

Writing Without Images, Writing Without Voice

Sensory Distribution and Syntactic Markers in the Creative Writing
of a Double-Absence Profile

Gino Fontana

Independent researcher — Saint-Martin (French Caribbean)

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What we know — and what we don't

DOCUMENTED

- Aphantasia: ~0.8% prevalence (Zeman et al., 2015; Kvamme et al., 2026)
- Anauralia / anendophasia: ~0.77% prevalence (N=32,784; Auckland 2026)
- Creative capacity preserved in aphantasia (Monzel, 2023; Poirier, 2024)

UNEXPLORED

- No study documents the **co-occurrence** of aphantasia + anendophasia
- No study examines impact on **creative writing** from a first-person perspective
- No computational analysis of **sensory signature** in texts produced under double absence

THE METHODOLOGICAL DEBATE (MAY 2026)

The question of anendophasia's existence has crystallized into a three-way debate in *Psychological Science*:

POSITION	METHOD	CONCLUSION
Nedergaard (2024)	Questionnaires + lab tasks	Anendophasia exists
Lind (2025)	Methodological critique	"Low ≠ zero"
Hurlburt (2026)	Meta-methodological	Need fidelity-based methods
PDSPI (this talk)	Computational textual analysis	Text = highest-fidelity cognitive trace

The 4th angle: None of the three existing approaches examines the sustained cognitive products that individuals with reported anendophasia naturally generate. Textual analysis

offers a fidelity-based method (Hurlburt's sense) that avoids auto-report bias (Lind's critique) and laboratory artificiality.

This presentation: First-person account + computational analysis from an autofiction corpus written under documented double absence (multisensory aphantasia + self-reported anendophasia). The author also self-identifies as AuDHD; the analysis relies on the two conditions where first-person authority constitutes the epistemological gold standard (Dance et al., 2022; Monzel et al., 2023).

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03 / THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Dual-Stream Model & Compensatory Cascade

DUAL-STREAM MODEL

Scholz et al., 2026, *Neuropsychologia* 225

Two streams must converge for conscious imagery:

1. **Attentional stream** — top-down sensory reactivation
2. **Interoceptive stream** — insula integration + sense of agency

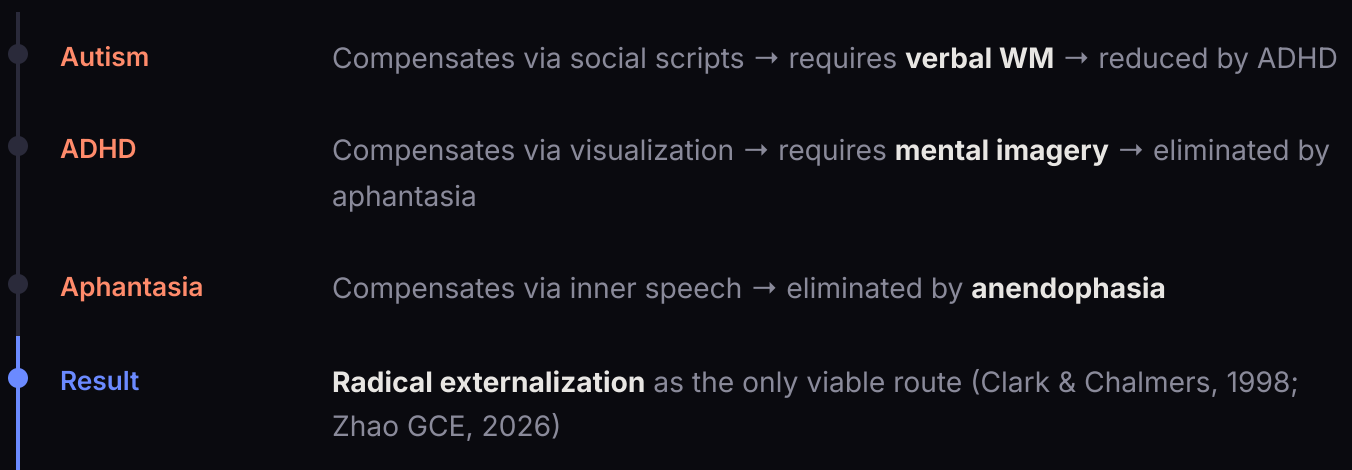
Double absence = both outputs blocked.

No visual/auditory imagery. No inner speech. Residual channels: **semantic processing** + **direct bodily sensation**.

Epicognition — what remains is not a deficit but an alternative cognitive mode: direct access to conceptual structures and bodily states without imagery or inner speech (cf. unsymbolized thinking, Hurlburt 2008; embodied simulation, Muraki et al. 2023; interoceptive grounding, Silvanto & Nagai 2025; patterned internalization, Colelli et al. 2025).

Non-linearity as universal substrate — The cascade can be reframed philosophically: non-linear cognition is a *universal human mode*, not a neurodivergent anomaly. The rhizome (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980) opposes the arboreal hierarchy; complex thinking (Morin) integrates chaos and emergence; abduction (Peirce) is inherently non-sequential (Magnani, 2024). The double-absence profile abolishes both the internal tree (aphantasia) and sequential narration (anendophasia), producing **necessarily rhizomatic cognition**. Neuroscience confirms: DMN has a causal role in divergent thinking (Beaty et al., 2024); creativity is predicted by DMN-ECN switching (Li et al., 2025). This profile is the **natural limiting case** of a universal cognitive mode.

COMPENSATORY CASCADE



Does a double-absence author produce a different sensory signature?

Corpus: *Encore une Nuit* — autofiction, 74 scenes, 45,303 words, 5 acts.

Method: 344 regex patterns, 7 sensory modalities. Indices: VDI, NVRI.

0.28

VDI

Visual Dominance Index

Norm: 0.40-0.60

0.53

NVRI

Non-Visual Richness Index

Norm: 0.20-0.35

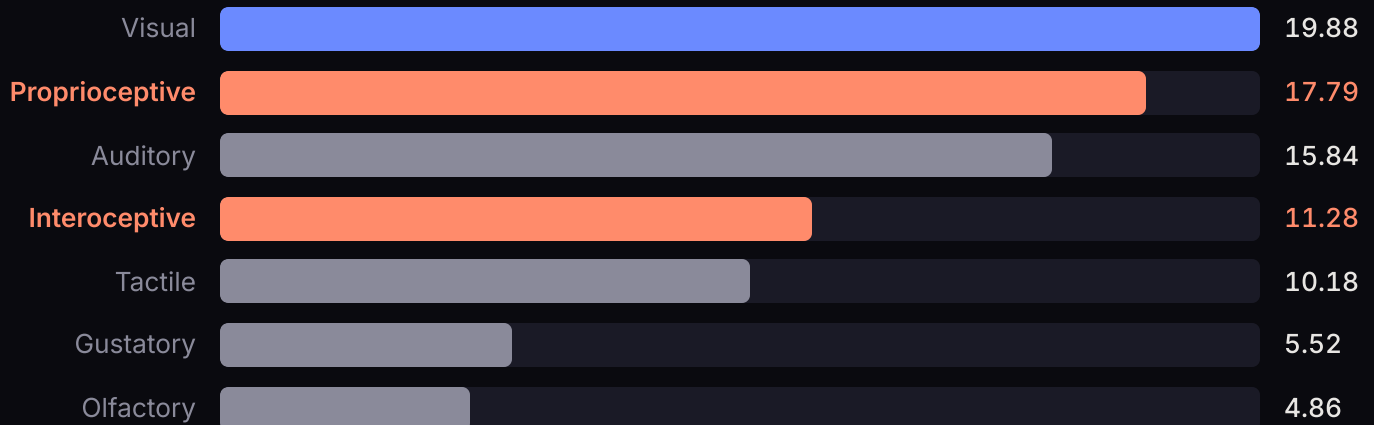
2.54

NV/V RATIO

Non-visual per visual ref

Norm: 0.67-1.50

MODALITY HIERARCHY (/1000 WORDS)



Proprioception as 2nd modality — rarely measured in linguistic studies, here dominant. **"Silence" = #1 auditory term** (190 occ.): treated as texture, not void. **Act IV peak:** NVRI 0.59, VDI 0.24 — when emotion rises, the body writes.

Same analyses applied to two additional works: *Le Huitième Royaume* (L8R) — science fiction, first drafts — and *L'Heure Pile en Cinq Chapitres* (L8PC) — realist choral fiction, 8 chapters, ~7,800 words. Three radically different genres.

RQ1 — SENSORY INDICES

INDEX	EUN	L8R	L8PC	
VDI	0.28	0.31	0.19	All < 0.40
NVRI	0.53	0.48	0.53	All > 0.45
NV/V	2.19	1.55	3.27	All > 1.5

Published norm: VDI ~0.40-0.60 (Winter, 2019). L8PC VDI = **0.19** = lowest of all three — realistic setting amplifies visual suppression.

RQ2 — SYNTACTIC MARKERS (/1000)

MARKER	EUN	L8R	L8PC	
M3	6.49	5.98	6.40	max Δ 8%
M4	3.64	5.56	3.97	SF +53%
M6	1.39	1.44	2.56	×2 realist
M5	2.56	2.89	5.38	×2.1 realist

M3 = author constant (6.49 / 5.98 / 6.40, variation max 8%).

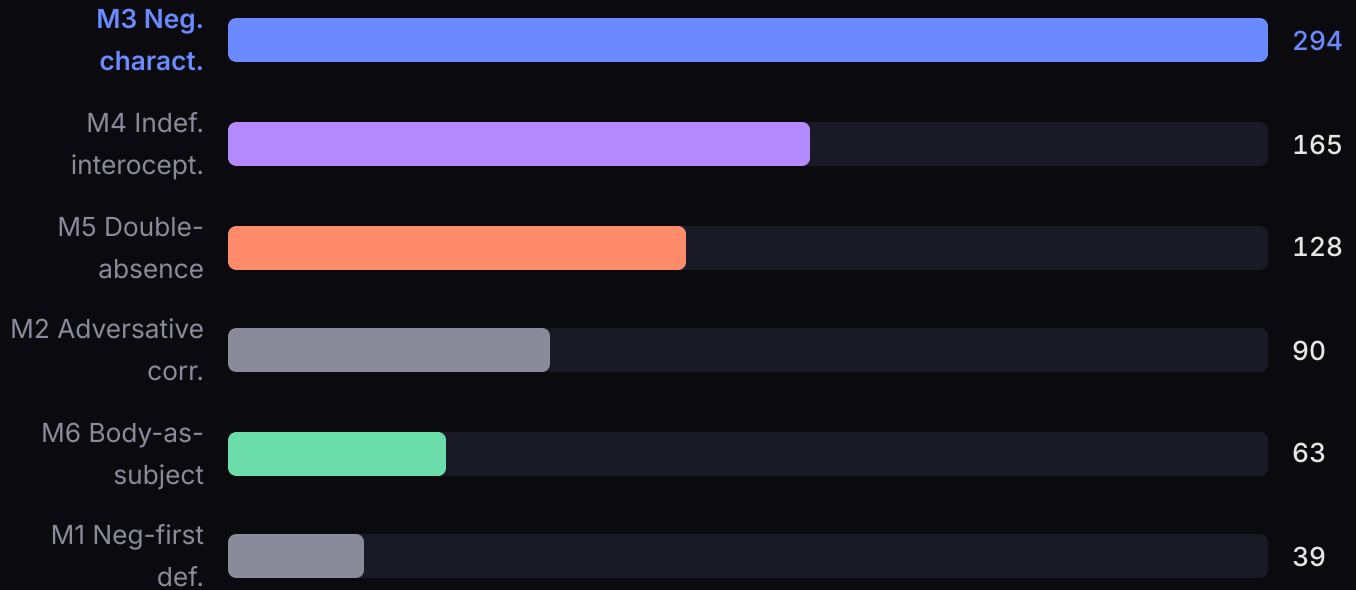
M5 amplified ×2.1 in L8PC — theme of disappearance exacerbates double-absence constructions.

Signature persists across three genres spanning ~58,000 words.

M3 stable within 8%. NVRI identical (0.53) in autofiction and realist fiction. Cognitive effect, not stylistic choice.

The syntax of emergence: 779 markers across 74 scenes

96 regex patterns, 6 marker categories. Corpus: *Encore une Nuit*, 45,303 words.



0.226

FDI

Fragment Density

Norm: 0.10-0.20

0.114

NPI

Negation Prominence

1 in 9 sentences

0.31

SCI

Suspended Closure

23/74 scenes

M3 — NEGATIVE CHAR.

Characters defined by what they do NOT do, feel, know. Mirror of the cognitive profile.

"Il ne sait pas quoi"

"Elle ne comprend pas"

M4 — INDEFINITE

Feeling without naming. Direct trace of anendophasia: sensation precedes the word.

"quelque chose en lui"

"sans savoir quoi"

M6 — BODY-AS-SUBJECT

The body acts when the mind has neither images nor words. Kinesthetic imagery preserved (Peruski, 2026).

"Ses jambes le portent"

"Son corps sait"

Emotional gradient: M3 intensifies from Act I (4.4) to Act IV (8.0/1000) — mirrors interoceptive peak in RQ1. When emotion rises, negation and body converge.

*The double absence is not a double deficit but an **epicognitive filter**.
What passes through — pure semantics, bodily sensation, affect —
constitutes a distinctive creative signature.*

SIX PREDICTIONS CONFIRMED

PREDICTION	INDICATOR	OBSERVED
Body writes first	Corporeal dominance	NVRI = 0.53 (RQ1)
Text discovers, not transcribes	Emergence markers	M3 = 6.49, FDI = 0.226 (RQ2)
Cognitive, not stylistic	Cross-genre stability	M3 & M6 stable EUN/L8R
Indefinite intensifies	M4 in unknown territory	M4 +53% in SF
Fragmentation under load	FDI in world-building	FDI 0.343 (L8R) vs 0.226
Emotion through body	Convergence at climax	NVRI 0.59 + M3 8.0 Act IV

SENSORY (RQ1)

VDI = 0.28, NVRI = 0.53. Corporeal modalities dominate. Proprioception as 2nd modality. Stable across genres.

SYNTACTIC (RQ2)

779 markers. M3 dominant (6.49/1000). FDI above norm. M3 + M6 = author constants. Emotional gradient mirrors RQ1.

STRUCTURAL

Externalization system meets extended mind criteria. Not delegation — **cognitive amplification**.

NEUROMECHANISTIC MAPPING: DUAL-STREAM → TEXTUAL TRACES

The epicognitive triangle (M3–M6–interoception) maps directly onto Scholz et al.'s (2026) dual-stream model. **M3 traces the attentional deficit**—the failure to assemble positive representations produces characterization by absence. **M6 traces interoceptive compensation**

—when the mind cannot see or formulate, the body acts as autonomous agent. Their convergence at the emotional climax (Act IV: NVRI 0.59, M3 8.0/1000) is predicted by the model: under high affective load, with no representational buffer, both streams collapse into the text simultaneously.

NAMING THE OUTPUT: *APHASIC PROSE*

We propose the term *aphasic prose* (from Greek *a-phansis*: absence of internal manifestation — not clinical aphasia) to designate writing that produces these measurable signatures. Where Barthes (1953) described *écriture blanche* as a chosen aesthetic program, aphasic prose is a cognitive architecture made literary — the form is not chosen but generated. The double absence produces a syntax of absence (M3 dominant, FDI elevated) and a sensory hierarchy of presence (NVRI = 0.53, proprioception as second modality).

PREDICTION 7 — EPICOGNITIVE WORLDBUILDING

The author's second work (L8R, SF) constructs 7 civilizations, each organized around a distinct rapport to language — mapping precisely onto the documented functions of inner speech (Ferryhough, 2016). An anendophasic author possesses **radical externality** toward language: its functions are perpetually visible, never automatic. The worldbuilding is not thematic choice — it is **involuntary phenomenology**.

This pattern extends beyond world-building: the author's earlier novel (*Le Point Cardinal*, realistic ensemble cast, 8 chapters) maps the same 7 functions onto 8 characters — subtraction, substitution, excess, inverted orality, absence, inverted production, sacralization — with the protagonist embodying the synthesis. The taxonomic externalization appears independently across **three genres** (autofiction, SF, realist fiction), spanning the author's complete oeuvre.

**The body writes what the mind's eye cannot see.
The text discovers what the inner voice cannot rehearse.**

The epicognitive mode extends beyond creative writing

"The fake self is not a social mask — it is a social double, the one who acts on the outside. [...] the subdivision of a being, who compartmentalizes rather than disguises."

— Fontana (2026, unpublished interview)

Without inner speech to mediate between self and social environment (Fernyhough, 2004; Morin, 2011), the cognitive system may produce a structural solution: **cognitive subdivision** — an autonomous mediating agent, phenomenologically distinct from both autistic masking and Winnicottian false self.

RQ6 — PRELIMINARY

	AUTISTIC MASKING (HULL ET AL., 2017)	EPICOGNITIVE SUBDIVISION (RQ6, PRELIMINARY)
Nature	Behavioral strategy	Cognitive structure
Agency	Conscious / semi-conscious	Pre-reflective
Dissolution	Relief, identity reclaimed	Grief, loss of agent
Post-dissolution	Authenticity	Need for external mediator

IMPLICATIONS

Identity Anendophasia affects not only cognitive tasks and creative writing, but also **identity architecture**

Method Supports Hurlburt's (2026) call for fidelity-based investigations — the subdivision was identified through open interview, not questionnaires

Debate Textual evidence (RQ1+RQ2) provides indirect support for anendophasia's existence, addressing Lind's (2025) challenge via a novel channel

The epicognitive mode is not a mode of writing — it is a mode of being.

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09 / OPEN QUESTIONS & INVITATION

Where do we go from here?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ3 Does preserved interoception predict more embodied prose in aphantasic writers?

Requires MAIA-2 + multi-participant sample

RQ4 Does a personal AI system built for a triple neurodivergent profile meet extended mind criteria?

Clark & Chalmers; Heersmink; Zhao GCE

RQ5 When compensatory strategies of one condition are blocked by a co-occurring condition, does the system converge toward externalization?

RQ7 Is the double-absence profile a natural limiting case of non-linear cognition — aphantasia abolishing internal hierarchy (Deleuze), anendophasia removing sequential narration, ADHD disinhibiting lateral association?

LIMITATIONS

- n=1 case study — exploratory, not generalizable
- Lexical analysis, not semantic (metaphor, synesthesia not captured)
- Self-reported absence of inner speech (VVIQ/ISQ pending)
- No inter-author control corpus yet
- L8R comparison corpus small (3 chapters, 4,852 words)
- Regex counts are floors — atypical constructions escape patterns

INVITATION

Looking for collaborators interested in:

- Sensory linguistics + neurodivergence
- Creative cognition under atypical profiles
- Multi-participant corpus studies

Open to contributing corpus data to collaborative research.

gino@ginofn.com · ginofn.com