

I The Language of Film

(Selected Terms for Film Analysis)

FIELD SIZES

long shot



The camera is at a great distance from the subject being filmed and presents the entire setting.

medium long shot

The subject of the shot, e.g. a couple, is shown together with its surroundings.

full shot

a shot of a subject that includes the entire body and not much else

medium shot

The camera is not quite as near to its object as in a close-up; with human subjects the person is shown down to the waist or hips.

normal shot



comprehensive term for all field sizes between long shot and close-up

close-up



The camera is very close to the object; with human subjects, the face and its expressions are shown. The slightest nuance of expression in an actor's face is shown and can become

extreme close-up/detail shot

a shot of a hand, eye, mouth or object in detail

POINT OF VIEW

The position from which the camera is filming, e.g.

establishing shot

generally a long shot that shows the general location of the scene

point-of-view shot (POV)

shows the scene from the point of view of a character

over-the-shoulder shot

The partner in a dialogue is seen from the perspective of a person standing just behind and a little to one side of the other partner so that parts of both are in the frame.

reverse-angle shot

a shot from the opposite side

CAMERA ANGLES

high angle/overhead



In a high-angle shot, the camera is placed at an angle above the scene of action, thus objects and people appear smaller and less important. In an extreme form, it becomes a bird's eye view.

low angle/below shot



Objects and people are filmed from below, the importance of what is shown tends to be enlarged thereby. In an extreme form, it becomes a worm's eye view.

"The camera shoots from a low

eye-level/straight-on angle

the fairly conventional angle at which the camera is pointed at the subject; it is often used to convey the idea of realism, authenticity and objectivity

CAMERA MOVEMENT

Movement of the camera during the shot

pan(ning)



This is a movement from left to right or vice versa around the vertical axis. The panning movement can lead smoothly from one image to the next, or from one character to another. "The camera pans across the picture."

tilt



movement of the camera upwards (**tilt up**) or downwards (**tilt down**) around the horizontal axis

tracking (trucking) shot

These expressions are derived from the early film practise of putting the camera on a truck or on a small waggon running on a metal track.

zoom

Technically this is not a moving shot because the camera itself does not move; the zoom is produced by a system of lenses whose focal length is adjusted during the shot; **zoom-in**: the subject appears to come closer; **zoom-out**: the subject appears to move farther away. "The camera

Refers to the way in which shots are linked. The most common are:

cut	a simple switch from one image to the next
fade-in	The screen is black at the beginning, gradually the image appears brightening to full strength.
fade-out	the opposite of fade-in
dissolve	the old image disappears, fades away and the new image gradually appears

Others:

credits	list of people who were involved in the making of the film
mis-en-scene	direction of actors, placement of cameras, lighting, arrangement of the shot
voice over	the voice of the narrator speaking while other sounds including voices of the characters continue
(voice) on	The speaker (narrator/character) is shown in the picture.
(voice) off	The speaker (narrator/character) is not shown in the picture.

