Looking at Movies - Chapter 9 - Sound

I made this summary following the ‘questions for review’ at the end of the chapter. And also I copied some terms from this side: http://www.wwnorton.com/college/film/movies3/glossary.aspx

1. What is a sound design? What are the responsibilities of a sound designer?

A sound design, or creating the sound of a film, has in the past been the responsibility of a sound crew composed of the artists and technicians who record, edit, and mix its component parts into the sound track. In conventional filmmaking with film stock, the sound track is a narrow band to one side on the image on which the sound is recorded. In digital filmmaking, depending on the recording method being used, the sound track basically consists of a digital code being placed somewhere on the digital recording medium.

By contrast, the contemporary concept of sound design rests on the following basic elements:

- Sound should be integral to all three phases of film production (preproduction, production and post-production), not an afterthought to be added in postproduction only.
- A film’s sound is potentially as expressive as its images.
- Image and sound can create different worlds.
- Image and sound are co-expressible.

Term: Sound design
A state-of-the-art concept, pioneered by director Francis Ford Coppola and film editor Walter Murch, combining the crafts of editing and mixing and, like them, involving both theoretical and practical issues. In essence, sound design represents advocacy for movie sound (to counter some people’s tendency to favour the movie image)

Term: Sound track
A separate recording tape occupied by one specific type of sound recorded for a movie (one track for vocals, one for sound effects, one for music, etc.

2. Distinguish among recording, rerecording, editing and mixing.

Recording:
The process of recording sound for the movies is very similar to the process of hearing. Just as the human ear converts sound into nerve impulses that the brain identifies, so the microphone converts sound waves into electrical signals that are then recorded and stored.

Rerecording:
Also known as looping or dubbing. The replacing of dialogue, which can be done manually (that is, with the actors watching the footage, synchronizing their lips with it, and rereading the lines) or, more likely today, through computerized automatic dialogue replacement (ADR). (Dubbing also refers to the process of replacing dialogue in a foreign language with English, or the reverse, throughout a film.)
**Editing:**
The process by which the editor combines and coordinates individual shots into a cinematic whole; the basic creative force of cinema. Or more likely today, by computer through automatic dialogue replacement (ADR). This is a faster less expensive, and more technically sophisticated process.

**Mixing:**
The process of combining different sound tracks onto one composite sound track that is synchronous with the picture.

3. What is the differences between diegetic and nondiegetic sources of sound?

Sources of movie sound:

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<th>Source of sound</th>
<th>Diegetic sound</th>
<th>Nondiegetic sound</th>
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**Diegesis:**
The total world of a story—the events, characters, objects, settings, and sounds that form the world in which the story occurs.

**Diegetic element:**
An element—event, character, object, setting, sound—that helps form the world in which the story occurs. Compare nondiegetic element.

**Diegetic sound:**
Sound that originates from a source within a film’s world. Compare nondiegetic sound.

**Nondiegetic sound:**
Sound that originates from a source outside a film’s world. Compare diegetic sound.

4. What are the differences between sounds that are internal and external? Onscreen and off-screen?

**Internal sound:**
A form of diegetic sound in which we hear the thoughts of a character we see onscreen and assume that other characters cannot hear them.
**Interior monologue:**
One variation on the mental, subjective point of view of an individual character that allows us to see a character and hear that character’s thoughts (in his or her own voice, even though the character’s lips don’t move).

**External sound:**
A form of diegetic sound that comes from a place within the world of the story, which we and the characters in the scene hear but do not see. Compare internal sound.

**Onscreen sound:**
A form of diegetic sound that emanates from a source that we both see and hear. Onscreen sound may be internal sound or external sound.

**Off-screen sound:**
A form of sound, either diegetic or non-diegetic, that derives from a source we do not see. When diegetic, it consists of sound effects, music, or vocals that emanate from the world of the story. When non-diegetic, it takes the form of a musical score or narration by someone who is not a character in the story.

**Simultaneous sound:**
Sound that is diegetic and occurs onscreen.

**Non simultaneous sound:**
Sound that has previously been established in the movie and occurs when a character has a mental flashback to an earlier voice that recalls a conversation or a sound that identifies a place.

**Asynchronous sound:**
Sound that comes from a source apparent in the image but is not precisely matched temporally with the actions occurring in that image.

1. Is a movie limited to a certain number of sound tracks?
2. How do ambient sounds differ from sound effects? How are Foley sounds different from sound effects?

**Vocal sound:**
Dialogue, recorded during production or rerecorded during postproduction, is the speech of characters who are either visible onscreen or speaking off-screen—say, from an unseen part of the room or from an adjacent room. Dialogue is a function of plot because it develops out of situations, conflicts, and character development.

**Narration,** the commentary spoken by either off-screen or onscreen films, where it may emanate from an omniscient voice (thus, not one of the characters) or from a character in the movie. There are two main types of narration: first-person narration and voice-over narration.

**Environmental sounds:**
Environmental sound, which emanates from the ambience (or background) of the setting or environment being filmed, is either recorded during production or added during postproduction.

**Foley sounds,** A sound belonging to a special category of sound effects, invented in the 1930s by Jack Foley, a sound technician at Universal Studios. Technicians known as Foley artists create these sounds in specially equipped studios, where they use a variety of props and other equipment to simulate sounds such as footsteps in the mud, jingling car keys, or cutlery hitting a plate.
7. *Can the music in a movie be both diegetic and non-diegetic?*

**Music:**
Is meant to increase the emotion of the character or the action. Music can be either diegetic or non-diegetic.

**Silence:**
As viewers, we are familiar with all the types of films sound that have been described in this chapter, but we may be unfamiliar with the idea that silence can be a sound. Paradoxically, silence has that function when the filmmaker deliberately suppresses the vocal, environmental, or musical sounds that we expect in a movie.

8. *How does sound call our attention to both the spatial and temporal dimensions of a scene?*

Primarily, sound helps the filmmaker tell a movie’s story by reproducing and intensifying the world that has been partially created by the film’s visual elements. A good soundtrack can make the audience aware of the spatial and temporal dimensions of the screen, raise expectations, create rhythm, and develop characters. Either directly or indirectly, these functions provide the viewer with cues to interpretation and meaning. Sounds that work directly include dialogue, narration, and sound effects (often Foley sounds) that call attention (the characters ‘or ours) to on- or off-screen events.

9. *Why sounds are faithful to its sources.*

- **Audience awareness**
  Sound can define sections of the screen, guide our attention to or between them, and influence our interpretation.

- **Audience expectations**
  Sounds create expectation.

- **Expression of point of view**
  By juxtaposing visual and aural images, a director can express a point of view. In countless movies, for example, the sounds of big-city traffic-horns honking etc. express the idea that these places are frenetic and unlivable.

- **Rhythm**
  Sound can add rhythm to a scene, whether accompanying or juxtaposed against movement on the screen.

- **Characterization**
  All types of sound-dialogue, sound effects, music- can function as part of characterization.

- **Continuity**
  Sound can link one shot to the next, indicating that the scene has not changed in either time or space. Overlapping sound carries the sound from a first shot over to the next before sound of the second shot begins.

- **Emphasis**
  A sound can create emphasis in any scene that is-, can function as a punctuation mark-when it accentuates and strengthens the visual image.