

SOUND in film: can you see me?

Josélia Neves

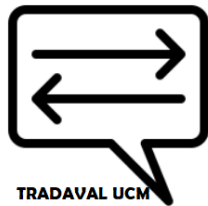
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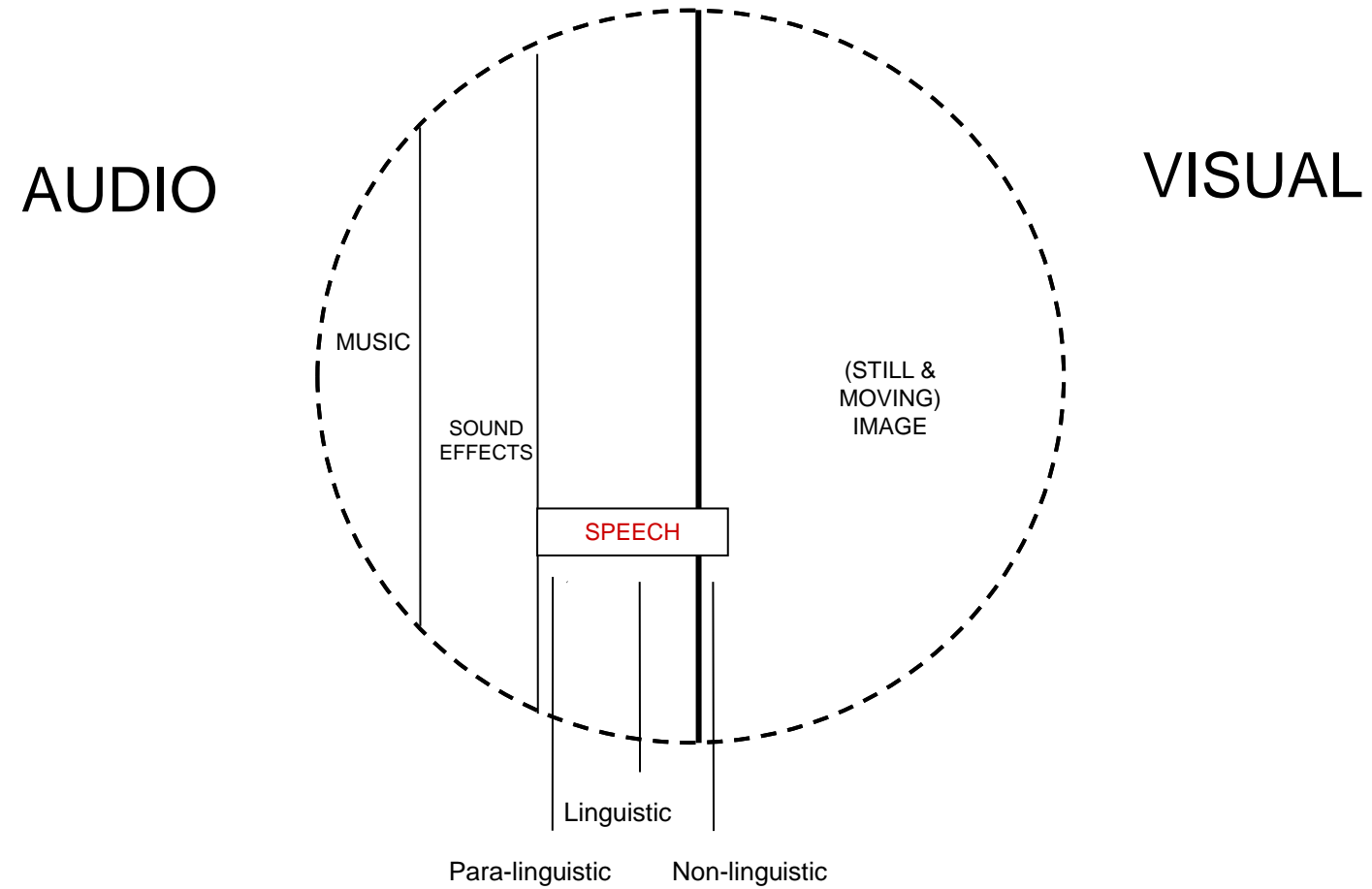




AVT and the AUDIOVISUAL CONSTRUCT

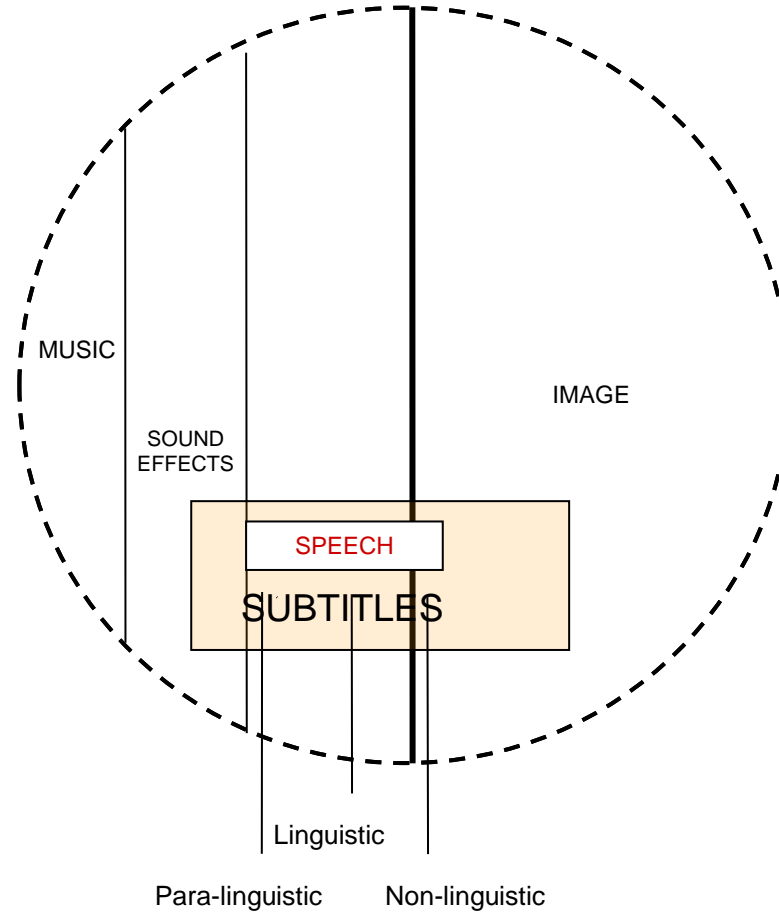
(FILM)

The audiovisual text



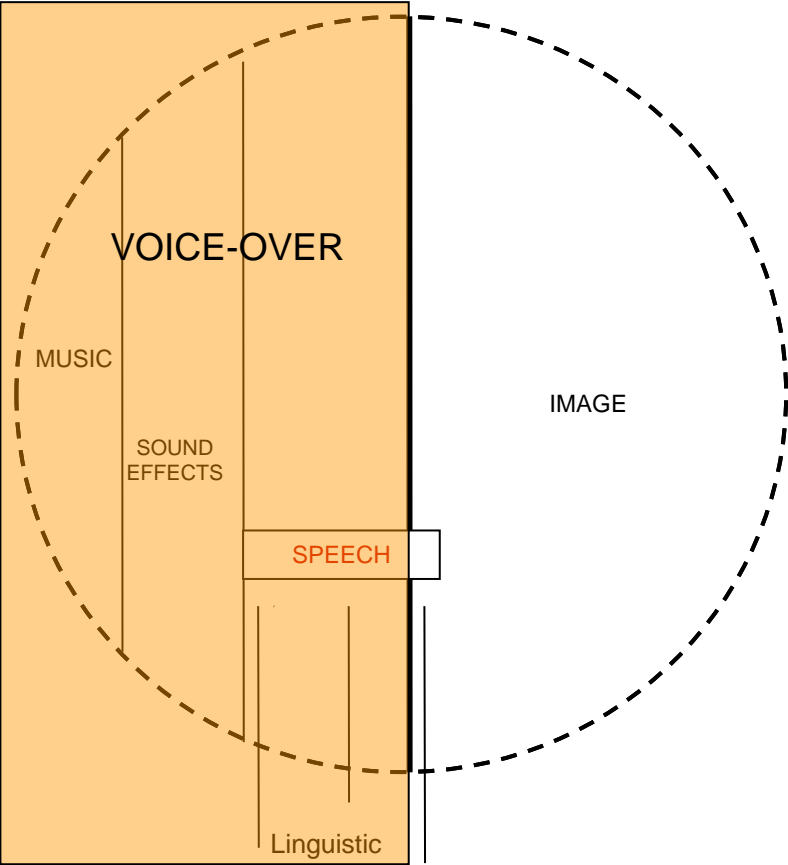
AUDIO

VISUAL



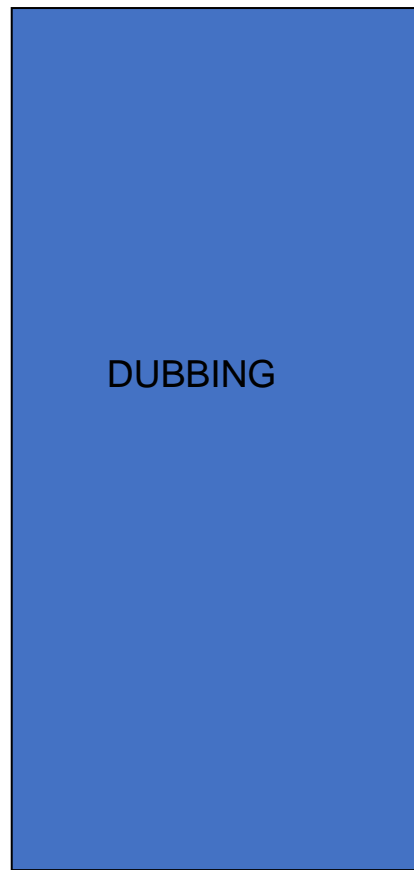
AUDIO

VISUAL

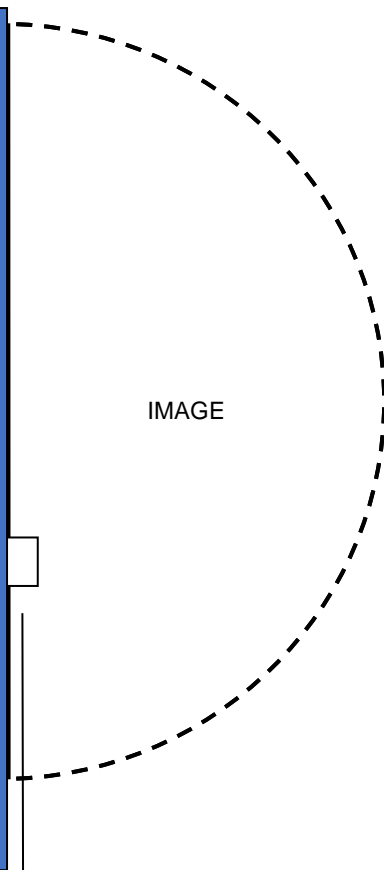


Para-linguistic Non-linguistic

AUDIO



DUBBING



IMAGE

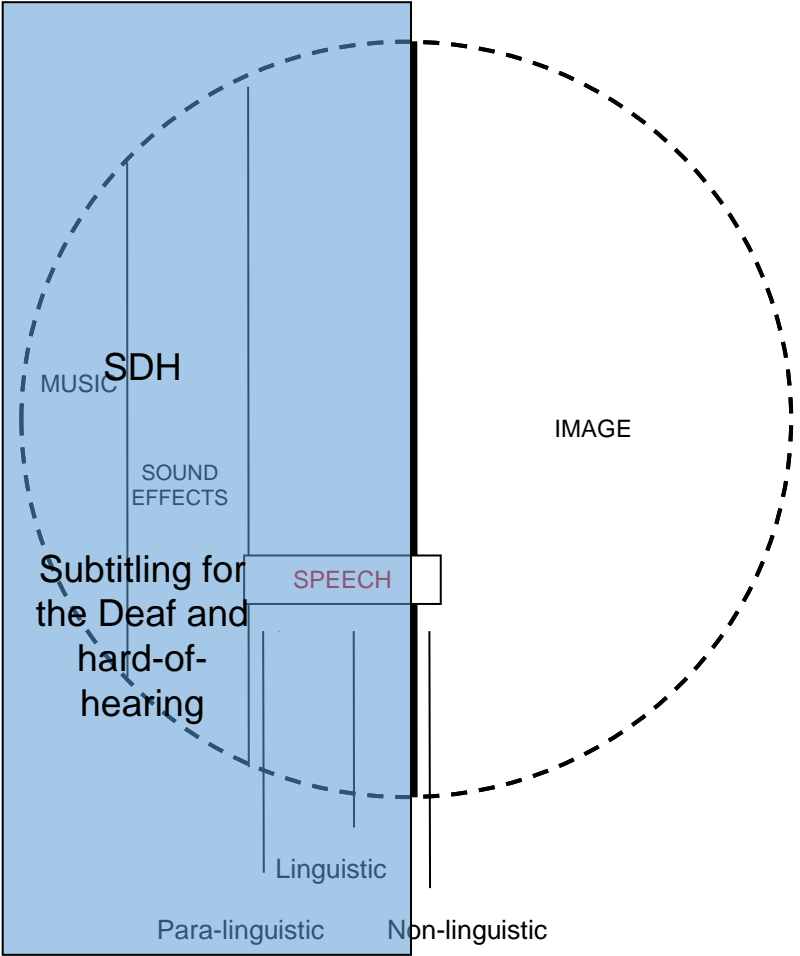
VISUAL

Para-linguistic

Non-linguistic

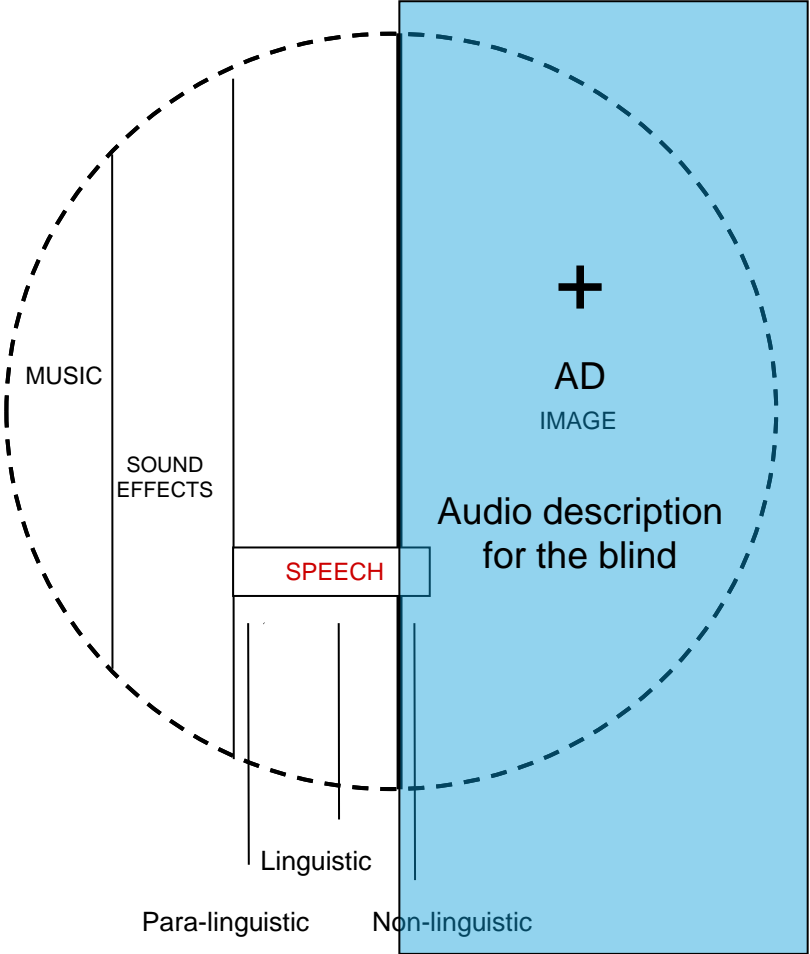
AUDIO

VISUAL



AUDIO

VISUAL





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On IMAGE

Chandler Daniel (n/d) ***The Grammar of Film.***

Available at: <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/short/gramtv.html>

Camera Techniques: Distance and Angle

Shot Sizes



XLS



LS



MLS



MS



MCU



CU



BCU



XCU

Shot Angles

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Low



Eye-level



High



Worm's eye



Canted



Bird's eye

Camera and Lens Movement



Pan Left



Pan Right



Crab Left



Crab Right



Track Out



Track In



Zoom Out [lens]



Zoom In



Ped Up



Ped Down



Tilt Up



Tilt Down

Editing Techniques



- Cut Matched cut / Jump cut/
Motivated cut / Cross-cut
- Cutting rate
- Cutting rhythm
- Cutaway/cutaway shot (CA)
- Reaction shot
- Insert/insert shot
- Buffer shot (neutral shot)
- Fade, dissolve (mix)
- Superimpositions
- Wipe
- Inset
- Split screen.
- Stock shot
- Invisible editing

Manipulating Time



- Screen time
- Subjective time
- Compressed time
- Long take
- Simultaneous time
- Slow motion
- Accelerated motion
(undercranking)
- Reverse motion
- Replay
- Freeze-frame
- Flashback
- Flashforward
- Extended or expanded
time/overlapping action
- Ambiguous time
- Universal time

Narrative Style



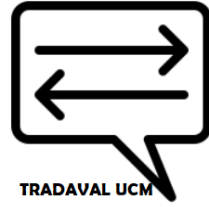
- Subjective treatment
- Objective treatment
- Parallel development/parallel editing/cross-cutting
- 'Invisible editing'
- Mise-en-scene.
- Montage/montage editing
- Talk to camera tone

Other aspects...

- Lighting
 - Soft and harsh lighting
 - Backlighting
- Graphics
 - Text
 - Graphics
 - Animation
- Genre



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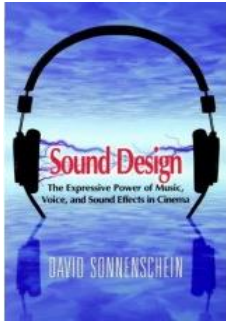
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On SOUND

Use of Sound in film



- Direct sound
- Studio sound
- Selective sound
- Sound perspective/aural perspective
- Sound bridge
- Dubbed dialogue
- Wildtrack (asynchronous sound)
- Parallel (synchronous) sound
- Commentary/voice-over narration
- Sound effects (SFX)
- Music
- Silence



Sonnenschein, David. 2001. *Sound Design: The Expressive Power of Music, Voice, and Sound Effects in Cinema*. California: Michael Wise Productions.

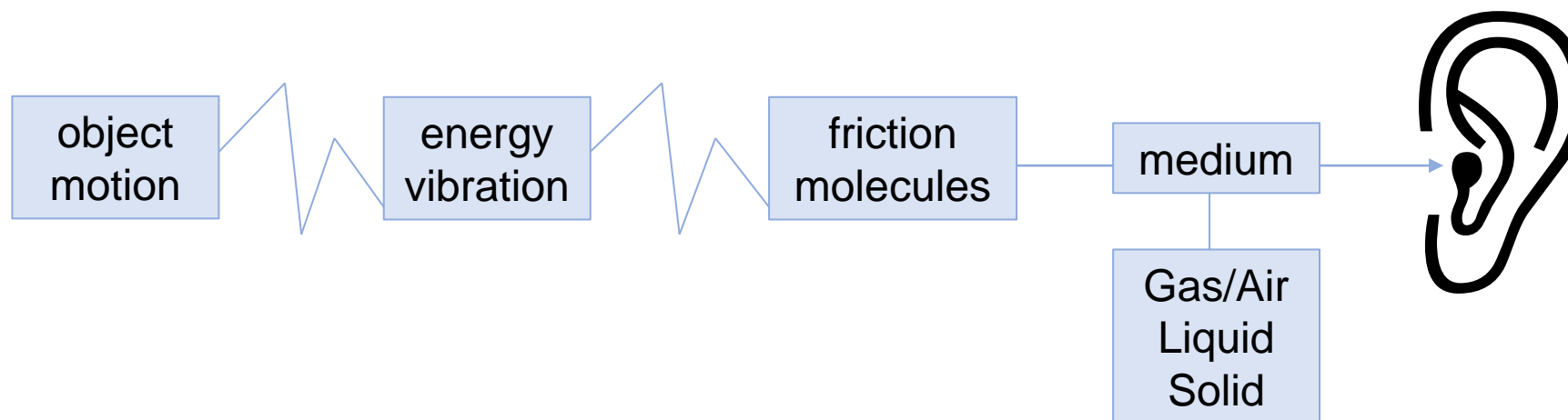


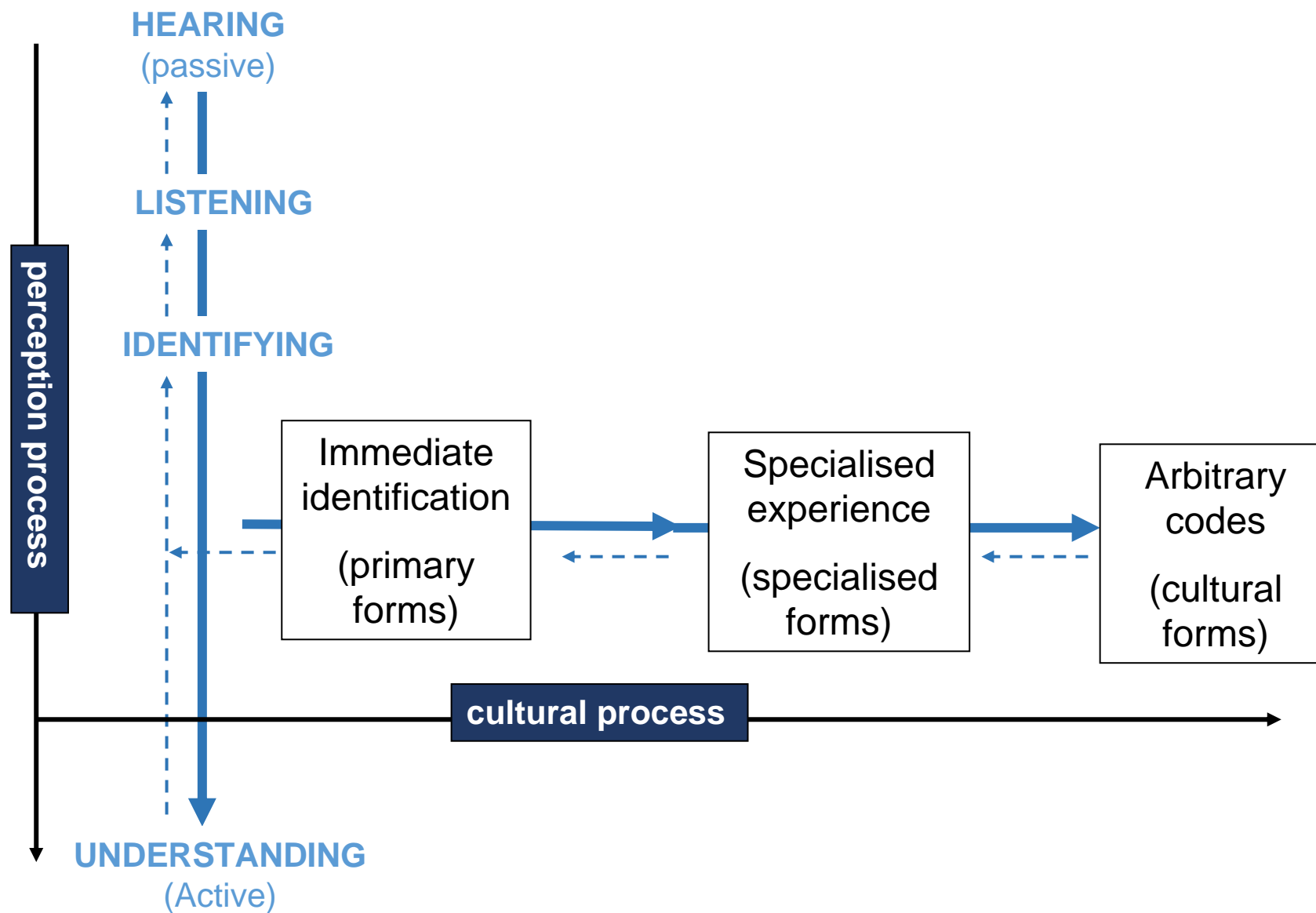
Sider, Larry et.al.. 2003. *Soundscape. The School of Sound Lectures 1998-2001*. New York: Wallflower Press.



Chion, Michel 2003. *Audio-vision. Sound on Screen*. New York: Columbia University Press.

The Production of Sound





Types of listening modes

- **Reduced** – real-time awareness of all sound quality parameters. It is the observation of the sound itself and not the source or its meaning.
- **Causal** – listening to sound to gather information about its cause. It can help to qualify what type of space, object, or person is creating the sound.
- **Semantic** – pertains to the spoken language and other code systems that symbolize ideas, actions, and things.
- **Referential** – being aware of or affected by the context of sound, linking not only to the source but principally to the emotional and dramatic meaning.

“Listening begins with being silent.”

(Joachim-Ernst Berendt in Sonnenschein 2001: 77)

Silence

“Any silence makes us feel exposed, as if it were laying bare our own listening, but also as if we were in the presence of a giant ear, tuned to our own slightest noises.”

(Chion in *Soundscape* 2003: 151)

“The ultimate metaphoric sound is silence. If you can get film to a place with no sound where there should be sound, the audience will crowd that silence with sounds and feelings of their own making, and they will, individually, answer the question of, ‘Why is it quiet?’ If the slope to silence is at the right angle, you will get the audience to a strange and wonderful place where the film becomes their own creation in a way that is deeper than any other.”

(Murch in *Soundscape* 2003:100)

Sound in Audiovisual texts

Diegetic – everything that happens to those people and in the environment portrayed on screen.

Non-diegetic – any sound that would not be heard by a character or is not emitted from the sound event in the story is considered nondiegetic (voiceover narration, sound effect). Guides listener towards a certain feeling, subjectively beyond the the visual elements.

On-screen – comes from a source which is visible on screen (dialogue with lip sync, door slams, footsteps, cars, ocean waves...)

Off-screen (active or passive) – we hear the sound without seeing the source (ambient backgrounds).

Sound has three functions in Audiovisual texts:



1. Transmits spacial sensations with great precision – distance / direction / space (e.g. cave, cript, empty room).
2. Conducts the interpetation of the audiovisual whole – when sound is added to image or image is added to sound a new message is created.
3. Provides narrative organization to the audiovisual discourse – sound can give coherence to apparently incohesive image (e.g. video clips).

“In the audiovisual narrative, the images we see are not the source of the sounds we hear, the space that we hear is not always the space we see, the distances we perceive often do not correspond to the ones we see. And, finally, the space we see and hear do not exist. The objects do not exist, nor does the space, nor the distance between them and the receiver. The only thing that exists is a series of organised sounds that make up an acoustic landscape that has to be interpreted.”

(my translation of Rodríguez 2001:227)

About synchrony

We expect synchrony between image and sound.

Attention is directed when certain movements are accompanied by amplified and well defined sounds that are clearer than all the others.

Even though we are not rationally conscious of it, our perceptive system reacts more or less violently to an audiovisual stimulus, according to whether the sound comes before or after the visual stimulus.

“Like dreamscapes, the language of sound imagery has parallels to the figures of speech in our verbal tradition.”



(Sonnenschein 2001:55)

Language of sound imagery	
simile	Acoustic similarity of two sounds (scream and siren)
hyperbole	Obvious and intentional exaggeration (scream with alarm clock)
metaphor	Suggest comparison of an actual sound with an idea (scream with blinking red light)
allegory	Representation of abstract through concrete (scream held mysteriously until climax (e.g., in <i>The Shout</i>))
irony	Contrast or least-expected opposites (scream with smile)
paradox	Apparent contradiction that may express inner truth (scream from cigarette)
vivification	Manifest living traits in an inanimate object (scream from doormat)

Sound references in film

- **Universal** – potent types of sounds that transcend culture. Certain sounds resonate on an archetypal level for all people, like a lion's growl, screeching fingernails on a blackboard, or a heartbeat. (universal aspects of our environment).
- **Cultural** – each culture carries its soundmark through the environment, religion, work ethic, social life, language, and musical expression.
- **Historical** – sound carrying a different time or era.
- **Geographical** – certain sounds transport listeners to particular parts of the world / spaces.

“Music Creates order out of chaos,
for rhythm imposes unanimity upon the divergent,
melody imposes continuity upon the disjointed,
and harmony imposes compatibility upon the incongruous.”

(Yehudi Menuhin (master violinist) in Sonnenschein 2001: 101)

The function of music in Film

- **Emotional Signifier** – takes us into the make-believe world of film. It allows us to sense the invisible and inaudible, the spiritual and the emotional processes of the characters portrayed.
- **Continuity** – a sense of continuity is maintained when music is played over spacially discontinuous shots.
- **Narrative cueing** – music helps the audience orient to the setting, characters, and narrative events, providing a particular point of view.
- **Narrative unity** – music can aid in the formal unity of the film by employing repetition, variation, and counterpoint, thus supporting the narrative as well.

ACCOUSTIC EXPRESSION OF EMOTIONAL STATES (1)

According to Friederich Marpurg (1718-1795)



EMOTION	EXPRESSION
sorrow	Slow, languid melody; sighing; caressing of single words with exquisite tonal material; prevailing dissonant harmony
repentance	The elements of sorrow, except that a turbulent, lamenting melody is used
fear	Tumbling downward progressions, mainly in the lower register
hate	Rough harmony; soft, flattering melody in broad movements
envy	Growling and annoying tones
jealousy	Introduced by a soft, wavering tone; then an intense scolding tone; finally a moving and sighing tone; alternating slow and quick movement
wrath	Expression of hate combined with running notes; frequent sudden changes in the bass; sharp violent movements; shrieking dissonances
impatience	Rapidly changing, annoying modulations

ACOUSTIC EXPRESSION OF EMOTIONAL STATES (2)

According to Friederich Marpurg (1718-1795)

EMOTION	EXPRESSION
happiness	Fast movement; animated and triumphant melody; warm tone colour; more consonant harmony
contentment	A more steady and tranquil melody with happiness
hopefulness	A proud and exultant melody
laughter	Drawn out, languid tones
love	Consonant harmony; soft, flattering melody in broad movements
compassion	Soft, smooth, lamenting melody; slow movement; repeated figures in the base
modesty	Wavering, hesitating melody; short, quick stops
daring	Defiant, rushing melody
innocence	A pastoral style

MUSICAL REFERENCES TO CULTURE/GEOGRAPHY



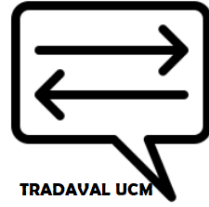
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION	MUSIC STYLE
Middle Eastern	Minor key melody with much ornamentation
Indian territory	4/4 allegretto drumbeat with first beat accented, woodwinds with simple minor-modal tune
Latin America	Rumba rhythm and major melody with trumpet or marimba
Japan or China	Xylophones and woodblocks and simple minor melodies in 4/4, pentatonic scales
Turn-of-the-century Vienna	Strauss-like waltzes with strings
Rome and Paris	Accordions, harmonics
Medieval, Renaissance	Harps, flutes
New York, big city	Jazzy or slightly discordant major theme with brass or strings
Pastoral location	Woodwinds in major keys

“Sound is 50 per cent of a film, at least. In some scenes it’s almost 100 per cent. It’s the thing that can add so much emotion to a film. It’s a thing that can add all the mood and create a larger world. It sets the tone and it moves things. Sound is a great ‘pull’ into a different world. And it has to work with the picture – but without it you’ve lost half the film.”

(Lynch in *Soundscape* 2003: 52)



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...in practice...!

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