



THE SOUND TREK
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Making Sense!

Entering the Field of Sensory Studies.



**Joint Module organized by
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Syllabus (14 weeks, autumn term at UB: October - January)

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Sub-Units of the Module

Smell Trek: PD Dr. Cordula Weißköppel, UB

Sound Trek: Dr. Javier Gago Holzscheiter, UB

Visual Trek: Dr. Martin Gruber, UB

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Station 1: Listening and hearing (4 SWS)

Reading

Chion (1994: 25-34)

Synchronous part (2 SWS)

Introduction and goal formulation of the Sound Trek (approx. 10 min)

Our aim is to sensitise your ears, to make them a tool. You should work out what you experience of the world with our ears, how our city can be ordered acoustically and how you can communicate your experiences, our results. Whether with the pen, the camera or recording technology.

- You will first explore your immediate environment, the home.
- You will keep an acoustic diary.
- You will explore the city individually.
- You will explore a place together.
- You will compare our individual experiences.
- You will either let the sounds speak for themselves.
- Or you can tell us about your sound experiences.
- And: where can we find an audible world beyond our environment?
- What listening experience in particular interests you?

Warming up exercise (approx. 20 min)

The basis for hearing - detached from the deep basses, which we also feel with our whole body - is the ear. We want to find out that our ears do not always hear in the same way by means of a small introductory exercise.

To start with, we do an exercise from speech therapy. We touch our ears, stroke them, form them into shells, while we listen we notice: What happens in the immediate environment of our ears also changes our auditory perception.

Less important than the results of this little exercise is your personal experience of it. Try to describe how differently you hear. Make notes.

Exchange ideas!

Input/discussion (approx. 30 min)

Discuss *Michel Chion: The three listening Modes*. How do you usually listen? How does your environment change when you listen to it?

In many languages, a distinction is made between hearing and listening (French: *écouter* vs. *entendre*, Italian: *sentire* vs. *ascoltare*, German: *hören* vs. *zuhören*). Basically, we distinguish whether we have heard something, a sound, i.e. whether we have noticed it. Listening, on the other hand, means not only hearing, but also understanding, grasping, reading a code, basically picking out something concrete from the many.

Exercise (approx. 30 min)

We remain silent for ten minutes and take notes. We start our audio diary with this: What do you hear when you are completely silent? Are they natural sounds, technical ones or ones we produce ourselves (concerning your body), we mark our results with (M)en, (N)ature and (T)echnique. We collect the results, compare and discuss. Which sounds predominate?

Asynchronous part (2 SWS)

Practice (90 min)

Podcast: Just a sound? Find all Podcasts on the Making Sense Blog!

Do you have a preferred sound? Listen to the audio to a particular sound. Do you also have a sound that enraptures you? Try to find out which sound is particularly beautiful to you. Try to capture the sound photographically, describe it in your own words. Or use an app on your smartphone. Record a sound, notice how different this recording sounds depending on how close you get to the sound source. In the future, do you want to talk about sounds or let the sounds talk? Think about what you want to record, what you have heard. Say something about this sound into your smartphone. Very briefly!

Reading

Schafer (1993: 3-12)

Atkinson (2007: 1905-1917)

Station 2: Soundscape and Urbanity (4 SWS)

The session deals with the soundscape and the urban, sonic fabric.

Synchronous part (2 SWS)

Presentation and discussion approx. 30 min

Present some of your sound samples. Did you make an audio or did you take a photo or did you just write? Present and discuss your experiences with this exercise! Every sound has its own story!

Text work Soundscape approx. 30 min

As a lecture or as a student's presentation, we briefly introduce the basic ideas of Schafer and Atkinson. In plenary you discuss the main topics. And, depending on the result, go into the next group exercise sooner or later.

- What does Murray Schafer mean by a soundscape?
- What is a high and low-fi soundscape?
- Do you know examples of how our soundscape has changed historically?
- Which sounds do you know from your childhood and which have only recently come into existence? What do you think?
- How do you hear your surroundings?
- How different do you think the city sounds in this or that neighbourhood?
- Are there sounds that occur in the city but not in the countryside or in the villa district, at the airport or in the countryside?
- In this session, become aware of how different places sound.

Sound mapping exercise (approx. 30 min)

If you were a sound designer, what sounds do you prefer? First, design a map of your home, your neighbourhood. What do you hear in your neighbourhood? When you step onto the street? First make a drawing from your memory!

Present your results in plenary!

Asynchronous part (2 SWS)

What is a Soundwalk (Podcast) 15 min

Listen to the podcast before you start running!

Find all podcasts on the Making Sense Blog!

Practice 90 min

Take a soundwalk. Go out and listen consciously! How will you document it? Take photos, notes or record individual sounds with your smartphone! Keep writing your diary!

Reading

Helmreich (2010:10)

Field (2015:12-21)

Station 3: Sound Research City Sound (4 SWS)

Synchronous part (2 SWS)

We discuss the concept of soundscape and explore a place together, in tandems: the shopping center.

Warming up exercise (approx. 30 min)

What are your experiences during your soundwalks? What did you hear? How did you document? Share your experiences!

Input (approx. 30 min)

You have dealt with the concept of soundscape. Give input or discuss Helmholtz's concept in comparison to Schafer's.

Organisation of the tandems 30 min

Can you meet in tandems? Do you live in a city? That is the ideal case for the task! If you don't live in a city, still form tandems and share your experiences in pairs! Organize yourself!

Asynchronous part (2 SWS)

Tandems 90 min

With this excursion we want to go to a specific place, the shopping mall. You have already done a soundwalk. You have gone freely and chosen where you want to go. In the group exercise we want to go to the same or a similar place.

We follow the instructions of the podcasts to the specific location. Proceed carefully, stick to the sequence. Explore the individual stations separately from each other! Document your experiences during the breaks! Reflect on your experiences and think about how to share, present your experiences!

Take notes on your experiences. What did your tandem partner perceive, what did you? How did your partner proceed? How did you proceed? Were there any complications? Did you make audio recordings? Did you take photographs?

No reading

Station 4: Sound research (First Results) (4 SWS)

Synchronous part (4 SWS)

Exchange of experiences and discussion, considering all the reading texts.

Intro (approx. 15 min)

Steven Feld is an ethnomusicologist who has studied the influence of sounds, including those of birds, on Kaluwi culture. For Steven Feld, the soundscape is not just the outer shell, but an aesthetic space in which the outer world interweaves with the inner world, the way people think about the world. We listen to Kraftwerk (Autobahn) together. We raise the question: What does it mean that the motorway (In German Autobahn) also shows itself to us musically? Is it part of our habitat?

Discussion

Results (approx. 15 min)

You have pricked up your ears to here: you have massaged your ears and listened inside. You have explored your home and noted who and what you hear when you stay at your desk. You have done an independent soundwalk and you last did a community exploration of a shopping mall. You have learned to listen consciously and you have changed your focus to urban phenomena. What are your findings?

Briefly present your basic experiences!

Working groups (approx. 30 min)

Divide into four groups, each taking a place from the shopping mall as their subject. Ask yourselves the following questions:

- What is the special feature of the place?
- What distinguishes the place from other places?
- How do the people in the place behave?
- Which sounds predominate?
- Were you addressed? Were you perceived as a researcher?
- Were you asked what you were doing?
- What role does the location have in the overall construct of the shopping mall?

Plenary 30 min

Present your results and discuss your positions! Record your positions on a whiteboard.

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Groups: Locating in the city (approx. 20 min)

Divide into groups again and discuss the following questions and take notes on a whiteboard:

- Why do you think people go to the mall?
- How long do you think you will stay there?
- Do people like to be there?
- What kind of different people are there?
- How do people get there, how is the shopping mall connected to the place?
- What do you think? Do people like working there?
- Is there a tonal design that makes it nicer for people?
- What comparable places are there where people buy very different goods, also historically? What makes the difference from then to now?
- Do people even perceive what they hear?

Plenary: Locating in the city (approx. 20 min)

Discuss in a results-oriented way:

- What does your ideal shopping mall sound like?
- How can you best present your shopping mall experience to others in plenary?

What is your experience of the Sound Trek in general? (approx. 20 min)

Bibliography

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