

The sound of the voice: an exploration of the aural properties of the voice and their impact on meaning in communicative contexts.

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Abstract:

The sound of the voice: an exploration of the aural properties of the voice and their impact on meaning in communicative contexts explores the sound of the voice and its gestural properties in order to detect the importance of aural gestures when perceiving meaning, in communicative contexts. In pursuing how the sound of the voice mediates meaning between a broadcaster and a perceiver, this project discusses the following three aspects: the intimate nature of the voice, the aural gestures of the voice and the silent voice in written material. The exploration of the aural properties of the voice in communicative contexts indicates that sound mediates a meaning which goes beyond the semantically definable; thus, that sound has a strong impact on perception and experience of meaning.

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Chapter 1

Description

The following project consists of three parts; 14 sound studies, 6 text studies and a written article discussing the sound studies in the context of other conceptual work and philosophies. The studies (sound and text) are amplifications of the written components' researched material, and whilst they extend and introduce new ideas, they coexist with the concepts explored in the written element.

Chapter 4 and 5 are relating directly to the submitted sound work, whilst Chapter 3 is there to provide the reader with an understanding of the philosophical and conceptual context I believe this work should be approached by. This also applies to Chapter 6 which introduces the text studies.

As the written work progresses there will be a referral to particular sound and text studies.

Appendices A, C and D provides descriptions of the individual studies' designs, and directions on how to listen to/read them. Appendix A for studies 1 to 6 (the intimate nature of the voice), Appendix C for studies 7 to 14 (the aural gestures of the voice) and Appendix D for studies 15 to 21 (the silent voice in text).

It is thus suggested that the reader accesses the SDCard and refers to the appropriate Appendices whilst reading, to listen to/read the studies as they are referred to in the written component, once or more as preferred.

The 14 sound studies are individually designed with the purpose of describing or discussing concepts as brought forward in the written component. However, it will become clear that these studies could potentially be randomized, and one would be able to find a specific topics' properties in a sound study related to elsewhere. One would for example find plenty of aurally gesturing material in a study based on intimacy and vice versa.

Whilst I find it agreeable to listen to these studies more than once and in a random order, I strongly suggest that they are initially listened to in the order written. The reading of the text studies should follow the same principle.

The SDCard includes sound studies 1 to 14 and PDF versions of the text studies 15 to 21. You will also find a PDF of the dissertation, Dissertation.pdf and lastly a video, Presentation.mov (for headphones) as documentation of the presentation of the studies.

SDCard:

Dissertation.pdf

<http://marthawinther.com/>

Presentation.mov

(folder) Studies: Study_1.wav

Study_2.wav

Study_3.wav

Study_4.wav
Study_5.wav
Study_6.wav
Study_7.wav
Study_8.wav
Study_9.wav
Study_10.wav
Study_11.wav
Study_12.wav
Study_13.wav
Study_14.wav
Study_15.pdf
Study_16.pdf
Study_17.pdf
Study_18.pdf
Study_19.pdf
Study_20.pdf
Study_21.pdf

As listed and placed on the SDCard, the entire project can be accessed via following link:

<http://marthawinther.com/>

It is placed here to exist in the public domain, as well as for personal reasons in terms of future installation of work and/or potential employment.

Chapter 2

Introduction:

The sound of the voice: an exploration of the aural properties of the voice and their impact on meaning in communicative contexts explores the sound of the voice and its gestural properties which connects a broadcaster's intentions and perceived meaning. The term broadcaster is used throughout this written component and here refers to (s)he who is speaking or in other ways using the voice. The term meaning refers to that which we assign and derive from communication.

The project explores how the aural domain of the voice carries meaning beyond that which we can make sense of semantically. In doing so, it discusses the three following aspects; the voice and its powerful effect due to an intimate nature, the aural gestures of the voice through which we communicate and sense meaning and lastly the silent voice which mediates meaning between a the reader and text. These three aspects are all bound to gesturing elements in the sound of the voice; because, it is through these elements that one can express and understand meaning, aurally and written. Therefore, they may all be considered as paradigms of how the aural gestures of the voice communicates meaning beyond that which is semantically definable.

The sound of the voice: an exploration of the aural properties of the voice and their impact on meaning in communicative contexts discusses the phenomenon of the sound of the voice and its potential in communicative contexts within chosen conceptual and philosophical approaches already written. Whilst also visiting contemporary conceptual work through the texts of Steven Connor or Janet Cardiff's artwork the most consistent characters of this writing are Giorgio Agamben, Immanuel Kant, David Ffrangcon-Davies, Jacques Derrida and Maurice Blanchot.

On the basis of this, it is clear, that the voice and its gesturing properties have been discussed thoroughly throughout history. This suggests a continuous tradition, which this project is part of. As with most things, this project is self-seeking; in that, it explores a subject in order to gain knowledge. Nonetheless, there may be reasoning in applying contemporary technologies to highlight and, or discuss deep-rooted concepts; or, at least, use new and old concepts contextually to reveal generic supposition and ideology thoughts and to transfer this into practical study.

The fundamental premise of this project will identify that intention and perception in a communicative context is based entirely on individual understanding and experience. It is thus approaching the researched and practical material with a phenomenological method.

On that basis it is worth mentioning that this projects' practical work is limited to the use of my voice, thus my accent and my cultural understanding. These restrictions implies the dismissal of discussions of different accents and languages which by definition carries different gesturing elements. My hope is that the reader will approach the project keeping this in mind.

Chapter 3

Sound and voice; the conceptual context of this project

The three dimensionality of sound:

In everyday life¹, it is noteworthy how sound, perhaps unintentionally, is sometimes described by words that indicate shortage or absence. An example here may be that it is 'difficult' to establish clear distinctions in aural impressions; it is not immediately intelligible. I will extend focus to what it leads me to examine; the ways in which we perceive sound. To open this discussion, I quote Artist Jakob Kierkegaard: "I like the idea of sound having a membrane inside of it, like a kind of skin, separating the external and the internal. I imagine, that sound is like a body one can walk around or behind and will act differently according to where one is in relation to it. (...) I think it is interesting that sound can source from all sorts of places; from above, from behind, and it can affect me physically and of course sensually too. At the same time it is invisible." (Matsen 2011: 13).²

Kierkegaard points out that sound has a physical impact on our perception of surrounding environments. We perceive aural impressions through our body thus not merely through one single sense. An example is being how we may register the sound of footsteps in our body as a bodily acoustic.

Whilst I would claim this sense of a three dimensionality to be factual, it raises the question of an ambiguous nature of sound; which, in connection with the opening notion of difficulty of precise categorisation in the aural domain, empathetically implies a relationship where the understanding of sound is bound to inadequacy, in terms of defining meaning.

However, this understanding of inadequacy, suggests to me that it is also a profound attribute of sound. The way in which sound may not invariably be well suited to define impressions finally and precisely; it is corollary capable of keeping meaning and signification of our surrounding spaces open for interpretation.

Professor Steven Connor states; "we have a very strong preposition to believe that hearing is specially spatial or localizing, that it puts us in some sense in the world in a richer and more three-dimensional way than seeing, which seems by contract to make of the world a flat screen, or the other senses, that seem to give us only small slugs or slices of the sensible totality of the world. For we can hear textures and qualities, or at least judge them by their sounds, and we can thus hear the insides of things, while we can only ever see their outsides." (Connor 2008: 2).

With this quote we detect that sound may have a special ability to create a three dimensional and potentially richer phenomenological perception. We also note that through hearing "textures and qualities" we can not be sure that sound necessarily adheres to the intentions of its broadcaster or reflects the image of its source faithfully, in the way visual impressions generally tends to. This ability to exist in semantic hesitation, in "the potentiality of meaning" as philosopher Giorgio Agamben suggests in *Means Without End, Notes on Politics*,

¹ I am here referring to people in general; not the academic elite dealing with sound.

² This quote that been translated from Danish into English by me personally.

makes the domain of sound fascinating, although also potentially misleading in terms of everyday life both sensory and physically.

As this project is based on the voice in communication, let us look at these notions in the context of the aural properties of the voice. We shall start by introducing selected historical philosophies attempting to define the voice, and finally a proposal of how this project will approach it.

The voice and phenomenology:

Although, I do not intend to give a thorough account of the voices' historical context, I feel it is important to mention some motions this phenomena has gone through as it gives us an idea of how the voice is understood, in present time, and perhaps why.

The voice has a comprehensive history, philosophically, with various conflicting interpretations. We note the voice in connection to sensuality of dangerous effect in pagan tradition where sailors were said to be seduced to shipwreck by the sirens' singing.

The voice is here connected with a somewhat alarming sensuality which we can revisit with the Christian theologian, Augustine of Hippo (325-430) who suggested; that, the singing of religious texts could lead to such elevation and joy that the singers (and listeners) might accidentally abandon the words of praise and submit to the more worldly emotions. (Augustinus 2004).

These two examples, suggests an idea of the singing voice being connected to an instrument of persuasive and unreliable qualities. In current time, this is noted in other forms of expressing the voice. Museum director Madeleine Grynsztejn expresses thoughts on the work of artist Janet Cardiff as the following; "what makes her voice so effective is that it's at once very approachable and at the same time incredibly sexy. It's seductive but creepy, too; in other words, it draws you in, but you know it's not good for you."

(Schaub 2005: 176). This suggests to me that initial ideas of hearing and the voice has an effect on their status today, perhaps even on the auditory consciousness in western history generally.

In the Romantic era, the voice is connected to authenticity, self-presence and a unity of body and soul. This notion ties the voice to the personal or individual and thus an understanding of subjectivity which extends to the philosophy of cognition attested by Immanuel Kant.

Within this latter philosophy, chosen to extend focus to a phenomenological approach to sound; Kant describes in his *Critique of Pure Reason* the term noumena, in which all actual things, including sound, are measures which human beings cannot directly understand. Directly refers to an understanding of the things/ objects in themselves, for themselves. However, according to Kant we are able to understand things as phenomena; through our individual perceptual ability.

I have adopted this philosophy and believe one can only assume to understand or derive meaning on a basis of experience. Therefore, I can only assume to investigate the subject through systematic reflection on basis of subjectiveness; I must investigate sound as an experienced phenomena and thus describe, discuss and analyze it as such.

Whilst this may sound like an excuse to decidedly avoid arriving at a potential conclusion, I feel this basis of investigation reveals opportunities; because, the phenomenological approach to sound is an understanding of sound which produces meaning on the sensory and primary level and yet, generally exists in connection to conventional and cultural forms.

Chapter 4

The intimate nature of the voice

This chapter will discuss studies 1 to 6. You will find these on the SD Card. [SD Card - open folder 'Studies' - Study_1], [SD Card - open folder 'Studies' - Study_2] and so forth. It is suggested that you listen to these studies as you come across them in the text, once or more, as preferred. Please also refer to Appendix A for listening instructions and descriptions of each study.

We have had a short introduction to the voice through selected historical philosophies which has indicated a notion of the powerful influence the voice has on human beings. But, let us look at the voice on the basis of an intimate nature and within this domain also the seductive value. A notion which quite comfortably initiates this, is the idea of touching each other with the voice. "We touch people just as truly with the voice as we do with the hand, the only difference being that we use the intervening air as a means of contact, and not the hand." (Ffrangcon-Davies 1905:71).

Ffrangcon-Davies here refers us to an anatomical link where a person, by expressing himself (a pressing out), sets airwaves in motion which travels to another person's ear. As such, sound is a means of being in physical contact with our surrounding environment and each other.

This physical definition of the voice is entirely intriguing and impossible to ignore due to the nature of obviousness. It presents an uncomplicated relationship to sound and voice as it places individuality at the centre of communication/relation; he who speaks and he who listens are subject to their own physicality. Thus, so is the voice as it is a product of the selfsame physicality, expressed and heard.

As mentioned, I think it is a very appealing account of the voice as it implies an un-compromised presence which also indicates a high degree of intimacy. However, in terms of this project it presents us with issues of mediation. Whilst the following discussion looks at mediation in connection to the studies based on the voices' intimate nature, I refer you to Appendix B for notes on the entire project in presentation.

This project does not include a presentation of sound in live physical presence, so how can we present sound in an intimate way when cutting out the notion of touching each other?

I believe it is with binaural recording we shall find the answer, as this technique attempts to copy the physical shape of head and ears which are sonic-shaping functions. There is, of course, the argument that these sonic-shaping functions are unique to everyone due to physicality, thus an individual sonic experience. Whilst this is factual, I shall focus on binaural recordings' possibilities in terms of intimate impressions which it emphasizes (in comparison to other recording techniques) even if not to upmost perfection.

"The recorded sound is inside you, sharing your own interoceptive processes." (Fisher 1999:59).

Art historian Jennifer Fisher points towards, in a way I find slightly exaggerated, binaural recording having a quality of intimacy, due to a notion of inseparability to the listener's body. I would assume, that this accounts for all sound, recorded or live, purely scientifically. However, provided binaural recordings are played back through headphones, it does have an effective intimate quality. It seems to preserve an atmosphere and as

such it moves the listener into an original 'scene'; there is a felt connectedness between broadcaster and perceiver.

As we have looked at the voice based on physicality, and intimacy through technological means, I wish to finally mention the voice as a representation of the 'self' before continuing with the studies.

We can think of the voice as a personal signature; it is through the sound of the voice we recognise a particular singers' or speakers special timbre. This understanding of a personal signature deals with the notion of the individual which is associated with the idea of an intimate self-presence or self-expression.

The studies:

To initiate this part which deals with the notions described above on a practical level, it is appropriate to begin with a study outlining the idea that the properties of the voice are always identifiable as human.

Study_1 traces this relationship through the comparison of human speech and speech synthesis. In this study, we note a remarkable difference in short collections of words as well as split seconds of both (human and synthesized) which indicates that we as perceivers are quick to differentiate between the two³. This is due to our predisposition to recognise the voice and of course the physical properties which channels the voice. On this basis, there are two things I would like to mention.

I found the fact that there is a lack of breathing in the synthesized material to be critical. Whilst we shall look further into breath in the final study of this chapter, what I will mention here is that this absence seems to be important in understanding speech synthesis because it eliminates natural rhythm. Another central attribute to the human voice is its mediation of a person's empathy. Some of the vocal results of this belong to the aural gesture but the sound of it is only recognised as human (at this point in time). These human characteristics also supply information of a specific individual (provided one is familiar with this individual beforehand). Study_2 plays split seconds of five different people's voices, indicating that the voice is a personal signifier. This is, again, due to the physical properties of the individuals' body which suggests that we may consider self-presence and self-awareness⁴. Study_3 stimulates a discussion of these terms based on my own experience as this study is my voice recorded (as all studies are, apart from Study_2). I find that an edited version of my recorded voice where consonants are the primary content left crosses a personal boundary when played back to other individuals. I believe this is due to the fact that these particular sounds are shaped mainly in the mouth. Thus, the physical characteristics are revealed, which strangely (as the listener is most likely indifferent to this) provokes a feeling of being on display; somewhat like how a shy individual can feel when speaking in public. This is the intimate premises of the voice, which makes it so fragile and on the flip-side so powerful.

³ I imagine if one were to bury a voice recording somewhere that would render the signal camouflaged, it would still be recognisable as human when played back.

⁴ In terms of self-awareness, I can, without mentioning names, reveal that only two out of the five who was kind enough to participate in this study, were entirely comfortable with taking part. Whilst this may be for various reasons, I believe that the personal nature of the voice is one of them.

Delving into this intimate characteristic on a mediated (non-live) level, the use of binaural recording becomes useful. Study_4 intends to trace this through introducing closely recorded vocal as well as vocal recorded further away to create contrast and allow the listener to tune in to the closely 'miked' voices. This study is bound to mediation and the technological opportunities we have to provide a sense of intimate closeness, but let us for now look at what is there in terms of listener perception. There is a sense of being touched, as noted with David Ffrancgon-Davies earlier, due to the maintained plosive effects of voiced language. It is as if someone (in this case myself) is there breathing words into the ear. This inspires an idea of the potential ability of voice to feel live or present when mediated, due to choices of presentation and due to its familiar characteristics in terms of general human perception.

However, this type of recording and choice of presentation might also provoke a sense of intrusion and even disorientation because of its ability to abruptly immerse the listener in an unfamiliar environment or create an intimate relation which may be unwanted. In addition, this technologically manipulated voice has the capability of producing a feeling of doubt as to where this voice speaks from in relation to the position of perception. As such, a collaboration between a voice represented binaurally and its natural qualities as a tool of persuasion (in terms of human perception), can potentially prompt a feeling of intrusion for the listener. I ask you to listen to Study_5 with these notions in mind.

The final study deals with breath as I believe this is important in understanding the intimate characteristic of the voice. This text does not intend to discuss the biological build which channels the voice, but the ways in which breath leads the voice somewhat like an extended arm⁵ in terms of physical interaction. In Study_6 all spoken words has been edited out. What remains are the pauses in between words including a small selection of consonant sounds carrying a noticeable amount of air.

As we are aware the heard voice, thus words, are carried by air. One may only need to place a hand in fair proximity to the mouth whilst speaking to notice this. However, whilst I may be alone in finding this to be a surprising discovery, I found that there is a large amount of airflow (disregarding inhalation here) in between words when the vocal sound has expired. The vocal resonance representing the sound which is basic in order to perceive the meaning of a word. In terms of how this links to the voices' intimate properties, I believe I can only base a discussion on my experience as the voice being studied belongs to me. I find that this dissected version of my voice where tiny slices of exhalation after words are in focus is almost intrusive when having to present. Like Study_2 communicates, I also find that these sounds indicate that it is in fact myself who is recorded even when only focusing on the breath based sounds in the study (dismissing the plosives)⁶.

As such I will conclude that breath can help in defining a certain individual (when meticulously edited), and that whilst it is fascinating that every word when spoken has a wave of air after the sound crucial to semantic

⁵ I am here referring to the Ffrancgon-Davies quote as seen in the introduction to this chapter; "We touch people just as truly with the voice as we do with the hand".

⁶ I have played this study back to various people who are familiar with my voice, and the majority voted that it is noticeable that it is I on the material.

understanding of a word has come to an end, it is intimidating to exhibit because it is the physical frame which reveals it.

The voice reveals much, it reveals a human being's presence (even just in voice) and the individual. The voice thus represents an elementary form of self-awareness, through which we note an intimate, fragile, authentic and personal phenomenon. One may take note of this in situations where the voice reveals or communicates the emotional state of the broadcaster⁷.

On the other hand, the voice is endowed with strength and power. It can issue demands and practice the individuals democratic right. Meanwhile, it is also a highly effective tool for seduction as well as being a root of comfort. In conclusion, the voice is on one hand an intimate personal signature, and on the other, a powerful aesthetic instrument which combines persuasion, suggestion and seduction.

⁷ A study outlining this property of the voice would have been ideal, however, lacking skills to imitate emotion convincingly, this was overruled.

Chapter 5

The aural gestures of the voice

This chapter will discuss studies 7 to 14. You will find these on the SDCard. [SDCard - open folder 'Studies' - Study_7], [SDCard - open folder 'Studies' - Study_8] and so forth. It is suggested that you listen to these studies as you come across them in the text, once or more, as preferred. Please also refer to Appendix C for listening instructions and descriptions of each study.

Continuing on from exploring at the voice on basis of its intimate nature, this chapter will look at the voices' aural properties through which we communicate and perceive meaning.

Initially, we may look at how we can describe these aural, expression and intonation-based dimensions in communication? Perhaps it is through the concept of aural gestures, that we may consider the many layers of expression that are bound to communication and our understanding of it.

Before delving into this topic, we must acknowledge that there are two types of gesture; aural gesture and bodily gesture. As the heading suggests, I shall concentrate on the first mentioned. I, nonetheless, feel inclined to give mention to the latter as this type of gesture, similar to one based on orality, supports the meaning we intent to put across and the meaning we understand. Bodily gesture contains a motion, an act; when we point towards something or when a performer bows down to receive applause. These gestures are actions whereby we can eliminate aural expression and still extend the intended meaning. A form of bodily communication⁸. Like this, is that act of gesticulation whereby we can enforce or aid what we say. This latter form is more closely related to the aural gesture, that I wish to discuss here, as they both act as mediators or means through which we support (as broadcasters) or question (as receivers) the meaning of language, through language.

In terms of research, the gesture proves a fruitful dimension of communication. Firstly, we shall revisit Giorgio Agamben and his description of gesture as "communication of communicability" (Agamben 2000: 58). Agamben defines this statement quoting that gesture "has precisely nothing to say because what it shows is the being-in-language of human beings as pure mediality." (Agamben 2000: 58). However, as this sense of being-in-language can not be part of the language itself; it is something which cannot exist in sentences without human mediation, Agamben states: "the gesture is essentially always a gesture of not being able to figure something out in language" (Agamben 2000: 58).

According to Agamben, gesture is endless mediation in itself (as thus never representing a final meaning) and a part of a system of meaning which can not be determined in the same way as language. In other words; the meaning of gesture is a function in human mediation by which we can determine the meaning of language and the meaning of what is being communicated to us, but it has no meaning in itself.

⁸ I am aware that the non-verbal gesture expressed through bodily actions are highly important in terms of communication, however as this type of gesture does not have aural properties (I have found no evidence of a such), I have chosen not to discuss it in detail.

A shared view on gesture's inability to obtain status as definitive signifiers of meaning exists with Philosopher Jacques Derrida who writes on Edmund Husserl's theory of signs. Derrida states; "A sign is never an event, if by event we mean an irreplaceable and irreversible empirical particular. A sign which would take place but 'once' would not be a sign." (Derrida 1973: 50).

We note that a sign can not exist on its own, but, is also a reference to repetition. A sign must remain the same and be repeated as such (within the boundaries of individuality) in order for it to be recognised. In order for it to be a signifier, we can use it to support meaning in operation and perception. As such, Derrida addresses signs/gestures on basis of linearity time, whilst Agamben addresses this on basis of human mediation. I will look at one further philosophy before relating to the practical studies of aural gesture; it shall be that of gestural tone.

Ludwig Wittgenstein inspires us to look at gesture as the tone in language in *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*. Wittgenstein argues that there, within verbally expressed language, exists a strong musical element which is primary to developing meaning. With Wittgenstein, we can look at, a sigh, a question or the tone of longing as they are altogether gestures merely by existing as tones in the voice. It is, thus, established that aural gestures can have a meaning of their own, a meaning which lives beyond the message. In this sense, Wittgenstein implores us to look at sound as the core of communication.

The studies:

We have had a short introduction to the aural gesture through chosen philosophical views given by Giorgio Agamben, Jacques Derrida on basis of Husserl's theory of signs and Ludwig Wittgenstein. The following writing wishes to discuss these, as well as my own ideas, on a practical level through a selection of studies. Before beginning the discussion let us remind ourselves of the phenomenological approach this project takes. The initial thoughts on sound and meaning⁹ and the notion of tone in the voice outlined by Wittgenstein, appeals to an intensification of our listening sensibility. With this emphasis on the act of experiencing and listening, this project is directed towards a need to approach sound on a phenomenological basis.

Let us begin by focusing on Study_7 which deals with a single sentence's ability of diversity by stressing different words, and is as such a simple way of detecting the use of aural gesture. Study_7 is somewhat obvious in terms of our experience of aural gesture because it 'only' shows that which we already know; that gesture can shape intention and perception of meaning in language. The question, however, is to what extent it does this. With Study_7 we note that the verbal gesture establishes meaning through tone and rhythm (a detailed investigation of these terms follows at a later point). Ludwig Wittgenstein writes of an experience of meaning in language, where levels of expression push the boundaries of the language itself (Wittgenstein 1991: 40). To make sense of this in an exaggerated manner one could say that gesture is a sort of verbal playground where the spoken word is being given meaning through tone and rhythm whilst still upholding its general meaning as we know it from the dictionary or other communicative contexts. Thus, a single word can

⁹ As discussed in chapter 2 - The three dimensionality of sound.

(when used or understood gesturally) represent meaning beyond its own semantic definition, and thus it points towards its own ambiguity. As such we have a relationship between sound and meaning which is difficult to determine. Perhaps we can make sense of this by employing categories such as primary and secondary meaning; primary meaning being the semantic definition of language and secondary meaning being that which is added by aural gesture. Here, I introduce Study_8 which attempts to introduce the secondary meaning as the dominant.

In this study we note how stressing the first or last word in a sentence implies different meanings, like we saw it with the prior study. But, it also shows how it links entire sentences together, by using the secondary meaning to shape the following sentence. We thus see a connection between aural gesture and the flow of language. The gestural element in the use of language enables the language itself, through sound and intonation, to tell something additional to the message while still preserving its relationship to the primary meaning of the words spoken. One could refer to this as wordplay of soundly dimensions.

Having introduced this idea of aural gesture to have the ability of adding a layer of meaning to language whilst maintaining its relationship to primary meaning, let us investigate whether aural gesture can exist on its own. I here refer you to listen to Study_9. In my view, gesture is a means of making intended meaning visible. It is a fundamental form of communication and cannot be understood through the semantic and syntactic systems of language. For example, one can determine certain jokes as gesticulative play on words, which, works only within the domain of language and yet challenges this domain. As we have seen it with Giorgio Agamben, gesture generates or produces meaning but does not have meaning which can be determined in final. A gesture has the ability of giving a single word several meanings; it is the action of meaning or even the 'act' itself, yet with Derrida we note that it will never obtain status of being a definitive sign in itself. In Study_9 we have a series of 'sighs' which I would claim work on their own in a communicative context.¹⁰ They are valid communicative descriptors without a connection to spoken language, but also with, as they (although not layered onto the words) apply meaning to it. There may be an issue of definition; it could be that Agamben and Derrida would agree with this idea but chose to exclude a sigh from the general understanding of gesture. This exploration does nonetheless adopt the philosophy of Ludvig Wittgenstein where sighs are in fact a type of gesture and they communicate meaning which is definable without words as it were.

Another way of perceiving meaning through gesture without specific semantic understanding is dominating in Study_10. This study uses aural gesture in collaboration with language and thus deviates from the previous study. However, like the previous study, it deals with the fact that gesture provides the receiver with an idea of broadcasters emotional content, before without language, now with. The voice is an immensely powerful tool; it displays emotion of all kinds. Whilst this study would fit comfortably into the studies on intimacy, it is nonetheless here because the aural gesture plays a part in how the sound of the voice illustrates the emotional state of the speaker. This study portrays an argument from a removed location, in which one

¹⁰ These particular sighs very much depend on their place culturally and geographically. I will however, hesitantly, assume that the concept of defining certain gestures as definitive signifiers applies other cultures as well.

can easily tell its nature without being able to hear the primary content. The secondary content is enough to advise the listener of the situation. This is partly due to the aural gesture (partly because a continuously raised voice is not necessarily one of the attributes of aural gesture) and because of the added, exaggeration in this case of tone and rhythm as discussed earlier.

The following two studies will further investigate tone and rhythm, as mentioned above. Study_11 focuses primarily on the rhythmical value in voiced language. Art historian Ernst Gombrich suggests the following; “the mechanism of projection plays a major part in hearing” (Renier et al. 1986: 75-76). Hearing is, as such, trained to project meaning onto sound in order to make sense of it.

Study_11 investigates this by replacing recorded speech with a sine wave following the amplitude of the original signal, with the intention of resembling speech. This type of study has been done before by Psychologist Robert Remez who found that “signals are apparently sufficient to support perception of the linguistic message” (Remez et al. 1981: 1). Remez, however, combined and layered sine waves to replicate the properties of speech, where Study_11 more so works on basis of an envelope follower by hand¹¹. Whilst I am not arguing that Remez are incorrect in finding that the acoustic properties of the speech can be resembled by mechanical sounds, I find that Study_11 has a human communicative value to it but does not give the illusion of speech. This communicative notion may be due to it’s resemblance of a telegraph sounder which by definition belongs in human communication. On that notion, one is inclined to agree with Gombrich and his emphasis on perception.

A thing we however tend not particularly to perceive when hearing the voice in speech is its musical value. We always perceive its tone which I believe is bound to expression, but not necessarily its vast range of musical tones. Study_12 emphasizes this aspect.

The outcome of this study has an intense effect I find, simply because it is not necessarily a noted part of speech when heard (although this type of study has been thoroughly explored by various musicians/artists). As we saw it in the introduction to this chapter; Wittgenstein agrees that the voice has a musical content which is essential to perception in terms of emotional content. This musical value is intonation and intonation lies in tone.¹² The tone in the voice mediates information about the broadcaster to the perceiver. While doing so, intonation (along with rhythm) also invites contact between the two. Study_13 outlines this relationship through asking questions and replying. With the idea of being able to touch each other with the voice, as discussed previously, a notion on physical contact is introduced. Whilst Study_13 is not based on the physical properties of ex-pressing air thus an actual physical connection, it nonetheless emphasizes contact. When asking questions and replying, what is crucial to mention is proximity. The aural gestures of

¹¹ I replicated the speech signals amplitude by hand, as I found the result of using an actual envelope follower to sound ‘less human’. This is quite possibly because we, as perceivers, do not hear all, but only that which is crucial for our overall understanding of a message.

¹² Although this writing does not intend to discuss various accents, dialects, languages and so forth, it is noteworthy that this tone (and rhythm), quite often tend to change according to the language. I myself, speak with a much higher pitched voice in my first language, Danish.

the voice has the ability of creating closeness¹³; on the one hand one can invite another into one's personal space as it were by whispering a question and on the other force someone to move away by speaking harshly. Or perhaps initiate a negative conversation through interruption. As such, we note the aural gestures of the voice as having the ability to create an either positive or negative effect through inviting the listener to act. A blatant way of outlining this relationship is through the use of a megaphone. Study_14 uses such a device. A megaphone is a system of addressing a larger crowd with the ability of mobilizing an audience. My interest in this device as a mediator for the voice is the way in which it instantly changes our perception of the human voice. It is given that this changed perception depends on cultural mindsets (as we saw it with Study_9 and its sighs), possibly even on the individual within a certain culture. However, I find that the sonic overpowering broadcast of a (generally unknown) individual tends to suggest that important information is being given and therefore all must listen. However, within this exact suggestion lie an instant withdrawal; forced listening creates a scenario where one feels obliged to dismissal so as to think for oneself. This argument may be dismissed as authority problems as some, I'm sure, would make an effort to listen to the words, but what is crucial here, is the fact that this mediated voices' distorted sound, volume and gesture affects how we engage with it, or not; whether the message is positive or negative. I believe that these are the properties of the aural gesture; they mediate the voiced language through layers of expression in order that we, as perceivers, are able to define meaning.

¹³ In terms of presenting sound work this could prove highly effective because asking the listener questions introduces a conversational dimension by engaging the listener to feel personally addressed, thus drawn in.

Chapter 6

The silent voice in text

This chapter will discuss studies 15 to 21. You will find these in PDF format on the SDCard.

[SDCard - open folder 'Studies' - Study_15], [SDCard - open folder 'Studies' - Study_21] and so forth, or in separate plastic folders following Appendix D. It is suggested that you read these studies as you come across them in the text, once or more, as preferred. Please also refer to Appendix D for reading ideas and descriptions of each study.

A related, though, not identical curiosity is the literary voice. This silent voice is a central function in the literary experience because it is a voice which lies in between the lines; speaking from nowhere, but distinctively speaking to someone. It is thus that it points towards a relationship between the author and the reader; it is thus that it becomes a poetic function through which we experience written material.

The voice in text as a philosophical phenomenon discusses the relationship between the neutral, absent voice and the personal, authentic, speaking voice.¹⁴ This chapter shall focus on the silent voice as a phenomenon which enhances the experience of a text which is separate from that which we encounter in language generally, and examine how this fictive, silent and literary voice concept works and acts in literature.

Firstly, I must establish, with you the reader, that I consider the literary voice to be a behavior or action within written material which guides our reading of it. It is neither metaphorical nor physical. Accordingly, it is a voice; which, exists somewhere between being and not being, somewhat like a fictional character in a novel inspires us to create an appearance without showing us a portrait. With this example we also note the potentiality of deviating from the writers intention (as his interpretation of the characters' appearance is quite possibly different from the readers), but we shall return to that at a later point.

A significant challenge when dealing with the literary voice proves to be determining its location. It is simple to state that it exists only in our heads, but let us examine this a little more closely. As mentioned earlier it speaks from nowhere yet one could claim that it 'sounds' from anywhere (referring to text, reader and in between). Meanwhile, however, it shuns apprehension; it is not possible to capture so to speak. It can not be identified in the text itself for that is merely symbols lying mute on a surface. It exists nonetheless, as a mediator between text and reader; a voice which is only 'alive' to the extent, that it is being read. Historian Horace Engdahl states; "I detect and understand the written in the very moment that I hear a voice in it, when the sentences are given a tone, a perspective." (Engdahl, 1996: 174).¹⁵

The literary voice which Engdahl identifies here if one of silence yet one we can listen to through the text. Literature thus becomes a medium which is not a passive instrument of knowledge but one which is set in motion as it is read.

¹⁴ I base this on reading the works of Maurice Blanchot "The Gaze of Orpheus and Other Literary Essays" and Jacques Derrida "Speech and Phenomena, And Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs".

¹⁵ ¹⁵ This quote that been translated from Swedish into English by me personally.

In order to study and analyze this literary voice which has been introduced however, we may need to look to the more tangible tools. We can look at the voice as being a function bound to aesthetic factors such as pause, rhythm and structure as well as expressions of belief or attitude (the way in which the text is written). In other words which, mediates the relation between text and reader through semantic gesture and mood.

Firstly, on this note of mood in a text, I will use the word tone, which Engdahl introduces. Tone shall refer to the distinctive atmosphere existing in a text.

I would claim that the obvious analysis of a tone in text would be that it belongs to the writer simply because he wrote it and thus poured his tone into it. Tone is as such rhetorical, and not neutral in its intention.

However, whilst I believe it is not neutral, it is questionable whether this is due to the writer or the reader: the tone is expressed by the writer but experienced by the reader through the literary voice.

The studies:

We have noted that the voice in literature is a mediating function between a text and a reader; it is a function through which we meet, sense and listen to the author. However, the literary voice is neither identical with a real, physical voice nor with the writer. It is a function in the text which plays with these positions. Let us look at this phenomenon in practice.

Firstly, we shall look at the text which we have already heard though the spoken voice in previous studies. I now refer you to Appendix E which is an analysis of the text itself (in its original written mode), through which we note the complexity of the literary voice. In Appendix E this silent voice is pointed out on a semantic and structural level; how it moves around 'inside' a text. However, the literary voice is, as discussed, also useful on an expressive level; on its way 'out of' the text.

I initiate this idea with a couple of studies, which I find directly invites a reader to listen. Study_15 and Study_16 are two exaggerated representations of the text. These two examples capture the attention of the reader in opposite ways; let us look at them separately. Study_15 is initially intrusive. It has the same effect as sound mediated by a megaphone in a social context; it potentially interferes with a mindset and compels to be read it yet it is effortless. It screams at the reader. Study_16 on the other hand, whispers at you, to you. It invites an intimate relationship because you have to physically move in to read it and because it inspires a personal connection between writer and reader. As such, it is connected to the notions discussed in Chapter 3. These two representations have entirely different moods/tones, and I would argue that, fundamentally changes the way in which we hear them.

Another two examples which engages the reader personally is Study_17 and Study_18. These studies are dominant in terms of a reader-writer relationship. However, I believe this relationship is based on semantics; the handwritten text provides the reader with an understanding of writers' age, time in which it was written, geographical dimensions and so forth. But does this meaning based on semantic understanding add to or ignore the silent voice? Firstly, we have established that the literary voice mediates the relationship between text and reader. As such the semantic understanding is secondary to the voice. However, it is in the process of reading that we experience the atmosphere in a text which arguably affects the voice. I thus feel inclined to

conclude that, with Study_17 and Study_18 we note that sometimes meaning is created in a collaboration between semantic understanding and the literary voice.

Study_17 and Study_18 point us towards semantic understanding in a 'broad' sense; creating meaning relating to dimensions standing 'behind' a text; in this case the writer in time and space (geographical).

Let us also look at studies where the literary voice is expressed mostly through those dimensions in text relating to syntax, rhythm, punctuation; a sort of linguistic analysis of silent phonology.

I initiate this idea with Study_19. We can note a sense of being spoken directly to or accused in some way.

With this slight change in the written text we note a different tone to the one initially introduced. This tone lies in the chosen way of addressing the reader, and its outcome includes a relationship of directness between reader and writer. Due to this change of tone in the text, we also note a change of rhythm which, like expression, is bound to the literary voice. Whilst this change of rhythm is embedded in Study_19, I instead refer to Study_20 in which this relationship is much more exaggerated. In Study_20 there is, in the semantic and syntactic level, a use of shifting the flow in sentences which is important for the feeling of pace when reading. One thing which is noteworthy here is the tactic of interrupting the pre-assumed rhythm. On this basis of broken rhythm and changing topics, the text inspires a tone or silent voice which is babbling in some sense. As such we can look at Study_20 as an experiment where a speech related type of writing affects the way in which we hear the voice in the text through reading.

There is one other thing we are pointed towards when changing the sentences to displace a sense of rhythm, which is that of meaning. When a meaning fails to end at the end of a sentence, new meanings are created. Look for example at the first four sentences in Study_20 bearing the original typing in mind. On this basis, we can use the rhythmical fractures to point at language through the use of language. This establishes a relation between sound and meaning, as we understand the meaning through the rhythmic content which, in my opinion, is directly bound to the literary voice.

A strategy which may help to define the voice in text, and which is not entirely dissimilar to the previous two studies is that of identities. Most obvious is the identity of the author, mentioned earlier in discussion of tone within a text. This identity inspires the idea of a self-present author, who exists behind the text. But let us look at the identities related directly to the semantic understanding in a text first. Study_21 is the text written out as a conversation between two people. In this case, the author is an agent standing behind his work, introducing a selection of identities in front of it, so to speak. This study is closely bound to the literary voice, as we automatically use it to separate identities; we assign a voice to each character. Especially in this particular case, due to the complexity of the conversation; it is not easy to make sense of semantically or in terms of who speaks when.

The three studies above have looked at the relationship between reader and writer, rhythm and identities, and conclude altogether that the literary voice exists and is understood through tone. A tone in the text which is related to the semantic and the atmosphere. However, these studies also point out that it is through punctuation and syntax that the literary voice takes place. By introducing different types of writings with shifts in rhythm, ways of speaking, introduction of identities and so forth, it is noteworthy that perhaps the

literary voice is in movement and emerges through this syntax, semantic and rhythm based notion playing on what words do, and on what they say.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

We have explored the sound of the voice and its potential when determining meaning. In doing so, a connection between intention and perception has been noted.

To understand the gestural meaning which is inherent to the sound of the voice from a phenomenological point of view, one is required to adopt a style of thinking, in order to acquire a new meaning. The aural gesture in communication is as such bound to individual perception. Meanwhile, it is equally bound to intention. Viewed from this perspective; sound in communication finds itself to be closely related to phenomenology through which we can only perceive our surrounding environment according to our personal experience of it.

Language is carried by sound and it is through this sound that we perceive it and assign meaning to it. The aural gesture is engraved in language to give it meaningfulness beyond the primary definition. Unlike the semantically definable information or message in language, the aural gesture is bound to an experience of meaning which relies upon our 'sense' of language. In this respect, it is tempting to argue that these 'sensed' messages form the primary meaning for language because it empowers language through expression. This idea of the gesturing element of language, which is expressed in sound, as being dominant in terms of experiencing meaning is also reflected in the silent voice experienced when reading a text. This voice implements a gestural relation between reader and text because it imparts through expressive dimensions, amongst others. The silent voice of written material is located as a gesture between reader and text; it is not written but awakened by a reading and it mediates a text's gestural potentials. As such the silent voice reveals its author, just as the spoken voice reveals its broadcaster. It is a powerful tool of expression, just as it is an instrument which exposes us: the voice is a personal signature which channels a self to be perceived by another self.

Sound has a strong impact in terms of experience; it is an effective tool of communication, and as discussed throughout this project, it works on more levels than the semantic.

The study of sound (within a communicative context) might thus assist in understanding the perception of meaning in communication, the meaning that goes beyond that which we can make sense of when relying on our semantic understanding. The gestural approach to sound can assist when interpreting meaning in communication. Approaching interpretation with a phenomenological method (in which listening is necessary in order to capture meanings that stand outside the semantic definable) is equally necessary because it unveils a type of meaning which is individually captured.

In conclusion; this practical and philosophical exploration of sound as being the mediator of meaning between broadcaster and perceiver highlights the fact that sound is key to understanding the meaning we derive from communication.

Appendix A

List of studies 1-6: The intimate nature of the voice

Studies 1 to 6 are binaural recordings of the voice, some of them including whispering. They are therefore somewhat quiet and must therefore be listened back to in a quiet environment. I advise you to listen to these at the same volume level as one would expect the voices to be in a live situation.

- Study_1:

Listening instruction:
On headphones.

Description:

A selection of randomly chosen sentences, at times edited into sound of no semantic definition. The voices recorded are my own and a speech synthesizer found on website <http://www2.research.att.com/~ttsweb/tts/demo.php>

The synthesized voice and my own take turns in being the most easily detected as well as blended together to give the listener an opportunity to detect how the natural and the synthesized voice differ as well as how they are alike.

- Study_2:

Listening instruction:

On stereo speakers. This study may benefit from being looped 4-5 times in order to recognise patterns to differentiate voices. Times of looping is discretionary.

Description:

A study which differs from the rest as it is recorded material are of five different people not including myself.

Split seconds of each recorded voice is played, and the recordings follows the text chronologically.

It may be worth mentioning that I chose to use only male voices for the simple reason that there are more men than women at the place where recordings took place, and I wished for the study to be consistent in gender to avoid emphasis on semantic definitions of male/female within the study.

- Study_3:

Listening instruction:
On headphones

Description:

A chronological reading of the text, where chosen consonants is the primary material left.

- Study_4:

Listening instruction:
On headphones.

Description:

A series of sentences roughly following the texts' chronological order, recorded binaurally and at various distances and processing.

- Study_5:

Listening instruction:

On headphones.

Description:

A chronological reading of the text recorded binaurally. There are several 'characters' recorded, speaking from various places, at various volumes with various processing, as well as with various expressive content.

- Study_6:

Listening instruction:

On headphones.

Description:

A chronological reading of the text where all words have been edited out. Remaining is the pauses in between words as well as a selection of consonant sounds. This study is a very silent due to the natural materials silent nature.

Appendix B

Project in presentation:

When describing this work in presentation, I find its main strength is its ability to overlap what is private and what is public. Public refers to the perceiver who is invited to move through a space directed by his/her listening. Private, however, is much more interesting here, because whilst this overlap of public and private is perhaps general to arts (an artist provides a perceiver a glimpse of the artists' self) this work potentially also encroaches on the perceivers' personal space. This effect occurs through the voices' ability to engage a perceiver directly and through mediating the voice in such a way that it feels invading.

On the note of the broadcaster/artists' private sphere, I have, throughout the process of creating the studies had a clear feeling of this work encroaching on my personal boundaries when presented. This is no complaint however, as I believe this feeling indicates the intimate nature of the voice which is a main theme of this project.

This overlap also provides an interesting relationship between the broadcaster (myself) and the perceiver. I have through feedback from friends understood that experiencing this work in presentation has a strange effect; it creates an unfamiliar layer of relation due to its difference to the preexisting relation they have with me. So, as these are thoughts of people familiar with me, one can only wonder what effect the work will have on a person unfamiliar with me and my voice.

Notes on future presentation:

The practical studies of this project can be presented in various ways. The documentation video Presentation.mov [SDCard - Presentation.mov] shows this work presented as a whole throughout two differing spaces, one being a corridor containing doors to rooms and staircases, the other a large storage room filled with various objects. This arrangement is ideal for this work, as the sound studies works well if placed according to their 'theme', an example is Study_10 [SDCard - Aural Gesture Studies - Study_10] which is well placed behind a closed door as it imitates a distanced argument. As such, a space which due to architectural properties leads you in a direction when walking, like corridors, is ideal for this project. However, due to the amount and variety of studies, one can also envision this work in a gallery space. As part of an installation I imagine an empty, silent room with two binaural studies playing through headphones at each end of the room. This would have a very different effect from the presentation already described. This work in presentation is thus highly adaptable and potentially most interesting when experimented with.

Appendix C

List of studies 7-14: The aural gestures of the voice

- Study_7:

Listening instruction:
On stereo speakers.

Description:
a selection of sentences where each word is stressed in turn as well as definitions to what the applied stress implies. For example:

you can't do everything you want (but I can)

you *can't* do everything you want (it's impossible)

the study does not progress linearly but each sentence is represented with its respective amount of variations (one for each word in the sentence) and definitions.

- Study_8:

Listening instruction:
On a mono speaker.

Description:
The sentence “they slept with their glasses on” is here represented twice. The first half of the study evolves through stressing the last word of the sentence and then ‘explaining’ with a single sentence what this particular stress implies. The second sentence, like the first sentence, stresses the last word to give it a particular meaning. An ‘explanation’ is then given to what the second sentence meant, this third sentence also stressing the last word, and so forth.

The second half of the study works on exactly same basis, although stressing the first word.

- Study_9:

Listening instruction:
On stereo speakers.

Description:
A series of 5 expressive sighs not including speech is firstly played. They are then applied to a selection of sentences, each to two different ones to show their diversity. The choice of sentences are few; there are only 5 which means that each sigh is assigned to two sentences of very limited choice. I chose to restrict it to this number in attempting to show diversity.
I however found that the fifth sigh does not necessarily work in collaboration with sentences.

A list of possible meanings when expressed on their own:

- 1: expresses being annoyed or indifferent
- 2: expresses exhaustion like when being asked to repeat something
- 3: expression perhaps when witnessing someone hurting themselves

4: expressing indifference or uncertainty

5: expression potentially meaning the same as saying “what”

- Study_10:

Listening instruction:

On stereo speakers. Whilst you can listen to this study in the space your speakers are in, you may also want to leave the room and listen to it from behind a closed door. For this, you will need to turn up the volume, so that it is detectable however still slightly muted when listening back from behind the door.

Description:

A muffled argument between two people in a location which appears to be removed from listeners point of perception.

- Study_11:

Listening instruction:

On a mono speaker.

Description:

A chronological reading of the text being replaced by a sine wave following the amplitude of the original recording. The original recording however appears, at circa two thirds into the study, and continues in unison with the sine wave to show that the beginning of the track where only the sine wave is present has in fact been following the amplitude of the speech signal.

- Study_12:

Listening instruction:

On a mono speaker.

Description:

A slow chronological reading of the text with an added keyboard track playing the notes uttered by the voice. As I am not able to identify the musical notes in the voice to perfection this can be characterised as a creative recreation which is bound to my abilities in determining pitch.

- Study_13:

Listening instruction:

On stereo speakers.

Description:

A chronological reading of the text recorded at various distances to create the effect of different characters. These characters makes statements, poses questions and interrupt each other.

- Study_14:

Listening instruction:

On stereo speakers.

Description:

Three layered recordings of the text spoken through a megaphone. Falling in and out of the study is a background of layered speech recordings (also of the text), which replicates a crowd as this is generally part of a scenario where a megaphone would be in use.

Appendix D

List of studies 15-21: The silent voice in text

The following seven pages are the text studies enclosed in plastic pockets in order for them to be removed and placed elsewhere for reading in case you should wish to do so. Whilst they need no further explanation beyond that which is written in the main text, I've allow for a little note below.

Study 15:

This study can be imagined as a much larger print (A0 or larger) hanging on a wall in a public space.

Study 16:

This study has the right size, but should ideally be hanging on a wall in a public space so that the reader must move into close proximity to be able to read its content.

Study 17:

This study needs no mentioning of altered size or placement. It was kindly written by my mother, Trine Abildgaard.

Study 18:

This study needs no mentioning of altered size or placement. It was kindly written by my brother, Benjamin Winther.

Study 19:

This study needs no mentioning of altered size or placement.

Study 20:

This study needs no mentioning of altered size or placement.

Study 21:

This study needs no mentioning of altered size or placement.

Appendix E:

The sound of the text on a semantic and structural level

Come again. Think big, like a king.

Everyday phrases which in the context of this text has no sense of orientation, but engages the reader by being direct.

You can't do everything you want.

Again, attempting to engage the reader personally by talking directly at him/her.

That's the way it is. Like a map

under your feet. A breaking of flow in sentences which allows for alternative meanings. Either 'That's the way it is; like a map.' or 'like a map under your feet.'

Don't get lost in the grey zones. He puts his glasses on to

Introducing an unrelated idea on the same line which breaks the flow of the text when reading it.

see the fog a little clearer. Look at it.

A direct reference to the readers' physicality and thus his/her engagement.

And use your ears.

A direct reference to the readers' physicality and thus his/her engagement.

The rest you'll have to figure out for yourself.

A direct reference to the readers' physicality and thus his/her engagement. This also implies a relationship between author and reader by suggesting that the reader must 'figure something out for him/herself.'

Think! They collect their speech bubbles and

A use of pauses and breaking of sentences so that their meaning does not end after a line but continues in the next suggests rhythm by breaking rhythm.

click-clacks away in shimmering sandals.

'click'clacks' describes the sound of an action. 'shimmering' describes the optical or aural properties of an object.

They could do nothing, they slept with their glasses on.

Listen to my voice, listen to me! The sound should smell green and taste soft.

Using 'me' and 'my' refers directly to the author, thus implies a relationship between reader and writer. An attempt to draw attention to the readers' physicality by engaging the totality of senses.

Not like a stone in your shoe.

A stone in your shoe does no harm. Does it? Well.

The word 'Well' is a word of semantic definition, but it is also a word which is very gestural depending on its context.

And she goes, don't stare at the orange,

The word 'orange' has a double meaning according to how you say it; 'orange' quickly followed by pause indicates the fruit. 'Orange' quickly followed by the next line refers to sight and complimentary colors (orange - blue).

it turns everything else blue.

Just do what you're best at. Do that.

A sense of rhyme which implies rhythm.

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