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RECORDING OF DIALOGUE SPEECH ON THE SET SITE: TECHNOLOGIES AND SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

This article discusses the recording technologies of "pure" sound in film and television, as well as their artistic and technical significance. The role of the sound engineer in the filming process, his interaction with other members of the creative team and the importance of sound in conveying the author's idea are highlighted. Special attention is paid to the choice of microphones, planning of recording technology, as well as the specifics of working in various conditions (pavilion, interior, nature). The problems of recording dialogues and ways to achieve a natural, legible and artistically authentic sound are analyzed.

Keywords: *cinema and television, clear sound, sound recording on the set, conversational speech, lavalier microphone, microphone on a fishing rod, hypercardioid microphone, sound image, sound recording technology, filming process, audio production, mixing, inter noise*

The sound engineer, along with other participants in the filming process, is an important link in the chain of transmission of the author's idea. The task of a sound engineer in a movie is to direct the viewer's attention in the right direction. Good sound in the film does not distract from the video sequence, but highlights the key points, forcing you to focus on yourself in particularly important cases. Since the sound engineer is not the only participant in the realization of the author's idea and the sound is only part of a holistic artistic image, it requires the ability to work in collaboration with other specialists.

One of the important types of work of a modern film and television sound engineer is the recording of so–called "finishing" sound – sound recorded on the set and, with proper processing, capable of being included as a carrier of sound information (most often speech) in the final mix.

You can discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a "pure" sound for a long time. But one advantage over dubbed is obvious – the actor's speech in interaction with the voices of other actors, which has natural, truthful emotions and sounds in three–dimensional space, is a treasure. It is absurd to lose such wealth.

The technology of "pure" sound in cinema and television. *Preparing for shooting. The choice of technology. Microphone selection.* Creating an artistic sound image should begin with understanding exactly what the director, cameraman, producer and, of course, the sound engineer of the future film want to get from recording sound on the set. Without a specific plan, it is difficult to achieve anything – the entire filming period turns into a banal capture of certain sounds that periodically occur on the set. Speech and noises, both useful and completely random, that occur every now and then during the take, are simply recorded using a sound recorder. A good sound starts with "hearing" the result. Most of the factors that destroy the artistic sound image of a film are predictable, and the same problems recur with almost every new film. This concerns both the purely technical aspect of the sound recording issue and the artistic one. Since a positive result in achieving the necessary artistic image in sound begins with foresight, the process of preparing for the filming period should not be underestimated. This applies to reading the script, communicating with the director, choosing the filming location, and selecting the necessary personnel and equipment. Let's look at the technical side of the issue using examples.

For example, it is known that the sound engineer will have to work on an entertainment film. What do you need to know from the technical side during the preparatory stage of working on this film? The script. Here, in addition to the actual storyline of the film, the sound engineer should be interested in questions: what is the role and number of dialogues; what role is assigned to scenes that are not directly related to speech; how many actors speak almost simultaneously in one scene; what locations are mentioned in the literary source.

Discussion of the film with the director and the director of photography. It is assumed that the director and the director of photography are already aware of the approximate budget and shooting technology for the auditorium. The first thing you need to know is whether the shooting will be: pavilion, that is, the scenery is being built in a pavilion specially prepared for filming; interior, that is, filming will take place in real rooms not adapted for filmmaking; full–scale. The second is how many cameras are planned to be used and (a question for the director of photography) which ones. The third is whether it is planned to shoot all the actors involved in the scene at the same time, or whether there will be a "sub-shoot". Based on the answers given by colleagues, the technical and artistic solution of the sound engineer will be chosen.

Since dialogues occupy an important place in the film, it is necessary to consider their recording and possible problems related to external and internal factors. The presence of more than four actors in the frame threatens that the microphone operator, or even two, is not able to catch all the lines of the characters. At first glance, the problem and solution are obvious – to voice all the actors speaking in the scene using miniature buttonhole microphones, and transmit the signal using a radio channel, record all this on a multitrack recorder, and then figure out what happened. With this solution, everything seems to be simple – all speakers are voiced, their voices are written on separate, independent channels. It remains tolerable to attach these microphones under the actors' clothes and monitor the level during recording. The negative side of this approach lies in the very decision to "voice the actors using only radio clips". As practice shows, the timbre side of the microphone's sound is buttonholes, even successfully fixed under the actor's clothes, it leaves much to be desired. The voice remains mumbling, the normal high-frequency component is irrevocably lost. The use of a radio channel, regardless of the cost, leads to a risk of high-frequency interference and loss of a useful signal. Even the slightest movement of the actor, even if he is dressed in soft cotton clothes, and the risk of static electricity is minimized, leading to the appearance of unwanted rustles and crunches that distract the viewer from the perception of the speech component of the sound. There is no need to talk about the natural plan at all. With further mixing, several more disadvantages will appear – audible differences in timbre and inter-noise (background noise typical of any filming location). A microphone located almost under the throat or in a headdress cannot be compared in naturalness of sound with a microphone located on a fishing rod. However, using this type of microphone can save the stage from further overdubbing in conditions that are both frankly dif-

ficult and completely unsuitable for recording speech with a microphone on a fishing rod.

What is the advantage of loopback microphones in difficult sound conditions? It is constantly close to the mouth of the speaking actor, which means a better signal-to-noise ratio than a microphone on a fishing rod. Overload resistance, which can be useful when recording loud actors and shouting. The presence of a radio channel, albeit less reliable than a good cable, gives greater freedom of movement compared to a wired microphone. All this makes the use of a buttonhole radio microphone the only possible solution for recording conversations on a noisy street.

The disadvantages of using a hypercardioid microphone are largely related to its advantages. Since the microphone has a less sharp focus, especially in the mid-high and high frequency range, using such a microphone when shooting on location can lead to serious problems. There is a chance that signals coming from the side, especially noises, will be recorded at too high a level relative to speech. This can be used as an artistic device, especially since these noises will sound quite natural, but practice shows that it is better to have all the elements of the soundtrack, if possible, separately from each other. This will give you more freedom when mixing in terms of level, panorama, timbral correction, dynamic processing and artistic solution of the film. The third option for recording sound material on the set combines the first and second options and seems to be the most correct. You can take advantage of the two options while compensating for the disadvantages. The choice of microphone largely determines the strategic planning of sound recording technology on the site. So, when recording in the pavilion, it would be reasonable to use a hypercardioid microphone as a basis or "half a pillow". Buttonhole microphones should definitely be hung on those actors whose voice recording can be a serious inconvenience for the microphone operator. If the shooting will be carried out with two cameras, it is advisable to clarify in advance with the director of photography whether both cameras will shoot footage of the same or different sizes, if we are talking about the so-called "eight", traditional for most dialogues in the series. The storyboard of dialogue scenes can provide a good clue.

Thus, high-quality recording of "pure" sound in film and television directly depends on the professional training of the sound engineer, his technical knowledge and creative approach. The pre-planning stage, script analysis, and effective interaction with the director and cinematographer play an important role. Proper selection and combination of microphones (for example, using a microphone on a fishing rod and lavalier microphones) can significantly improve sound quality. Practice shows that there is no universal solution – each scene requires an individual approach. Therefore, a modern sound engineer should be able to flexibly combine technical means and artistic tasks.

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