

Authority and voice: borrowing terms

Sound Design



Yuille, Jeremy (2006). *Collaboration in sonic design: frameworks for designing interactive sound environments*. Master of Design Project, RMIT University

In this extract, Yuille explains the key concept of sonic gestural activity as it relates to his sonic design system.

1. In creative practice fields, why is it common to use first person 'I'?
2. Highlight the writer's explanation about his own creative project.
3. Yuille needs Smalley's concept of gesture as a way of describing his own research. Underline the words and ideas he will 'borrow' from Smalley.
4. Notice how the language he uses illustrates control over authorial voice.
5. Can an image represent the writer's 'voice'? How?



Figure 20. gestural control of musical parameters using a game controller

...

I composed a number of pieces for this system. One of these, *Human beings are animals too*, has a number of conceptual levels. One is the concrete – manipulating sounds of one kind with a gestural interface so as to bring about another kind of sonic behaviour, purely for the reason of creating new sound objects in real time. In *The Listening Imagination: Listening in the Electroacoustic Era*, Denis Smalley (1995) discusses the concept of sonic *gestural activity*, categorising it in terms of a sonic object linked to an imagined activity or gesture that might have produced the sound. Throughout the following descriptions of my works I use the term *gesture* to widely describe sonic objects that exhibit what Smalley calls an *energy-motion trajectory* (Smalley, 1995), or whose *spectro morphology* (Smalley, 1997) indicates a gestural source...

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Answer key

1. In creative practice fields, the artist's act of making tends to come first. This is a personal process; hence the use of 'I' and 'my', **in bold red**.
2. The writer's **explanation about his own creative project highlighted**. Yuille needs Smalley's concept of *gesture* as a way of describing his own research.
3. **Underline the words and ideas he will 'borrow' from Smalley**.
4. **Notice the strong voice directing the reader - in brown**.
5. An image can visually represent the author's voice, because it is deliberately chosen to explain or exemplify or even to comment.



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