SpLDs and Modern Language Learning

- Which students?
- Considerations:
  - Language learning may be a longer process
  - Language selection is important
  - French is more opaque (like English)
    - No clear letter-sound correspondence
    - More irregularities
  - German is more transparent but has longer multisyllabic words and multiple consonant combinations
  - Spanish & Italian are more straightforward
Reasonable Adjustments

- Extra time in exams / tests
- Scribes
- Sympathetic marking
  - Mark work as much as possible for content, taking into account difficulties with spelling, punctuation and grammar. Please provide detailed, legible feedback on strong points of the essay or assignment, as well as areas for improvement. Examples of how to correct areas would also help and encourage xxxx to check for these in future.
Marking dilemmas

- Sympathetic marking becomes problematic if primary task is the assessment of spelling and grammar.
- How can markers assess whether an error is a result of an SpLD or a failure to grasp a specific grammatical concept?
- Should markers ignore *some* mistakes in order to be sympathetic?
- Marking also needs to take into account academic fairness, rigour, and quality assurance.
- There is a range of SpLDs and will one set of guidelines apply to all students?
Current context

- Fair amount of literature on how to recognise dyslexic learners and how to support them / how they support themselves in the language context.

- Extremely limited literature on how HE deals with the issue especially in terms of assessment.
Work I need to do.

- Do we already have strategies that markers are using when assessing work of students with SpLDs?
  - Yes, but tutors use their own discretion.
- Consultation with tutors and students re: the needs of both groups and their views on assessing language accuracy.
- Develop and pilot some appropriate assessment methods.
- Develop guidelines.
Existing research

- Hill and Roed (2005)
- Language learning opened up a new world of grammar.
- Successful dyslexic learners much more likely to be highly organised, have developed their own learning strategies, and spent a greater amount of time revising/practising.
- Students recognised the dilemma that markers faced and the majority felt that no adjustments should be made when it came to marking.