled 'barefoots'.

Despite my heuristic references to Davies (1968, 1977, 2003) in discussing what 'proficiency' means, testing per se did not form a major focus of my study. However, a relevant and thought-provoking issue to emerge with several dyslexic respondents was the joy at *not* taking up special allowances in examinations, and therefore having passed under the same conditions as their peers; and their agency was enhanced in the process.

Power issues came to light. The 'internal outsourcing' of dyslexia advisors, and their requirement to operate within a legal framework co-determined by the Human Resources, Student Assessment and Progress (Exams), Disability and other internal units, determines both professional practice *and* praxis in the professionals. This can set up further power issues in that the implicit, collective knowledge of the institution can prevail over the explicit, conscious but depleted knowledge of the individual – be they advisor or advisee. I found their situations were not equilibrated. The advisors may be more 'narrated' than their dyslexic charges.

I noted that a further power issue arises when professional 'experts' in one area are not expert in another. This may arise because they possess one type of knowledge but lack other types which their role or function demands. Both the academic director and advisors intimated that they had not set out to be the

manager of an MFL unit as well as an EFL one, or to become syllabus experts and cogs in a disciplinary machine as well as student counsellors. Changing institutional status and roles may create disempowerment through progressive *dis*qualification, often in the name of 'efficiency savings' and even when a promotion is awarded. Even the comfortableness of knowledge *qua* adherence to trending orthodoxies is ruptured; the knock-on effects can be severe 'downstream' in the institution, and it may be the case that neither the academic director not the advisors possess, in truth, much more agency than the dyslexic students.

Question 3.6 asked, in sum, what coherence, theoretical or empirical, in the Institution concerned informs the 'incommensurability' question raised in my first Research Question: "To what extent is studying a foreign language at University to Proficiency level incommensurable with being dyslexic?"

An unfortunate and negative conclusion would be to advance that the institution is non-coherent and un-mindful, to avoid the terms incoherent and mindless. More properly, the incommensurability question reveals positive opportunities, not least of which is the opportunity for the institution to learn. A teaching institution which cannot learn would be a poor thing. But in my analysis, I felt clearly that coherence is lacking at both theoretical and empirical levels. Whether this study is a generalisable 'case' will be discussed in the last section of this chapter, but on a positive note, the 'incommensurability' question also provides a strong answer: automaticity and proficiency in dyslexic second-language learners in the institution studied is indeed possible; these learners say so.

Question 4, finally, asked what avenues were suggested in the research that the actors concerned in the study (including the Institution and, by extension, others) might explore to refute the 'incommensurability' notion.

Mindful of the answer to **Question 3.6** above, it seemed to me that several actions are needed. Not all of these first arise at the level of the institution concerned, a fact which I return to in my short discussion of 'cases' below. Some actions are also applicable to non modern languages students. But conversely, and for all that they refer specifically to testing, I found that the pervasive nostrum whereby

'what is good for dyslexics [sic], is good for everyone', cannot apply a priori, given the non-coherence, discontinuities and overlaps I have highlighted. Thus, specialist and particularist interventions are needed.

1. **Transitions**: A major difficulty reported in this study by the dyslexic students seemed to relate to *transitioning*. Not unusually, these problematic transitions have been between primary, secondary and tertiary education but also, between state and other institutions. Some of the institutions encountered by respondents were remedial but with low expectations for the student, and some were intended to be remedial for the student, but the institutions had higher expectations for their *own* repute. Thus, the public/private schooling binary needs more delicate assessment in this light, when considering a dyslexic student's 'journey' before entering higher education. The price they pay for 'help' can be more than financial, as several students reported.

2. **Confidentiality:** An emergent issue has also been *confidentiality*. Students wishing to maintain privacy regarding their dyslexia, or indeed any disability, also forego certain aids and assistances. This no-man's land needs to be converted into common ground, if students' compromised agency is to be overcome.

3. **Mindfulness**: The Institution in particular needs to be mindful of its students. It is in its own interests to be so. The 'mindfulness' needs to be genuine, systemic, systematic, and not superficially compliant ('box-ticking') or involve generalising dyslexic students under 'diversity' or other (possibly better-funded) labels.

4. **Auditing:** The Institution needs to *hear* its dyslexic students and, in the case of modern linguists, audit them 'locally', especially as regards compromised agency. The auditing process needs to be systemic and a mind with a memory needs to exist, which is both powerful and accountable at, and to, Pro-Vice-Chancellor level. This auditing is a sine qua non of shared proactivity (see 6. below) and must compensate in

particularist ways for a student's inclusion in the *generalised* 'institutional dyslexic' category.

5. **Teaching delivery:** Not unexpectedly, *teaching delivery* is a major issue. Under the guise of 'cultural preparation', teaching delivery in modern languages can override a student's needs, even when these are clearly laid out in education psychologists' reports, because "That's how it's done in (Germany, France, Italy…) on your year abroad". Multi-skill, cross-competency, multi-media foreign-language teaching is theoretically valuable to dyslexic students; it is, however, rare. Examples arose anecdotally of lecturers who 'don't do teaching' because they are, in their minds, researchers; and will at most provide a photocopy or two in advance. Conversely, dyslexic students may often be repelled by what Eraut terms 'hot' learning (Eraut 2000, p. 130). Balance and informed negotiation on teaching delivery are required.

6.   **Agency:** For me, the major finding in this study was that students are in fact able and willing and motivated to study a modern foreign language – when they have agency. They have broken out of a self-denying category and are attending university and studying a language at an advanced level. The facile answers that a) they were not dyslexic or b) they were insufficiently dyslexic are not generally borne out in the data. Conversely, what clearly emerged was that help by substitution ('I'll do it for you') is often no help at all; but help in becoming proactive is. Therefore an important action must be to discover and implement means for *shared proactivity* in establishing or re-establishing and then maintaining that agency.

I have limited these proposals to what is necessary, achievable, and suggested by the data. But transforming compromised agency into shared proactivity would be an end in itself, and also a good beginning – for all the actors involved in this study.

5.3   Some reservations about the study

Before speaking about generalisation and cases, I need to address some possible reservations about the study. Firstly, there were a small number of subjects, arbitrarily 12 in number and opportunistically gathered rather than selected or sampled for; and the institutional context in which they find themselves is specific.

Conversely, we would be speaking of relatively low numbers of dyslexic modern language students in any university-level institution.

Secondly, the in-depth, semi-structured interviewing method and the subsequent analysis which sought to increase the 'thickness' of the depth of investigation, presents known dangers. Not least among these are voluntary or involuntary convergence with the interviewer, involuntary 'cueing' of the respondents, respondent 'clienting', and many others explored by Hycner (1985), Powney and Watts (1987), May (1997), and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000).

Thirdly, the subsequent analysis which sought to increase the 'thickness' of the depth of investigation from an idiographic, naturalist and subjectivist point of view presents known challenges too. I have referred elsewhere to the methodology and method used in data analysis and the need to go beyond the boundaries of the immediate setting (Hammersley and Atkinson 1993).

To address these issues, I have worked (noting Giddens' 1979 'double hermeneutic'), within a phenomenological ontological framework in which the reality on which I focus involves a group of actors, including myself, who constitute that reality by performing certain actions with a particular understanding, or particular understandings, of what they are doing. In this subjectivist and particularist ontology there are limits to positivistic working. I felt that Dreyfus' (1982) heuristic requirements of modern scientific theory that it be *explicit, universal, abstract(ed), discrete, systematic, complete and predictive*[48],

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[48] See also Schatski (2006).

could not hold in my study, if they can even be held to do in the natural or the social sciences. *Explicitness* entails more than clarity and implies an exhaustive and propositionalised specification of the concepts under study. *Universality* requires a generalisation to all times and places; *abstraction*, in this sense, requires extraction of the object of study from purposive human action by sharers of meanings; *discreteness* presupposes that human context can be, and has been, elided from the 'reality' under consideration; *systematicity* requires both non-accidentality and systematic and rule-governed interrelationships between concepts. The requirement for *completeness*, which is the springboard of *prediction*, is a requirement for specification of all pertinent elements and possible effects in relation to the object of study – an impossibility, in my view.

Notably in this, my discussion cannot have a predictive focus (except in one, coincidental manner which I discuss in a short Postface chapter, below) because the reliability of predictions would depend in large part on their authentication (avoiding positivist connotations of 'validation') by human beings who are being considered in relation to the quotidian which constitutes the 'world-which-constitutes-them'. Predicting to known 'predictees' may invoke circularity. Secondly, though perhaps of greater importance, is that beyond any mismatch between concepts, prediction of human activity is impossible because human activity is, in my view here, indeterminate.

In Chapter 2, I cited Ricœur's notion of narrative *completion* in the reader (Ricœur 1991, p. 26). My broader constituency of 'validators' will be the readers of this thesis, who will be mindful in turn of cautions against the false consciousness of the respondents (Rex 1974) or of their lay actor status (Giddens 1976) and the potentially dissimilar realities of respondents and interviewer. My appeal is to Kemmis (1980) on the need for research to meet the demands of justification of people concerned with the truth of the findings and people worried about researcher accountability, and to Schutz' postulate of adequacy by verisimilitude or compatibility with the 'constructs of everyday life' (Schutz 1979, p. 35), and lastly to Maxwell's 1992 interpretation of *verstehen* which admits of descriptive, interpretive, theoretical and evaluative validity - but also, lastly, considers *generalizability*.

Thus an important question which remains to be addressed is whether this study presents a case, and whether that case is generalisable; and to this I now turn.

5.4   Making a case II - On validity and generalisation

As I suggested in section 1.11.2, defining a case can be problematic. Leaving aside the major question of whether cases are 'found' or 'made', to which I alluded earlier, definitions of case are numerous and circularly, can reflect the epistemological concerns of the definers, some of whom I cited in the earlier section mentioned.

Returning to cases and their generalisability, I ended my discussion in section 1.11.2 with Donmoyer's cautions about 'proof-giving' types of casing. Further discussion is offered here - a brief discussion of validity in qualitative and in quantitative working, and refocused epistemological understandings in presentation of a case.

Schofield (1990) cited Campbell and Stanley (1963), for whom "external validity asks the question of *generalizability*" (Campbell and Stanley 1963, p.175; original emphasis). For them, this generalizability will likewise require the application of hypotheses derived from quantitative findings across two axes: the socio-geographic, and the diachronic. Both Schofield and Donmoyer expanded away from these traditionalist views, and from the accretional epistemology advocated, for example, by Thorndike (1910), towards alternative conceptions. Hence, they looked toward a new language and new epistemology centred on *vicarious experience*.

Donmoyer presented two challenges to the "traditionalist" view as he defined it: the "Complexity" challenge, and the "Paradigm" challenge. The first is an essentially cultural and diachronic problem. Of particular interest to me was his reminder that generalisations "lose potency" over time owing to the changeability of cultures and the many-faceted interactions between subjects and methods which may intervene in place and in time, to the detriment of supposedly 'hard'

findings. Onto this time-place instability, Donmoyer grafts a discussion [embryonic, but expanded in Schofield (1990)] of the difficulties which may arise if the objects of the practitioner's interest are relatively autonomous individuals, and not an inanimate aggregate.

Donmoyer's "Paradigm" challenge addressed the problem of perception and the temporal convergence of (often idiosyncratic and latent) assumptions into shared, *a priori* theories - or paradigms - to which the researcher may subscribe. These may "influence the researchers' findings at least as much as the empirical reality being described" (Donmoyer 1990, p.179). Indeed, he specifically rejects *cause-and-effect generalisations* in research findings. Donmoyer is informed by the symbolic-interactionist views of Blumer (1969): his arguments are socio-semantic to the extent that "human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings things have for them and that meanings are a product of social interaction rather than external causes ... […] meanings are not static but must constantly be constructed and reconstructed by actors during social interaction" (Donmoyer 1990, p.180).

For me, one positive and one negative outcome may flow from the "Paradigm" challenge. Firstly, a knowledge of the process itself of social interaction and meaning exchange (for example, in teaching-learning situations), which is in Blumer's own terms "of far greater value for prediction, if that is one's interest, than would any amount of knowledge of tendencies or attitudes" (Blumer 1969, p. 98). My interest, as I have said, is not in prediction. But secondly, there is a recognition that explanatory frameworks can themselves send messages which are inaccurate, regardless of their substantive content, because of the essentially Kantian dilemma of our being unable to disentangle what we know from how we (have come to) know it.

This left me with another paradox: if I, as a researcher, am to remain concerned with non-ideal, (in several potential senses) individuals rather than with abstract aggregates, then research can only ever remain a "heuristic [which] can suggest

possibilities but never dictate action" (Donmoyer 1990, p.182). However, the research itself remains "inevitably ideological" (Lather, 1988), as the researcher must inevitably rely on a priori conceptualisations not determined by the data but determining of them. Hence we have "heuristic" data which nonetheless "inevitably conceals as it reveals" (Lather, 1988).

How to escape from these dilemmas? Donmoyer offered proposals to adapt and extend the concepts of *transferability* - derived from Lincoln and Guba (1985) and of *naturalistic generalizations* (Stake 1978, 1980) towards his concept of the 'vicarious' experience channelled through qualitative case studies.

Schofield too recognises that a redefinition of positivist 'replicability' can in fact serve not only to justify but to enhance qualitative work. Although much qualitative work is too arduous to specifically permit replicatory studies, particularly if, as in my thesis, the focus has been 'thickly described' in the sense of Geertz (1973), it can nonetheless "stimulate further research of a qualitative *or quantitative* (my emphasis) nature that provides information on the replicability of that one aspect of a study" (Schofield 1990, p. 204; emphasis added). Schofield cites earlier work of Guba and Lincoln (1981, 1982) and Stake (1978) together with Goetz and LeCompte (1984) to describe an emerging consensus in qualitative work itself, though terminologies and precise foci of attention differ: "fittingness" - the degree to which situations studies match one another - in Guba and Lincoln, "naturalistic generalization" or idiographic bodies of knowledge encapsulated in "working hypotheses" in Stake, and "translation and comparability" based on clear description of theoretical stances and research techniques advocated by Goetz and LeCompte (ibid.).

I have noted the "fittingness", as it is cousin to my coherentist approach.

Several other factors informed the present research and served me, the researcher, in my quest for *understanding*. Donmoyer refers to the accessibility offered by

research "to places where most of us would not have an opportunity to go" (Donmoyer 1990, p.194), through this vicarious experience. He proposes that "the role of research is not primarily to find the correct interpretation … […] the purpose of research is simply to expand the range of interpretations available to the research consumer" (ibid.).

I noted also that in their discussion of positivist forms of triangulation and their counter-proposal of *transferability*, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that "an investigator can make no statements about transferability for his or her findings based solely on data from the studied context alone. […] the final judgement on that matter is […] vested in the person seeking to make the transfer" (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 217).

Synthesising points I have raised so far, despite the exigencies of trying to emulate quantification by breadth and density of investigation, I believe that it is still possible to respect the notion that we can generalise by, in Shakespeare's terms, "holding the mirror up to nature". As a researcher working within a qualitative and coherentist approach, I have become aware that questions of *validity, applicability* and indeed, *generalizability* reside firmly with the study's readers, provided always that my study has been scrupulous and professional not only in presenting and describing and analysing, but in relating also the contents of my "peripheral vision" of the phenomena I have studied, and of myself.

5.5   Implications for further research

My research has several implications, and suggests avenues, for further research.

5.5.1   There is a need to consider **gaps in stages in schooling** as a general case. Specifically in terms of the themes of this thesis, there is a need to enquire further into socioeconomic issues and schooling, notably the disruptive effect on first-language and foreign-language skills of being moved, by fluctuations in family finances, between state and private schools, notably where the latter are both

success-focused and unequipped for remedial or supportive work – and brazenly flout legislation on this 'invisible' disability. Such research would also contribute further to understandings of the links, if links there are, between first language and further language dyslexia: is an English mother-tongue dyslexic fated to fail in another language? 'Second bite at the apple' literatures exemplified by Miller-Guron and Lundberg (2000) may be even less persuasive (Le Juen 2006 p. 52) if other explanations for counter-cases of L2 success in L1 dyslexics can be found.

5.5.2   Accessibility issues: The notion of *agency* has emerged in my study, and the realisation that people from certain backgrounds can make it work; however, the small sample of students and their limited variability in terms of social stratification and ethnic origin calls for amplification: only one claimed 'working class' status and none showed visible signs of ethnic difference. Discussions of power and thus, powerlessness need to accompany a further, more delicate discussion of agency as it relates to accessibility to higher study.

5.5.3   The 'institutional dyslexic': this concept, which I have used heuristically, needs further unpacking along two axes: you cannot, seemingly, get help unless you accept the label of 'dyslexic' (thus, a measure of self-diagnosis and self-confirmation is required) and secondarily upon this, the issue of the centrality of dyslexia is lost. In other terms, the pragmatic lumping together of 'dyslexia', 'dyslexia-like' and 'dyslexia-producing' labels may hide other conditions and needs – as simple as reading-glasses, or as devastating as parietal lobe brain tumours.

5.5.4   Gender issues

5.5.4.1 Meta-awareness: There seems from my limited sample to be greater meta-awareness among the female students, in broad terms and here, in the narrow term of their self-understanding in relation to their dyslexia. Exploring this apparent difference with males would find avenues for back-reflection toward both exceptional and unexceptional female students, notably those engaged in formal foreign language study.

5.5.4.2 Gender and choice in academic disciplines: Very specifically, future research would be useful on the fate of women students with dyslexia who undertake formerly 'male' subjects – such as engineering and the applied sciences – and may make themselves *doubly* visible – by their dyslexia and their gender. This research might well point up difference in institutional views, in that allusions to 'creative genius' often accompany references to male students in media or informatics courses who are dyslexic. What is the experience of women dyslexics in these fields?

5.5.4.3 Gender, dyslexia and prior 'bilingualism': Additionally, when female dyslexic students come to further or higher education from multiethnic and/or multilingual backgrounds, what are correlative and what, causal links between their language difficulty and previous home and school language use? Some girls and women are forcedly 'bilingual' in the home, and may be assumed at secondary school level to be linguists; although formal exposure to further languages can in fact be catastrophic. Primary research in this area seems to lack, but will be essential to "widening participation" and similar initiatives.

5.6   From CAS to Thesis: a final reprise

I suggested at the close of Chapter 1 (the reprise of my CAS study) that a part of the Conclusion here should be to comment on what the thesis has added to the CAS. This is simply stated. The heuristic 'institutional dyslexic' of my CAS was useful at both the substantive and the methodological level to highlight disparities between theory and practice regarding notions of 'proficiency', 'automaticity' and the condition of being a 'dyslexic' student of modern languages in a higher education institution. The thesis has added more dimensions. Firstly, the voices of non-heuristic ('real') institutional dyslexic students. Secondly, a re-consideration and reconfiguration of the interrelationships between automaticity, proficiency and dyslexia in the light of second-language teaching and learning theory, and in the light of the stories which are told in the Institution: the institution's own, as vehicled by its dyslexic students, and those of their student

advisors and an academic manager. Finally, an account of conflicts in knowledge (and consequently, power) which ensue from the 'automaticities' of overt and tacit knowledge and professional expertise – and sometimes, their loss or supersession – was included.

What has emerged for me is that from a picture of possible negativity and impossibility, managerialist pragmatism and short-termism, and certain signs of discontinuity, balkanisation and insularity of the Institution, hope shines through. Subjectively, I found it particularly salutary that in their narrations, the dyslexic students themselves were able to help me realise that their own remediations and strategies, and notably their struggle for agency or its restoration and certainly, its sharing, have value, possibility and opportunity. They are far from being 'narrated'. The dyslexic respondents have led me, a researcher and teacher, to learn something I didn't expect to. This will inform my professional practice – in both spheres.

Chapter 6

A Postface

I completed reading for, and writing, this study in April 2011. Earlier in the thesis, I discussed the question of *prediction*, in the context of Dreyfus (1982). My research has, since its inception and quite 'unpredictably', become very topical in that the Wealdston University, inspired by new managers and an apparent turn-about in government policy[49], has decided not to curtail its language programmes but instead, preserve its modern language degrees and indeed, expand the programme to include a 'language proficiency' qualification as a 'minor' element in a very great number of its science, social science and humanities degrees. Numbers of 'institutional dyslexics' attempting a language will, in all probability, increase.

This research is dedicated to them.

20 April 2011
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Appendix 1A – Research Ethics Statement

The present Statement is modelled on the Standards and Guidelines on Research Ethics and its Checklist Annex published by the University of Sussex variously at http://www.sussex.ac.uk/rrdd/documents/code.pdf (1990) and https://studydirect.sussex.ac.uk/file.php/1153/Handbook_Assessment/Professional _Doctorate_in_Education.pdf (2006/7), both accessed most recently on 17th July 2007. It is to be noted that these documents are now off-line because they have largely been subsumed, after the reorganisation of the Sussex Institute which hosted the Education Department, into more recent protocols; thus slightly more extended and explanatory answers are given here, in the spirit of convergence with these, and not in the interests of prolixity.

Standards 1 & 3: Safeguard the interests and rights of those involved or affected by the research. Establish informed consent.

1.1   I have considered the well-being of those involved or affected. Measures have been taken to protect their interests (e.g. by clarifying the use to be made of outcomes, and particularly the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality).

1.2   Written and signed consent was not obtained for one of the cohorts because of the nature of the participants in the research - who are dyslexics and can react to form-filling, e.g. by avoiding it. In compensation for this, a full verbal explanation was given at the time of interview, and an abbreviated version of the main points of this explanation was recorded as part of the transcript. The participants were informed of their right to refuse or to withdraw at any time. Respondents who were not members of the Dyslexic cohorts being interviewed were offered a written consent form but the main cohort of dyslexic subjects were first read the paper then supplied with it.

1.3   The purposes and processes of the research were explained and the implications for participants in terms of time were explained also. The "standard" refers to the expression "fully explained" but for reasons intrinsic to the research it was not fully explained to members of the Dyslexic cohort that the same instrument would be used for "Fossilised Adult Second Language Learners*"*, nor vice-versa, to avoid leading the

respondents. In the event the responses of the "Fossilised Adult Second Language Learners" were not used in the present study. For reasons adduced under 1.2 above only verbal communication was used except for logistical e-mails. Any reference to the possible influence of the outcomes of the Research was, again for reasons cited above, usually only made if elicited by the Respondent, again to discourage respondents' convergence with the Researcher in their answers, and because the outcomes will only be known upon analysis of the data.

1.4   I did not use covert forms of research, indeed the research questions and general outline of the Semi-Structured interviews were explained overtly to the participants (dyslexic respondents, dyslexia advisors, academic director) using the protocols also included here as Appendix 3A, 3B, 3C. Agrement to proceed was included as part of each interview, the possibility of not answering was explained, and confidentiality offered. My Appendix 1B, below, presents the Informed Consent form read-over to participants (initially, as they were dyslexic) then given to them.

1.5   Section 1.5 contains presuppositions on what "data" and "findings" are and here, "data" are taken to mean raw, incoming information and "findings", to mean selected, analysed and categorised items from which it is proposed to claim knowledge. The research did include procedures to verify data with respondents but not to offer feedback on the findings. Data-verification procedures were limited to *response* verification a) during interviews, through interview probes or requests for clarification, and occasional oral running summaries and b) in an end-of-interview, a closure section when the respondent was asked what s/he felt had been omitted or now wished to add spontaneously. For reasons germane to interviewing methodology and the uniqueness of the event (see Tulving (1972) and Episodic versus Semantic memory and the dangers of over-writing oral data), continuation interviews were not proposed though some respondents supplied additional factual information after the event, usually by e-mail (exact A Level grades, parental information they had lost, similar).

1.6   The participants were involved indirectly, but legitimately, in data collection (see reservations in 1.5 about this term) to the extent that some of the respondents belonged to a type of Dyslexia Club run on campus by the Student Advisory service, and could refer their friends and acquaintances to me. No student was paid for recruiting other students. Individual students and some part-time colleagues were paid a flat-rate, small honorarium, as is common practice with e.g. science and social science research project interviews.

1.7   Anonymity and confidentiality were offered and these were conditional, as discussed below. Reciprocal confidentiality was requested, to avoid predisposing other respondents and because not all respondents have elected to make their language condition known to a) fellow-students, b) the University. Anonymity has been preserved in a further sense, which is that the Semi-Structured interviews have been reduced into a single narrative by means discussed elsewhere (Proposal Document). Conditional anonymity has been hard to offer and already a fellow employee at Sussex (who no longer works here) contacted my cohort via a Student Advisory e-list, with a view to discovering their opinions on various matters. I will not be using the students who were contacted in this way, or their interviews, as it transpired that my offers of anonymity and confidentiality were baseless. Further respondents will have this concept of "conditional" anonymity and confidentiality better explained, particularly in view of legal requirements and effects of the Disability Discrimination and associated Acts (e.g. disclosure of a disability is a requirement if the University/employer etc. are to act on this disability).

1.8   There is no person directly parallel to these categories however individual Student Advisors, on the one hand, and my own Line-Manager, on the other, are aware of the research and in positions to intervene upon myself or my respondents in case of need under 1.8.

Standard 2: Ensure legislative requirements on human rights and data protection have been met.

2.1   The implications of at least the four pieces of legislation listed at http://www.sussex.ac.uk/si/1-7-6-2.html (last accessed on 17.07.07) have been considered: The Data Protection Act, to the extent that the Respondents will be made aware how and why any of their personal data is being held, including non-electronic ones though these will be a rarity given the nature of the research and its methods. As regards onward use of their data for secondary analysis beyond the purpose for which they were first collected, these responses will have been analysed, anonymised and transformed into a collective narrative and thus no longer be strictly identifiable as "their" data.

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995-2005 and annexes) is a central plank of the Thesis and of its precursor CAS[50]. Dyslexic participants in the research will be invited to apply for details of its outcome. The Human Rights Act (1998) and Convention the Rights of the Child (1989) are not thought to have direct relevance to the research nor its prosecution in ways not covered in other responses to the Code of Ethics but it has been noted that the online Sussex Institute Standards and Guidelines on Research Ethics referred to above propose that "the spirit of this Act should apply to research contexts involving young people and vulnerable adults involved in research". The Respondents are all adults, though some lability, convergence and projection has been noted in early work and will be dealt with professionally or referred. As has already been stated, by extension of UNCRC (1991) art. 12, the Dyslexic respondents have been facilitated in making Informed Consent by repetition.

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[50] Le Juen, Y. (2006), Proficiency, Automaticity and the Dyslexic Modern Language Learner: A Critical Analytical Study in Conflicts of Knowledge - CAS (Critical Analytical Study) in part-submission for Professional Doctorate in Education (EdD).

2.2   No particular implications have arisen from legislation, nor do uncertainties currently exist, but contact will be made with the named university person in such cases. Ethical issues will be separated from employment ones, as the coherentist approach to the research requires triangulation of the enquiry from dyslexic respondents not only with a) dyslexia tutor-advisors, but also b) my own line-manager.

Standard 4: Develop the highest possible standards of research practices including in research design, data collection, storage, analysis, interpretation and reporting

3.1   Existing literature and ongoing research have been identified and considered both in the CAS (reference as above) and in the emerging Thesis.

3.2   Methods have been selected to be fit for purpose.

3.3   Where appropriate to the Research Design, all data collection proposed has been used to address the question.

3.4   Methods for verifying data have been built into the research design, including the triangulation referred to in 2.2 above.

3.5   The research is not externally funded.

3.6   Plans of this nature (UK Data Archive) have not currently been considered, given the nature of the degree-bearing research concerned.

Standard 5: Consider the consequences of your work or its misuse for those you study and other interested parties

4.1   The short and long term consequences of the research have been considered from the perspectives of the participants and the researcher. The fact of its being carried out has been reflected upon separately from

any facts it may be uncovering. Funders and "policy makers" may be, locally, an issue if the research findings highlight "grey" institutional practices in the admission/teaching/qualification of dyslexic students, given that the Institution will also fund and award my Thesis.

4.2   Cost (financial) to participants has been dealt with on the basis of a flat-rate hourly payment well in excess of Minimum Wage requirements and comparable to similar payments made to undergraduate respondents in similar research projects.

4.3   Information about support services such as mentoring and counselling has been considered in cases where there might be unsettling effects of the research, and the notion of respondents 'clienting' is covered in the methodological discussion. However the majority of respondents have been referred by such services in the first place. It is observed here though that respondents were redirected to Advisors rather than Student Mentors, unless for the barest practicalities, but consideration was given to students' funding status also as Counselling costs require either LEA, Private or Hardship Fund financing, and are not free.

4.4   Planning flexibility will allow for time to discuss issues arising from the effects of the research on the individuals; however the effects on institutions/services will take further time and fall outwith the research project itself where this refers to external institutions and services rather than the Institution which is forming the focus of the study.

Standard 6: Ensure appropriate external professional ethical committee approval is granted where relevant

5.1   A supervisor was asked to comment on the research proposal in the first instance, then a second internal supervisor, in ethical terms and following a reading of a draft of this document.

5.2   Sensitive ethical issues: none had at the time of writing been raised by the School Committee nor comments sought. However it was anticipated that Supervisor comments might well do so on reading parts of the Thesis. Indeed, revisions lead to further masking of the participants' details as some respondents were, in addition, colleagues and, in one case, in a line-managerial relationship with the researcher though that respondent has now retired.

5.3   External professional ethical committees: none has been identified as yet, thus none has been contacted.

5.4   This question asked whether guidelines from that professional committee been used to check the proposed research. At that time the Sussex Institute dealt internally with these issues and I generated a draft statement which was reviewed and amended by my Supervisor, notably as my research does not bear on health or social care issues.

5.5   This question asked whether plans include seeking clearance from any committee and leaving sufficient time for clearance when organizing my proposal. Such planning was not included, for the reasons adumbrated above. However, mindfulness of the issues raised in the Ethics clearance process at that time led to my creating an Informed Consent document to be read in the first instance to participants (as many were dyslexics) then supplied to them in written form. This is attached below as Appendix 1B.

Appendix 1B – Research Ethics Statement - Informed Consent

Thank you for taking part in my Research. This Research is subject to the guidance of a Research Ethics Committee. I am required to point out some things to you for your information and your protection - and mine.

1. We are required to respect the most recent versions of four pieces of legislation in particular - the Data Protection Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995-2005, the Human Rights Act 1998 and Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989. In accordance with common practice I extend the UNCRC to cover both children and vulnerable adults. I am accustomed to *reading out* this document for DDA reasons, but I'll give you a copy too.

2. Your contribution to the research will be doubly confidential: it will not identify you personally in the first place (anonymity), and methodologically, your contribution will be blended with others into a narrative.

3. I would ask that confidentiality be two-way, i.e. that you don't tell other people the details of what you learn about this research. This is only because others might contribute after you, and may try to "help" the research.

4. You have every right not to answer particular questions which you find personally intrusive. It would help if you would say "No Answer" rather than disguising your feelings.

5. In some cases I will have asked you to speak from a Role position rather than a Personal one. Both contributions are welcome. I will ask you on some occasions to remind me from which position(s) you are speaking - Tutor, Advisor, Parent, etc.

6. I try not to "lead" you with the questions I ask. But sometimes I'll ask for clarification, or instances, or a qualification (such as *slightly, deeply, 50%,* and so forth).

7. I would welcome, but do not expect, further information you remember after the interview; if things arise at interview that you need to talk through with me on a non-interview basis, please contact me without hesitation and I will help or seek help for you.

8. I will now ask you, as part of the recording, to indicate to me that you are happy to proceed on this basis, and you will have a copy of this Statement for your records.

The Researcher - Yves Le Juen, A57 Arts A, 7409

Appendix 2 – The respondents' stories

Appendix 2A – Aggie's Story

Me, in a nutshell!
I am middle-class, I am not tone-deaf, I don't have a clinical or Ed-Psych report of amusia or acalculia or alexia, dyslexia or SLI [specific language impairment], I'm not clumsier than average, and I am mostly right-dominant. I have same-coloured eyes (blue/green/gray) natural, normal hearing natural, normal eye-sight - just oridinary [sic] short sight - (5.5). I can't do deliberate mimicry, impersonations but I have involuntry [sic] mimicry (or convergence). Have I just made 2 typos in my e-mail or am I dyslexic? Yes, I am dyslexic - but not certified as such. My School French GCE = Grade B, and my School English GCE = also Grade B. I know other languages through their difference to English but don't "fully" know those languages. I'm going to talk about learning Russian, Italian, and French.

I have fun with Russian – a crap teacher
I had a Language 2 imposed on me as part of other studies – Russian. I found learning it a very stressful experience - I just didn't get on with what was going on; I vaguely remember accented homonyms, the rest is a blank now! I read and prepared and learned ahead of the class - but I found the course peculiar and I was not alone in hating this course. The tutor was from overseas, and I think there was a secret agenda to the teaching. I know about Suggestopaedia: I know what's normal for a Suggestopaedia class, so I know that this was "strict" Suggestopaedia. I noted a class mate was motivated to learn non-Suggestopaedically. Like I said, I was very, very tense about it; I needed a drink before each class! I learned nothing from the bad Russian tutor. I had no expectation that I should pass or fail with the Russian - but I don't regret *not* acquiring Russian, because it wasn't my choice to study it. I was depersonalised and infantilised by the tutor/teaching of Russian. Why? I was offended by the teacher's *attitude* and by the teacher's presumptiveness about being the source of learning. I was horrified by being saddled with a Personality Teacher and a teacher who took no account of individual taste or preferences. Here was I giving to the tutor (time, money) but this wasn't acknowledged. I received Bad (Customer) Service from this tutor!

I had a gut reaction against a tutor who treated people like that and was revolted by the teacher's cruelty. The Bad teacher made me aware that it would be very easy for a teacher to destroy my confidence and motivation.

I can spot a crap (for me) teacher in nanoseconds. I was stressed by *anticipation*, ill-disposed to the Russian Tutor. I had a flashback / panic reaction to the Bad Russian teacher: "I just know that this woman cannot teach me", I thought, and that's the only time of my life that it's ever happened, apart from with Mashinka. I feel that with Mashinka, it wasn't just the methodology, it was the lack of acknowledgement of her pupils as people. I felt Mashinka was telling me "It's your fault if you're not learning". I was actually probably the person who reacted most strongly to this woman, though I was conscious of the other learners' feelings and thoughts. I was aware that many people were so *angry* and so *offended* by this Russian woman. I learned nothing from the Russian tutor, none of us did.

What went wrong?
I am not ill-disposed to "difficult" languages, a priori, but I am sensitive to learning atmospheres. I need an atmosphere which is conducive to learning, but I was seething. I despise formulaic teaching (Russian or Italian) by tutors who know what they're doing but not why. And I don't take language ability for teaching ability. I don't have a problem with Suggestopaedia per se, only with under-rehearsing learners and reciting their "basic phrases" - because otherwise they get memory overload. I am a teacher myself and I can spot "appalling". I can spot a crap teacher because I can spot the vindictive and the

pathological! I know a PGCE-trained teacher when I see one. I found the teacher arbitrary and unfair, so I switched off I was being forced to remember something unanalysed and not understood. I had a double annoyance: that we didn't do read/write language learning AND that we were actively "not allowed" to do it. This experience has affected my desire to know Russian culture and travel there. This (my experience with this Russian tutor) hasn't put me off learning a language at all, but I would do absolutely anything at all to get out of learning Russian, now. Indeed, I built up an actual resistance to absorbing Russian, from this experience. I needed to be coaxed by the others to come into the lesson. My reaction personally was probably stronger than the others, indeed the symptoms of my distress were different to the others in the class.

My Credo – How should it have been?
I'm about to argue below for elasticity and not rigidity in teaching-learning situations but the elastic *timetabling*, on the Russian course, had offended me. I have a theory around elasticity in teaching-learning, not rigidity. I think tutors should bend. In my teaching-learning theory, tutors should react to learners and not vice-versa (you can plan it, AND you can dump it if necessary). I believe interest in languages and prior language learning are facilitators of further language learning. I want *writing* when I learn a language, i.e. I want to produce/transform inputs rather than to repeat un-understood ones. There is a mathematical relationship between length of time of teaching and uptake of that teaching! Insider knowledge [my being a teacher who is being taught] is a double-edged sword: it speeds me up in task completion, but it saps motivation when I see it being done wrong. I think a "teacher's book" attached to a course book neither trains nor educates teachers; but if they're trained or educated already, then teacher's books have some sense and/or are redundant.

I think becoming accurate and building up the foreign language are parallel but separate activities. I believe a *wants* analysis is needed (rather than *needs*) and that students should be acknowledged culturally and motivationally by their teachers. I believe in negotiation between teacher and student(s) over the syllabus, and that the teacher needs to help develop the learner's motivation and confidence. Because learning styles are individual, I believe teachers should abstract themselves - rather than teach against their principles. It's the teacher's role to acknowledge their students.

I believe teachers have an identity separate from their personal identity but I think empathy and a bit of attention predispose learners favourably.

Thinking about my own language learning needs and strategies
I have "inclinations" in my language learning – strategies and desires and probably my own learning syllabus. Indeed, I have a theory about language learning and cultural/linguistic immersion. My colleagues in the Italian class were instrumental learners - not seeking automation, just accretion - but I need an integrative + instrumental motivation: instrumental alone wouldn't carry me through an evening class programme.

I focus and complete better in group language learning than alone, but the teacher has an influence on how long I stay on the course. I can work out people's prior language learning history. I need teachers who, like me, have been trained – *properly*. I have high expectations of teachers because I'm a teacher trainer myself! I probably do need to learn to switch off a little bit more when I go into a language class; I have classroom anxiety by proxy.

Now I like grammar: learning it is related to my Learning Style. I welcome metalinguistic knowledge and its encouragement in others by teaching. I know my French grammar's poor and that does bug me a little bit. I have a birth-bilingual sibling, but I too

had a childhood experience of communicative success in a L2, not failure. I have overall prosodic awareness, even if my micro phonology e.g. vowel discrimination is defective.

I (think I) project enthusiasm and a desire to learn. I know what I'm doing and I can't acknowledge that I don't know what I'm doing. As an adult, I feel sometimes I have to get someone else to do it if I don't.

My theory on uptake is that, if you have a reasonable level and you have confidence, then uptake is (diagrammatic, quadratic, schematic…?). I liked focused and purposeful one-to-one teaching, for specific short-term purposes. Indeed, I might take separate classes for separate language activities in the FL
I probably do need to learn to switch off a little bit more when I go into a language class; I have classroom anxiety by proxy. I can get by: but my instrumentalism is cutting off accuracy, I have no motive in being accurate if I can achieve anyway, so I need an external stimulus in order to start improving my accuracy.

Ideally, I would lead my own learning by choosing classes, teacher, and 1:1 status. I wouldn't "automate exponentially" if I wanted better French, I'd need "quite boring repetitive work", "a long haul", "quite hard". I both need and despise dull, boring and ploddy teaching in basics. I'd want bespoke teaching materials, though I can revise and recall phrase-book language and functional-notional items from teaching scenarios.

I think people can have an "ear" for languages: my sister's knowledge of high technical French grammar is permanent and communicable. I don't acquire spontaneously as an adult, myself - though my sister does: but she studied grammar books, so it wasn't all "spontaneous adult acquisition".

I like learning things and I've never had a problem saying "I don't know and I'm going to learn". My own learning strategy: "if I want a language I'll go and find a situation in which I have to use it", because I feel language learning in the abstract is pointless - I feel language is about responding to people. In language, you have to make some effort to establish that rapport.

I'm always angry at my lack of self-discipline to do things - I'm very poor on the self-discipline front, and I need somebody to impose a bit of discipline. I actually appreciate a teacher picking up on my weaknesses in order to help alleviate them, so I need negotiation and shared control, i.e. discipline without loss of autonomy.

As an adult I sometimes feel I have to bluff if I don't know, or even lie! I have had issues with my age, gender, status, and levels of formality too. My strategy is to speak quite quickly so nobody hears what I'm saying! I could compensate practically for my lack of grammar knowledge in tests in this way.

French and me!
I have had passive child acquisition of spoken French. Paradoxically my childhood success is now adult failure as I've not followed through grammatically, and people will wonder… My sister has high technical understanding of French grammar – she acquired "magically" because she was 5 and bilingual. At school, language facility in French brought me kudos. And boys. A practical outcome and success in it added purpose and confidence to my school studies. I was average but individualistic at school – this individualism was a coping mechanism. My Oral and Written French were out of balance at O Level – an indicator. I got the same for French and English GCEs – grade B. Having gone back to French, because I went to live and work in France, My opportunistically acquired, orally-sourced French has all but disappeared, as I have little metalinguisic

sense or categories now; I acquired *français de l'oreiller* but I can't write a letter in French; I can describe and circumlocute my way around things in the foreign language (here, French), but I have a problem with accuracy as opposed to fluency in my French. I am aware enough of how bad it is, yeah – my written French. I wanted to be an insider in France but not to *be* French. "Correct" English can have a Scots etc. accent; however "correct" French shouldn't have a Brit one. I can't make some French vowel sounds because I can't perceive them as input. I would rather speak the French I speak with a reasonably good accent than speak grammatically perfect French with an awful accent - I didn't ever offend people [with my French] but I was always a foreigner, so that was OK! I had a convergence problem - or gift of mimicry, depending on how you consider it, to the point of some native language loss; I was embarrassed by others out of using these Gallic overlays

I have a conservative view of my (Chomskyian) competence in French. Having motivation and having discipline for language learning aren't the same thing, for me. I am a reverse case of the rest of the class: I am fluent but inaccurate, they are accurate but not fluent. I haven't got the discipline. I should have added to what the Teacher did, done it myself.

Other teachers – and me!

I believe there has to be some sort of methodology, some sort of thought into [language teaching. Teacher *attitude* can be a factor in my own acquisition/learning/uptake of language. I dislike pompous, dogmatic and didactic teachers. In my experience, a teacher can be irrelevant or at least, a poor agent for learning. I think it's punctured confidence (punctured by half-cock teaching) which makes language learners go back to 2-language use in the foreign language classroom. As for me, I'm a "communicative-based teacher", even if I'm not altogether on board with Communicative Language Teaching. I found the (Italian) teacher was a communicativist, i.e. in this sense, he was a giver/sharer and not a *withholder* or FOFO artiste like the Russian woman. This over and above the Communicative Movement typology. I can work out people's prior language learning history. I think that there is a particular sort of knowledge available to a "good" teacher which isn't simply years of practice; I think learners also get confidence from witnessing this knowledge and conversely, lose confidence sometimes dramatically when it's not there. I can define a good teacher as someone who wants to teach well, is interested in the students, tries to innovate, has a nice manner, who plans and arranges. A teacher needs *nous* and pre-emptive thinking / mind-melding with the learners – because they'll switch off it it's not there. A well-meaning teacher isn't good teacher if they haven't evolved their own way of making aims and methods address each other. Some teachers can encourage accidental learning in the right context, in my view. I think there's a difference between being uncritical about something and not minding about something. You can 'not mind' something because you are lacking critical awareness, and mind desperately just because you *are* critical about something, of course. I learn a lot by observing other teachers, even though this can be a turn-off in my own learning situations (Russian, Italian examples). I think one fluff in teaching is excusable; two begins to look like carelessness – with apologies to Lady Bracknell

Cultural attitudes, accents, Britishness

The thought of what I *could* end up sounding like blocks me, a bit. I believe you can be British in French, if you don't look out, and imposing Britishness linguistically makes me cringe. I am slightly repelled by Britishness including British language learning prowess (or the lack of it!). I think that languages have a soul, and the soul of a language is its sound and rhythm. The soul of the language is the communicative act, it has a performative aspect. A Ted Heath accent really hides racism or at least cultural autism. I have perceived a split between native speaker attitudes and learner attitudes on the relative importance of communicative ability over linguistic accuracy. I infer that people

infer that I'm mocking the soul of the French Language if my accent's too Brit. I believe a language expresses a culture uniquely. Some British people imagine a foreign accent isn't "nice", and probably treacherous!
 I have a belief that monoculturals/monolinguals are more coloured or resistive towards other language/cultures: such people suffer from a lack intercultural awareness and this blocks their acquisition or uptake of a foreign

My linguistic instability
I was not conscious of oddities in my English when I was abroad; however being in a foreign country my own First language became definitely wobbly. I have good metalinguistic awareness - but aurally and for other people. So I can notice "not quite" English in others, but living in another language does affect my own ability to use English, as does living with somebody with a strong accent. I have been told here that I pick up expressions from colleagues and I don't even think about it .

Oh, did I say? I think I'm dyslexic.

Appendix 2B – Carmen's Story

General Stuff about me!
I was aged 21 at the time of this interview. I'm middle class I am recognised by the State as disabled. I had a false start at Uni. I'm right-handed and right-footed. I'm not much more clumsy than the next person but I'm messy, *very* messy. My eyes are the same colour; I had a lazy eye in childhood, corrected by glasses. I'm a bit long-sighted in my lazy eye I still occasionally wear glasses. I was told to see an Optician but didn't bother because I decided intellectually that this was pointless. My hearing is fine; I can do accents, badly. I converge phonologically with people (the accommodation phenomenon). I had naturalistic acquisition of music. I know about "famous" dyslexics. I'll "have a go" at anything, despite my dyslexia. I get drunk.

So: what's my problem?
I have a 'late' diagnosis of dyslexia. This diagnosis took place at University; the psychologist's diagnosis was of "mild dyslexia" and "fluency problems". Indeed, my dyslexia is a knock-on effect of another cause, the working memory difficulty – this emerged in general diagnostic work. I do not have automaticity and have to learn by rote BUT I can't learn by rote too well, with my Working Memory problem. I have a Working Memory problem with the interrupted numbers test. My numbers problem has never been salient in daily life, unlike my language difficulty. I don't have *acalculia*, just working memory problems.

I have never had a problem with actual reading: I have always been a keen reader. I feel a bit iffy about this, but I come from a family of avid generalist readers. My problem is more productive than receptive. I have problems with fluency in writing: I have difficulty in expressing, in writing, what I'm thinking. I have great difficulty in assembling and structuring for another reader the orderly ideas that are there in my head. Academic text is new to me I need time to read academic text.

I have tip-of-the-tongue word-retrieval difficulties: I lose words, and "hang" like a computer. The 'me' who is thinking and the 'me' who is assembling and saying what I'm thinking don't communicate, at times. I am socially inhibited by my "block" and potential malapropisms - It's just happened, I'm looking for the words *malapropism* and *synonym* and they're not there. I don't have an accessible slot for some of these words; they've slipped my mind even now. I have a certain amount of fatalism about word-loss. Some spellings are NOT obvious to me; learning to spell "stupid" words was a "little victory" [battle image].

Dyslexia is not that bad because I can master it to work for me. I'm still determined, even after my realisation; I know something if I can write it down, this is my strategy for learning. Oral presentations are fine if I'm prepared. But listening and writing at the same time makes me tune out, because I lose both the input - from the Lecturer - and the output, the notes to myself. Communicative interactions of any sort are affected by my dyslexia. I can sing tunes (music) note-perfect but not the words - I can't learn German *lieder* by heart, as a singer, it doesn't click in; I don't acquire automaticity over singing material in German or English.

My family
For my father, I respond about *my parents* during the interview. My family are all academic high achievers. I am a psychiatrist's daughter. My Dad's an Oxford graduate, psychiatrist and author, "so" not dyslexic. My father the psychiatrist doesn't take my dyslexia seriously as a problem (but I'll note later in the Interview that my Dad the psychiatrist DID help me at school with spellings - *my Little Spelling Book*). My Mum has terrible handwriting I am aware of my mother's coping strategies for probable

dyslexia. I told my Mum she might be dyslexic, indeed I have discussed her dyslexia extensively with Mum. I believe there is a genetic route for dyslexia.

Reading
I do really have a receptive problem with reading despite what I said earlier (so I'm inconsistent, like Matt). I tune out during reading. I don't absorb information from reading when I'm tuned out. Also I can't get the gist of a technical text because of new technical words which interrupt my holistic reading; I can't get the gist of a technical text because of complex sentences which interrupt my holistic reading.

Writing
My spelling is terrible, and people noticed my bad spelling. I don't have strephosymbolia, however I do write 'phonetically', as I would hear or say it. I do have unstable orthography, as I said earlier, so my spelling is 'variable' as well as just 'bad'. I have difficulty hearing the Lecture and writing Notes at the same time I go off on a tangent when writing essays - I am worried about my habit of including irrelevances and tangential items. I need help with overall structure, which is not the same as idea-to-idea relationships in a mind-map. My marks don't change, or the feedback (I feel no progress). I recognise the paradox of the deskilling effect of progression.

Grammar
I have poor metalinguistic *awareness*, indeed I have little to no metalinguistic *knowledge* – I haven't a clue about grammar! I depend on spell- and grammar-checkers for 100% accuracy. I can't make my implicit knowledge explicit, nor can I export my implicit language knowledge into another language

School to Uni
I was at a very small school and I had small class size of 10. Theatre school is for thickies! I had individual attention - my momentum in school was sustained by others. I got Grade A at GCSE English; in fact all my GCSEs are B upwards. I got lots of practice at GCSE French – there was a small class size of 10, and I got B at GCSE French.

I extrapolated my high class position at GCSE onto A Levels whereas in fact I had to work beyond the class teaching to maintain my success through to A Level. I was crammed (or at least, tutored) outside school. I had a threefold increase in class size, at A Level; I could hide, at A Level, and could choose not to attend. I was successful with, and liked, English Literature. I had a problem assembling and structuring essays, at A Level.

Strategies
Sitting by myself before a blank piece of paper doesn't help me with assemblage and output. However, speaking out loud allows me to perform assemblage and output of ideas. I have a strategy of transcription rather than written composition, I write as I speak. On the reading side, my strategy is to force the phonological route by hearing myself read aloud instead of hearing text meaning when I quiet-read.

My former coping strategy was fatalistic-ditsy-bubbliness. My dyslexia helper Moira is very good and sweet – in addition to helping me attach some retrieval tool to 'losables' and 'confusables', she teaches me strategies - *general learning* strategies and *academic reading skills*. For example, I have been taught a strategy which is pause-and-analyse/summarise. The structure of essays "isn't there for me" until Moira has helped. Moira helps me arrive at a point, a conclusion; she helps me make physical maps of my ideas and gives me reading to do – she takes dictation from me! I benefit from her oral/aural feedback; I don't go to the group meetings, I prefer 1:1 help.

I'm responsible for any stickering. I'm not *required* to put on stickers. I have Mind Reader to record lectures, though I am irregular in using Mind Reader. I don't use scan-and-read software, it sounds like a parrot and I find it hard to read computer-generated mind-maps e.g. from Inspiration. Dictionaries are not much use to me as a dyslexic, so I've been introduced to a syllabary phonetic dictionary

Self-organisation is a key to good marks, for me; I have a Buzan-inspired study-skills routine, pre-, during, -post lecture; I've started doing essays in a slow, structured way. I "just get on with it".   I learn the word by "doing" the word, in writing/checking (this isn't performativity except in a physicalist sense). I go about *lexia* differently; I am differently lexic - I use brute mental energy to remember spellings of words.

One of my tutors uses Ron Davis' *The Gift of Dyslexia*. I have to make sure people understand my determination, after my realisation that I was dyslexic.

And I can always get a housemate to do help with my work.

Affect and Psychological
I may have been under covert expectation to come to University - I wasn't directly pressured to come to University – but I'm not an academic, I'm a singer. I'm only average, intellectually - but I *am* intelligent, because I'm at University. My dyslexia makes me feel frustrated. My dyslexia gets me down. I feel stupid, being dyslexic. I know I'm not stupid but I feel stupid nonetheless. I have had problems with morale - I don't like being dyslexic, I feel a *lack* from my dyslexia because I don't like feeling not level with everyone else [sic]. I'm aware of dyslexia types and can compare by exclusion: there's no-one here whose dyslexia matches mine exactly. I don't want to stand out from the crowd - I don't like getting special treatment. I don't like to put stickers on my essay I don't want people to treat me differently to anybody else. My dyslexia is gnawing me - I want a 2:1 and I compare grades with my friends. I'm hard on myself (because I want a 2:1) but I'm fatalistic about by low scores. I am fatalistic because I can't change things. I am fatalistic and resigned about some confusables, for example, indeed I have always been fatalistic about my language problem. I'm happier if I did it, rather than a machine, e.g. getting notes down but I have been a last-minute, self-stresser before.

My "bad story" was around structured written work – Essays. I am my work, and criticism of my work is criticism of me - "Slating" feedback is shitty. Dyslexia - It's just really horrible! I have had a blow to my self-esteem. I am constantly conscious of my dyslexia : whatever is *underlying* my dyslexia is ever-present, even in non-lexic situations - I find it hard to know what's my dyslexia and what's me, at a particular time. My dyslexia isn't part of my central identity: "things aren't just me" - I'm part of a "we", and you're part of a collective "you".

I have up until now thought dyslexia is the opposite of wonderful. I have had a revelation through the dyslexia diagnosis. I have or had a belief that dyslexia is code for stupidity, and doesn't really exist. I thought I was a bit "slow" - I had a poor view of dyslexia until my own diagnosis and I've been considered ditsy rather than dyslexic by my family up until now. I had found my dyslexia funny but now it's a problem.

Positive was my suddenly realising and coming to terms with my difference; I'm not slow or stupid - I came to a point where I accepted "It's shitty but I can do other things" – to get round the dyslexia. An epiphany was Moira helping me realise my dyslexia can vary in intensity, some days I am glad of the diagnosis. There's little to say that's good about my dyslexia – but it's important for me to know that it *is* something serious, and it's also important for me to know that …it is something that *does* change. I've had self-

organisational problems, I don't really lose stuff, it reappears – it's probably dyspraxia of some sort. Dyslexia is a way of thinking; too I'm learning and thinking about my dyslexia (reference to Time). I feel challenged by my dyslexia. I have been taught to "accentuate the positive" (♫ always look on the bright side of life ♫).

At University
Academia is a separate reality, and not "everyday life". My dyslexia is not something I really publicise - I don't know other campus dyslexics, though I know dyslexics at my last academic location before Uni (Esher College) and one of my best friends is terribly dyslexic - but I am recognised by the University as a Dyslexic student, indeed I'm in a group which has a Dyslexia Helper. In fact 3-4 fellow students on the actual campus know I am dyslexic and my housemates know I'm dyslexic (and one helps me, see later). I don't tell people I'm dyslexic for my Foreign Language, German.

Modern Languages
I'm studying German at University as a Minor Subject. L2 learning is a level playing field; I'm with others who make mistakes. I have good Oral German but I have problems with German Grammar. Written German is orthographically transparent for me, i.e. written as it sounds. My German vocabulary is bad – I don't remember it. I got GCSE A for English and B for French but I'm an autodidact on the German – no GCSE so the onus is on me to make the running about my dyslexia, in German. I acquired German by immersion in the target language culture. I avoided the functional-notional when I learned German. Language learning would be harder now as I'm older Learning German in Germany was good, because I was living with a German family in Germany, and I was always talking in German so I had to, if you have to do it then you will do it. I definitely find easier with some German words to express myself; I failed my German exam because of my English.

Appendix 2C – Chris' Story

General Stuff about me
I was twenty-three last birthday; I suppose I'm middle class. I'm right-handed – and right-footed as well. I have glasses for long sight; my eyes are both the same colour. I feel a bit clumsy, I'm not that bad but I do drop things. I worked for 3 years between school and Uni: I did an A Level in Art History in the evenings, during one of my three years between school and Uni – with quite a lot of reading. I have normal hearing I'm not tone-deaf I'm not particularly gifted as a mimic. I got an A at GCSE for German.

My family
There was no affective family stuff around my dyslexia: my dyslexia was a non-issue in my family, and my brothers helped me matter-of-factly with spellings. I think my Mum is dyslexic: I went to this really small school, and so I had to bring the same book home all the time, and my Mum used to be like, by about six months of reading it she was really bored with me (841).

My Mum – who has an Acquired Dyslexia from being forced to change writing hands at school in the 50s - thought it wouldn't be very good to have a dyslexia diagnosis, I think she had this idea of a big red dyslexic stamp over my exam papers.

My problem with language
Predominantly my problem is with spelling, which isn't very good. My poor spelling has more than one cause - all input problems causing output problems: missing letters off words when I take notes, also I'll put letters in the wrong order, and I misread things quite a lot. I'll see something very quickly and I'll think I've got it, but it'll turn out I've just completely misread some of the words

I was a really, really late reader I hated reading I don't really have that much of a problem with numbers. It was my teacher in Secondary School started to notice that my spelling was appalling. My Secondary School teacher suggested I might be dyslexic; but my mother thought that being dyslexic was a bad idea and didn't want me to get tested for [dyslexia] in case I was looked at badly because of it.

Since coming to University I decided to go and see an Educational Psychologist, who agreed that I was probably dyslexic

My "dyslexic teacher" [sic] is right when she suggests that it's because I'm having a lot of ideas and I'm in a real hurry to get those ideas down. My Dyslexic Teacher talked about it in terms of not having a very good short-term memory

I read something I forget it straight away because I've gone on to thinking of something else. Also when I'm listening to someone **talk** or I'm listening to someone **reading** something and I think I've grasped it, and my mind's kind of moved on to something else. I suppose what I'm doing is when I'm listening to the lecture I'm having a lot of ideas about what's being said, and that's making me think about new ideas. So in that sense it [my dyslexia] is a memory problem.

Writing
I don't have strephosymbolia. I do leave out small, tricky words like "the", and" and "of" - I get *the* wrong a lot! When I'm writing something, engaged in unreflective, routine writing... you know, really boring, then it's fine, I make fewer errors. When I'm full of ideas, my dyslexia is worse. I don't know I've made a mistake – so I don't check and learn from mistakes. I sometimes find difficult words, but not incidences of anomia as such I get lost if I have to BOTH listen to and grasp what lecturer is saying AND keep

notes, linguistically . Usually if I come back to [my contemporaneous lecture] notes they won't usually make any sense.

Now, I work as a writer but the editor just thinks it's appalling 'cos it's all spelled really badly. I chose not to tell an employer I'm dyslexic when I was editing a magazine.

Even though I'd spell-checked stuff sometimes when I sent it to [the Editor] there were some obvious mistakes that I didn't really notice.

Reading
I can read *really* quickly, but sometimes if you ask me what I've just read I won't be able to tell you. I read something I forget it straight away because I've gone on to thinking of something else. It wouldn't make a difference to my recall if I'd actually read it aloud, rather than reading it silently.

Affect and psychological
My problem is worse when I'm under pressure. Exams are really, really bad for putting me under pressure and causing the language problem to manifest. My stress and anxiety and linguistic skills seem causally interconnected. When I'm stressed and when I've got a lot of things in my mind that'll be the first thing to go, the spelling. I have a holistic-level and synchronous, high-level facility with ideas, even seemingly unconnected ones, which others in the lecture may not be getting. On the other hand, if I'm trying to handle kind complex ideas in my head, maybe abstract ideas, I can find it quite hard to also be thinking about how to spell those words I suppose I'm not very good because I consider it to be kind of irrelevant whether you should spell them right not - I don't give a monkey's anyway. Maybe the way I write [is] refusing to conform to phallocentric ideas of how things should be spelled!

I have problems with multi-tasking against the clock. I feel embarrassed by my Dyslexia sometimes; I felt a sense of injustice about being docked marks and had a certain amount of anger with the teacher for not realising I was dyslexic in the first place, and then for not taking up the fact that I was dyslexic.

I was in two minds about the dyslexia labels. I am calculating about "telling the truth" about my dyslexia. If someone looked over your work and found spelling mistakes you might feel quite criticised, but I'm just waiting for someone to find the spelling mistakes in my work, so I don't feel bad about it when they do.

School to Uni
I attended a very traditional private girls' school. My English teacher was very kind of Old School, very kind of Oxbridge and she certainly didn't think that spelling wasn't important. Nor did she think that linking together random ideas was very interesting. I think it depends what institution you attend for what the attitude to dyslexic work is. My school took a pragmatic view of dyslexia testing, for the extra exam points. I've confronted teachers about it [marking penalties against dyslexics] at my school. The only time I've felt negative about being dyslexic was I suppose about when I was 14 when I noticed that I was really good at English and this teacher as I said kept giving me bad marks in my essays and I felt like I was always....the marks were always being taken off because of spelling. I confronted my teacher for penalising me for ever on the same thing and my marks went up a little.

The University wasn't expecting a dyslexic when I enrolled. It was only after I started the first year I kind of remembered what had happened at school and thought, and I asked to see an Educational Psychologist. I get Student Support and Disability Allowance; I'm

now *officially* a Dyslexic. The academic world is supposed to be about ideas and not perfect spelling.

Modern Languages

I did French and German and Latin at school I got quite good at spoken German, but spelling wasn't particularly… I wasn't particularly good at written German. The French I was generally rubbish at it. The Latin you never have to write it, you only ever translate it? I could translate quite happily out of Latin at school, but probably not any more. I got an A at GCSE for Latin and I got an A at German, I didn't do the French - I got A or A* at English Language GCSE. I've heard of the "second bite of the cherry effect".

Dyslexia at University

My Dyslexia "Statement" has helped me in very practical terms, because I'm self-funding my way through University. The dyslexia grant means I can take texts home and I can if I'm going to work a lot with the book. I find I need to read several times and underline it. I've been given a lap-top and I get £200.00 a year to spend on books, and photocopying. My laptop's also good for structuring actually, being able to cut and paste and stuff on my laptop. I find it quite hard to structure my work but instead of having to rewrite it, you can just jig it around. I get Inspiration for mind-mapping on my computer, which I don't actually use at all. I'm just not very computerate, I suppose, I do actually do the equivalent by hand. But I just can't be bothered a lot of the time. I know it sounds really bad but I'm really grateful for the laptop and I can spell-check. I am also grateful for the back-up of the minidisk to listen to again after a lecture. I also get things like these stickers I put on my work that say I'm dyslexic and they're not supposed to take marks off for spelling and the same in the exam and I suppose really that works for me because that's like the way I think, which is "Let's just not talk about that". I was in two minds about the Dyslexia Labels. I don't like the fact that the dyslexia stickers are big and yellow. I suppose I go to some lengths not to let other people see the stickers. I did think about whether or not I wanted to be flagged as dyslexic in my exams, because I felt that if an examiner was coming to my paper, they would they immediately like think something about me. I've spent a lot of time talking to this Dyslexia Teacher about which would be better and I suppose I decided in the long run that I would probably lose enough marks by *not* being flagged as dyslexic that it would be worth my while to kind of do that.

Part of me which is quite traditional thinks that part of getting a degree in English Literature should be about being good at spelling and grammar. What if I want to be an English Teacher, for example? I think there are still very old school people in the world, and they look at the label dyslexic and maybe that person's marking your exam and they're thinking I don't know if I would want someone to come out of my University with an "A" in English Literature who couldn't even spell.

I think I have been really lucky actually at Wealdston because I think that being dyslexic and being able to put together like the approach I've taken to some of my work I think has meant I've got better marks and actually I see that as a result of being dyslexic. I use lateral thinking, which makes me realise what I'm studying might be relevant to all the other stuff I'm doing, whereas some people are a lot more compartmentalised in their thinking. My Dyslexia Teacher reckons that the transfer of ideas between topics is because I'm dyslexic and I'm linking together very different ideas. So. I think I've been quite lucky.

Applying for these MAs, should I tick the dyslexic box or not? One of my Lecturers said that she thought to go on and do an MA even though you were dyslexic, they would see as a positive thing, because it's like you'd overcome something. With the MA, I did think that I might want to apply for support money and stuff... that's how I ended up ticking the dyslexic box, because I thought like subsequently if I need to apply for a

laptop or something like it, it might be a difficult situation to then go back and say I was dyslexic.

My "Good Story" is that I used to get a lot of criticism for my essays, which used have loads of ideas in and there used to be quite a negative feel, at School, whereas here I find that having a lot of ideas is considered to be quite a good thing. So. I mean it's not a specific story but generally I've been quite happy during my degree.

Strategies and Assistances
I have maybe up to half a dozen little tricks for actual spelling. I don't really have study help routines and ditties, mine or others'; I kind of write things obsessively in a diary, actually, and people say "God you're organised!" and I say "It's because I'm not very organised that I have to …" I don't go to the group workshops, I don't know why. I can't say if other people's dyslexia is like mine as I've non-one to compare with. I have one-to-one teaching from the Dyslexia Teacher - we do things like make the letters of the alphabet out of Plasticene. It's quite fun. I'm not sure how useful it is!

My dyslexia in the "real world"
I think even doing an MA will be harder in the real world. Presentation is quite important, in the "real world". I used to make quite a lot of mistakes, when I used to work as a waitress, as well. Really, recently after months, I mentioned to someone at work that actually I was dyslexic and that my spelling was really bad. I don't think if I ever apply for a job I'd ever tell them that I'm dyslexic. I'm pretty resolute about that [not telling at work that I'm dyslexic], but then partly I just think I would find other not just coping but being good enough in other areas of my work for it not to be a problem, I don't think dyslexia has to be the be-all and end-all.

Articles which I write might be badly spelled, some times, but I'd like to think they're always of good quality and I always give them in on time I am calculating about "telling the truth" about my dyslexia. I've been quite lucky that I've always worked with people who haven't been particularly cross with me about my dyslexia. I've never been fired or anything because of that, but when I was waitressing for example my boss would come out with special rules about spelling.

My bosses are never very happy when I'm sending a letter to someone and it's a professional letter and there are spelling mistakes and stuff in it. I don't know if I'd be breaking the law by not telling an employer I'm dyslexic - it's not *legal*, sacking a dyslexic, is it?

Coda
I wasn't at all like the people in "The Gift of Dyslexia". But the more my Dyslexia Tutor talks about dyslexia, the more I can se the whole way my mind thinks is influenced by being dyslexic. I've come to think about it, my dyslexia, as a really positive, fantastic thing.

Appendix 2D – Freesia's Story

Some general stuff
I am aged 21, at the time of this Interview. I'm middle-middle-class. I had a Gap Year, before University. I am right-handed, have good vision, may have slight deafness, but have no aids except lip-reading at times. I'm not tone-deaf, and I can read music. I can't mimic people, nor imitate regional or foreign accents. I am not particularly clumsy, but I can seem a bit forgetful. I got the same grades for English and French at school.

Family
For me, science is the study of reasons behind things; but I've taken no interest in the subject of my dyslexia, despite being a science undergraduate. Still, I believe there's a strongly genetic rather than environmental explanation for my dyslexia. I am the daughter of an undiagnosed dyslexic, and the sister of a diagnosed dyslexic. My dyslexic sister Jen is older than me. She has a voluminous handbag too! She is over-inclusive: "she has a big handbag with everything she could possibly need all day within it". Jen had "learning difficulties" too (we have said these are *difficulties with learning* rather than cognitive depletions); she was, like me, late-diagnosed in her language/learning problems. Jen had extra-school paid-for help, but I didn't. My sister's dyslexia identification was secondary and coincidental to help with integrating into a new school. Unlike my sister Jen who came to university "*because she wanted to leave home and it was the only mechanisms she could use*", I came to university because I thought I could do it.

My problem, as I see it
I have a form of dyslexia, but I don't know very much about it (I can't remember my dyslexia sub-diagnosis!) It wasn't until I was about 18 and a half, nineteen, that I really got seen about it when I got to University; in fact I managed, with the odd hiccup along the way, until University.

I have specific problems with spelling and word recognition, and learning new words. It's kind of somewhere in between hearing and reading, quite often... sometimes I can't read a text at all, other times I just can't process it?   I think I have more of a processing than a hearing problem - although as a child I was had [sic] quite severe problems for the first two and a half years with my hearing. I can "hear" some familiar words off the page, but I use lip-reading to segment inputs and disambiguate them.

I'm not too sure if I have a memory problem as such. I get letters and numbers in the wrong order. Not only do I sometimes get the numbers in the wrong order, I also get the letters in the wrong order. I always had problems with spelling tests at school, and I don't remember words I've looked up several times in the dictionary. I can spot a typing error but then retype the same error!

I have a strong visual memory, even across time, so my memory's really good for placement of things and I have long-term memory for words I have tagged visually as well as phonologically. I'll seek a "phonetical channel" for new words I come across - and I won't remember what I can't pronounce. Conversely, I lose words I don't "organise", i.e. tag in non-phonological ways. If I don't organise it, then it goes straight out again. If I don't need a noun I'll not go back and learn it.

I have a problem with names and remembering them (I'm anomic) I can remember Frodo by his face, not "Frodo" the name. I need a (written-language free) visual support when receiving aural inputs.

I 'tune out' though distractibility, like everyone else. But also, a word or phrase in writing activity (output) can blank me out. I have a conflict between lexical memory and discourse/narrative memory, they cause each other to cut out.

I can only access grammar sequences by reinitiating the whole sequence; I can't break into the alphabet sequence but must repeat it from the start. So I don't have hologramatic access, i.e. access to part doesn't gives access to whole, access to the whole doesn't give me access to the part, I need to go back to the beginning. And I don't have numeric automaticity any more than alphabetic.

Schooling

I was educated outside the state sector. I didn't feel stigmatised at home or before University in general. I had learning difficulties in my first primary school - to the extent that my mum actually moved me schools and I was put into small groups. I had been retained in Reception Class because of class sizes, before - I was a victim of disorganisation by my previous school – but in the small-group school scenario with teaching assistants I did incredibly well and I got a lot confidence as well.

At the first Primary School, my 'bad' teacher was "*not very nice*" and "*a bit of a bully*" – and she has been "ousted by Ofsted", since. My good teacher was encouraging, really enthusiastic and methodical, and she was *approachable*. I got a lot of praise so she was a good teacher. I was given a pen instead of a pencil! The encouragement I received created a learning spurt. My catch-up with the "good" teacher gave me confidence and self-esteem as a springboard into Secondary School; it motivated me, "*wanting to do well at school as well*". I think I've always done well and I care, as well. A "good story" was realising it wasn't me, it was them all the time.

I did really well in secondary school, so... I feel like I got lost along the way a little bit. My school French tutor, who was also my Form Tutor, spoke French and was very approachable. She was nice, and nice, for me, is "really, really supportive. My Uni Spanish Teacher at Uni, in contrast, didn't always speak Spanish. I've always been quite well-supported - I had some after-school activities tailor-made just for me. In science, I was in top sets for everything; there were 65/70% girls in science but the group was hard-working, supportive. But also, there were expectations of me from having been "good" at some subjects.

I left secondary school at 16.

Strategies I use

I am aware, or at least, subliminally aware that people have mechanisms or skills to compensate for their language / learning problems. I have a friend who is "*crap at spelling and other things*", though his record collection is huge and alphabetical and he's "*really good at sciences*" and "*must have some incredible strategy for organisation*". I can't (or won't) organise myself

I cheated in spelling tests at school - I cheated by looking up verb tables in the dictionary, but my dyslexia makes me poor at cheating; I can copy down the wrong word. Now, I live my life by sticky notes. I have Post-It notes all over everywhere I sample words then dump some half-way through.

I need multiple recall techniques. My strategy with names (nouns in fact) is to know their relevance, then remember the item concerned, and not the other way round. I need the

highlighter for saliency / relevance purposes when I have to retrieve. I'll repeat an action or scenario several times rather than risk forgetting it.

I've mostly evolved my own strategies for coping because I know myself best and what works for me. I wasn't taught strategies directly by the Ed Psychs, but I was given positive reinforcement of my strategies by the Ed Psychs. But they used some negative modelling/instances, too. I use lists, as a technique. My lists are literally *aide-mémoires*, as well as satisfaction-garnerers: I have a highly planned daily diary of deadlines and tasks; this allows me to give myself satisfaction for my progress. I'm very organised, e.g. my handbag with all its compartments. My wallet's the same, i.e. planned inside and I have a multi-compartmental bag also.

I learn by doing, and I have a kind of a reward system for completing work. I delegate my mental planning and organisation to physical objects. I tick pages and fold pages back to signal progress and completion – to myself.

I use keys to access rules or memories, but I can access rules or memories by substitute techniques when these are blocked by my dyslexia. For example, I have a strong associative memory, **j** for **j**alapenos; visual letter/vegetable shape and phonology are associated.

I do miss some lectures, but not many. I sit quite close to the front. I quite like the beginning, middle and end, kind of thing; I like them to tell me where we're going in the lecture, and I find that a lot more useful if there's some sort of structure I can follow.

I do plucky I've always persevered and made it through to the end at least; this failure at Spanish is my first *avoidance*.

Grammar
I can remember grammar rules and models in general. My spelling can be incorrect: I have letter reversals esp. **d** and **g**, I have **d-**slot and **g-**slot inversion (god/dog), and my **d** and **g** problem creates word segmentation problems.

Reading
I don't read for pleasure very much: I tune out after half a page, even when reading for pleasure. I am a slow reader, because I have to re-read a lot. When dyslexia hits I need to stop and start over again, so I need to use a highlighter when reading. Even though I've said each word in my head, I sometimes don't string them together to make sense. I also re-read things a lot because I'll get half-way through a paragraph and will have sort of forgotten what the point of it was. I'll know the last 5 words I've read but I don't know what context it's in so I haven't built up, like, a sort of internal story going on… I've lost the story, pretty much, I quite literally lose the plot. I find it so frustrating: I can go back and read about four or five times. I have a computer-based reader, which help; sounds a bit sad but... I do use that [the computer reading programme] a lot. I need to highlight for gist and for salience / relevance as I read science papers.

I don't remember what I can't pronounce. I seek a "phonetical channel" for new words I come across. My processing interruption occurs somewhere between the actual taking the words off the page and putting them into the thought… it kind of mismatches, and doesn't quite work.

Writing
When I can't convert thoughts into words I fall into circumlocution and periphrasis, lengthening my phrases unnecessarily

Affect and Psychological
I was really stressed as a 7-year-old and I plucked out all my eyebrows and eyelashes Sometimes I feel just a bit of an airhead, I can seem a bit forgetful I always thought myself as a bit of a blonde bimbo. I think up until now I just thought I was a bit scatty. I am aware of the impression I make on other people I have obsessive-compulsive traits sometimes, I'm not paranoid or over-anxious but I'll continuously check things because I don't remember doing them.

In the Spanish class – which I failed - I felt anxiety. Definitely. I felt embarrassment. I wasn't happy at all about involvement with others. I need to be in control. I prefer private to public, and I compare my performance and motivation with other people's; I can feel humiliation about what other people think. I've been quite emotionally involved in my academic work. I'm not good at expressing feelings - I just tend to cry. The one and only response.

I'm very stubborn, and I have quite a long attention span, though I imagine my condition sounds pathetic to others. But I gauge success and progress by my popularity, as an indicator, because low self-esteem and lack of confidence would have led to *lack of esteem*, i.e. *un*popularity.

For me, self-esteem leads to learning success leads to language success. Self-esteem isn't so much language-related as learning-related, for me.

Modern Languages and me
As I said earlier, my school French tutor spoke French (my University Spanish Teacher didn't always speak Spanish, in contrast) and the French teacher at school was not only my Form Tutor but was very approachable too. And there was practical application of some of the French teaching, at School. My GCSE was just above average, 6/10 at school, but I am monolingual: I'm sad and sorry to say that just don't know any French really at all, now. I crammed for GCSE French but it never stuck, and I don't even have passive, comprehension knowledge.

I tried Spanish at University - although I didn't get on so well. I was pretty underconfident in it (I had a utilitarian, not integrative motivation for learning it) but my learning didn't generalise or exponentiate, my strategy of thoroughness and over-learning was pointless, for foreign language work; In addition to having dyslexia, I'm beyond the "critical period" (Lenneberg 1967). My Spanish wasn't "growing organically" for me, and it was never there for me, spontaneously.

The "bad story" in my interview was to do with the Spanish teacher. I was treated unfairly, and I was angry because she hadn't bothered to look into my special needs. I was hard-done-by: there were non-beginners in the Beginners' Spanish course, and it would have been fairer to support the people who were having problems rather than the people who were finding it a lot easier 'cos they speak Greek or other languages. I have a belief that people who know more than one language have an advantage in learning a third or fourth etc.: I was shown up in front of speakers of other European languages on this course.

I think a lot of my problem with the Spanish was that the teaching approach at the University was different from school, which I think made it very difficult. Spanish […] was a lot more fast-moving and a lot more text-book orientated, at University. My time and memory problems were not catered for in this group learning situation. I was more in control of things, in the School language classroom. Having people look over my work I didn't like that very much, especially my spelling and such things I prefer it [marking] to be done by the teacher in confidence. I don't like opening [exams] all together, or

speaking about them afterwards. I tend to just open them and not say much. I was sitting there humiliated.

"*I had to go first out of all the class*" in the Oral Exam - I wasn't able to use stuff in my rôle-play learned from other class members. I couldn't use my in-class peer modelling / learning strategy.

I never reached exponential automaticity in French or Spanish. I have only been concerned about my language use since coming to university. Spanish was my first failure… I couldn't emotionally do that, this time; it was just total avoidance, which is the first time it's ever really happened. Another part of the "bad story" was also not knowing anyone else in the class, and that I didn't *feel* as though I was doing all right: I felt I needed help: but there was no-one there, and stupidly when I got the report back, I did do all right. My *oral* test was not worth quite as much as I emotionally thought. The University Spanish course incident was a bigger knock than Primary School, with the hair plucking etc.

A Coda
I have been *vindicated* - it wasn't just my problem, others had it too, and that teacher has been "changed".

Appendix 2E – Jake's Narrative

Me – some basic stuff!
I'm twenty years old at the time of recording. I'm reading psychology here at university. I'm *upper* middle-class (though the term is much devalued). My eyes are the same colour. I had a gap year between Secondary and Higher Ed. I'm clumsy and break things at home. In fact I'm the worst, at home, at clumsy/breaking. I also lose things a lot. I'm completely tone-deaf. I can't impersonate people's voices or replicate accents which aren't mine. I am ambidextrous except for writing (mixed laterality), but left-footed. I miss appointments, even important ones. I haven't dealt with my scattiness as rigidly as my sister - I can't really be arsed, to tell you the truth. I "go out" quite a lot but I have a hearing problem with people's voices (I've probably been deaf since 13 years of age) so people find me loud, I shout at them. I'm unaware of my loudness, so get embarrassed when it's pointed out!

My family
I have bilateral family dyslexics of strong to severe handicap, both ♀ and ♂. I find the same things difficult as the rest of my dyslexic relatives. Abby is [dyslexic], that's my sister. My sister's dyslexia "*dominated our family*". My aunts and uncles were 'dyslexics before dyslexia' and "*just dropped out of school I think*". . I have one "dyslexia disbeliever" family member.

My problem
Personally, I'm dyslexic or should I say, I'm "dyslexic broadly". Dyslexia affects my memory quite a lot. I've a very bad short-term memory. Also, I get things muddled up. In fact, dyslexia affects basically the speed of my reading and organisation… organising my work and everything in my life really. I forget my word-processing. My room is really a mess. My bag is always a mess. I'm not organised at all, and that is so frustratin' sometimes.

Reading
I believe you have to read in order to get better at it, but I'm so scared of reading. I get scared and very anxious because there's too many words on the paper, too many long words. I can't read long words. I find reading very difficult. I took minutes at a meeting, once, but wasn't able to read them back. I can't always read OHP slides I don't scan-read, I grab what I can, opportunistically because I lose "the plot" or argument if I trip over a hard word. I can read short sentences, and I'm fine with single-syllable words but no more; I find sentences with nested clauses difficult to read. Complex descriptors can throw me when I read, too. My problem isn't that words get mixed up or back-to-front. I actually just can't read the words; I don't know what they say. When I am reading, all the letters start jumping around, and the words stop making sense. I don't allow myself to read, but I do think if I actually allowed myself to actually read more it would become easier. Reading makes me anxious because you just see so many words on the piece of paper. I have to invest heavily when reading because I need to process *everything* – before I can analyse and decide what's relevant. I've got to go through every single sentence, every single word. And if I go through my alphabet to find something I always have to go A, B, C all the way back to the beginning. I would prefer having to over-process potentially redundant information, rather than getting totally lost in any case.

I never read silently except on holiday. On holiday I can read silently in my head if there's not a single sound to distract me. I have to speak out loud so that I overcome whatever noise there's there. Talk-radio is a big obstacle to head-radio when I'm reading. I don't like reading out aloud in Seminars if I haven't had time to prepare for it, I'd hate that, but yeah if I'm well-prepared I'm OK.

Writing
I experience different problems to reading when I write.

Grammar
I find it hard to remember where punctuation and plural markers go. I remember *being taught* punctuation - but not *what* was taught.

Modern Languages
I did French foreign language. I really didn't like it very much - I was pretty naughty in my French class, but I had extra tuition with it. My Mum paid for me - just a local French lady that helped me. I got B [in French], in the end.

Strategies and techniques
I don't **recall** any spelling ditties, strategies.   Indeed, I don't **recall having been taught** e.g. spelling ditties, strategies. Technology-wise, I scan and enlarge my work on a computer screen too.

I avoid self-directed anger by avoiding tasks and situations likely to create this anger. I deliberately won't read stuff. I procrastinate and "just leave" stuff. I will borrow OP (Other People's) essays but not reciprocate: I have good essay feedback (but still don't want to share what I've written with other students). My flatmates also study psychology - my flatmates offer interpretation and clarification of inputs I've received. But I find friendships with other dyslexics "naff". I find organised socialising with other dyslexics a bit lame or naff too.

I can chat way in seminar. My friends tell me I'm a waffler because I do just talk a lot. Seminars are good because I can listen to lots of stuff. I learn through talking and there's no interaction but there IS essay-writing so I have a double bind in motivational terms.

My theory
My theory on my own dyslexia is that I wasn't taught grapheme-to-phoneme equivalences - we didn't have phonics at school. But I don't really have private theories on dyslexia. I think dyslexia affects people's reading and spelling in that maybe words or letters within sentences or letters within words get muddled up, or wrote [sic] the wrong way wrong. I think some people also experience difficulty with digits and maths, in dyslexia. I have a series of beliefs, though: I would say there's some genetic predisposition to it, and that if dyslexia is caught at a young age, if you get them at a young age and you teach them properly they can… they have to work hard but they can be just as successful. There is a belief in my family (Mum) that "proper teaching" and hard work can lead to success. For me, personally, success equals academic success equals reading and writing. I associate dyslexia with illogicality. I believe dyslexic people have impaired logic.

School and transfer to Uni
I was a bit of a joker at Primary and Junior School, before diagnosis. Because I was a "naughty child" at school, dyslexia wasn't apparent until my A Levels. My A Level teacher said "You're dyslexic". I went and got tested and I was. My parents paid for me to have it [Dyslexia Support] externally from the actual School.   No-one before my A Levels clocked I might be dyslexic. I was not taught phonically at school. I think had I gone to a better school they would have picked it [my dyslexia] up.

I went to a school which didn't cope with students who had learning or even behavioural difficulties very well at all, they'd just kind of exclude you, I think had I gone to a better school they would have picked it up. It's a class thing, definitely.

A Bad Story was when a student teacher referred publicly to my dyslexia. Another teacher publicly associated my classroom naughtiness with my being dyslexic. I believe a dyslexia diagnosis is an invitation to open, public disparagement by others.

Surprisingly I got an A for English Language, and I got a B for English Literature. I thought it would be the other way round, I have to say. I did about 6 weeks before my exams - I didn't actually do much before that. My Mum, bless her, sat down *every day and night* with me and I didn't go to school, she just went through it all with me, and I learned it all. My mother tried to make me take responsibility for inducing syllabus content from exam papers. My mother trained me in exam-craft. In Secondary, I got an A in Psychology and a B in English at A Level; I'm not saying for Drama. My teachers were passionate about their subjects, and they made me want to learn and want to do it. I came from a good school background, all clever girls. My "Good Story"? A Level teachers - because it was good size classrooms, you know, they were able, they had enough time to be able… you know, you could meet up with them and speak to them about it

Uni and Dyslexia

I thought my dyslexia arrangements would be in place when I arrived at Wealdston. The dyslexia support we got in the post was just words, it "*never really came to anything*".

I got a computer and a scanner, which I could have provided myself, though the technical assistance here from Assistive Technology Unit was really good. I was told, "You have to be proactive in using these to help you". I found it hard to go and say to people "Help me". I have to work harder, with my dyslexia, so I have to be a lot stricter with myself, thus my dyslexia is socially limiting, e.g. staying in alone to study.

I made a conscious decision to engage with the Support system. I have tuition once a week . Last year the guy I had was useless, he was subcontracted in from outside and so he was…I didn't find it very helpful the support last year. I nearly left at the end of last year because I just thought… I can't do this. I got a new tutor who's *brilliant* and I feel a million times more happy this year.

My studies have taken up *loads* of Mum's time – she's a family therapist, chatty and into psychology. My mother has edited all my essays up to now. If I got an essay back with a bad grade, and I'd done it all myself, "*Yeah I'd be disheartened, I would have to say*". I wrote my first essays by myself last week and my Mum didn't check it. For the first time last week I felt confident and I think a lot of it for me is confidence of being able to write it.

Affect and psychological states

My dyslexia saps my confidence and replaces it with automatic self-doubt, which is horrible. I am mentally really, really anxious. I don't feel as anxious when I'm talking (as when I'm reading) - I tend not to "lose it" when I'm talking, as I feel I'm much more in control (I have propriocentric feedback on my oral outputs). I lack confidence in my writing abilities, enough to hide my work from others - I don't want anybody to ever read my work.

My psychologist's report for my dyslexia said that my sequencing and my short term memory was really bad. I get panic attacks, headache, hyperventilation, shakes. I hate having all this work hanging over me, it makes me anxious. Dyslexia makes me feel angry with myself for not being able to do simple things Dyslexia makes me feel frustrated. I believe I'm intelligent, behind it all. I don't doubt my intelligence, but I find it really difficult to know what the level is expected of me. I do feel embarrassed by [my

dyslexia] sometimes. In fact my dyslexia is terribly embarrassing - it is actually embarrassing to have to say to people "Oh actually you know I'm dyslexic" in work-place settings.

Being identified as dyslexic in front of my peers made me angry, and I feel people may think I've faked my dyslexia to get a computer. I find in-your-face disbelief / denial of my dyslexia upsetting. A dilemma is that although I wouldn't reject a fellow dyslexic just because they were dyslexic, I don't really identify with the label "disabled". The fact that I find reading so difficult has made me more outgoing.

On the upside, I wasn't disgraced in front of my peer group by my A Level results. I didn't think I'd get my A Levels although I'd worked really hard to get them. So that's a Good Story for me - just getting my exam results, because I never thought I'd get 'em.

My unfulfilled needs
This Dyslexia Support is only indirect, impersonal, generalised help, and so not about me, not directly helpful of me. It's not *personalised, one-to-one teaching / feedback*. It's very generalised, so it's quite hard sometimes, it's not coming at it from my direction. I believe older students like me need individual tuition because I have grown, individuated, and attained different levels to others - *so need individual tuition*. My success / survival mechanisms are also now potential *blockers* to teaching-learning. University's just an "*absolute joke*" because there are so many lecturers or tutors - but you can't access any of them: school wasn't that small and they were busy, but available.

Weighing it all up
My dyslexia has actually contributed a lot to other things that I've enjoyed doing - like sports. I don't think Dyslexia is a "gift" - I'm annoyed by the "gift of dyslexia" concept. I sometimes imagine famous or successful people became so because they were never any good at reading or spelling so they did it more.

Success, for me: a Coda
"I got an A and two Bs" at GCSE, and that was a good result, I mean it was a *normal* result.

Appendix 2F - Jess's Story

General stuff about me
I'm 37 years old, I'm long-sighted, I have dominant R hand/foot, no mixed dominance.
I'm middle-class because my parents were middle class – teachers. I'm not tone-deaf.
I'm poor at mimicry. I'm uniquely dyslexic in my family, I'm different from the rest of
them.

My School Education
I scored "*Ungraded*" at English, and wasn't even put in for French – I was fobbed off
with a piece of paper. I believe my schooling was responsible in part for my problem:
school set me back, caused problems. But I had this BEFORE school; school exacerbated
and focused the problem. I am aware people at school took "knocks" over their language
difficulty [perhaps even I did].

I've pulled off some academic successes in school but couldn't repeat them, i.e. *build up*
success. In my little "success" at school [my ace character sketch from either Charlotte
Brontë - or Jane Austen], I'm still unsure how the actual academic exercise won praise.

I combined a distraction technique with attention-seeking in class, and knew that
punishment/attention would surely follow; but I was inwardly sad no-one was picking up
on my problem. My problem correlates with being punished for something which isn't
my fault – being slow in writing.

I had an 8-10 year gap between school and Uni work.
My post-school education has been a bit stop-start.

My Language problem
I received lots of oral/aural inputs as a child, but I need time, to complete things involving
writing. I sometimes lose the thread and answer one thing heard and take it as the salient
item – so the "language thing" (288) isn't replied to, the "family" (286) one is. I've been
involved in empirical psychology work of others. I think my language and motor
problems are related even though I have no problem actually articulating. Even for a
success, a positive thing, I am averse to being shown up in front of others.

When I go monosyllabic, people assume I'm a moron. I may have a problem reading
myself in others' eyes. I can "come off" with odd statements, like saying I was involved
with Cherry: it's Cherry who is involved with both Dyslexic Students and with Mature
Students. We're not "involved" in that sense!

My language problem is in fact the interaction of two problems, which sort of interfered
with each other. I also have an assemblage problem which seems to combine anomia with
tip-of-the-tongue, minor aphasia.

I've had these problems ever since school. The main problem I have with language is in
the written form. I've never had a problem with reading, and was even a couple of years
ahead, at times. But actually forming words is physically effortful for me. An outward
sign of my language problem is that I write in capital letters, which slows things down.
My problem isn't mechanical in origin, but there's still a mechanical *outcome* because I
need to write in CAPITALS. With the exception of **e**, I don't have real problems with
cursive script. My writing got smaller and smaller in tandem with my lack of confidence,
though I'm not sure of this pop-psychology interpretation.

The knock-on effect is loss of memory in the planning department of my written outputs.
I find it hard to read my own work with someone else's eyes, i.e. abstract myself from my

own writing. I feel I'm "meant to" and "supposed to" write in certain ways, and this is another thing I lose sight of: the academic readers' expectations of me, as well as losing concentration on what I intended to write. I can't sometimes marshal and assemble ideas to tell or write to others.

Flow, or automaticity, was something I couldn't achieve owing to the twin claims of written output and assembling concepts. I don't have automaticity in writing, I have to concentrate and make my hand write, so my meaning-intentions have to "hang" temporarily. And so when I've performed the writing, I need to go back and see what it was about, and rejoin the semantics. If my ideas are clear, I don't have a problem retaining them even if embedded in complex syntax. However rather than at syntactic level, at discourse level I have difficulties in joining on the next idea. I've forgotten the "story" of what I'm writing; this is a discourse-level phenomenon, really.

I sometimes need to blank out the world in order to concentrate. The information is there in my brain but locked in by occasional word-blindness. I crash, or hang, like a computer programme. I find it hard to do assemblage *and* information transfer, e.g. in something as negotiated and two-way as explaining something – I'm assembling and producing for two: for myself and for my hearer. Sometimes I don't know whether I've been relevant in my answers, particularly to involved questions. There's a feedback problem at times: have I said the *correct* thing, versus have I said the socio-culturally *relevant* thing, i.e. what was expected of me.

I've not had problems with general reading but as a student of technical texts I have mild anomia: I can retrieve whole-words visually though not phonetically: I see words I recognise as wholes but I don't "hear" them speak to me. My visual sense isn't as developed as well as my sibling's mental 3D or my parents' artistic work. Segmenting visual forms may be slowing me up, as I have to go for the whole form.

I can achieve certain grammar structures successfully when talking, spontaneously; but not when writing. I haven't internalised some metalinguistic categories at all. What metalinguistic terminology I do possess comes from formal study of English at school, not a foreign language. Sure, writing "lines" at school was more physical as a problem, but with essays, it's marshalling the ideas and marshalling an appropriate essay format at the same time which is the problem, for me. Because of my writing and language difficulty I find it difficult learning and recalling and assembling and writing all at once. I need to get the whole first then analyse down, not analyse particulars and create a whole from particular to general

Orally, I need to do differentiated listening, for relevance and emphasis as well as content. Blanking on individual words, like I'm doing now, halts the flow and stops me from synthesizing my ideas. I have to go round some problems and carry on the other side. I actually know that I know things, and I also know it's not coming out right, it's an expressive rather than a content thing. So for the oral side, I'm dammed-up on the thoughts-into-words side (until I'm given or find the sesame word), whereas for the written side, it's more properly an assemblage problem for thoughts into writing. People fire sesame-words at me and I remember. I can't trigger recall in myself, but others can trigger me.

Interestingly, on the numbers side, I can't do numbers orally but can do them written down. I'm actually faster with numbers than words in experimental situations. This seems to opposite to my language problem where the reverse is true. I didn't have *number automaticity* until years of practice and certainly not at school, where we learnt *numbers* by chanting *words!* I can do with numbers what I can't do with words, i.e. see the symbol and hear it in my head and use it as a token, almost simultaneously. Writing takes longer,

I need time to recover the semantics, this affects my writing and communicating and discourse-level communicative performance.

Separately to just writing, I have problems with attention and focusing. I'd rather not seem clumsy – but I am, because I can have motor problems in restricted spaces. I'm forgetful - but at least I know I'm forgetful. I might have slight developmental language problem owing to infant hearing difficulties

I have scientific curiosity about my problem. More important than my scientific curiosity is the possibility of overcoming or curing my problem, because I think sometimes that I can't do some things at all.

Affective and psychological
I am keen to help with the Interview.

I judge success and failure in oral communication by others' reactions. I have memories of success which are still salient. I had an early-life experience of failure. I didn't have the comfort of a diagnosis, at school, and blamed myself. I still wonder *why* I'm not doing things right. In fact, praise was rare at secondary school. I like working to my strengths (Parents positively reinforced what I *could* do, my strengths (like the Dyslexia people here are trying to do?)

After the positive focus of my family, the state (school!) used negative reinforcement on me, setting me lines to do. There was ambivalence towards me at school – Sinner (slowcoach) and Saint (Monitor) I regret that the penny didn't drop and that acquisition didn't take place. I was inwardly sad no-one was picking up on my problem. Later, I would also lose my feelings of success and progress. Success, for me, the sort that leads to more success, has to be *conscious, striven-for* success. I'm suspicious of some "automaticity", therefore, because it's a loss of control over success strategies I'm familiar with.

At school I used my empathetic skills to draw out the character of someone written by Jane Eyre. Since leaving school and going into Higher Education, I suffered for the woman giving the Student Support Dyslexia talk - I feel their position and am empathetic about it, in the abstract, so not autistic in analysing what they've said or written

I was shy and relied on bravado in my earlier H.E. studies. I may have seemed more mature than I feel. I am mature enough to be (or at least feel) proof against "knocks". Actually it did knock me, I'm reinterpreting positively that I learned from this but it took quite some time – 2 years – to accept I needed the Ed Psych. I feel stupid at times. But I feel more puzzled than stupid. I'm taciturn, I'm not systematically up-front about it [Dyslexia] with people. I am averse to being shown up in front of others. So I feel stupid *from* me and stupid *from* others.

I wasn't happy to carry on the way I was, but also, I have made a profit-and-loss calculation of my own about receiving help. I felt annoyed by the O.U. Lecturer; I felt he was over-frank, negative and unhelpful – he wasn't constructive (so he was destructive). I have resolve and pluck, and possible vengefulness [an "I'll show you" Motivation]

I've become aware of, and slightly taken on, the University's point of view; I'm convergent as well as empathetic.

Difference and "Passing"
I pass as OK, from my oral performance: listening to me you'd rarely think there's anything wrong. But I have a sense of otherness: for a start, I'm uniquely dyslexic in my

family; I'm different to the rest of my family. What's more, I am aware of difference I am aware of not conforming to expected behaviour and actions. I have to intuit what is "normal" and good in non-dyslexics. I've been aware of being "bad at writing" but at the same time, intellectually "quick", since childhood. The teachers "caught on" that there was something amiss, a contradiction in my performances. I had assumed everyone else functions in certain ways, in teaching and learning. Why did no-one spot I was different? I'm in a no-win situation. I'm not "the classic visual dyslexic guy who sees the letters moving around." I've met others who have an output, not an input problem. I find strategies easier to deploy in private, e.g. *going the long way round*. I don't have problems of *face*, in private. But in public… I'm "out" to other dyslexics and have a "tribe" to fall back on to a certain extent

I'm not a "youngster", being thirty seven years of age. In earlier studies in a technical subject where my dyslexic tendencies may not have been spotted, I expected my difference, i.e. my individuality, to be addressed by the tutor who dealt with me. I need to work to my strengths, which are my differences, but not be different, and "pass" among others.

Uni and diagnosis
My oral language doesn't impinge on others, you wouldn't know from hearing me. . My dyslexia wasn't picked up at school (I scored extremely highly in school assessment tests) but still no-one picked up on my dyslexia. In fact, I was never "statemented" at school; I had to wait until Level 3 education.

I know about dyslexics and dyslexia and the idea of a continuum of problems.
I believe there was a cause *outside myself* for the problem. I can hear in my head what I'm reading, but I'm not hearing on output, just on input. I don't think I have amusia. .
I've had to learn inductively what I'm not good at from what I'm told I'm good at. The Dyslexia people here work to my strengths. Having a delicate metalinguistic classification doesn't work for me as well as pragmatic language use, but I need visual feedback to confirm the success of my communications (But I don't get this, in written work, as I go).

My dyslexia has been connected with my grasp of the world. I'm less good at phonological routes for retrieving words from their sounds. I'm good at holistic pictures of words – holoforms. My explanation of "my" dyslexia is that the holistic visual route blocks the phonological, analytical one. I can achieve spontaneous visual understanding of non-linguistic items such as wiring diagrams: so I can cope with the "language" of maps and diagrams, I receive communication from them. I am aware of paralinguistic features even if I miss out on metalinguistic ones.

I'm "out" to other dyslexics and have a "tribe" to fall back on to a certain extent – but I'm not systematically up-front about it with people. The help from Student Support at the O.U. was oral and I'm good at oral. There's collective help I've garnered for myself and collective help organised by Student Support. But: I think I realise some of these people aren't clinically qualified to deal with some cases.

Modern Languages
I was exposed to situational and functional-notional syllabuses; French didn't click, it didn't become automatic for me. French didn't sink in over time, either. The intercultural communication route didn't work. I've tried elective audiolingual courses, of the generative perfect-master variety. The automaticity thing didn't kick in for me.

My Strategies

I seem to be OK in talking, possibly I'm picking up cues that people respond to but in written work. I need to "get my head round" certain things, learn them my way and not the teacher's way. So being assertive, at times. In fact it is a strategy of mine to avoid things which set me difficulties with my studies: [plain avoidance of the problem!] I'm a mature student and know what difficult academic situations to avoid, by now.

A phonological solution to taking exams would help - but as a Dyslexic all I get is extra time.

Outside academia, I found some redemption in practical work appealing to my strengths. I found professional work using my strengths – cognitive, problem-solving.

Attitudinally, I nearly was negative, leaving things to the last minute, but I've spun this positively: I cope and complete even if it's at the last minute.

I need to be *sustained* by interlocutors, so mutual feedback.

I have general learning strategy of learning comparatively and by analogy.
I tend to work from general to particular, from holistic position to a more micro, analytical one; I'm a deductive and synthetic learner. I explain things out loud and I sometimes think that people think that I'm patronising them when in fact I'm just using a strategy for *me*, not for them.

I've received help of a narratological nature in presenting and discussing facts as a kind of dialogue; I can do oral, but can now do it on paper too.

There's collective help I've garnered for myself and collective help organised by Student Support. I'd probably like 1:1 help. But I've gone for collective, suggestive and generalistic types of aids from Student Support. Pragmatism!

I have an "If it's not bust don't fix it" approach, don't rock your own boat if you're getting to the right port. Pragmatism again!

I'm damning myself with faint praise, here – I don't really count this as "success" [getting it right but not knowing why – the Character Sketch]. I need control as well as success.

The bad tutor wouldn't give me feedback time and wasn't afraid to show it. So a need of mine is for time, as well as feedback.

I'm OK on confusables as regards spelling in my own language - I didn't get taught little routines to help with my English - but I did refer earlier to slightly more semantic rather than orthographic difficulties – and those lists of words in French and English. I've got over the basics, so there were some things I could "fix", my dyslexia is to some extent repairable.

I know I can cope at holistic level and work downwards to the micro; the reverse would be micro, analytical, and working upwards – like piecemeal grammar classes. In a way, I put a brake on myself and my learning: if I haven't got holistic learning then I can't micro-analyse, but I won't allow myself holistic learning that I haven't found effortful or whose processes I can't remember going through, to extrapolate from next time.

A coda
There's a difference for me between academic and professional spheres. I have prior teaching/learning experience in another Level 3 institution. I feel I'm hard-done-by: I

think the O.U. tutor was a bad teacher - he would analyse my work but not me. He was a hooray ["badminton and stuff"]. I know that the tutor wasn't lying, but telling me the truth. I expected help, not criticism, from a Tutor. The bad tutor wouldn't give me feedback time and wasn't afraid to show it. I'm paying for this but am being palmed off with an uninterested part-timer.

Appendix 2G – Lin's Story

Me, in a nutshell!
Let's rule some stuff out. I'm not clumsy / dyspraxic, I've got very good eyesight I'm left hand, left foot dominant. I've had no time out of education. I can spontaneously caricature / mimic accents - but not deliberately. I may be a bit deafened [clubs], and I do have selective hearing - I need people to speak up (volume); my mood can relates to my hearing at times. I'm not tone-deaf as such.

About my family
I'm middle class, my mother is a dyslexia specialist teacher. I have a younger brother with worse dyslexia. I am a better reader than my brother but I'm less practical, less hands-on than he is - less artistic and "handy" than him. He's right-handed and right-brained, I am left-handed and left-brained. My girlfriend's actually dyslexic; or she's just found out she's dyslexic and she's also dyspraxic.

School and Diagnosis
My dyslexia wasn't showing as a child. I was privately tested for dyslexia, but actually not at school. In fact I was actually being home-schooled when I was "diagnosed". My school education was discontinuous. Working round my dyslexia to obtain high grades cost me in time and in stress, more than my peers. I was living in the suburbs outside New York and the schools were really going quite badly; I was in the top 10% of my class in High School but my schooling was dangerous and I ended up taking that test when my parents sort of got a little bit involved in my education.

My mother "took up" dyslexia teaching when she found out we were both dyslexic. I was used in part by mother to discover about dyslexia! I was not near the "worst case scenario" people my mother was studying. I was home schooled before my mother knew much about it, but having a name for my language problem so early on was a help. I knew what the problem was, so it was less of a problem as a consequence. I think that there was more of a taboo a while ago, of how you were put you were put into different classes at school in England and stuff and it was something better to *not* know about than know about in some ways.

Uni – the help I've had
I was 17 when I started university.   I had a scholarship to Boston University, but preferred Wealdston. I'm coping, generally. I recognise myself and my dyslexia in some other dyslexic students as I know other dyslexics here at Wealdston. I'm not alone in being stressed. I've even channelled some students to Support Unit myself!   I had my dyslexia assessment forwarded to the Student Support Unit, and I got extra time in testing. That's all I arranged, extra time for exams, if needed. I've not had tutoring, only extra time because time is a critical factor for me, less than external help. There are also particular aspects, individual ones, to each dyslexic. I've noted that dyslexia can particularise, paradoxically, as a result of school / early life intervention, i.e. it can be much more up-close-and-personal at university. I did not get Assistances as, I wasn't resident 3 years in U.K., so I did not get group or individual support for dyslexia: I had my own laptop but I don't understand some dyslexia support software, I only use Word tools.

My problem with unstable dyslexia
I've been aware that I'm dyslexic since I was about 12. My language difficulty sort of varies from time to time, and I am now borderline dyslexic because of progress I've made. Being borderline dyslexic is very different to being fully dyslexic, I think, but being borderline dyslexic hasn't really hindered me. In fact, I don't regret having borderline dyslexia: initially, it was more the speed in which I read which was the

problem. I was a little bit of a slow reader – well quite a slow reader really: I did understand completely what I read and I was quite good and saying what I'd learned from whatever I'd read. I used to be prescribed Ritalin, not for ADD but for reading speeds and I found it stimulated my attention / concentration centres. I can't really remember how I got prescribed to it [sic]! I also had a problem with my spelling.

I've come to terms with it over the years. The way it's affected me has changed. Ironically, success in my inputting (reading, comprehending) has led to a problem with my outputting (essays etc.). Now, the dyslexia affects me more in terms of structuring my thoughts and essays, and making the facts more concise. What happens is that words lose their visual focus when I'm tired or after long periods of reading. I'll often find my brain will be very tired very quickly.

The main thing that sparks off my dyslexia is just stress in general, I find that stress makes me have the effects of dyslexia come right back out - I can have *relapse dyslexia*. I can "practice" my way out of some dyslexia phenomena whereas if I'm not stressed it's almost as if I don't have it. Stress will make me reverse words and make my spelling change, so my spelling can be unstable: I switch letters round in my spellings, sometimes. And again, it's stress that will make me have to go back and read a paragraph again. When I get stressed, I seem to lose the logic a little bit and sort of get a bit confused with those deadlines and stuff, on essays; I can't get my head round what I've said and what I haven't said.

With a lot to do at once, I lose focus in my thinking. I can't do one, single thing well because I'm thinking about all four at once. If I have four different things I have to do, because I know I have four things, I cannot just take one thing and do it, I'll think about all four at once. I can't prioritize. It's not that I panic, it's just that I can't think, I just shut down - I have conative immobilisation, i.e. my will and decision-making facilities are sapped in front of too many tasks. Is my parallel/serial problem causing me "stress dyslexia" or is my dyslexia stressing me into serial/parallel blocking? My stress doesn't cause dyslexia: my dyslexia causes stress, but purely in the academic sphere. If I'm given one simple task at a time, I can do it very well. It's a dilemma: I need to work in parallel and in real-time, and am nearly obsessive about this, but also I have to sequence (serialise) to avoid "hanging" This self-blocking in parallel is something I always seem to do.

Under exam pressure I start to lose connection to language and don't know what to say in writing. I'm working, everything's fine, then all of a sudden the 'dyslexia switch' will go and I'll just realise that ... It's gone. I have this task in hand and I can't really understand what this question is. That's the worst, when I completely lose sense of what I'm doing or thinking about or writing and what the question means [whiteout]. Having had dyslexia and associated assistances like time I have become dependent on them and stress when I don't get them. A vicious circle?

When I'm reading

Why am I studying literature? Because I love to read. I'm not hit by dyslexia when I'm reading novels, I can get into the flow with novels. I can visualise and imagine fiction reading because I have more strategies available to access prose when it's non-technical and fiction (metaphor, etc.).   But my reading speed varies with stress: the more I'm stressed, the slower my reading becomes. With complex philosophy texts I need to stop and take notes, and this breaks the flow. I don't have a problem with actual words, vocab, lexis, and I don't have anomia, knowing the thing but not being able to say its name.

When I'm writing

My essays are described as prolix and rambling. I have a tendency to write quite long, and complex, sentences which muddle what could be more simply stated. I don't know if that's dyslexia or just the way that I write sentences! It's a trend that I've always had, overcomplicating my sentences. My every sentence probably in some ways could be simplified to half its length.

I'm basically completely dependent on a computer, when I write, because I can type as fast as I think - but I can't write as fast as I think. I dunno if this is a trait of dyslexics, but my handwriting isn't... when I speed up, legibility decreases just ridiculously. This handwriting thing struck at university, it was OK before. I write my exams on computer, now. My illegibility isn't to do with my dyslexia *directly*, but because of my left-handedness and writing speed.

Grammar

People don't comment on my grammar, it's good. I had school tests just on grammar in the States, and teaching of grammar rules was really rigorous. In fact I had double the grammar teaching that students get in England; I know my grammar quite well. This being said, I have grammar knowledge in discrete little bits but can't do it all at once.

Me and others

I've never had any kind of hassle for being dyslexic from anyone, I've never really been singled out to others as a dyslexic, and the only people who know I'm dyslexic are the ones I tell. I'm more in control of my dyslexia than being controlled by others. Yes, I am aware of my peers' views and attitudes etc., and I know quite a few dyslexics because there are quite a few around. I'm in a word-of-mouth network of dyslexics. But I only know happy and interested dyslexics, not "sufferers"

How I got on with French

I did 4 years of French at High School in the States; it was definitely very hard and I can't remember it. I could remember French class-work, I could cram for tests, but couldn't keep it. I don't really have the head for languages because I had problems integrating discrete grammar points and exceptions and non-cognate items into my acquisition of French. I've heard that dyslexia affects the way people do foreign languages but I'm not sure. I didn't feel more dyslexic in English as a result of studying French.

My hypotheses

I'm not sure if this mismatch between intention and execution is dyslexia-related but this is my struggle. I need to sequence (serialise) to avoid "hanging": I am micro-planning, however in so doing, I'm holding lots of information but also, lack lots of information, propriocentric info on my work in progress.

Winning through

I've heard of that book "The Gift of Dyslexia" but I haven't really read it - I certainly don't know what my "dyslexia gift" is! I just think dyslexics think differently because they're using their brain differently - I've heard an explanation that dyslexia is like a - two hemispheres of the brain sort of working at the same time. What I know is that I am not my dyslexia, i.e. some things are "me" and some things are "my dyslexia". Invisible

dyslexics can be invisible not because they're undetected but because they've coped, so far.

Appendix 2H – Millie's Story

General stuff about me!
I was born on 27th January 1983, so I'm twenty two years old at the time of this interview. I didn't have a gap year. I have a lazy left eye and something of a tracking problem. With my eye tracking the first half to the middle is OK but then the middle to the right, it's a little bit rough and then the whole jump from the right to the left it's just disaster! I have to get back to the next line I am quite clumsy, especially in the kitchen. I write and kick with the left foot, I'm ambidextrous and ambipedal but can't wrote with both hands. I'm not tone-deaf, though I think I just don't hear some kinds of sounds. I think I have selective hearing. I don't choose what I select. When I'm really tired, I'm listening, listening, and I can't absorb certain things. I had M.E. for some time during my schooling.

My family
My Dad was dyslexic and my brother too. I think my Mum is slightly – or at least, she has some of the same difficulties as me. My Dad's a really, really bad speller. Really, really bad. My Dad wasn't very aware that he was spelling it wrongly.

In terms of the visual-spatial thing with my Dad he was *brilliant* and so was my brother, but I don't know whether that's to do with another thing, because my brother was diagnosed as having Asperger's Syndrome. And then my Dad kind of has quite a lot of similar tendencies.

My Mum's side tend to be more artistic and less academic, shall we say. I think that because my brother was having so many problems at school, I was seen as not having any problems, or mine not being an issue in comparison to him.

My Dad's side of the family are upper-lower going into middle class. I do think one thing, actually, in terms of having an environment… the fact that my Dad is dyslexic kind of hinders you because he couldn't teach me to the extent he might have.

I was read to when I was small, at Bedtime. I didn't do the reading because I just remember *hating* it, I would just do *anything* not to.

During bedtime reading I'd just pretend, turn pages after about 2 minutes. I'd make up my story as I went along!

My problem with language
I'd say this is both an input and output thing. I often can't find the words to say what I want to say; it's generally just this tip-of-the-tongue thing, where I know what I want to say but I can find the words to say it. I often find it difficult to structure what I mean. Generally, I get more frustrated with myself, because I know what I mean but I can't find ways to say it. The tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon is just really annoying, because I know that there's a word for what I want to say and I don't have the vocabulary to express what I want to say most of the time.

Sometimes I have difficulty in concentrating on what people are saying, and I just have mind-blanks (26). Listening to other people can be difficult as well, especially if I'm having to do two things at once - like in lectures if I have to listen and take notes. As soon as I start making notes, I miss what they've said about the other thing. Sometimes when I'm speaking, what happens to me is that I have so many thoughts in my head, as I'm trying say them all, that some of them just get lost. I find myself hunting for the best

word to compensate for the tip-of-the-tongue word-loss, or just finding really long ways round to describing [sic] things.

I "tune out" both productively in talking and receptively in speaking. I think I'm more aware of it ["tuning out"] when I'm talking to someone because when I'm listening, if I lose attention, I don't necessarily notice. That's why I prefer writing things down, because I can take my time, then in saying something that I want to say.

I definitely have a bad memory. I forget the names of simple things – like cats! It's a memory thing, but also an attention thing. I try and word my notes so I don't have to write everything down - and concentrating on that just takes away the concentration on the lecture.

I had a difficult birth where I had to have an operation as soon as I was born and I had like patches over my eyes for a lot of the time, and I wonder if my visual-spatial thing is connected with that. I came into the world blindfolded in a way. When you're first born, you develop a huge amount in those days.

In terms of my developmental side when I was younger, I didn't crawl; with the whole crawling action, you're always scanning with your eyes to your left and to your right, and I think that's quite connected with having learning difficulties.

Writing
When I write things down, I write down everything and then I can edit it to what I actually mean – eventually. I have to sit there and think of that word, how to spell it, and whenever I write my notes I always write in pencil. Always. I'm constantly rubbing out going "no that's not how you spell it, you spell it like this". Because if I've time to think about it I can often correct it. It is a speed issue. When I'm taking down notes, I often get half way through a sentence, then I can't remember what I'm meant to be writing! I get letters in the wrong order [but not back-to-front or upside down as in strephosymbolia].

When I talk, people that I know think I'm quite scatty, most times. But if someone saw my writing they'd probably say "Oh, that doesn't sound like Lauren". Because I've got time to say what I want to say, and give it structure. When people *read* what I've written they wouldn't necessarily think that was me because it's a lot more structured and sensible. I take a lot of time over my writing, that's the thing, I'm a complete perfectionist.

Reading
In terms of reading, I often read the same over and over again – but completely wrong and just not realise it. Or I'll read things and put different meanings on them *because* I've read it wrongly. I spend ages looking for a word, even if it's right there I don't see it - it's right there and I can't see it. If I pay attention to something else, the word disappears; and sometimes if I refocus, the word comes back - but sometimes it doesn't. I think I'm seeing them, these words on the page, but I'm just not processing them. I don't think there's any kind of a visual thing in my not processing words on the page; I've got a kind of theory on that: I see the word, but I just don't process it - that's what it feels like to me. We've done it in psychology, often usually people will recognise the word quicker than the picture? And I always recognise the picture quicker. Always. I'm on that visual basis - the words tend to take on a form rather than individual things that make up the word. I see it as a whole and I don't break it down. I can always do the long words, it's the… it's the short words that I got tripped on? And I think it's like the *where* and the *wear* and

the… and the *hear*… I have incredible difficulty with sound-alikes. Also, I get tripped by short function-words like "a" and "the", because I try to read semantic value into them. It would take me a whole day to do the reading for an essay - and I wouldn't do anything else. I can't tune out into the flow when reading - I'm really aware that, as soon as I tune out I have to stop and I have to re-read it and re-read it. I can't tune out into the flow when I'm reading because of the perfectionism thing and the attention-span thing as well. But I'll also get bored because I'm not reading to the pace that my mind wants to.

School to Uni
I went to my Infant School and I never had time to finish anything, and I used to get really upset, specially in my art work. My Mum said I just used to be in tears because they didn't give me time to finish my artwork. And I think it was because it was something that I knew I could and I kind of excelled in. I felt really unhappy especially at Infant School, at one particular stage when we were doing our… I can't remember what tests they are, I just freaked out, I just came home crying. I was like, I can't go to school, I think that the thought of being tested was just the *worse thing*. I did just feel incredibly isolated and different, incredibly. I didn't get the support I needed back in Mixed Infants. I know that when I was at Infant School, children were just not being diagnosed as dyslexic because of the whole funding thing: it wasn't in their interest to put it into light, basically.   Having our first tests just as you transition from Infants to P1, I just completely freaked out, and I've constantly done it when I have exams, complete panic attack.

Then, in reading at Primary School, I got pulled up for being a bit behind. In maths I just looked at it and everyone was going through their book and doing them and I just didn't understand it. In maths I'd be at the beginning of the book when they'd be on the last page of the second book. I didn't get support in maths; I was just left to do it when I literally couldn't.

I liked writing stories and was good at it if I was given the time. But in terms of reading I think I pretended that I could. I was very much hiding some of my difficulties there. In terms of the reading thing, I didn't feel very supported, in fact I remember one incident where a teacher shouted at me because she just couldn't believe that I getting this word wrong again: "I ***told*** you! I ***told*** you this a million times before!" and I was just "I'm not *trying*, you know, to upset you". I just used to dread the extra reading I class with the teaching assistant. No I don't think I got practise. I think they often presumed you would do it at home, you know, with your parents. Apparently, my teachers never raised anything with my Mum, or my Dad for that matter, saying you know "She's having a difficulty". There was always just… I mean nothing was ever raised. I don't know if the teachers who taught *me* were [aware of my brother's condition. No-one was really aware of my brother, they just thought he was a really odd child and they couldn't really understand him. I mean his Asperger's syndrome didn't get diagnosed until recently, fairly recently. So no, the teachers weren't comparing my brother and me.

I think I was quite withdrawn anyway when I was younger, but I think that I was obviously noticed as being the one who was behind. I don't specifically remember being picked on for being "behind" but I was kind of aware that "Oh if I was better at this because then I could be friends with that person".

I remember being very, very unhappy at middle school. But not really talking to anyone about it. I got Extra English lessons at S. Mary's Convent from the age of about 11 till 15 but with a *group* of people. I used to write things in very short sentences and not expand on them, and Extra English was stylistic expansion of my writing from very short sentences. The Extra English was just analysing poetry in a way, not writing it down. I

was kind of good at analysing poetry, yeah. But Extra English was also chapters and things you used to be tested on, and I remember I starting to be tested on them and I got three lines of the story or something, and I just did so badly! Over 50% of the time I wasn't there as well because I was ill. So that would have been another hindrance in the Extra English comprehension tests.

My structured academic education was hindered by my Steiner education in favour of non-structured thinking. Then, I went to a State School – Alderman Jones – and kind of kind of just did my GCSEs in a period of a year. They put me in classes probably higher than I should have been because I went to a private school, they just presumed that, and in terms of the structuring having to get things done and being tested kind of gave me the motivation to work. Doing an A-Level was more structured, you kind of like knew what you were doing. But I found it very, very difficult to work in that structured pace thing where "I will achieve THIS by THIS", because it's going to be done when it's done and when I'm ready, that's what I always thought. I did freak out completely [in the state sector school]. It took its toll on my health even more there; in terms of achieving I was successful, because I got a B in English Literature and I got a C in English Language.

When I did my A Levels I decided to do Human Biology because I thought I wanted prove it to myself that I could do a science. And I got extra lessons for that, just for myself, people helped me with the statistics side of psychology. I tried to do Art on two occasions but I was faced with the same problem that I didn't ever had enough time to finish it.

Diagnosis - and Assistances received

I was tested by a non-specialist at the Steiner School, who "wasn't sure".

At Wealdston, my EdPsych tests included Digit Memory, and the Similarity test and then Backwards Digits and Hand-Eye Coordination. I got my Educational Psychologist Report back saying, you know, Lauren does have specific-learning-difficulties-brackets-dyslexia. Actually I came out really high on my memory, as well, which was quite bizarre. But (from my knowledge of it, anyway) a lot of dyslexics tend to have really high visual-spatial skills in… and certain other skills which I was really quite poor on. Stuff like the scanning, looking for the missing thing in the picture I was really bad at. Divergent thinking kind of the language stuff I was really good at apparently. I know that this whole structural way of thinking side of things coincides with Asperger's syndrome. But I've not a structured way of thinking at all. I think that's the problem.

The Ed Psych kind of tested my reading and my writing and he said "You know someone of your reading and writing ability really shouldn't … or doesn't usually get to university" and throughout the first year I thought, "Oh I shouldn't really be here; I'm not good enough to be here".

But in terms of actually being diagnosed as a dyslexic, that was a really good thing for me, because it was just such a relief? The Educational Psychologist had explained to me, "This is what you're good at…and this is what you're not so good at, and these are the reasons for it". And I guess for me at least, because in my head I was feeling really stupid, I could kind of let go of part of that. With my diagnosis and label, I felt a lot more confident about my difficulties, about showing them, because I know that it wasn't down to something that I was doing particularly, it was just down to the dyslexia or whatever you want to call it.

Indeed, my Good Story is the day I was diagnosed. Because I could make a whole lot of sense of why I had all those difficulties. And the fact that I was given – started, anyway, to be given a whole lot of support and understanding of why I am like I am.

Support at Wealdston is a bit of a sore subject, because I was supposed to get Statistics Support from the beginning of this academic year but it's only starting this week. So I will be getting statistics support. It's just breaking [maths] down because I do think I see things as a whole, and maybe that's why I was more artistic and stuff, you know the divergent thinker? But you're breaking it down, you're seeing a table and knowing what you're looking at is something I definitely need help with. But I got stuff like software and a Minidisk player for lectures; I don't have to take notes, so I've recorded all of my lectures because I know that in terms of the reading, I'm just not going to get most of it done and I've heard from some third years anyway that if you just do lectures and you know it well that's enough. I think in terms of me having less information to concentrate on [lectures only, not the readings] means that I will learn more.

I've got a computer with the read-and-write thing, where you have a scanner or alternatively you can take Word Documents and it will basically read it aloud to you, which is *brilliant*. Especially in terms of like essays, I can actually now correct my essays, because what I would do is I would read it with the punctuation in, even though it wasn't there, but if the computer does it, it just goes blah blah blah blah blah, I know when to put in the breaks because I can *hear* it? The Inspiration thing has been useful at times, but I don't know fully how to use it. But generally, thanks to the kit offered and because I can concentrate, I'm taking it in

Strategies I use
I can't make a presentation off the cuff, from notes. I've had to do a few presentations, and what I generally have to do is write everything. What I try and do is give out notes to my class and then do my own notes, but put them put them in very wordy ways so that they wouldn't necessarily think I was reading it.

If I stand up and have to give a presentation I can't just do it like that, I can't research something, write little notes and give a talk like and talk about it. When preparing an Oral Presentation I would have to write the whole thing down just as a safeguard. I haven't gone blank by giving an unscripted presentation, but I haven't ever given myself the opportunity to!

In terms of reading strategies, I tend to cover up the rest of the page so I can only see down the lines that I'm supposed to be looking at. With some texts especially I shout them out in my head. If during my reading I feel myself drifting off or various things like that, I try and make it in some way interesting by imagining a funny little accent or something when reading the words.

When you come to doing a degree there's a lot less structure, a lot more independence, I didn't really know what was essential what wasn't essential, and in terms of the structure of my time the structure of my work… once I have a structure I can work from it. I know that I created a lot of ways to hide my difficulties which in turn would be many reasons why they wouldn't pick it up, so I think it's just being aware of those signals.

Affect and psychological
My "Bad Story" was around generally insensitive or uneducated teachers being really *personal* or really inappropriate, how people have perceived me and not understood. Not been aware. I've always been really, really aware of my difficulties and just kind of thought "Oh God I'm really stupid". I was in a state just in terms of the knowing

everything but not being able to do it because it was just too difficult. I very much put myself down even at a young age, I mean there were a few people who I saw being pulled up as having difficulties reading, and I thought "I'm one of them, basically". Even outside "tests", I feel I am being tested just with a question: I wonder if there's a right and a wrong answer.

I think in terms of recognition, and in terms of the visual sphere, I have no sense of direction at all. I get lost, basically. I think that's connected to my lack of knowing where I am in the world, basically.

Having these problems, and then being a complete perfectionist, kind of sets me up, I feel sometimes for just this kind of paralysed state where I can't do anything, because I can't achieve what I want to do. I can spend a huge amount of time while I'm being anxious. It's a great, then, an even greater barrier. I did go through a phase last year when I didn't think I was going to carry on, and I just couldn't cope with it.

I'm learning to get over myself. I do try and be careful because I don't want to think about this too much, "Oh I am A Dyslexic", I have dyslexia, because I wasn't aware of it before, I wouldn't have made it as an excuse, it's really a word I don't want to... I just think of myself as the same, just try and do as high as I can. What I kind of have to do in those sorts of situations like presentations and in exams as well: I can't talk to anyone beforehand, I need to keep myself in a calm state and not be influenced by… incoming things. I focus on my breathing and I try and bring myself back. The whole perfectionism thing, I thought… that whole area I think I'm dealing with, so it's in that way it's easier for me to cope with my work. I have belief in myself and pass one thing at a time which builds up confidence in myself.

Modern Languages
In Wealdston Steiner School we did French and German, until aged 12 and then the way that we learned was very much based on music, and I was one of the top ones in the class!

In Michael Hall in Steiner I did French again, but I dropped German, in fact doing extra English, and in Blatchington Mill I did start French but I was able to have my timetable reduced because I had M.E. and that was one of the ones that I dropped. So I avoided French and German by doing Extra English.

Coda
I think that's been the main thing, in my Bad Story: just people thinking I'm actually slow or stupid. My Good Story is that I got a certain satisfaction at achieving my A Levels and finishing my degree and things like that. I have decided to carry on for my career and whatever. In part of my education I had a really good physics teacher – he was always so encouraging, saying "You can do this" constantly, I think it's just having an encouraging teacher who kind of believes in you.

Appendix 2I – Pat's Story

General stuff about me

I am 18 years old. I came to university straight from school with no Gap Year. My Major subject here at Wealdston is International Relations. I write with my right hand. I can understand people from different areas. Pretty well. My hearing doesn't require hearing-aids, and I don't wear spectacles. Both my eyes are brown. I'm not tone-deaf – but I have *no* musical skills at all: my singing is... singing in the shower kind of thing. I'm not dyspraxic: I don't drop things more than other people; well, that's to say, I do have days when I tend to drop things, my sister too but it's just one of those days, so I am not more accident-prone than others. I acted in school plays and mimicked accents and voices; I mimic people a lot - friends from university and things like that, and at this stage now when I've known them for a term I think I can roughly get their accents and things like that - I can mimic different regions and things like special words. My mimicry can turn to mocking. I'd probably say [I am] Upper Middle [class]

My family

I was aware my parents were alarmed at my progress. My mother used to try and help me with spellings and things like that, at home. But I had rows with my mother because she didn't know what was on or off the syllabus. My sister who is 2 years older than me helped with learning and testing unlike my parents' style of teaching. My brother is quite a bit older than me and didn't get involved at all.

Halfway through my summer vacation my parents told me that they were going to switch me to D'Overbroeks because they didn't want me to waste an extra year of my life. So it was their decision. I was thrilled about [my parents'] decision to switch me to D'Overbroeks]. There was only a certain amount I would tell my parents; I thought that if I did go home every day and said "I can't do maths" and "I can't do science", and "I can't do this ...", then their answer would be to put me in more classes. I really dreaded these classes, you know, once a week, it was only an hour or so but it was *horrible* kind of lessons, I didn't like them at all.

My problem as I see it

Basically I've always had problems with reading and writing. [These problems with reading and writing have] then come into problems with actually speaking as well. I get words wrong, I miswrite words because of getting words wrong, I miss-say things, I believe my reading and writing problems and my miss-speaking problems are interlinked. My dyslexia is both ways, an input thing and an output thing: I occasionally give myself negative feedback on the sense of some utterances. I'm not aware of it at all; I think [the difference between how I work my English and how I work my I.R.] [Dyslexia] doesn't necessarily or it doesn't have to affect you at all moments of your life. I am coping, on the whole, I don't think dyslexia holds me back much. I did a number-remembering test, but can't remember what it was.

I think to me it's always been spellings and reading problems which have just managed to make my schooling days a little more difficult than they should have been. I wouldn't say dyslexia has wrecked my life, or anything like that, it's been a hurdle […] but it is manageable to jump over easily. My dyslexia is a very small part of me personally, it's about a quarter of me academically.

Spelling and Grammar

[You would first notice dyslexia in my writing by the] spelling mistakes throughout, my spelling is ummm… I've always thought it [my spelling] was O.K., but numerous teachers have said that it's [my spelling's] atrocious. I am not strephosymbolic, but I have

a tendency to write things down as I hear them, i.e. phonetically. I have rule-formation problems (over-formation and under-formation).

I think I was way into past GCSE before I actually realised what the difference between a verb and a noun and an adjective and things like that were. We didn't really learn grammar; we just learned how do things. I remember spending two or three lessons throughout maybe the first three years of secondary school learning grammar. We definitely didn't do any in primary school. My A Level teacher was notorious for making us make sure that we learned our vocab, he thought that was like the most important thing. We had to spend at least fifteen minutes a day learning the vocab of the day which if you build up over a two year course does get you into a system of doing that.

Reading
I tend to read quite a lot... for someone of my age group let alone a dyslexic! When I do read, I do tend to get the odd word mixed up. If I read a sentence, for instance, and I'm not paying very much attention to it, then I'll read something different, I'll get one word mixed up with another word and it'll just change the meaning. I rely on semantico-logical cues about any misreadings. On phonological matters, lexical-semantic glitches slow my reading. So I have phonological accompaniment when I'm reading. I have a strategy of keeping on reading technical texts so context can help me
I'm not aware of having anomia in my L1: if I see a name that I don't particularly know how to spell, if I can't say it in my head I'll try saying it out loud or something like that just to try and work out which name it is. Homophones are by biggest problem I have a problem with homophonic-initial words. I might write something like "through" instead of "throw" or things like that.

Writing
When you get to long words, I'm bound to make a mistake somewhere in all the jumble of letters.

Diagnosis
I was diagnosed with dyslexia when I was quite young. I certainly didn't notice it and I don't think either of my parents did. I think it was my 4th-year primary teacher who first said something, and then I was referred to an educational psychologist or something, who did then say I was dyslexic. I think they [some of the European School teachers] just thought I was very complacent and didn't care about the subject. Some teachers almost didn't believe that it existed, the attitude that they had towards me wasn't exactly the nicest thing.

I was a "sole dyslexic" in my family - but since all my tests and things like that were done my... my father suspects that he might have been dyslexic himself. I think I might get it from ... from his [my father's] side of the family if anywhere, but I'm presuming it's just passed down family to family, from parents and grandparents. As a child I was an asthmatic and I think I've always felt that it's the same kind of thing, you know, I was born with dyslexia and had asthma and the two things were just there.

Strategies and Remedies
I talk fast sometimes.

If someone did notice bad spelling I wouldn't say I was a bad speller, I'd say, well, I'm dyslexic you know. "This is normal for me".

I think peer teaching will be a good idea.

I had school-based remedial teaching in English - my remediation was interactive but led by the support teacher. I don't remember what the remediation was in the extra English classes; I had story books with adventures and spelling and help sections, making it about as interactive as you can get with a book. [To learn words,] I'll have a look at my piece of paper, reading the words and trying to get them into my head, trying to almost *visualise* the piece of paper.

When we got into secondary school [The European School], they stopped everything. There was no additional help. I would go home and study and study and study and then come back in the next day for the test that the whole class was having, and whereas I would get a low mark my friends who hadn't studied at all, would get the highest mark in the class. We used to have to choose whether we were going to Higher or Lower Maths and English, and things like that. I remember choosing *lower* all the time, just because I didn't want to get myself into a bad situation. I had to go to extra lessons for lots of things; my parents didn't want me to fall behind in any class. I had one-to-one classes. I remember there were a lot of shouting fits about [the extra lessons], and me refusing to want to go Things that I can remember being taught [are] maybe things like essay plans.

The college I went to [later; d'Overbroek's] specialised in small classes and it was just a tutorial college, and they because of the small classes and every teacher had a training in dyslexic students. That worked a lot better, one-to-one tuition and things like that.

If they asked me, I'd tell them how I work; but I wouldn't say that *that* is the way, I mean it's just the way that I've started working now. I'd really confuse myself [with little spelling ditties], because it's not my way of learning. I can't evaluate my techniques comparatively, they seem so 'normal' to me I can't even analyse them. I keep setting myself goals. I set my own goals and control myself rather than being controlled. I'm aware of other people's grades here in French, I'm aware of other people's grades in I.R. I give myself rank feedback against my peers. I hope for the medium-range in my marks.

My dyslexia wasn't followed through from the college to Wealdston University. I have been assessed and had all the tests done which I think have been passed on, so all the bits of paper are somewhere in the university.

[The "disabled student committee"] gave me a sheet to photocopy and hand out to all my teachers, to warn them that spelling mistakes and grammar were going to possibly be a problem and I was officially dyslexic, as opposed to complacency.

School to Uni

I actually attended an International Lycée so it was very linguistic-based.

This was all picked up around fourth year primary - I had two years when I was put into classes about once a week. The [classes] with dyslexia specialists - those were even worse. It was one thing to have extra lessons in French, which is my second language, but to have them in your *first* language... It's not like studying English at A Level or something like that, it was like studying elementary English, which just annoyed me so much that I had to go and do that.

I stayed at the European School for five years, at which point I had to leave because I was just falling behind quite drastically.

Maths was one of my key worse subjects until I transferred to the English GCSE and got a B and the offer to take it at A Level. At the European School they were trying to put me in lowest classes for maths and kind of saying, well, we'll fade this out as quickly as we

can. I think the European School's Bac was just too much, I think it was just too difficult, it wasn't my style of working at all. When I moved over to D'Overbroek's for the GCSEs it wasn't just maths that I started doing better in, it was general - all my subjects generally. [Maths] was the same sort of stuff, just taught in a different sort of way. I don't know why, I don't think there's a link between my dyslexia and maths, it just started to make sense.

Dyslexia and Languages

I started French when I was seven. In those days learning French was singing songs and hand-claps and colouring in pictures of France and things like that.

I was put into Spanish classes especially because Spanish is more audible in the writing as opposed to other languages and even with that I had a kind of tendency to get spelling mistakes again. Some grammar rules in Spanish I have acquired from the teacher, others I seem to have made up. I used to get very confused between French and Spanish. It was just a lot of the time just saying the word and trying to look at the teacher's reaction, was it happiness or confusion on their face! But I don't think French had a negative effect on my English. I'd say it [French, after 3 or 4 years] might have actually helped my English a bit, especially with vocabulary and things like that, because learning French words which actually mean the same thing in English, they're the same word but I hadn't heard the word in English, I think that made me kind of improve my vocabulary a bit.

For French vocab learning, I start off by writing on a piece of paper, French on one side, English on the other, then covering up the French side after spending five minutes learning. I kind of spend five minutes making sure I've written down each word like five, six times or something like that. [I don't "see" the French in my mind's eye,] I hear it. Because in my head, I'm saying over the word. I say the word in French and the word in English and that is an auditory link that I make. Definitely it is an auditory link which I think may not be very good as far as my spelling goes because then I don't learn the spelling straight away and I usually have to go back to it and learn the spelling.

My French teaching was directive, authoritarian, un-analytical at the European School.

I suppose learning new words in French I try and see if I can think of an equivalent in English that I've heard of and then just try and think of a different way to remember it, but it doesn't always work. If I'm trying to learn an irregular verb or tense of a verb I'll just keep reading it over and you know, things like that, maybe leave it for 50 minutes, come back later and see if I can remember it still, and check it off.

I reckon that if I got 60 in English I'd probably get about 40 in French.

On the speaking side of things that's the way I study or the way for French for me … I can speak it fine and go off to France and have conversations, but writing and things like that is almost out of the window. I'm constantly forgetting how to spell those - *ils*... the plural of the third person plural - because when you say them they're the same. My spelling impacts on my grammar because small spelling differences change things like tenses and moods.

Affect and Psychological

I have to get higher than a 2:2 at university just because that's what my brother got.

There were definitely points at the European School where it was very kind of harsh... harsh things happened. It was pretty much survival of the fittest at the European School. I

remember that [low marks] being quite bad and making me feel quite stupid. I also remember that [feeling stupid at low test grades] happened quite a lot.

Psychologically it [D'Overbroek's] works a bit better as well, because they seem to be caring a bit more than the European School, which just left me to get on with it, whatever.

I would never get upset at school, I got upset at home rather than at school because that would I suppose show weakness and I wouldn't want my friends to think I was... unstable. I had a façade of not caring about the whole "dyslexia thing", in front of my peers. In fact, I was very frustrated with the learning. I didn't really want any help because no-one else needed any help with my friends, so I didn't want to single myself out. I felt that I couldn't do things like that [English, maths] because of dyslexia.

[I think I would have done a lot better in my other subjects because] I think my self-esteem would have been lot a lot higher which would have made me push myself a lot further. I wasn't too worried about what the other children felt about me, I was a bit more concerned about what teachers thought about me. I just always felt that they [the teachers] were slightly scary, just because they had this power to say what... how good I was at their subject, and other people would listen to what *they* said, and I didn't like that at all. I was conscious of power in the classroom. And quite scared of it. I think that's [power/powerlessness in the classroom is] one of the reasons I had to leave the European School, it was just because I didn't like this whole idea, it was getting me down quite a bit.

My dyslexia made me feel frustration and anger. I had bad moods and "closed off" into myself for days at a time. I didn't want anyone to kind of make a fuss about it because I felt that would make it worse.

[At school] I was completely demotivated. I wasn't going to be able to get very high in society or get to where I wanted (When I was younger I really wanted to be a lawyer [but][…] by just hearing that at that stage I thought that was my whole dream of two years or whatever had been... gone out of the window and that held me back, just the fact that I was dyslexic I could never do all that work. I remember definitely thinking that there was no point really, because I was dyslexic and I remember thinking there was only a certain point I could get to, that was C/B Grade, I would never get to an A. So I kind of stopped working on that basis, and I think if I hadn't been dyslexic then I would have pushed myself further and got the better grades. I used to leave homework to the very last second because I felt, it doesn't matter if I did it at the start or at the end, I'd still get the same grade. Indeed, I had a very constant grade, no matter how much extra work I put in I would usually get the same grade as doing a small amount. I thought [assumed] the teachers were always completely fair. When I started getting to fourteen, fifteen, I started realising that it [fairness of the teaching institution] wasn't as good as I had imagined it to be.

I felt definite jealousy of my friend who got the straight As regardless of studying or not. I think that's just the way I am actually! Measuring my educational performance against others'. [If] I get 55 or something for an essay and I meet someone else who says they got 80, I won't immediately say "Oh yeah, but I'm dyslexic". I'm quite happy to say that I'm dyslexic; it's not something that worries me. At all.

I wouldn't say any desperately good emotions have come out of [my dyslexia]. Maybe a bit of self-achievement [resulted from being dyslexic] - I suppose [I felt] happiness to an extent when I did come out with good marks, especially in things like GCSEs where I *never* used my extra time, ummm, you know, I'd get 25% extra time for all exams, and at GCSEs I went in, sat down, did them, and was always finished before time, so I'd just

kind of leave when everyone else left. Also, I remember getting *higher than average marks* back without using my extra time, in a way that was quite nice.

My "Good Story": I remember thinking, you know, "Right, that's it, clearly I've... I'm better than half the class at this, so that's O.K." I remember instances like that when I thought that I was getting on, you know, beating the dyslexia, kind of thing. I didn't get the tap on the shoulder in the spelling test to leave the class with the Bad Spellers. But the *real* Good Story: I thought basically I was screwed in English and English Literature, and then I came out with Bs in both. So that was quite a happy moment because I was expecting much worse grades than that, I was expecting Ds and things like that, so that was probably a kind of moment of jubilee. I was happy with myself, I was quite impressed.

Without a *doubt* [my "Bad Story"] was Mrs Spriggs my chemistry teacher in third year secondary; she told us he had been marking the test, and she informed the class that she had decided that because one of the persons' spellings in the class was so bad, that she had taken off a point of that person's work for every spelling mistake not to do with chemistry but to do with anything, and of course that was my work. I remember being *so* angry and *so* upset because of that, because she was penalising me on what wasn't actually her subject. That was definitely the lowest point, I think... straight after class I skipped my next two classes and just went home. I called my Mum and said "Please can you collect me now". I couldn't cope with that - I have never hated a human being before or after this individual. There was no need to know for the others in my class, we weren't in a team I'd let down or anything. I think on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the worst, that was probably around a 6. Obviously at that point in my life that was so horribly hard ... the fact thats he had humiliated me in front of the class because everyone clearly knew that this was my work. At the time, if anyone had kicked me whilst I was down, it probably wouldn't have made any difference.

Appendix 2J – Petey's Story

About me
I had 15 years "out" between school and University. I'm Working class, I think. At school, I was probably somewhere in between Working and Middle class.

Physically, I'm not really clumsy, except first thing in the morning. I am left-handed but with mixed dominance (writing with left and catching with right) and mixed dominance foot. My hearing is fine, and I have good eyesight – no obvious compromised laterality in eyesight. I am not tone-deaf: I can do mimicry, but I'm not capable of judging if it's good. When I was learning Dutch, at first I was sort of making a face with it. When I got fluent with the language, I forgot to do the face.

My problem with language
My Language Problem is finding the right words and expressing myself in the way that I want to express myself. I think. It's a problem is with articulation: I know what I want to say but struggle to express it. I have difficulty in expressing *my ideas*. It's also finding the right words and expressing myself in the way that I want to express myself – in writing too.   I've had an Educational Psychologist's report ... I've had tests and then a report said that I have Dyslexic Tendencies. Yeah. Whatever that means. I've got no idea how long people have been termed dyslexic; it's something I've only heard about recently. I know a little bit about Dyslexia and it's quite broad, I think, I don't fit into some of the brackets.

Reading
I was a big reader but a very slow reader. It never entered my mind why I might be slower than everyone else or slower than people that I know [at reading and writing].

My Ed Psych said that's it's to do with my Holding Memory; this comes into reading as well, I think, I'll read but sometimes I don't know what I've read. My problem isn't "drifting off" when I'm reading, like other people might. I tune out rather than wandering off inattentively; I lose the discourse-level, literally lose the plot. When my Language Problem happens, I read all the words and they're just words, rather than coherent sentences. They just jumble. I don't get a message from them, I don't get the narrative, I just get a load of words. Some pieces of writing are very complicated i.e. have several levels and because I have to read every word, I may miss out and just get the gist at one level. I also have to read (or re-read) some pieces as a whole entity to "get the point" of the piece of writing concerned.

Spelling
I always leave letters out when I'm writing. The thing that I'm most aware of and it's continuous, it's never gone away is however much I write: were and where, I have to stop and think about whether it's got an H in it or not.

Writing
I have up-down and left-right letter reversals. My letter-reversals are less common than spelling mistakes and missing letters.

Grammar
On grammar, I was never brilliant, I've never grasped it [grammar] at school. But I was getting better, thanks to feedback on written work. I'm doing more writing and receiving and acting on feedback about my grammar.

Speaking
I'd like my ideas to be in an order to make myself clear and express myself in a way that I would like to, but they don't come out in that way, they kind of… emmm… yeah a little bit like now, I'm thinking, stopping, thinking, stammering, there's a lot of emmm… there's not fluency to it.

With my Language Problem, it's either I can't recall what I want to say or it comes out quite jumbled. No-one's actually ever said to "Sorry you're talking gibberish. It's mainly something I think about myself, this notion that I'm disjointed and uncommunicative. I don't feel like I'm really engaged in a conversation On the disjointed/uncommunicative thing, I do hear people saying "Can you explain that again?" or "Can you add to that?" or I'm maybe picking up on that, a bit more, I don't know – perhaps! I'm not sure. I think I'm putting a lot of importance on the idea of being communicative [orally].

School to Uni
I wasn't easy to teach. Only in hindsight can I see that I had a communication problem at school, although I didn't realise it then. At school, I was regarded as a dissident, and I spent a lot of time outside the classroom door (owing to my communication problem). It was a bit strange because my actual results if you like were quite high, but my report was always terrible. I think there was a *little* bit of pressure on me to do well at school, not a huge amount, not really.

I had problems with my tables as well, chanting the… I thought it was quite a good way of learning, but it didn't mean anything for me, it was just chanting. I could have been chanting anything.

I was unaware there was anything wrong until I went onto the Access course fairly recently.

At my school there were a lot of people having problems that weren't being addressed I just don't think that it was a type of school where the majority of the kids were really getting what it is possible to get out of an education. I think my feeling was that I was let down by that system, by the school, by certain teachers.

My family
My language problems were unnoticed in my family. I don't come from an academic family but my Mum has been to university since. I think my Dad might be dyslexic although he's never been [diagnosed], and he was successful despite his dyslexia. Maybe even my brother [is dyslexic], as well. My brother, like he was really good at foreign languages and English as well, but like in the academic world it suddenly all went wrong, you know, for him! But for [my brother] […] no one said hang on it might be dyslexia… I don't think my sister has any problems with it [dyslexia] as she did well at school.

I was in trouble right through school and my family knew it. My parents, they was [sic] concerned but not enough to make me… to make anything change, I don't think. I think my father was fatalistic about my behaviour, but I think [my mother] was more concerned that I had an education because she didn't have one herself.

Strategies and remedies
I think essay-writing has sort of helped me to really express my ideas, yeah.
I was relatively successful, despite the bad reports, by doing things my way.

I use special software, to help my dyslexia. I use Inspiron mind-mapping – for the process, not so much for the product. Also, I bounce ideas off "this guy I see once a

week". It's about vocalising it I think, if I get the opportunity to talk about what I've been learning then it consolidates it.

For remembering, a lot of the time it's the visual thing I try not just to have everything just in black and white print, I use a bit of colour and patterns and things like that.

I know little codes (I before E …) and even made up one of my own (where>here). I can't remember my tricks and codes spontaneously but they are embedded and arise as I write.

In the study skills workshops we discuss solutions rather than our individual problems.

Self-Analysis and explanations
I think people have a problem because they've been told they have a problem, sometimes. With my language problems, I can "*work them to advantage*". I have managed despite my problems because I am "*really into language and the problems with language*" and also because "*I'm so interested and fascinated to work through them [problems].*

I have an advantage in knowing I have a problem (over people who don't realise and don't act on their problem). It's not a "second bite of the cherry effect", I'm just more aware of problems and of the need to work through them and engage with the problems more.

With my Language Problem, I would actually say that it's probably a common thing, but I don't feel that I've got special needs. I ascribe some of my language difficulties to a mismatch between my way of learning and the school's way of teaching. People learn in different ways and there's a certain way of teaching, particularly when I was at school, there was a way of teaching and it's not right for everyone. There was an imitation and reinforcement ethos in the school teaching I got – "*we'd have to copy exactly what was on the board and if you couldn't do it then you'd get into trouble*"

Other Languages
I done French for a while [at school], didn't get on too well with that! I dropped out of French as soon as I was thirteen. I wasn't diagnosed with dyslexia and wasn't consequently told to drop languages. I think I learnt more French while I was in Holland than I did at School.

I also speak Dutch. I got on very well in Dutch learning – I think it was a matter of my own interest at the time- but I think Dutch is very similar to English in a lot of ways, so I got on well with it. I acquired very basic qualifications in Dutch. I really enjoyed the experience [of learning another language] - I thought [learning another language] was an amazing thing to do, so I went [away] to learn another language [in its country of use]. How I learnt Dutch: "*I just wanted to learn through actually doing it in the community*". I learned Dutch in situ by learning the rules and applying them. [I didn't seem to have] huge problems with learning those [Dutch] rules and you just apply the rules and, yeah OK if you kind of get it wrong, someone tells you you've got it wrong.

Knowledge of my problems – that I have them, as well as the problems themselves - is a motivator to deal with them and "Work them out" even in the second language. There was a point… there was a time when I was completely immersed in it [Dutch], when I was thinking in it, dreaming in it. I didn't learn Dutch in England, but carried on learning it when I got back, through my girlfriend. Despite my immersion and thinking/dreaming in Dutch, my expressive problem never went away. My smaller Dutch lexis wouldn't have helped with the expressive side.

Affect and Psychological

I have a love of English Literature. I think I've always been interested in language. I have a reciprocally-influential relationship with language: I affect it, it affects me. My reciprocally-influential relationship with language is different to how it is for other people. It's [language, i.e. reading, writing has] always been such a big part of my world without even realising it, but now I'm having to use language in that's going to be assessed by people that have got rules or assessment, then – yeah it's become more of a problem. People who comment on my language use are commenting on a core aspect of my identity.

I tune out a bit on input and also, on output. So I don't always see what I've written in my work [mistakes, e.g.].

I used to get in trouble, at school. I went to "quite a rough school". "*Perhaps there is a connection between things like getting into a fight and fighting other kids because of your frustration in the classroom, yeah maybe they are connected, I've never… I never really thought about that before, I just thought you know, boys will be boys*"

At school, "*I was picked on, and I was made to feel stupid, and I think it probably affected me in quite a big way*". Some teachers at my school nourished by sense of failure: "*In some of the subjects I gave up… some of it was just thinking well, I don't understand it, I can't… I can't do it*". I think that [wondering that this geography book's all about] came from the problem.

I believe sincerely that this is how, *at the time,* I perceived my teachers and their demotivating powers.

I felt both stupid AND aggressive. I was feeling a bit upset in certain areas for thinking that I was stupid. My frustration […] came out in sort of naughty schoolboy ways.

Affectively, my Good Story was that I had been away from formal education for 15 years, between school and the Access Course. My absence of 15 years from schooling to Access Course was all the more of a milestone, so my "Good Story" was: passing my Access Course". I passed my Access Course before diagnosis and had NO Extra Time. I was assessed through seen essays and unseen exams on the Access Course, including 3-hour finals. It was a Good Story because, until then, I'd had little or no belief in my own capacities.

My Bad Story is the kind of general feeling of just not quite being up to it - knowing what I want to say and not being able to say it I felt too inarticulate to perform and explain before people. I kept myself out of danger (making mistakes with language in front of others). I started realising that I had a problem when I hit the heavy reading load for the Access Course. There was a dyslexic in my class on the Access Course who knew he was dyslexic and got more time. The Statemented Dyslexic wasn't wholly how I recognised my own dyslexia but gave 1 or 2 more pointers. I recognised myself most fully as a Dyslexic after the psychologist had spoken to me.

Between School and Uni

I got no feedback from my writing, in the period between school and Uni. I wrote a lot, most of the writing I was doing, I was doing for myself [and didn't get feedback on the grammar etc]. Then, my Access Course tutor recommended I look into dyslexia. At school, I'd never heard of dyslexia. It wasn't until post-secondary that I discovered dyslexia. I lacked opportunities for diagnosis through assessment or critical feedback during my post-school, pre-university years. I can't think of anything concrete which

caused my dyslexia - Just it could be to do with the fact that I'd gone out of the like academic world for such a long time.

Appendix 2K – Sam's Story

General stuff about me
I am nineteen. My first language was English. I'm middle class, sort of stuff. Yeah, middle class. Never thought of myself as anything else. I did a gap year. I went to India and to South Africa. I am right-handed. My eyes are both the same colour. I've been given some specs once and I never really wore them. I've always been relatively clumsy, not as clumsy as some I've got some mates who are more dyslexic than me and they're so clumsy it's funny! Maybe there's a clumsiness in the way that I projected myself, a clumsiness in the way that I come about, in the things that I say maybe sometimes. It's probably a mental clumsiness, sometimes. Maybe I'll come out with comments and things that other people might not. I'll tell you another clumsiness: organisation, I'm very clumsy at organising, all types of organisation. I don't think I'm tone deaf. A few people say that my accents are pretty good: I can do quite a variety of accents! You should have heard me in India! It was appalling; I spoke with an Indian accent as well!

My family
There was just a suggestion that I might be dyslexic but then it was completely eradicated round the dinner table. I think dyslexia is something you're born with, pretty much. Oh yeah it was, definitely my father who "gave me" dyslexia. My father doesn't want to believe in dyslexia. I think my father *does* find it a little bit difficult but I think also he makes more of an effort than me to overcome it.

My father has improved a lot through years of learning and pushing himself he's learnt to deal with it whereas I've probably been more lazy than him.

My father doesn't want me to think that I'm dyslexic, so then maybe you know, I'll start to underachieve because I'll think I'm supposed to underachieve, or something like that.

What my father doesn't realise is that Yes, I do find it difficult to read and write in comparison to the majority and yes maybe he did too, what he doesn't realise is there's a word for that and even though you can overcome it like that - or he seems to think we can overcome it - the word's dyslexia and he just doesn't realise I don't think, it's as though he doesn't like it.

My mother always got involved, she was always trying to help me. That was really annoying, Mum always trying to give me these extra comprehensions and punctuations. Although I enjoyed some of the books my Mum read to me, reading was boring, books were boring. At that time I was too young to really know that I didn't really like reading because my reading was bad.

I'm sure there are maybe some forms of dyslexia that come about through the way you've been brought up, say, if you'd never been read to and no-one's ever made an effort to make you learn to write then you're going to have some form of learning difficulty, right, but I've always had the parents who've made the effort. I know this, my mother thinks that there are blessings to dyslexia.

Both my brother and my sister read lots of books and they've had exactly the same upbringing as me almost, so why I should have had it is just to do with me, it's to do with my personal ... feelings and the way I cope with things.

My problem with language
I don't really know what's happening with the language problem. I've just always known that I had a problem. The **[sic]** sinful [simple] name for my problem would be dyslexia. I've never actually thought it was dyslexia, I thought it was just a mild form of reading

difficulty. I've found it a little bit more difficult to read and write and all this ... sort of things. Maybe my language problem is because I rush things sometimes. When I slow myself down I just get frustrated. My spelling has never ever been anywhere up to standard - I was "noticed" at Secondary School and taken out of lessons because my spelling wasn't quite right and my handwriting wasn't up to scratch. I always need to use a computer and spell-check. But my handwriting, if I put an effort into it, actually can be really quite nice.

Sometimes I find it very hard to think of the simplest words. I can have something perfectly worthwhile to say and I know what I'm trying to get across, I know what I'm trying to say, it's all straight in here but I can't get it across. I'll have the thread of what I'm trying to say in my head but it'll come across that I don't have a clue what I'm trying to say because I just can't find the correct vocabulary or means of describing it .

Everybody has things that they're good at and things that they're not good at, however people who aren't good at reading and writing are noticed a lot more because reading and writing is a milestone in what we have to do every day. Most people have difficulties and mine happen to lie in reading and writing. Other people who are good at reading and writing also have their weaknesses but they're not in the sorts of things that you actually need to use every day. I know for sure that there are other things that I find a lot easier than people who don't have dyslexia do.

My language production problem, orally, controls certain people's views on how intelligent I am. But I don't remember spending *any* nights thinking about at [sic] my dyslexia problems much at all. If people are feeling for me because I can't finish my sentences I don't really notice it that much. I'd quite like to be impressing people with my ideas but I can't express them.

Reading
I never really read that much - because I found it difficult - so I didn't learn that way. My reading skills are slower than others'. Even in Primary School I started to realise that when everyone else was reading books, I hated reading books. I find my thoughts confused when I try to sort through a book; I also find my thoughts confused when I try … to take out certain pieces of information for an essay.

I refused to read and even at night, my Mum was always constantly trying to get me to read like she'd sit me down and she'd read some book and then I'd read some of the book then she's read some of it and then I'd read a bit. I only really started reading books for myself about two years ago. That was a great day, when I finished Lord of the Rings, when I suddenly realised I could read, when I read my first book in *one day*. But I still don't read at home here, I only read on holiday. I reckon if I'd read a lot more when I was a kid, things would be easier but I've obviously found it more difficult.

If I read it out loud or I move my lips when I'm reading it goes in better, usually I'll have to read a sentence twice I do find that moving lips while reading helps me physically - but then I do find that also, I try not to do it. I just heard silly things being said about people who move their lips when they read, so like I'm on the Underground for instance I'll most probably try my hardest not to move my lips when I read.

I can feel overwhelmed by dense readings. Usually, I just look through the sentence around to try and describe what that word means. Sometimes, I'll just try and work it out. I have difficulties with timed reading in a seminar group. I've had to apologise because I haven't finished reading things in time. Seeing as it takes me half an hour to read four pages, that's just overwhelming. I just get really frustrated.

I've been told Social Anthropology does have a way of complicating things. I do come into contact with a lot of long words, and it does really put me off, actually. Some of the Social Anthropology books I get have taken me about ten minutes to have read a page - and I've hardly understood a word of it. There's a LOT of technical, long words in Social Anthropology that just go past my head. Some words in Social Anthropology are a bit silly and pretentious, and I don't really want to know what they mean. Some words in Social Anthropology you can explain in just a few more words and I don't know why they just don't do that. I don't understand these books because the written language really isn't very friendly, they use these horribly complicated words. The reason I find it difficult to read all these long books is because there's so much there, sometimes, there's so much on a page I'm just overwhelmed by it and it puts me off. I'd tried to read really fast but then I'd realise I hadn't really read it, I'd just been reading the words but not actually taking it in. A lot of the time I've been reading these Anthropology books and I've have just fallen asleep.

Writing
I first noticed others were better than me at primary school, when I was put into one of the lowest spelling groups. I've never really had the mind for spelling and the grammar behind it, it's just never really come easy to me. If I really think about a word, spelling it in my head, I get closer and most of the time now I get the spelling. I can't simultaneously hold the whole word in my mind and spell it out without reference to the written- down form. I really have to have a pen and paper and be thinking about the word. I can't check what I've written down from the sound of it. Yes, I can actually spell it out in my head, but it just takes, you know, longer; I have to really sit there and think and work it out. Spell "dyslexia"? I probably wouldn't get that right first time, "dyslexia" if I was to put it on the page. "Elephant" I'd find easy because it's e-l-e-p-h-a-n-t, I mean I don't know if I've seen that written down a lot as well, I can rely on memory to a certain extent, after a while. If I know the word in my head, I know the *sound* of the word in my head, I can eventually learn to write it down, letter by letter.

I have a letter-reversal problems with **b**'s and **d**'s specifically; capital B and D aren't strictly reversible. I always got my **b**s and by **d**s the wrong way round. Always. I've always had to really think about it I don't have automaticity, but… well I often just... stop... not the way things come easy to people. The woman [gave] me a technique to remember my D's and B's that was a good idea but it never stuck in my head, ever, not while I was there.

I had a problem formatting written pieces – except stories. Written pieces were supposed to be a certain way, which I didn't know. I still find myself getting into a muddle every time I try to write a long piece of writing. In essay-writing I need to look up the meaning of words, look up their spelling, AND keep the plan in my head. What I've noticed, when I came to University, was how difficult it was to write essays - but I knew that beforehand. I knew more that most people in that exam did; so why have I been penalised by that Geography tutor just because I find it difficult to write essays? I'm a geographer, I'm not an essay-writer.

When I'm trying to listen to what the lecturer's got to say, I understand what he's saying - but I never really know how to put it down in my own words on the page. I never have the confidence to know that the way I'm formatting my notes is as good as it should be. And a lot of the time I will have listened to what he's said then he'll have gone on to something else and I'll have lost it. My notes are not very aesthetic either, so they're not very friendly to read again. My notes never look like everyone else's, you know? They're always scrappy and scraggly and all over the place - and I wish they weren't!

School to Uni

The term 'dyslexia' came into my consciousness in school. Maybe it's because there's always a few people who are more dyslexic than you, at these sort of state primary schools, that it doesn't get blown up out of all proportion.

I got an extra tutor, before I left primary school, to try and get into secondary [public] school; she was just there to help me out on these things that, you know, some state primary schools don't teach you but that you need to know for public school.

After school, I heard the term 'dyslexia' from family friends who are also dyslexic and I thought "Oh, I'm dyslexic too".

My parents were quite adamant that I *wasn't* told that I was different to other children. My parents didn't want a failure to make it from one year to the next to happen, 'cos I was obviously being secluded [sic] from the rest of the class. On things like the Sciences and Music and *Maffs* [sic] and Art and French and that lot, I've never really dropped behind in.

I went to a Public Boys School [sic] where there were all these incredibly intelligent boys who read the dictionary before they went to bed, you know what I mean. I didn't take English for a reason! I took Geography A Level because I knew... I knew about the factuals.

At Marlgate Oratory, when I went there next, nothing was done about my dyslexia, apart from my English teachers; I've always had really good, really friendly, lovely English teachers and they've looked out for me. I had this "Extra English" teacher at Marlgate Oratory and she kind of came into context [sic] a bit - but she never really helped that much, she was just quite a silly old lady who was surely in it just for the money.

But there was one English teacher who *really* inspired me to do well and like for the first time *ever* in English, I got like seventy something percent in an exam, and that was a great day. My Form Tutors, my house-masters always knew that I found certain *fings* a little difficult, so they were always being particularly friendly and helpful and enthusiastic about what I did. I started doing Acting at school seeing as that was considered as a part of English for the English GCSE that was counted for a part of the English mark. I know there's people who don't enjoy performing; giving presentations, doing that sort of thing and I can imagine they must feel quite low when they can't do something like that.

You don't have to do all your own extra reading at GCSE where I was, you're kind of getting spoon-fed at a public boys' school; it was made pretty easy for us to pass those exams. It was put on a plate for the taking and if you wanted to take it, you could. In GCSE English, there were parts I could do well on - I got a B in GCSE English which was brilliant for me really.

I was tested at Sixth Form just to get extra time 'cos I knew I needed extra time, which I really did; it was such a help. If you get a little more time to sort out the ideas in your head, you feel less pressure, then everything comes out clearer.

And then there was the Geography teacher; he didn't like me much anyway...

Modern Languages

I most definitely was better in French at school than I what was considered to be at English.   My average grade for English and for French would be between C and B. Maybe a *little* bit higher for French, maybe. At GCSE I got an A in French, but I only got a B for English. I've come out with decent grades in English for GCSE, and then obviously I gave it up as soon as possible.

I've always adapted myself quite well to speaking French and English, like all in the same day, and I can't really remember anything specific suddenly happening with my reading ability or my writing ability as soon as I started the French Language at University

Affect and psychological

I've never actually thought of myself as really dyslexic, because my father is adamant I'm not. I never really got angry about the fact that I couldn't read because I didn't like reading, so it didn't matter that I couldn't read.

At secondary school I got a little annoyed that I had to go to these extra English lessons. I felt feelings of unfairness that I was like havin' to have to do this when other people didn't. Another annoying thing was that other people would have got a lot further than me. But if there's other people in the room,sometimes I'll feel real pressure to catch up with them. And if it's not interesting I'll lose concentration after about 10 minutes, easy. I have to concentrate quite hard, I can't just read and it will go into my head like that and then I'll be able to talk about it straight away, I need to read it and maybe highlight it. Sometimes I was aware of other boys' progress. I don't remember thinking about it an incredibly large amount but yeah, I was really making comparisons I suppose, to an extent; I felt a little bit low that I found it more difficult to do things than others did. But I don't remember being ever really unhappy about it.

Here at Uni, I find it difficult to say what I want to say sometimes. I think that I can't say it quite right or I sometimes feel maybe it wasn't a relevant point. In seminars I don't always catch on straight away, quite often that'll be because I haven't read quite as much as everyone else. No-one really understands the feelings of frustration. Honestly, that's what annoys me *so* much, just finding the word that's so simple and I know, I can't think of them sometimes. It's excruciating sometimes because people will be waiting for you to finish your sentence but you're like "Oh I can't" and then you know everything you've been trying to say has gone completely to waste because it's like you haven't been able to get it... spit it out properly

When you come up to university, with this incredibly large number of people, everyone is really very intelligent so maybe you start to doubt your own intelligence. I have feelings of inadequacy, of being inferior to people – yes, I tend to think most people are more intelligent than me to an extent. I don't think I should *indoubt* [sic] my intelligence as much as I do sometimes, but I do quite a lot. A lot of the time, I'd say. I don't know if that an excuse.

I do feel inferior sometimes, quite a few times, but then I'll suddenly come out with something that is quite intelligent I think. Intelligence is how well you can write an essay, how witty you are, how much you know about the world, how you cope in a debate or in a discussion, your ideas on things, yeah, *your* ideas. But intelligence for me also includes creativeness, if you can think of things that other people haven't thought of.

Strategies and Assistances

I was given useful techniques like use my finger along the page and read more slowly.

I look at other people's notes. Other peoples' notes are more copious than mine.

I like to try transforming my reading into pictures and imaginations inside my head. What I do is I just have to simplify it, I'll have to simplify what I'm thinking. I have to sort of do some sort of role play or do something with a little bit of charisma then... then I usually find that I enjoy doing something like that.

If I'm trying to read and act I find it difficult, I have to pretty much learn the script before I can act to my full potential. No, I just can't sight-read in auditions, it just won't go into my head properly, the words will look muddled. I do need time to look at it first and really take it in and say it over in my head and learn some of the words, you know, to learn the sentences, learn the words, learn what I'm going to have to say, learn the patterns of the sentences so that even if I don't read it exactly correctly I know the basics of what it's trying to say. I need to highlight it [the text], so I can come back to it, so I can come back and look at the relevant bits. Usually if I'm trying to act and read I won't get it right unless I've read it through quite a few times.

On the negative side, at School, I'd skip out chapters and things to get round doing more reading. I would never really do the *extra comprehensions, punctuations* properly though, I'd always find some way of getting myself out of it as far as I can remember. Another technique was telling [Mum] I didn't have to read as much as I really did. I don't think the Extra English tutor's "**bed**" thing worked at all. Apart from the **b**'s and **d**'s, it was just little spelling mistakes, and there were no real techniques that I used to get around the words that I know of.

When I had to do a book review, I didn't want people to know I hadn't read the book, 'cos everyone seemed to be able to read these books so easily and I couldn't, I could just never get into them. That was always quite funny, because I'd never read the book, I'd like just read the back or I used to try and get out of doing it [by] skipping chapters or maybe, I don't know, download the book review on the computer or get my friend to help me. Or they'd say they want two pages, I'd write half or three quarters of a page and colour the rest in or find some other way of filling the space.

Appendix 2L – Sandy's Story

First, general stuff!
My birthday was 15.8.83 so I was nearly 28 when I recorded this interview. I don't smash things or bump into them in general, but I *do* have a tendency to trip over things. I can't play football at all! I am messy and untidy but I can have compulsions to repair *order* - I repair others' disorder, not my own! Physically, I am right-handed for writing, I'm short-sighted in both eyes, I need extra volume on human language hearing, I'm badly tone-deaf. I can't mimic other people - I overestimate my accent-mimicry skills badly. Academic information: I got B/C in English Lang/Lit , I took no time out between school and uni, but I did take a Foundation Year at Chichester College of Arts Science and Technology. I have *l'esprit de l'escalier*, (i.e. I think up the perfect retort when it's just too late).

My family and… other dyslexics
I'm middle class. I got read to quite a lot when I was younger; my parents picked up on my reading-aloud errors. One uncle and my sister are dyslexic, and my privately-schooled cousins were picked up as SLD. My parents screened my school work - they advised on wrongness, but didn't correct as such. GCSE's weren't exam-based so my parents got me through. But I was persuaded to get Dyslexia testing by dyslexic friends, at Uni – and now, I'm "out" as a dyslexic among friends. I didn't / don't really "come out" as dyslexic, but I've never really been "in" - news just travels! I now have dyslexic friends who check my work. I realise the dangers of being helped with my dyslexia by dyslexics. In my limited experience, all dyslexics have greater or lesser "upsides". Which we'll come to.

School and transition to Uni
Before my diagnosis my dyslexia did cause me quite a lot of problems. I was undiagnosed at school – indeed, there "wasn't" dyslexia at my school. The only "assistance" I got was handwriting lessons, at school - I was treated as having an output problem and a mechanical one at that. There have been mixed expectations of me among my peers, at GCSE age: I was an object of fun, mocking;   I was sidelined, disparaged, *sous-estimé*. I was bullied because of my dyslexia. Unknown markers marked me lower than known ones. I knew that I didn't "just" have handwriting problems. I didn't think I was stupid but I knew other people thought I was.

I was resentful of everyone else, at school. I was resentful because I seemed to have something intrinsically wrong with me; my resentment was against their apparently natural ease with spelling. I got away from the bullies, it didn't just stop or get stopped. I think [the bullying was] because in some areas I was more intelligent than some of the people doing the bear-baiting. I selected my way out of bullying by taking A Levels and on upwards. I'm not traumatised too much by it now but I "failed" A Levels (BBE!) - I failed to complete my A Level papers but passed my Foundation course well. In fact I passed Year 1 at Uni BEFORE taking the Dyslexia Assessment.

Uni, Diagnosis and Help
I believe my dyslexia statement is from the University, and I think I'm "officially" dyslexic because my Personal Tutor picked up on this. I didn't take the Dyslexia Assessment until end 1st year; my Year 2 difficulties weren't directly Dyslexia-related. My Dyslexia Diagnosis is a Good Story because prior to that it had been assumed that I was just a bit daft in the head. I discovered an "upside". I'm better at some other things as a result of being dyslexic: I'm bad at handwriting but good at genetic codes. I can actually translate genetic code. My coding "upside" isn't compensatory, it's more in the "gift" category.

As regards Assistances and Kit, the University gets me more photocopying and printing money from the Council [LEA]; Student Support organises sessions - which I can't attend as I'm busy then. I got a recorder and a computer with spell-checker through Assistive Technologies. I'm not keen on the "Inspiration" mind-mapping software - I have physical, not electronic, mapping strategies which work. I only used the audio-recorder for a year - I am forgetful with the recorder itself and with the actual recording, as well as collecting the machine. My lecture transcriptions backed up so I stopped taping! I end up having to rush down things anyway I should really get down through memory.

What's my language problem?
My language problem is a "wiring difficulty", I've been told – it's been broadly diagnosed as Dyslexia. It's more production than reception for me, this problem, and more angled towards the fact that I can't deal with sequences of things. On the output, spelling side I have letter and number ordering difficulties (I miss-spell my own name, Daniel, at times). Occasionally, I can't retrieve words (tip of the tongue phenomenon). Perhaps more important for me than retrieval is self-screening - I don't necessarily notice that I've made that mistake and I'll carry on.

Knock-on effects
I make assemblage-to-output errors in reading aloud. I innocently get the wrong words [unconsciously]. My dyslexia hasn't had an emotional effect on me, long term, but I was an Annoyed Person for quite a while, I had quite a bad temper and
I once got into a punch-up.

My dyslexia can be a bit of an inconvenience at times. I'm shy and nervous in oral presentations, and oral presentations always bring a sense of dread. I have an impending Assessed Presentation on my Dissertation; I'm not looking forward to it! I believe my dyslexia makes me have word-loss during presentations, and nervousness makes me even more dysfluent on top of the dyslexia. A vicious circle?

Affective and allied matters
My "Good Story" for the Interviewer was finding out I'm dyslexic: a good story as it includes realising it wasn't just me being stupid, there was something hard-wired into my brain that means I can't process things in quite the same way. My Bad Story was being labelled as stupid for so long; being labelled as stupid made me bad tempered. I look back at that [my pre-diagnosis period] and just think, "*Why!?*" But now, my apparent success has overridden people's old perceptions of me.

Writing
My mistakes are most obvious with handwritten, i.e. no spellchecker inputs. I suffix random supernumerary letters onto words, I write half-words, I confuse "witch" and "which", i.e. homophonic heterographs. I can perceive incorrectness before I can find the correct output I need; and I get negative feedback from markers on defective items I haven't noticed. This happens to me daily, and speed and pressure of work are contributory factors. My hand-written work has flourishes which look like extra 'e's. I'm pragmatic about errors in lecture notes, I can go back later – but sometimes I can't read my own notes! I can recover information from context in the case of my indecipherables.

Reading
I was always a big reader as a child and there were no problems and I went through all the reading stages like anybody else I've always accidentally skipped lines when reading. I accidentally re-read sections though inattention. I'd miss stuff if there weren't sometimes back-references to tip me off. Accidental misreading does get a little bit annoying, but it isn't too bad: I'm not like the readers who get nothing at all off a given paragraph. I can speed read for gist but not comprehension: I need 2 goes for depth reading

Grammar
I find basic punctuation difficult, and I sometimes have problems with plural markers and suffixes. I have speed-induced grammar errors of omission. I mishear certain words in my head and they don't make sense because I don't recognise them, even with a dictionary This mishearing in my head doesn't happen that often, and other people can re-trigger the phonology of words for me then I hear them in my head and recognise them. I can get phonological clues about some markers which are sounded ("makes sense in my head"). I don't have strephosymbolia as in letter-inversion but I mix fricatives and sibilants and i/o/u in suffixes. I know some spelling ditties (but can't spell my own name, Daniel…).

Modern Languages
Unfortunately I did both French and German, and I was absolutely terrible at them: I got B/C in English Lang/Lit, but only C in German and a D in French at GCSE. I'd have to quite frequently resort to grammar books and dictionaries (we were taught on the grammar-translation model, test-as-you-go) but quite frequently, I ended up having to resit my language tests: I'd mix up past and present tenses, I'd just cut (out) the pronouns. I have remembered practically nothing of either French or German. I didn't acquire automatically; I believe I would have learned more French / German at a younger age. But I don't believe learning MFLs made my English worse, though.

Strategies for repair and winning through
One of my repair strategies is use of context to fill in gaps. Another strategy is extra focus when reading and listening I can and do try to force-learn certain words: instead of phoneme-to-grapheme I use kinetic memory to "learn" certain words. I speed-read to check-as-I-go with the spelling (I can spot some salient errors visually, though my check-as-you-go is much more atomistic when writing by hand) but I have abdicated to the computer spell-checker, slightly! Other techniques: I de-clutter visually by double-spacing handwritten work, I recite learning ditties, …I compare myself to someone "worse" than me.

A coda
I'm not broken; I don't need fixing.

Appendix 2M – The Advisors Jillie and Dave's Story

You have read us the Informed Consent document, and we consent to this interview.

What we do
Our work is not specific to Humanities or, within that, language students.
We're centrally appointed, through Student Services. We're centrally funded. Not through the Humanities School. We're not paid through the School Budget, no. The DDA [grant] goes direct to the student through the LEA [but] it's passed straight to the SSU sometimes. There's kind of central policies, but each School has its own style. The Director of Student Support in the School is not our Manager, we work as a collaborative team. Sometimes Advisors move from one School to the other, well, some people have moved. I [JP] did to some extent, insofar as I started off split between Humanities and Life Science, I worked point three [0.3] in Life Sci and then came over here full time.

We're not disciplinary in our role, definitely not, and we're not Police. I think the word Policing is an emotive word, but for example when a student has been absent a lot they get a tracking e-mail which says, "You've been absent a lot" then they're asked to see a Student Advisor. You could say that that's... again I don't think policing is a good word for it, but it does indicate to students that someone is watching their performance, to some extent, for their own good, it's a supportive role, it's to help them so we're saying, "There's a danger here, do you want to do anything about this?" You could say the same with the Police in a sense, that part of their role might be to beat people up and throw them in prison, but partly they might also be able to pick up the old lady that's fallen down in the street, sort of thing. So policing is a bit of an awkward term. But you now we have a variety of roles in a sense they're all support role but it sometimes in different guises.

We're there to really give a space, a psychological space to students on a one-to-one basis who need help – or think they need help, they may not know exactly what they need, but they certainly the thing they *do* need is the attention of the one-to-one, individual space where they can say what they need to say, which they are not getting in other places and that... I think it goes from there. That's how I see it. Things happen that are quite disturbing, in the School, people quite often … the first people are us, as well.

Interactions with Faculty
There are some Academic Advisors who frequently pop in and say they're worried about a certain student or whatever, and there's a good working relationship but others don't really … you get some that don't even reply to e-mails. [Also, there are Academic Advisors who] Don't respond to e-mails, don't notice that the student's been missing for a long time, that kind of thing - but when it works well, liaison with Academic Advisors, Personal Tutors as they were, it really is very effective I think, quite an effective system. It seems like a Care Plan but in great … not written down in great detail, that's Social Services. But certainly it does work now, when Tutors respond as well.

It would be nice if the whole thing was more kind of unified and there was more communication and generally a much tighter mix of approaches, I think. Possibly in other Schools where you get smaller Departments there is much more interaction with Tutors.

We want to mention one key thing and that is the amount of response that we get by Faculty when students are flagged up. I think there is some cynicism about the actual label [of dyslexia]. The electronic records are very often not accessed at all. Not by a minority of Faculty but in effect, when you look at it, it is the majority. And the Traffic Light system which is being piloted next year, maybe will solve the problem. But

certainly the impression that we get at the minute is that there's large pockets of resistance to the idea of supporting dyslexic students amongst many staff.

[Some tutors are] not prepared to give them specifically to certain people or whatever, even Heads of Department, we've heard, and I've been in meetings where this has been said quite openly, and that people do not want to do it. There's various reasons given for it and that's one; another one is that "My lectures are like spontaneous, I can go anywhere intellectually therefore I can't provide a bit of paper, I'd have to type it all out". Another one is "Copyright, someone could steal my ideas and put them in a book". There's various reasons which I think are all pretty disingenuous really because they're only asked to provide outline notes for the basic structure of their lecture, not to provide a painting and stuff. That is the most basic thing, is the handouts, really. It's so, so common, students going to the SSU saying I'm not getting handouts, I've asked for them and I've been told by this person or that person that he doesn't do them. He doesn't do handouts *full stop*.

I think hand-outs and things like that are basic things you get in most educational institutions, you know colleges, schools and so on, it's just sort of good practice really to give people some back-up to the overall lectures. And I think that this is the main thing the dyslexic students were asking for, or stuff put on electronically which is also good for people that are sight impaired, things like that because they can expand it and so on and so forth.

I think there should be a lot more interest in general in the actual craft of teaching. I mean some areas are worse than others. Students get lost in all senses of the word in big departments, and the biggest department in this School [English] has just become bigger and it's not Student Support conducive at all. That's what I'd say, certainly I'd say.

I think Wealdston, possibly is behind most institutions on this. I'm not talking about theUniLang Centre at Wealdston, for sure, which is different, it's more like real teaching that's going on there but I think what we're talking about is more like the big Academic Departments where there's in a lot of them a kind of snobbery, ivory-towerishness to some of it, and some people have a kind of antagonism to the idea of teaching any student who's other than a straight public school type intellectual person, rather than broader type of students they think it's rather demeaning to have.

It is quite astonishing, because they're actually breaking the law and you know, people have been told that under the DDA you should be doing this and they still say they won't do it and I think it is a burning issue.

Disability: our view
About disability: we understand the umbrella term "disabled" includes hidden disabilities and physical disabilities, and also Mental Health as well as physical and learning difficulties, so it's an umbrella term, disability. There are Visible Physical, Invisible Physical, Hidden Disabilities including Dyslexia, and Mental. Separately there are Learning Difficulties with no latent or obvious mental problem, more of a cognitive difficulty. [Disabled students] get treated according to their needs, they don't all get the same, the Student Support Unit writes their notes down and then it's available electronically, and there's different things for different disabilities. Some people that are flagged up don't necessarily have DDA status. [people can be flagged up] on the university system because they want to be flagged up, for example if they've got a psychological condition which means they're claustrophobic or something, they might want Tutors to know that they'd like to sit next to the door or something like that. So they go on the system as a Flagged Student. They won't necessarily be DDA.

We don't think we're required to have a position on [the existence of dyslexia], I mean if someone had a position that it was just a sort of middle-class version of thickness or something, some of the things which have come up on the television recently, if you did have that point of view I guess it might be a bit difficult to do the work we do. But it's not really something that I've ever had a problem with. One of my (Dave's) sons is dyslexic and I used to teach dyslexic students at one stage, so you know I'm fairly clear about what I think it is, so I've never really struggled with a particular position, really. We're not *required* to have a position, in terms of our jobs. But I (Jillie) don't feel I have enough knowledge about the current sort of… theories to say I have a position on it myself.

I do sometimes wonder about whether it really is a condition or not, but I work with what we have and it doesn't interfere with my job. [Jillie] I think that an associated condition with dyslexia is often dyspraxia, which I notice more because it's not confined to written work. Students who are very disorganised, and I feel I can distinguish between a student who is just a bit of a lazy student who doesn't like getting up and one that is constantly struggling to get things in a better order and can't. And I think that is possibly linked to the written dyslexia, but I don't really feel I'm enough of an expert on the condition to say very much about it.

Referrals
Some [students] are self-referred in the sense that they simply turn up at the door and say "I think I may be dyslexic", and they haven't got any piece of paper or anything like that. Some [students] have been urged by the Academic staff, I mean that's quite common, a lot of the turn up and "One of my Tutors said to me have I looked into the idea of dyslexia" and … yeah that's a common one.

[People on M.A. programmes and Ph.D.s] tend to come by self-referral. There isn't anyone in the Graduate Centre who has that brief [of referring dyslexic students to us] This is an issue, really, they don't have Academic Advisors any more when they get to be Postgrads. They don't really have anybody, do they, they may have a Dissertation Supervisor when you get to Dissertation level, but there's the Convenor of the Programme. There's no mechanism to access us, as such, but they [postgrads] do come to us actually. They do, they find their own way. I don't know what the percentage is but in this School, a fair number of the postgrads have been undergrads with us. I'm thinking of one of the people I know who was an undergrad is now a postgrad who does have dyslexia. If by sheer fluke there were 100 dyslexics in the intake for 2008 as opposed to 20 or 30, we would still have to cope but the burden would really be on the SSU.

Fellow-students acting as Mentors can spot dyslexics. One of main the points of having Mentors is that they're peers, so [students] come out with things to them that they may feel uncomfortable with other, say, members of staff. Occasionally one of the Mentors will talk to us about a student they've seen in their capacity as a Mentor, they've said they might possibly, be a dyslexic.

The Student Support Unit is mainly where the one-to-one dyslexia tuition takes place. We refer upwards to the Student Support service and not down the other way. But there is a to-and-fro of information between us and the Student Support Unit. A dyslexic student who's not getting the help that they should be getting under the DDA will very often complain to the Student Support Unit rather than to us. Quite often the information goes to the SSU and they will e-mail to say that a student is complaining that they're not getting any of their Advance Lecture Notes or something else, can you look into it", in which case usually we e-mail whoever and say could they look at what's happening.

I (Dave) help slightly sometimes with direct dyslexia diagnosis. Occasionally, not very often, I run back the test past them, the one that's got about 25-30 questions, checklist thing and say "Do any of these things ring a bell". If they appear to have some symptoms then I refer them to SSU.

The Institutional View
There's no top-down, institutional view on dyslexia. We ourselves have picked up things [about how the Institution feels about dyslexic students] but it's still difficult to say whether it's the Institution as such or particular individuals. There have at times you know been e-mails flying back between people in certain departments saying "Dyslexia is a load of rubbish". Some Faculty say that we shouldn't take students who are dyslexic […] these are individual points of view and there's as many faculty or other members of the University as there are points of view. I don't think [it's] totally strange, I know that the stuff they send out on paper and on Unimoodle it sometimes is down as SLD and sometimes Dyslexia.

I think BG and others see it as a pretty umbrella term anyway and I think the terminology they use may well sometimes emanate from the particular EdPsych report that they've got in front of them when they write it up. BG did have a kind of a bit of an e-mail sort of backwards and forwards with the Philosophy Department at one point, and she actually did write quite a long e-mail at one point explaining the fact that they "*Use the term Dyslexia merely because that's what they think other people understand rather than SLD*".

It might be obvious but the Student Support Unit itself is very much pro dyslexia as a learning difficulty, isn't it. If they weren't it would be a bit odd, wouldn't it, I suppose. Seventy percent of their [SSU's] work is dyslexia-based. Well between sixty and seventy, I think . Our work would be quite difficult to do if any of us actually thought of the whole thing as completely bogus, because I think we'd be clashing quite often with the SSU and with other people, it would be quite awkward, I think.

How you "become" dyslexic at Wealdston
Dyslexia problems will really arise most commonly in the second rather than the first or final years, nearer to assessment and deadlines. I wouldn't say shortly after they get to University because that first period is the settling in period and a lot of the problems don't arise at that point, they're kind of building up if they are, aren't they ? To do with dyslexia, anyway. On one analysis we did we did we saw that we saw more second year students than we saw third years or first years and off the top of my head we get people come up who are third year students who say they may be dyslexic and people in the second year and people in the first year.

[Wealdston students "become" dyslexic] when an Educational Psychologist says they're dyslexic and the Educational Psychologists are not part of Wealdston University, they're independent. The University pays for their test, but it's external and independent. When the report comes back saying, yes they are dyslexic, then they're officially dyslexic. That's my understanding. [Students] can get help in a broad sense when they come to us in whatever way they like really, whether they consider themselves dyslexic or not, and certainly though the Mentors they can, and you know it might be one of these in-between areas where the Mentor helps them with their phraseology or something, it's not specifically dyslexia help. And it is confidential. It's confidential with us too. If [students] come to us and they don't know if they are or not and there's a suspicion, possibly from written work, then we can refer them to the SSU.

It's an interesting question, how it is that a student gets all the way to the age of eighteen or nineteen, turns up at university and then is diagnosed as dyslexic. Don't know if there's an answer to it! Even postgraduates have turned out to dyslexic, so yeah, I think that's a question that needs some debate. Not all students come to us through the usual A-Level route, we have Access Students as well. I don't know to what extent their written level of English is excused but is allowed for in those courses, and on A Levels as well, that be an explanation or partly an explanation for some of it. [The question of late diagnosis has] come up in Central MEC, it's been discussed, there was a case we discussed some months ago a student – and this isn't particularly uncommon – only a matter of months before their Final Exams will say "Oh I think I might be dyslexic" and then if they get the Educational Psychologist's Report which says they are, and they're flagged, then they get Retrospective Impairment for their whole three years.

The conversation in Central MEC took various directions but one of them was that if someone is diagnosed *that* late in the day, how seriously dyslexic can they have been what one might think, well it couldn't have been serious, more likely to have been mild dyslexia if they didn't know about it to the very last minute.

To tell or not to tell
Some students come to University knowing they're dyslexic but they don't make it known to the University. [Students] can't get DSA if they don't declare it, so they can't benefit from those additional supports. In which case the SSU wouldn't get the money for a one-to-one, because that's paid out of the DSA.

If [students] choose not to do anything about their suspicion or whatever about their having dyslexia, that's their decision, but in that cased there's limited help we can give. Because we're not one-to-one dyslexia helpers. There may be a lot of students struggling underneath who don't declare their learning difficulty because they're not really sure about it or some of them even have an attitude that I suppose they don't feel justified in [doing so]… they've always struggled, so they'll continue struggling, you know. "I take twice as long to read something as the next person but that's how it's always been and I'm OK with it". I think we have to kind of accept all of it, really, we have to, you know.

One of the main reasons students go to see Mentors is Study Skills help, help with essays, and they may be asking for help with structuring essays, how to do footnotes, referencing, things that we now assume that at this level they should know, but the fact is they don't.

Dyslexia and Modern Languages
[Regarding dyslexia and Modern languages] the assumption being if you can't spell, and order or structure your grammar in English, your first language, then how on earth can you do it in a second language, that's the assumption, isn't it. Dyslexia is a term in which the spelling might be fine, it might be some other aspect of it. It can be word order, and structure and grammatical structure aren't the same across the different languages anyway. In fact in some ways maybe sometimes it's easier, I was just beginning to think in some languages, other languages.

This [the assumption that if you can't spell, and order or structure your grammar in English, your first language, then how on earth can you do it in a second language] is a gross overgeneralization and pessimistic. I would think so. Of course there's a lot of difference between speaking a language and being able to read and write it.

Dyslexics very often have skills which are in excess of other people's, in certain other directions, and I mean language is not a straightforward thing is it, there's all sorts of aspects to it, and to say that… to lump people all into one same category and say they

can't do one particular thing just seems nonsensical. I found when I was teaching some dyslexics that some of them were very good at learning rules and working with rules, and that often when I was working them I would see a sentence as a sentence naturally but they'd be applying a rule - and God we're thinking in two different ways, they were very good on rules about all sorts of things, actually, a little bit kind of like Asperger's type of way of looking at things. [The Asperger's way of looking at things is] a kind of very formal way, everything is compartmentalised, they have systems for everything, some of them, the colour-coded thing as well, and some of them lived very well because they'd internalised a whole set of rules, and that got them through everything.

I've always thought that the way English in taught in Junior Schools is very bad, and it's no wonder students find learning foreign languages difficult when… well basically we're not really taught our own grammar very well. [The assumptions about language learning in primary and maybe secondary education.] - I just think there has to be something going wrong in early education with that, because we… I mean we're not Tutors but even in our role, we do see even at MA level how difficult some students seem to find – and these aren't dyslexic students necessarily, I don't know they are or not, but students who wouldn't consider themselves dyslexic how difficult they find sometimes writing coherent sentences, and who don't know what a verb or a noun is, or a preposition or something like that, which, you know - obviously I'm going back to when I learned English, we were taught those things and I know it's old fashioned, but I don't know how it's helped them really to be learning in other ways.

If you just think in terms of a sentence, like most of us, you know when something's a sentence or not just naturally, because it doesn't sound right if not, but other people might analyse it to see whether it's a sentence or not, because they can't hear whether it's a sentence.

We've not come across trigger dyslexics, dyslexics who have coped well with their L1 until attempting a L2.

[Affect and learning] I mean it's possibly a kind of dialectical backwards and forwards between the two, rather than a unidirectional thing. One thing to the other.

The Year Abroad
[Students in the HUMS School] tend to go away on the whole – but they are in contact sometimes, you get a phone-call from Germany or something, someone's very unhappy and in terms of looking after their dyslexia needs they're kind of remote from us then. But sometimes we get a MEC case where someone has not had their support abroad and that's where it gets to MEC. There is liaison between the ISAO* and the Institution Abroad, and also between Terry Johnson now, on a Mental Health basis and any student who is in a foreign institution who has a mental health difficulties, so we would liaise between... there has been a case with a student I know, and John speaks to them and then I might get involved then in terms of MEC evidence *(ISAO=International Study Abroad Office).

[Dyslexic students] have to produce evidence from those [overseas] institutions sometimes, for MEC, and it's very difficult proving a negative, i.e. proving that they didn't get support. There can be a bit of contention between what the ISAO say and what the student is saying about the institution's lack of support. [Rather than the *absence* of support,] it's not the right *kind* of support. I think it's a difficult area actually because there's an assumption on the part of the student maybe that the institution they want to go to will be able to give them the level of support they've had here, and I think they often find that it isn't on that level.

[Outgoing Year Abroad students who are dyslexic] must go knowing that, or maybe it's something you *can't* know until you're actually there, because in a sense, I think a lot of support is down to the relationship between individuals, the Tutor, the student… whoever is dealing with support issues, and if that goes wrong, then it can - with a vulnerable student, with a fragile student, it can create huge problems and it can be exaggerated. But for that student, because they're in a fragile state anyway, it seems a lot *worse* perhaps than it is.

If there are proactive arrangements made for students going on their Year Abroad we won't necessarily know about it unless [a Mental Health or similar advisor] informs us. I don't think SSU would be involved at that level with the Year Abroad. Is it involved? I think probably Brigitte [Diplock] or Sue Currell [Year Abroad Directors Europe and North America, respectively would liaise with the Institutions. [The year Abroad Directors] do contact us before a student goes, I'm thinking of a student who I spoke to Sue Currell a lot about on his American Year Abroad and whether they were going to be able to go or not because there were issues there.

I'm not clear about how much this Institution can actually say no to a student going abroad if they don't really believe they are fit to be able to do that. I don't know where the decision about that lies, really.

This is something that intrigues me a bit - isn't this *known* beforehand, that the style of working in universities in Europe is not often very similar to the way… I mean maybe our support levels are lot higher than they are in Europe, or they see in a very different way. I had a case the other day actually, this was a student at the Sorbonne, she said the lectures had about 300 or 400 people in and you couldn't hear very clearly what the lecturer was saying and received absolutely NO dyslexia support at all. Now isn't that communicated to students, because I would have thought that was obvious from… but that's from my life experience of seeing... being in other cultures, but... are students prepared enough for that, I don't know. Perhaps there's a kind of slight conflict insofar as a student might want to go to a prestigious university or a university in a particularly nice area but knows at the same time that that particular university or country is not that sympathetic to dyslexia but nevertheless they still like to go to that university.

Appendix 2N – The Academic Advisor Derek's Story

What my Unit does
In the unit I manage, there are two subject areas, Modern Languages – French German Spanish and Italian – and English Language courses and English Language Teaching. And within Modern Languages, we run an undergraduate degree programme, Single-Honours Major and Joint Majors for those four languages mentioned, and we also run Open Courses, which run courses in the languages that I've mentioned but in addition to that in many other languages besides.

On the English Language side we run a large programme all year round of EFL courses, courses for non-native speakers of English of various kinds, we run teacher training courses, and we run a BA in English Language Teaching and we run an MA in English Language Teaching. Some of SLI teaching is directly or indirectly state funded but people can also come here and spend their own money. Visiting and Exchange students […] join some of our English Language courses which are accredited by the University and can be taken for credit back in their home country.

On the English Language side, there are the BA and MA which is kind of state-funded, but there are also Visiting and Exchange students who join some of our English Language courses which are accredited by the University and can be taken for credit back in their home country.

For those on undergraduate programmes, postgraduate programmes, obviously it's the University [which accredits their course]. [For accredited but non-graduating courses] I suppose it's the University that qualifies them, although we're running assessments which are accredited and which are recognised for credits which Visiting and Exchange students then take back to their own countries.

We run initial Teacher Training courses in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, and those courses are moderated and a qualification is given by Trinity College, London. British Council in some ways will influence the way we teach, or the way things are set up. Definitely. Yes. On the English Language Teaching side there are various things that we need to do to comply. On the English Language courses, you're looking at paying customers who've come… I mean we run Examination courses, sort of part-time courses for… I should have mentioned that before, I suppose, we run Examination courses to prepare people for Cambridge Examinations and for IELTS examinations.

Our syllabuses and methodologies
We designed the [BA in ELT] degree partly based on our experience of teacher education at various levels, partly looking at schemes that are out there and accredited such as the Certificate and the Diploma. Oh, in fact yes – in fact what we wanted to do was to incorporate the possibility of students obtaining the TESOL Certificate within their degree course, and so we worked also with Trinity College in such a way that our syllabus over the first two years of the BA ELT covers the Trinity College syllabus. Our syllabus is more than that, it goes a lot deeper, but at least that one is included. So if students are successful and if they want to be moderated, they end up after the 2nd year with a Certificate in TESOL.

We did actually discuss [where we're at collectively in the way we teach] a couple of years ago, as a staff, and we do have a document where have laid down certain principles that we subscribe to. I can't quote from that document from memory, but I've got a fair idea of the sorts of principles that are in there, but I would say on a day-to-day basis that people will use informed eclecticism. People are pragmatic. They will draw on a number

of different methodologies and techniques depending on the needs of the students in front of them and what those students are aiming for, and that probably is different and looks different for example between English Language courses and language courses for Modern Languages, for Undergraduates. I think there *should* be [Informed Eclecticism on the Modern Languages side as well as the English language side], I do get the impression that the Modern Language teaching on undergraduate programmes is more traditional in nature – from what I can gather. I think that part of Informed Eclecticism is that it's horses for courses. Let's take the Cambridge exams. The examination is made up of several different papers. One is the Use of English Paper, and so really, in order to prepare students for that examination, you have to look at the kinds of tasks, questions that come up and deal with those, and that would be a fairly traditional look at grammar structures, but also certain lexical things, not only grammar. But the Oral for the Cambridge exams - which is worth a fair bit, I think it's worth more than the usual kind of cursory 5 or 10% is in the form of a conversation in pairs, with students given certain communication tasks to do, and so it's very definitely targeted at how well students can communicate and interact thoroughly, it would be more academic, more focused I suppose on grammar, reading and writing than a General English course.

They (people on F/T language courses) want to come out of here having improved the way that they speak, write, comprehend etc., English. They are interested in improving their communication skills, and not necessarily looking for a certain piece of paper. Our undergraduates, obviously are aiming to get a degree qualification and while certainly communication - and if you like if we concentrate on spoken or aural-oral communication skills, those are important, but inevitably the focus is more academic in terms, people have to know more about the grammar, probably, of the language, and they have to be able to take part in seminars and write academic assignments in the Target Language.

[There] is an interesting Second Language Acquisition question as to whether we could produce high quality Modern Language Graduates in terms of their communication skills without explicitly addressing the grammar of the language but I think the general feeling of both staff and students are comfortable with at the moment is that they do need – that when they're thinking about advanced language groups, they do feel that they need to address *explicitly* the grammar. Tutors do have to get students up to a certain standard but as I said before, the interesting question is whether, because it's really serious, in terms of the level that you want students to meet, whether that means that you've *got* to use quite a traditional method and that I don't know. It's not *only* about how much you focus explicitly on grammar, I don't think, it's also to do with classroom management and the degree to which pair and group work and … and that sort of thing is done, or whether there's a bit of sort of lecturing going on, so I think there is a difference in culture between… I think there are both cross-over points and a shared culture between Modern Language tutors and English Language tutors. Well I suppose one can be totally honest, I think it's because [Modern Language] tutors were taught that way [rather than the fact that the teachers know that in the Year Abroad things are going to be done a certain way].

There are differences there, I think, between Modern Language tutors of various languages [but] are the differences justified? Well, as things go at present, I've taken the view that… to give it the benefit of the doubt and say "Yes they are". I think if I can just speak off the record for a moment, if one wasn't so completely taken up with sorts of questions we've been taken up with over the past couple of years, one might have wanted to really address these things more than we've been able to. But you know, one doesn't really want to be talking about this sort of thing while everything seems to be working fine, you don't really don't want to be talking about this sort of thing when you're fighting for your life. *At the moment* my view, would be that there'll be maybe a Spanish way of doing it, maybe a French way of doing it, and I'm fairly neutral so long as it works.

On the Modern Languages side, we designed a new degree; we decided on what components we wanted, we decided on what learning outcomes we wanted, and we worked backwards from there, and through that process and everybody contributing, we came up with the curriculum with the courses that go to make up the programme. Well what goes into [the Language side of the BA Mod Langs] is a bit of a mystery to me to be honest. Except to say that we did I think have a conversation and decide that we would all use the ALTE levels, and so actually in theory that's what we should be doing, because each of the language courses *should* be pegged, and I think the curriculum documents say that, they *should* be pegged to certain ALTE levels and certainly we use ALTE levels for our English Language courses. So in theory we should be able to say, well this course is this level and this level... I mean there is the European Common Framework, of course which gives detailed curriculum guidance for different levels.

In the IELTS descriptors it always used to strike me as very strange that the descriptor for the top level – Level Nine – said "This is a level that not all Native Speakers will reach" - Well it's an *educated native speaker,* which I suppose you can understand in a way, for a qualification which is aiming to tell Universities – give Universities information about this person's language abilities. But certainly, there is an example of a scale, or a reference as it were, which does refer to Native Speakers and says that the top level even is beyond some Native Speakers. There is a level of pronunciation which is good enough. If you've got people who are aiming to be diplomats or teachers of the language, then you'll want to reference that to being as native-speaker-like as possible. But otherwise we would use descriptions such as "Can be listened to with a certain degree of comfort and ease by an interlocutor", and "Not be a strain on an interlocutor". So I think depending on *why* this person is learning the language and what they want to do, adequate communication of meaning without too much strain on an interlocutor can be, you know, something that you measure people by. We are going for criteria more than absolutes, more than native Speaker levels.

The Year Abroad and its implications
I totally disagree that the idea of a Year Abroad is a sheer waste of time and an indulgence in Modern Languages Programmes. I think the idea that you pick up certain things *by* being in the country and receiving teaching in that country is *extremely* important. Apart from the aspect of being immersed in the language, there is more and more appreciation these days that the reason why we're teaching a language or learning a language in the first place is to communicate with people from cultures other than our own, and so there is cultural learning to take place, and a learning not only one specific target culture, but learning to be culturally adept and to communicate with people from different cultures, from a range of different cultures, and survive in a different culture. And I think that this is definitely one of the learning outcomes that we've got on *our* modern languages degree, that people should be interculturally competent.

Is there is something linguistically important, do I think, in this immersion process? Clearly. It is the exposure to the language. It's not exposure alone, I mean there's got to be some kind of interaction, it's the combination of the exposure and the interaction. There are relatively few things that you can say with any certainty about how people acquire language, but certainly the degree of exposure to the language and the opportunity to interact in the language in a meaningful way have certainly been shown by research to be significant factors in the acquisition of that language.

Is there something linguistic that happens to students on their Year Abroad? It's psycholinguistic and psychological. Their subconscious will work on the data that they're given, some of what they learn will be conscious, it's the opportunity to practise, and it's also a social thing, if students are socially acculturated, if they do interact, if they

have friends, if they have a social group which includes speakers of a Target Language, then again studies have shown that this will lead to improvements in their language. Whereas if they are completely isolated or they don't mix with people from the target language socially, then probably they will not improve to such a degree. The motivation to be part of a group is tremendously strong and I think that the studies that have been done on children who are thrown into a foreign language situation, when you look at their interactions with children round them, who are speaking a different language, you can see that they have all of these strategies that they use in order to be accepted. Now I know that we're talking about adults and not children, nevertheless I'm sure that some of those motivations and strategies will still be there. Group Integrative Motivation with peers is a strong engine, going beyond mere learning to acquiring mechanisms slightly more. If you want make the distinction – if you want to make Krashen's distinction between learning and acquisition, I would say yes, they have the opportunity to acquire.

"Re-engagement of acquisition is expected in the year abroad country for adults", Yep. I think it's not expected, it is something which possibly *can* be expected, but it's not an *expectation* as such.

Issues around Disability
[For] British students, there are certain systems in place to fund support that they need and that they're entitled to. With the Disabilities legislation We're obliged not to refuse access to our courses on the grounds of disability - on any of our courses – British students, that is, or British and EU, I'm not sure to what extent the legislation applies to EU, I'm just not sure. [As regards disability], there is a grey area here between British students and non-British students. Or shall we say non-Home/EU students.

 In terms of our British Council accreditation, one of the things that we have to provide to students who are taking our Fee Paying courses is we have to provide there has to be a Welfare structure. Everybody really has a welfare role and teachers do pick up occasionally that they think that somebody's dyslexic but of course it's always very difficult to know whether somebody is a dyslexic or whether their level of literacy in their own language is actually quite low. I would say that only students on undergraduate and masters' courses [can access the HUMS Advisors]. When students go to the Student Advisors here, you know they're thinking about Mitigating Evidence because they've got to submit late and all the rest of it.

But we had an application from a student who wanted to come on one of our Summer Courses, not only was he wheelchair-bound, which wouldn't have been a problem, but was blind. And that created a problem because the Student Support Unit wanted us to provide the sort of support which might have been sufficient if that student had been attending lectures – and seminars – so just you know, blow up the lecture notes and photocopy these. But of course that wasn't the case, he was going to be in a class, with other paying students, with teachers who were teaching full-time as you know – the 21 hours a week – and using a course book for 21 hours a week, and so we tried to explain that really the only way that we could cope with such student [sic] was if he had a companion there, in the class, who could actually read out what was there. It was clear to us that that was the only way that we could cope in order to be fair to the student, to be fair to the other students in the class, and not to overburden the teachers. And there was this great thing going round the houses as to whom [sic] should pay for this, he wanted to be on a Pre-Sessional course, that's right, so the question was should SLI pay for it, should the receiving Department pay for it, should Student Support pay for it, they said "No, you now, we only get money for British students", and so in the end he actually didn't come. But it… that case certainly pointed up the fact that there is a problem for us, for students who are not covered in terms of financial support. That case [the blind,

wheelchair-based overseas student] certainly pointed up the fact that there is a problem for us, for students who are not covered in terms of financial support.

Dyslexia Issues

There certainly is a dilemma if you have a dyslexic student, because you're supposed to make allowances. Obviously, if part of what you're assessing is whether there's agreement at the end of an adjective or something like that and you're looking very precisely for an extra E or an extra S or both, it is a dilemma I think, whether to penalise a dyslexic student for not observing that in written examinations, or in written work, you're being unfair on the student and not taking account of their disability. On the other hand if you don't penalise them, you're penalising other students for making that mistake. Yes, it's a dilemma. Without a doubt.

I mean obviously we're not supposed to be forced in any way to lower standards. Therefore initially, you would only accept people onto the degree programme who've achieved a certain level of proficiency. I mean if students have managed to get as far as A Level, you know, then in theory they should be able to continue. But I really think it's a question to what degree you *do* make allowances for things like spelling and that's very difficult when actually that's precisely what we're assessing students on. [The] idea that you are not required to lower standards when you accommodate a disabled student comes from the guidelines that we've been given by the University, and I think they take it from the legislation in some way.

What then happens if we get somebody who comes along and then goes to the Student Advisor and says "Oh by the way, I'm dyslexic", is you can't sort of say you cannot come on some courses… if somebody applies to do languages and they get the requisite qualifications, then obviously we can't refuse them, and you assume that if they could get that far, they can get further. They may discover they've got that far despite being dyslexic and that, then they are assessed and all the rest of it.

For a lot of the course, presumably in all **Content Courses** whether they are in the target language or not we should be able, we should be making the sorts of accommodation that's made for dyslexic students. I think there is a problem with **language courses**, and again some of the language course is oral/aural, and I think it is a dilemma, I don't think I know what the answer is. We do what we can in terms of making handouts clear and all the rest of it but I suppose the assessment is where the crunch comes, and of course there are different kinds of dyslexia and we're asked to make different kinds of accommodation for those people.

Dyslexia and the Year Abroad

To the statement "Learning in the target language or country works well for dyslexics as they have their own strategies SO we should let them go on their Year Abroad *even if they do badly in their pre-Year Abroad exams*", I would answer I don't think that we should. We've thought about it carefully, and come to a decision that students need to be of a certain standard in terms of proficiency with the language before they go on the year abroad and we've done that for their good, and I don't think that we should change that. IF we had – what I could see happening, and I suppose a conversation one could have, is that one actually weights assessments differently for dyslexic students, giving more weight to oral/aural work and less weight to written work to a certain extent. But I don't think you could do that a *huge* amount, or I don't think you would necessarily be achieving the learning outcomes of the degree programme. I think that dyslexic students [going on a Year Abroad] need to be warned, and they need fully aware, because if what they're going to be doing is taking University courses which involve writing, written assessments which they inevitably will, those assessments - they will not get *any* accommodation and they will not get any special treatment, and if they achieve low

marks on those assessments, that is going to impact on their degree results. Therefore I think you know at the time when any student is identified as being dyslexic, I think – or other disabilities than that, I think that they do need to be fully advised by somebody in the Department about what the implications for them are. Because you can't expect somebody in the Student Support Unit to understand about Year Abroad things. If you become aware of the fact that someone has a difficulty, maybe that they weren't aware of before, you might say to them, "Look, at this point, do you want to change your degree programme, or… you know. It just may not be the best degree programme for you."

Appendix 3 – Instruments used

3A – Interview Schedule – Dyslexic students
3B – Interview Schedule – The Advisors
3C – Interview Schedule – The Academic Director

3A – Interview Schedule – Dyslexic students

[Footer throughout:] **Yes**: feedback question with own words (**their** keywords, in lieu of tape counter). Scale that, 1-5; rank that ? Can you give me a for-instance; is that what you think or what people think; is this a general or a particular instance/case.
No: Are you saying that ([re-]interpretation)... So in summary you're saying that ... Any **leads**

Timings +
Respondent
Keywords

QUESTIONS AND PROBES

Introduction and description of the interview (theme of mature students and language issues)
- confidentiality issue
- explain why I can't *lead* in questions
- parts of the interview: this Introduction;
Question 1: your view of the difficulty*;*
Question 2: how do you feel about this;
Question 3: did you cope, and how ? Good Story; Bad story; probes and discussion; facts and figures like age etc. for deductive working; your chance to add anything that this interview has triggered

PART ONE:
For Inductive Analysis:

QUESTION 1: Your view of the difficulty.
Probe: <u>Can you describe it for me</u>?
Checklist/Prompts: Memory, Spelling, Writing, Reading, lexis retention, lexis retrieval, L1/L2 lexical equivalents, phoneme/grapheme/phoneme conversion; aural discrimination/accents; formal grammar e.g. rules and principles, syntax, morphology
Probe: <u>What do you think caused or causes this</u>?
Checklist/Prompts: is it something in you, or something external to you? Is anyone "to blame"? Is this specific to you or affecting everyone, anyone? Is this from nature or from nurture? Is there some other cause?
Probe: <u>What were the (non-affective) consequences or results of having the difficulty</u>?
Checklist/prompts: do they still exist? What was the degree of consequence (scale, please)? What

time factors were involved ? Were there social consequences, knock-on effects? What other people were affected - family, peers, teachers current or past, others? Other academic effects? Other language effects **but don't lead here** e.g. of L1 on L2 or vice-versa, linguistic destabilisation/regression? (analogy of computer "hanging" - useful?)

QUESTION TWO: subjective, personal perspectives on the difficulty
Probe: <u>Can you describe what it feels like from your point of view</u>?
Checklist/prompts: shame, pride, stupidity, intelligence, embarrassment, defensiveness, self-anger, self-fulfilling despair/feelings of futility, self-blame, loss of control, loss of motivation, other
Probe: <u>Was this a public or a private matter</u>?
Checklist/prompts: did you hide the difficulty, deny it, get found out, compare yourself with others?

QUESTION THREE: did you cope, and how?
Probe: did you evolve coping mechanisms, as opposed to clear strategies?
Checklists/prompts: concealment, denial, <u>not</u> coping
Probe: did you have your own strategies?
Checklist/prompts: self-organisation, back-checking, mnemonics you developed, learning from mistakes, going and asking for help, did the minimum to get through
Probe: did you discover, seek out or receive other people's strategies?
Checklist/prompts: formal study skills, back-up lessons (private or provided), self-checking? Other? How did these help? What did these help?

THE GOOD STORY
In-flight probes/qualifiers, if not disruptive of flow: See Footer
Post-Probe: e.g. this is about you in particular?
Post-Probe: e.g. could this have happened to someone else?
Post-Probe: this is about a specific instance or a generalisation?

THE BAD STORY
In-flight probes/qualifiers, if not disruptive of
flow: See Footer
Post-Probe: e.g. this is about you in particular?
Post-probe: e.g. could this have happened to
someone else?
Post-Probe: this is about a specific instance or a
generalisation?

PART TWO:
For Inductive Analysis

DEDUCTIVE/PRE-CODING QUESTIONS
(Alphabetical)
Clumsiness
Dominant hand
Eyesight
Eye colour (same?)
Age
Years out of formal language work before mature
studies
Amusia / reported tone-deaf
Actually tone-deaf (National Anthem)
Mimicry skills, accents
Hearing
What social class would you say you were
Top grade for English Language
Top grade for Foreign Language

PART THREE:
For Inductive Analysis

INTERVIEWEE FEEDBACK
Probe: has anything been left unsaid?

Appendix 3B –

Interview Outline - The Student Advisors

<u>These were the questions on my Interview Sheet</u>:

1.   Informed Consent

2.   Recording begins - permission to proceed?

3.   The SA role in general; autonomous or School or Uni managed?

4.   The SA role in particular - disabled students
   -             dyslexic students
   -             same DDA status?
   -             Post- Statementing / referral

5.   How do dyslexic students come to SAs - self-referral, SSU referral, many types

6.   Is there ever a *Diagnostic* role of SAs? i.e. can you spot a dyslexic student, yourselves ?

7.   Dyslexia *position* required - i.e. there's dyslexia because students are dyslexic, or vice-versa, or it doesn't matter ? Is there an orthodoxy or counter-orthodoxy, e.g. Learned Helplessness, Seligman (1975, 1992), or Gift of Dyslexia, Davis (1997), others?

8.   Dyslexic and reporting via Wealdston Direct. Do some entries say "dyslexic" and others refer to "dyslexia-like difficulties"? Are there in fact differences in approach or intervention?

9.   Confirm intervention levels - SAs intervene locally e.g. at School level, whereas SSU intervenes at Uni level and directly with the student ? Limited to undergrads ? All-comers, or caseload ? Cinderella-ish activity?

10.   Disability, crime and punishment - dyspraxic, disorganised, attention-deficitous etc. students with dyslexia diagnoses - exhort, or punish, or?

11.   Any views on HOW some students can arrive at Uni THEN be diagnosed as dyslexic?

12.   Any views on WHAT TYPE of students (gender, age, class, other variables) these are who have slipped through the net?

13.   Money - does DDA money attaching to a student e.g. from their LEA reach the SA system, directly or indirectly ? (Comparative case of Assistive technology appraisals).

14. True or false: no student is legally dyslexic at Wealdston until Wealdston agrees that they are (i.e. the Institution "makes" students dyslexic).

15. True or false: Student Advisors cannot and will not help "in" (rather than "out") dyslexics, i.e. there's no confidentiality.

Wider questions

16. Dyslexics and Modern languages. Comment these statements for i) content and ii) typicality:

16A "You'd have thought they'd just not bother to try"
16B "I'm dyslexic in English but I picked up Dutch when I lived over there, I just learned the rules - and used them"
16C "It was only when I had to do Russian from scratch on my MA in Applied Linguistics that I worked out I'm actually dyslexic".

17. Affect and learning - own experiences as SAs - which leads which ? Bad affect > bad learning or vice versa (vicious downward spiral).

18. (off the top of your head) *Presenting* problem with dyslexics - broadly 50/50 between Academic difficulties and Affective difficulties, or different proportion ?

19. Is there a typical time i.e. just before Year 1 exams when there is a "peak period" for support and/or diagnosis of dyslexics ?

20. What is SA support, if any, for students (esp. dyslexic ones) on a Year Abroad, or is this handled via SSU and OISA[51] ?

Letter from the Vice Dean of International Relations, Faculty of Arts, University of Madrada[52], included as Jille and Dave made reference to it concerning the Year Abroad (emphasis added)

Estimada Amelia,
Escribo en relación al caso de la alumna MJP. En la actualidad, la Universidad de Madrada no contempla ni tiene regulado ningún tipo de normativa para este tipo de discapacidad. De hecho, es el primer caso que conozco en la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras. Por este motivo, no puedo garantizar ningún trato especial a Mary-Jane Phelps dado *que no estamos autorizados para modificar o alterar las normas que mencionas en tu mensaje; bien por estar reguladas por de instancias superiores (las que afectan a la biblioteca etc.), o porque afectan a la dedicación des profesorado (tiempo extra en exámenes, criterios de calificación, etc.).* En

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[51] This is the Officefor International Study Abroad, which deals with ERASMUS, British Council and Junior Year Abroad (North American) visits and exchanges, and also teaching practice and Work Placement issues. Its funding is partially external, e.g. through European Union sources.
[52] People and place names have been altered as previously.

cualquier caso, estad seguros que, en el caso de que decida venir, prestaremos a MJP la mayor ayuda posible siempre que no afecte a las normas de la Universidad. Por favor, te ruego que se lo hagas llegar para que lo tenga en cuenta antes de tomar la decisión. Cordialmente, Cordelia Jesus Fernandez de Ortiz.

Dear Amelia
I'm writing in connection with the case of your student MJP. At the present time, the University of Madrada is neither about to nor has it implemented any settled policy regarding this type of disability. In fact this is the first example of such a case that we have come across in the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters. For this reason, I cannot guarantee any special treatment for Mary-Jane Phelps*, given that we are not authorised to modify or alter the regulations which you mention in your letter, whether these are derived from higher authorities (regarding e.g. the library and so forth), nor as regards teaching time (extra time in examinations, criteria for exam success, etc).* Whatever the case, if she decides to attend our university, please be assured that we shall offer all assistance possible provided that it does not alter university regulations. Please ensure that this is conveyed to her so that she can be mindful of it before she takes her decision. Yours, CJF de O

Appendix 3C - Interview Schedule - The Academic Director

These were the questions on my Interview Sheet:

1.   Informed Consent

2.   Recording begins - permission to proceed?

3.   Describe the activities of the UniLang Centre.

4.   Who funds what - Joe Public, private individuals ...?

5.   Qualifications and who grants them.

6.   Is there a central ethos or methodology - we've done grammar-translation model, audiolingual 50s and 60s, functional-notional syllabus, the communicative syllabus, proceduralism - where are we at collectively?

7.   What do the qualifying/certifying bodies expect - esp. when they're inspecting and franchising etc? And thru' exams?

8.   MFL vs EFL methodologies - same?

9.   In EFL and MFL where do the *internal* syllabuses come from, where these courses aren't validated externally.

10.   Role of Native Speaker levels - referenced to NS proficiency or referenced to criteria e.g. can write a letter correctly.

11.   If not then what is the role of direct teaching?

12.   Learning "in the target language culture" - worthwhile and a selling point?

13.   Mod Langs and year abroad - "sheer waste of time and an indulgence"?

14.   If not how do students "pick up" stuff on their YA - something clicks in, automatically?

15.   So re-engagement of acquisition is expected in the year abroad country, for adults?

Disability and related

16.   How to deal with disability - what's the obligation: take all comers, if they're funded?

17.   Paradox or dilemma of being unable to refuse disabled students and unable to discriminate against them in marking etc.

18.   Difference dyslexic / other disabled - i.e. their own fault if they try and do something they're disabled at?

19. **Agree/disagree?** "Learning 'in the target language/country' works well for dyslexics, as they have their own strategies - so we should let them go even if they do badly in pre-YA exams.

20. Practical question - does UniLang Centre co-fund Student Advisors? (BA, MA programmes)

Appendix 4 – A Table of NVivo 8 labels derived in the
Thesis and their explanatory sub-descriptors encoded in
the NVivo 8 electronic models.

Only the FIRST occurrence of each label is sub-described, hence no reference is
made e.g. to Model 4 or Model 8, as they simply reconfigure, realign and interpret
earlier labels.

Model	LABEL	SUB-DESCRIPTOR
1	AUTOMATICITY AS UNREALISED EXPECTATION	I expected automaticity because others have it, but I didn't reach it.
	NEGATIVE AUTOMATICITY: 'AUTOMATIC' SELF-DOUBT	I 'automatically' doubt my capacities and, in a self-fulfillling reaction, fail to reach automaticity.
	LOSS OF AUTOMATICITY – 'TUNING OUT'	Just when I think I am reaching automaticity, I become distracted and 'tune out' , i.e. lose the flow.
	SERIAL-AND-PARALLEL AUTOMATICITY UNAVAILABLE	I can do things (e.g. learn items) either in tandem (parallel) or one-after-the-other (serial); but not both, in an 'exponential' way.
2	AUTOMATICITY OF UPTAKE	I absorb linguistic and metalinguistic information 'mindlessly' - but permanently and exponentially.
	SPONANEOUS, NATURALISTIC ACQUISITION	Without prompting or coaching or using dedicated teaching materials I can uptake and and in addition, process (e.g. store, compare, categorize, sort, retrieve) linguistic information in a permanent way.
	AUTOMATICITY OF OUTPUT (FLUENCY?)	I can assemble and output linguistic data without conscious planning and without seeming to have consciously planned it.
3	INTERACTIVE, CREATIVE EXPONENTIALITY	I can handle (input, output) linguistic information including novel (untutored and unplanned) utterances or text of my own or other people's creation, or any mixture of these, and use these inputs and outputs to 'grow' my language use in content and perfomance.
	TRANSCENDENCE OF 'CHUNKING'	I can rise above using fairly unanalysed chunks of language (e.g. holophrases), and/or using such chunks either in parallel OR serially towards parallel AND serial.
	DE-AUTOMATION	Loss of automaticity or of progress towards automaticity, for various reasons.
	STRATEGIC MICRO-PLANNING	The reverse of 'transcendence of chunking': I descend towards making the best out of units and holophrases - as a deliberate (conscious) strategy.
5	PROXY AUTOMATICITY	The assumption that others will understand – automatically – for me.
	AUTOMATICITY OF MEMORY (SEAMLESS RECALL)	I can recall things effortlessly and with e.g. no hesitations or tip-of-the-tongue phenomena.
	PRE-ASSEMBLAGE AUTOMATICITY	I can automatically (i.e. not deliberatively) assemble items before outputting them.
	SEMANTIC AUTOMATICITY	Not specifically lexical, i.e. not *anomia;* but offering unprompted access to the meaning of intrasentential elements.

	INTERLOCUTOR SUSTAINED AUTOMATICITY	De-automation doesn't kick in so long as automaticity is sustained by an interlocutor (i.e. it might, when lecturing, presenting, monologuing unidirectionally.
	ELECTIVE DE-AUTOMATION (SELF-SCREENING)	My de-automation (q.v.) results from self-screening for accuracy in preference to automaticity.
	OVER-WRITING (GROUND-HOG DAY) DE-AUTOMATION	Automaticity does not evolve because linguistic information is *over-written* by new items effortfully acquired.
	NARRATOLOGICAL-DISCOURSAL AUTOMATICITY	One form of automaticity is that exponentially, the more narrative-types and discourse-types I encounter, the more I know of them and the less these impinge on my uptake or output of language.
	CONATIVE DE-AUTOMATION	My *will* to automaticity lacks, or has been jeopardised or lost. Not to be confused with 'demotivation'.
6	**METALINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE**	My linguistic knowledge (overt and covert) about the language(s) I am acquiring or have acquired, and about human language in general.
	OVERT, DESCRIPTIVE GRAMMAR-TEACHING	Deliberate teaching of grammar which I have received, probably of the 'grammar-translation model' variety, with its covert assumptions that description and analysis are *necessary* precursors to growingly spontaneous uptake, extension and stability.
	PARTIAL AUTOMATICITY (SUB-AUTOMATIC RULE-INTERNALISATION)	My memory and cognition allow quantities of language (including foreign) to be internalised, though probably for monologic outputs in restricted fields and functions.
	RELATIVE AUTOMATICITY	I (as an Advisor) believe that some forms of automaticity are easier to acquire - so conversely, dyslexia may simply mask *interlinguistic* difficulty.
	PARTIAL AUTOMATICITY (WITH ADVISOR-DENIED DYSLEXIA)	Partial automaticity again but as a 'dyslexia professional' I would deny this is Dyslexia at all, because "They've made it so far, haven't they?"
	EARLY STAGE 'LANGUAGE AUTISM'	I am 'as though' autistic in the early stages of my L2 acquisition (or even L1, discounting e.g. symbolic/kinetic language).
	FAILURE OF PRAGMATIC GRAMMAR JUDGEMENTS	I can't (even) judge whether my grammar use is correct or not.
	OVERGENERALISATION OF (THE LITTLE) ACQUIRED	I have internalised very little in the way of Metalinguistic knowledge AND what I have internalised has been overgeneralised.
7	**'AFTER' PROFICIENCY, A.K.A. 'NOT YET' OR 'WHOLE POINT' PROFICIENCY**	I will acquire this proficiency AFTER a Year Abroad, i.e. the 'whole point' of the YA is to acquire it, as I am 'not yet' proficient.
	'BEFORE' PROFICIENCY	I must acquire this proficiency BEFORE a Year Abroad, i.e. the purpose of the YA is to use and reinforce what I have *already* acquired.
	EXPOSURE AND INTERACTION MODEL OF (RE-)ACQUISITION	I (the Academic Director) believe that acquisition of language requires exposure to language (and therefore, not ontogenesis) combined with interactions (which will be further and further under the acquirer's control). Acquisition isn't automatic and/or irresistible.

	ONLY 'ASPIRATION' GP/MLAP – RE-LAUNCH ONLY 'POSSIBLE'	I (the Academic Director) also believe that acquisition of language is only an aspiration, a 'possible' so we shall teach Modern Languages for General Purposes or Modern Languages for Academic Purposes and hopefully, it will stick. If it does, you get a Year Abroad, to improve it even more. Acquisition isn't automatic and/or irresistible.