

Handout for “The Grammar of Film: A primer for world language teachers”

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- A. The Shot (the period of continuous filming between cuts)
 - a. Shot length (the relationship between camera and subject, as contrasted to shot duration); definitions vary: typically a medium shot is from the waist (or knees) to the top of the head; a medium close-up is a/k/a a “bust shot.”
 - i. Extreme long shot
 - ii. Long shot
 - iii. Medium long shot
 - iv. Medium shot (Subject is seen from the waist to top of head)
 - v. Medium close-up shot (“Bust shot”)
 - vi. Close-up shot
 - vii. Extreme close-up shot
 - b. Shot angle
 - i. High angle (camera looking down on subject)
 - ii. Low angle (camera looking up at subject)
 - iii. Canted angle (camera tilted so that vertical lines in the frame are not parallel to the frame)
 - c. Camera movement:
 - i. Tracking shots
 - 1. Dolly-in/-out shot (closing in on subject; moving away from subject)
 - 2. Trucking right/left shot (camera moves parallel to the subject)
 - 3. Pedestal up/down shot (camera rises or falls with the subject)
 - 4. Following shot (camera follows behind or in front of subject)
 - ii. Axial movement of the camera on a fixed base
 - 1. Pan (right/left)
 - 2. Tilt (up/down)
 - 3. Whip pan: very rapid pan where the action is blurred
 - d. Lens
 - i. Depth of field
 - 1. Deep focus: the entire scene is in sharp focus
 - 2. Shallow focus: only part of the scene is in focus
 - 3. Rack focus: in the shot focus changes from one object to another
 - 4. Soft focus: objects in the shot are deliberately blurred
 - ii. Focal length
 - 1. Wide angle (wide field of view, expands background)
 - 2. Telephoto (narrow field of view, shrinks background)
 - 3. Zoom
 - a. Dolly zoom (e.g., in *Jaws* or *Vertigo*)
 - e. Lighting
 - i. High key (low contrast, few shadows) (e.g., comedies, musicals)
 - ii. Low key (high contrast, shadows) (film noir, drama)
 - iii. Back lighting
 - f. Mise-en-scène: Colors, objects, positioning of characters

B. The Cut (filmic editing, i.e., the space/relationship between shots)

a. Continuity editing

- i. Transitions: Fades, irises, dissolves, shutters
- ii. Reverse shot (a/k/a shot-reverse/shot): a shot from the opposite angle; in a two person scene, over-the-shoulder reverse shots are common
- iii. Insert shot / cut-in shot: A closer view of something in the same scene
- iv. Matches (continuity editing)
 1. Graphic/color match
 2. Match on action
 3. Eyeline match (a character looks in a direction, we then see what they are looking at)
- v. Cutaway shot: Breaking away to a new scene
- vi. Crosscutting (Cutting back and forth between two scenes, often suggesting the two scenes are occurring concurrently)
- vii. J-cut: Sound precedes video, i.e., the video of the current shot includes audio from the following shot; L-cut: Video precedes the sound

b. Discontinuity editing

- i. Jump-cut (e.g. of discontinuous editing)
- ii. Juxtapositions

C. Intratextuality and intertextuality

- a. Objects
- b. Filmic "rhyming," (a/k/a simile or intellectual montage): using the same filmic device to tie together two shots.
- c. Borrowing (intertextuality)

Clip #1. Shot #1



Length: medium long
Angle: high (bird's eye)
Camera movement: none
Depth of field (focus): ? deep
Lighting: dark, low key
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition: Cutaway to temple

Shot #2



Length: medium long
Angle: low
Camera movement: None
Depth of field (focus): deep
Lighting: dark, high contrast
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition: Cutaway to temple interior

Shot #3



Length:
Angle:
Camera movement:
Depth of field (focus):
Lighting: low key
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition:

Shot #4



Length:
Angle:
Camera movement:
Depth of field (focus):
Lighting:
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition:

Shot #5



Length:
Angle:
Camera movement:
Depth of field (focus):
Lighting:
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition:

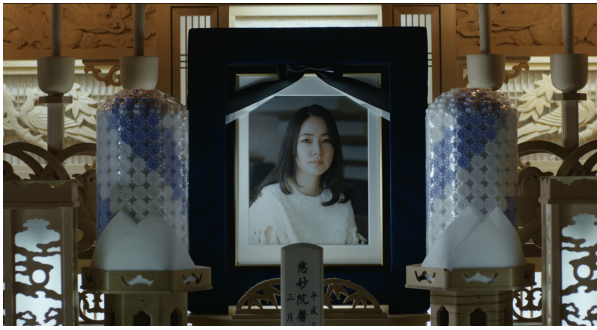
Shot #6



Length:
Angle:
Camera movement:
Depth of field (focus):
Lighting:
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition:

Shot #7



Length:
Angle:
Camera movement:
Depth of field (focus):
Lighting:
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition (to the next shot):

Shot #8



Length:
Angle:
Camera movement:
Depth of field (focus):
Lighting:
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition (to the next shot)::

Shot #9



Length:
Angle:
Camera movement:
Depth of field (focus):
Lighting:
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition (to the next shot):

Shot #10



Length:
Angle:
Camera movement:
Depth of field (focus):
Lighting:
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition (to the next shot):

Shot #11



Length:
Angle:
Camera movement:
Depth of field (focus):
Lighting:
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition (to the next shot):

Shot #12



Length:
Angle:
Camera movement:
Depth of field (focus):
Lighting:
Mise-en-scène (colors, objects, positioning):

Transition:

Film analysis in close-up :

Une Partie de Campagne, Jean Renoir (1936)

Name the shots, editing styles, and camera movements that you see on screen.

1. Shot #1 _____
2. Shot #2 _____
3. Shot #3 _____
4. Shot #4 _____
5. Shot #5 _____
6. Shot #6 _____
7. What do you note about the composition of this shot?
(For ex, you could write here about the mise-en-scène)

8. Camera movement #1_____

9. Camera movement #2_____

10. What were the main ideas of this opening sequence?

11. How are these ideas related to the filmmaking elements you noted above ?

12. What's interesting to you about the sequence? Why? Could you make an argument about the sequence that is supported by the director's choice of elements? What would it be ?