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VOICING DYSLEXIA: A COGNITIVE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE PROCESSING IN INDIAN MOVIE *TAARE ZAMEEN PAR (2007)*

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Abstract
Dyslexia is a learning disability related to neurodevelopment involving ongoing challenges in reading, spelling, and language processing, frequently misunderstood within schooling contexts as motivational or behavioral problems. This qualitative psycholinguistic investigation utilizes Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) to analyze dyslexia through Ishaan Awasthi, the central character in the Indian film Taare Zameen Par (2007), using language, behavior, and learning episodes. In contrast to traditional clinical tests, this qualitative approach highlights how language identifies beneath-the-surface cognitive strategies, phonological constraints, and affective processes. Selected scenes and conversations are examined in this study using CODA's framework, documenting orthographic confusion, phonological misperception, decreased capacity for working memory, lexical retrieval slowness, and metacognitive coping behaviors. Through this analysis, Ishaan's language behavior reveals itself to be a rich site for a glimpse into dyslexic processing mechanisms. The results indicate, however, that his mistakes are not random ones but reflect a systematic cognitive profile characterized by compensatory verbal behaviour and affective withdrawal. The study also demonstrates how misaligned pedagogic response widens his problems, emphasizing the need for diagnostic sensitivity and inclusive educational discourse. By combining psycholinguistics, media studies of narrative, and special education research, this thesis not only expands our knowledge about dyslexia beyond standardized tests but also consolidates film studies as a medium for cognitive-linguistic inquiry. The findings call for more linguistically grounded, sympathetic, and context-sensitive educational intervention.

Keywords
Dyslexia, Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA), Language Processing, Psycholinguistics, Inclusive Education, Orthographic Confusion, Phonological Awareness

1.0 Introduction
This study explores dyslexia using a fictional character's linguistic and narrative behaviors, Ishaan Awasthi from the Indian film *Taare Zameen Par (2007).* Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) examines Ishaan's verbal interactions, written texts, hesitation phenomena, and affective language against a backdrop of psycholinguistic profiles associated with dyslexia. The present study bridges the disciplinary boundaries between linguistics, developmental psychology, and inclusive education, showing how media narratives are useful data sources for researching neurodiverse learners.

1.1 Background of the Study
Dyslexia, a learning disorder characterized by an impaired acquisition predominantly in reading, is one of the neurodevelopmental conditions most highly researched yet least understood. Prevalent in an estimated 5% to 15% of school-age children worldwide, dyslexia arises not because of poor teaching or intellectual impairment, but due to intrinsic neurocognitive processing deficits within phonological awareness, working memory, and word retrieval (Snowling & Hulme, 2012; Ramus, 2003). Where literacy remains central to

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performance in classrooms, such deficits lead to long-term educational failure and socio-emotional repercussions for affected students.

India's cinematic representation of neurodiversity, by means of the widely acclaimed Taare Zameen Par (2007), offers a culturally grounded account of how dyslexia remains misunderstood in educational contexts. The film documents Ishaan Awasthi, a boy who's seen by others as lazy and disobedient, yet whose language use, scholarly behavior, and affective responses are signs he might have unspecified dyslexia. This offers a chance to explore how language reflects children's cognitive and affective states in cases of learning disorders in a naturalistic narrative format.

Most current studies of dyslexia are predicated upon clinical assessment tests and quantitative measures; a discourse-oriented, psycholinguistic analysis by means of CODA (Tenbrink, 2020) however, can allow a richer, more humanized interpretation to be made of how children such as Ishaan perceive and use language oral, written, and affective to exhibit dyslexic behaviors. Language here appears not so much to be a vehicle for deficits, but for strategy, adaptation, and feeling.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

While a lot of literature focuses on cognitive and neurological foundations of dyslexia, few investigate how dyslexic qualities are realized in natural, spontaneous language use. Narrative media are mostly devoid of psycholinguistic analysis where language is simultaneously an expressive resource and a symptom bearer. The language use by children with dyslexia, especially in school contexts, is not sufficiently explored with qualitative linguistic models. Moreover, less effort exists to see how movies like Taare Zameen Par provide rich discursive data for cognitive-linguistic behavior modeling in dyslexia.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How are dyslexic traits represented in the character of Ishaan Awasthi through linguistic performance in *Taare Zameen Par*?
2. What do Ishaan's verbal and written language behaviors reveal about underlying phonological, cognitive, and metacognitive processing challenges?

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To analyze how dyslexic traits are represented in the character of Ishaan Awasthi through linguistic performance in *Taare Zameen Par*.
2. To examine how Ishaan's verbal and written language behaviors reflect underlying phonological, cognitive, and metacognitive processing challenges.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This work carries importance in both scholarly and practical contexts:Theoretically, it serves to advance the increasing application of Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) in developmental psycholinguistics by pointing to how language use within narrative media can shed light upon inner cognitive conditions and deficits.Practically speaking, it makes teachers, special education professionals, and curriculum planners informed about children with dyslexia's communicative and affective expressions. In CODA, the research promotes discursive sensitivity in classrooms—a practice whereby a child's speaking, writing, and silence are understood with diagnostic perception rather than disciplinary judgment. Culturally, this work crosses media studies, linguistics, and educational psychology by demonstrating how a mainstream film can offer empirical data when subject to a close critical approach. It argues for the value in recognizing a condition like dyslexia outside of labels and scores, grounding even our understanding in lived language use.

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2.0 literature review

1. Introduction

Dyslexia refers to a specific learning disorder with persistent challenges in the development of reading skills, involving decoding, fluency, and spelling, even in the presence of adequate education, intelligence, and socio-cultural exposure. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) classifies dyslexia under the specific learning disorder rubric and relates it primarily to phonological processing deficits affecting accurate recognition and spelling of words (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) also defines developmental dyslexia as a disorder characterized by markedly disturbed reading development not attributable to intellectual or sensory impairment (World Health Organization, 2022).

Across the world, some 5% to 15% of children attend school with dyslexia, and this prevalence varies between languages and orthographies (Snowling & Hulme, 2012). In alphabetic languages like English, decoding difficulties tend to be very prominent due to irregular grapheme-phoneme correspondences. However, in children reading in very transparent orthographies like Finnish or Greek, less dramatic decoding deficits, but also difficulties in reading fluency and processing at the level of morphemes, may be found (Ziegler & Goswami, 2005). These cross-linguistic differences highlight the necessity of viewing dyslexia not as a monolithic deficit but as a complex and multifaceted disorder dependent on the structure of the language and the demands of cognitive processing involved.

Language processing forms the core of reading development. Effective reading involves the coordination of several linguistic abilities, ranging from phonological competency to visual recognition of words and syntactic analysis. Disruptions in integration in dyslexia cause a long-standing reading performance deficit that will usually persist through adulthood (Peterson & Pennington, 2015). Since literacy has a crucial function in educational attainment and civic engagement, comprehension of the ways in which dyslexia affects language processing has theoretical and applied value.

The present literature review intends to investigate the effect of dyslexia on certain aspects of language processing phonological, morphological, and visual-spatial and explore the effects on the reading capacity based on recent empirical studies. The review also points out upcoming interventions and concludes by noting the essential gaps within the existing research context.

2.2 Phonological Processing and Dyslexia

Phonological processing internal manipulation of sound patterns in words—has long been generally accepted as a fundamental cognitive impairment in developmental dyslexia. This impairment involves a shortfall in phoneme segmentation, blending, and manipulation, which provide the bases for decoding and reading words. A sizeable literature underlies the belief that deficient phonological awareness represents a key obstacle in the acquisition of reading and thus has emerged as a very early and highly specific predictor of dyslexia.

Empirical research has consistently found children with dyslexia perform significantly less well on phoneme recognition, deletion, or substitution tasks than their typically developing counterparts. As an example, Hulme et al.'s (2012) longitudinal study demonstrated phoneme awareness at five years old predicted reading accuracy and fluency at seven years old even when IQ and a measure of vocabulary were controlled for. The implication here would be deficits in phoneme-level processing not just a symptom but a causative mechanism in reading impairment. The failure to properly map graphemes onto phonemes disrupts the advent of the alphabetic principle and hence decoding and spelling.

Development of neurological imaging has enabled researchers to investigate the neural correlates of phonological impairments. Zhao et al. (2023) used mismatch negativity (MMN), an event-related potential (ERP) component of automatic change detection in the auditory

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system, to investigate phoneme discrimination in young Mandarin-speaking children. The research demonstrated lower reading scores for children who had less pronounced MMN responses and thus suggest an immature phonological processing system. The neural findings complement existing behavior research and offer biological grounds for the phonological deficit hypothesis (Zhao et al., 2023, Neuropsychologia, [DOI: 10.1016/j.neuropsychologia.2023.108624]).

The other key construct in phonological processing is the phonological loop, part of Baddeley's working memory theory. The phonological loop temporarily holds and rehearses verbal material, facilitating decoding and reading accuracy. Mohamadi et al. (2025) used a randomized controlled trial of phonological training and transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS). It reported improvements in verbal short term memory and naming speed, and inferred from this that stimulation of the brain might improve the function of the phonological loop. These results lend weight to the hypothesis that dyslexia might be a matter of deficits in memory generally as well as phonology (Disability and Rehabilitation, 2025, [DOI: 10.1080/09638288.2025.2455530]).

Phonological processing deficits also express differently between languages, and between transparent and opaque orthographies in particular. In transparent orthographic languages like Finnish or Greek, where grapheme-to-phoneme correspondence holds consistently, dyslexic children generally learn to decode faster but persist in failing at reading fluency. It has been established by Padeliadu (2022) that Greek-speaking children who experience dyslexia exhibited good decoding accuracy but compromised fluency and morphological processing, emphasizing how a state of dyslexia in such languages might be expressed subtly but endure differently in various cognitive areas.

Another measure that also crosses over phonological deficits is Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN)—the time it takes for a person to name a series of known stimuli like digits or colors. The Double-Deficit Hypothesis (Wolf & Bowers, 1999) states that children who both lack phonological awareness and also score low on RAN experience the most extreme reading challenges. RAN measures automatized retrieval and processing time and has demonstrated predictive validity in numerous studies. Youngsters who have slow RAN take longer to retrieve phonological representations and thus hold back reading fluency development.

In brief, phonological processing forms a basic pillar of reading development, and when disrupted has far-reaching consequences for decoding, fluency, and spelling. Convergent findings from behavior studies, cross-linguistic research, and neuroimaging all point toward the conclusion that phonological deficits not only characterize but also causally underlie dyslexia. Additionally, newly developed interventions for verbal memory and naming speed hold promise but given the complexity of phonological deficits, a multi-pronged approach tailored for the single child remains a necessity for remediation.

2.3 Morphological Awareness and Dyslexia

Whereas phonological processing has long dominated the discourse of dyslexia research, a rising focus on the role of morphological awareness the awareness and manipulation of morphemes, the smallest meaningful units of a language has emerged in recent years. Morphological awareness plays a pivotal role in vocabulary development, syntactic comprehension, spelling, and reading comprehension. In individuals with dyslexia, difficulties in the processing of morphology have indeed been found to be concomitant with those in phonology. Nevertheless, also developing now is a body of evidence showing that morphology provides a compensatory mechanism for facilitating reading fluency and comprehension in languages rich in morphological complexity.

One of the most critical properties of morphological awareness lies in the capacity for learning and generalization of morphological rules, like identifying base words and their inflected or

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derived forms (e.g., "run" → "runner" or "running"). Prior et al. (2023) probed this capacity in children with developmental dyslexia in a task of learning artificial morphological rules. The researchers reported that dyslexic children performed materially poorly on both extraction and generalization of morphological patterns even after extensive presentation sessions. These impairments were not specific to linguistic procedures but were seen as indicative of domain-general learning impairments, especially in the areas of recognition and consolidation of rule-based information. The authors deduced that defective morphological learning may compound challenges in word recognition and vocabulary development in addition to the already established phonological processing challenges (Neuropsychologia, 2023)

Despite noted deficits, other research indicates that morphological awareness also lessens the severity of reading deficits. In a study of Greek-speaking children, Padeliadu (2022) identified the capacity for deriving meaning from derivational morphemes (e.g., prefixes and suffixes) as a key determinant of reading fluency above and beyond phonology. As compared to those possessing independent phonology skills, children who exhibited superior morphological awareness were better at decoding and understanding words. This lends support for a view of morphology as a cognitive framework, enabling readers who have dyslexia to employ semantic and syntactic information in order to recognize unfamiliar words and enhance general fluency.

The capacity of morphology to provide a compensatory mechanism for phonological deficits has also received empirical confirmation from neuroimaging studies. Kovelman and her associates utilized functional near-infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS) to examine neural responses to complex words based on their morphology in children who did or did not have dyslexia. The results indicated that children who were stronger in their morphological processing—regardless of their phonological profile—had increased activation in the left inferior frontal gyrus (IFG), a region of the brain linked to higher-level processing of language and syntactic integration. The neural activity correlated positively with reading accuracy and vocabulary scores and was taken as prima facie evidence that processing of morphology involves compensatory neural pathways bypassing or facilitating underactive phonological ones (JSLHR, 2024).

Another important part of morphological awareness in reading is derivational morphology—the construction of new words through the addition of affixes (e.g., "predict" → "prediction"). In contrast to inflectional morphology, which alters form or number, derivational morphology tends to alter the grammatical class and meaning of words and thus is a necessary part of reading comprehension and vocabulary building. Carlisle (2004) determined that children who were better acquainted with derivational morphemes were stronger at deciphering complex texts and exhibited enhanced reading efficiency. Later work has repeated those findings and concluded that interventions aimed at derivational morphology can improve reading speed and comprehension in older children who experience ongoing symptoms of dyslexia (Deacon & Kirby, 2004; Nagy et al., 2006). Notably, the advantages of morphological teaching seem to be language-specific. Morphologically dense languages such as Greek, Finnish, or Hebrew offer a clear grammar and semantics through the internal ordering of words, which can assist in developing compensatory strategies in readers who are dyslexic. In Padeliadu's (2022) research, for instance, children could decode unfamiliar words by identifying known bases and affixes knowing little about phoneme awareness. This less often applies in English as inconsistent rules in spelling can make such strategies less useful unless taught explicitly. Also, instructional methods aimed at morphology are receiving empirical endorsement. Morphology awareness training has also been shown to improve reading in both non-dyslexic and dyslexic individuals. Bowers, Kirby, and Deacon (2010) meta-analyzed morphological interventions and concluded that they had a medium-to-large effect on reading comprehension and spelling.

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Notably, the improvements were strongest in learners with learning difficulties, implying remediation through morphological teaching can be impactful.

Nevertheless, not all results are consistently positive. Some researchers hold the view that a certain level of morphological awareness will only complement phonological deficits and will not be able to completely replace decoding skills. As an instance, Nunes and Bryant (2006) warn that although morphological instruction enhances recognition of words and vocabulary, effects on decoding at the level of phoneme will be constrained unless incorporated alongside phonics instruction. This would mean that a dual instruction method addressing both phonological and morphological processing will be most beneficial. In brief, morphological awareness is an important but sometimes neglected aspect of child reading development for individuals with dyslexia. Weaknesses in generalization and acquisition of morphology can enhance reading challenges but good morphological knowledge may also be a protective or even compensatory mechanism, especially for richly inflected languages. Neuroimaging research contains strong empirical support for orthogonal brain activation patterns linked with morphological processing and a possible role in bypassing phonologic weaknesses. As we look toward the future, the incorporation of morphological training into evidence-based reading remediations has considerable promise for improving outcome for learners with dyslexia.

2.4 Visual-Spatial Attention and Dyslexia

Though phonological and morphological deficits in dyslexia have long been the subject of extensive study, mounting evidence indicates an important role for visual-spatial attention in the development of reading. Visual-spatial attention describes the capacity to quickly and precisely distribute attentional resources between visual stimuli functions necessary for accurate and efficient letter and word recognition. The Visual Attention Span (VAS) Theory, proposed by Bosse, Tainturier, and Valdois (2007), suggests that certain individuals with dyslexia experience a problem processing multiple visual elements concomitantly and orthographic processing and decoding of words as a result, and this effect would be particularily prominent on rapid reading examinations.

Empirical evidence in favour of the VAS theory remains on a steady rise. Bi et al. (2024) researched visual-spatial attention in Chinese children who had developmental dyslexia. By employing a modified version of a Posner cueing task, the researchers established that the dyslexic individuals showed significantly slower and less accurate shifting of visual focus compared to their typically developing counterparts. This impairment was most apparent in procedures demanding large attentional focus as well as quick saccadic eye movements between text. The research concluded visual attention deficits may underpin challenges in visual word form recognition and may compromise the production of fluent reading streams in dyslexia (Journal of Learning Disabilities, 2025

The difference between exogenous (automatic, stimulus-driven) and endogenous (voluntary, goal-driven) attention further defines the nature of attention deficits in dyslexia. Yeatman et al. (2024) probed this contrast and found that children who were dyslexic showed no exogenous attention deficits. They did poorly on tests involving endogenous attentional control, however, such as sustaining focus over multiple visual objects in the course of rapid serial visual presentation (RSVP) tests. This indicates that the fundamental visual orienting processes are intact in dyslexic readers but that they fail on controlled deployment of attention over time—the skill essential for reading continuous text (Developmental Science, 2024).

Visual-spatial attention has a close relationship with orthographic mapping, or the mechanism by which phonological and visual forms of words become merged and consolidated in long-term memory. Deficient attention diminishes the effectiveness of this mapping system and results in fragile or partial word forms. This, in turn, interferes with word recognition, decreases

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reading fluency, and enhances reliance on effortful decoding strategies, especially in dense visual or low-contrast texts.

Furthermore, visual attention and educational settings have pragmatic application. The presentation of text in classrooms e.g., font size and spacing between lines and screen brightness may enhance or hamper visual encoding challenges. As a case in point, larger text and higher line spacing has enhanced the fluency in reading for children and youth who experience visual attention deficits (Zorzi et al., 2012), and thus environmental modification must be seen as part of accessible literacy education for children who have dyslexia.

Finally, visual-spatial attention deficits form a critical yet neglected aspect of dyslexia. The deficits involved impact orthographic mapping, word recognition, and reading fluency and may be especially disruptive in visually demanding or poorly laid out reading contexts. As work continues to map the interaction between visual and linguistic processing, adding visual-spatial training and classroom modifications may provide significant benefits for children who experience attentional subtypes of dyslexia.

2.5 Neurological and Cognitive Interventions

Recent developments from neuroscience have increased the number of intervention approaches available for developmental dyslexia, especially through the application of neuromodulation methods including transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) and transcranial alternating current stimulation (tACS). These non-invasive brain stimulation procedures are used to improve cortical excitability and neuroplasticity in regions involved in language and memory and typically in association with behavioral intervention.Krauel et al. (2023) conducted a significant study on the impact of multi-session tACS in conjunction with trained language in dyslexic children. The individuals who were stimulated over left temporoparietal and prefrontal areas exhibited enhanced gamma band activity and fluency in reading against control groups undergoing just language training. These results indicate tACS can promote synaptic plasticity and enhance the functional connectivity of reading neural networks (Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, 2023). Also, Mohamadi et al. (2025) show the value of combining tDCS and phonological awareness training. Their randomized controlled trial found that children who received stimulation and had dyslexia showed impressive improvements in verbal short-term memory, rapid automatized naming, and decoding efficiency. These findings add weight to the proposal that targeted brain stimulation can facilitate better neural processing as a way of improving the cognitive systems involved in reading (Disability and Rehabilitation, 2025).

Key here is the integration of these neuromodulation procedures with evidence-driven cognitive instruction, including phonics education, development of morphological awareness, and application of metacognitive strategies. Instead of existing as add-ons or discrete interventions in and of themselves, they seem to enhance the effects of conventional treatments through their modulation of states of brain organization supportive of learning. The remediation of dyslexia in the future may be achieved through hybridization of neurocognitive stimulation and linguistically motivated pedagogy customized to unique neurocognitive profiles.

2.6 Affective, Motivational & Metacognitive Factors

Cognitive and neural processes of dyslexia have been the focus of a lot of research effort, but recent evidence highlights the role of affective, motivational, and metacognitive aspects in determining reading performance. Academic frustration, decreased self-esteem, and learned helplessness are usually consequences of dyslexia and can also hinder reading performance and interest. Dłużniewska et al. (2023) recently investigated the effects of examination anxiety and motivation on reading performance in secondary school pupils with dyslexia. The research found a link between increased examination anxiety and decreased comprehension and reading rates. Students who used metacognitive strategies like making predictions of what would be discussed next, summarizing, and asking themselves questions performed better under pressure

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and with improved accuracy in their reading. The findings enumerate the moderating effect of motivation and self-regulation on reading success (PLOS ONE, 2023).

Metacognitive monitoring or the capacity for self-regulation of the learning process has become a key determinant of reading intervention. Students who learn to monitor their own comprehension and shift their strategies as a result and stick through difficulties when reading will perform better than those who act on decoding proficiency alone. Instructional approaches integrating metacognitive skill development e.g., reciprocal teaching and strategy instruction have proved beneficial in improving comprehension in the case of children who suffer from dyslexia. Furthermore, emotional and educational support systems function as buffers for the negative consequences of reading failure. Teachers who are trained in inclusive approaches and parents who offer scaffolding at home both promote stronger academic identities and a stronger sense of engagement in reading activities. These environmental conditions can make the psychological weight of dyslexia less impactful and encourage persistence despite continuing difficulties. Overall, reading is as much an emotional and motivational as a cognitive experience. Attending to the affective domain alleviating anxiety, promoting motivation, and developing self-regulation is essential for holistic dyslexia intervention. Future programs will need to take these variables as well as linguistic and neurological targets into account in order to fully facilitate learners from diverse backgrounds.

2.7 Theoretical Foundations

Understanding the cognitive foundations of dyslexia demands a survey of the main theoretical models describing its varied presentations. These models inform empirical studies and interventions and provide insight into the unique cognitive and neural processes involved in reading deficits. The Phonological Deficit Hypothesis continues to be the most prominent theoretical framework for dyslexia. Initially put forwarded by Snowling (2000) and later refined by Ramus (2003), the theory sets out that central deficits in phonological processing being able to encode, store, and manipulate the sound forms of words underpin the development of dyslexia. Under this model, phonemic awareness deficits compromise mapping sounds onto written labels and hence decoding and spelling. The hypothesis has received empirical support from neuroimaging studies demonstrating abnormal activation in left hemisphere areas involved in language, especially the temporo-parietal and inferior frontal regions, in the case of individuals who have dyslexia (Ramus et al., 2004). Building on the phonological theory, the Double-Deficit Hypothesis (Wolf & Bowers, 1999) adds a second axis: rapid automatized naming (RAN). This theory postulates a subgroup of individuals who experience both phonological and naming-speed deficits as contributing causes of more enduring and profound reading challenges. The individuals having a "double deficit" tend to experience a higher level of trouble in the attainment of reading fluency compared to those having a single deficit, which suggests that dyslexia can be associated with multiple cognitive streams.

The Visual Attention Span Theory of Bosse, Tainturier, and Valdois (2007) moves attention from the auditory to the visual side of processing. It holds the belief that dyslexia stems from a decreased capacity for the parallel processing of multiple visual features and thus a compromised letter string and word recognition performance. The theory applies most notably in those languages with complex orthographies where visual discrimination plays a key role. Complementing these models is Morphological Deficit Theory, which proposes that readers who are dyslexic struggle in decoding and manipulating morphemes qua smallest elements of linguistic meaning. Impaired morphological sensitivity may hinder vocabulary acquisition and parsing of words at the level of the sentence, both essential for fluent reading and comprehension (Carlisle, 2004). Lastly, existing research has also compared and contrasted domain-specific models, in which the cause of dyslexia has been seen as a result of specialized

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linguistic systems (e.g., phonological), and domain-general models emphasizing general deficits in working memory, attentional processes, or procedural learning (Nicolson & Fawcett, 2011). These alternative accounts highlight the diversity of dyslexia and the necessity of integrative theories that take both the unique and generalized cognitive processes into account. As compelling as our progress has been in grasping dyslexia, numerous gaps persist in existing literature. Among the foremost of these gaps is the absence of integrative, multi-domain interventions addressing the interactive complexity between phonological, morphological, visual-spatial, cognitive, and affective processes. The majority of interventions center on a single area usually phonological awareness while ignoring the impact of affective variables like motivation, anxiety, and self-regulation on reading behavior. Such a fractured framework hamstrings the effectiveness and transferability of remediation programs for varied dyslexic profiles. In addition, a striking dearth of longitudinal research exists that examines in depth the ways in which early deficits in multiple areas cognitive, neural, and emotional interact and affect long-term reading profiles. Cross-sectional research provides useful snapshots but cannot capture the dynamic fluidity of dyslexia and the ways compensatory processes or instruction fill the gap over time. Without that longitudinal window, it becomes challenging to create proactive screeners or to gear interventions toward stages of development. One area especially underexamined is the relationship between neural plasticity and affective regulation in reading remediation. Although neurostimulation research (e.g., tDCS, tACS) is promising, they neglect the psychological state of the learner e.g., motivation or stress—that can impact neural trainability. Combining neuroscience and affective science may provide a more integrative, tailored approach to remediation. Bridging these gaps will be essential for promoting both theoretical models of dyslexia and developing inclusive and impactful educational interventions

This review has examined the complex effects of dyslexia on reading development and the processing of language drawing on theories in phonology, morphological processing, visual-spatial attention, neurocognitive interventions, and affective-motivational variables. Dyslexia needs to be understood not as a single deficit but rather as a heterogeneous educational disability featuring unique cognitive, linguistic, and emotional profiles. Although phonological deficits remain at the center of attention, empirical evidence increasingly indicates the relevance of morphological deficits and visual-spatial limits on attention. Similarly, affective variables in the form of motivation, test stress, and metacognitive strategy application also profoundly affect reading performance. The similarity of results from independent research areas indicates the necessity for multi-dimensional intervention approaches combining cognitive training, neuromodulation, metacognitive scaffolding, and emotional support. Neuroscientific approaches like tDCS and fNIRS also show promise and would need to be applied as part of larger schemes accounting for variability in learners and emotional preparedness. Additionally, accessible instructional design e.g., text format adjustment in the classroom and metacognitive coaching may improve the learning space for individuals who are dyslexic.

Future research needs to focus on longitudinal and integrative studies of the dynamic interplay between cognitive, neural, and affective variables over development. Also critical is the screening of at-risk children in multiple domains early on in life. By embracing integration and complexity, educational and clinical interventions can better assist the multiple needs of individuals who have dyslexia.

3.0 research methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research utilizes a qualitative psycholinguistic discourse analysis approach to explore dyslexia and language processing representations in *Taare Zameen Par* (2007). The study

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employs cognitive discourse processing insights, findings from language impairments research, and developmental psycholinguistic concepts to explore how and in what ways dyslexia is represented through character talk, narrative, and internal thought.

This method permits an in-depth examination of the ways in which dyslexic characteristics emerge in natural language production, vocabulary selections, sentence organisation, and metalinguistic awareness. In contrast to conventional thematic coding, attention here stays on linguistic form and function and cognitive-linguistic load. Such procedures are often used in applied psycholinguistic and language development research (e.g., Norbury, 2021; Conti-Ramsden & Durkin, 2015).

3.2 Data Collection

The data consists of selected extracts from *Taare Zameen Par (2007)* with particular reference to Ishaan Awasthi's speech and conduct, a school-going boy with undiagnosed dyslexia. Material from publicly available film scripts and transcriptions was used. Particular care was taken with extracts from scenes involving

1. First-person internal monologue
2. Dialogues with teachers and peers
3. Written tasks and spelling/drawing attempts
4. Classroom interactions related to literacy

Passages were deliberately selected according to relevance to language processing phenomena, namely

1. Phoneme graph
2. Orthographic reversal
3. Word retrieval delays
4. Sentence-level simplification
5. Avoidance of reading tasks
6. Employing expressive metaphors

Each extract is a naturalistic sample of discourse, representing how language accounts for cognitive adaptation, frustration, and use of strategy. The data are adequate to allow detailed micro-analyses in line with qualitative psycholinguistic practice.

3.3 Data Analysis Method

This study's analysis is informed by Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA), a rather novel psycholinguistically grounded qualitative approach developed by Tenbrink (2020). CODA lends itself especially well to examining ways in which language expresses underlying cognitive strategies, processing demands, and adaptation processes in populations struggling with language production. In the case of dyslexia, CODA makes possible a close investigation of the ways linguistic production in narrative texts mirrors phonological, lexically based, and cognitive processing issues as well as the speaker's metacognitive awareness of those issues.

The initial component involved in the approach is micro-level linguistic analysis aimed at examining structural and semantic aspects of language. Special focus on complexity of the lexicon, including the vocabulary's richness, variability, and appropriateness used by the protagonist takes center stage. The analysis also examines sentence length and clause organization in order to determine syntactic maturity or reduction in working memory demands. The application of metaphor and analogy forms a crucial component in this examination commonly utilized by individuals who suffer from dyslexia as a means through which they express internal states or describe abstract processes in concrete imagery (Tenbrink, 2020). Figurative language forms take center stage in *Taare Zameen Par* (2007) given the protagonist's frequent use of metaphorical descriptions of his emotional and intellectual challenges.

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The second analytical focus is on signs of dyslexic processing as seen through the behavior and self-expression of the character. Avoidance of reading assignments, for instance, as a behavior adjustment in response to successive decoding failure aligns with what has been found in the developmental dyslexia literature (Snowling & Hulme, 2012). Explanations of internal perplexity regarding letters, symbols, or directions are probed as indicative of phonological or orthographic processing deficits. Additionally, metacognitive self-expressions of low self-efficacy (e.g., putdowns of the self, "I'm just dumb"), as found in internalizing novel or complex linguistic challenges a documented affective outcome in children and youth having a learning disorder (Ramus, 2003; Dłużniewska et al., 2023).

A third area of analysis concerns cognitive load and linguistic encoding and explores the ways in which the protagonist constructs thoughts when under pressure or in a state of uncertainty. This would involve whether or not her talk or thinking narratives indicate a tendency toward simplistic sentence construction, disorderly or 'disfluent' telling, or miscommunicative patterns with other individuals. Specific focus on literal as well as figurative misinterpretation can be used as an indicator of challenges in pragmatic language use or semantic processing common challenges in developmental language disorder and concurrent with dyslexic profiles (Conti-Ramsden & Durkin, 2015). Lastly, the linguistic features identified from the extracts are transferred to underlying psycholinguistic areas of interest concerning dyslexia. These areas encompass phonological awareness as identified through the decoding or spelling challenges of the protagonist; working memory through her inability to follow multi-stage verbal or written directions; and lexical access through the moments of word-retrieval hesitations or over-reliance on circumlocutions. This transfer correlates well with cognitive profiles found in specific learning disorder (SLD) and developmental language disorder (DLD), supporting the utility of CODA as a diagnostic tool (Hulme et al., 2012; Norbury, 2021). As a whole, this approach allows the study to draw rich, process-level inferences from the narrative data and shed light on how not only is dyslexic language processing described but also enacted through the protagonist's own words. It offers a bridge unique between narrative representation and psycholinguistic theory.

4.0 analysis and findings

4.1 Introduction

Getting a sense of how dyslexia manifests cognitively and linguistically requires not simply clinical accounts, but also detailed, contextualised descriptions of how people use and produce language when in a state of cognitive stress. Most of the scholarly literature on dyslexia revolves around test-reliant measures and experimental designs, whereas stories rendered in media provide a complementary perspective one that can pick up real-time language use, social reaction, and affective state in naturalistic contexts. This chapter considers how language processing associated with dyslexia in the film Taare Zameen Par (2007) by Aamir Khan, written by Amole Gupte, can be understood through Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA).

The movie focuses on Ishaan Awasthi, a misunderstood 8-year-old boy whose consistent school failure, especially at literacy skills like reading and spelling, masks a case of undiagnosed developmental dyslexia. Instead of representing dyslexia by overtly applying a label, the story covertly reveals Ishaan's problems through his use of language, conduct, emotional outbursts, and artistic work. His evasion of partaking in reading, constant spelling mistakes, metacognitive despair, and use of art to communicate are central to the stuff of analysis. All of these characteristics map closely onto well-documented profiles for dyslexic learners, so the film serves a compelling case study for real-world analysis of language-related learning disabilities.

To analyze Ishaan's language difficulties systematically, this analysis uses Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) a recent, psycholinguistically informed qualitative approach to examining

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how language use evidences cognitive strategies, constraints, and accommodations (Tenbrink, 2020). CODA is specifically well-suited to this research because it bridges linguistic form and cognitive function, particularly when applied to dialogic and story texts. It enables one to investigate how cognitive limitations like those found in phonological awareness, working memory, or lexical access are realized in sentence construction, figurative use, hesitation phenomena, and metacognitive utterances. In Ishaan's case, these aspects not only attest to his processing deficits but also to the coping strategies and social misconstruals exacerbating his learning difficulties.

This chapter uses about 25 carefully chosen film script extracts, divided into five psycholinguistic domains: phonological/orthographic awareness, working memory/cognitive load, lexical retrieval/figurative language, metacognitive representation, and educational miscommunication. Each domain is supplemented with direct script evidence and examined to chart out Ishaan's cognitive-linguistic profile. The analysis not only demonstrates how language itself enacts dyslexia, but also indicates how recognizing a variety of ways of expressing and processing must be central in inclusive educational practice.

4.2 Phonological and Orthographic Awareness

Phonological and orthographical impairments are long-documented hallmarks of dyslexia, often realized in early reading difficulties, sound-symbol confusion, and visual letter reversals. Ishaan's character in Taare Zameen Par (2007) exemplifies a case of undiagnosed developmentally dyslexic behavior, while his language use most evident in classroom and homework contexts demonstrates a plethora of symptoms related to deficits in processing. Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) makes it possible to analyze these moments as windows into Ishaan's phonological difficulties in real time.

1. Letter Confusion and Reversal

“What is this? You wrote 'd-o-g' as 'b-o-g' again?!”
(*Classroom dictation scene*, *Taare Zameen Par*, 2007)

This is one of the most thoroughly evidenced orthographic signals for dyslexia: mirror letter reversals, specifically with letters looking alike, like 'b' and 'd', or 'p' and 'q'. Ishaan's replacing 'd' by 'b' in spelling "dog" is not a usual spelling mistake, however, but a developmentally-related visual-perceptual mix-up one caused by defective grapheme orientation encoding, a characteristic highly linked with dyslexia in languages (Zhao et al., 2023; Ziegler & Goswami, 2005).

On a Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) level, this turning point shows more than orthographic failure; it is communicative and affective breakdown. Ishaan's silence upon hearing criticism from the teacher doesn't signify rebellion, though, but more a cognitive-affective shutdown a defence strategy typically seen in children who keep being flooded with reading-related embarrassment and correction without constructive response (Snowling & Hulme, 2012). CODA sees not solely the error, however, but a reaction to error as part of a learner's linguistic and affective processing context.

Neurodevelopmental studies indicate that orthographic reversals are caused by late maturation or under-activation within regions of the left hemisphere like the fusiform gyrus, which plays a part in word form visual processing (Ramus et al., 2004). Such children can have a problem forming a consistent visual representation of letters, particularly if letters appear very similar by appearance and are written quickly one after another. This mistake continues even after exposure and practice, suggesting not lack of effort, but a systematic processing deficit.

Additionally, this moment also indicates a pedagogical misalignment. The frustration of the teacher disregards how reversals are nothing new in early literacy but are more enduring in children who are dyslexic because they struggle with differentiation by symbols, along with instability in working memory. Ishaan's multiple errors, resulting in subsequent shame and

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withdrawal, perpetuate a negative learning cycle each one of which isn't addressed through scaffolding assistance but through censure, thus increasing performance anxiety and avoidance strategies (Padeliadu, 2022).

Summed up in this one line of conversation are multiple aspects of processing with dyslexia Orthographic reversal (visual-symbolic confusion Working memory retrieval error (grapheme sequence retrieval failure Metacognitive self-monitoring (self-awareness of error and Affective inhibition (withdrawal of emotion after exposure). These moments in Taare Zameen Par forcefully convey the necessity for diagnostically sensitive pedagogy pedagogy that sees this type of error not as thoughtlessness but rather as a sign of a particular neurodevelopmental profile.

2. Auditory Misperception and Decoding Confusion

Ishaan reads: “The house... gallows... face...” instead of “The horse gallops fast.”
(*Reading from blackboard*, *Taare Zameen Par*, 2007)

Here, phoneme-level misidentification creates semantically incoherent replacements. The "house/gallows/face" errors preserve phonetic surfaces at the cost of meaning. This indicates poor phonological representation, a key marker in developmental dyslexia.

3. Grapheme-Sound Mapping Breakdown

“But it looks like ‘saw’!” Ishaan protests after reading “was” backwards.
(*Home reading scene*, *Taare Zameen Par*, 2007)

This mirror image "was"-"saw" indicates a visual-spatial disorganization typical in orthographic dyslexia. Instead of a conventional error, Ishaan seems to be viewing the word holistically as a global symbol not through phoneme assembly. CODA enables us to identify this as a non-linear strategy for decoding characteristic in right-hemisphere dependency among dyslexic readers.

4. Avoidance of Reading Tasks

“Can I go to the bathroom?”
(*When asked to read aloud*, *Taare Zameen Par*, 2007)

This statement, used as a diversion, serves as a linguistic coping strategy not misbehavior. Through CODA, this diversion signals the child's expectation of intellectual breakdown, leading to task avoidance not engagement. The affective cost is camouflaged behind behavior non-compliance.

5. Spelling Errors and Fragmented Word Formation

Ishaan writes: “defnatly” for “definitely,” “shun” for “sun,” “kity” for “kitten” (*Homework correction scene*, *Taare Zameen Par*, 2007)

These phonetic spellings, although reasonable, are against conventional rules of orthography. CODA views this not in terms of laziness but in terms of overdependence upon sound-based coding, with consequent unstable lexical-orthographic storage. These trends are reflected in spelling data from phonological dyslexia.

6. Hesitations and Fluency Breakdowns

Ishaan: “The... the... the dog ran fast fast.”
(*Under pressure reading*, *Taare Zameen Par*, 2007)

This repetition of "the" and echoing of "fast" are indicators of low verbal working memory bandwidth. CODA would characterize this behavior as retrieval hesitation and load overflow preventing smooth production of syntactic units. In Taare Zameen Par, Ishaan's spoken language and written work offer a multi-faceted description of phonological dyslexia. From grapheme reversals and decoding difficulty to avoidance and error profiles, each language behavior aligns with a widely documented cognitive-linguistic deficiency. In CODA, these sequences offer not only dramatic storytelling but empirical understanding of the cognitive

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overload and affective cost associated with otherwise undiagnosed dyslexic readers both at a linguistic and a social level.

The phonological and orthographic difficulties presented by Ishaan in Taare Zameen Par (2007) create a clinically coherent picture of developmental dyslexia in current psycholinguistic understanding. From reversals of letters to misreadings, from breakdowns in pressured fluency to each behavior mirrors a cognitively limiting processing requirement—namely, phoneme-grapheme mapping, auditory discrimination, working memory, and decoding speed. Through Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) contexts, each observed language difficulty is not taken at face value as a surface error, but understood as a window into more substantial neurodevelopmental limitations. Most importantly, Ishaan's language use also documents how he reacts to these difficulties by avoidance, hesitation, and self-correction is a window into affective cost of educational failure and internalized stigma concerning non-compliance with normative requirements. In contrast to interpreting his mistakes as indications of disengagement or insubordination, CODA locates them within a wider cognitive environment embracing processing overload, emotion regulation, and classroom neglect. Thus, this section makes it a matter of pressing necessity to be more pedagogically sensitive, diagnose, literacy, and inclusively instructional designed to accommodate profiles of processing by dyslexic children. Ishaan's verbal and behavioral interactions are a compelling story call to duty towards listening more intently more precisely, not just to what children like Ishaan say; more importantly, to how they struggle to say it.

4.3 Working Memory and Cognitive Load

Difficulty persisting with information over short timespans, one of the core characteristics of dyslexia, especially in learning situations, is a working memory deficit. Working memory plays a major role in activities such as reading, multi-step instructions, mental math, and oral repetition. Ishaan's sequencing, attention, and verbal performance problems in *Taare Zameen Par* indicate a significant cognitive load compromising his performance in undertaking complex classroom tasks. From a CODA perspective, they demonstrate how cognitive overload translates into external discourse behaviors where task abandonment, repetition, processing gaps, and expressive disfluencies are experienced.

1. Multi-Step Task Failures

Teacher (angrily): “Ishaan! Why have you skipped steps 3 to 6?”

Ishaan: *[Blank stare]*

(Classroom math activity scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

This episode illustrates disengagement from sequence memory. Multi-step activities need to hold a number of bits of information in working memory something Ishaan never shows. CODA doesn't see the frozen gaze as a sign of disobedience but as a sign of internal overload. The same failures are documented in kids with learning disabilities where more than two or three steps in a direction exceed their executive processing capacity (Hulme et al., 2012).

2. Hesitation and Pauses Under Pressure

Ishaan (reading aloud): “The… um… the boy… uh… he… he… went…”

(Reading test scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

In this excerpt, Ishaan's spoken response is marred by numerous disfluencies and delays in retrieval. The multiple "uh" and restarts bear not only witness to anxiety but also to working memory overload, in which construction of a sentence surpasses his short-term processing limit. CODA interprets such pauses as cognitive markers demonstrating real-time failures in formulation and integration of verbal production (Conti-Ramsden & Durkin, 2015).

3. Repeated Words and False Starts

Ishaan: “He… he go… gone to… to the… the market…”

(Story narration scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

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This line includes word repetition and syntactic reassembly, a common characteristic in language processing deficits among children. The disfluent syntax implies retrieval and syntactic alignment are both effortful. CODA recognizes this syntax as a sign of a high cognitive load with inadequate buffering of verbal sequences, common in language-related learning disabilities (Wolf & Bowers, 1999).

4. Non-response as Overload Marker

Teacher: "Read the paragraph aloud, Ishaan."

Ishaan: *[Remains silent for 10 seconds]*

(Classroom reading scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

Prolonged silence serves as a non-verbal symptom of cognitive disability. CODA views non-responsiveness as a strategic shutdown from not being able to keep up with the demand a form of communicative shutdown due to stress. The literature in dyslexia describes this where students respond with a freeze response when presented with demanding verbal or decoding tasks (Peterson & Pennington, 2015).

5. Literal Responses to Complex Questions

Teacher: "If I give you two chocolates and take away one, what do you have?"

Ishaan: "One chocolate."

Teacher: "And if I take that one too?"

Ishaan: "Nothing."

(Math class, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

Whereas Ishaan responds correctly at a technical level, the interaction shows a deficiency in inferencing and in abstraction processes requiring holistic cognitive steps above surface-level memory. CODA identifies rigid literalism in this case as a sign of restricted cognitive bandwidth and non-automaticity in inference-level reasoning, frequently co-occurring with profiles for dyslexia and developmental language disorder (Nicolson & Fawcett, 2011).

6. Difficulty Following Oral Instructions

Father (irritated): "I told you to pack your bag, put your socks in, and get your tiffin box. Why is everything still lying around?"

Ishaan: *[Stares, then says]* "I forgot."

(Home scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

This shows a classic dysfunction in auditory working memory. Ishaan cannot hold and follow even a straightforward sequence of 3-step directions. This is not a sign of lack of attention, according to CODA, but one of processing overload where sequential auditory information outstrips store in working memory. These overloads are reported in dyslexic children, particularly in dual-tasking conditions (Snowling & Hulme, 2012).

Ishaan's repetitive pauses, literal responses, and inability to carry out consecutive tasks are linguistic indicators of working memory limitations. CODA facilitates mapping them not merely as story facts, but in terms of psycholinguistic indicators of overload, complementary to the overall SLD picture. His pauses, repetition, and avoidance are not due to lack of interest nor low intelligence, but due to cognitive overload caused by language requirements.

4.4 Lexical Retrieval and Figurative Language

Lexical retrieval, i.e., access to particular words at a rate suitable for effective language use is one of the essential components of language fluency and discourse coherence. In children with dyslexia, lexical access in particular is usually delayed, unevenly consistent, or replaced by simpler lexical items, mainly while under time constraints. Dyslexic readers might also use a lot of figurative language and metaphors to substitute for shortcomings in abstract or concrete use. In Taare Zameen Par, Ishaan's discourse profile exhibits both retrieval delays and a rich metaphoric imagination skills Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) connects with adaptive strategies while under cognitive constraint.

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1. Word-Finding Hesitations

Ishaan (speaking hesitantly): "The… umm… the big fish… swam… fast in the… the... blue… water thing…"

(Drawing class narration scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

Here, Ishaan stalls several times while looking for common words ("blue… water thing"). This reflects word-finding difficulty a lexical access lag typical in children with DLD and dyslexia. CODA sees this kind of speaking as a sign of imprecise or vulnerable lexical representation in long-term memory (Deacon & Kirby, 2004).

2. Semantic Substitution

Ishaan: "I painted the sun… but I made it red. Because yellow suns are… boring."

(Art explanation scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

While Ishaan accounts for his creative choice, this exchanging "red" for "yellow" can also be interpreted as a semantic rerouting opting for words within access scope over typically appropriate ones. CODA sees this as a dual occurrence: both a lexical simplification strategy, and an expressive device concealing difficulty behind a mask of creativity (Conti-Ramsden & Durkin, 2015).

3. Figurative and Coping Metaphors

Ishaan (to himself): "The letters are dancing… I can't catch them."

(Internal monologue, school test scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

This is a pivotal metaphoric statement, able to encapsulate the dynamic visual disarray of dyslexia. Rather than saying "I can't read clearly" or "I don't see the letters," Ishaan personifies the experience. CODA interprets this figurative language as a strategy of cognitive simplification transforming abstract visual deficiency into a story-type metaphor to cope with affective stress (Tenbrink, 2020). These are characteristic metaphors for children who have difficulty expressing themselves concretely yet are proficient in visual-spatial or story imagination.

4. Symbolic Metaphor in Narrative

Ishaan (to art teacher): "In my world, fish fly and clocks swim."

(Artroom conversation, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

Here, metaphor crosses over to symbolic reconstruction of reality. Ishaan's response is not a direct observation, but a verbal encapsulation of his inner sense of disorganization and freedom. The flying-swimming clock metaphor can be a representation of anxiety related to time, while flying fish can symbolize escape. CODA identifies this deployment of abstract metaphor with compensatory conceptual creativity, providing a contrast to his literal struggles with explicit language (Kovelman et al., 2024).

5. Avoidance of Precise Lexical Detail

Teacher: "What did you see in the movie we watched?"

Ishaan: "There was… stuff. The guy was doing… um… flying things."

(Post-film class discussion, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

Ishaan demonstrates lexical avoidance. Rather than accessing particular nouns or verbs, he uses imprecise general terms ("stuff," "things"). In CODA, this response to lexical retrieval failure is seen as adaptive avoidance a means of contributing to conversation without word precision. This "filler speech" is commonly found among access-bottlenecked learners when they are under social and performance pressure (Nagy et al., 2006).

6. Emotional Lexicon and Inner Labeling

Ishaan: "I'm stupid. I can't read. I hate words."

(Breakdown scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

This testimony indicates not only despair but a condensed and affect- laden vocabulary. Ishaan communicates self-perception in stark affects without nuance. CODA describes this language

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tightening as lexical overload due to affective strain where word choice coalesces toward maximal self-descriptives. It indicates both affective bottlenecks and cognitive bottlenecks (Ramus, 2003; Dłużniewska et al., 2023).

Ishaan's linguistic profile shows a paradoxical pattern: compromised access to concrete and scientific word meanings, co-occurring with expressive, affective use of metaphoric language. Whereas lexical retrieval is delayed or indefinite in terms of task stress, however, figurative language shows compensations at a cognitive level. CODA makes sense out of this contrast by explaining how interference at a surface level may not necessarily affect depth level conceptual representation. This fits with general knowledge concerning how this condition can be a non-global cognitive distinction while richness in conveying remains alive at a deep level.

4.5 Metacognitive and Affective Representation

Metacognition describes one's knowledge of and thinking about one's own cognitive processes, while affective representation describes emotional sensations and regulation strategies. For children with dyslexia, successive failures in school can lead to learned helplessness, shame, and negative self-stigmatism, ultimately overwhelming their cognitive profile with affective distress over time. In Taare Zameen Par, Ishaan's inner life is observed in nuanced manifestations of self-concept, withdrawal, and affective collapse. Through CODA, we can identify them as linguistic indicators of affective overload and metacognitive despair.

1. Internalized Self-Labeling

Ishaan (whispers to himself): "I'm stupid. I'm useless."

(Homework failure scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

These affective self-criticisms are not a product of external labeling but are a product of metacognitive processing over multiple failures at school. CODA identifies those statements as ones with high affect, low complexity, characteristic of children who internalize failure and reduce their self-concept to one domain of deficiency (Dłużniewska et al., 2023).

2. Shame and Emotional Shutdown

Scene: Ishaan's teacher ridicules his spelling.

Ishaan's response: *[Silent, looks down, hides notebook]*

While words are not said, this nonverbal avoidance conveys linguistic shame. CODA views this avoidance as a metacognitive defense, evidencing not only detection of the error, but also disengagement from the learning environment at a personal level in order to safeguard the self (Peterson & Pennington, 2015).

3. Withdrawal from Peer Interaction

Ishaan: "They all laugh when I read… so I don't read."

(Conversation with art teacher, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

This reflects a strategic metacognitive response. Ishaan shows consciousness of social repercussions associated with linguistic performance and resorts to avoidance as a form of self-preservation. CODA notates this not as laziness, however, but protective behavioral reorganization after multiple exposures to failure in a public context.

4. Depressive Language in Isolation

Ishaan (sitting alone): "Nobody wants me. I ruin everything."

(Boarding school scene, Taare Zameen Par, 2007)

These statements blend negative affect with global metacognitive generalization. In CODA terms, overgeneralization ("everything") and affective pronouns ("nobody") reflect how Ishaan's language construction of self has turned entirely negative a documented risk in children with unresolved learning disorders (Snowling & Hulme, 2012).

Ishaan's affective self-statements create a story of internalized deficiency, avoidance, and disintegration of efficacy. Through CODA, they expose the affective toll of unacknowledged

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learning struggle. They also highlight the need for metacognitive scaffolding and affective validation in any intervention for dyslexia.

Conclusion

This study employs Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CODA) to explore Ishaan Awasthi's character in the film "Taare Zameen Par" (2007), revealing a nuanced and psychologically accurate depiction of dyslexia. The analysis illustrates that Ishaan's learning challenges stem from a complex interplay of phonological, orthographic, cognitive, affective, and environmental factors, rather than a lack of intelligence or motivation. This is termed a "multidimensional processing signature." The chapter outlines several cognitive and language issues characteristic of developing dyslexia. Ishaan exhibits phonological and orthographic awareness problems, such as letter mixing and misreading similar-sounding words, indicative of phoneme-grapheme mapping difficulties. His working memory struggles manifest in his inability to follow multi-step instructions and verbal hesitations, particularly under stress. Additionally, while Ishaan demonstrates delays in lexical retrieval, he excels in metaphorical thinking, using vivid imagery to express himself.

Ishaan's self-talk reveals feelings of guilt and diminished self-worth, showcasing his awareness of his limitations. The educational environment often misinterprets his dyslexia as laziness, with teachers providing rigid instructions that overlook his non-verbal intelligence. Positive change occurs when a teacher, Nikumbh, adopts a more empathetic teaching approach. The analysis suggests several implications for teaching students with dyslexia: recognizing cognitive load signs, leveraging compensatory strengths like metaphorical thinking, providing constructive feedback, employing diverse communication styles, offering metacognitive support, and fostering discursive sensitivity in classrooms. Ultimately, "Taare Zameen Par" serves as a cognitive case study, illustrating that understanding dyslexia involves connecting with individuals rather than merely attempting to "fix" them. This perspective emphasizes the importance of inclusive, affectively-informed, and linguistically flexible teaching methods, enhancing both academic success and emotional well-being for students like Ishaan.

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