Interviewer So had you heard about the Intelligent Speed Assistance System before the study?

M3 I don't think I'd ever really heard of it in that way. I knew that the technology in cars was increasing, and I was aware that you have things like radar controlled cruise control and things like that. But no, I hadn't thought that you could have a device that would just sort of monitor and control your speed. So that's quite new to me.

Interviewer Yeah. So the idea of how it would work is that there's the camera on the car and also some form of GPS. So it recognises signs and then it can sort of download data and work out the speed limit. And the idea is then that it cuts the fuel gently just to slow you down to underneath the speed limit. And you would have an override feature so that you can accelerate and sort of override the intelligent speed assistance. So just to start off with, can you just tell me your sort of initial thoughts about the system and whether you think about it favourably or whether you would have some concerns?

M3 Yeah, I really do think of it as very positive erm.... because I'm a driving instructor very recently qualified. And so speed is a huge issue for the students that I'm working with. But as a driver myself, I'm.... I'm very proud that I've only ever had one speeding ticket in my driving career and I've been driving for 30 years erm.... and that one was really annoying. It was such a, you know, it was the speed changed and I just didn't see it. So I think if there'd been a system in the car that automatically brought me down to that speed, then I would have avoided a three point fine and I think it was £60....£60 fine and three points on my license, which would have been, you know, much more preferential. I'm not a speedy person. I don't like to zoom around, so the thought of something sort of just there as a safety feature, actually. I think is really positive.

Interviewer Is the benefit mainly around speeding tickets or do you also see a sort of safety aspect to it?

M3 Yeah, I think certainly erm.... If.... if it became commonplace and you then had series of cars that were doing the speed limit, I think the roads become safer because the problems that you see when you're out and about is always when someone's.... decides to try and overtake at a bad place or they're being very erm.... speedy in a slower area. So I think that certainly there would be a lot of safety benefits. I can see why people might have a few concerns. They might sort of think that it's going to. erm.... take control away from them as a driver, and erm.... I think that that's something that we really would be very..... wary of as.... as a society so....

Interviewer Yeah, that's interesting from your viewpoint as a driving instructor as well, I wonder how all these sort of more automated driving systems fit in with, you know, when you're teaching people to drive,

M3 well, things like an electronic handbrake throw pupils you know, that have never met it before erm..... so you really do have to sort of talk them through the technology. And I guess my.... my one really big concern is that we become dependent on something. And then.... what if it doesn't work or what if it's wrong, you know and you still have to have that, that brain in your head thinking the... the processes through and erm.... I would probably want to know just how safe it was and how reliant it was and how accurate it would be.

Interviewer Yeah. So you would need to know that sort of thing before you would feel reassured...

M3 Absolutely. I think probably I would be happy to take part in a trial of it, but I wouldn't erm.... I wouldn't use it as my only way of controlling my speed to start off with. I guess, over time, if it became a...... just a commonplace feature on cars, we would all be much more kind of comfortable with it. And I guess then you've got that complacency that we need to be aware of the limits of the technology and the risk involved if people start just assuming that they can drive anyway they want (laughs)....

Interviewer Do you teach students who have the .....these sort of systems in the car when they're learning to drive or is this a sort of later thing

M3 well they learn in my car and my car doesn't have it. My car's relatively modern, but it doesn't have a lot of super modern features. I know some of the newer cars that the driving instructors from...like I trained with the AA and you can take on an AA car and they will have the sort of more up to date vehicles which may have things like parking assist and things like that. But I don't think anyone's got this speed control in there just yet

Interviewer because I was just sort of wondering, it's slightly off topic, but just from the point of view of a driving instructor, whether you feel like these systems de-skill drivers slightly, especially if you're going in at the start....

M3 Yeah, I think that... that's my concern is that if you started off with that system, you might never understand the place of the driver that the importance of being aware of your circumstances and er.... also, I suppose we we spend a lot of time talking about erm.... learner drivers, reading the road and reading the information that's coming in to you. And a great part of what we talk about is speed and erm... obviously..... less speed, they have more time to react. And again, you know, if you're doing er... 30 in a 30 zone, we would say to them it's a.... an advisory top speed rather than a target. You don't have to drive at 30 erm..... So that would be something just to be sort of aware of, I think.

Interviewer Yeah. So that's sort of like part of the teaching is, is that awareness.... So I suppose if you've got a system, who's doing that for you, as you say, you know it.....

M3 I know from one of my cars I personally drove a few years ago. It had a satnav that had the er.... the speed would pop up on the screen as you were driving along. And I found that so useful erm.... because there are moments in driving when you think, Oh, you know, I was.... distracted, I was having a conversation and I didn't pay attention to the speed sign. And you know, I think it's still 40, but I'm not sure. And just being able to look down on the sat nav was quite reassuring. So I guess I think of this system that you're describing as that, it's just the ability to er..... check yourself, you know, you're.... you're just making sure that you're not breaking the speed limit erm.... I suppose that I would also question, you know, like variable speed limits.... if it was that sensitive, because er.... if you ever drive on the M25 and.... you know you never know what the.... the signs above you are going to be saying from one journey to the next..... and if the speed system actually tied in with that, I think that would make driving on the M25, for example, easier and probably a lot safer as well.

Interviewer Yeah. So that's sort of a situation where it would be useful to have the system. Can you think of sort of types of journeys or types of driving where it wouldn't be so useful to have a speed limiting system or just situations that might arise.....

M3 Erm..... my.... my question.... When I filled in the survey on this and I was trying to think of negative.... negative situations and I couldn't think of a lot and the only one I can.... I can really think of is if you needed to... to take evasive action or something like that. But then you said that there's like a kick down...... approach so you can override it anyway erm..... No, I guess heavy traffic would be an interesting one, but as long as it wasn't beeping away at you or something like that, if it was aware that you were in slow moving traffic and then it turned itself off, then that would be really useful. Perhaps it kicks in after a certain speed because you know, you have things like 20 limits in residential areas, and I'm not sure if that's..... I don't know.... that... that would be an ideal situation for it.... to be able to slow people down in those 20 zones because they are.... really badly driven through usually.

Interviewer Yeah, it's sometimes quite hard to slow down to 20 isn't it.... 20 can feel very slow.

M3 Yeah....Definitely.

Interviewer Yeah, so it sounds like you are saying it is useful in the same way that an advisory system would be useful, which is sort of when it flashes up on the screen to tell you. Yeah. How do you how do you feel about the two systems.... which would be preferable to you, the sort of advisory where it's telling you but not doing anything as opposed to this system where it would actually slow you down?

M3 I can see that the advisory side would be useful, but I think it probably defeats the purpose of what..... what you're describing. I think the actual intelligence system is probably erm.... at its most valuable when it can actually erm.... limit the top speed of the car. I know there's a cruise control and there's a speed limiter on my car for that sort of situation, but it's a bit of a pain. So having one that does it automatically, I think, would be..... would be quite positive. The advisory bit, I don't think it would have any purpose other than advising. I suppose you could switch to passive if that was something that you preferred. But erm.... no, I would see it as a really positive thing to kind of.... limit speeds, to avoid..... and I keep saying speeding, but I don't think it is the speeding I think it's..... situations where erm..... people drive too fast and then it's quite dangerous and..... I know again, you've said you can override the system, so I'm guessing you could really if you wanted to keep speeding everywhere you could...... but for a, you know, 90 percent of drivers, it would probably be quite a useful thing erm..... to have.

Interviewer And if you if you did have the system in your car, how would you think you would use it? So you can choose to turn it on for certain journeys or you can have it on all the time or you can turn it off and just use the override. What are your feelings about how you would use it if you did have a system like that?

M3 I'm assuming I would leave it on because I can't see a reason not to. There is no.... there's no point in the system if you just have it in the car and turn it off. The idea is that it..... it's a safety feature and it's something that will erm.... keep you safe and keep other people safe, I'm guessing erm..... and it does take away..... one of the biggest problems I find driving around is.... is erm... you know there's a speed camera, so suddenly you're fixed on your speedo, you know, you're concentrating on not going 33 in a 30 zone. And that, I don't think is safe. Whereas if the car itself was in control and you know, it didn't go past 30, no problems, you know, you're doing away with that whole.... that whole worry, but also you're allowing the drivers to focus on the road rather than, you know.... the speed camera.

Interviewer So it would take some of the the attention away from you having to focus on speed and then you could focus on road awareness and other things that were going on.

M3 Definitely. Definitely.

Interviewer You mentioned that you've got cruise control and things in your car. Do you use those kinds of systems and how useful do you find those

M3 All the time erm.... Long distance, all the time. Cruise control is brilliant when you're in, you know...going on a journey. It's useless in town. And I've barely ever used the speed limiter, so it's something that erm.... I guess I can see the purpose of it. But it's never been something..... I think I've used it going through London a few times because of the sheer number of speed cameras as you go through some of the outskirts of London driving in and you're just thinking, god I don't want to.... don't want to risk six different speeding fines just for doing....again.... 33 34 in a 30 zone so.... I've sometimes used the speed limiter there but very, very rarely....

Interviewer So that sounds like there is some kind of speed limiter on your car then. Is that right?

M3 Yes, you can choose to flick it on, it's not a.... intelligent one at all. It's.... you set it... it's like the cruise control, you know, you tell the car...that's the speed I want to maintain and then.... it can drive at that speed but it's not..... It's not camera-linked....it's GPS linked or anything like that....

Interviewer So just thinking about if you were going to buy a new car and it had this kind of system in it, would it influence your buying decision at all? So it would be sort of like whether you were looking for something like that or whether it would put you off or make you more likely or no difference. What do you think.....

M3 I don't think I'd pay extra for it. I think if a car had that as a standard feature erm.... I would be very interested in it. I would rather.... I would rather have the technology and be able to turn it off.... because you never know and I think that that is.... it's things like Lane.... Lane Assist. you know erm...., we... we drove a car as a test drive a few years back and it beeped every time a car went past the window. And that was annoying after a few, a few.... being overtaken a few times. So I think I'd want to try the system out erm.... and make sure it wasn't going to be something that would annoy me erm.... and as I say, I wouldn't pay extra for it at the moment. Maybe in the future if it became a..... a much more reliable system and you knew that it was making a bigger difference to safety records and things like that.... Also, if it brought insurance prices down, I think it would well be something that we would consider because, you know, that's such a price, especially for erm..... we've got two teenage children who are looking to learn to drive at the moment. Now their insurance is through the roof. So..... if you could fit something like this and save four or five hundred pounds off their insurance, it would be wonderful but....

Interviewer Yeah. So it would be it might be a good thing for newly qualified drivers.

M3 Yeah, definitely. Yeah.

Interviewer So if the car had it in, you would be interested, but you wouldn't go looking for it and you wouldn't pay extra.

M3 I wouldn't pay extra. I think I would look around and see which cars erm... had that sort of technology as .... standard and look at that. But if you.... if you put me in the situation where I could buy a..... perhaps a less premium brand and it had all the tech and a premium brand without the tech, I'd go for the less premium brand. I would prefer to have the technology in a less sort of prestigious car.

Interviewer Yeah. So some cars have it fitted as standard, but some it is an Add-On. So people would have to be motivated to want the technology if they're going to be paying for that extra.....

M3 I think people have always said, if you look at Mercedes.... there's a Mercedes something now and whatever technology they're putting in their cars will be the standard in.... I think they say like 3,4 or 5 years...something like that so.... you know, all the on-screen displays and the lane assist and stuff, that was standard a few years ago in the Mercedes. And now it's trickling down and it's just becoming standard in the much cheaper cars.

Interviewer So if you were buying a car and it had the technology in it, is there anything that you would find useful from the dealership or any information or anything like that that you would like about the system that would sort of help you get to grips with it a bit?

M3 I think you'd need to have erm..... a very good explanation of the system. You'd need to have perhaps a demonstration of it and erm.... you know, rather than just getting you out the door as quickly as possible. I think it might be when we're getting into that tech level, you might need someone to take you out and explain it, if you want to..... you know, some people would prefer to just jump in and go and try it. I'm probably...... a go off and have a try type person, but I know my wife would much prefer someone to go through it with her and then she'd feel much more comfortable about it.

Interviewer Yeah. So it's kind of knowing the person and the best way to do it

M3 yeah, have it as an offer maybe and then people can choose if they want to pick up on that....

Interviewer I know you get these big manuals, but manuals aren't necessarily the best way for everybody to learn how to use a system.

M3 No, definitely not.

Interviewer So at the moment, if you don't want to use the system, you can just turn it off. But one of the options could be to make it more difficult to turn off. So you have to make an effort to turn it off. What are your feelings about that kind of driver sort of choice and things....

M3 Erm.... that's a difficult one, because obviously.... from the perspective of someone who has to focus on speed a lot, I'd say that's a really good idea erm.... And from from what you you've sort of described, it doesn't sound like the system is actually as..... as restrictive as.... as I perhaps imagined it.....if you could like.... I used the phrase kickdown. I know in an automatic car there is a way of pushing down so if you need to get a burst to speed on. And I don't think that's necessarily a bad idea to able to.... you know, switch it on. People will turn it off. You know, the sorts of people that are going to speed are going to turn it off if it's.... put on there anyway. But as I said, you're talking about 10 percent and everyone else will probably just be much more..... driving much more safely and possibly more economically, which again at the moment.... would be a big, big bonus for everybody. So I don't think that's a bad idea.

Interviewer Yeah. Do you think there's any way of encouraging the people that would just turn it off. Do you think there's any way of slowing them down....

M3 I don't know. I think probably it's, it's carrot and stick, and the carrot doesn't work. So the stick is probably back to, you know erm.... fines and points on the license. And then maybe they would..... If someone's a repeat offender for speeding, you know, perhaps instead of the the fine and the school that they have to go and sit... perhaps they could have one of these boxes put on their cars, but they're not able to switch it off and it just becomes an integral part of their....their driving for a period of time.

Interviewer Yeah, that's an interesting idea to target it being harder to turn off for that group...

M3 Well, yeah. And then you.... because I know that the.... the driving, if you ....if you do have a speeding fine, mine was.... eight, nine, maybe 10 years ago. So I didn't have to go to the drive speed awareness class. My dad, who's a really safe driver, got caught by a speed camera up north and he was furious with it because he's never had a speeding fine in 45 years of driving or whatever it is. So he had to go to the speeding class and he said it's rubbish, you know.... it was a group of people who didn't want to be there, but it was.... it reduced the fine that they had to pay.... Now perhaps if you take that option away and instead of the fine and perhaps even instead of the points, you have a mandatory .....black box fitted to your car that prevents it from doing a.... a particular speed then, maybe that's.... that's a way forward.

Interviewer So you said something a bit earlier about the car flashing up the speed to let you know that you're going over the speed limit, but you also mentioned something about beeps being annoying. What's your feeling about those sort of warning systems....

M3 I think.... I think an auditory beep, an auditory beep... might be ok to some people, but for me, it's... it's very distracting and I think you've got to be..... You've got to be aware that some people are going to be..... distracted by different things, so it needs to be an option to.... an easy option rather than one of these impossible ones to find erm.... to make it an auditory or a visual. I think if you're.... if you're talking future-tense technology.... just something that can flash up on a windscreen display, so it's in your vision would be perfectly good and.... would do the job that we're talking about. I think an auditory beep might be too much for me.

Interviewer Yeah, but.... a choice thing.

M3 Yeah....Just in case someone did prefer the beep....

Interviewer Yeah. And what are your sort of feelings around these kind of systems if they were rolled out into all cars and they did become compulsory? I think you said it would make driving safer for the sort of 90 percent of people so would you generally be in favour of this kind of thing?

M3 Yeah, I think we're getting to the point where we're talking about autonomous cars and we're talking about erm.... you know, the way forward for driving and it's going to probably be electric cars and automatic gearboxes and all this stuff so.... cars are already changing an awful lot and I think people are beginning to accept that.... the roads are.... not the best that they can be and they're not..... there's not been a great deal of investment by the government in anything to do with the...., you know, the safety aspects, for a long, long time. So I think it's.... it's starting to come down to different manufacturers to....kind of, make things safer erm.... There's a campaign at the moment isn't there...space invader or something where.....you know, it shows people tailgating and you think, oh..... make that something linked, you know.... have the technology in a car, if we know that cars are able to.... use radar to...you know, detect distance from the cars in front. Personally, I think I would find that a really positive thing if I knew that someone couldn't drive..... so close behind me that it was dangerous anymore....and we're getting to the point where you watch movies and it's in the future and...cars are almost on rails, jetting everywhere and like....whether we get that that stage in my lifetime but.... I think becoming more autonomous is going to happen. And maybe the first point of that is that, you know..... we're trusting sat navs, we're trusting..... GPS co-ordination already. So just tie that in with your speed and your brakes, and your gears and all that stuff and....it would just make driving a safer experience for everybody....

Interviewer So it's kind of like an inevitable thing that these things are going to be coming into cars.

M3 Yeah....

Interviewer But there's still obviously, especially from your point of view as a driving instructor, a role for driver judgment.....

M3 Yeah, I think you need to teach people how to drive safely, and that's... that's the biggest er.... mistake I think some pupils make... they get into the car because they think they're going to learn to pass the test...... and I've been taught to teach them how to be safe drivers, and that's a big difference. So, you know, if you're a safe driver you can pass a test anywhere. You don't need to learn the roads and the routes around where you live. So, yeah, I think you need to know the basics.

Interviewer Yeah. So as the technology is rolling out into cars. How would you encourage people to turn the system on and use it....it could be incentives. I think you've mentioned a few things actually but how would you convince people of the benefits or provide incentives to use?

M3 I mean, again, we talked carrot and stick earlier. I mean, the stick for this one is those that dreadful, dreadful advertising campaign, very effective where the little girl's..... lying on the side of the road and urghhhh...it's horrible. That sort of thing, you know... Kill your speed, not a child type message, I think, works for quite a lot of people erm.... I think.... you, again, if you're looking at the carrot aspect of it, you're saying to people, this will reduce your insurance, reduce your fuel costs, it will reduce your... your stress and your anxiety as you're driving, you know.... you will not necessarily get speeding fines. You don't need to worry about speeding cameras anymore, and I think a lot of people would go, that sounds amazing..... and jump on board. And I think dropping insurance costs would be.... a very good way to to encourage people because then if you.... if you have a speeding fine, then maybe your insurance company can say well you're clearly not using the system that's.....you've told us you are so..... you know...your insurance goes up....

Interviewer Yes, so that's a bit of targeting again, isn't it, like with the speed awareness courses you mentioned earlier......targeting to people who might find that more useful.....

M3 And I think that there are certain.... sectors of our driving communities that would just.... need this so erm.....delivery drivers at the moment who are.... so much in a rush and it's... it's not a criticism of the person, it's a criticism with the.... the standard of driving that they have to do to keep up with this impossible time thing.... you see them booting down roads, you know, 20 miles an hour is the limit and they're not doing 20. So that sort of thing would be a really positive step forward if particular erm.... sectors of drivers were.... it was enforced.... you have to have this going er..... taxis is another one who.... traditionally drive very badly at times and.... I do think young drivers, it would be a very useful tool to... to keep them safe.... to start off with, especially..... and this sounds really sexist but I think... the... the young men that learn to drive quickly and then get into a very... sporty car because they see that as a rite of passage erm.... We had a young man, I was... I was a teacher... well, I still am a teacher, but.... at a school I was working at and he was killed because the driver of the car he was in, was doing... I think they worked out, between 90 and 100 along a country lane nearly so....you know...

Interviewer So having a speed limiting system is kind of the.... the opposite to that sort of desire to... to drive fast and show off. What's the best medium, do you think, for spreading information to people about the general speed thing. Where's the best place to get that information out?

M3 Well, it's going to have to be for the younger drivers, it's going to have to be social media.... and it's going to have to be social media that I don't understand...like TikTok and Instagram and Snapchat erm.... I think for... the older drivers, probably still TV commercials and..... possibly a bit of Facebook but erm...you know, I think probably..... it's one of those difficult situations where erm.... you just have to convince people what's in it for them rather than come at it from the sort of the. ...the safety aspect only... it comes into your safety and.... what you're going to get out of this system.

Interviewer So you've got to make the benefits clear to people.

M3 Yeah.

Interviewer Well, that's great. That's that's all my questions to do. Do you have any other thoughts?

M3 No, that's everything...