

## **Pedagogical Activities (by escoitar)**

### **Introduction**

We are surrounded by sound: noise, speech, music are part of our everyday lives. Most of the time we do not pay attention to the noises that we produce. But some of these noises can become meaningful when we change our mind and listen to them. From that moment on we can understand and study the sounds that surround us, the soundscapes, learn how our memories preserve them, create links between sounds, places and experiences.

Reflecting on soundscapes is a much more complex endeavour than working in the visual realm. In the past, technology overloaded our social environment with images, but now even Sound Marks have claimed their place. Thanks to easy accessibility we are living through historic times: sound seems to come out of its ancestral lethargy and becomes ubiquitous through computers and mobile phones. Nowadays we can re-discover sounds in a new way sharing and comparing different contexts. We become aware that we have a golden opportunity to shape our relationship with these vibrating environments. In this context we can find new ways to study and explain sound addressing new social and cultural challenges, improving educational processes, opening up a new sonorous sensibility. With this end in view we will present some ideas we have developed for the European Acoustic Heritage project.

### **1 WORKING WITH ONOMATOPOEIAS**

Onomatopoeias are a practical way to give an audience that usually does not relate with sound in a reflexive way an understanding of soundscape work. When we work with sounds and try to convey their importance, one of the main problems to overcome is how to explain them. Sound does not play a relevant role in society because, unfortunately, there are no educational references; sound usually goes unnoticed among those disciplines that could recognize its role: history, art, geography, communication, literature, anthropology, even music, and more. Therefore, one of the best ways to promote soundscape awareness is to recover the old patterns used to spread and fix it until the advent of the first sound recording system by Edison, that is: onomatopoeia, emblems, ideophones, painting, literature, etc. (see <http://europeanacousticheritage.eu/pedagogical-activities/>).

#### **EAH stickers**

For practical work we have drawn 40 sounds with their individual onomatopoeias and printed them on megaphone-shaped stickers (see [Drawing-with-sound.pdf](#)). You can use our ready-made examples or create your own onomatopoeias in your own language, drawing them on blank stickers. This exercise invites people to become aware of their auditory memory, and helps them to discover sounds that they do not usually pay attention to. See for example:

[http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste\\_d%27onomatop%C3%A9es\\_dans\\_diff%C3%A9rentes\\_langues](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_d%27onomatop%C3%A9es_dans_diff%C3%A9rentes_langues)  
<http://www.written-sound.com/>

### **2 WORKING WITH STICKERS**

#### **General Map**

The next step is to print a map of a location known to the group. Participants can then identify and locate any sound represented on the stickers on the map, and put the respective onomatopoeia sticker on its location on the map.

## **Thematic Map**

Another possibility is to use more specific maps with people of any age. We can choose any kind of map (urban, industrial, rural, ancient, etc ...). The process is similar to the former, but we can talk with people in a deep way focusing on what sounds are part of our acoustic identity. In this exercise, it is very interesting to work with ancient maps, discovering how soundscapes may have changed over time.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- These exercises provide a feedback helping us to think and talk about sound in a common space sharing sound experiences.
- They allow us to identify and locate the acoustic signals of a territory from its inhabitants point of view.
- Detecting our tangible and intangible heritage.
- Studying and understanding the soundscape evolution from a diachronic perspective.

## **ITINERARIES**

### **A) SOUNDWALKS**

Once we have completed the onomatopoeia sound maps we can use them to create more elaborate works: itineraries, blogs, compositions, etc ... For example, we can design soundwalks analyzing the results attending to:

- Most beautiful (or ugliest) sounds from one place.
- Endangered sounds.
- Missing sounds.
- Natural or social sounds, sounds related to economic activities, social interaction, etc.
- Noise pollution.

### **B) LOCATIVE TOOLS**

Using web applications we can share these sounds geolocating them on a virtual map (e.g. create your own layer in GoogleEarth) to offer a big picture of how different the soundscape of a city is depending on the season, the particular place or the time of day. This helps us to understand how sound contributes to create spaces as a flux.

We can also use locative audio mobile tools such as noTours ([www.notours.org](http://www.notours.org)) to create overlaid soundwalks deconstructing conventional audio-guides in a creative way and adding virtual sounds, imaginary soundspaces, soundscapes recomposed, interviews, etc., to a real place changing the way we perceive it.

## C) BLOGS

Another possibility is to take pictures while people are completing the physical map. Then, we open a blog where students will analyze the main data. This work, in stages, allows us to study the evolution of the physical map while they are filling their sounds.

Data that can be analyzed in a mapping are:

- Major sounds: natural, ancient, technological, etc.
- Highlighted sounds.
- How are the sounds located in the territory?
- Acoustic photo of the city, town, etc.

## 3 WORKING WITH SCORES

### Introduction

Another practical exercise is to design sound scores. This graphical representation allows us to play with the “acoustic gymnastics”, offering a different way to understand sound concepts such as: spatiality, temporality or intensity. For this exercise we take the Optical Discs of Marcel Duchamp and design a score. Once we have finished the drawing phase, we can put it on a turntable, or turn it with a pencil, and check the optical effect of the colours and patterns we have written.

Draw your score from these files:

<http://www.photo.rmn.fr/cf/htm/CPicZ.aspx?E=2C6NU005VD38>

<http://www.photo.rmn.fr/cf/htm/CPicZ.aspx?E=2C6NU005VI05>

### 3.1 HOW TO WRITE A SCORE?

- a) We select any of the two sides of our optical paper disc.
- b) We divide the “blue” groove according to the duration of the soundscape we are going to draw.
- c) We write/paint the sounds along the “blue” groove in our optical paper disc.

### 3.2 HOW TO END A SCORE?

- a) Throughout the groove, we write the main sounds of our soundscape. We can use onomatopoeia stickers or our own created onomatopoeia stickers.
- b) If the sound has high intensity it should be on the line “high”, and if it has low intensity on the line “low”.
- c) We can accompany each onomatopoeia with colours, symbols, etc. to express more details about: duration, tempo, rhythm, timbre, etc.

*(Remark: This exercise is an application, a graphical representation of sound. As Murray Schafer said: “Physical Training to reflect about soundscape”. Rather than imitating a contemporary music score, we only want to have fun while we think in sound.)*

### 3.3 EXAMPLES WITH SCORES

#### 3.3.1 Score with a composition

- a) We listen to the soundscape.
- b) We identify the most important sounds.
- c) We write in our optical paper disc the first sound, the middle and the last sound of the composition.
- d) Finally, we complete the score with the rest of the sounds identified in the same order and location.

#### 3.3.2 Score with a 24 hour-soundscape

In this exercise we work collectively and apply Murray Schafer's "Acoustic Gymnastics".

- a) The optical disc is divided, along the "blue" groove, in the same order and timing that we ask those questions to the students:

*07.00 h.* First sound we hear when we get up.

*08.00 h.* One sound when we walk to school.

*11.00 h.* Think of a sound when you're in the schoolyard.

*14.00 h.* Remember a sound when you are leaving the school.

*17.00 h.* A sound in the afternoon.

*20.00 h.* What sound do you hear when you come back home?

*22.00 h.* What is the last sound of the day before sleeping?

- b) You can ask as many questions as you like, but always look for a chronological order throughout the day.
- c) Each student has to write in the score all the sounds selected in the order of the questions (and time) until the groove is completed.
- d) To finish the exercise, we work in the same way as other examples: intensity, tempo, duration, etc.

#### 3.3.3 Score with a soundwalk

This exercise ignores the timeline and allows us to write the score without listening to the soundwalk.

- a) Once you have made the map with the participants, we can draw personal itineraries.
- b) For example, we can choose a route on our map with the most beautiful sounds.