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### Class Exercise 5: Active Listening

*What sound sources do you identify in the environment? Consider sound cues that play once (e.g. a car horn) or repeat (e.g. Periodic sounds like the sound of a car tire passing over seams in the pavement) as well as more ambient, evolving sources (e.g. as wind increases in strength, the sound changes).*

This sound environment has a clear foreground and background. A pair of young students are having a discussion about their team sport, and their conversation can be heard well over the background noise.

In the background, there are sharp, sporadic clicks that remind me of table tennis and a general buzz of conversation. Occasionally, somebody exclaims excitedly in the background, and they steal attention from the pair of students for just a moment.

*How were you able to identify these sound sources? What sources presented themselves to you first, and which required more careful background listening? Consider your own process of making sense of the sound, including listening for the absence of certain sounds.*

Initially, I could tell that the foreground consisted of two chatting students, but I focused more on the overall ambiance rather than the topic of their discussion. I noticed the high pitched table tennis balls, which immediately reminded me of a high school gym. The overall pitch and style of the people talking further confirmed the high school setting.

It was only after a full listen that I decided to pay attention to what the pair were talking about. Presumably, these kids are part of some sports team and they're excited over their team's performance: "I was so surprised... he did good yesterday." One person mention a past scrimmage in passing, which helped me identify that they were members of a team sport.

*What do these sound sources tell you about what is happening in the environment? Do they have a positive, negative or neutral meaning in context? (e.g. A lion's roar may not be threatening in a zoo, but would be in the jungle)*

The setting seems to be a common fitness area of a high school where kids can mingle and play physical activities like table tennis. However, the facility also has social utility as well, as observed by the excited chatter of the background and discussion between the teammates.

*How could these sound sources (or environment) vary to give you different information? Consider frequency (pitch) information and location information that may vary in these sources.*

Overall, it seems like the people in this sound environment are nestled in their activities. Table tennis players are in the background and people seem to be having siloed conversations within their groups. Specifically, when the background noise varied due to

yelling, the two teammates didn't seem to care for the noise. From this information, I was able to tell that there was exciting sports occurring, but not everybody was taking part in the activity.