0 unit: THE LISTENING MODES AND THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

0.1. THE LISTENING MODES

"Each hearing person who listens to the radio, watches TV, goes to the movies, goes dancing eats in restaurants, goes to supermarkets, participates in parties, has built up, has been forced (in order to be able to handle her or his perceptions of the sound)—to build up an appreciable competence in translating and using the music impressions that stream in from loudspeakers in almost every living space." (Ola Stockfelt, Adequate modes of listening)

When we ask someone to speak about what they have heard, their answers are striking for the heterogeneity of levels of hearing to which they refer. This is because there are at least three modes of listening, each of which addresses different objects. We shall call them **causal listening, semantic listening, and reduced listening**. **Causal listening**, the most common, consists of listening to a sound in order to gather information about its cause (or source). When the cause is visible, sound can provide supplementary information about it; for example, the sound produced by an enclosed container when you tap it indicates how full it is. When we cannot see the sound's cause, sound can constitute our principal source of information about it. An unseen cause might be identified by some knowledge or logical prognostication; causal listening (which rarely departs from zero) can elaborate on this knowledge. We must take care not to overestimate the accuracy and potential of causal listening, its capacity to furnish sure, precise data solely on the basis of analyzing sound. In reality, causal listening is not only the most common but also the most easily influenced and deceptive mode of listening.

Causal listening can take place on various levels. In some cases we can recognize the precise cause: a specific person's voice, the sound produced by particular unique object. We need to know the context to understand the cause of the sound. The human individual is probably the only cause that can produce a sound, the speaking voice, that characteristics that individual alone. Different dogs of the same species have the same bark. Or at least (and for most people it adds up to the same thing) we are not capable of distinguishing the barking of one bulldog from that of another bulldog or even a dog of a related breed. Even though dogs seem to be able to identify their master's voice from among hundreds of voices, it is quite doubtful that the master, with eyes closed and lacking further information, could similarly discern the voice of her or his own dog. What obscures this weakness in our causal listening is that when we're at home and hear barking in the back room, we can easily deduce that Sua or Beltza is the responsible part.

Michel Chion´s ¨listening modes¨ appear in his book ¨The audiovision¨ where he deeply analyzed the way we listen.

There are a lot of examples in everyday´s life such as shaking a box, but that shaking a box can give us more information what simply knowing that the object is a box.

Semantic listening

I call **semantic listening** that which refers to a code or a language to interpret a message: spoken language, of course, as well as Morse and other such codes. This mode of listening, which functions in an extremely complex way, has been the object of linguistic research and has been the most widely studied. One crucial finding is that it is purely differential. A phoneme is listened to not strictly for its acoustical properties but as part of an entire system of oppositions and differences. Thus semantic listening ignores considerable differences in pronunciation (hence in sound) if they are not pertinent differences in the language in question.
Obviously one can listen to a single sound sequence employing both the causal and semantic modes at once. We hear at once what someone says and how they say it. In a sense, causal listening to a voice is to listening to it semantically as perception of the handwriting of a written text is to reading it. The semantic listening makes us judge the language more than just by understanding the cause of it.
Example in our lives: Two people talking in Basque. We can understand where those people are from just by understanding the semantic properties of their language.

Reduced listening
Pierre Schaeffer gave the name reduced listening to the listening mode that focuses
on the traits of the sound itself, independent of its cause and of its meaning. Reduced listening takes the sound-verbal, played on an instrument, noises, or whatever-as itself the object to be observed instead of as a vehicle for something else. A session of reduced listening is quite an instructive experience. Participants quickly realize that in speaking about sounds they shuttle constantly between a sound's actual content its source, and its meaning. They find out that it is no mean task to speak about sounds in themselves, if the listener is forced to describe them independently of any cause, meaning, or effect. And language we employ as a matter of habit suddenly reveals all its ambiguity: "This is a squeaky sound," you say, but in what sense? Is "squeaking" an image only, or is it rather a word that refers to a source that squeaks, or to an unpleasant effect?
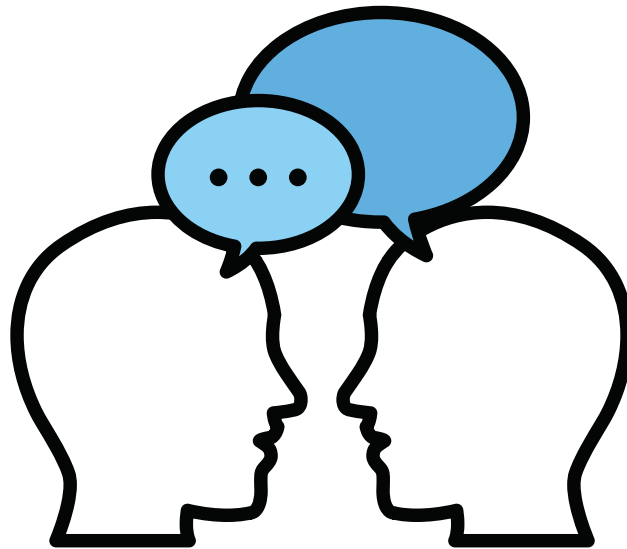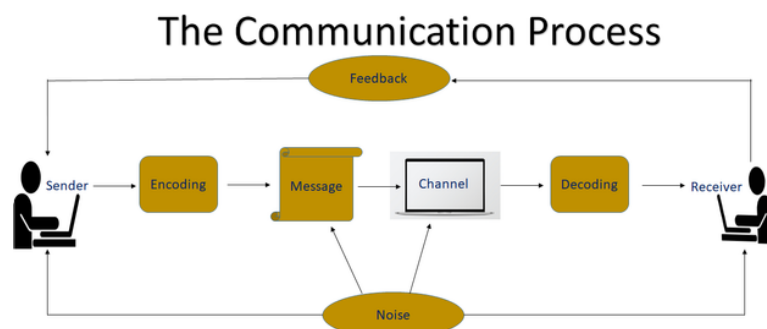
The reduced listening makes us undestand the the sound has some physical characteristics like a pitch, a tone and pays attention to those characteristics.

0.2. Typical communication processs

The communication process

The communication process refers to a series of actions or steps taken in order to successfully communicate. It involves several components such as the sender of the communication, the actual message being sent, the encoding of the message, the receiver and the decoding of the message. There are also various channels of communication to consider within the communication process. This refers to the way a message is sent. This can be through various mediums such as voice, audio, video, writing email, fax or body language. The overall goal of the communication process is to present an individual or party with information and have them understand it. The sender must choose the most appropriate medium in order for the communication process to have worked successfully.

The communication process has several components that enable the transmission of a message. Here are the various parts:

1. **Sender:** This is the person that is delivering a message to a recipient.
2. **Message:** This refers to the information that the sender is relaying to the receiver.
3. **Channel of communication:** This is the transmission or method of delivering the message.
4. **Decoding:** This is the interpretation of the message. Decoding is performed by the receiver.
5. **Receiver:** The receiver is the person who is getting or receiving the message.
6. **Feedback:** In some instances, the receiver might have feedback or a response for the sender. This starts an interaction.

How does the communication process work?

In order to successfully communicate, it's important to understand how the process works. Here are the seven steps in the communication process:

1. The sender develops an idea to be sent.
2. The sender encodes the message.
3. The sender selects the channel of communication that will be used.
4. The message travels over the channel of communication.
5. The message is received by the receiver.
6. The receiver decodes the message.
7. The receiver provides feedback, if applicable.

SOME PAGES TO PAY ATTENTION TO

The Process Communication Model │ Mickaël Dufourneaud │ TEDxEDHECBusinessSchool - YouTube

Types of Listening Skills - YouTube

Film Sound: Michel Chion's Acousmêtre - YouTube

Some assignments to work on listening

1st exercise: PRESENTATION: Listen to your mates presentations and take notes about them. Try to listen in the causal mode, semantic and reduced mode and undestand more about your colleagues.

2nd exercise: TED TALKS: Listen to the TED video and understand and identify the different parts of the communication processs

3rd exercise TRY TO CREATE A LIST WITH ALL THE PROBLEMS WITH CAN HAPPEN IN THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS