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### Sound and its Role in *My Name is Lisa*

It is common knowledge that Sound plays an enormous role in films. Viewers find themselves singing the music from famous films while rehashing scenes from that film or even using music from certain films to let others in on their moods or jokes. Think of people swimming in a lake and one of them singing the theme to *JAWS*. Those who have viewed the film *JAWS* are automatically triggered to remember the suspense the music created while watching the film. It is also often found that the lack of music can create suspense as well as helps view the events of a film in a certain light. In Ben Shelton's *My Name is Lisa* sound is used in many ways to help create scenes and connect viewers to feel certain emotions. In "My Name is Lisa" Shelton uses sound bridges, diegetic sound, and non-diegetic sound, as well as no sound at all to create scenes and connect viewers to the film.

*My Name is Lisa* uses both diegetic and non-diegetic sound. The non-diegetic sound used in the opening scene is very soft, in fact so soft that many viewers may not even be aware of the soft piano music playing in the background. The main character, Lisa, is shown frequently in scenes throughout the film making a video blog in her living room. The use of this soft non-diegetic piano music is used in every scene where Lisa is shown using the web cam. When the scenes change from Lisa being in her house to showing her outdoors coming home from what viewers assume is school; a louder version of the non-diegetic piano music used in the video blog scenes is playing, and also slowly crescendoing. This slow crescendo of non-diegetic sound

creates a sound bridge leading from one scene into another. The sound bridge keeps viewers interested in seeing what is going to happen next and lends smoothness to the scene change.

Another scene where non-diegetic piano music is used is when Lisa's mother is sitting in the car when Lisa approaches her when she comes from school. The non-diegetic music used is medium soft and is a playful, childlike ditty. The music playing helps viewers understand that Lisa's mother is confused and almost childlike in her forgetfulness. A sound bridge using the same type of non-diegetic piano music leads viewers out of the outdoor scene into a video blog scene inside the home. Every scene in *My Name is Lisa* has the same sound bridge leading out of and into the next scene. It gives viewers a subtle way to know that time is passing and that all the events that are viewed are connected.

Though the non-diegetic sound played during the video blog scenes is so soft viewers cannot hear it, the diegetic sounds such as the movement of Lisa's mother's voice, her footsteps walking away, and Lisa's fingers hitting the keyboard are very prominent. This use of diegetic sound connects viewers to Lisa's world and makes the viewer feel as if they were on the computer chatting to a friend. Diegetic sound is also used in the outdoor scenes to make events stand out and hit the hearts of viewers. For example, when Lisa sees that her mom has left the car partially backed out of the driveway with the door open; viewers hear the dinging signaling the car door is open with the keys in the ignition. At this moment viewers understand that her mom is not just forgetful but seems to be suffering from something more than just a random case of forgetfulness. The starkness of the sound of the slam of the door as Lisa gets in the car, her turning the key in the ignition, and the roar of the engine as Lisa pulls the car back into the driveway all help the viewers connect with the character and see the impact that the events have

on Lisa. The use of these diegetic sounds help the viewer believe that this could take place as a real life occurrence.

Shelton's use of sound impacts viewers in *My Name is Lisa* by using the sound to make scenes in the film have more of an impact on the viewers. By using diegetic, non-diegetic, and sound bridges in the film, viewers are able to connect with the events that the characters are going through. The sound bridge used coming in and out of each scene is memorable and fits with the emotions that Shelton is trying to get across. In *My Name is Lisa* viewers are shown that sound is a very important part of film.

Work Cited

Shelton, Ben. *My Name is Lisa*. *YouTube*. 6 Nov. 2007, <https://youtu.be/ZiRHyzjb5SI>.